



## **Annex 5. Resolutions adopted by the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament, 22.-23.5.2015**

This is list over the short decisions of adopted resolutions (total 41). For full adopted resolutions which include the resolution background text, see FEP home page ([www.usp.fi](http://www.usp.fi) > Session 2015, or: [www.usp.fi](http://www.usp.fi) > Activity > Resolutions)

### **COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL AND OFFICIAL ISSUES**

#### **1. The Government Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns for 2012–2016 to be updated from the beginning of 2017**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Government Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns for 2012–2016 be updated so that the government may adopt it in time for it to enter into force from the beginning of 2017. The Ministry of the Interior is asked, in cooperation with the Finnish Expatriate Parliament, to coordinate the updating and **sharpening** of the Government Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns for the next implementation period in the same way as in preparing the current Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns.

#### **2. Postal voting for expatriate Finns and Internet voting**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that because postal voting improves voting conditions for expatriate Finns, it must be speedily implemented. This requires amending the Election Act (714/1998) and allocating funds for this purpose through a framework decision by the government. The Speakers' Council is given the task to speed up the implementation so that postal voting can be made possible for expatriate Finns already in the next national elections. In addition, Internet voting, as another voting method of the future, should be taken seriously and investigated carefully.

#### **3. Expatriate Finns to have a separate electoral district in Finnish parliamentary elections**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the possibilities of establishing electoral districts for expatriate Finns in parliamentary elections be investigated.

#### **4. Impediments to individual mobility between Finland and expatriate living**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Speakers' Council investigate what kind of impediments and restrictions to living in Finland are experienced by expatriate Finns.

### **COMMITTEE ON CITIZENSHIP ISSUES**

#### **5. Notifying citizenship of another country to the Finnish population register to be simplified**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Finnish consulates must be authorized to verify original certificates of foreign citizenship on behalf of the Finnish population register and to inform the population register about this.



**6. Change of domicile at birth in the Finnish passport of a person with dual citizenship**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament resolved not to handle the initiative but states that the Secretariat of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament must inform expatriate Finns about the possibility to check one's own data and about how important it is to do so. In case of any ambiguities related to the population register, one should turn to the Jakobstad Unit of the Local Register Office of West Finland.

**7. A mobile passport unit, passport issuing point to be established in Frankfurt**

**8. A mobile passport issuing point (mobile passport unit) to be established in Europe**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that it investigate the possibility to establish a mobile passport unit in Central Europe and another, additional unit in Southern Europe in order to shorten the distances that citizens need to travel in order to apply for a new passport.

**9. Handling fee for passports applied for in Finnish missions abroad to be reduced**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the price of a passport applied for at a Finnish diplomatic mission abroad be reduced to the same level as the price of passports applied for in Finland.

**10. Filing an application for a passport of a European Union Member State with the authorities of another European Union Member State**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament resolved not to handle the initiative, because the matter is not yet topical.

**11. Online passport applications to be made possible also for Finnish citizens residing abroad**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior actively continue their efforts to develop online services so that it becomes possible to introduce electronic passport applications and a simplified passport application procedure also in Finnish missions abroad.

**12. The validity of Finnish passports to be extended to 10 years**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior actively continue investigating the possibility of issuing Finnish passports for ten years instead of five years.

**13. The process of renewing Finnish passports to be developed**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that in connection with renewing passports Finland adopt the practice in use in the UK, where any unused months of the validity period of the old passport, up to six months, are added to the validity period of the new passport.



## **COMMITTEE ON SENIOR ISSUES**

### **14. Pensions**

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament does not express an opinion on the initiative as such, because the pension application processes and decisions of expatriate pension applicants are affected at an individual level by a wide variety of factors, such as periods of residence and employment in different countries, and such information may also be requested by the pension authorities of EU Member States and social security agreement countries, as well as the Finnish authorities. The Finnish Expatriate Parliament concludes that Finnish earnings-related pensions can already be applied directly from authorized pension providers based on the data included in the pension accruals registers maintained by the Finnish Centre for Pensions and Keva.

