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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC,  
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS**

Reports submitted in accordance with Economic and Social  
Council resolution 1988 (LX) by States Parties to the  
Covenant concerning rights covered by articles 10 to 12

**FINLAND**

10 January 1980

Articles 10-12 of the Covenant are all somehow connected with family policy. Up to the end of World War II family policy in Finland was more or less equivalent to population policy, which concentrated on measures aimed at improving the health care of mothers and infants. After the war increasing attention was paid to the financial security of families with children. Equalization of family costs became the major issue of family policy. While the industrialization and urbanization of the society went on, women started working outside the home in increasing numbers, which necessitated the development of family policy so that it became possible for women to be employed outside home. Thus day care of children became a new, indispensable form of support available for families. The extensive structural changes of society have now led to a situation in which the problems most difficult to solve are not necessarily of financial nature.

II Article 10

- A. (1) The relevant statutes/regulations are included in the following acts: Child Allowance Act (22 July 1948/541)  
Social Assistance Act (17 February 1956/116)  
Act on Communal Home Services (6 May 1966/270)  
Child Day Care Act (19 January 1973/36)

Child Allowance Act (22 July 1948/541)

The Child Allowance Act states that an allowance shall be paid from public funds for each child under the age of 16 and living in Finland. An increased allowance is paid for each eligible child under 3. The purpose of the Act is, by means of a financial subsidy, to equalize the costs of bringing up biological as well as adopted and foster children. Child allowance is a periodical payment independent of the need of the beneficiary.

Social Assistance Act (17 February 1956/116)

The purpose of social assistance is to secure the necessary maintenance and care of an individual or a family, whenever a person is not able to secure it through work, private means, somebody else's assistance or in any other way. Another purpose of the assistance is to prevent a person of small means from falling into a state in which he would not have sufficient maintenance or care. Social assistance services are aimed at maintaining or reviving the person's own initiative and keeping him/her in his/her home environment as long as possible, as well as keeping the family intact.

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The necessary maintenance and care referred to in the Social Assistance Act include adequate nourishment, necessary clothing according to season, hygienically satisfactory living conditions, necessary sanitation, special care necessitated by illness or disability, and any measures necessary to a person of a given age for the maintenance of his/her mental and physical well-being.

Social assistance is either preventive or remedial and provided either in the form of home care, care in a private household or in an institution. To obtain social assistance it is not necessary to be a Finnish citizen. Aliens as well as persons without nationality are eligible for it on the same grounds as Finnish nationals.

Social assistance is granted by the Social Welfare Board of the municipality in whose area the person needing assistance resides. As a rule the costs of the assistance provided are not reclaimed from the beneficiary or from the person liable to maintain him. Under the Social Assistance Act the state, in conditions specified in the Act, participates in the annual costs of social assistance and child care carried by the municipalities.

#### Act on Communal Home Services (6 May 1966/270)

According to the Act the purpose of the communal home services is mainly to attend to the regular household duties of the housewife in families with several children and other comparable families, or to give assistance in the performance of these duties whenever the housewife or the person responsible for the duties, for the sake of confinement, illness, over-strain or need for vacation of her own or of another member of the family, or for any other comparable reason is temporarily unable to attend to her duties. Communal home services can also be provided for the elderly and any other people in need of special care, the most important group being the mentally handicapped and their families, and the severely disabled. The provision of the home services for families with several children aims at supporting the family in the tasks related to child care and upbringing.

Communal home services are guided and supervised by the National Board of Social Welfare and the Provincial Boards. The services in each municipality are run and supervised by the municipal Social Welfare Board.

To supply the home care services the municipalities can establish posts of home makers and supervising home makers. In addition they can employ qualified and otherwise suitable persons (so called home helpers) to carry out home services either on full-time or part-time basis.

The recipients of home services other than those without means or of small means are charged for the services, the charge being determined on the grounds approved by the National Board of Social Welfare.

The state refunds to the municipalities 30-80 % of the costs of the home services personnel, according to the financial capacity classification of the municipalities.

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#### Child Day Care Act (19 January 1973/36)

The Act defines day care as: 1. Care in an institution established for this purpose, i.e. a day nursery, 2. Care in a private home or in other family-type conditions, called family day care, and 3. Guided and supervised play indoors or outdoors, in a building or area reserved for this purpose. Day care services can be provided for children under the age of compulsory education, and, in specific circumstances, for children above that age, if their care has not been arranged in any other way. The Act provides that day care should be arranged so that it provides good conditions for learning and general development, and guarantees a continuous attendance to the child at the time of day it is needed.

It is the municipalities that are responsible for the availability of the day care services, either in organizing or supervising capacity, in the extent or in the forms needed in the area. The duties pertaining to the municipality are carried out by the Social Welfare Boards.

The general management, guidance and supervision of day care of children are performed by the National Board of Social Welfare, whose responsibility it is to draw up a national plan for the development of the day care of children in the next five years and to revise it annually. Each municipality then draws up its own plan for the next five years, in accordance with the national plan.

