Chapter 2 New frames for food charity in Finland

Tiina Silvasti and Ville Tikka

Introduction <1>

In 2017 in Finland, approximately 1,843 tons of food aid was delivered by initiatives financed by the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) alone. Nationally, the FEAD's operational programme is focused exclusively on combating food poverty. It works to distribute food aid to the most deprived people throughout the country using 650 distribution centres run by partner organisations. These are usually parishes, faith-based organisations (FBOs) or non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Altogether, 271,723 food parcels and 55,754 meals were provided to recipients within the year. However, it is estimated that only 23% of all food distributed by partner organisations is funded by the FEAD. Donations are another source of food, and some partner organisations also buy food for distribution using their own resources. There are no up-to-date official statistics on the use of charitable food aid in Finland. According to the FEAD's partner organisations, out of Finland's population of 5.5 million, 284,352 people received food assistance at least once during 2017 (Mavi, 2018). Furthermore, based on an extensive survey conducted as part of the hard-to-survey-populations strategy during 2012/13, it is estimated that over 22,000 people have been turning to charitable food assistance every week (Ohisalo, 2014, page 40; Ohisalo, 2017, page 51).

These figures prove that there is a need for charitable food aid in Finland. According to earlier research, the primary reason for this need is income poverty (Riches and Silvasti 2014). Where people lack sufficient earned income to provide a decent standard of living, they are entitled to social security. However, the European Committee of Social Rights[1] has repeatedly criticised the minimum level of basic social security benefits in Finland. In particular, labour market subsidy[2], sick leave allowance and income assistance have been

[1] The European Committee of Social Rights is an impartial investigative body working within the Council of Europe that examines whether the countries that have accepted the European Social Charter are adhering to its requirements.

[2] The labour market subsidy is means-tested benefit intended for unemployed persons who enter the labour market for the first time or who can no longer receive basic or earnings-related unemployment allowance since the maximum payment period for these benefits has been reached.

highlighted as being too low to provide an adequate standard of living (European Social Charter, 2018).

It may be claimed that, in monetary terms, as well as numbers of recipients of charitable food aid, the phenomenon is a minor factor in undermining the foundations of the Nordic welfare regime compared, for example, to an increasingly unequal public healthcare system. However, in a wealthy country such as Finland, satisfying the basic human need for food and nutrition should be regarded as a matter of social principle. Furthermore, if we accept the argument that the problem is insignificant, it could be claimed that it is surely trivial enough to be easily solved. The solution can be implemented simply within the existing social security system by raising the minimum level of basic social security benefits, as the European Committee of Social Rights has suggested. Given the relatively small number of people in need of food aid, the budget required to put these poverty policy measures into effect should not be prohibitive. Yet the political will and appetite to tackle the poverty problem seem to be lacking.

Even in the absence of effective political action to fight hunger, public interest and research concerning food poverty and voluntary emergency food provision have varied over the last 25 years. The initial wave of media interest dates back to the 1990s when breadlines and food banks appeared on the nation's streets for the first time (Karjalainen, 2008). At about the same time as this media debate, the first studies on the topic were also published (for example, Kontula and Koskela, 1993; Hänninen, 1994; Heikkilä and Karjalainen, 1998).

The focus of discussion in both the media and research was on the escalating poverty problem as a welfare paradox in the context of a Nordic welfare state regime. Finland definitely identifies itself as a Nordic welfare state, together with Sweden and other Scandinavian countries. The overall picture presented in the media discussion was contradictory. The obvious inconsistency between a Nordic welfare regime and rising food aid delivery conducted by charitable actors was certainly identified, but there was still no serious political debate about the fundamental basis or future direction of welfare policy in Finland. Over time, the subject became less newsworthy, and media interest ceased. Gradually, people became used to the phenomenon. Charitable food aid received a kind of tacit approval, and it was normalised (Silvasti, 2015). Under these circumstances, little by little, food aid as a means to fight food poverty became embedded as a concern of the realm of charity (Silvasti and Karjalainen, 2014).

