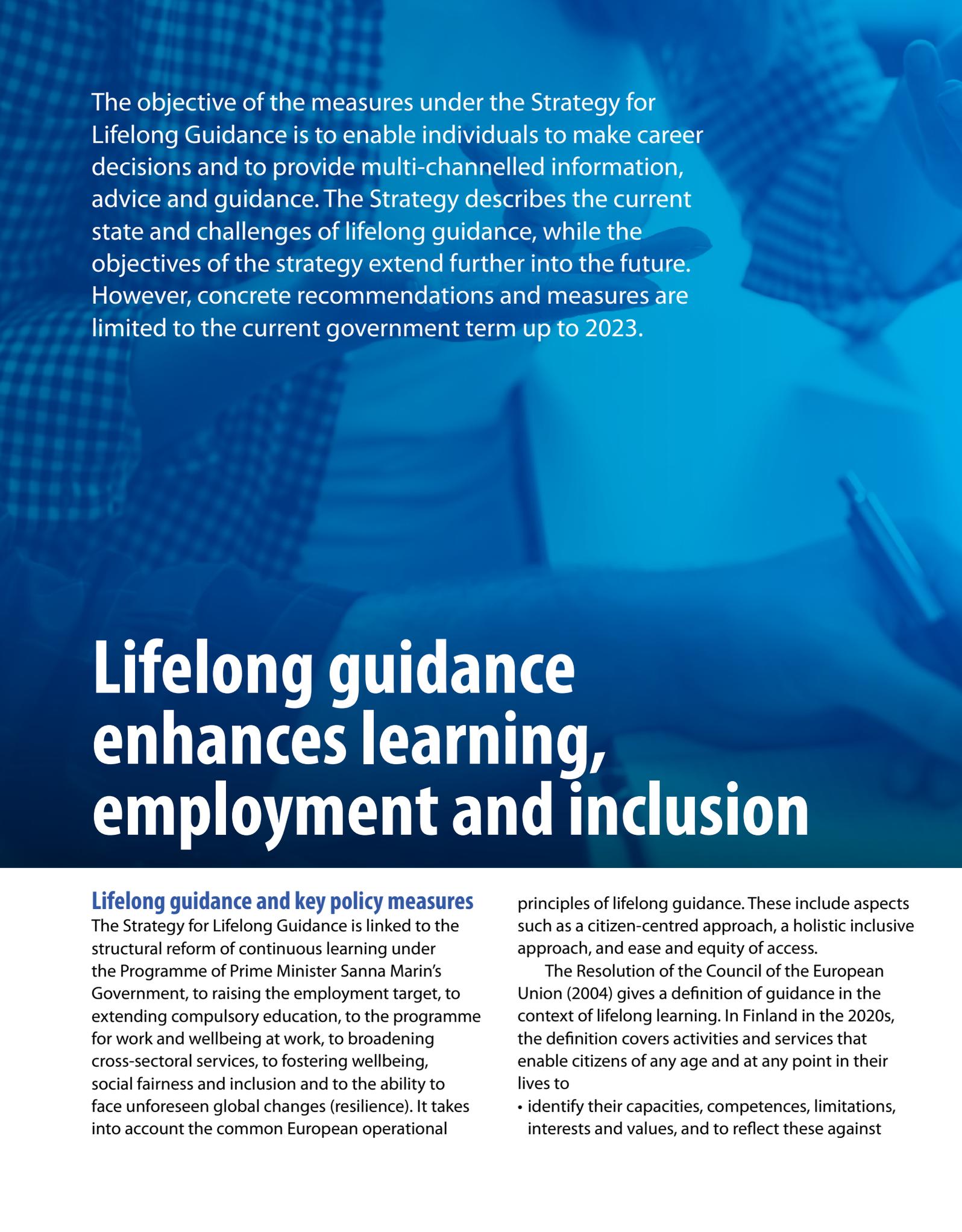




Strategy for Lifelong Guidance 2020–2023



The objective of the measures under the Strategy for Lifelong Guidance is to enable individuals to make career decisions and to provide multi-channelled information, advice and guidance. The Strategy describes the current state and challenges of lifelong guidance, while the objectives of the strategy extend further into the future. However, concrete recommendations and measures are limited to the current government term up to 2023.

