

# **Ageing in digital societies: enablers and barriers to older persons exercising their social rights**

**Finland**

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# 1 Legal and policy framework

## 1.1 National legislation on digital public administration

Equal access to public services, including digital services, is regulated in discrimination legislation, administrative procedure legislation and in specific legislation on digital services. Thus, discrimination on grounds of age is prohibited in section 6 of the Constitution of Finland<sup>1</sup> and in section 8 of the Non-Discrimination Act.<sup>2</sup> Other prohibited grounds of discrimination listed in the Non-Discrimination Act are origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, state of health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.

In addition to prohibiting discrimination, the Non-Discrimination Act stipulates in section 5 that public authorities have a duty to evaluate the realization of equality in their activities and to take effective, expedient and proportionate measures to promote the realization of equality, taking into account the authorities' operating environment, resources and other circumstances. Furthermore, authorities must have a plan outlining the necessary measures for the promotion of equality.

The Administrative Procedures Act regulates the foundations of good administration, including the service principle, appropriateness of services, advice and requirement of appropriate language.<sup>3</sup>

The Shared Support Services for eGovernment Act regulates the joint support services for public e-services.<sup>4</sup> The Act does not as such highlight any specific group in need of support. However, with reference to the aging population and increased digitalisation, it is noted in the Government bill that the authorization service, provided for in section 3, point 6 of the Act, facilitates the managing of administrative tasks of another person in a reliable, secure and uniform way.<sup>5</sup>

Further, in connection with the transposition of the European Accessibility Act,<sup>6</sup> a new Act on provision of digital services was adopted on 15 November 2019.<sup>7</sup> Section 1 stipulates that the aim of the Act is to promote the availability of digital services, the quality of services and security of information as well as the accessibility of the digital content in order to improve all persons possibility to use

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<sup>1</sup> Finland, Constitution of Finland ([Suomen perustuslaki/Finlands grundlag](#)), Act No. 731/1999, 11 June 1999, section 6.

<sup>2</sup> Finland, Non-Discrimination Act ([yhdenvertaisuuslaki/diskrimineringslagen](#)), Act No. 1325/2014, 30 December 2014, section 8.

<sup>3</sup> Finland, Administrative Procedures Act ([hallintolaki/förvaltningslagen](#)), Act No. 434/2003, 6 June 2003, chapter 2.

<sup>4</sup> Finland, Shared Support Services for eGovernment Act ([laki hallinnon yhteisistä sähköisen asioinnin tukipalveluista/lag om förvaltningens gemensamma stödtjänster för e-tjänster](#)), Act No. 571/2016, 29 June 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Finland, Government bill No. 59/2016 ([hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laeiksi hallinnon yhteisistä sähköisen asioinnin tukipalveluista sekä valtion yhteisten tieto- ja viestintätekniisten palvelujen järjestämisestä annetun lain muuttamisesta/regeringens proposition till riksdagen med förslag till lag om förvaltningens gemensamma stödtjänster för e-tjänster och lag om ändring av lagen om anordnande av states gemensamma informations- och kommunikationstekniska tjänster](#)), p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> Directive (EU) 2016/2102 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies, OJ 2016 L 327

<sup>7</sup> Finland, Provision of Digital Services Act ([laki digitaalisten palvelujen tarjoamisesta/lag om tillhandahållande av digitala tjänster](#)), Act No. 306/2019, 15 March 2019.

digital services on equal terms. Persons with disabilities are explicitly mentioned in the text of the Digital Services Act (sections 2 and 8), whereas older persons are not. However, in the Government bill it is noted that the growing group of older persons will benefit from the Act. It is also stated that when digital services are being developed, it is important to keep in mind that all users cannot make use of digital services. Also for them access to services have to be secured.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, with respect to the monitoring of the accessibility requirements, it is noted in the Government bill that the monitoring authority has to regularly consult with key interest groups, including organisations representing persons with disabilities and the elderly.<sup>9</sup> The monitoring authority is the Regional State Administrative Agency for Southern Finland (*Etelä-Suomen aluehallintovirasto/Regionförvaltningsverket i Södra Finland*).