The state refunds to the municipalities 35-80 % of the costs of the day care of children, in accordance with the financial capacity classification of the municipalities.

#### Home Care Subsidy

At present the assistance society can offer to families with child care problems includes day care services supplementing home care, and financial benefits paid in the way of compensation for the costs incurred by children. As it became obvious that neither these general services and financial benefits nor the existing forms of means-tested subsistence security could in all circumstances guarantee that the most appropriate form of care could be secured for each family, an experimental project was launched in Finland at the beginning of 1978, with a view to developing a system of subsidizing home care of children.

The objective of the subsidy paid towards the home care of small children is the provision of increasingly better spiritual and material conditions of home care. As a result of the experiment the first, moderate appropriation for the creation of a general subsidy system has been included in the budget proposal for 1980.

- (4) See (1); Child Allowance Act (22 July 1948/541) and Child Day Care Act (19 January 1973/36).

(1) Maternity Benefit Act (13 June 1941/424)

Under the Act, maternity benefit can be granted, upon application, from state funds, to a woman permanently residing in Finland. The purpose of the benefit is to ascertain that all expectant and nursing women are financially capable of obtaining necessary maternity care and acquiring clothes, equipment and other articles needed by the mother and the child. The amount of the benefit is approved by the Council of State and it is provided for each infant born, either as a benefit in kind or a cash benefit, or a combination of the two. The condition for obtaining the maternity benefit is that the mother, to safeguard the health of her child, attends to medical examinations during pregnancy.

(2) See B (1), Maternity Benefit Act (13 June 1941/424)

(3) A decision of the Council of State of 1961 enables mothers of small means to obtain annual holiday. For the arrangement of such social holiday services municipalities can obtain state subsidy.

(4) The social holiday services referred to above cover also self-employed persons of small means. The Act provides that a self-employed farmer is entitled to an annual holiday and the provision of relief services during the holiday. A self-employed farmer is entitled to relief services also during confinement, to secure the maintenance of her farm and household.

(5) See A (1); Social Assistance Act (17 February 1956/116) and Act on Communal Home Services (6 May 1966/270). Other relevant statutes are:

Child Maintenance Allowance Act (5 September 1975/704)

The Child Maintenance Allowance Act lays down that every child has a right to adequate maintenance. This entails satisfying all the material and spiritual needs of the child at each stage of development, supplying the care and education needed by the child, and answering for the costs caused by these. Under the Act the parents are responsible for the maintenance of the child to the best of their ability. When assessing the maintenance ability of the parents, the factors taken into account are their ages, ability to work and possibilities of having gainful employment, availability of private means, and any other statutory maintenance liabilities they may have. When estimating the extent of the maintenance liability of the parents, the factors taken into account include also the ability and opportunities of the child to support itself, as well as any circumstances removing or reducing the expenses of the parents. Under The Act the right of the child to maintenance supplied by its parents ceases normally when the child reaches the age of eighteen.

The parents that do not in any other way participate in the maintenance of their child, must contribute to it by paying alimony. The amount of alimony and the mode of payment are determined either by agreement or by a decision of the court. The amount and mode of payment of the approved alimony can be altered by agreement or court decision if the conditions specified in the Act prevail.

Before the Child Maintenance Allowance Act was enforced, the regulations governing the right of a child to maintenance were included in the Marriage Act (234/29) enforced on 1 January 1930. According to this Act the responsibilities for maintaining the family were determined on the basis of the circumstances of the spouses. According to an amendment enforced on 1 October 1976, both spouses must, according to their ability and financial position, participate in the maintenance of the family. The maintenance of the family includes satisfying the needs arising from bringing up the children.

#### **Act on Ensuring Child Maintenance Allowances (28 January 1977/122)**

The purpose of the Act is to secure to each child, independent of birth, an adequate and permanent maintenance whenever the child does not obtain the necessary maintenance from its parents. Ensuring the maintenance of a child includes the payment of maintenance allowance from municipal funds, and various measures supporting the fulfilment of the maintenance obligation referred to in the Child Maintenance Allowance Act (704/75). The Act defines the circumstances in which the allowance is paid. The allowance is normally paid to the end of the month in which the child reaches the age of 18.

The general management, guidance and supervision of the activities referred to in this Act are carried out by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the National Board of Social Affairs, subordinate to the Ministry. In each provincial district the activities are guided and supervised by the Provincial Board, under the supervision of the National Board of Social Welfare. In each municipality the statutory activities are carried out by the local Social Welfare Board.

The amount of the maintenance allowance is tied to an index, being thus increased or reduced together with increases or reductions in the cost of living.

The state refunds to the municipalities 80 % of the amount of the maintenance allowance paid out annually, subject to conditions stated in the Act.