Lifelong guidance enhances learning, employment and inclusion

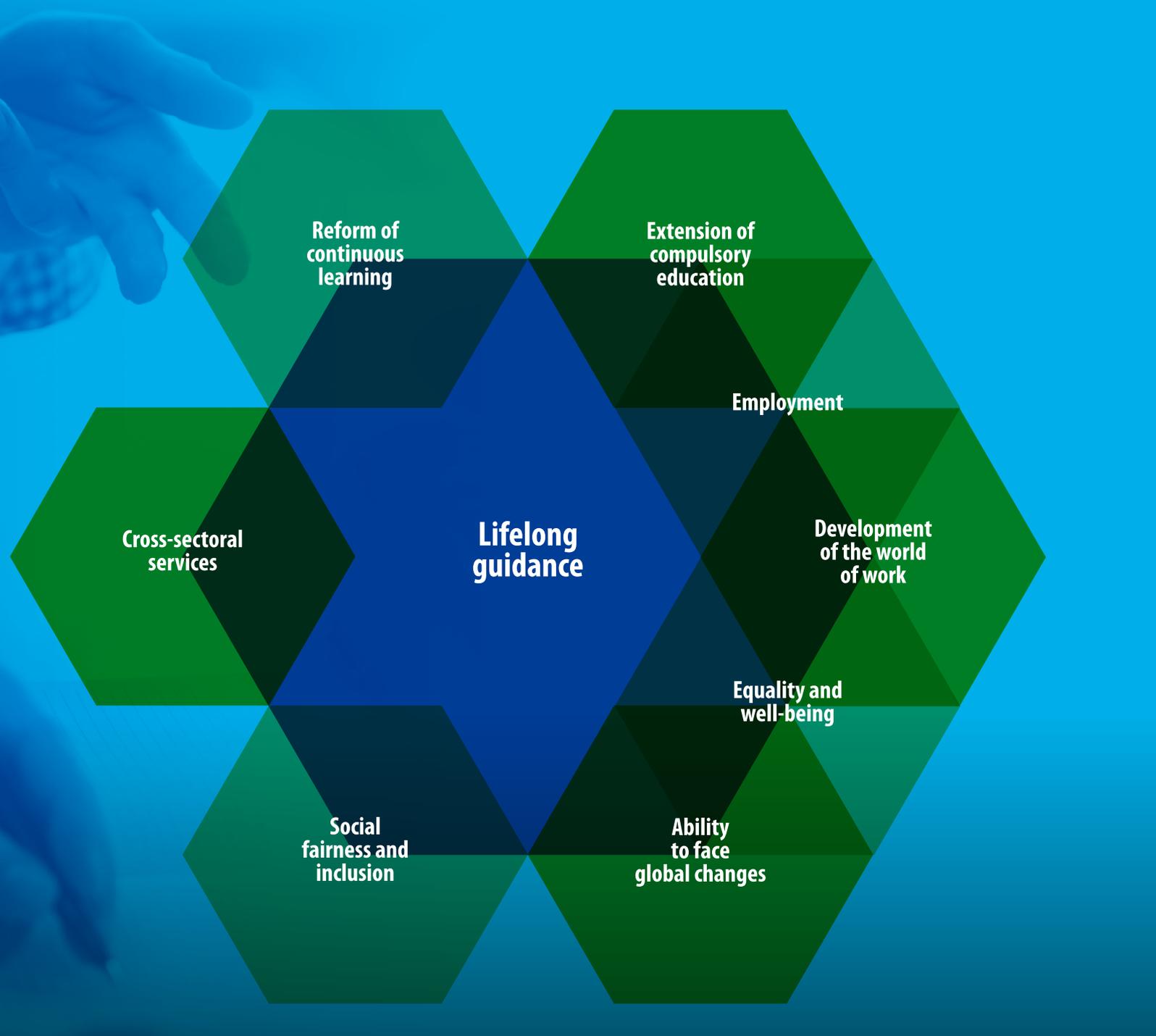
Lifelong guidance and key policy measures

The Strategy for Lifelong Guidance is linked to the structural reform of continuous learning under the Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government, to raising the employment target, to extending compulsory education, to the programme for work and wellbeing at work, to broadening cross-sectoral services, to fostering wellbeing, social fairness and inclusion and to the ability to face unforeseen global changes (resilience). It takes into account the common European operational

principles of lifelong guidance. These include aspects such as a citizen-centred approach, a holistic inclusive approach, and ease and equity of access.