## 1.2 National policy, strategy or action plan on the digitalisation of public services or digital inclusion

Digitalisation of public services is a key goal in the present Government Programme adopted on 10 December 2019. With respect to older persons, the Programme states that support services promoting the ability of older persons to use e-services will be strengthened.<sup>10</sup> In the Strategy for Public Governance Renewal released in 2020 it is held that by 2030 services will be organised in a people centric and diverse way.<sup>11</sup> This means, among other things, that the needs and circumstances of different people, businesses and organisations will be taken into account, services will be developed together with the clients, and digitalisation will be extensively used. The strategy further outlines that the services and benefits will be 'easily accessible, understandable, interoperable, safe and reliable'. Also, the government's capability to identify and modify structures and processes that cause inequality will be strengthened.<sup>12</sup> No explicit reference is made to older persons or other groups.

In addition, the Ministry of Finance adopted in 2020 the Programme for the Promotion of Digitalisation (*digitalisaation edistämisen ohjelma, Digi-ohjelma*) covering the period 25 February 2020 to 31 March 2023.<sup>13</sup> The aim of the

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<sup>8</sup> Finland, Government bill No. 60/2018 ([hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laeiksi digitaalisten palvelujen tarjoamisesta sekä sähköisestä asioinnista viranomaistoiminnassa annetun lain muuttamisesta/regeringens proposition till riksdagen med förslag till lag om tillhandahållande av digitala tjänster och lag om ändring av lagen om elektronisk kommunikation i myndigheternas verksamhet](#)), p. 39

<sup>9</sup> Finland, Government bill No. 60/2018 ([hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laeiksi digitaalisten palvelujen tarjoamisesta sekä sähköisestä asioinnista viranomaistoiminnassa annetun lain muuttamisesta/regeringens proposition till riksdagen med förslag till lag om tillhandahållande av digitala tjänster och lag om ändring av lagen om elektronisk kommunikation i myndigheternas verksamhet](#)), p. 85

<sup>10</sup> Finland, Government Programme (2019), [Inclusive and competent Finland – a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society](#), Publication of the Finnish Government 2019:33, 10 December 2019, p. 86

<sup>11</sup> Finland, Ministry of Finance (*valtiovarainministeriö/finansministeriet*) (2020), [Strategy for Public Governance Renewal](#), 1 December 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Finland, Ministry of Finance (*valtiovarainministeriö/finansministeriet*) (2020), [Strategy for Public Governance Renewal](#), 1 December 2020, p. 8.

<sup>13</sup> Finland, Ministry of Finance (*valtiovarainministeriö/finansministeriet*), [Programme for the Promotion of Digitalisation](#), 25 February 2020.

programme is to ensure that public services are available digitally from 2023 onwards. The Programme for the Promotion of Digitalisation includes measures to improve accessibility and enough support services to safeguard equality in accessing the services.<sup>14</sup> The Ministry of Finance has awarded € 1,8 million to the Digital and Population Data Services Agency (*digi- ja väestötietovirasto/myndigheten för digitalisering och befolkningsdata*) for piloting a permanent national digital support service in 2022. The digital support is directed at both individuals and business actors. It includes distance support (chat, phone, video), local support (guidance points, peer support, support in the home) and training (e-learning, community college, courses). Digital support is developed in open collaboration with several actors. It is based on a nationwide network and stakeholder cooperation and locally provided digital support services.<sup>15</sup> Older persons are a key target group for the digital support services developed by the Ministry of Finance and the Digital and Population Data Services Agency.

### **1.3 National recovery and resilience plans covering the digitalisation of public services**

Digitalisation is a recurrent theme in Finland's Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) 'Sustainable Growth'.<sup>16</sup> The second pillar addresses specifically digitalisation and the digital economy as a means to strengthen productivity and make services available to all. The actions to be financed are focusing primarily on improving digital infrastructure, accelerating the data economy and digitalisation, and strengthening digital security. Among the actions funded the Virtual Finland service platform (P2C2R3) addresses most directly public services. The platform aims at providing user-friendly online information to foreigners and foreign enterprises planning to relocate to Finland. It is based on collaboration between public authorities and private service providers. The information will be tailored based on various target groups such as employees, university students, seasonal workers, tourists and companies. In the description of the action it is noted that the platform in the future will replace old practices of filling in and mailing hard-copy forms and physically visiting an office for transactions, thereby avoiding the need in some instances to travel to another country.<sup>17</sup>