### **15. Kela pension decisions in EU languages**

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament concludes that Finnish authorities issue pension decisions in an official EU language, either Finnish or Swedish, and any pension decisions issued within the European Union in an official EU language are valid in another EU Member State according to the EU's social security regulation. Nevertheless, the Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that each decision be supplemented with a certificate/translation of its content in an official language of the pension applicant's country of residence.

### **16. A Declaration on the Rights of Older Persons for the UN**

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament urges the Speakers' Council and the Secretariat to investigate opportunities to propose adoption of a Declaration on the Rights of Older Persons, as the percentage share of elderly people is rising sharply both globally and in Europe in particular. Such United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Older Persons would draw attention to the needs and rights of the elderly population and to the extent to which human rights are realized among elderly people.

### **17. Cooperation between Finnish and Australian authorities in Finns' pension applications**

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament urges the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health as the Competent Authority referred to in the Agreement between the Republic of Finland and Australia on Social Security as well as the Finnish Centre for Pensions and Kela, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, as the liaison bodies for pension matters to work toward the creation of a flexible practice for processing Finnish and Australian pension applications submitted by expatriates in order to clarify and accelerate the process in cooperation with the Australian liaison body, Centrelink. The Finnish Expatriate Parliament considers it important that pension applicants are informed of the pension application process.

## **COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES**

### **18. Kela's maternity packages for expatriate Finns**

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Secretariat of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament has verified that the maternity package is a benefit available for mothers falling within the Finnish social security system. Similar packages are currently available for purchase through a private company.

### **19. Dissemination of information about access to health care**

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**



## ULKOSUOMALAISPARLAMENTTI

UTLANDSFINLÄNDARPARLAMENTET – FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament urges relevant parties involved in the Finnish health care system to inform public health care services more effectively of the legislative amendments governing access to health care effective as of January 1, 2014.

### **20. A permanent social worker for the Spanish Costa del Sol**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs reconsider the establishment of a permanent social worker's post in the Spanish Costa del Sol.

### **21. Expanding the coverage of the European Social Insurance Card to Turkey**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament urges the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to take action to expand the coverage of the European Social Insurance Card to also apply to Finns vacationing and residing in Turkey.

### **22. Taxation of expatriate Finns as summer workers in Finland**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament demands that the Finnish Tax Administration promptly amends the taxation of pay received from Finnish summer jobs by young expatriate Finns to correspond to that of pay received from summer jobs by young people permanently residing in Finland.

## **COMMITTEE ON STUDY AND TRAINING ISSUES I**

### **23. Authorization to provide Basic Education in the Arts to be granted also for education provided abroad**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that Section 3 of the Act on Basic Education in the Arts (authorization to provide education) be amended by adding the following sentence as the last sentence of the second subsection: *The authorization may also be granted for education provided abroad.*

### **24. Remedial teaching in Suomi Schools for children with beginner level skills in Finnish**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes to the Ministry of Education and Culture that, in order to secure the teaching of children with elementary level Finnish in Suomi Schools, the group size required for state subsidy be reduced from six to four students so that teaching can be tailored to individual needs.

### **25. Completing a National Certificate of Language Proficiency outside Finland**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that in order to support the official languages of Finland, the law on National Certificates of Language Proficiency be amended to make it possible to take the general language proficiency tests in the official languages of Finland even outside Finland.

### **26. Activities for children under 3 years in Suomi Schools to be included in the state subsidy**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health determine which of the two ministries is responsible for supporting the activities organized in Suomi Schools for children under 3 years of age. The Finnish Expatriate Parliament also



## **ULKOSUOMALAISPARLAMENTTI**

UTLANDSFINLÄNDARPARLAMENTET – FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT

proposes that the responsible ministry extend the state subsidy to cover educational activities offered by Suomi Schools to children under 3 years of age and to increase the budgetary appropriation reserved for Suomi Schools accordingly.

