DESIGN FOR GOVERNMENT: Quick Introduction to Finnish Society and Government

Contact information

Taneli Heinonen Mail@taneliheinonen.com www.taneliheinonen.com

Understanding context is crucial for success

Starting Point: Key Features of Nordic Welfare States

- Free education and universal health care from kindergarten to university
- Strong social security and safety nets social work, support and benefit systems
- **Public pension plans** with agencies and companies running the pension system
- **High public spending** and relatively large number of public employees
- Strong role of labor unions employer federations and labor representatives bargain at the national level
- **Democratic process** with elections for parliament, president, European parliament and municipal councils





Two Strong Levels of Government (Currently)

State

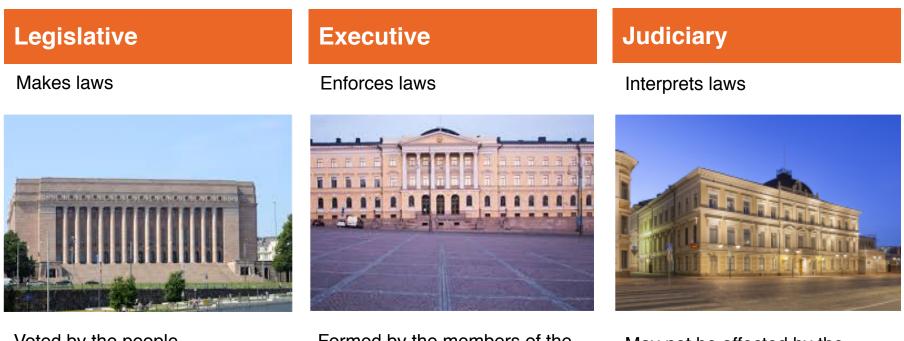


- Citizenship
- Parliamentary elections every 4th year (coming in April)
- Citizens pay income tax (progressive rate)
- State is responsible for legislation, foreign affair and international cooperation, defence, state economy, police, justice system, transport and communication systems, special health care, higher education system (partially).

Municipalities

- Residency
- Municipal elections every 4th year (all residents over 18)
- Residents pay income tax (flat rate with exceptions)
- Responsible for example of:
 - Daycare and school
 - Libraries and cultural services
 - Basic healthcare and social services
 - Water and energy
 - Urban planning and land use
 - Waste disposal and sanitation
- State partially funds municipalities and is responsible of the legislative framework

Distribution of Powers and Three Branches of Government



Voted by the people.

Formed by the members of the parliament and must have support of the parliament majority to function.

May not be affected by the political system. Mmebers of the Supreme Court appointed by the president.

Role of Ministries in the State Government

After each **election** the chairman of the largest party starts negotiations to form a coalition to run the government and nominate the ministers.

They agree on **a government program** for the 4 year term.

Ministries work together with democratically elected government to execute laws.

Civil servants in the ministries serve as specialists in the preparation of government's decisions in their own field. They are also responsible of international cooperation and manage the regional and local level administration.

Ministry	Finnish name
Prime Minister's Office	valtioneuvoston kanslia
Ministry for Foreign Affairs	ulkoasiainministeriö
Ministry of Justice	oikeusministeriö
Ministry of the Interior	sisäministeriö
Ministry of Defence	puolustusministeriö
Ministry of Finance	valtiovarainministeriö
Ministry of Education and Culture	opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	maa- ja metsätalousministeriö
Ministry of Transport and Communications	liikenne- ja viestintäministeriö
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment	työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö
Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö
Ministry of the Environment	ympäristöministeriö

Administration in the State Government

- State's national administration consists of authorities operating under the direction of ministries. (FFCA under the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Migri under the Ministry of the Interior)
- State's regional administration is most often in forms of ELY and AVI.
- State local administration is in the form of police departments, prosecutors offices, customs, local register offices, employment services, tax offices etc.
- Indirect public administration of agencies, trust funds and NGO's that have a legal mandate to carry public tasks. (Sitra, Kela, Finnish Bank etc.)



Third Sector of the Civil Society is tightly connected to the Government



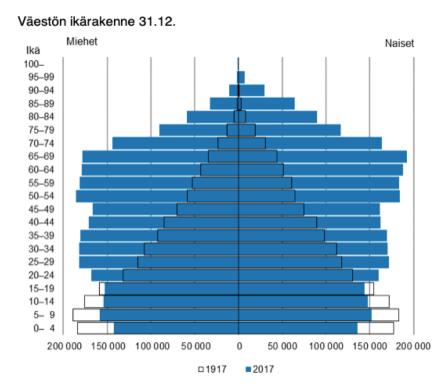
- State regulation on businesses
- State-owned companies
- Regional development companies
- · State subsidies for companies

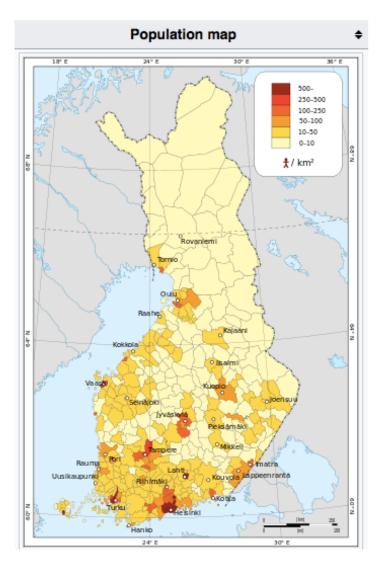


- State funding based on applications
- Additional social services allocated tasks for the organizations

