

Innovative Practice 2015: Finland/Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (215)

Title

Providing accessible candidate lists and other election materials for visually impaired persons

Finland – Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (FFVI)

Summary of Project

During the Finnish parliamentary elections in 2011 the Ministry of Justice, in cooperation with the Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (FFVI), for the first time financed the production of accessible candidate lists for visually impaired persons, including audio and Braille. The Ministry also funded the production of other accessible election-related materials, such as information on voting procedures. The FFVI was responsible for the production and distribution of all accessible materials.

Quote

“The voting experience should be independent, from beginning to end.”

Maria FINSTRÖM, Organization Secretary, Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired

Facts & Figures

- In 2014 the Ministry produced 13,500 lists in audio format and 250 in Braille.
- Since 2011 these visual aids have been available in every election on all levels in Finland.

Problems targeted

Prior to 2011 the list of candidate in Finnish elections were not accessible to everyone, as they were only published in print or on the Internet.

Solution & Methodology

The practice of producing candidate lists in audio and Braille formats is a simple way to significantly enhance the political participation of visually impaired people. The visually impaired have been directly

involved in both the planning and implementation of the project, as the FFVI has been responsible for the project's practical work.

Outlook & Transferability

Depending on the election system, the practice is easily transferable to other countries. Notably, the Finnish Ministry of Justice deems this a cost-efficient practice.

Contact

Maria FINSTRÖM

Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired

Marjaniementie 74

FIN-00030 IIRIS Finland

+358 9 3960 4669

maria.finstrom@nkl.fi

Nominated by: Maria FINSTRÖM