

EHYT - Finnish Association for Substance Abuse Prevention

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EHYT - Finnish Association for Substance Abuse Prevention

- EHYT = NGO and expert organisation, combining community empowerment with public health advocacy
- Staff of ~75 employees and 115 member organisations
- Our focus areas: alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse prevention as well as gaming and gambling harm prevention
- We aim at improving well-being across the society
- Levels of work:
 - Individual – Community – National – Global
- We target all age groups, from children to youths, adults and the elderly
- We target individuals, professionals, communities, policymakers, and the public opinion

About EHYT

- We are an expert organisation, advocacy agent and an NGO
- We rely on evidence and evidence-based methods in our activities
- We produce methods, training programmes, information and assistance that supports healthy life-styles across all age groups
- We believe alcohol and other drugs have no place in working life, in traffic, during pregnancy, childhood and adolescence

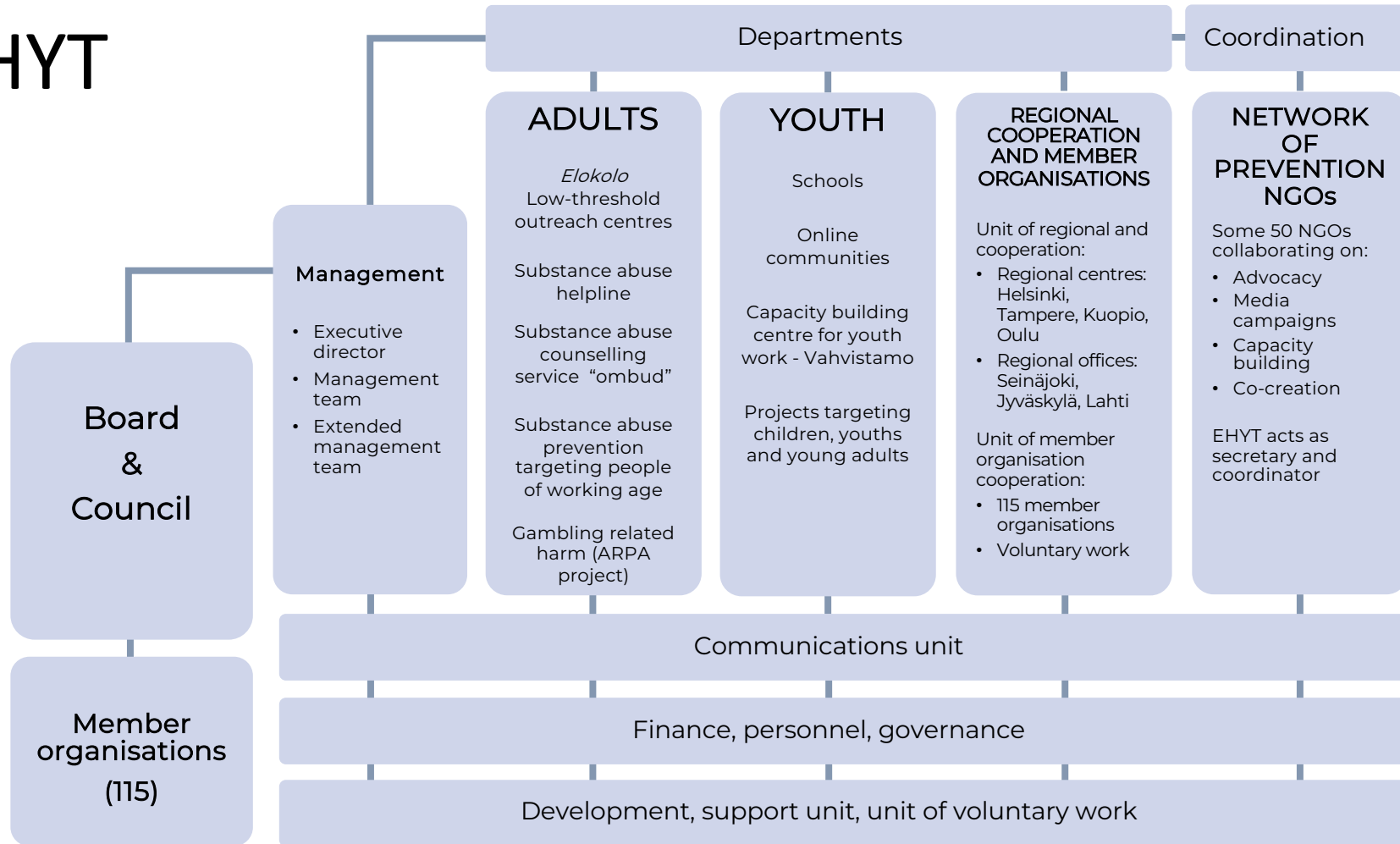
Our Funding

- STEA - Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations, Finnish Government
- EU project funding sources
- Ministry of Education
- National Centre for Health and Welfare
- Charitable foundations

Advocacy

- We participate in the policy debate on, and decision-making covering alcohol, drugs, tobacco, nicotine and gambling
- We aim at furthering health and well-being and healthy life styles
- We aim at influencing the public's opinion in a health oriented direction
- We carry out campaign work during elections, participate in forums for discussion and debate, attend meetings and face-to-face discussions with our target groups
- We participate in international collaboration (WHO, Eurocare, NordAN)

EHYT



Adults and Working Life

- Substance abuse prevention targeting people of working age
- “Elokolo” Low-threshold outreach centres
- Substance abuse helpline (24/7)
 - Substance abuse helpline, free of charge, anonymous and operated by professional counsellors
- Substance abuse counselling service “ombud”
- Gambling related harm (ARPA project)

