

No. 142**REPORT**

for the period of 1 June 2013 to 31 May 2018 made by the Government of Finland, in accordance with article 22 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organization, on the measures taken to give effect to the provisions of the

Human Resources development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)
(Ratification of which was registered on 14 September 1977)

I LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

The Act on Social Benefits for the Unemployed (1290/2002) was reformed in 2016 to monitor and contact the clients in the PES every three months in order to re-evaluate their individual employment plans. The 12 § (1451/2016) indicates that refusing to take part in the vocational guidance offered by the Finnish PES, if agreed in the employment plan, may lead to the suspension of the unemployment benefit for 60 days.

The Act on Vocational Education (531/2017) has been reformed in the beginning of 2018. The new law covers the vocational education and training both for young people and adults. Applications and students are taken in throughout the year. More emphasis is now on the learning and employment results of the education. Previous competences of the students are taken in to account in their personal study plans. The completion of the studies is more individual and flexible. Students have the right to receive personal guidance in order to be better able to complete their education. The reformed law states that vocational education as labour market training that aims to a degree is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment on the other hand still offers as a form of public employment services vocational labour market training that does not aim to a degree and training for the immigrants and refugees.

The National Board of Education has in cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment updated the guidelines for training for immigrants according to which also labour market training for immigrants is organized. The goal is to speed up the learning of language skills and the transition from training programs with emphasis on language, social and culture skills to training programs with emphasis on vocational skills.

The government is planning to give new legislation in order to reform also the public employment services. The aim is to give the regions both the funds and the responsibility for arranging and procuring of public employment services including vocational guidance and training. The regions will be encouraged to procure services from the open market.

II APPLICATION OF THE ARTICLES IN FINLAND

The basic organization of the Finnish PES has remained the same during the aforementioned period. One of the new aspects regarding the provision of vocational guidance is related to the European Youth Guarantee program (Social Guarantee for the Youth in the previous report). A result of the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in Finland is a network around Finland of 50 one-stop-shops, that provide low-threshold multiprofessional guidance for young people under 30 years old.

PES network has been organized in co-operation with municipalities, youth services, outreach services and the third sector. This has been seen as a great improvement of the services provided for the youth, since integrated services makes it better to assess and answer to the needs of young clients and prohibits exclusion from the society and number of NEETs with better timed services and easier access to services.

Other new aspects involve the role of privately produced guidance services. For example, many of career coaching services are procured from private companies by the PES. Also, many pilot programs where private actors have been encouraged to create new kinds of services for the unemployed. These programs have been executed to create better markets for employment and guidance services in preparation of the planned reform. Furthermore, it must be noted that the number of career counsellors in PES has declined during the period due to systematic decisions not to fulfill open vacancies.

There has also been an increase in the use of digital systems to support or execute guidance. More and more guidance encounters have taken place via video or phone in the PES and there is a specially organized unit (TE-asiakaspalvelukeskus) that provides online information and guidance nationwide equally for those in need of services whether they are clients of PES or not. It is also now possible to conduct personality tests etc. via internet by the psychologists of the PES. The AVO programme has been updated and modernized. The labour market information online is getting more detailed and easier to use. Also, a new tool for online guidance called ohjaustaverkossa.fi is on the way and to be published in the summer. The digital systems of the PES as a whole is to be renewed in line with the planned reform.

In vocational training, the aim is to increase cooperation with employers and private, public and third sector service producers to address the skills mismatch in Finland and to provide training to fit the needs of the labour market and employers. There is more focus on upskilling and reskilling pathways for adult population. It is important that the developing digital services will enhance mapping the current competencies and skills of the clients of PES. Furthermore, more focus has been placed on the training and guidance of immigrants as well.

The national Lifelong Guidance and Cooperation Group jointly coordinated by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy and the Ministry of Education and Culture got an extension to continue until 31.1.2020. The main objectives of the group and the nationwide network are now to prepare for upcoming reform and oversee the availability and quality of guidance during and after the change, advancing multiprofessional guidance especially to other age groups as the youth as well and finally to take a consultative role in the development of new digital systems regarding competences, training and guidance.

Regarding the competences of the guidance professionals, there was a decision in 2017 to create a specialization education program of career guidance. The first programs will start in the autumn of 2018. Also, in relation to the reform of vocational education, a decision has been made to create a new vocational degree in the field of guidance which is still in the planning phase.

III-V

Nothing new to report.

VI

A copy of this report has been sent to the following labour market organizations:

1. The Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)
2. The Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK)
3. The Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees (STTK)
4. The Confederation of Unions for Academic Professionals in Finland (Akava)
5. The Commission for Local Authority Employers (KT)
6. The State Employer's Office (VTML)
7. The Federation of Finnish Enterprises (SY)

Statements of the labour market organisations:

Joint statement by SAK, STTK and Akava:

A vocational education reform, which will fundamentally modify vocational education and training for both young people and adults, entered into force at the beginning of 2018. Finnish trade union confederations have voiced their criticism on certain parts of the reform, but in its entirety, it has been deemed necessary. The key focus of the reform is learning in the workplace and the personalisation of studies. Because the reform entered into force at the beginning of 2018, the assessment of impacts is too premature at this point in time.

In Finland, employment authorities have held primary responsibility for providing vocational guidance for adults. Resources have been limited and there has been more demand than supply. The regional government reform, which is currently under preparation, and the related restructuring of employment services have been cause for uncertainty. Additionally, the activation model for unemployment security, which entered into force at the beginning of the year, obligates employees to accept short-time employment or participate in services. However, it is difficult to fulfil the participation requirements laid down as prerequisites for receiving unemployment benefits when services are not available for a large segment of unemployed persons who need career services or support for employment or those at risk of unemployment. This means that inadequate services also lead to cuts in unemployment security.