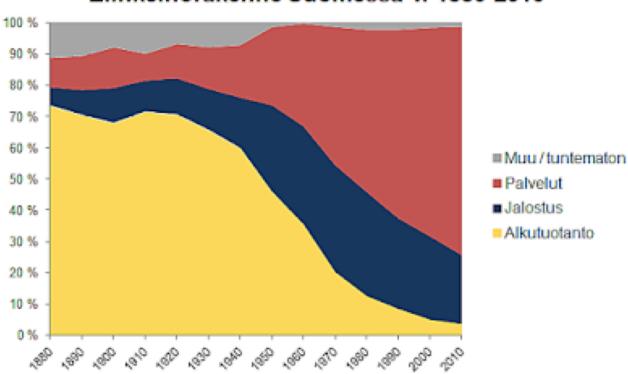
Relevant Dynamics of the Finnish Society

Aging Population and an Emptying Country(side)





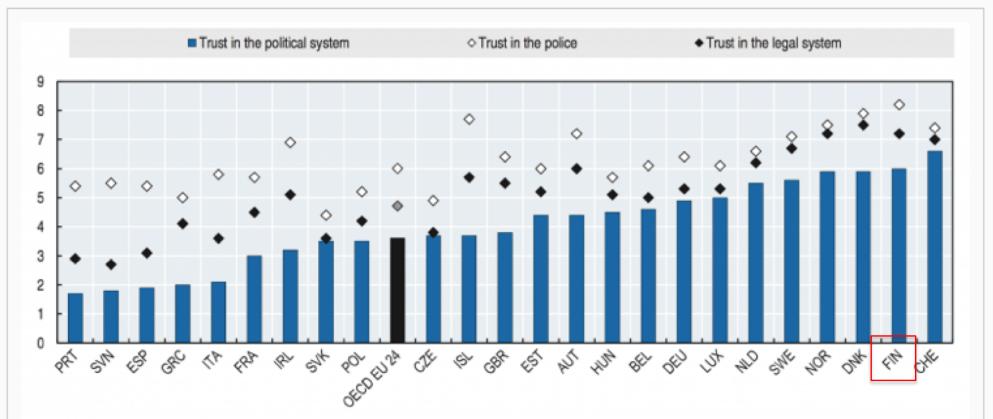
Rapid Change from Agrarian to Industrial to Service Economy



Elinkeinorakenne Suomessa v. 1880-2010

Trust in the Public Institutions is Very Strong

Mean trust in public institutions, European countries, 2013 – Figure 3.14 in the OECD report How's life? (2015) ⁵



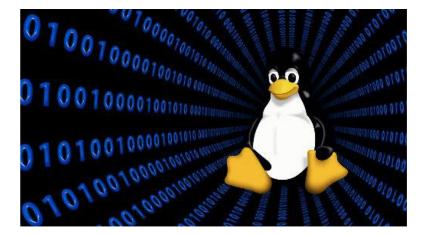
Note: Response options range from 0 ("No trust at all") to 10 ("Complete trust"). The OECD EU average is the population-weighted average of the values included in the chart.

Source: Eurostat (2015), European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show. do?dataset=ilc_pw03&lang=en.

High-Tech has a Strong Cultural and Economical Meaning









Small and Mid-Size Companies Play a Major Role in the Economy

Definition:

- Less than 250 employees
- Less than 50 million € in yearly revenue
- Independently owned

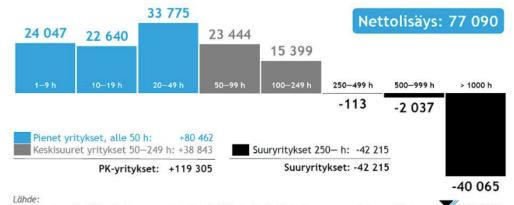
Value:

- Around 60% of all revenue created by Finnish businesses
- Out of people who work in companies 65% work in small and mid-size companies
- In the past 20 years new jobs have been created in these companies

Yritysten henkilöstö eri kokoluokkien Yrittäjät yrityksissä vuonna 2017



Työpaikat syntyvät pk-yrityksiin (2000-16)



Tilastokeskus. Henkilömäärät muunnettu kokopäiväisiksi työpaikoiksi, pl. maa-, metsä- ja metsätalous.



Examples of Social Innovations in the Public Sector

1948 Free school lunch for all children – to secure sufficient nutrition for children of all sociodemographic backgrounds

1949 Maternity package for all expectant mothers – to decrease infant mortality and to provide a safe first bed for all infants

1949 Prenatal and child care units in all municipalities (neuvola) – "place where you're given advice" and where the growth and health of a child is followed until the age of 7.



Interview Exercise

Spend 10 minutes interviewing your group-mate. Take notes during your interview.

Switch roles, so everyone gets the chance to be an interviewer and an interviewee. Use your mobile phone as a timer to stay in schedule.

After these two rounds, use your notes to present a story of who your interviewee is, and what are their expectations about the course and its theme. Take 1 minute to present your interviewee to the whole class. 1. Research question: Who is the person?

Interview question: How would you describe yourself?
Probe: Why do you study what you study? How do you spend your free time?

2. Research question: What is their relationship to the theme of the course?

- What do you think of when you think the public sector? Probe: What kind of experiences have you had with the public services?

- What do you think of when you think of design in the public sector? Probe: What do you think design can offer for the public sector?

3. Research question: What are their expectations for the course?

- How do they expect to work?
- What do they expect to learn?
- What do they hope achieve with their project?