

# Leverage from the EU for a future of equality

Structural Fund period 2007–2013



European Union  
European Regional Development Fund  
European Social Fund

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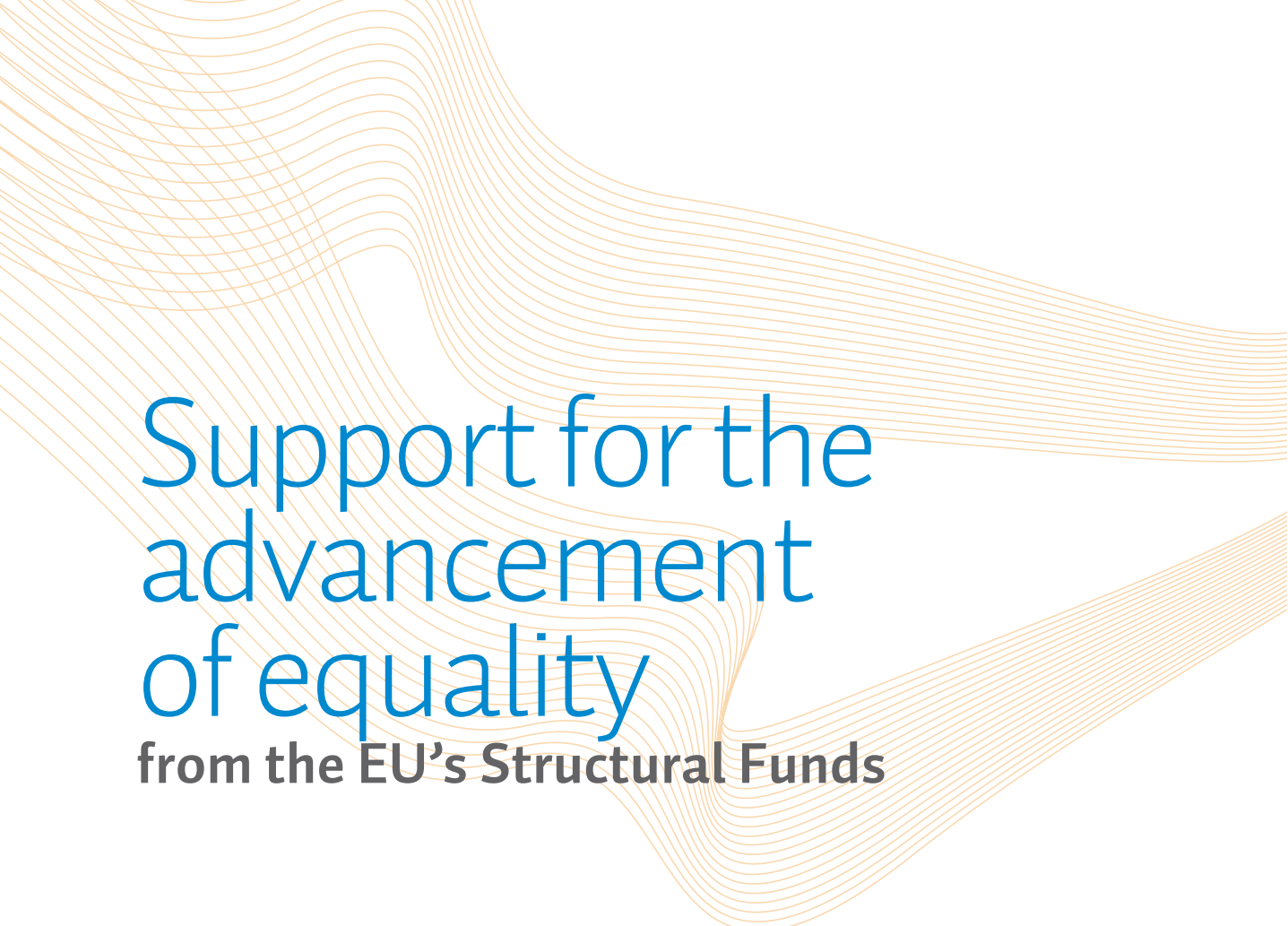


# Leverage from the EU for a future of equality

To remain vigorous, a society needs the support and active participation of its members. Equality is one of the strategic focuses of the European Union's Structural Fund programmes. The objective of highlighting the "future of equality" theme is to improve the well-being and living conditions of people so that their position in the labour market will be improved. It is especially important to support equality and equal opportunity - between individuals and between different regions of the country.