Although both media and academic interest in charitable food provision had temporarily fallen at the beginning of the 2010s (Tikka, 2019), the situation has changed in more recent times, with plenty of research on food aid being published, especially in the field of social policy (for example, Silvasti and Karjalainen, 2014; Ohisalo, 2017; Laihiala, 2018). In addition, the scope of research has expanded to encompass several disciplines and approaches. These include theological examination of the Christian underpinnings of the motives and practices of charitable actors, conducted by ethnographic method (Salonen, 2016), philosophical reflection on the social and environmental injustice of charitable food aid (Kortetmäki and Silvasti, 2017), and social scientific media analysis from an environmental perspective, framing food aid not only as a social issue of poverty but also as an environmental 'solution' to food waste (Tikka, 2019).

Similarly, the focus of media discussion has also varied. During the 1990s and early 2000s, charitable food aid was understood to be a social policy issue. As such, it was connected to topics such as increasing income inequalities, cuts in social security and deepening poverty. In the context of a Nordic welfare regime and a strong public commitment to the ideal of state responsibility, increasing social inequality and deepening poverty were regarded as social evils. This offered a negative interpretational frame through which to view charitable food aid (Silvasti and Karjalainen, 2014). During the 2010s, however, interest in charitable food provision as a means to reduce food waste in the name of environmental protection has increased. Framing food aid (Arcuri, 2019; Tikka, 2019) as a means to recover otherwise wasted food, and, as such, as an environmental act, provides a new positive frame for interpreting charitable food provision. Combining these two frames, the new line of discussion celebrates the win-win situation, where 'the planet is saved by fighting food poverty' – delivering surplus food to people afflicted with food insecurity. This combination of frames constitutes a new form of legitimisation for charitable responses to poverty.

Furthermore, over the quarter of century of modern food aid provision in Finland, the administrative framework for such action has changed. There has been the will and an active tendency to develop – rather than shut down – the practices of charitable food aid delivery. This chapter asks: what does this kind of entrenchment of charitable food aid provision tell us about the Finnish welfare state? The chapter begins with a short history of the development of modern charitable food aid provision in Finland. That is followed by an examination of poverty, and food poverty in particular, in the context of Finnish social policy. There is then a discussion of the new interpretational frames for charitable food provision, such as food aid

as an environmental act preventing food waste, and charitable food delivery as part of an emerging charity economy. In the conclusions, the Finnish case is summarised with reflections on the social justice implications of reliance on food charity in the context of a Nordic welfare regime.

A short history of modern food aid in Finland <1>

After the Second World War, Finland was a poor, war-torn country in need of foreign food aid. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was founded in 1946 to provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by the war. Finland, as one of the first beneficiaries, received food aid between 1947 and 1951 (UNICEF Finland, 2019). The pace of reconstruction was fast during the 1950s, and the Finnish economy developed strongly throughout the 1960s. The most intense period of building the country's welfare state, mainly following the Nordic model and the example of Sweden, dates back to the 1970s and 1980s. During those decades, people in Finland were convinced that, in the name of universalism, the welfare state should satisfy the basic needs of all citizens. The old social evil of hunger was thought to have been eradicated for good (Silvasti and Karjalainen, 2014).

However, this turned out not to be the case, and in the early 1990s, the need for emergency food assistance unexpectedly returned during an exceptionally deep economic recession. The first indication of 'the hunger problem' came about as a by-product of a survey exploring the health impacts of the economic slump. According to this survey, 100,000 Finnish people were experiencing an extreme situation where 'the fridge was empty and there was no money to buy food' (Kontula and Koskela, 1993). The first charitable food distributor, and the biggest actor in the field to this day, was the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF). It has been organising food provision with the help of voluntary workers since 1993. The first operation in Myllypuro in Helsinki was originally named according to the way it practically functioned – 'the breadline'. The first food bank was initiated two years later by the ELCF in Tampere. In the Finnish context, the term 'food bank' does not refer to the central warehouse or stock of donated food. Instead, food banks operate as sites to deliver food directly to recipients.

The 1990s slump was recognised as a transient state of economic emergency. Thus, originally, charitable food provision was meant to be nothing more than a temporary solution

to the short-term food poverty caused by that specific situation. It was thought by deacons working within the ELCF that the Christian voluntary work community could meet the immediate food needs of people sooner than the public sector. It was not their intention that responsibility for people suffering severe poverty should be permanently delegated to the ELCF and the third sector (Malkavaara, 2002).

