

Which parties have the greenest policies?

An opinion piece for Aalto University Student Union (AYY) by Nick Walters, 18th May 2021

Municipal elections are held on 13th June 2021. Here I explore each party's stance on environmental issues and encourage you to vote for a candidate and party representing your concerns. I explain why parties (not only candidates) are important, share my opinions on the major parties and what they are based upon, and present an optimistic vision for the future!

"I vote for an individual candidate. Why should I care about the parties' positions?"

I originally come from a highly antidemocratic country with archaic electoral laws. My vote counts for nothing because the first-past-the-post system means that the only constituency in which I am eligible to vote has never been won by a party that represents me. Party politics is central to the system, and that's toxic. I am therefore highly appreciative of Finland's highly proportionally representative democracy.

I have, however, always been sceptical when Finns have told me that they vote for a candidate, rather than a party. Whilst I value the ability to directly connect with candidates or elected representatives with differing opinions and interests, it's always worth considering two issues when deciding which candidate to vote for in an election:

- Each party fields tens or hundreds of candidates in each municipality. Of those, the party-list system of proportional representation means only a small proportion—if any—are elected. Every vote for a candidate contributes to their party's list and share of elected representatives, so your vote for an individual candidate still counts towards a party.
- While each representative is an individual with their own stances, they often vote along party lines. This is because party representatives—to different extents—share a similar ideology or vision which ties in with that party's underlying motivations. It may also be damaging to a politician's career to constantly rebel against the party line.

For these reasons, it's important to consider not only the personal interests of the candidate you vote for, but also their party's underlying political and economic aims and motivations, as well as its track record.

"How can I know what a party stands for?"

Reading electoral programmes is a useful start, but if you want to truly understand what the parties stand for, you need to analyse them more deeply. A candidate or party who sets out environmental targets may easily compromise on some of those aims, once in office, if the targets conflict with the party's economic motivations. Economics are the dominant factor within any party. It's therefore advisable to set aside any preconceptions you have about each party, and look into the parties' aims, motivations, and track records. You can do this by reading news articles, scrutinising how each party voted on issues that are important to you, and discussing with politically knowledgeable people with different backgrounds and perspectives, whom you trust. You may even discover that you are compatible with a party you had previously dismissed!

"What are your opinions of parties based on?"

My opinions of parties are based on a mixture of analysing candidates' or parties' 2021 Municipal Election programmes (Helsinki), parties' 2019 Finnish and EU Parliamentary election programmes, news articles, and voting records, as well as many years of discussions with diverse people with differing motivations and opinions. I have summarised my opinions of each major party's social, economic and political motivations as part of my analysis of their environmental action.

"The article's title focusses on green policies. Why are you writing about social, economic and political issues?"

Social, economic, political and environmental issues are inherently interlinked. For example:

- Environmental challenges may affect some sociocultural or socioeconomic groups more than others;
- Environmental solutions may be beneficial to some social groups whilst being detrimental to others;
- Political action on environmental issues often has short-term economic costs but long-term economic benefits.

Now let's take a look at the eight major parties (those which won 3% or more of the vote in the 2019 Parliamentary election):

PS Finns Party | Perussuomalaiset | Sannfinländarna

PS is a nationalist populist party promoting ultraconservative social, economically liberal, and overtly anti-environmental policies. PS denies the urgency of climate change, or even that it's caused by anthropogenic activity. Its 2019 programme states that climate action should not affect industry, employment, or living costs. PS believes pollution in Finland should not be any higher or lower than in the rest of the EU and that Finland should not lead the way in reducing emissions. It does not set out any environmental protection targets, instead seeking to reduce business tax to the minimum allowed in the EU and reduce energy tax. Almost every issue in its programme involves blaming immigration. PS threatens racial, religious, sexual and gender minorities and is strongly linked to fascist organisations that promote hate speech against minorities.

If PS aims to reduce immigration to Finland, it should in fact prioritise climate action. Unsustainable land use and industrial practices (incl. agriculture) cause drought, flooding, desertification, and low productive soils. In 2017, of 30.6 million refugees from 135 countries, 60% were displaced directly by natural disasters, the prevalence of which is amplified by climate change. Conflict is another major cause of displacement, and while conflict often appears to be driven by politics or religion, the underlying cause is usually a race to secure natural resources, which are increasingly threatened by climate change.

