

# Child Friendly Hämeenlinna

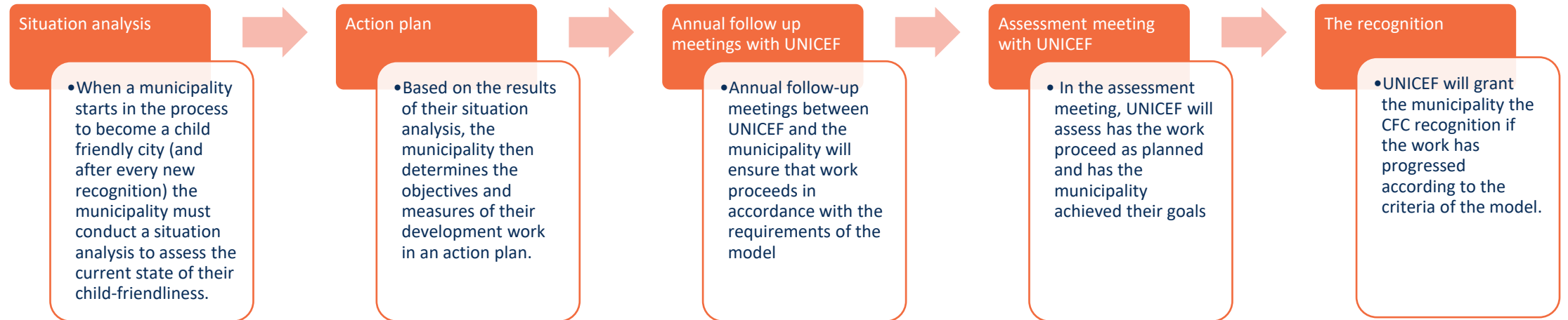
12.4.2023



# The Child Friendly Municipality initiative in Finland

- The Lapsiystävällinen kunta (Child Friendly Municipality) initiative in Finland has been active since 2012 and is led by the Finnish National Committee for UNICEF.
- The Finnish model of CFCI was developed in cooperation with the city of Hämeenlinna
- Hämeenlinna was selected as the pilot city because we were already involved in implementing child rights programming and Hämeenlinna were already working on child participation and other issues at a national level.
- As a result of the pilot project, in December 2013 the city of Hämeenlinna was recognized as the National Committee's first Child Friendly City (CFC).

# How to become a Child Friendly city



# Child Friendly municipality initiative in Hämeenlinna

- First CFC recognition in 2013, and the recognition has been renewed 4 times since (2015, 2017 and 2021)
- the latest recognition is from December 2021 and it is valid until 2025
- We conducted the latest situation analysis in 2022
- Big part of the situation analysis was to participate children and youth to the process
- We did inquiries and interviews with children of different ages and backgrounds and asked them what they thought about Hämeenlinna and what they would want to improve here. The children's answers were taken into account when we drew up the action plan
- The inquiries and interviews was done with cooperation with early childhood education, schools, youth work, and social services

# Action plan

- Our goals are
  1. The municipality's employees and key stakeholders have been familiarized with the rights of the child
  2. The municipality prevents discrimination by trying to influence the attitudes of the municipalities
  3. Assessments of child impacts are carried out systematically
  4. The municipality ensures that the basic level services for children and young people support the development of children's and young people's mental health in everyday life
  5. The municipality ensures that the participation of children in a vulnerable position is also realized
  6. The municipality prevents school bullying
- The aim is that we have reached these goals in 2025 and to renew the recognition

# Cross-sectoral coordination group

- According to the CFCI model when a municipality starts in the process to become a child-friendly city, the first step is to appoint a coordination group who is responsible for guiding the development process
- It is recommended that the coordination group is cross-sectoral and there should be also members of civil social actors and youth members
- In Hämeenlinna the coordination group consist members in all fields on the municipality and two youth council members
- There are also members of the three biggest civil social actors in the area that work in the field of children and youth
- The coordination group meets up about 4-5 times in a year
- In the meetings the coordination group discusses about current topics related to children and youth and monitors that the action plan is proceeding as planned
- Cross-sectoral coordination group ensures that the whole organization is committed to child-friendliness, not only those who naturally work with children and youth but also those who don't directly work with children

# Cooperation between other CFC in Finland

- There is very active network between all the CFC municipalities in Finland
- Currently there are in Finland 53 municipalities on board in the CFCI model.
- UNICEF organizes annual meetings with all the CFC municipalities where the municipalities can network and learn from each other





# Regional cooperation

- In Kanta-Häme region there is 7 (out of 11) municipalities on board in the model
- Municipality's CFCI coordinators in Kanta-Häme region have Teams -meetings monthly
- We share experiences and good examples and ask advices from each other and discuss what issues each municipality is at that time working on





# The Biggest Achievements

- The biggest achievements
  - Change of attitudes
    - The adults want to participate children and youth and their opinions are taken seriously. Children and youth are seen as equals as adults
  - The city leaders are committed into the CFCI model and they want to invest in children
    - We have our own Child Friendly Hämeenlinna program which is part of our municipality's strategy.
    - The program focuses on the development of child family services in a phenomenon-oriented manner
    - The Child Friendly Hämeenlinna program is valid until 2030

# The Child Friendly Hämeenlinna program

- In the Child Friendly Hämeenlinna program, the main theme is the happiness of the children and young people of Hämeenlinna.
- The theme of happiness is connected into five areas of well-being which are: learning, relationships, health, participation and safety
- As part of the Child Friendly Hämeenlinna program was developed a dashboard which contains the national's School Health Promotion (SHP) study's indicators which monitors the well-being, health and school work of Finnish children and adolescents.
- With the help of the indicators, we get information about what is happening to children and young people from Hämeenlinna in the topic of happiness and we can also compare the data to the data of other municipalities
- The aim is that in 2030 Hämeenlinna would have the most happiest children in Finland

# Good practices in Hämeenlinna

- The Youth council
  - Youth council have members in city council and boards
- Student councils
  - Every school has it's own student council
- The Culture Path
  - Culture Path provides culture experiences to everybody in early childhood education and in comprehensive schools
- The Get active near you –project
  - The main goal is to increase the wellbeing of children and young people by providing free hobbies during the school day
- "Make a difference day" and the Youth summit for 8th graders
  - The Make a Difference day is a co-operation process between schools, pupils, youth work and the town's decision-makers and officials
  - During the process 8<sup>th</sup> graders will gather initiatives and ideas for developing city services and after that they will introduce the initiatives to the town's decision-makers and officials.
  - Each school chooses one of their initiatives to the Youth Summit where the pupils decides which initiative gets 30 000 euros grant

# Thank you!

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Links:

[Child Friendly Hämeenlinna  
dashboard](#)

[UNICEF: Child friendly cities  
initiative](#)

