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## Reaching Multi-diverse Populations with Health and Social Services. A Finnish Perspective

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# Presentation Outline

- The maternity and parental benefits in Finland
- Maternity package – an unique Finnish benefit
- Maternity and Child Health Clinics
- Additional support provided for special groups
- Breastfeeding education of health professionals
- Finnish breastfeeding support chain of care



# Maternity and Parental Benefits in Finland

- Maternity leave, allowance is paid for the mother for about 4 months, up to maximum of 70% of previous year's income.
- Main eligibility requirement is that the mother has been covered by the Finnish social security ("Kela") for at least 6 months before due date.
- Paid parental leave is available after maternity leave, for mother or father, for approximately 6 months.
- Separate paternity leave for 9 weeks.
- Mother or father can care for the child at home until the child is 3 years old. Home care allowance is about 343euros/month for first child.

# The Maternity package /Äitiyspakkaus

- A kit is granted by the Finnish social security institution, Kela, to all expectant or adoptive parents who live in Finland or are covered by Kela system.
- Provided that the mother visited a doctor or municipal prenatal clinic before the fourth month of pregnancy, offering a strong incentive for mothers to seek prenatal care

## Maternity package



# Maternity and Child Health Clinics

- Health care and advice is provided **free of charge** in the maternity and child health clinics for those who have a municipality of residence in Finland. Many cities like Helsinki provide care to all pregnant women and minors even without residency.
- Breastfeeding counselling is provided to all by public health nurses during individual visits or in group counselling or in connection with home visits.
- Public health nurse can provide an interpreter for foreign clients. In Helsinki in some areas 50% clients need an interpreter.
- Families in need of special support are identified and intensive counselling is provided.
- More intensive counselling is also provided in breastfeeding

# Additional support for special groups

## From health and social services:

- Breastfeeding outpatient clinics connected to hospitals or maternity clinics locally. Available to all mothers.
- Interpreter for foreign clients during maternity care visits

## Additional support from third sector:

- Breastfeeding Support Association "ITU" offers peer support groups for all mothers (45 groups, some bilingual)
- Young mothers can get additional support from "Girls' House" young mothers' groups (many groups are led by a professional breastfeeding counselor)
- Single mothers can get additional support from Single Parent Associations' peer support groups
- Intercultural families are referred to Duo Family meetings and web self-study family training courses
- Rainbow families are referred to support services from the Rainbow Families association

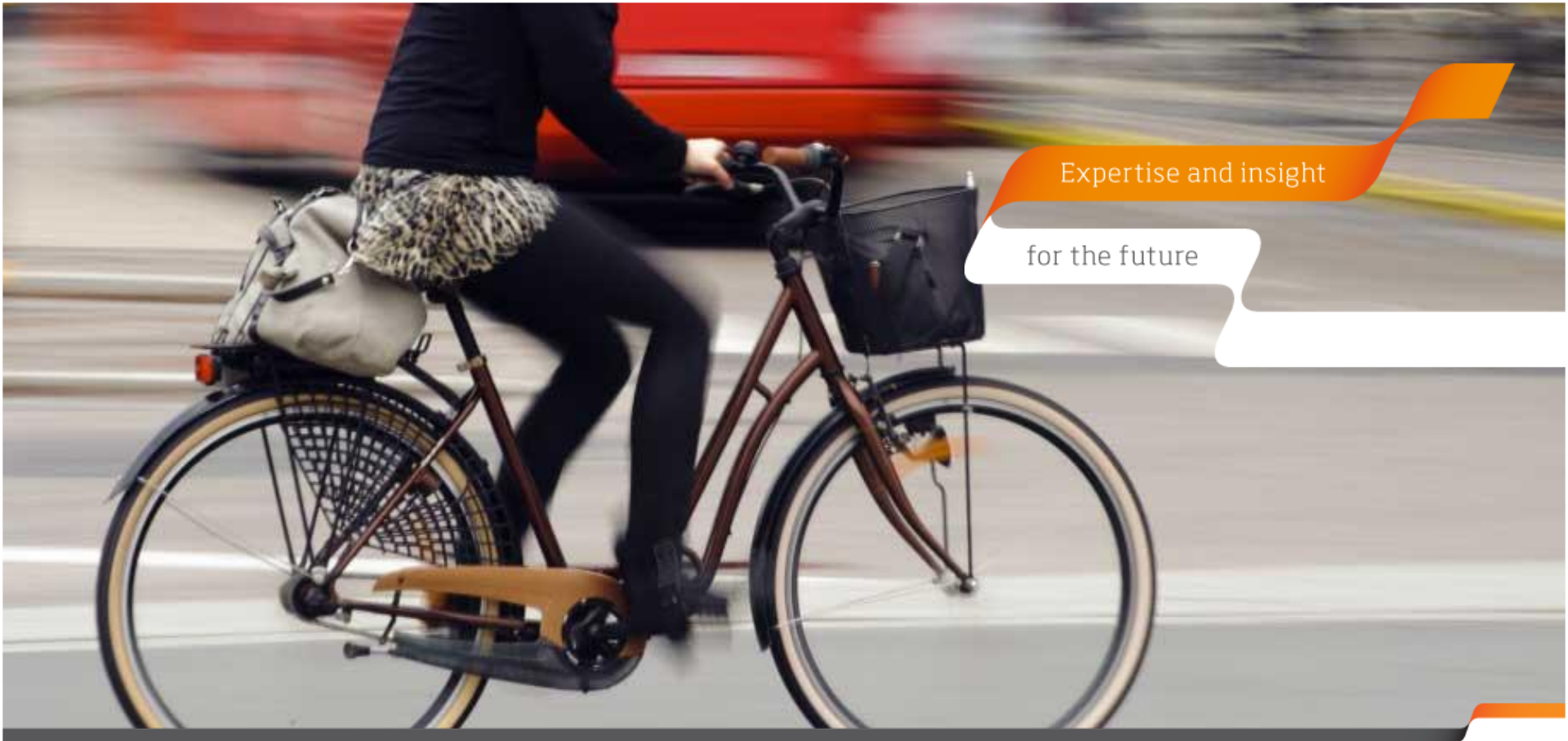
# Breastfeeding Training for Health Care Professionals in Finland

- Nationally, majority of public health nurses have WHO 20 hour training in breastfeeding counselling. In Helsinki all are trained and it is the curriculum of new public health nursing students
- All midwives have at least WHO 20 hours training of breastfeeding counselling
- There are about 200 (7,5 Cr) trainers of breastfeeding counselling who work in the hospitals, municipalities or private sector.
- There are 16 IBCLC's who work in public or private sector
- At the moment the problem is that many medical doctors, neonatal nurses and dental hygienists lack breastfeeding knowledge resulting to conflicting advice to parents

# Finnish Breastfeeding Support Chain of Care

- The Network of Trainers of Breastfeeding Counselling organises yearly a free two-day seminar for members as continuous education
- We co-organize a free public Breastfeeding Day seminar together with breastfeeding peer support group (ITU) and affiliates in Metropolia University
- Folkhälsan trains doulas to give breastfeeding peer support for Swedish speaking Finns
- ITU trains peer supporters, supports a webpage and a telephone helpline run by trained volunteers. It also hosts local support group meetings throughout Finland, sometimes in co-operation with local public health nurses
- All parts of this chain collaborate, so that families would get the kind of care they need





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THANK YOU! Questions?

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