Ironically, PS' predecessor (The Finnish Rural Party) was formed from a breakaway from the Agrarian League (now Kesk.) and its populist founder was responsible for resettling Karelian refugees. Presumably, coming from a Finnish subethnicity, Karelians were more "palatable" than contemporary refugees, though they also faced discrimination. Present-day PS is founded on many of the same nationalist populist and ultraconservative positions of its predecessor, blaming "cultural elites" and immigration for economic issues. Other fascist parties have used the same tactics throughout history. PS does this under the guise of backing people who have been "left behind" by liberal economic policy, while paradoxically supporting similar policies on reducing business tax, which would leave less money for addressing social (and environmental) issues.

Committing to climate action is the main route by which Finland can contribute to reducing human suffering and the number of refugees seeking asylum. Instead, PS ignores these challenges and opportunities in favour of using nationalism and archaic social values and misleading economic policies to recruit voters, leaving behind the very voters it claims to work for.

Kesk. The Centre Party of Finland | Suomen Keskusta | Centern i Finland

Kesk. is an agrarian party promoting socially conservative, economically neoliberal, and anti-environmental policies. Along with PS, it is a significant threat to environmental action. It has dominated Finnish politics over the last three decades, leading four of the seven most recent governments and currently having the second most cabinet seats. In cabinets containing the party since 1991, every Minister for Agriculture & Forestry and two Ministers for the Environment have been from Kesk. Its voters are predominantly rural voters in communities where these industries are important livelihoods.

It's absolutely correct that rural voters should be represented by a party standing for their economic interests. Whether Kesk. achieves that is highly debateable. Superficially, Kesk. attempts to differentiate itself from the "right" and "left" by appearing to protect rural workers and industries with "centrist" economic policies. In reality, under the guise of backing entrepreneurs, it advocates for neoliberal policies that benefit large business owners, not SMEs. Although Sámi people represent only a small group (~10,000), Kesk. policy has diminished their rights over their indigenous land, and some Kesk. representatives have even used deceptive methods to gain undeserved influence in the Sámi Parliament.

In a 2018 document on its political principles, Kesk. makes various claims which can be discredited by observing its track record. Its "powerful emphasis on democracy" is undermined by its selling of rights to environmentally destructive mining in Talvivaara to Prime Minister Sipilä's relative and then attempting to silence state media journalists. "Recognising strengths of a decentralised society" is undermined by lobbying for centralised administration of major national and EU subsidies for unsustainable factory farms, many of which are owned by their own representatives. It claims to promote communalism, counter individualism, and promote growth for "everyone", whilst its policies benefit only a very narrow group within society (wealthy landowners), and constant growth is environmentally unsustainable. It "demands that execution of economic activities is socially responsible, open and transparent", while its attempts to suppress the media and deregulate the economy directly contradict these aims. In April, Kesk. overreached its political mandate by prolonging budget negotiations from two days to eight and holding the coalition to ransom. To prevent its dissolution, the coalition was forced to agree to on Kesk.'s condition that the government waters down already weak legislation to reduce peat consumption in the energy mix by half by 2030. Peatland habitats are essential for biodiversity. Accumulating at a rate of ~1 mm per year, peat cannot be considered to be "renewable". Peat mining and combustion releases greater volumes of greenhouse gases than coal, per unit of energy produced. These issues have profound effects on the Finnish and global climate, habitat and ecology.

There is a misconception among Kesk. voters that impending changes to rural industries will inevitably have detrimental effects on rural livelihoods, families and communities. That needn't be the case. Despite an abundance of trees, clear-cutting forestry practices are extremely unsustainable, degrading land, releasing emissions, destroying habitat, and reducing biodiversity. Excessive production and consumption of highly emitting dairy products and industry lobbying contribute to poor cardiovascular health and animal suffering. Instead, the party could actively embrace novel technologies and practices among its voter base, such as continuous cover forestry, renewable fuels, or plant-based meat/dairy alternatives. Technological developments, changing consumer demand, and strengthening global environmental policy make these changes inevitably necessary and Finnish SMEs are already leaders in this sector. Instead of conservative attitudes towards novel approaches within target rural sectors, Kesk. should embrace these changes and support its voters in transitioning.