- C. (1) See B. (5); Child Maintenance Allowance Act (5 September 1975/704) and Act on Ensuring Child Maintenance Allowances (28 January 1977/122) and the following:

The welfare of children and young persons is in Finland supervised by the National Board of Social Welfare, under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The services are run by the municipalities, private associations and federations of communes,\* except for residential schools, which are established and maintained by the state or a private association, under state supervision.

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\* Associations of municipalities formed for specific purposes such as building and running of hospitals jointly.

#### Act on Child Guidance Centres (2 July 1971/568)

The function of a child guidance centre is to promote a healthy mental and social development of children and young persons and to do its share in ensuring that each generation of children is provided with the best possible mental and social abilities. The centres carry out this function by means of preventive work and counselling, research and treatment provided in questions relating to the arrangement of a child's education.

The general management, guidance and supervision are carried out by the National Board of Social Welfare. In each district the child guidance services are managed, guided and supervised by the Provincial Board, subordinate to the National Board of Social Welfare.

A Child Guidance Centre run by a municipality or a federation of communes obtains state subsidy, dependent on conditions defined in the Act. A Centre can be owned by a municipality, a federation of communes or a private body. Each centre must have a management board. Every Child Guidance Centre is also obliged to employ at least one physician, one psychologist, one social worker, and other staff according to need.

#### Child Welfare Act (17 January 1936/52)

The Act defines 'child' as a person under the age of 16, and 'young person' as somebody between the ages of 16 and 18. Generally the responsibility for the protection and welfare of children and young persons lies with the municipalities. The relevant municipal boards must arrange for the necessary advisory services and take measures to prevent and remove any disturbing factors. With the present resources the possibilities of the Social Welfare Boards to arrange educational counselling or to remove factors disturbing the lives of children and young persons (e.g. in the form of community work) are limited.

The measures referred to in the Act must be taken whenever a child is in an unprotected condition or maladjusted. The Act enumerates the following groups of unprotected children: orphans, abandoned children, children in need of special care, neglected children and children at risk. The forms of maladjustment are; maladjustment at school, being guilty of punishable acts, and abuse of intoxicating substances.

In the instructions governing the application of the Act (Memorandum of the National Board of Social Welfare B 4/1978/pe) emphasis is laid on the fact that causes such as financial difficulties, poor housing and unemployment cannot be regarded as sufficient grounds for taking into custody. In the first place the family should be advised on the use of the available services and forms of support. If these measures are deemed insufficient, steps must be taken without delay to ensure the child's welfare by taking it into custody.

The Board is responsible for placing the child in a private home or institution temporarily or for a longer period, according to the individual maintenance plan devised for the case. If a child or a young person cannot be satisfactorily maintained in a private home or an institution, it should be placed in an approved school. The decision must be referred to the Provincial Board.

The Act defines foster child as a child that, is brought up outside its own home by persons other than the municipal Social Welfare Board.

The participation of the state in the costs of institutional child welfare, i.e. the upkeep of the children's homes, is discretionary. Under the Act the state subsidy to a normal children's home can amount to a third, and to other children's homes to a half of the approved costs. In the 1970's the state subsidy has been about 4 %. Furthermore the state refunds to the social Welfare Boards a third of the costs of the care of the children taken into custody for the sake of maladjustment. Subject to discretion the state can also subsidize the occupational training of children and young persons in custody, financed by the Social Welfare Boards.

A proposal for a new law was submitted to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in 1977 and has been subject to a wide discussion. The proposed comprehensive law would cover also day care and child guidance services. Acts governing these services were given in the 1970's.

The proposal is an attempt at emphasizing the significance of preventive and family-oriented activities in child welfare. It proposes that the state should participate in the financing of the services up to 80 %, instead of the present share of about 4 %, depending on the financial capacity of the municipality, as is the case in day care and child guidance services.

On the basis of a decision of the Council of State (8 July 1976) the municipalities have received state subsidy since 1976 for the development of non-institutional care of children and young persons, aimed at developing and establishing preventive and family-oriented forms of service. The municipalities have applied for subsidy for the following forms of activity: maintenance of the care relations, various stimulative activities, support of education and employment, services of a voluntary 'child's friend', holiday recreational services and various other forms of financial support.

The National Board of Social Welfare issued the qualification requirements of the personnel in the welfare institutions for children and young persons in 1977. Together with the National Board of Vocational Education the Board has organized temporary qualifying training. As a part of the ongoing reform of the post-comprehensive school education the actual training for various occupations in the welfare institutions for children and young persons shall eventually be organized in the form of 4- and 2-year courses.

The National Board of Social Welfare issued an extensive memorandum defining the principles of child care and its development in 1978. The memorandum emphasises the significance of preventive measures, and the importance of planning and of keeping the institutions small, as units of 6 to 8 children.

