Child and family policy in Finland

Financial support and family leave

The aim of Finland's family policy is to create a safe environment for children to grow up in and to provide parents with the material and psychological means to have and raise children.

In Finland, support for families consists of three elements: financial support, services and various types of family leave. The most important forms of support for families are child benefit, day care services, and maternity and child health clinics.

Financial assistance for families

Maternity grant

Every expectant mother who is a permanent resident in Finland is entitled to a maternity grant when her pregnancy has lasted at least 154 days, provided that she had a health examination before the end of the fourth month of pregnancy. Maternity grants are also available to adoptive parents.

Expectant mothers can choose to receive their maternity grant either as a lump sum in cash or in the form of a ma-ternity package. The maternity pack-

age contains clothes and child care items needed for a new-born child. Most families consequently opt for this "baby box" rather than the cash benefit.

Child benefit

Child benefit is paid from government funds for the sup-port of every child under the age of 17 residing in Finland. Child benefit is tax-free income. Eligibility is not affected by the family's financial situation. The amount depends on the number of children in the family.

Family leave system

Parental leave and childcare leave give both parents an equal opportunity to spend time caring for the child. Parents are entitled to maternity leave, paternity leave and parental leave based on pregnancy, birth and childcare. Maternity allowance, paternity allowance and parental allowance are determined on the basis of prevoius income and paid for the duration of the leave. Persons with no previous income receive the minimum allowance.

FAMILY LEAVES AND PAYMENTS DUE **DATE OF** GRADES REGINS -YEAR-OLD DATE -YEAR-OLD **BIRTH** -MONTH-OLD **SCHOOL** 1 AND 2 **K**(0) **FAMILY LEAVES PARENTAL LEAVE PART-TIME** PART-TIME CHILDCARE LEAVE **MATERNITY LEAVE** 158 weekdays **CHILDCARE LEAVE** 105 weekdays both mother and father but either father or mother, 50-30 weekdays before the expected due date not simultaneously not simultaneously father, mother or a hired caregiver Both parents can take partial parental leave during the same period **PATERNITY LEAVE 18 weekdays** 36 weekdays PART-TIME CHILDCARE LEAVE PAYMENTS FOR PART-TIME CHILDCARE LEAVE **PAYMENTS** MATERNITY ALLOWANCE PARENTAL ALLOWANCE appr. 70% of employment income FLEXIBLE CARE ALLOWANCE No allowances from PARTIAL CARE 3 years of age till ALLOWANCE of employment income schooling begins * One or two periods of at least one month PATERNITY ALLOWANCE The allowances are CHILD HOME CARE ALLOWANCE ** Earned income for the previous year, taxable income and DURING CHILDCARE LEAVE as confirmed for tax purposes, of employment income increase pension or income from the preceding 6 months + possible municipal supplement * Flexible, based on weekly working hours Weekdays mean Mon-Sat.