Youth

- Schools (network of trainers)
- Online communities (social media presence, YouTube, Instagram)
- Capacity building centre for youth work - Vahvistamo
- Projects targeting children, youths and young adults
 - Selvis – discussing substance abuse and gambling with young people with disabilities
 - Discussing cannabis with adolescents and youths (ESR funding)
 - Strengthening substance abuse prevention and creating harm reducing cultures among student in universities and colleges
 - Reducing and preventing nicotine harm (snuff) among youths
 - SmokeFree education and activities for schools

Regional Collaboration, Member Organisations and Voluntary Work

- Unit of regional and cooperation:
 - Regional centres (4): Helsinki, Tampere, Kuopio, Oulu
 - Regional offices (3): Seinäjoki, Jyväskylä, Lahti
- Unit of member organisation cooperation:
 - 115 member organisations
 - Voluntary work

Network of Prevention NGOs / Coordination

- Some 50 NGOs collaborating on:
 - Advocacy
 - Media campaigns
 - Capacity building
 - Co-creation
- EHYT acts as secretary and coordinator

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Highlights from the government programme June 6, 2019.

Available at:

https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/10616/sallistava-ja-osaava-suomi-sosiaalisesti-taloudellisesti-ja-ekologisesti-kestava-yhteiskunta



Government programme June 6, 2019: Inclusive and competent Finland – a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society



- Practically all of EHYT's goals for the new government programme were included
- Challenge: resource allocation
- There is a clear emphasis on substance abuse prevention and health promotion:
 - National plan for substance abuse work
 - Government resolution on drug policy
 - **Increased alcohol and tobacco taxes**
 - **Reducing alcohol consumption**
 - An action plan to prevent harm from gambling

EHYT's Election Advocacy 2019



Actions before the parliamentary elections:

- Communication in social media, statements etc.
- Parliamentary election webpage with a pledge from candidates (22 new MPs/270): <http://www.ehyt.fi/fi/vaalit>
- Goals for the parliamentary elections:
http://www.ehyt.fi/sites/default/files/hallitusohjelmataavoitteet_2019_englanti_0.pdf

Actions after the parliamentary election:

- Statement letter to the government negotiators:
- EHYT: Written statement 17.5.2019 to the negotiation committee “Fair, equal and inclusive Finland”
- Approached per email, telephone or face-to-face some 20 government negotiators
- Carried out discussions about EHYT's goals for the new government with numerous stakeholders.

Government Programme 3.6.2019: Inclusive and competent Finland – a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society



"The fundamentals in our society are firmly in place. In recent years, we have seen strong positive trends in the economy and employment. **Our Nordic welfare society is a sustainable, fair and just model that enables us to respond to future challenges.**

Income security, well-functioning health and social services and solid education lay a foundation that guarantees all people equal opportunities to pursue their dreams.

However, the changing world and future challenges mean **we must reform and further strengthen the Nordic model as we enter the 2020s.**

Our aim is to transform Finland into a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society by 2030. In a Nordic welfare state, the economy is managed for the people, not the other way round."

Promoting health and wellbeing (s. 152)



- The Government will boost the economy of wellbeing by investing in measures that foster people's health and wellbeing and reduce their need for services.
- We will assess the health and wellbeing impacts of decisions comprehensively, and **make prevention and treatment of chronic diseases more effective.**
- New **low-threshold services in lifestyle counselling and prevention** will be introduced.
- Addictions will be reduced. To foster preventive work and to harmonise substance abuse services, the **Government will update the national plan substance abuse work.**

Promoting health and wellbeing (s. 152)



- We will continue working **systematically to reduce smoking and the overall consumption of alcoholic beverages.**
- A cross-sectoral **Government resolution on drug policy** will be prepared to increase the efficiency of services for drug users and to reduce the harmful effects of drug use.
- Moreover, **problem gambling will be tackled as part of an action plan on gambling.**
- Drawing on earlier work, the Government will prepare a **mental health strategy** with a focus on mental health as a resource. The strategy will secure people's mental health rights and mental health services, incorporating them into existing structures. It will also prevent suicides and strengthen the competence of mental health professionals.
- The legislation on mental health and substance abuse services will reformed at the same time.

Promoting health through taxation (p. 28)



Tobacco tax

The Government will continue the policy of gradually **increasing taxation of tobacco and nicotine products by a total of EUR 200 million** over its forthcoming term of office. This tax guidance promotes public health.

Alcohol tax

The Government will continue the policy of moderately **increasing alcohol tax by EUR 50 million**, having regard to changes in the operating environment by monitoring the impact on passenger imports.

State-owned companies



- **The ownership steering of Alko Inc. will be retained at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, and its current exclusive right to retail trade will be safeguarded. (p. 160).**
- All state-owned companies must base their operations on corporate social responsibility. Companies must take into account in their decision-making the economic factors and the social and environmental impacts of their activities. (p. 194).
- The Government Resolution on State Ownership Policy will be updated, and the criteria for strategic ownership will re-evaluated.

Strengthening wellbeing (p. 177)



- We will guarantee every child and young person a genuine opportunity to pursue a leisure activity of their choice as part of the school day.
- **We plan to create a Finnish version of the Icelandic model.**
- We intend to reinforce and improve the quality of the schools' morning and afternoon activities, clubs and cooperation with the municipalities and third-sector providers.

3.7 Finland that promotes competence, education, culture and innovation

- Opportunities for all to pursue a leisure activity as part of the school day – Finnish version of the Icelandic model – **EUR 14,5 million** (permanent funding)
- Additionally *a one-off investment*: Opportunities for all to pursue a leisure activity as part of the school day – Finnish version of the Icelandic model 2020-2022: **EUR 40 million**

**Thank you for your
attention!**

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