

**COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT
(CSTD)**

Geneva, Switzerland

Contribution by

Finland

to the CSTD call for information sharing on initiatives against COVID-19

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Science, technology and innovation for COVID-19 response / Finland

18 May 2020

Omaolo.fi online symptom assessment

In an early phase of Finland's COVID-19 epidemic, the COVID-19 symptom assessment service was developed and included into the national Omaolo.fi service. Based on the symptoms described in the service, the customer receives an assessment and further guidance. The assessment aims at providing reliable and up-to-date information to customers, alleviating concerns related to a potential infection and decreasing the workload of professionals in the health service system. It facilitates the provision of a smooth care path for customers, minimizing the need to go back and forth between services.

The assessment is linked to the national COVID-19 help line, national emergency line, the Kanta.fi data repository as well as to the webpages of municipalities, joint municipal boards and hospital districts. It is designed for the use of both citizens and health professionals.

The service was launched in mid-March 2020. The use of an existing Omaolo.fi platform and processes was beneficial for rapid development and implementation. During the first two months, the webpage has been accessed 500 000 times. The service is currently available in Finnish, Swedish and English.

The service is owned by SoteDigi, a state owned development company for digital health and social services, and the content is produced together with public and private partners such as the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare and the Finnish Medical Society Duodecim.

<https://www.omaolo.fi/en>

COVID-19 mobile application under development

Finland, alongside with many other countries, is developing a voluntary and temporary mobile application to support contact tracing as part of the public health strategy for countering the COVID-19 epidemic. The main goal of the application will be to complement manual contact tracing and possibly inform people when they have been in close proximity to virus carriers even if the carriers were not tested by the time of interaction. The application will be free to download on mobile devices. The application's effectiveness will depend on the number of people who install and use it. The estimated time for launch is Autumn 2020.

The national competent authority will determine the measurements for identifying an epidemiologically relevant contact person and the level of a contact person's risk of exposure to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The latter will be based on the level of exposure of a user to an infected user, taking into account distance and duration of the contact.

The tracing application will follow common EU interoperability protocols and will ensure safeguarding rights to privacy and data protection, regardless of where a device is being used in the EU.

COVID-19 contact tracing training

The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, in cooperation with the Tampere University and the University of Eastern Finland, have developed a web based, open and easy to access training programme that will support capacity building for contact tracing of health professionals without previous experience from infectious diseases contact tracing. The training consists of inter alia basic information on the SARS-CoV-2 virus, contact tracing and infection prevention and control, as well as information on interviewing contacts and on data protection and patient safety.