### **27. Funding for Suomi Schools to be secured**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament reminds the Ministry of Education and Culture that it must comply with the will of the Finnish Parliament and increase the subsidy allocated to the Suomi Schools by making a permanent increase in the budgetary appropriations to the Suomi Schools.

### **28. A separate state budget heading to be established for Suomi Schools**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that a separate budget heading for Suomi Schools be established in the state budget.

## **COMMITTEE ON STUDY AND TRAINING ISSUES II AND YOUTH ISSUES**

### **29. Vocational education and training and university education to be kept free of charge for students from outside the EU**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament appeals to the Finnish authorities to keep studying in Finnish vocational and higher education institutions free of charge also for Finnish expatriate students from outside the EU.

### **30. Securing the operating conditions for Finnish comprehensive schools abroad**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Ministry of Education and Culture specify the content of the authorizations of the existing Finnish comprehensive schools and upper secondary school abroad so as to safeguard the possibility of Finnish citizens to flexibly receive education within the Finnish educational system in Finnish and return to Finland.

### **31. Participating in the entrance exams of Finnish higher education institutions outside Finland**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Speakers' Council take action to encourage Finnish universities and polytechnics (universities of applied sciences) to investigate the possibility of organizing their entrance exams abroad at the same time as in Finland, for example in Finnish embassies and honorary consulates.

### **32. Taking the entrance exams of Finnish higher education institutions in English**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament requests the Speakers' Council to take action to encourage Finnish universities and polytechnics (universities of applied sciences) to investigate the possibility of preparing entrance exams also in easy-to-read plain language.

### **33. Good learning conditions to be secured in European Schools**

RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Finnish authorities take action to improve the learning conditions of Finnish pupils in the European Schools, to increase the effectiveness of catering to pupils with special educational needs, and to introduce allocations for the necessary personnel into the budget of the relevant administrative sector.



## **ULKOSUOMALAISPARLAMENTTI**

UTLANDSFINLÄNDARPARLAMENTET – FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT

The Secretariat together with the Speakers' Council should also investigate whether the European Schools could issue a proof of education, for example, corresponding to the Finnish comprehensive school leaving certificate, to those pupils who do not complete the European Baccalaureate.

### **COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL, INFORMATION, AND FINANCIAL ISSUES**

#### **34. Adding a special day for expatriate Finns to the Finnish calendar, marked with a flag symbol as a flag-flying day**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the University of Helsinki Almanac Office take action to include the Day of Expatriate Finns in the calendar and that it recommend the day as a customary voluntary flag-flying day by marking the date with a flag symbol no later than the beginning of 2017, as was done with the Europe Day and the United Nations Day subsequent to including these in the calendar. The flag symbol is proposed to be added in honor of the centennial of our national independence in 2017, which is also the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament. The Ministry of the Interior is asked to support the undertaking such that it will recommend August 5 as the customary flag-flying day. Expatriate Finns are encouraged to adopt the flag-flying day, and the Secretariat of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament is urged to encourage the introduction of the flag-flying custom at home and abroad, which will improve the chances of achieving the objective as it catches on.

#### **35. Tourist information about Finland in German**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament urges Visit Finland to transfer the content on the current [visitfinland.fi](http://visitfinland.fi) website under another (domain) name in order to avoid confusion. The reason for this is that the [visitfinland.com](http://visitfinland.com) and [visitfinland.fi](http://visitfinland.fi) websites are clearly intended for different target groups and their almost identical (domain) names cause mix-ups around the world. The Finnish Expatriate Parliament further urges Visit Finland to maintain its websites in as many languages as possible.

#### **36. TV broadcasts from Finland**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament urges the Finnish Broadcasting Company to continue to broadcast programs to Sweden and ensure their diversity and the balance between Finnish- and Swedish-language programming. Finns residing in Sweden are dissatisfied with the change in TV Finland's programming structure, which took place in January 2014. The Finnish Broadcasting Company is urged to develop its services on TV Finland and Yle Areena so as to make an increasing number of programs available to viewers outside Finland.