Supplementary funding is granted from the European Union's Structural Funds for activities that improve Finnish expertise, employment and competitiveness. The objective is also to develop equal opportunities for people and regions. The aim is to ensure that Finland is a country with employment, skilled people, and a favourable atmosphere for new ideas and successful companies as well as a good environment in which to make a home, to live and to work.

EU funding connected to equality is targeted especially at supporting young people, the unemployed, adults, immigrants, the handicapped and other people in danger of marginalisation, and to promote regional equality. Equality between regions can be increased, for example, by improving competitiveness and access to regions. This can be accomplished by developing the transportation infrastructure, through logical solutions and by supporting the development and networking of data transmission. In this way, the transmission of ideas and innovations can be ensured, and their development into businesses and jobs. In addition, EU funds support projects whose objective is to develop the living and working conditions of people and well-being at work. Environmental points of view and the promotion of gender equality also play key roles. Development connected to equality can be funded throughout Finland.



# Support for the advancement of equality

## from the EU's Structural Funds

Additional funding for projects that support equality is available from both the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). The policy guidelines of the funds determine the key objectives of the programmes and the projects to be funded.

**The European Regional Development Fund** supports, for example, job creation at the provincial level, and improves the attractiveness of regional labour markets. ERDF funding is granted to good project ideas that have as wide an impact as possible on the region and the well-being and employment of its population.

**The European Social Fund** supports job creation and the formation of a pluralistic working life. ESF funding to promote well-being and equality in Finland is targeted to points of focus defined in the ESF programme. The objective is also to promote job creation by, for example, guiding young people, marginalised individuals and the handicapped to working life.



Funding for projects that promote equality is available from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF).

# Effects on the environment, cooperation and equality under a magnifying glass

The evaluation of environmental impacts is an essential part of projects that receive assistance from the EU. The best for the environment is achieved when the environmental impacts of projects – both good and bad – are recognised already at the stage when the projects are chosen. Finland's own legislation also requires that the impacts of projects on the environment are assessed.

Cooperation at different levels – such as between the parties that implement the projects, the authorities, industry and commerce, other organisations – takes place at all stages of the projects. Partnership and doing things together are encouraged both during the planning of projects and during the implementation phase.

The promotion of equality in all of society, such as between the sexes, and between people of different ages and population groups, is also one of the criteria of EU assistance. In addition, national legislation requires that attention be paid to gender equality in the implementation of projects.





# EU assistance is directed via programmes

Programmes, through which EU assistance is directed, are approved for a seven-year period. The current period covers the years 2007–2013. EU funding has been reserved separately for each year.

The funding of the European Regional Development Fund is distributed during the 2007–2013 period via five regional programmes in southern, eastern, western, and northern Finland, and in Åland. The programmes are based on the development needs of each region. The programmes define the strategy, measures and funding directed at them, as well as indicators to measure the results of the operations.

In mainland Finland the funding of the European Social Fund is distributed via one programme that is divided between a nationwide part and regional parts. The programmes are described in more detail in programme-specific brochures.

## TEL LAPPI (Lapland) has enabled electronic cooperation

The TEL LAPPI projects managed by the municipal federation of the Lapland hospital district enable efficient educational and consulting operations between basic and special health care. There is also close cooperation between health centres.

“The communication between health centres and special health care has started to utilise an elec-

tronic note-feedback system. Digital imaging, image transfer and a hospital district-specific archive have also been introduced,” says **Sirpa Liimatta** from the Lapland hospital district.

Thanks to the new regional information system, patient data can now be transferred quickly and securely between various institutions. Video conferencing technology is utilised in

educational events in the health care sector. The data transfer system for emergency medical services is also one of the targets for development in regional health care.

TEL LAPPI information technology projects are managed by the municipal federation of the Lapland hospital district and receive ERDF funding via the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.



Enterprises, educational institutions, research institutes, municipalities, and other societies or their combinations can apply for funding for their projects from the EU.



# Further information

## **What does EU assistance mean in practice?**

In practice, EU assistance means that part of the public funding allocated to a project is EU funding either from the European Regional Development Fund or European Social Fund and part is national public funding. In addition to the public assistance, the project must also include the financing provided by the party implementing the project. The type and amount of assistance varies depending on the public financier, content of the project and national legislation.

## **Who can apply for EU assistance?**

Enterprises, educational institutions, research institutes, municipalities, and other societies or their combinations can apply for funding for their projects from the EU.

## **Where can EU assistance be applied for and where is additional information available?**

Public financiers describe the procedures for applying for funding, and the possible application periods, on their own Internet pages. Contact information for the financiers is listed at the end of the brochure.



