



YOUTH AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

BEST PRACTICES FROM FINLAND

Laura Maria Rajala

**Laura Maria
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I have a Master's degree in Law and Human Resource Development.

In my practice years I have drafted, reviewed and negotiated contracts in notary, human resource, insurance, labor and bankrupt law area.

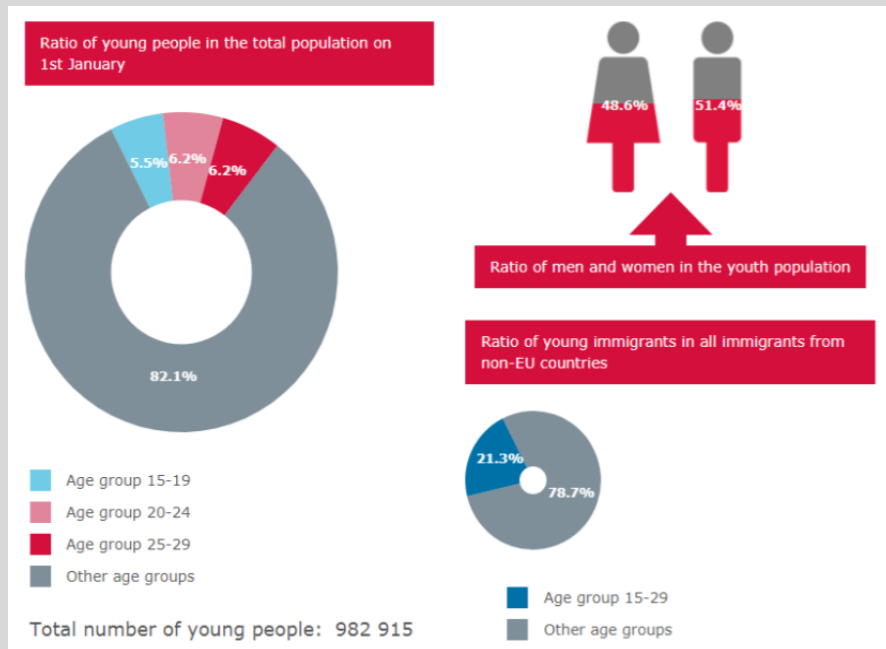
At now my legal practice has increasingly focused on human rights.

I help people to care their law problems in different areas for example migration questions, starting up businesses and protect estate interests. Most of my clients are immigrants and I prevent them from making mistakes by explaining the Finnish way of life.

Empowerment of young people and women: the key to development

The aim of Finnish development policy and cooperation is to eradicate poverty and empower ordinary people – women and men, girls and boys – to strive towards economically, socially and ecologically sustainable societies.

Nationally, Finland has a long history of promoting youth and women empowerment equality. Finland is often depicted as an equality trailblazer and paradigm of sustainable development.



Finland is famous for a variety of reasons, one of those being that the country has its own law for respecting the rights of young people.

The Youth Act promotes social inclusion, opportunities to participate in decision-making in matters of concern, development of individuals' abilities, the improvement of living conditions and the availability of free-time hobbies and youth work, to name a few. The Government Decree supports the implementation of the act by, for example, specifying the allocation of the duties at the national, regional and local levels. The National Youth Work and Policy Programme has its basis in the Youth Act but is also informed by the Government Programme.

Finland's Structural Fund Programme 'Sustainable growth and jobs 2014 – 2020' is realising the Europe 2020 Strategy targets, many of which are related to the social inclusion of young people, being one of the population sections considered to be in a vulnerable position in society.

The programme is led by the Ministry of Economics Affairs and Employment.

The Ministry of Education and Culture also outlined three important strategic priorities:

1. Promoting multiculturalism, sense of community and inclusion (Meaningful in Finland)
2. Promoting gender equality (The Action Plan for Equality by the Ministry of Education and Culture - In Finnish: Toiminnallinen tasa-arvosuunnitelma)
3. Promoting sustainable development (The Finland we want by 2050 – Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development)

The Ministry of Education and Culture allocates funds to national and international projects in the youth field.

It takes into consideration whether these projects promote one or more goals of these strategic priorities.

The evaluation of the 'Sustainable Growth and Jobs' structural funds programme 2014-2020 was published in June 2019 by MDI Public Ltd and its partners.

For the evaluation, a multitude of methods were used, for example: documents, questionnaires, interviews, and monitored indicators.

On average, the funded projects were able to raise young people's opportunities to be involved in education, or work, or to develop their work ability and functionality.

On the one hand, it was stated in the evaluation report that even more sophisticated effectivity indicators need to be developed in the future, since, for instance, the young people coming to One-Stop-Guidance-Centres often have several obstacles on their paths to employment and wellbeing such as health issues, and this seems to be one of the reasons why the employment targets have not been achieved in this age group. On the other hand, the projects targeted directly at the development of social inclusion and reduction of poverty got on average good results when it comes to young people.