Kok. The National Coalition Party | Kansallinen Kokoomus | Samlingspartiet

Kok. is an economically neoliberal party containing both conservative and liberal social elements and anti-environmental policies. Historically a socially conservative party formed after the Civil War from the re-merging of the conservative, tsar-appeasing Finnish Party and its liberal, anti-Russification breakaway, the Young Finnish Party, Kok. long opposed social welfare, until it realised in the 1970s that it couldn't succeed in a country where welfare is considered fundamental. Similarly, since the Thatcher-Reagan era, it has increasingly tried to capture a broader voter base by diluting its conservative values to instead promote individualism. Nowadays it even claims to back LGBTQIA+ rights and support refugees, while deeply conservative elements remain in prominent positions in Kok. Its mayoral candidate recently withdrew in opposition to the party's dominant strategy of appeasing far-right PS (a serious threat to the safety of the minorities Kok. claims to support).

The main position of the party is one of being "pro-business", in favour of lowering taxes and reducing regulation. Beyond that, all of its policies exist to try to attract a broad selection of different social groups who think they might one day "make it big". In that sense, it's somewhat akin to the UK's New Labour, a "broad church" claiming to represent everyone, whilst implementing policies benefitting large businesses and transferring public assets to wealthy individuals at the expense of everyone else. It's more aligned, however, with the UK's Conservative Party, a neoliberal-conservative party which (post-2010) introduced same-sex marriage and claimed to be "the greenest government yet", before: introducing fracking

(extremely destructive natural gas extraction); attempting (but failing) to privatise forest management; pushing forward with New Labour's high-speed rail link (destroying 108 ancient woodlands); and implementing the harshest imaginable austerity programme, leaving millions reeling in poverty and reliant upon foodbanks. Kok. also tries to build the impression that everyone can “succeed” as an entrepreneur and use this as a justification for liberalising the market, much like the “American dream”. How are these examples relevant to Finland? Neoliberal economics, rabid individualism and consumerism, and dying communities harm the majority of voters and have long been debunked by economists. Kok. is directly influenced by these political approaches: convince people that by removing “red tape”, they can control their own destiny; then, gain power, privatise public assets, deregulate the market, and leave a handful of people with significant assets to profit from exploiting others’ labour and the country’s natural resources! It’s a highly effective strategy, successfully employed for decades across diverse economies to liberalise systems and concentrate wealth. Unfortunately, most people lose out. Concerningly, the party has recently been attracting people of colour to stand as candidates under their “pro-entrepreneur” banner, while they are presumably unaware of the party’s failure to support minority communities.

On environmental issues, Kok. is similarly disingenuous. Prior to the 2019 election, its large advertising campaign involved roadside signs saying “your car belongs to you”, and telling voters in interviews that environmentalist parties would ban the use of private vehicles, a gross misrepresentation of those parties’ policies. Last October, they unveiled a plan to scrap car tax, claiming it would enable consumers to buy low-emission vehicles. A blanket scrapping of the tax will do little to guide consumers towards expensive low-emission vehicles; an effective policy would rather be to scrap tax only on low-emission vehicles, making them affordable to all, and leave tax in place on highly polluting vehicles, while phasing them out altogether.

More fundamentally, committing to taking radical climate action means making an ideological commitment to prioritise the environment, habitats, species, and people affected by environmental challenges. Humans are intrinsically linked with the natural resources that support their existence. Addressing social inequalities means making a similar ideological commitment to prioritise the average person, rather than the financial interests of big business and shareholders. Economically, Kok. is at direct odds with principles of protecting the environment and the welfare of the average person.

KD Christian Democrats in Finland | Kristallidemokraatit | Kristdemokraterna i Finland

KD is a socially ultraconservative and economically conservative religious party with weak environmental policies. It was founded via a breakaway from Kok. and undemocratically ties up Judeo-Christian religious principles with the state, a concept which most voters consider unpalatable. By using nationalistic language that asserts that Finnishness is inherently Christian, KD implies that nonreligious and non-Christian religious people are not truly Finnish. This different approach to PS achieves the same goals of disempowering anyone who doesn’t fit into their interpretation of Finnishness.

In terms of economics, KD doesn’t differ significantly from Kok., though being a minor party, and with religion on the decline in Finland, it is poorly equipped to achieve its economic aims. Socially, it vocally rejects women’s right to bodily autonomy and opposes rights for LGBTQIA+ people. In other words, it automatically disregards the rights of over half of the population.