The Act on Juvenile Delinquents of 1940 concerns young persons between the ages of 15 and 21. A proposal for a Government Bill to the Parliament concerning a revision of legislation on young offenders was submitted in 1978. Its main issue is the proposal that children under the age of 18 should not be sentenced to unconditional incarceration, unless this is justified by the maintenance of general obedience to law or by other grave reasons. Offenders

above 18 years of age should normally be subject to regular criminal jurisdiction. Thus the maintenance of delinquents under 18 would become the liability of the social welfare authorities. The possible penalties, to be carried out by judicial authorities, would entail penal supervision and caution.

#### Research

In 1978 the National Board of Social Welfare launched two university research projects; one concentrating on the development of family care of children taken into custody; and the other on the possibilities of community education in the welfare institutions of children and young persons.

In the framework of a university project research has also been carried out into so called intensified family work or employing a home maker to attend to families with multiple problems. This form of service has met with very good response in practice. There is also an ongoing project charting the work of the social welfare offices.

#### Reports

In 1978 the functions of the social services in the cases of separation and divorce were charted, and instructions concerning measures to be taken in these cases were issued. The amounts and types of summer recreation for children provided by the municipalities have also been charted. A planning process aiming at organizing the child care services in a regionally effective and versatile manner has also been launched.

Other factors influencing the welfare services for children and young persons include:

- Introduction of the 9-year comprehensive school system in the whole country in 1977
- Lowering the age of majority from 20 to 18 years in 1976 (a change that affects above all children raised outside their homes since the present regulations do not automatically ensure care for those of 18 years of age)
- Revision of the Act on Induced Abortions (1 January 1979) which provides that the termination of pregnancy must take place before the 12th week of pregnancy instead of the earlier 16 weeks (despite an information campaign arranged to coincide with the enforcement of the revision the number of unwanted children may grow)
- Appointment of the National Commission for the International Year of the Child in 1978. According to its mandate the commission should make proposals for the improvement of the status of the child.
- Appointment of a committee in 1978 to report on cultural activities for children
- Act on Execution of Sentences Concerning the Care and the Right of Meeting of the Child in 1975

- (2) See C. (1); Child Welfare Act (17 January 1936/52), and the following:

Decision of the Council of State on State Subsidy to Non-institutional Care of the Mentally Subnormal (14 May 1969/311)

The Act on the Mentally subnormal of 1958 concentrated on the building of institutions for the mentally subnormal. The Decision of the Council of State of 1969 concerning state subsidy to non-institutional care of the mentally subnormal made it possible to obtain state subsidy for the following purposes:

- Maintaining out-patient clinics for the mentally subnormal
- Organizing advisory services and courses on home care and education and other forms of rehabilitation of the mentally subnormal for their parents and other custodians
- Organizing day club and playground services aimed at promoting the care and education of the mentally subnormal
- Arranging summer recreational centres and summer camps
- Organizing free-time activities for the educational development of the mentally subnormal
- Therapeutic, educational and instructive activities carried out by special social workers in the home of the mentally subnormal
- Acquiring and borrowing appliances for the mentally subnormal, and acquiring equipment and materials for various diversional and educational activities as well as financing equipment needed in carrying out advisory activities
- Financing other activities related to those mentioned above and other comparable activities concerning non-institutional care of the mentally subnormal.

Child Care Subsidy Act (4 July 1967/444)

The Child Care Subsidy Act entered into force on 1 January 1970. Under the Act the parents taking care of a handicapped child at home can obtain for this purpose special financial subsidy, which is not dependent on the financial position of the family. The Act, together with the decision of the Council of State mentioned above concerning state subsidy to home care of the mentally subnormal, made it financially possible for municipalities, other communities and parents of such children to develop and utilize a versatile network on non-institutional care services.

Act on Special Care for the Mentally Handicapped (23 June 1977/519)

The Act on Special Care for the Mentally Handicapped entered into force on 1 January 1978. The special care defined in the Act comprises the following forms of services:

- Medical, psychological and social examinations necessitated by the individual planning and realization of the special care
- Health care
- Work adjustment and other necessary adjustment training and guidance

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- Job placement, arranging of accommodation and other activities aiming at social adjustment
- Acquisition of individual aids and appliances
- Individual care and maintenance
- Guidance and advice to a mentally handicapped person's wife or husband, parents and other members of the family, other custodian or person close to the mentally handicapped
- Dissemination of information on special care services
- Prevention of development disturbances
- Other activities necessitated by the provision of the special care.

This Act and the related Decrees guarantee a mentally handicapped person's right to use the regular services provided by the society and to obtain special tuition whenever the regular educational services cannot be used. Naturally the mentally handicapped children have always been able to make use of the normal services but the Act in question specifically ensures this right.

#### **Decree on Work Adjustment Training (16 February 1979/190)**

The Decree on Work Adjustment Training was enforced on 1 August 1979. This Decree specifies in more detail the responsibility of the municipalities and federations of communes to organize the education of the mentally handicapped as defined in the Act on Special Care for the Mentally Handicapped (23 June 1977/519).

