

# Participation of Finnish Disability NGOs in policy processes

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# FINNISH DISABILITY FORUM

- Finnish representative member of European Disability Forum
- Co-operative umbrella of 32 national disability organizations with over 338 000 members

# Our member NGOs

- Finnish Stroke Association
- Association of persons with brain injury
- The Finnish Association for Autism and Asperger's syndrome
- The Finnish Epilepsy Association
- Association of Swedish Speaking Persons with physical disabilities
- Association of Swedish Speaking Persons with intellectual disabilities
- The Federation of Swedish Speaking Visually Impaired in Finland
- Pulmonary Association
- HETA Association of employers of personal assistants
- Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities
- Jaatinen – Resource center for families with disabilities
- Finnish Association of People with Intellectual Disabilities
- The Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- The Finnish Federation of the Hard of Hearing
- The Finnish Association of the Deaf

# Members -contd

- The Threshold Association
- Association of self advocates, people with intellectual impairments
- Finnish Association of Muscular Dystrophy
- Finnish Central Association for Mental Health
- Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired
- The Finnish Psoriasis Association
- SAMS – Samarbetsförbundet kring funktionshinder rf
- Spinal cord injured Association Akson ry
- Disabled War Veterans Association of Finland
- Finnish Cerebral Palsy Association
- The Finnish Diabetes Association
- The Finnish Deafblind Association
- Finnish Multiple Sclerosis Association
- Finnish Polio Association
- Finnish Rheumatism Association
- Finnish Association of Persons Injured through Accident or Injury

# Activities

- Information to and from members
- Lobbying nationally and internationally
- Pooling of expertise and resources through networking
- Focusing on major themes that we all share
- Human rights approach to disability

# Examples

- We are invited to participate in ministerial working groups which have as task to draft proposals.
- We are called for expert hearings by Parliament Committees
- We give position papers on various bills, draft legislation under preparation.
- Our expertise is called for early – trusted.

## Example of co-operation

- Vampo, National action plan on disability

# Background to VAMPO

- In 2006, the government of PM Matti Vanhanen (Vanhanen I) gave out the Government Report on Disability Policy : equality of persons with disabilities, right to participation and right to necessary services and support
- Government programme of II Vanhanen government (2007-2011) included a reference to drafting of VAMPO, or the Government Disability Policy Programme
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities signed by Finland in 2007; ratification process still ongoing. Parliament has passed the Ratification Bill but process still ongoing.
- The Council of Europe Action Programme on Disability Policy 2007-2015: dignity and human rights of persons with disability; paradigm shift; persons with disabilities are subjects with rights, or rights holders, and no longer just objects for care and charity



# The drafting process

- Kick off seminar in 2008, public hearing in 2009
- Regional public hearings across Finland (6)
- Co-operation between ministries of foreign affairs, justice, interior, education and culture, finance, transport and communications, employment and economy, environment, social affairs and health

# Drafting process contd.

- Key social partners and civil society actors were involved: Finnish Disability Forum, The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, social partners, The National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), National Council on Disability (VANE)
- Thematic meetings (19), two rounds
- Guidance group under Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 1.9.2008-31.3.2010 (10)
- 2000 participants in total

# The Structure of VAMPO

- Concrete measures: 122 concrete measures
- Content areas: 14
- Responsible administrative sectors: relevant ministries or other central actors
- Timetables: measures to take place concurrently
- Need for financing: expressed in general terms – no funding necessary /funding necessary
- Indicators for implementation and monitoring: measure completed or under review
- Legal obligation or basis: relevant articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) or relevant EU legislation, the Constitution of Finland or other national legislation.

# The Objectives of VAMPO

- To increase the equality, independence and self determination of persons with severe disabilities, and improve their opportunities to take part in different activities within the society.
- VAMPO is a key instrument that guides the process of ratification of the CRPD, including its transposition into national law
- Key objective is to ensure that persons with disabilities have an equal and just place in society through tackling the drawbacks by concrete corrective measures and development actions.
- Strong support and direction offered to both municipal and regional disability policy
- Sustainable and responsible disability policy: long term goal oriented – sustainability in social, ecological and economic terms

# What is required for VAMPO to become a reality ?

- In Finland, preparation for the necessary legislative changes needed before the CRPD can be ratified and implemented nationally are ongoing at full speed.
- Key ministries have committed to the implementation of the VAMPO (Government Disability Policy Programme) and the necessary co-operation across administrative sectors.
- The realisation of the programme requires smooth co-operation, commitment and monitoring from other actors, as well.
- More than half of the measures can be realised without extra costs to the administrative sector implementing them, but other types of resources are needed.
- Quarter of the measures are dependent on the Government decision on spending limits in force and are realised within the budget, - a question of political will.

# UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- Finnish Disability Forum were part of the ministerial working group, which had a task to draft proposal for national implementation
- Disability Forum are involved in the planning of how Finland will realise Art 33 (3).
- We are fully included in the design of the human rights architecture, not only in regard of CRPD but more generally

# Conclusions

- We need to be fully included in all stages of the process and decision-making.
- It is important that persons with different disabilities, including those who need support in decision making, are directly involved.
- Necessary resources for the whole process

# Muchas gracias !

- Mas preguntas?:
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