The Resolution of the Council of the European Union (2004) gives a definition of guidance in the context of lifelong learning. In Finland in the 2020s, the definition covers activities and services that enable citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to

- identify their capacities, competences, limitations, interests and values, and to reflect these against



labour market opportunities and demands and against available settings in which these capacities and competences are learned;

- make meaningful plans and decisions on education and training, career paths and recreational activities and livelihood throughout their lives.

Follow-up to the implementation of the strategy

By early 2021, the Lifelong Guidance Forum and its Secretariat will draw up an action plan for

implementing and funding the proposals for the strategy. This includes a description and support for the role of regional lifelong guidance forums and networks for putting the strategy into practice. Key milestones and performance indicators will be defined for each key proposal. The Lifelong Guidance Forum will regularly monitor the implementation of the strategy and ensure that strategic objectives for lifelong guidance will be also set for the next government term.

Changes in the world of work, advances in technology as well as demographic trends imply robust education, new competences, upskilling and continuous learning. Guidance can contribute to smoother paths for education and training, better functioning of the world of work and inclusion.

Guidance brings added value to individuals, organisations and society

It has become more challenging for people to understand the functioning, changes and competence demands of the labour market, and it is more difficult for people to manage their educational and career paths. To support their decision-making processes, people are increasingly looking for and demanding reliable information and guidance, that can be easily digested. Guidance engages individuals with learning and clarifies pathways through learning and work.

Well-functioning guidance at different levels of education reduces the number of dropouts, promotes completion of qualifications and degrees and speeds up the transition to the world of work and further studies. In employment services, high-quality guidance makes it easier to match supply and demand. Moreover, support for acquisition of career management skills in work places and companies enhances staff commitment and boosts productivity.

Lifelong guidance is one of the key tools for supporting society in the transformation of the world of work and competences. Guidance can contribute to the acquisition of competences that are essential for employability, smooth transitions and the formation of suitable and meaningful paths for education and training and careers, whether in studies, paid employment, as an entrepreneur or in other forms of work. Besides direct economic outcomes, guidance can help achieve wider outcomes in society, supply of skilled labour force, skills match, better world of work and regeneration of the economy and society.

This Strategy and its proposals promote overall lifelong guidance as a continuum in which the objectives, capabilities and realistic opportunities of individuals, groups and society are combined by means multilateral cooperation both vertically and horizontally.



Identified needs for developing lifelong guidance

Lack of equal opportunities for career development

A wide range of information, advice and guidance services already exist in Finland. These services are, at least in principle, accessible to everyone, but in practice they fail to reach some people.

Complex nature of guidance

The complex nature of guidance services has proved to be necessary, but different projects and funding lack comprehensive, systematic and evidence-based coordination.

Fragmented development of digital guidance services

To build a functional and comprehensive multi-sector and multi-channel digital ecosystem, we need consistency and more systematic cooperation between government sectors at national level.

Global phenomena imply rethinking of guidance skills

People engaged in guidance work are expected to constantly update their competence in education and training provision, the labour market and the guidance systems. They are also required to possess flexible digital skills as well as an understanding of how the COVID-19 pandemic impacts society, and how climate change, demographic trends, racism and gender segregation affect individual people's educational and career choices.

A hand holding a pen is shown writing on a document. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. A dark green hexagonal shape is positioned on the right side of the image, containing the text "Evidence-based".

**Evidence-
based**

**Accessible and
customer-oriented**

High quality

**Equally and
sustainably**

**Cross-sectoral
and coordinated**

Digitally

**Lifelong guidance
– Strategic objectives and
recommendations for action**

The long-term goal is that everyone has the potential and skills to make well-informed and conscious plans and decisions on education and careers in a changing world of work.

Accessible and customer-oriented

Over the government term of 2020–2023

We will create more equal opportunities for people of all ages to harness the information, advice and guidance services they need throughout their life by

- bringing in more resources for guidance in different sectors, taking into account a customer-oriented approach to outreach groups with special needs;
- promoting multi-channelled guidance and encouraging guidance providers to diversify their service channels;
- by increasing needs and skills assessment within the context of guidance and by making use of cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary cooperation to build personalized guidance, education and training and service paths as a lifelong continuum.

We will strengthen acquisition of career management skills for people of all ages in education, working life and transition phases of life by

- launching a project to promote career management skills;

- coordinating the development of self-help career development tools;
- incorporating these objectives and contents in an appropriate manner in core curricula and qualifications and degrees.