Policymakers' initial reactions to rising income insecurity and food poverty were typically disbelief and denial. For example, in 1990, then Prime Minister Harri Holkeri criticised Finnish citizens for favouring expensive food even when cheaper alternatives were available: 'the use of herring should be increased and tenderloin reduced,' he advised (YLE, 1990). Generally, it was argued that the problem of hunger was being exaggerated. Hunger in Finland was belittled by comparing it with famines in the developing world. The problem was also minimised by insisting that the supply of free food from charities inevitably created demand for it. If the problem of food poverty was recognised at all, the reason for the situation was readily attributed to the hungry people themselves. Through blaming and shaming victims, it was concluded that the reason for food poverty was essentially individual: people in need of food aid were deemed incapable in some way – for example, drug abusers, the 'new poor' or 'new helpless'. By contrast, cumulative weaknesses in the social security system were never seriously discussed. (Karjalainen, 2008.)

In the end, the existence of food poverty was acknowledged in public discussion, if not officially recognised in any political statement. It was widely accepted that the level of income assistance (the very last resort of means-tested income security) was too low to sustain an adequate standard of living. At the same time, however, it was argued that the state could not afford to increase spending on social security, even when the national economy was recovering. In fact, during the early 2000s, charitable food aid provision as a solution to the hunger problem was tacitly accepted as being a task for religious actors and the third sector simultaneously with exceptionally strong growth in Finland's gross domestic product. This development clearly indicates the way in which Finnish basic social security moved away from a traditional Nordic welfare regime, based on public responsibility, in the direction of a liberal welfare regime and the Anglo-Saxon model (Silvasti and Karjalainen, 2014).

Economic recession and social security cuts, motivated by a neo-liberal direction in economic policy, were not the only factors that contributed to the establishment of food aid. Finland joined the European Union in 1995, and the very next year, in 1996, as the only Nordic

welfare state in the bloc, it also joined the European Union's Food Distribution Programme for the Most Deprived Persons of the Community (MDP). It is fair to say that the decision to accept MDP assistance reinforced and institutionalised the concept of charitable food aid delivery in Finland. Back in the early 1990s, there was no nationwide distribution system to deliver food aid to recipients, nor were there systems for regular large-scale corporate food donations from retailers and the food industry to charities. Both systems have grown up and become established since the implementation of the MDP programme, when food from the EU provided the first basic stock that enabled regular and continual food aid provision for many parishes, FBOs and NGOs.

The peculiarity of this process is that the MDP was not an integral party of social and poverty reduction policy. Rather, it was part of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and therefore classified as marketing support. Consequently, from 1996 to 2013, social and poverty policy and the governance of EU food assistance were the responsibilities of different domains within the Finnish administration. There was no cooperation or coordination of food aid between the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (MSAH) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The practical outcome of this inconsistency was that even though poverty policy definitely came within the remit of the MSAH, the ministry opted out of food aid activity completely (Ohisalo, 2013; Silvasti and Karjalainen, 2014).

Moreover, the MSAH still maintains only a vague connection with charitable food aid. It certainly acknowledges food aid activities, yet explicitly states that they are not part of national social security, but a form of 'civic activity' (MSAH, 2017a). This can be interpreted as a desperate attempt to maintain the ideals of the Nordic welfare regime and public responsibility. However, in the 2016 and 2017 government budgets, the MSAH – having had little or no previous connection to food aid practices – allocated around €1.8 million to food aid, with another €1.2 million of grants available to food aid providers on application (MSAH, 2016; MSAH, 2017b; MSAH, 2019).

In addition to the direct funding from the MSAH, between 2017 and 2019, food aid organisers received over €2.5 million from STEA, a funding operator that functions in connection with the MSAH[3]. In fact, by funding such activities, the MSAH is, together with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (the government ministry responsible for FEAD activities), actively involved in entrenching food aid in Finland and shaping its future.

[3] Data gathered on 25 March 25 2019 from STEA grant database: http://avustukset.stea.fi/.