KD’s environmental programme consists of highly generalised themes like “let’s make the waters near us clean, the nature and parks cosy”, “we defend smooth and affordable public transport”, and “we promote reusing, renewable energy and reducing waste”. These themes are so vague that they are meaningless. KD does not put forward any concrete measures for environmental protection and does not consider the complex trade-offs and benefits associated with climate policy.

RKP Swedish People’s Party | Svenska folkpartiet | Suomen ruotsalainen kansanpuolue

RKP is a socially liberal party with good environmental policies undermined by its neoliberal economic stance. It’s therefore firmly more centrist than Keski. RKP was founded to represent the Swedish-speaking minority and has been highly successful in securing protections for the Swedish language. In recent years, it has sought to attract immigrant voters, some of whom face racial discrimination, and many of whom face challenges in the job market due to the difficulty of Finnish language. RKP has positioned itself as being supportive of asylum seekers, LGBTQIA+ rights, and individual freedoms.

Economically, RKP is similarly neoliberal to Kok., but like KD, is a small party lacking significant traction on these policies. Recently, RKP has become a strong proponent of environmental and global responsibility. Having a similar economic stance to that of Kok., however, means its environmental concerns are often at odds with its economic motivations. RKP further undermines its pro-environment stance by backing fur-farming, a cruel and ecologically destructive practice which is being phased out in other countries. It backs it because most fur farms are located in predominantly Swedish-speaking regions.

SDP The Finnish Social Democratic Party | Suomen Sosiaalidemokraattinen Puolue | Finlands Socialdemokratiska Parti

SDP is a social democratic party with somewhat socially liberal policies, a centrist economic stance, and contradictory environmental policies. Founded as a democratic socialist party and central to the independence, suffrage, and workers’ rights movements in the early 20th century and the establishment of the welfare state, the SDP has been a fundamental part of developing Finland’s relatively equitable society. Democratic socialism is an antiauthoritarian economic system in which workers collectively own the means of production, as opposed to free-market liberal democracies, economic systems in which owners of wealth are free—to differing degrees—to accumulate further wealth by exploiting workers and natural resources. All parties mentioned so far are economically liberal, advocating fewer checks and balances on how wealth can be accumulated and concentrated among a minority. For much of its history, SDP remained true to its socialist roots and advocated against this concentration of wealth. Over time, as the party’s policies became reinforced through the welfare state being a central characteristic of Finnish society, the threat of wealth disparity became ignored by politicians across the spectrum. In the 1990s, social democratic parties across the world adopted a new set of policies as they faced

increasing pressure to attract voters away from the new Thatcher-Reagan school of neoliberal thought. Neoliberalism made many people think in individualistic and materialistic terms and distracted from the collectivist and equitable principles of socialism. SDP followed other social democratic parties, and the definition of “social democracy” morphed from meaning “a democratic form of socialism” into meaning “a partially-regulated capitalist economy with strong welfare components”.

Since the 1990s, like the UK’s New Labour, the SDP has been complicit in the economic deregulation and transfer of public assets to private shareholders that has also occurred in Finland. During the unpopular 2015–2019 Kesk./Kok./PS government, SDP commendably shifted back from the centre-right to the centre-left. Its socioeconomic stance and its interaction with environmental issues, however, remains highly complicated. SDP still has strong links to most trade unions and superficially always appears to act in the interests of workers, though in reality they have recently sided with Kok. and Kesk. on austerity measures. Since many workers are employed by big businesses, SDP treads very carefully when it comes to holding them to account. Although it has publicly promoted increasingly centre-left policies, the party is in no way radical enough in its current form to transform the economy, challenge exploitation, or genuinely represent the working or middle classes. This means that it often works to protect unsustainable, old-fashioned industries which are decreasingly competitive. It lacks the vision to make substantial investments in new technologies and sectors which could provide employment opportunities to its target voters. It sets ambitious climate goals for Finland, but has no choice but to include Kesk. as its largest coalition partner, which works against environmental progress. Its climate goals are also medium-term, meaning that it won’t be held accountable if it is no longer in government, if and when those goals fail to have been met.

Being the largest party left-of-centre, SDP will be an essential partner for addressing environmental challenges, but a more radical attitude is required. If its leadership dares to take bolder and more optimistic, concrete steps, it can be a leader of the necessary, inevitable transformation, protecting its working-class voter base in the process.