Due to the development of the non-institutional care services during the last decade it has been possible for mildly and moderately sub-normal children and young persons to live with their parents. Those severely or profoundly subnormal, and other children and young persons who for other reasons (such as multiple invalidity and social reasons) have not been able to receive home care, will also in future be placed in institutions for the mentally handicapped, which, in addition to actual treatment, provide both educational and therapeutic services.

The Decree on Special Schools for Handicapped Children (398/14 May 1976) makes it possible for handicapped children (mainly those with disabilities affecting mobility) to attend special schools if they are not able to attend ordinary comprehensive schools. This Decree enforced on 1 August 1976 does not apply to the mentally handicapped.

An amendment of the basic act concerning rehabilitation, the Care of the Disabled Persons Act, enforced on 1 January 1972 (739/71) concentrated on extending the area of the benefits received by handicapped children. This meant that the care of the disabled person incorporated appliances facilitating the daily activities, adaptations made and various devices and equipment installed in the home of a severely disabled person. The main purpose of these home benefits is to make it possible for a disabled person to live at home, to increase his/her comfort and to prevent the need for long term institutional care.

Subsidy for adaptations to the home and appliances facilitating living at home can also be paid to mentally handicapped children not in permanent institutional care.

Article 11

A., B. (1) and (2)

An adequate standard of living, both as regards nourishment and clothing, is secured by the Social Assistance Act passed on 17 February 1956 (116/56) (see Article 10, A. (1)). The Act was amended by an Act passed on 10 April 1970 that entered into force at the beginning of the year 1971.

Under §1 of the Social Assistance Act the municipality is responsible for the provision of social assistance to every person not capable of securing an adequate livelihood or care through work, private means, somebody else's assistance or in any other way. The responsibility for providing the assistance rests with the municipality in the area of which the person needing assistance resides. The responsibility for providing institutional care rests with the municipality in the area of which the person is domiciled in the sense defined in the Population Register Act.

An adequate standard of living and adequate care are considered to include sufficient nourishment and sufficient clothing according to season. The extent and quality of the social assistance are decided by the Social Welfare Boards.

The Military Allowance Act of 22 July 1948 (566/48) secures the financial position of a family member of a conscript in regular military service when the family member is regarded as dependent on the assistance provided by the conscript and is in need of assistance. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health approves the general grounds for defining the amount of the military allowance. The present grounds were approved in 1975. The municipal Social Welfare Boards deal with matters concerning military allowances. The basic allowance is granted towards the provision of food, hygiene and daily cash. The Social Welfare Boards cannot use discretion in determining the amount of the basic allowance. In addition to the basic allowance, additional allowance can be granted to cover the real costs of housing, corresponding to a reasonable standard of living in each individual case. On special application the person eligible for military allowance can be granted additional allowance towards costs of illness, clothing and child care.

The Discharge Benefit Act passed on 8 December 1977 (910/77) states that the maintenance of a conscript upon his discharge from the military service is assisted by a discharge benefit, paid to all conscripts discharged from regular military service.

B (2-10)

Agriculture in Finland is mainly based on private ownership of land and on family farms, which guarantees maximum efficiency in the utilization of the available resources (fields, forests, water) within the limits set by the Nordic climate. The principal devices of controlling the structural development of agriculture are the Farm Act of 1977, and the systems of generation exchange and farm retirement pension, which have been applied since the beginning of 1974. The development of farming income has been regulated by means of acts on agricultural revenue. In addition

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attempts have been made to control agricultural production by a number of systems aimed at reaching a certain level of self-sufficiency.

The short growing season of the country sets strict limits to plant cultivation. Plant breeding has been practised to find varieties of plants suited to our conditions, with the purpose of achieving an increase in the production of domestic protein, and fat self-sufficiency. Breeding efforts are concentrated on grassland plants, coarse grain and food grain, leguminous plants, oil plants and potato. In plant cultivation the main emphasis is on developing cultivation techniques and improving the quality of the produce. Finnish field crops are of high quality and have a high mineral content.

Practicable methods of analysis have been developed to test the fertility of the soil in practical agriculture. The use of nutrients has been successfully adjusted to the actual needs of the plants. Research for the purpose of developing methods of soil improvement, liming, fertilization and soil preparation is fairly advanced in Finland. The latest research topic is the utilization of municipal and industrial waste. The early 1980's should see an account of the hazards of heavy metals impeding the use of waste materials.

Finnish livestock production is to an increasing extent based on grass. The earlier, hay-based production has declined, while production based on feeding of silage with a higher protein content has gained ground. At present up to 50 % of farms make silage. Utilization of protein and fodder energy in feeding is one of the most important research topics. In cattle breeding main emphasis is on developing animal strains with a higher utility rate of fodder. Fertility and health of cattle are also major research topics. Animal husbandry is facilitated by the use of artificial insemination which now covers nearly 100 % of breeding. (Appendix 1)

Agricultural research was started in Finland in the late 19th century and has developed to the point where the Agricultural Research Centre comprises nine departments and 15 experimental stations. The annual budget of the Research Centre totals now about Fmk 60 million, and the Centre employs about 700 people. Research conditions will improve markedly in the early 1980's, when new, up-to-date premises will be completed to accommodate all the departments of the Centre.