Under the third pillar on employment-related issues, digitalisation of services is addressed, e.g., under the Nordic labour market services model reform (P3C1R1), which aims at raising the employment rate by making the jobseeker service process more individual. The reform includes a digitalisation component which focuses on developing digital services, such as appointment booking, self-

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<sup>14</sup> Finland, Ministry of Finance (*valtiovarainministeriö/finansministeriet*), [Programme for the Promotion of Digitalisation](#), 25 February 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Finland, Digital and Population Data Services Agency (*digi- ja väestötietovirasto/myndigheten för digitalisering och befolkningsdata*) (2022), '[Digituki](#)', webpage on digital support.

<sup>16</sup> Finland, Finnish Government (*valtioneuvosto/statsrådet*) (2021), [Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland. Recovery and Resilience Plan](#), Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:69, 20 August 2021, p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> Finland, Finnish Government (*valtioneuvosto/statsrådet*) (2021), [Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland. Recovery and Resilience Plan](#), Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:69, 20 August 2021, pp. 124-125.

reporting, new service needs assessment tools, and online guidance services. Equal access to the digital services is not addressed in the description of the action.<sup>18</sup>

The fourth pillar provides that access to health and social services will be improved and their effectiveness enhanced. To achieve this, one of the investments concerns 'Introducing service-oriented digital innovations that will help achieve the care guarantee (P4C1I4)'.<sup>19</sup> The care guarantee refers to the waiting time for access to health care. The Government has on 9 September 2021 decided to shorten the waiting time for primary health care from three months to seven days.<sup>20</sup> To this effect the Government has submitted a legislative proposal to Parliament on 12 May 2022.<sup>21</sup> The services to be developed to achieve this include digital solutions for pre-service actions and for consulting services; self-care, health care at home and e-transactions; and digital peer support services. Government grants will be awarded to the regions for the development of the services.<sup>22</sup>

According to the RRP, in the design of digital services that will assist in achieving the care guarantee, the availability and accessibility of the services will be considered from the perspective of disadvantaged and vulnerable persons. Further, it is stated that some services may be specifically targeted at special needs groups. It is also noted that digital services may indirectly improve the status of disadvantaged and vulnerable persons by freeing up personnel that can work more intensively with groups that require special support.<sup>23</sup>

In the description of the investment older persons are not explicitly mentioned. However, in connection with another investment that focuses on promoting the compliance with the care guarantee in the aftermath of the coronavirus crisis (P4C1I1) the disadvantaged and vulnerable include 'children, adolescents, the elderly, mental health rehabilitees, intoxicant abuse rehabilitees and the disabled'.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Finland, Finnish Government (*valtioneuvosto/statsrådet*) (2021), [Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland. Recovery and Resilience Plan](#), Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:69, 20 August 2021, p. 171.

<sup>19</sup> Finland, Finnish Government (*valtioneuvosto/statsrådet*) (2021), [Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland. Recovery and Resilience Plan](#), Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:69, 20 August 2021, p. 310.

<sup>20</sup> Finland, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö/social- och hälsovårdsministeriet*) (2021), ['Government decisions in autumn 2021 budget session: Progress made in seven-day cap on waiting time for access to care'](#), press release, 9 September 2021.

<sup>21</sup> Finland, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2022), ['Government proposes seven-day cap on waiting times for access to primary healthcare'](#), press release, 12 May 2022.

<sup>22</sup> Finland, Finnish Government (*valtioneuvosto/statsrådet*) (2021), [Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland. Recovery and Resilience Plan](#), Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:69, 20 August 2021, p. 311.

<sup>23</sup> Finland, Finnish Government (*valtioneuvosto/statsrådet*) (2021), [Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland. Recovery and Resilience Plan](#), Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:69, 20 August 2021, p. 311.