We will promote recognition and validation of competences, upskilling and career guidance in workplaces by

- making career development and guidance services easier to use and more readily available at workplaces in cooperation with public and private service providers;
- developing methods and tools for skills assessment and career development for those at work, utilising labour market forecasts and increasing awareness of upskilling and career development.

We will strengthen regional cooperation and networks to create customer-oriented services, including by strengthening and consolidating the functioning of regional cross-sectoral lifelong guidance forums and networks.

The long-term objective is a well-functioning entity of digital services for continuous learning, in which guidance and career development are at the centre, serving lifelong learners smoothly, including the use of artificial intelligence.

Digitally

Over the government term of 2020–2023

We will ensure the practical implementation of a set of digital services for continuous learning by 2023, where guidance and career development are at the core. The purpose is to create a well-functioning digital ecosystem of guidance and skills assessment services that will make better use of shared information on education, the labour market and competences.

Digital information systems support the systematic data collection and production of information needed for the management of lifelong guidance services and system development. These systems will be integrated into the digital ecosystem for continuous learning.

Labour market forecasts will be better utilised in guidance services so that real-time and easily accessible data on the labour markets can be used to support individuals, education providers and guidance services.

Within the scope of the practices of lifelong guidance and guidance services, the digital skills of individuals and those engaged in guidance work will be enhanced.

The long-term objective is that those engaged in guidance work have the capabilities and competence to perform high-quality, multi-channelled guidance work.

High quality

Over the government term of 2020–2023

We will produce national descriptions of core and specialist competences in guidance work.

To strengthen the professionalism of guidance, we will launch an overall evaluation of education and training for guidance professionals. It will examine the competence needs of guidance professionals in various contexts, different educational paths and structures as well as contents for training programmes both in Finnish and Swedish languages.

We will evaluate the need for structural reforms for training of career professionals. The evaluation will take into account whether the training meets the diversifying guidance needs, mobility of career professionals across the sectors and continuous learning during their own career.

The long-term objective is that guidance promotes an equal, fair and diverse society in Finland.

Equally and sustainably

Over the government term of 2020–2023

We will use guidance to advocate national and international professional and regional mobility.

We will make sure that all guidance activities are in line with ethical principles and take into account the objectives of anti-racism, language and gender awareness, demographic change and climate and sustainable development objectives. We will focus on meeting the needs for guidance among specific user

groups (e.g. those with neurocognitive difficulties, those with a low level of educational attainment and persons with disabilities and long-term illnesses), on competence in guidance and on guidance procedures and practices.

We will increase guidance provided in different languages and we will ensure that the guidance is available in both Finnish and Swedish.

The long-term objective is that the sectors responsible for guidance co-operate smoothly with clear division of labour. Measures to develop guidance that are prepared in different sectors will be jointly planned and implemented through multi-administrative cooperation between different administrative branches.

Cross-sectoral and coordinated

Over the government term of 2020–2023

We will establish a permanent national representative structure to coordinate overall lifelong guidance and to support national, regional and local actors, for example as part of the continuous learning and employment service centre.

We will utilise both national and international benchmarks in the planning and implementation of national guidance and counselling services.

We will improve the support, legislative measures and evidence-based management of cross-sectoral guidance services in dialogue with the continuous learning and employment service centre.

The long-term objective is evidence-based lifelong guidance system and policy development. We can enhance both national and regional evidence-base by national cross-sectoral monitoring and impact assessment of guidance services. Knowledge-management tools bring continuity to guidance throughout life.

Evidence-based

Over the government term of 2020–2023

We will set common indicators and evaluation tools for lifelong guidance across sectors. We will offer support for the introduction of the evaluation tools. We will collect information on the availability, quality, impact and outcomes of guidance services in different sectors.

We will develop permanent procedures and means to systemically share nationally collected and jointly structured data to support the development of guidance services across different sectors.

Activities will be managed increasingly based on evidence at all levels: national, regional, local, organisational and expert level.



MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION AND CULTURE
FINLAND

In May 2020, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Education and Culture set up a National Lifelong Guidance Forum and a Secretariat to prepare a new Strategy for Lifelong Guidance in Finland.

An extensive publication of the strategy in Finnish:
Strategy for Lifelong Guidance 2020–2023:
National Lifelong Guidance Forum, feasibility study as an appendix
<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-536-8>

#ElinikäinenOhjaus

Strategy for Lifelong Guidance 2020–2023