# For what kinds of projects can assistance be applied for from the European Regional Development Fund?

The European Regional Development Fund aims to reduce differences in the level of development between regions and backwardness in the weakest regions. The Fund's work strengthens the community's economic and social solidarity by supporting the development of the regional economy and structural reform. It is possible to apply for additional funding from the Fund for projects that promote competitiveness and innovation, create and maintain long-term jobs and ensure sustainable development.

The ERDF supports a future of equality by e.g.:

- promotion of entrepreneurship (new companies and growth companies and groups of companies)
- promotion of innovation and networking and strengthening of knowledge structures
- development of research and educational systems and learning environments
- improvement of the accessibility of the area and the operating environment



# For what kinds of projects can assistance be applied for from the European Social Fund?

The funding of the European Social Fund can promote equality, prevent marginalisation, develop know-how, working conditions and the well-being of employees, or develop systems that ease the operation of the labour market and activate people to participate and work.

The ESF supports a future of equality by e.g.:

- prevention of the marginalisation of young people
- the use of new kinds of cooperation models and employment partnerships in services for individuals having difficulty finding jobs
- services directed at immigrants
- support services for people in danger of marginalisation and those in a weak position in the labour market
- elimination of structural unemployment
- intermediate labour markets
- measures to promote equality and prevent marginalisation
- the ability of companies to hire movement-impaired individuals in order to improve the development of the social responsibility of companies

# What do I need to do to get EU assistance

If you have an idea for a project to develop equality for which you would like to seek EU funding, you can proceed as follows:

- Get together a group of people who are interested in the idea and who are willing to develop the idea further. Include people who are directly concerned with the development. Ensure that your idea has the support of your own organisation and of the required partners.
- Contact a public financier operating in your region so you can discuss your initiative. It is a good idea to get in touch with financiers right at the planning stage of the project, so that it will move smoothly in the right direction.
- In addition to the EU programmes, find out about the regional strategic programmes and their implementation plans.

## Selma is developing the operating methods of the future in the care sector

The development of a regional multiple producer model for the social welfare and care sector (Selma) is an ESF project led by Keski-Savon Kehittämisyhtiö Oy and funded by the Pohjois-Savo Regional Council, the City of Varkaus, the municipalities of Lepävirta and Joroinen and companies.

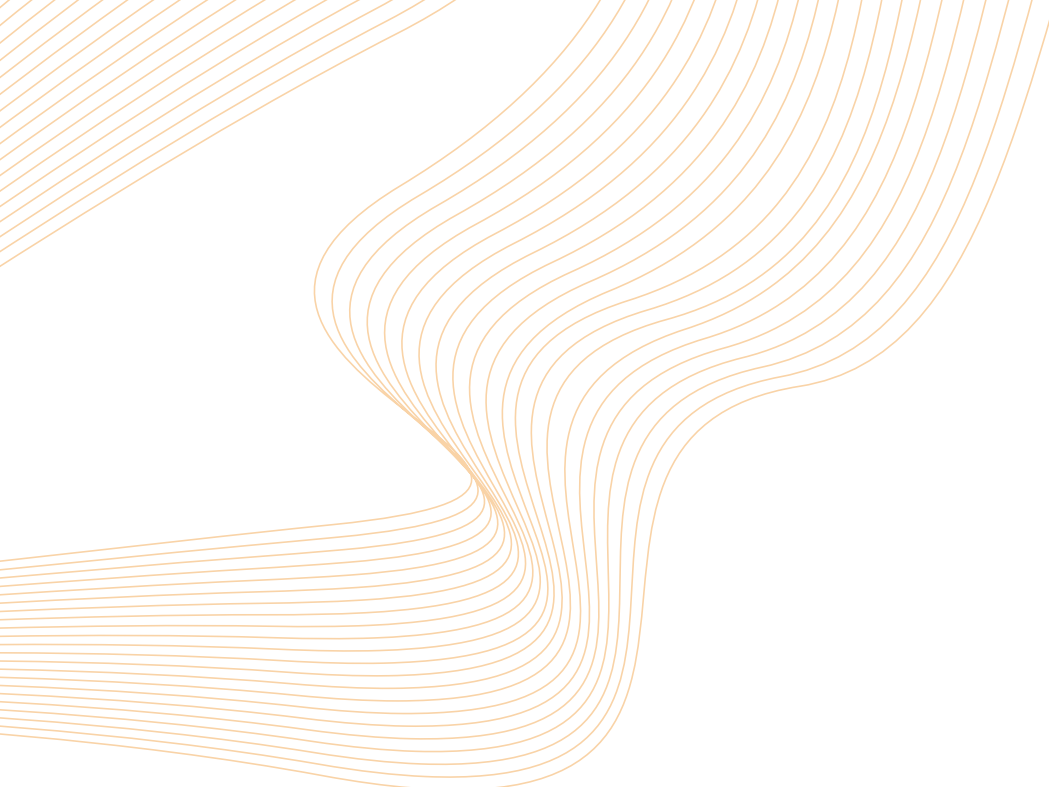
With the advent of Selma, new companies have been established and new jobs created, and it has been