<sup>24</sup> Finland, Finnish Government (*valtioneuvosto/statsrådet*) (2021), [Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland. Recovery and Resilience Plan](#), Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:69, 20 August 2021, p. 302.

## 2 Programmes and practices aimed at ensuring equal access to public services in the digital age

The 'Technology supporting smart ageing and care at home programme (KATI)' is a national programme which is coordinated by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) and funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.<sup>25</sup> Its objective is to reform home living operating models and services for elderly by utilizing technology to maintain the functional capacity and well-being of the person living at home, to support independent and safe living, and to promote services brought home. It encompasses development, piloting and introduction of new technologies in social and health care in a systematic and nationally coordinated manner. The introduction and use of these technologies is expected to produce positive welfare effects for their users, such as enhanced functional capacity, quality of life, state of health and reduced need of services, as well as cost effects. KATI programme grants subsidies which are channelled for consortia of municipalities or associations of municipalities. Besides new service models, it presents a new model of national coordination that supports cooperation between social partners and companies in piloting and deploying technologies. The programme was started in September 2020 and will run until the end of June 2023. The end report of the programme will include an impact evaluation, the methods of which include interviews among the end users.<sup>26</sup> The evaluation will be carried out by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare in cooperation with the VTT Technical Resource Center of Finland.

The RAI system (Resident Assessment Instrument) is a standardised system for collecting information for the assessment of social and healthcare service needs and for creating a care, rehabilitation and service plan for older and disabled persons.<sup>27</sup> It is developed by a group of international researchers (InterRAI<sup>28</sup>) and has been in use in Finland since 2000. On 1 April 2023, its use becomes a statutory obligation in all municipalities.<sup>29</sup> The RAI system is designed to benefit both clients and personnel. Clients participate in the assessment of service needs as well as in the planning, implementation and assessment of care. The uniformity of the system and the use of a handbook and standardised trainings, training of trainers, and expert and peer support for personnel can be seen to contribute to client

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<sup>25</sup> Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (*Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos/Institutet för hälsa och välfärd*) (2022), '[Technology supporting smart ageing and care at home programme \(KATI\)](#)', .

<sup>26</sup> Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (2020), [Kotona asumisen teknologiat ikäihmisille \(KATI\) 2021-2023: Ohjelma ja hankeopas](#), p. 18.

<sup>27</sup> Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (*Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos/Institutet för hälsa och välfärd*) (2022), '[Information on the RAI assessment system](#)'.

<sup>28</sup> For more information, see [interRAI's](#) website.

<sup>29</sup> Finland, Amendment to Act on Care Services for Older People ([laki ikääntyneen väestön toimintakyvyn tukemisesta sekä iäkkäiden sosiaali- ja terveystalvveluista/lag om stödjanv av den äldre befolkningens funktionsförmåga och om social- och hälsovårdstjänster för äldre](#), Act No. 980/2012), Act No. 565/2020, 9 July 2020, entered into force on 1 October 2020 (Government bill 4/2020).

equality. Information on the RAI system and its use, including on plain language, is available on the website of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare.<sup>30</sup>

Reference can also be made to the digitalisation programme described above under chapter 1.2., older people being one of the key focus groups of the programme.<sup>31</sup>

### **3 Research and data focused on equal access to public services in the digital age**

The Non-Discrimination Ombudsman reports having received altogether 416 complaints relating to aged based discrimination in 2018–2021.<sup>32</sup> In 2021, the number was 179. Out of this number, 50 complaints concerned social and health care services in general.<sup>33</sup> What type of issues they were connected to is not specified in the statistics. The Parliamentary Ombudsman reports having registered 125 complaints relating to older people and social and health care services during 2021.<sup>34</sup> The Parliamentary Ombudsman's statistics do not either include access to public services as a variable. A cursory glance at the titles of the complaints reveals, however, that approximately 10 of them concerned access to public services in general.

