

Finland: EIB continues healthcare financing – loan for new Kainuu hospital



Kainuu Central Hospital

An artist's impression of the new facility in Kajaani in 2021

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Kainua-alianssi / Sweco Architects

[Kajaani, Finland]

- **EUR 78 million loan to replace current outdated facilities.**
- **Hospital to serve regional population and provide primary healthcare in Kajaani city area.**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has signed a EUR 78 million loan to Kainuu Social and Health Care Joint Authority ("Kainuun sote") in North-Eastern Finland. The loan will support the construction of the new hospital in the city of Kajaani, to replace the current outdated facilities. As the existing facilities are no longer fit for purpose, the new construction will allow the hospital to provide more efficient healthcare services.

The hospital will provide all major healthcare specialties for the regional population, as well as primary healthcare functions in Kajaani city area. The new building will be designed and equipped with a strong emphasis on the integration between primary and specialised care, as well as social services. The layout of the building is also expected to lower the workload of resident staff compared to the current, outdated facilities.

Vice-President **Alexander Stubb**, responsible for EIB-lending in Northern Europe, said: "After other recent care-related loans, I think this further operation clearly underlines the EIB's intent to support the Finnish healthcare sector. It is necessary to provide top class healthcare all over Finland, also in very sparsely populated areas like the Kainuu region. I think we can only be proud to support this project."

Director of Kainuu Social and Health Care Joint Authority, the patron of Kainuu new hospital project, **Maire Ahopelto**, emphasises the opportunities opened up by the new central hospital to develop digitalised services in a large scale: "The new central hospital will be a modern example of an intelligent hospital reaching its operations far beyond its walls. This kind of opportunities are even more important here than in big cities."

European political parties: revised funding rules adopted

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On 26 April 2018, the Council adopted revised rules on the funding of European political parties and foundations.

The new rules target certain abusive practices such as the creation of spurious entities for the purpose of receiving EU funding. Some of the changes will facilitate access to EU funds; others will help tackle fraud. Transparency will be increased.

This reform is important and timely. It will ensure that EU funds go to European political parties with a distinct political agenda, corresponding to the European citizens' needs and expectations. It also includes tougher measures against misspending and abuse. I very much hope that, with elections to the European Parliament coming up next year, there will also be much greater public awareness of the links between political life at the European level and in member states.

Monika Panayotova, Deputy Minister for the Bulgarian Presidency of the EU Council

The main changes are the following:

- **Stricter requirements for forming a European political party:** in future only parties – and no longer individuals – will be able to sponsor the creation of a European party. Cross-party membership will be prohibited;
- **More proportional distribution of funding:** the fixed amount each party receives from the EU budget will be reduced from 15% to 10%. This leaves a larger share of the budget (90%) which will be allocated in proportion to the number of members of the European Parliament in each party;
- **Easier access to funds:** the co-financing requirement will decrease from 15% to 10% for European political parties and to 5% for European political foundations, making it easier for them to reach the required level of own resources;
- **Stronger enforcement:** the new rules allow in certain cases for the

recovery of money from individuals who are responsible for the misuse of EU funds. De-registration of parties which have provided false information will also become simpler;

- **Increased transparency:** European political parties will in future only be able to receive funds if their EU member parties display the logo and programme of the European party on their websites.

The formal adoption of the new rules by the Council today concludes the legislative process. They are expected to be signed on 3 May. They will then be published in the EU Official Journal and enter into force the following day.

The funding for the current financial year (2018) will not be affected. However, in order to receive EU funds for 2019, the parties and foundations will have to comply with the new rules.

In some cases, such as for the display of logos and programmes, transitional arrangements will apply to ensure a smooth introduction of the new rules.

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