Vihr. The Greens | Vihreä liitto | Gröna förbundet

Vihr. is an environmentalist party with liberal social and economic policies. It was founded by environmentalists and former Liberal People’s Party members. Socially, it’s closely aligned with RKP and Vas. and promotes equitable treatment of people of all identities, including strong LGBTQIA+ policies, and welcomes refugees. Incorrectly, it is perceived by a large proportion of the public to be a left-wing party because of its social liberalism. In reality, its representatives have economic stances varying from centre-left to neoliberal, with the right of the party having been dominant.

Undeniably, Vihr. is one of the leading environmentalist parties in Finland and it has a set of ambitious and concrete climate and ecological goals. It’s highly problematic for its environmental policy, however, that the party lacks a unified set of economic policies. Similarly to Kok., it attempts to appeal to diverse voters. In the case of Vihr., those voters agree that climate change and other environmental issues are the most urgent of our generation. They may include anyone, from highly disadvantaged workers or unemployed people, to financially secure and even very wealthy people. Whilst at first glance it may appear positive that people from across the socioeconomic spectrum support climate action, unfortunately the voices of disadvantaged people are often marginalised when powerful interests are involved within the same discussion.

Inevitably, although Vihr. has sometimes rejected cooperation with Kok. on a national level, having resigned from the 2002 and 2014 cabinets over decisions to support new nuclear power plants, it has still facilitated their governance, and in Helsinki City, it has often sided with municipal austerity measures promoted by Kok. In 2020, a budget surplus of over €260M had been predicted, yet Kok., SDP, Vihr. and RKP voted together to cut €22M from education, at a time when children were the most vulnerable they’ve been in several generations (and the surplus turned out to be a huge €496.7M). Especially within the capital region, where Vihr. voters are predominantly middle class or wealthy, the party has no qualms voting through harmful neoliberal measures. Until Vihr. is willing to vote in the interests of the working class and directly take on polluting corporations within energy, transport, industry, and agricultural sectors, climate goals will continue to fail.

Vihr. is a central part of Finland’s climate movement and has concrete environmental goals. By committing to a radical transformation of the economy, it can be a major part of the solution. Until it commits to bringing its economic policy in line with its social and environmental policies, a lot of support and resources will unfortunately contribute to negligible outcomes.

Vas. The Left Alliance | Vasemmistoliitto | Vänsterförbundet

Vas. is a socially and economically left-wing, environmentalist party. Vas. was formed by the unification of the majority of the parties making up its predecessor, the Finnish People’s Democratic League, a socialist and communist confederation. Nowadays, without explicitly referring to transforming the economy from a capitalist to a socialist one, the party has a strong set of policies for reducing social inequalities, by making the economy work more fairly for the majority, and by rebuilding welfare mechanisms systematically destroyed by the seven other parties. Vas. is one of the leading environmentalist parties in Finland, with a concrete set of targets for addressing climatic and ecological issues. Unlike other parties, a look at the voting record of Vas. representatives shows that the party consistently acts according to its values, for example, having rejected Helsinki City’s 2020 education cuts, and having resigned from the 2014 cabinet over spending cuts and tax rises.

While each municipality has differing challenges, Vas. has a general programme for the 2021 municipal elections (unlike most parties), which sets out common goals to be achieved across all municipalities. These goals deal with five main themes, which align with the party’s principles: equality and wellbeing of children through education and culture; municipalities as solvers of environmental issues; health and wellbeing for everyone; the municipality as an employer; and art, exercise and culture for all. Concerning environmental issues, it sets out 13 concrete solutions, including: improving public transport and cycling and pedestrian paths; promoting low-emission vehicles and car and bike sharing; favouring improving existing buildings over demolishing them; enhancing the circular economy of construction waste; energy

efficiency investments in public spaces; affordable housing for all; promoting timber and green buildings; phasing out coal and peat burning; conserving more habitat and biodiversity; increasing nature tourism; and enhancing animal welfare.

Every single one of these common targets is ambitious, but concrete, realistically achievable, and adaptable to the varying conditions of different municipalities. Phasing out the burning of fossil fuels for power generation—the most urgent of these targets—is time-bound to the end of the municipal term (2025), meaning there is a high level of accountability. International and national environmental targets often fail to be achieved by the target year, since long-term targets have a low level of accountability when the government's term ends well before the target year. For example, every single one of the UN's 20 Aichi biodiversity targets failed to have been met by the target year of 2020, while a look at the UN's tracker of 232 indicators of progress towards achieving 169 targets of 17 Sustainable Development Goals shows that most are on track to failing to have been met by 2030. In this sense, by setting a target year—at least on the most urgent issue of coal and peat burning—Vas. is willing to take accountability for its actions in municipalities where it's elected. For a political party, this is a refreshingly scientific approach, and demonstrates competence and commitment to addressing environmental challenges.