Most notably, by allocating funding to a limited number of organisers for specific purposes (cold storage facilities, refrigerated vehicles and so on), the MSAH influences both who can provide food aid and how the practice is organised. Thus, it is reasonable to say that the MSAH has a major role in actively building a new private-public model of food aid in Finland.

In retrospect, striking incoherence can be seen in the interpretation of the way charitable food aid has been established. On one hand, delivering food as a charitable act has been represented as an illegitimate form of social security in the framework of Nordic welfare state policies. On the other hand, food provision has been construed as a legitimate form of charity and kindness for the ELCF and FBOs. Therefore, the general view in Finland about establishing charitable food aid as a permanent part of the social security of last resort is contradictory. This contradiction is repeated in practice since it is common knowledge that people who are not eligible for income assistance or for whom income assistance is inadequate to provide any standard of living are referred to charities for additional aid by social workers from the public sector (Ohisalo and Määttä, 2014). Hence, food charity appears simultaneously to be a suitable solution to an awkward but undeniable hunger problem and a matter of national shame because of its conflict with the Finnish welfare model based on the Nordic ethos of welfare (Karjalainen, 2008). This double standard can still be seen in public discussion of the issue (Silvasti and Karjalainen, 2014; Salonen and Silvasti, 2019) and particularly in the contradictory behaviour of the MSAH. Overall, this contradiction appears to reflect a collective interpretation of the fundamental nature of charity as a form of philanthropy – charity seems to be immune to serious critique, making political debate about the topic extremely difficult (McMahon, 2011; Riches and Silvasti, 2014).

Eventually, the MDP was phased out at the end of 2013 and replaced by the FEAD programme. This does not come under the CAP, but is part of the EU's Cohesion Policy, and in Finland, it is administered by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. The main focus of the FEAD programme is on supporting national programmes that distribute material assistance, like food, clothing and other necessities for personal use. However, in contrast to the MDP, the scope of the programme extends beyond material assistance to activities that promote social inclusion.

In practice, Finland's FEAD programme is focused exclusively on combating food poverty. Social inclusion activities, such as giving information about the services and projects

available in the public and third sectors, and guidance, advice and support on using these services are all delivered alongside food provision (Mavi, 2018). Basically, the FEAD programme continues the food aid measures that started with the MDP. From the point of view of recipients of assistance, there is no practical difference from the earlier food aid provision (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2019).

The transition period from the MDP to the FEAD lasted roughly a year, leading to temporary disruptions in the availability of food to charities (European Commission, 2018). In principle, the temporary shortage of food to be distributed could have offered an opportunity for serious political discussion and consideration of the future of charitable food aid. However, this opportunity was neglected. Instead, during the transition period, the food authorities loosened the regulations on the distribution of expiring food from retailers to charities by relaxing the rules governing expiration dates. This is in line with and motivated by the EU-led efforts to reduce food waste and promote food waste recovery as part of a so-called 'circular economy' (European Commission, 2017). Consequently, as part of these efforts to combat food waste, charities are now allowed to freeze donated food on the expiry date or offer it as a hot meal one day after expiration (Evira, 2013).

This chain of events clearly shows how different policy actors that have influence over food aid delivery interact without explicit leadership and proper communication between discrete parts of the administration. This leaves the development of food aid provision as a more or less arbitrary and obscure process, with similarly arbitrary consequences for people afflicted by food poverty. Moreover, the development of this new kind of private-public charitable system of poverty relief is happening without a transparent democratic process, in the shadow of the public and institutional arrangements that constitute the welfare state.

Under these circumstances, donated food is becoming increasingly important to charitable operations. According to the latest annual implementation report summary of the FEAD in Finland (Mavi, 2018), less than a quarter (23%) of all food delivered by FEAD partner organisations is now financed by the fund. More than half of all distribution locations provide donated food in addition to EU food. Moreover, most of the biggest food aid distributors in urban areas – for example, in the Helsinki metropolitan area – receive no EU food at all, relying solely on donations (Kirkko ja kaupunki, 2017).