Research on domestic animals is essentially a long-term process. The research indicates that the production of Finnish livestock has increased steadily, perhaps faster than the average, despite a decrease in the numbers of domestic animals. Research is based on production dependent on domestic fodder. The latest research topics include utilization of fodder materials of lesser value, such as straw and various waste materials, e.g. waste produced by pulp industry.

The technology employed in Finnish plant cultivation has developed rapidly since the early 1960's. Plant breeding has resulted in the introduction of new species, such as turnip rape (summer), and of 2-4 new varieties annually. The selection of plant varieties cultivated in Finland has been successfully adjusted to the conditions in the country. Chemical controlling of weeds, pests.

and plant diseases is an essential part of the cultivation techniques employed in Finnish plant cultivation. Row fertilization improving the use of nutrients was also generally adopted in the 1960's. A considerable part of the work carried out in the Agricultural Research Centre annually is devoted to testing new pesticides before granting a permission to sell. The contents of pesticide residues in various substances have become a major research topic. In hothouse culture Finland has pioneered as the first country in the world to employ biological pest control.

The results of the latest research are conveyed to the farmers by the agricultural advisory organization, 4-H organization and a number of specialized advisory organizations. In each of these organizations the local units are composed of farmers, which ensures that close contacts between research, instruction and practical farming are maintained.

Post-harvest losses do not present a serious problem in Finland. There is sufficient capacity for drying and storing the grain in normal conditions, even if drying to a great extent depends on imported energy. In the last few years a considerable amount of research has been done on the possibilities of preserving damp coarse grain by means of various preserving substances. New methods are adopted rapidly. Attempts have been made to find methods of reducing the amount of nutrient-rich compression liquids produced in the process of making silage. Research is carried out on various possibilities of utilizing substances suitable for fodder and capable of retaining liquid. Reducing storing losses of potato is an important field in which better results obviously can be achieved, and the Agricultural Research Centre will launch an extensive project in 1980 to investigate the matter.

Livestock products, milk and meat, can be transported to the consumers preserving a very high quality. The cooling and storing equipments of individual farms guarantee that the milk produced is of a high quality. The meat handling techniques employed in the Finnish slaughterhouses are of a high standard.

Communications in Finland are on the whole good and they guarantee a swift transport of food from areas of production to marketing centres without deterioration of quality. Collection of agricultural products is carried out by means of a country-wide network which ensures that every producer has access to the market. Most of the collection, trade and processing of the main agricultural products is carried out through co-operative enterprises controlled by the farmers. The distribution network of retail trade guarantees that every citizen has access to adequate food.

Generally it can be stated that every citizen has access to adequate food, irrespective of financial position.

The consumption pattern of food has changed over the years so that the consumption of grain products and potatoes has decreased considerably while a corresponding increase has occurred in the consumption of dairy products, meat, eggs, vegetables and fruit. It should be noted that the consumption of highly processed food, livestock products, vegetables and fruit is higher in towns, i.e.

among the population that is generally more affluent, whereas the less affluent population living in the country consumes larger amounts of inexpensive grain products and potatoes.

Legislation on food hygiene, the observance of which is at local level controlled by municipal inspectors (in towns by veterinary surgeons) guarantees that adulterated or somehow contaminated or spoiled food is not sold. Food processing is also carefully controlled on the basis of regulations concerning the composition and quality grading of food. Consequently cases of food poisoning are extremely rare in Finland.

Dissemination of information on principles of nutrition is carried out by advisory organizations, covering also the fields of home economics, nutrition science and nutritional habits. Advice and information are also disseminated by a number of organizations active exclusively in the field of home economics, as well as by schools and universities.

Finland, like other member countries of the United Nations, has i.a. participated in information campaigns carried out in the framework of FAO. Food aid has been given in the form of food (grain, cheese, powdered milk) and money.

Consumption of food and the development of consumption are followed in Finland e.g. by means of nutrition balance calculations carried out by the Research Institute for Agricultural Economy. These calculations, based on instructions and recommendations of FAO, determine the amount of foodstuffs used as human nutrition. Nutrition balance calculations have been carried out since 1959. The National Farm Board has compiled statistics on agricultural production, and these statistics are used for purposes such as the nutrition balance calculations mentioned above.

B. (6)

The National Board of Health, together with the health authorities of the other Nordic countries, issued in 1968 a recommendation concerning the principles of the development of national nutrition.

The Advisory Board for Nutrition appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry co-ordinates the activities of separate authorities in the field of food and nutrition policy. In addition a specific Advisory Board for Agricultural Policy was appointed in 1979 to draw up an overall programme concerning the provision of food, taking into account the proposals made by a committee appointed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to draw up recommendations concerning healthy nutrition.