Furthermore, given the strong interactions between social, economic, political and environmental issues previously mentioned, combined with its consistent track record, Vas. is in a unique position to push for complementary policies that work together to solve environmental challenges and bring socioeconomic benefits to all groups except the ultra-wealthy. In contrast, other parties' economic policies typically sit in stark contradiction to their proclaimed economic targets.

Disclaimer: I am a member—but not a representative—of Left Alliance. Here I have presented my own views.

“Why focus on scathing criticism of parties?”

Finland has one of the most equitable societies in the world and I am a fierce defender of its positive aspects, such as high levels of democracy, press freedom, and quality of life. Yet, Finland, like all countries, faces stark challenges, and there's huge room for improvement. Finland's most major challenges, in my eyes, include: its residents having one of the highest environmental footprints in the world, yet its ecology being among the most critically threatened by climate change; a mental health crisis caused by intergenerational trauma, lack of openness, and hurdles to social and mental healthcare, leading to high levels of domestic abuse and substance abuse; an increasingly unfair economy causing growing socioeconomic disparity and suffering; and severe xenophobia and discrimination, as well as growth of conspiracy theories, caused by populist politicians offering “simple” but false solutions to economic disparity by blaming immigration and social liberalism.

Behind these issues are decades of failure of major political parties (Kesk., Kok., SDP) and use of populism (PS, KD) or misleading neoliberal or centrist stances to distract from real issues. Vihr. and RKP have brought environmental issues to the forefront of debate in Finland, yet often facilitate political decisions which do not work for the majority of voters. Vas. and the very small Feminist Party (not analysed here) have concrete sets of policies that complement one another and work for people and the environment, but have failed to gain enough traction to lead any national or municipal government.

If we are to solve Finland's challenges, including its environmental ones, we need to not only set out ambitious targets, but analyse and constructively criticise the past failures and underlying motives of all parties. Since we vote for a party as well as a candidate, we need to establish what our own ideology is and commit to a party with a track record that supports it.

“What about that optimistic vision for the future you promised to set out?”

Don't worry, I haven't forgotten! I believe that there's a lot of hope for the future if wise decisions are made by voters. All major parties except PS now recognise that a majority of Finnish citizens and residents care about environmental issues. While environmental targets set on international and national scales are rarely achieved, municipalities are essential for green transition, since a lot of the pollution happens within municipalities and under their jurisdiction (e.g. energy production, transport, industry). Furthermore, local (especially rural) communities are tied up in trade-offs and benefits of climate action.

You, as an individual and as part of a community, have the power to effect change through your own actions. Recycling, using public transport, cycling, walking, and altering your diet are all important ways in which you can contribute as an individual. For more radical and lasting change, however, you need to look beyond individualism and engage with your community. Grassroots actions are the most direct way of achieving change, by taking matters into the hands of the community: find a local campaign that means a lot to you and participate. Hold a business to account and promote boycotting of those with environmentally and socioeconomically unsustainable practices. Political participation is also hugely important: research the parties and candidates; break free from societal pressures to keep your opinions to yourself and instead start discussing environmental, social and economic issues with your friends and family; vote, join a party, campaign for it... and maybe even run as a candidate one day! Candidates and parties who are willing to set out concrete measures and be held accountable for them must gain traction, and you can be a part of that process.

If you're frustrated by the lack of action or cynical about political parties, you have the power to take matters into your own hands and have influence over decisions. Every important radical transformation in history—not least, in Finland—has come about through direct and political actions carried out by people who are affected by unjust policies. Since we are all harmed by environmental inaction, we all have the power to push for urgent change in these diverse ways.

Nick Walters is a 35-year-old dual Finnish and British citizen with a background in biomedical science. He works as a research funding expert, both as a freelancer and at a government institute promoting sustainable use of natural resources. His views do not represent the neutral political stance of his employer. He has resided in Helsinki for three years and previously in Tampere for four years. Scan the QR code to follow his commentary and activism!