The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare researched the use of online services by the population for the third time as part of the project 'Monitoring and assessment of social welfare and health care information system services' in 2020.<sup>35</sup> The report describes the experiences of the population regarding digitalisation and the use of online services. The survey was carried out as part of the national survey of health, well-being and service use (FinSote). The results show that the majority of 55 to 74-year-olds had access to the internet (90 %) and a means of electronic identification online (89 %), whereas in the group of over 74-year-olds, only over half had access to the internet (54 %) and a means of electronic identification online (57 %). Experiencing barriers or worries concerning the use of online services were reported by 79 % of the population. According to the survey, whereas the majority of the population (85 %) assessed

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<sup>30</sup> Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (*Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos/Institutet för hälsa och välfärd*) (2022), '[Tietoa RAI-arvioinnista selkokielellä](#)', information on the RAI assessment system in plain language.

<sup>31</sup> Finland, Ministry of Finance (*valtiovarainministeriö/finansministeriet*), [Programme for the Promotion of Digitalisation](#), 25 February 2020.

<sup>32</sup> Finland, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman (*yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutettu/diskrimineringsombudsmannen*) (2022), [Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutetun kertomus eduskunnalle 2022](#) (Report to the Parliament 2022), p. 14.

<sup>34</sup> Information obtained from the office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman (*oikeusasiamies/justitieombudsmannen*) by e-mail on 3 May 2022.

<sup>35</sup> Kyytsönen, M., Aalto, A-M., Vehko, T. (2021), [Sosiaali- ja terveydenhuollon sähköinen asiointi 2020-2021: Väestön kokemukset](#) (Social and health care online service use in 2020–2021: Experiences of the population), Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (*Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos/Institutet för hälsa och välfärd*), Report 7/2021.



their internet skills to be good, the skill level systematically dropped in the older age groups. A fifth (19 %) of the population felt they needed help with using the online social and health care services.

A study titled 'Digital Divide in Perceived Benefits of Online Health Care and Social Welfare Services: National Cross-Sectional Survey Study', which was published in 2020, departs from the notion that in order to ensure wide and equal use of rapidly increasing online services, all users must experience them as beneficial.<sup>36</sup> The study thus examined associations of perceived benefits of online health care and social welfare services with the following variables: (1) demographics, (2) self-rated health, (3) socioeconomic position, (4) social participation, and (5) access, skills, and extent of use of information and communication technologies. Associations were examined separately for perceived health, economic, and collaboration benefits. The data was based on a large random sample representative of the Finnish population including 4495 (56.77 % women) respondents aged between 20 and 97 years. The results show that access to online services, ICT skills, and extent of use were associated with all examined benefits of online services. ICT skills seemed to be the most important factor. Also, health, financial difficulties, and participation-related variables seemed to be important. Regarding age, the results suggested that older people experience fewer benefits from online services, but that this is partly due to their lower levels of access, poorer skills, and lower use of online services. Because skills seem to be crucial for older people to benefit from online services, the study recommends providing training for them. The study concludes that there seems to be a significant risk of digital exclusion among economically disadvantaged people, those with poor health, and those who are socially isolated. When services are increasingly provided by electronic means, this digital divide may predispose people who do not perceive benefit from online services to be excluded from those services. To ensure that the population, particularly those who are older, in poor health, socially isolated, or of low socioeconomic position, can equally benefit from online health services, the study emphasises that access, skills, and possibilities to use these services must be provided. This is particularly important since these groups that are at the highest risk of digital exclusion also have the highest need for health and social welfare services.

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<sup>36</sup> Heponiemi, T., Jormanainen, V., Leemann, L., Manderbacka, K., Aalto, A., Hyppönen, H. (2020), '[Digital Divide in Perceived Benefits of Online Health Care and Social Welfare Services: National Cross-Sectional Survey Study](#)', *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, Vol. 22, No 7, e1761.

## 4 State of digitalisation of selected public services

		Selected public services relevant for older persons			
		Access to health records	Public statutory pensions	Social benefits	Other (as relevant in your context)
Stage of digitalisation	Not digitalised (Y/N)	N	N	N	
	Information is available online (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	
	Transactions are possible online (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	
Recognition of groups at risk of digital exclusion	Service specific regulation recognises barriers to digital inclusion / vulnerable and disadvantaged groups (Y/N).	Y	Y	N <sup>37</sup>	
	<b>If yes, please list the barriers and groups that are mentioned.</b>	<p>Section 10 of the Health Care Act provides that services have to be accessible and equally available.<sup>38</sup> No specific reference to barriers and groups is made.</p> <p>The new Social and Health Care Act, which takes effect on 1 January 2023, stipulates that the wellbeing services counties (N=21) are obliged to ensure that their services</p>	<p>Section 54 of the National Pensions Act provides that in case a person due to e.g. illness or old age is not able to manage his/her pension matters, the Social Insurance Institution (<i>kansaneläkelaitos/folkpensionsanstalt en, KELA</i>) can approve that a family member or other person represents him/her.<sup>42</sup> No specific reference is made to digital services.</p>		