In practice the foremost means of securing the nutrition of the most significant groups at risk has been the nutritional advisory service for pregnant women and infants, practised in maternity centres throughout the country since the 1940's.

(7)

By means of the Food Act (526/1941) and the decrees based on the Act the production, preservation, importation, transportation, storing, selling and handing over of foodstuffs can be supervised and directed with a view to safeguarding the health of the

population in general, protecting the consumers against the selling of sub-standard food and the resulting financial losses.

Separate decrees have been given concerning products such as eggs, food dyes, powdered milk, icecream products, berry and fruit products, foodstuffs obtained from animals that have received treatment by antibiotic drugs, butter, foods for special dietary uses, cheese, meat and meat products, adding of vitamins and certain other substances to foodstuffs, sweeteners and additives.

Supervision of the safety of foodstuffs is also the purpose of the following acts: Meat Inspection Act (160/1960), Milk Inspection Act (558/1946), Toxic Substances Act (309/1969) and Pesticide Act (327/1969).

The Health Care Act (469/1964) and Decree also include provisions concerning foodstuffs and household water as well as supervision of foodstuffs.

(8)

See also B. (6)

In the national five-year programmes on the organization of public health work approved by the Council of State one of the priority fields of health education is nutritional advisory services. In addition the National Board of Health has issued directives concerning nutritional education, including more detailed instructions for the health care personnel on the realization of nutritional advisory services.

(10)

During the last few years several extensive surveys carried out in Finland have shed light on the nutritional habits of the population. The major projects are:

- As a part of a multiple screening survey performed by the National Pensions Institution by means of a mobile clinic in 1967-1972 and 1973-1975 a survey charting the nutrition and nutritional state of the adult population in 23 localities in different parts of the country was carried out. The sample totalled about 10.000 people (Publications of the National Pensions Institute ML 6/1975, 9/1976, 15/1978).
- Survey of child nutrition in 1970-1971 in 14 rural communities. The sample was 1.600 children, aged 5, 9 or 13 years. (Räsänen and others; Ann. Acad. Sci. Fenn. VMedica. Ser A 168/1975, 169/1975).
- Mineral content research carried out in 1975-1978 to find out the contents of minerals and other substances in Finnish foodstuffs. On the basis of information obtained from this and from the nutrition surveys mentioned above calculations were made to find out the mineral intake of the population (Koivistoinen, Hasunen, Räsänen; not published).

D. (1)

Housing is not mentioned as a basic right either in the Finnish Constitution or in any other legislative enactment. The inclusion of this right in the Constitution has been considered in connection with the legislative review of the Constitution which is at present going on.

The most important enactments affecting housing at present are the Housing Production Act of 1966, concerning state subsidies for new housing production, the Housing Allowances Act of 1975, aiming at the reduction of the housing costs of families, and the Housing Rents Act of 1961, which regulates the rental of housing.

- (2) Housing as a basic right, and the measures needed to put this right into practice, have so far been discussed in Finland most extensively and most fundamentally in the National Housing Programme for the years 1976-85. (The summary of the report submitted by the Commission on Housing Policy, which took part in the drafting of the programme, is attached (Appendix 2), and shows the main principles followed by Finnish housing policy.)

The work of legislative review and revision required in order to achieve the basic objectives presented in the programme is at present under way.

Special attention has been paid to the improvement of the living conditions of inadequately housed low-income population groups. In order to put into practice the objectives formulated at the national level, the instructions drawn up for the preparation of municipal housing programmes also mention the need to improve the housing conditions of population groups which are inadequately housed or lack permanent shelter altogether.

Housing programmes formerly approached the question of the housing situation in terms of the dwelling unit, but this focus has now shifted to the occupants of the dwelling, and the aim of the programmes is to find concrete and individual-oriented solution to the housing problems of those housed inadequately.

- (3) Finland has practised scientific and technical cooperation in the housing production sector within the framework of the Nordic countries and the ECE, recently more also with the CMEA countries. One aim of this cooperation has been the achievement of common norms and safety regulations in housing production in different countries.
- (4) This question has no particular significance in Finland.
- (5) The regulations contained in the Housing Rental Act for the protection of the tenant include both regulation of rents and protection against unfair eviction. According to the current regulations, a tenant cannot be given notice to move except under certain circumstances specifically enumerated in law. Furthermore, if after being given notice the tenant finds particular difficulty in obtaining another dwelling, the court may on his plea allow him to remain the dwelling, for a maximum of one year.

