



# Role of Non-governmental Organisations (NGO) in Preventing Public Health Problems

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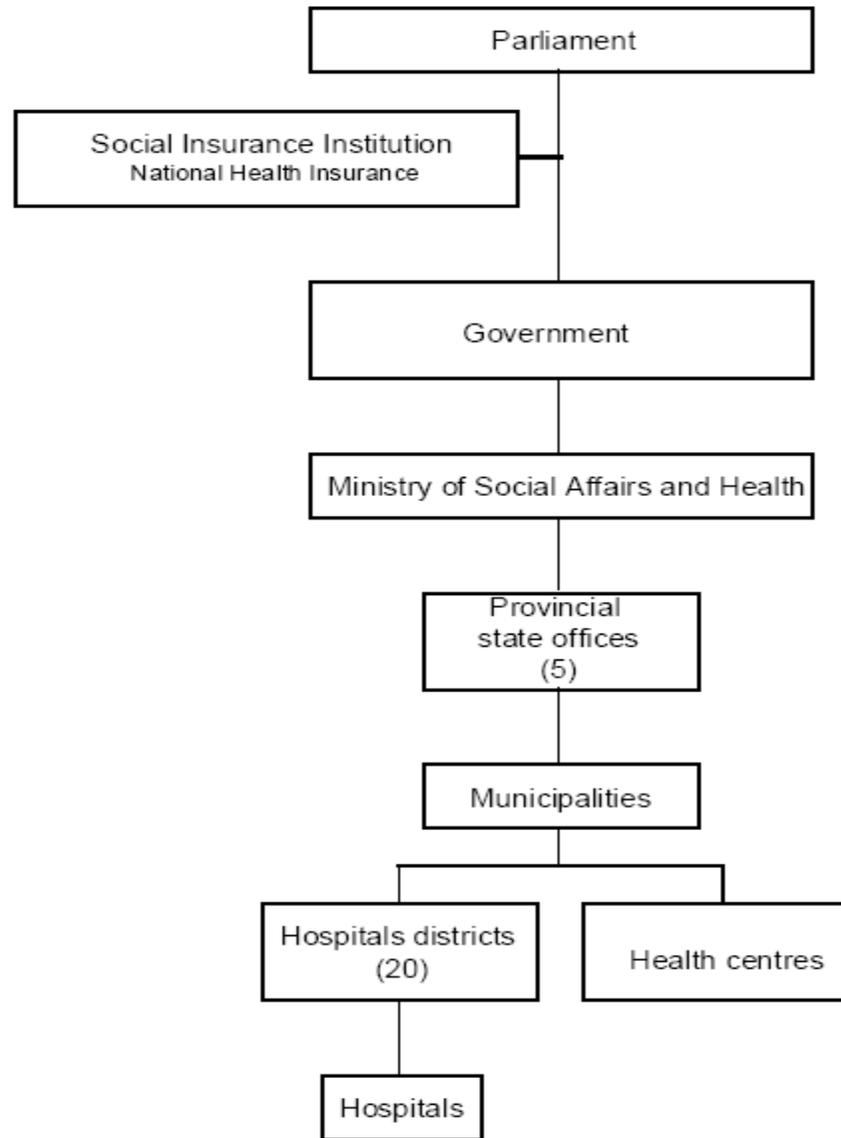
# Structure of the presentation

- ▶ Health care in Finland
- ▶ Non-profit public health organisations (NGO)
- ▶ Financial boundaries between state and NGOs
- ▶ Basis for auditing health care and NGOs
- ▶ Basis for auditing health prevention programmes
- ▶ Goals of the audit
- ▶ Methods
- ▶ Audit findings and recommendations
- ▶ Further challenges
- ▶ Discussion and further development



## Health care in Finland

- ▶ The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health directs and supervises the development of social welfare and health-care services and policies
- ▶ Parliament has legislative power on health care
- ▶ Local authorities are mainly responsible for arranging and healthcare services including preventive services
- ▶ Non-profit organisations also play a key role in preventing public health problems





# Non-profit public health organisations

- ▶ Long tradition of organisations in Finnish society
- ▶ Slot Machine Association started its work 1938
- ▶ Role of organisations changed after war
  - ▶ Activities of associations found new contents
  - ▶ New function as interest groups
  - ▶ New organisations of patients
  - ▶ Main support to child protection, associations of disabled, housing for elderly
  - ▶ Service production of organisations
  - ▶ Supplementary health and social services



# Financial boundaries between state and NGOs

- ▶ Slot Machine Association, RAY, has an exclusive right in Finland to operate slot machines and casino table games, and to run a casino
- ▶ In 2007 the Slot Machine Association granted 306 million euros to non-profit organisations
- ▶ Ministry of Social Affairs and Health agree main principles for directing funds
- ▶ Government decides final distribution of RAY profit



# Basis for auditing health care and NGOs

- ▶ Audit mandates
  - ▶ Right to audit authorities receiving economical support or benefits from the state
  - ▶ Addition to audit mandate concerning The Slot Machine Association
- ▶ Financial significance
- ▶ Promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness and financial management
- ▶ Produce audit information to the Parliament
- ▶ NGOs' major funding from state budget



# Basis for auditing health prevention programmes

- ▶ Societal costs of health problems are extensive
- ▶ Over 40% of adult Finns suffer from chronic diseases
- ▶ Cardiovascular, diseases, cancers, chronic pulmonary diseases, musculoskeletal disorders, allergies, diabetes and mental health disorders
- ▶ Significant direct and indirect economic impacts
- ▶ Significant funding to NGOs for health prevention projects



## Goals of the audit

- ▶ To evaluate
  - ▶ Effectiveness of funding provided by the Slot Machine Association to prevent major public health problems
  - ▶ Preconditions for effectiveness of selected health prevention projects
  - ▶ Management of funding
  - ▶ Results of the health prevention projects
  - ▶ Role of health prevention at government health policy level



# Methods

- ▶ Case study of seven projects
- ▶ Classification of project characteristics
- ▶ Study of evaluations concerning the projects
- ▶ Study of application process and specific project applications
- ▶ Interviews



# Audit findings and recommendations

- ▶ Successful factors concerning case study of seven projects – programme to prevent type 2 diabetes
  - ▶ Extensive planning
  - ▶ Communication planning
  - ▶ Risks considered
  - ▶ Profound documentation and data collection plans
  - ▶ Action plan for prevention programme
  - ▶ Screening of risk population and interventions
  - ▶ Evaluation of effectiveness
  - ▶ Strong connections to local health care level



## Audit findings and recommendations (cont.)

- ▶ Case study of seven projects – critical audit findings
  - ▶ Shortcomings in the project planning
  - ▶ Problems concerning target setting
  - ▶ Lack of diversified interventions
  - ▶ Organisations do not always have appropriate resources to conduct broad action programme
  - ▶ Promoting health has been left up to NGOs



## Further challenges

- ▶ The role of non-profit organisations in preventing major public health problems is unclear
- ▶ Preventive health care tasks have increasingly been allowed to slide out of the public sector
- ▶ Health care projects should be better coordinated and linked to other preventive activities arranged by local authorities
- ▶ The growing economic significance of public health problems – preventive work should receive more attention at national and local level



## Discussion and further development

- ▶ Health prevention Government programmes
- ▶ Renewal of health care legislation
- ▶ Reconstruction of municipal structure
- ▶ Development of health prevention organisation structures
- ▶ Further co-operation between NGOs and public authorities



## Sources

- ▶ Funding provided by the Slot Machine Association to prevent major public health problems. Performance Audit Reports 117/2006. National Audit Office of Finland.
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