<sup>37</sup> No reference to digital inclusion or vulnerable and disadvantaged groups is made in the Act on Social Assistance ([laki toimeentulosta/lag om utkomststöd](#)), Act No. 1412/1997, 30 December 1997, and the Housing Support Act ([laki yleisestä asumistuesta/lag om allmänt bostadsbidrag](#)), Act No. 938/2014, 14 November 2014. These social benefits are managed by the Finnish Social Insurance Institution KELA.

<sup>38</sup> Finland, Health Care Act ([terveydenhuoltolaki/hälsa- och sjukvårdslag](#)), Act No. 1326/2010, 30 December 2010.

<sup>42</sup> Finland, National Pensions Act ([kansaneläkelaki/folkpensionslag](#)), Act No. 568/2007, 11 May 2007.

		<p>are available and accessible.<sup>39</sup> No specific reference to barriers and groups is made.</p> <p>The Client Data Act took effect on 1 November 2021. It regulates the electronic processing of health and social care data, including the right of the patient to decide on handing out personal health records to another actor within the health care sector. Section 18 stipulates that if a person is unable to comprehend the meaning of handing out such information, a legal guardian can make the decision.<sup>40</sup></p> <p>The national electronic health records Kanta can be accessed by the client through the personalized My Kanta pages.<sup>41</sup> The pages enable the client to see his or her health records and prescriptions and to request prescription renewal. The client can on the My Kanta pages also</p>			
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<sup>39</sup> Finland, Social and Health Care Act ([laki sosiaali- ja terveydenhuollon järjestämisestä/lag om ordnande av social- och hälsovård](#)), Act No. 612/2021, 29 June 2021, section 4.

<sup>40</sup> Finland, Client Data Act ([laki sosiaali- ja terveyshuollon asiakastietojen sähköisestä käsittelystä/lag om elektronisk behandling av kunduppgifter inom social- och hälsovården](#)), Act No. 784/2021, 27 August 2021, section 18.

<sup>41</sup> Finland, Kanta (2022), ['My Kanta Pages'](#) (*omakanta/mina kanta sidor*).

		save his/her living will and organ donation testament.			
<b>Multichannel access options</b>	<b>Telephone service (Y/N)</b> If yes, please describe what kind of personalised services it provides.	<p>Y</p> <p>The municipality is responsible for providing necessary health care services, including access to a client's health records if he or she is unable to access them through the My Kanta pages.</p> <p>The client can phone the local health center or book a telephone appointment with a nurse or doctor. Appointments can be booked by phone or online. Due to a congested telephone service, clients are advised in many municipalities to book appointments online.<sup>43</sup></p> <p>The client can request from the health center printouts of relevant health records.</p> <p>As of 1 January 2023, the municipalities will cease to be in charge of healthcare and social welfare in Finland. Instead 21 wellbeing services counties</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Telephone service in Finnish and Swedish is provided nationally Monday to Friday 9-16. A customer can leave a call back request and be phoned within the same day.</p> <p>A service expert is answering the phone calls. For complicated matters, KELA recommends that an appointment for telephone assistance is made online or by calling the telephone service.</p> <p>Telephone service regarding pensions is provided also in English (9-15) and Sami (9-11). Further, the service can be used with an interpreter.</p> <p>Through the telephone service the customer can manage his/her pension matters, receive digital</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Telephone service in Finnish and Swedish is provided nationally Monday to Friday 9-16. A customer can leave a call back request and be phoned within the same day.</p> <p>A service expert is answering the phone calls. For complicated matters, KELA recommends that an appointment for telephone assistance is made online or by calling the telephone service.</p> <p>Telephone service regarding social benefits is provided also in English (9-15) and Sami (9-11). Further, the service can be used with an interpreter.</p> <p>Through the telephone service the customer can manage his/her matters, receive digital support</p>	