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The present system of rent regulation came into force in 1974, by an amendment of the Housing Rents Act. The purpose of rent regulation is not to freeze rents at a particular level, but to ensure that the scarcity of rental dwellings in a particular locality will not lead to an undue rise in the level of rents. Under the present system, a government decision is given at least once a year as to the maximum increase allowed in rents, and increases exceeding this maximum are allowed only by court decree. This government decision is based on information concerning the development of housing costs. In addition the government may give general guidelines as to the level of rents to be considered reasonable in different localities. If the rent of a particular dwelling is considerably higher than the level of the government guidelines, the court may on the plea of the tenant reduce the rent to a level considered reasonable. Similarly, if the rent is considerably below the general level, the owner can request the court to raise it.

At present a general review and revision of the Housing Rents Act is under way, with the purpose of improving the legal security of the tenant.

(6) The following statistics, on housing production and housing standard are presented in Appendix 2:

- GNP, gross fixed capital formation and investments in house construction and residential buildings in 1949-78
- Housing loan appropriations and loans granted in 1949-78
- Dwellings completed by type of building, and the share of dwellings in small houses in 1957-78
- Dwelling units by standard of equipment in 1950, 1960, 1970 and 1975
- Housing density in 1950, 1960, 1970 and 1975.

In conclusion, and with reference to Articles 1 to 5 of the Covenant referred to, it may be noted that in Finland the right to a reasonable standard of housing is not dependent on race, sex, religion or any other such factor. Special legislation has been passed in order to bring about a rapid amelioration in the housing conditions of the most inadequately housed minority groups, i.e. the Gypsies and the Lapps, and to provide these groups with a housing standard equal to that of the population in general.

The question of housing democracy, i.e. the possibilities available to the occupants of determining their own living conditions, is already satisfactorily solved in the case of those living in owner-occupied dwellings. In order to offer low-income households a real choice between owner-occupancy and tenancy, the new system of housing subsidies has been designed so as to reduce the share of owner-capitalization and the housing costs of the first few years of occupancy in owner-occupied dwellings. Attempts have also been made to develop tenant democracy, so as to improve the participating opportunities of those living in rental housing. The Committee on Tenant Democracy, which studied the issue, submitted its report in 1976, and this report is intended to serve as the basis of the necessary legislation. In this work the experience of the other Nordic countries will also be taken into account, and a joint Nordic research project is now under way to study the question.

## Article 12

The new Public Health Act passed in 1972 (28 January 1972/66) defines the obligations of public health services. Under these obligations every citizen is entitled to the best possible services in his/her home locality to maintain and achieve good physical and mental health, and each person staying in a locality has a right to obtain the necessary first aid there. The obligations also include prevention of premature births, reduction of infant mortality and promotion of the healthy development of children. The Public Health Act as well as the Health Care Act (27 August 1965/469) provide that the municipality shall also bear responsibility for environmental health care and prevention of infectious diseases. In addition the National Board of Health has in the last few years issued directives concerning environmental health issues.

Since 3 January 1976 no major reforms have taken place in the field of public health. The implementation of the Public Health Act has continued throughout the 1970's, and the services are already fairly advanced in the provincial districts, which works towards securing the health care of the whole population. In bigger towns municipal health care is under continuous development - meanwhile the people are able to obtain health services also in private health centres.

The enclosed booklet "Primary Health Care in Finland" (Appendix 2) provides a general picture of public health services in Finland. Additional information is provided by the enclosed offprints of the Official Statistics of Finland XI:74/1978 (Appendices 4 and 5). Chapter 3 of the booklet mentioned above, "Evolution of Health Care Policy" discusses the development of health care and covers several of the questions in Article 12; e.g. the lower figure on page 14 illustrates a very interesting development, i.e. the fact that the capital expenditure on primary health care since 1978 surpasses the expenditure on sick care. "PHC in operation" (Chapter 4) describes the services and Chapter 5 discusses the problems still to be overcome if the primary health care is to promote the health of the population to an even greater extent. The text on page 24 and the figures on page 25 illustrate how a more just distribution of health care services has been achieved in Finland by means of a specific system of planning and distribution of resources.

Since 1977 the development of health education has been a significant part of programmes promoting health. People have thus been entrusted with increasing responsibility for their own health (self care); by changing their own behaviour they are able to promote their own health and that of their environment.

As to vaccination programmes, a good 90 % of all children obtain the basic inoculations in spite of the fact that vaccinations have been on a voluntary basis since 1952.

Generally it can be stated that the municipality-based health care system has in Finland proved to be a system capable of attending to the health of the whole population so that all age groups can obtain support both in the promotion of health and the treatment of illnesses. While society develops and health risks change the same system is able to take care of the health of the population by means of its services and the associated political decision-making process.

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APPENDIX

List of reference material annexed to the report\*

1. Animal breeding, research and practical applications in Finland.
  2. The National Housing Programme - Report of the Commission on Housing Policy.
  3. Primary health care in Finland: Health Services in Finland. Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.
  4. Health Services: development of Health and Health Services in Finland. Yearbook of National Board of Health 1971-1977.
  5. Health Services: graphic presentation. Yearbook of National Board of Health 1971-1977.
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\* These documents are available for consultation in the files of the Secretariat.