

# Finland's National Action Plan to Reduce Health Inequalities 2008-2011

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# Preparation

- Initiated in 2006 by the Ministerial Group of Social Policy Issues
- Preparation by the cross-sectoral Advisory Board for Public Health
- Seven main areas of work identified by the Ministerial Group and work done by seven working groups with ~100 experts
- Seminar with ~700 participants
- Launched in 2008 as part of the Government's intersectoral Policy Programme on Health Promotion

# Main Approaches

- General **social policy actions** to influence poverty, education, employment, working conditions and housing
- Supporting healthy **lifestyles**
- Improving the equity and need-based availability of social and health **services**
- Improving monitoring and **information** systems

# Selected Achievements

- **Legislation:** restrictions in tobacco availability
- **Fiscal Policies:** taxes on alcohol, tobacco and sugar
- **Guidance:** Resolution on development for health enhancing physical activity and nutrition, improvements in catering services
- **Services:** unemployed, students in vocational schools, ethnic minorities
- **Programmes:** development of guides, implementation structures and improved information systems with equity focus
- **Health education:** health education in vocational schools
- **Information and research:** strengthened information system

# Lessons

- High level support important
- The leap from knowledge to action made easier by early involvement of politicians and policy makers from the concerned sectors
- Resources and structures for implementation important
- Integration to ongoing activities and programmes
- Information and monitoring linking important, but lack of exact data does not need to hinder policy-making