<sup>43</sup> Finland, City of Turku (Turku/Åbo) (2022), '[Ajanvaraus puhelimitse](#)'.

		together with the City of Helsinki will take over the said responsibility.	support and submit an oral application. <sup>44</sup>	and submit an oral application. <sup>45</sup>	
	<p><b>Physical administrative access points (Y/N).</b>  <b>If yes,</b> please specify the level of availability (local, regional, national), the opening days and hours.</p>	<p>Y  Local level  There are approx. 160 public health centers in the municipalities, each health center may have several sub-centers.<sup>46</sup> Opening hours vary, the centers are generally open weekdays.</p> <p>As a rule, a visit to the health center requires a prebooked appointment by phone or online.</p> <p>Regarding prescriptions, pharmacies can provide a list of a person's all prescriptions and can also assist in their renewal.<sup>47</sup></p>	<p>Y  Local/regional level.  Kela has 130 customer service points throughout the country.<sup>48</sup> Opening hours vary depending on location, some require prebooked appointment. In bigger cities the office is open 3-5 hours per day from Monday to Friday.<sup>49</sup></p>	<p>Y  Local/regional level.  Kela has 130 customer service points throughout the country.<sup>50</sup> Opening hours vary depending on location, some require prebooked appointment. In bigger cities the office is open 3-5 hours per day from Monday to Friday.<sup>51</sup></p>	
	<p><b>Specific locations that facilitate offline access to the service (Y/N)</b>  <b>If yes,</b> indicate the location(s).</p>	N	<p>Y  There are 155 citizen service centers in the country which provide information on several</p>	<p>Y  There are 155 citizen service centers in the country which provide information on several</p>	

<sup>44</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>45</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>46</sup> Finland, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö/social- och hälsovårdsministeriet*) (2022), '[Terveyskeskukset](#)'.

<sup>47</sup> Finland, Kanta (2022), '[Reseptit](#)', webpage on the Kanta service.

<sup>48</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>49</sup> For more information on opening hours, see KELA's online [customer service locator](#).

<sup>50</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>51</sup> For more information on opening hours, see KELA's online [customer service locator](#).

	Please describe what kind of support is provided.		public services, including KELA's services. <sup>52</sup> The customer may obtain application forms, brochures and general information on benefits and online services and may also submit his/her application to KELA. The citizen service centers are located in e.g. town halls, libraries, and shopping malls.	public services, including KELA's services. <sup>53</sup> The customer may obtain application forms, brochures and general information on benefits and online services and may also submit his/her application to KELA. The citizen service centers are located in e.g. town halls, libraries, and shopping malls.	
	<p><b>Specific locations</b> that facilitate <b>online</b> access to the service (Y/N).  <b>If yes</b>, indicate the location(s). Please describe what kind of support is provided.</p>	<p>Y  Many municipalities have established citizen service centers in e.g. town halls, libraries and shopping malls. The services offered vary and may include general advice on accessing digital services as well as possibility to use computers and printers at the service center. The staff of the service center assist customers who want to access digital services, such as the My Kanta pages. This service has been widely used by old</p>	<p>Y  Remote KELA services are provided in 91 citizen service centers and 70 local service centers.<sup>55</sup> With the assistance of the staff of the service center, the customer can through a video link reach a KELA service expert.   The citizen service centers provide digital support, receive applications and assist in booking time for telephone service or physical visits to KELA's</p>	<p>Y  Remote KELA services are provided in 91 citizen service centers and 70 local service centers.<sup>57</sup> With the assistance of the staff of the service center, the customer can through a video link reach a KELA service expert.   The citizen service centers provide digital support, receive applications and assist in booking time for telephone service or physical visits to KELA's</p>	