ensured that jobs in the care sector will remain in the region. The public and private sectors work in close cooperation in Selma, together with the third sector which boosts employment significantly.

The Selma project, which highlights the quality systems of the care and social welfare sector, increases the cooperation between the public and private sectors. The end result is the

creation of joint operating models for the future. Eighteen work communities participated in the quality training organised in the project. Private services in the care sector in Central Savo were also developed through the project.

Thanks to Selma, private individuals can search for private service providers for themselves and their family on the Internet site [www.keski-savo.fi/hoiva](http://www.keski-savo.fi/hoiva) or by ordering the Helmaus



- EU funding is always granted for a project that is limited in time and in content. A project plan is always drawn up and it includes the project's content, objectives and stages, division of work, budget and financing plan, and an implementation schedule.
- The application for assistance is completed electronically using the EURA2007 system for the majority of projects. Applications for assistance granted by the Employment and Economic Development Centres, research and development financing from Tekes, and loans and guarantees from Finnvera Plc are carried out, however, using their own application forms and procedures. Further information on submitting applications can be gained from the public financiers.
- You can find out about EU programmes and their objectives, application periods for funding and other terms and conditions on the Internet at the address [www.structuralfunds.fi](http://www.structuralfunds.fi). The page has links to the Internet sites of your own region and public financiers. Financiers also provide expert advice during the planning and start-up phases of the project.

publication. The magazine Keski-Savon Hoiva is distributed to homes and presents the companies in the region operating in the care sector. "To increase awareness of the companies we organized visits to companies and supported networking with the help of Keski-Savon Hoiva- ja Hyvinvointiyrittäjät ry [Central Savo care and social welfare entrepreneurs], for example," says Project Manager **Piia Puotinen**.





# Other Financing Opportunities

The European Union also has other programmes that support a future with equality by increasing regional, economic and social cohesion. Additional information about them is available from the European Union's Internet pages at [www.europa.eu](http://www.europa.eu). Several national development programmes and support systems exist in Finland for promoting a future with equality; additional information about them is available from the financiers mentioned in this brochure.

The development of rural areas is supported through the Rural Development Programme. Additional in-

formation is available from the Internet pages of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry at [www.mmm.fi](http://www.mmm.fi) or from Employment and Economic Development Centres at [www.te-keskus.fi](http://www.te-keskus.fi).

The Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (Tekes) also funds research and development projects through e.g. product development loans. Companies and public research units can participate in ongoing Tekes technology programmes through their own research and development projects. Additional information is available from Tekes's Internet pages at [www.tekes.fi](http://www.tekes.fi).



## FINANCIERS

Finnvera Plc  
[www.finnvera.fi](http://www.finnvera.fi)

State Provincial offices  
[www.laaninhallitus.fi](http://www.laaninhallitus.fi)

Regional Councils  
[www.reg.fi](http://www.reg.fi)

Finnish National Board of  
Education  
[www.oph.fi](http://www.oph.fi)

Road Districts  
[www.tiehallinto.fi](http://www.tiehallinto.fi)

Finnish Funding Agency for  
Technology and Innovation  
Tekes  
[www.tekes.fi](http://www.tekes.fi)

Employment and Economic  
Development Centres  
[www.te-keskus.fi](http://www.te-keskus.fi)

Regional Environment Centres  
[www.environment.fi/ayk](http://www.environment.fi/ayk)

Ministry of Transport and  
Communications  
[www.lvm.fi](http://www.lvm.fi)

Ministry of Education  
[www.minedu.fi](http://www.minedu.fi)

Ministry of the Interior  
[www.intermin.fi](http://www.intermin.fi)

Ministry of Social Affairs and  
Health  
[www.stm.fi](http://www.stm.fi)

Ministry of Employment  
and the Economy  
[www.tem.fi](http://www.tem.fi)

Ministry of the Environment  
[www.environment.fi/ayk](http://www.environment.fi/ayk)

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