Consequently, during the 2010s, Finnish food aid provision has become increasingly connected with food system surplus and food waste recovery. In addition, the emphasis of

such aid has shifted from the mere alleviation of hunger to focus more on communality, and the activation and agency of food aid recipients. Public funding from the MSAH has been allocated to initiatives such as *Yhteinen keittiö* (social kitchens) and also directly to food aid providers as 'Christmas presents' – unallocated funds from the ministry's budget – during the 2015–19 government's term of office (MSAH, 2017b; Yhteinen keittiö, 2019). *Yhteinen keittiö* is a prime example of simultaneously emphasising communal activity and the individual agency of food aid recipients. The direct funding of food aid providers is another nudge towards the institutionalisation of food aid practices as the redistribution system for food surplus, with funds allocated to acquisitions such as refrigerated transports rather than personnel costs, salaries or overheads (MSAH, 2017b).

As well as being in line with the EU-level efforts to minimise waste (EU, 2010) as previously mentioned, focusing on food waste reduction through charitable food aid fits with the national agenda to promote a circular economy as a form of sustainability (Valtioneuvosto, 2015; Sitra, 2016). The government's key project 'Breakthrough to a circular economy and adoption of clean solutions to promote circular economy and reduce waste' has provided particularly fertile ground for the development of food waste recovery practices (Valtioneuvosto, 2017). While many individual food aid providers have established bilateral collaborations with retailers, *Yhteinen pöytä* (Shared Table) and the City of Vantaa have been organising a centralised redistribution network (Yhteinen pöytä, 2019) – a model that is now being piloted across Finland in ten additional cities, with funding from the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra (Sitra, 2019).

Building on, for example, the *Berliner Tafel* (Berlin Table) model (see Chapter 3), *Yhteinen pöytä* aims to support existing food aid providers with centralised, large-scale food surplus collection and redistribution via its network of food factories, retailers and food aid distributors. Logistically, this means that the *Yhteinen pöytä* initiative transports food surplus to a central facility from where it is quickly distributed, with no long-term storage. It is a unique model in the Nordic countries insofar as it is the only city-led food aid scheme in the region. The enterprise is funded and owned by the City of Vantaa and Vantaa Parish Union, and thus it operates with substantial public funding[4] (Yhteinen pöytä, 2016; 2019).

[4] Food aid enterprises do receive substantial public funding from cities and municipalities as grants, but *Yhteinen pöytä* is still a first, being founded, funded and partly owned by the city.

The model is also noteworthy in that it is not primarily focused on the recipients but the providers of aid. Finnish food aid has been called a 'patchwork quilt of aid' (Ohisalo et al, 2014) – a loose network of practices with little or no coordination between them, despite the existence of an association for food aid organisers,[5] Finland does not have an umbrella organisation that would coordinate and bring all the organisers together. Therefore, while *Yhteinen pöytä* may not be the first, it is providing a strong and comprehensive link between organisers of food aid in the region.

In addition to *Yhteinen pöytä* being piloted or implemented in multiple regions, three publicly funded, nationwide initiatives are under way:

- 'From breadlines to participation' (*Ruokajonoista osallisuuteen*), 2018–20, led by *Sininauhaliitto* (Blue Ribbon Union – a central association for FBOs working with substance abusers) and funded by the European Social Fund (ESF);
- 'Food Aid Network' (*Ruoka-apuverkosto*), 2019–21, led by *KOA ry* (Association for Domestic Relief Work) and funded by the Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations STEA (a standalone state-aid authority operating in connection with the MSAH, as mentioned previously in this chapter);
- 'Enabling Community' (*Osallistava yhteisö*), 2019/20, led by *Kirkkopalvelut* (an Evangelical Lutheran central organisation) and funded by STEA.

Together, these initiatives represent an unprecedented level of coordination for food aid in Finland. They also strongly emphasise the social and communal aspects of such aid, shifting the focus from offering hunger relief to providing opportunities for recipients to engage with the community and society. Therefore, the social problem addressed is not so much food or income poverty, but social exclusion. Paradoxically, food as a part of food aid should be understood first and foremost as a 'lead item' or attraction, but not the focal point of these practices. This also marks a potential shift away from breadlines and queuing for food – the hitherto emblematic forms of food aid in Finland – to other, perhaps more humane practices.