<sup>52</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>53</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>55</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>57</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

		people e.g. in connection with printing corona certificates. <sup>54</sup>	service center. In the local service centers the main support offered is access to KELA's remote services. <sup>56</sup>	service center. In the local service centers the main support offered is access to KELA's remote services. <sup>58</sup>	
	<b>Other</b> – please indicate any other access channels to the service.	In accordance with section 23 of the Client Data Act, <sup>59</sup> a person can - through the Suomi.fi online platform - grant authorization to another person to act on his/her behalf in the My Kanta health records service (power of attorney). <sup>60</sup> The authorization requires that the person has personal bank codes. The Digital and Population Data Services Agency is presently examining the possibilities to grant authorization also without the usage of personal bank codes. <sup>61</sup>	Through the OmaKela e-service the customer may apply for benefits and manage decisions online. The service is available in Finnish and Swedish. With a power of attorney registered in the Suomi.fi service, a person can manage KELA matters on behalf of another person. However, it is not yet possible to complete or send an application on behalf of someone else. <sup>62</sup>  KELA offers services also on social media such as Facebook. Customers can send private messages to service	Through the OmaKela e-service the customer may apply for benefits and manage decisions online. The service is available in Finnish and Swedish. With a power of attorney registered in the Suomi.fi service, a person can manage KELA matters on behalf of another person. However, it is not yet possible to complete or send an application on behalf of someone else. <sup>64</sup>  KELA offers services also on social media such as Facebook. Customers can send private messages to service	

<sup>54</sup> Information obtained via telephone from Monitori Market Square of the City of Turku on 17 May 2022.

<sup>56</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>58</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>59</sup> Finland, Act on the electronic processing of client data in healthcare and social welfare ([laki sosiaali- ja terveyshuollon asiakastietojen sähköisestä käsittelystä/laq om elektronisk behandling av kunduppgifter inom social- och hälsovården](#)), Act No. 784/2021, 27 August 2021, section 23.

<sup>60</sup> Finland, Digital and Population Data Services Agency (*Digi- ja väestötietovirasto/myndigheten för digitalisering och befolkningsdata*) (2022), Suomi.fi platform, '[e-Authorizations](#)'.

<sup>61</sup> Information obtained from My Kanta's webpage '[Acting on behalf of an adult](#)'.

<sup>62</sup> Information obtained from KELA's webpage '[Toisen puolesta asiointi OmaKelassa](#)'.

<sup>64</sup> Information obtained from KELA's webpage '[Toisen puolesta asiointi OmaKelassa](#)'.

			experts or pose questions in the public comment section of FB. <sup>63</sup>	experts or pose questions in the public comment section of FB. <sup>65</sup>	
<b>Other forms of support for online use</b>	Please indicate any other <b>form of support to facilitate the use of the online service</b> for older persons such as easy-to-read versions, different language versions, etc.	<p>The Suomi.fi service provides information on available digital support services, including Q&amp;A of relevance also for older persons as well as a list of 85 digital support providers.</p> <p>In addition, the My Kanta platform offers an online training in Finnish and Swedish for new users.</p> <p>My Kanta operates in three languages Finnish, Swedish and English. Brochures on the service is available also in Inari Sámi, Skolt Sámi, Northern Sámi, Arabic, Somali, Sorani, Russian and Estonian.<sup>66</sup></p>	<p>KELA offers easy-to-read brochures of various benefits, including pensions in Finnish, Swedish, Sámi, English, Russian and Estonian.<sup>67</sup> The brochures include information on different ways to access the service, including online services.</p>	<p>KELA offers easy-to-read brochures of various benefits, including social assistance and housing allowance in Finnish, Swedish, Sámi, English, Russian and Estonian. The brochures include information on different ways to access the services, including online services.<sup>68</sup></p>	

<sup>63</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>65</sup> Information obtained via email from the Finnish Social Insurance Institution (KELA) on 13 May 2022.

<sup>66</sup> Information obtained from My Kanta's webpage '[Other languages](#)'.

<sup>67</sup> Finland, Social Insurance Institution (*Kansaneläkelaitos/Folkpensionsanstalten*), [Pensions and retirement. Briefly and in plain language](#), KELA

<sup>68</sup> Information obtained from KELA's webpage '[Esitteet asiakkaille](#)'.