

# The Youth Guarantee in Finland provides employment, training and a customised service

## youth guarantee

**YOUNG PEOPLE IN FINLAND** are mainly well educated. However, among 20–29 year olds, around 110 000 have completed only comprehensive school. 55 000 young people are unemployed jobseekers. Youth unemployment is on the increase.

There are estimated 40 000 untrained young people who are not working or taking part in education or training programmes. Such exclusion among the young costs the state approximately 300 million euros a year.

The intention of the youth guarantee is to ensure that young people have access to education, training and employment and prevent them from being excluded from the society. The cross-administrative youth guarantee takes effect from the start of 2013.

The Finnish youth guarantee is to be based on the Public-Private-People-Partnership model, where young adults are themselves the actors, responsible for their own future. Youth guarantee is a primary goal of the Government Programme and will be implemented throughout the government's term of office.

The youth guarantee promotes inclusion of the young people through three approaches:

- help these young people back into education, training or employment
- develop youth services to promote social inclusion
- create a context for collecting feedback from young people how the services work for them, and how the

measures adopted function, and in addition what needs to be improved.

### **WHAT IS THE YOUTH GUARANTEE?**

The youth guarantee will offer everyone under the age of 25, as well as recent graduates under age of 30 an employment, a study place, a place in the on-the-job training or in a rehabilitation within three months after becoming unemployed.

The youth guarantee consists of various elements: a guarantee of employment, educational guarantee, a young adults' skills programme, a youth workshop, and outreach youth work. The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture will be responsible for the guarantee of education and training, the young adults' skills programme, the youth workshop and outreach youth work. The project is being implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Employment and the Economy and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

### **HOW WILL THE EDUCATIONAL GUARANTEE BE IMPLEMENTED?**

The educational guarantee as part of the youth guarantee will offer everyone who

has just completed comprehensive school a place in further education or training.

### **More study places in vocational education**

An additional 1 700 study places have been created in vocational education in areas where there were fewer study places for people in this age group than elsewhere. This makes it easier for young people to move into vocational training and education, cutting the numbers of those who are excluded from educational courses.

### **New selection criteria**

The selection criteria in vocational education are undergoing a change, with those who have completed comprehensive school and those without upper level vocational qualification being given priority to study for such a qualification.

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### **Local authorities responsible for counselling services**

Student counselling during basic education ends when basic education ends. The aim is that local authorities will be obliged to offer counselling services for the comprehensive school graduates.

### Supporting language learning of the young immigrants

Compared with the population as a whole, young immigrants account for a greater number of those who do not apply for, have not been selected for, or who have quit or dropped out of study places. The situation is especially challenging for those who have arrived in Finland in the final stages of the basic education. More language training for immigrants will be offered in folk high schools and adult education centres to promote the young immigrants' competence to study and their language skills.

### Employers to receive a higher compensation for apprenticeship training

The apprenticeship system will be developed to make it more suitable also as a form of young person's education or training. Employers will receive a higher compensation for apprenticeships offered to young comprehensive school graduates.

### YOUNG ADULTS' SKILLS PROGRAMME

For those aged between 20 and 29 who have completed only basic education before the Educational Guarantee takes effect, a young adults' skills programme will provide better opportunities for applying for vocational education and training leading to a degree or other qualification. The program will be organised during the period 2013–2016.

In the programme, young people will be able to gain an upper secondary vocational, further vocational or specialist vocational qualifications. The aim is to bring altogether 36,000 adolescents into the programme throughout the programme period from 2013 to 2016.

Through the programme guidance and counselling on how to apply for study places and how to proceed in studies will be increased.

### WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES AND OUTREACH YOUTH WORK AS MEANS OF SUPPORT

Workshop activities and outreach youth work represent early intervention in youth exclusion. The work is targeted at young people who are inactive and who need other support (NEETs = not in employment, education or training). Both types of activity will be expanded in the period 2013–2016.

The main tasks of the youth workshop are to strengthen young people's life skills and social empowerment, provide early support, and promote greater



steady social awareness and learning by doing. The workshop is an opportunity for young people to participate in supervised, subsidised employment schemes, follow a tailor-made educational/training path, or find employment on the open labour market. The Youth Guarantee is a tool for improving the quality of workshops and strengthening cooperation between them and educational establishments on a young person's educational/training path.

The task of outreach youth work is to help young people who are not in

education, training or employment or who need support, and refer them to the services that are right for them. The Finnish Youth Act has laid down provisions on outreach youth work and multidisciplinary cooperation at local level since 2011. The Youth Guarantee will be a way to make these activities available all over the country.

### HOW IS YOUTH EMPLOYMENT TO BE SUPPORTED?

Youth employment is to be supported by making the 'Sanssi Card' a permanent feature of the system. The Sanssi card is a model designed to promote wage subsidy and it has lowered the employer threshold for hiring young people. Wage subsidy enables employers to benefit from a contribution of 670 euros a month that is to compensate their employment costs.

There will also be more youth services and career guidance provided at the Employment and Economic Development Offices, and new forms of entrepreneurship are to be developed through training, advice and start-up grants.

### FUNDING

The government has agreed that the Youth Guarantee is to receive 60 million euros a year. Approximately half of this sum will go to the administrative sector of the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the rest to the equivalent branch of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy. Furthermore, the young adults' skills programme will receive 27 million euros in 2013 and 52 million euros in the years 2014–2016.

There will be more funding available for youth workshop activities and outreach youth work: the appropriation for years 2013–2015 will increase to 19.5 million euros, and to 11.5 million euros in 2016. ●

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