While the most severe forms of COVID-19 have been reported in men and older patients, new research at Finland's Tampere University indicates that age and gender don't play a significant role in the expression of the ACE2 receptor through which the coronavirus infects human target cells.

Due to the corona outbreak, schools are operating with exceptional arrangements, with special attention being paid to ensuring good hygiene, avoiding unnecessary close contacts, and arranging teaching premises more spaciouly than usual.

EDUFI advises and produces support material for education and training providers in Finland on how to organize teaching under the exceptional arrangements.





Photo credit: Adobe Stock

Women are playing a key role in the health care response to the COVID-19 crisis. Women constitute an estimated two-thirds of the health workforce worldwide.

The COVID-19 pandemic poses a severe threat to the achievement of gender-related SDGs. It jeopardises some of the improvements observed since 2015 in several aspects of gender equality and women's empowerment. The crisis' economic and social consequences will exacerbate existing inequalities and discrimination against women and girls, especially against the most marginalised and those in extreme poverty. The development of the outbreak might also put a hold to some gender-transformative policies and reforms by diverting resources away from past and current needs of women, whereas the crisis will actually increase and expand them.

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The Finnish National Agency for Education has opened an email address info@oph.fi for advice on the coronavirus and education services. The service is meant for education providers, schools and organisations taking part in international programmes, and it operates during office hours (8.00-16.00).



In questions related to health, contact healthcare professionals and visit the website of the Finnish institute for health and welfare.

THE COVID-19 TRACING APP

How you can help stop the spread of the coronavirus disease in Finland

1



Download the free mobile app to your phone from Apple Store or Google Play. The app works in the background automatically and does not interfere with use of the phone or reduce its battery life.

2



Users' phones send each other an anonymous signal during an encounter. Each phone saves a code for encounters where exposure would be a possibility. The app does not store any personal data or location details.

3



If you become ill and receive a positive test result for COVID-19, you will also be given a verification code to anonymously warn people you have met during the incubation period, by using your own phone. You will also receive a warning about exposure if any person you have encountered falls ill. Information about exposure or illness will only be sent to you personally.

A mobile contact tracing app used on a voluntary basis and compliant with data protection legislation can help stop chains of infection caused by the coronavirus. The app allows people to participate in and influence the prevention of coronavirus infections and to protect their own and their loved ones' health.

Koronavilkku is an app produced by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, which aims to prevent the spread of coronavirus. In addition to the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) and DigiFinland (SoteDigi) have participated in the development work.

Koronavilkku makes it possible to trace those who have been exposed to the virus – also when they are not known to the persons who have contracted the infection – faster and more comprehensively. The app alerts the user to their potential exposure to the coronavirus and provides them with instructions.

When looking at the statistics concerning political participation in Finland, it can be concluded that the proportion of women in the democratically elected bodies is relatively high in Finland, especially since the 1980s. In addition, Finnish women have an exceptionally long history of political participation behind them: already in the first democratically elected parliament in 1906 their proportion was 10%. Also the division of labour between sexes in politics is not so clear cut anymore: particularly since the end of 1980s, women have been appointed also as ministers of defence, ministers of justice and foreign affairs.

In Finland there is a network of female MPs and an organization called NYTKIS - the Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations for Joint Action, which gathers together women's organizations from different political parties, as well as other non-political organizations such as the League of Finnish Feminists and the Association for Women's Studies in Finland.



Thirteen of the 19 women elected to Parliament in 1907.
Photo: Helsinki City Museum



In the 2019 **parliamentary** election, the proportion of women elected reached a record high. Women now account for 46 percent and men for 54 percent of all members of parliament.

The proportion of women in parliamentary groups varies by party. The Green Party has the highest number of women (85%) and, with the exception of single-member parliamentary groups, the Finns Party has the lowest number (28%).

Finnish politics today is dominated by women, many under the age of 35. This is a result of long-standing efforts to include more women in leadership.

FEMINA RY



Femina is an NGO that provides legal, social and humanitarian assistance to women's living in Finland.

We aim to achieve more sustainable and fair society by assistance to the people in need and advancing intercultural dialogue and education to all.

We run a workshops, trainings, seminars and information days, teaching people practical skills, and important aspects of socialization and integration in society, human rights and legal system in Finland, accounting matters and providing information to assist them in setting up their life's (in case of refugees, migrants and minorities) and own business.

We organize vocational education four kids and youth, like drama and music lessons, youth camps and debates.

We have created a website to inform women about changes in the legal field of Finland.

We provide relevant information through articles and newsletters. At the same time, the main task in organizing the work of the site is to complete, comprehensive and high-quality consideration of applications and preserve anonymity.

Thank
you



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<https://www.feminary.fi/en/home/>