#### **37. Possibilities of expatriate Finns to follow the Finnish media**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament urges the Ministry of Transport and Communications to investigate the ways in which Finnish communication services are offered to expatriate Finns. The Ministry is also urged to investigate the availability of the programming offered by the Finnish Broadcasting Company (Yle) in different parts of the world and the ways in which communication geared toward expatriate Finns is being developed. Furthermore, the Ministry is urged to propose the establishment of a channel intended for expatriate Finns to the Finnish Broadcasting Company or some other relevant party.

#### **38. The FEP's financial accounts and budget**

##### **RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:**

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament proposes that the Finland Society continue to support the Finnish Expatriate Parliament and present a report on the expenses related to the operations of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament to the Financial Committee and the Speakers' Council also at the next session of the



# ULKOSUOMALAISPARLAMENTTI

UTLANDSFINLÄNDARPARLAMENTET – FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT

FEP. The Finnish Expatriate Parliament urges the Finnish Parliament and Ministry of Education to pay attention to the Government Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns, which states that the policy of the Finnish government is to secure the operating conditions of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament.

## COMMITTEE ON STATUTORY ISSUES

### 39. The status of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament to be reviewed

#### RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament tasks the Speakers' Council with taking immediate action to establish the status of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament and to have it enshrined in legislation. The Finnish Expatriate Parliament also urges the Finland Society to investigate how the status of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament can be made official in practice and to take action to promote the matter.

### 40. The right of the Speakers' Council to submit initiatives

#### RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

Article 5 of the by-laws shall be amended as follows: "Each Finnish expatriate community, having ratified the by-laws, *the Speakers' Council*, and the Finland Society have the right to submit initiatives to the Finnish Expatriate Parliament."

### 41. Amendments to the Standing Order of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament

#### RESOLUTION OF THE FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT:

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament resolves to amend the Standing Order as follows (amendments in boldface):

#### 4 §

The Finland Society will send the registrants the agenda for the session, including all motions ~~as well as requested expert opinions by officials and other parties~~, no later than one month before the session. A report on the procedures carried out to execute the decisions of the previous session is to be issued at the same time. **A summary of the motions and the report of activities shall be published on the website of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament.**

#### 6 §

Parliamentary sessions are led by the ~~speakers' council speaker~~. **If he or she is unable to attend, the session shall be led by a vice chair of the Finland Society, or, if they are unable to attend, a deputy speaker elected by the speakers' council.**

#### 7 §

At the beginning of each session, the Parliament will ~~decide on the size of the committees, elect members of the standing committees, decide on establishing other possible committees, and elect their membership~~. **decide on the proposal by the speakers' council on the committees in accordance with article 7 in the by-laws.** The speaker will appoint summoners for the committees. The committees will elect the necessary officials by themselves. The committee sessions are closed **for outsiders**.

#### 8 §

After coming to order, the Parliament's work will proceed with a general debate on the Finland Society's report. At the same time, the discussion will act as the preliminary debate on the motions. ~~The decisions on referring the bills to proper committees will be made at the end.~~ During the general debate, every representative is entitled to state his or her opinion on any issue related to Finnish expatriates or expatriatism, regardless of whether there has been a motion made on the matter. Permissions to speak are to be requested in writing and allotted in the order received. By the Parliament's permission, the speaker can limit the length of the allotted speaking times, digress from the agenda or declare the discussion finished. Short counter-statements or rebuttals are allowed in connection with each statement. In regard to the general debate, a decision can be made on including an urgent matter in the agenda and its referral to the appropriate committee. Committees may consult experts if they wish.



# ULKOSUOMALAISPARLAMENTTI

UTLANDSFINLÄNDARPARLAMENTET – FINNISH EXPATRIATE PARLIAMENT

## 12 §

**The Finland Society secretariat of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament will draw up the minutes of the parliamentary session, to be inspected by the speakers deputy speakers. No later than two months after the session, the minutes are to be sent by e-mail to all member communities of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament and to all representatives and observers who participated in the session. The minutes shall be published on the website of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament.**

(\*)