Poverty and food poverty in the context of Finnish social policy <1>

[5] *Kotimaisen avustustyön liitto KOA ry* (Association for Domestic Relief Work), formerly *Ruoka-apu Yhdistysten Liitto RAYL ry* (Food Aid Organisations' Union).

In the early 1990s, during the economic recession that first triggered the need for modern food aid, basic social security and minimum supplementary benefits were cut or frozen as part of austerity measures. This hard-line social policy practised during the recession radically weakened the social security of the most vulnerable people in society. With the economic recession over by the end of the 1990s, economic growth in Finland was strong during the first years of the new millennium. In spite of that, no improvements of note were introduced in the area of social policy. Significantly, basic social security benefits remained frozen for more than 10 years. Consequently, income inequality between socio-economic groups grew substantially (Silvasti and Karjalainen, 2014).

Simultaneously, Finland's basic social security moved away from the Nordic welfare model towards the traditional liberal model, entailing more means testing. At the beginning of the 1990s, this change was motivated mainly by economic recession. Nevertheless, as the end of the decade approached, there was an increasingly explicit effort to actively transform social and labour policies in concert with arguments that endorsed greater income inequality as a precondition for future economic growth and stronger international competitiveness. In Finland, as in many other European countries, work was emphasised as the best solution to numerous social problems. Since the mid-1990s, the development and implementation of the government's activation policy has been one of the key tools in reforming social policy. This development followed the so-called 'activation paradigm' and was inspired by the goals and instruments of the international trend for activation policies.

The rationale behind activation measures is to link social benefits for the unemployed to work obligations. This manifests as a strong tendency towards ever stricter work requirements for recipients of unemployment benefits (Keskitalo, 2008). The latest reform – 'the activation model for unemployment security' – was implemented in 2018. As part of the government's key strategy on employment and competitiveness, the activation model 'incorporates measures to encourage people to actively seek work and use employment services at all stages of their unemployment'. If unemployed people fail to meet the requirements of the activation model, they will be subject to sanctions, including a reduction in their unemployment benefit (MSAH, 2019b).

The status of income assistance has also changed. Originally, it was meant to be a supplementary social security benefit of very last resort, which was means-tested. However, it has gradually become an indispensable supplement to plug the gaps left by falling levels of

basic social security. In fact, it is now the primary source of basic social security for a growing number of people. As a result, this means-tested form of social assistance, meant as a last resort and supposed to be a marginal form of social welfare in the Nordic model, is now practically an integral part of basic social security. Essentially, the minimum level of basic social security in Finland has repeatedly been proven to be too low to provide a decent standard of living (Kuivalainen, 2010; European Social Charter, 2018; THL, 2019).

The latest indication of an alarmingly low level of basic social security is presented in the recent *Evaluation report on the adequacy of basic social security 2015–2019* published by the National Institute for Health and Welfare[6] (THL, 2019). The report states that 'the income levels of those receiving unemployment benefit, home care allowance, minimum sick leave allowance or parental daily allowance were not sufficient to cover the reasonable minimum consumption budget. Student social security covers the reasonable minimum consumption budget only if supplemented by a student loan.' Moreover, the basic level of social security for unemployed people has fallen as a consequence of reductions in benefits resulting from the new activation model implemented in 2018. This reveals the core of the harsh, sanction-based activation policy measures targeted at the unemployed. Overall, during the evaluation period 2015–19, the role of means-tested, last-resort income assistance in filling the gaps in basic social security provision has increased significantly. There can be no doubt that this kind of long-term hard-line social policy development will further exacerbate the need for charitable food aid provision.

Despite the various weaknesses in the social security system, in comparison with other European countries, the income level provided by basic social security in Finland ranks either at the top or in the middle, depending on the circumstances of the recipient's family and life (THL, 2019). Also, as measured by the Gini coefficient, income differentials in Finland (Gini index: 25.3) remain well below the European average (Gini index: 30.7) (Eurostat, 2019a).

According to the European statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC), 23.7% of citizens of the European Union's 28 member states were living at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2015. In Finland, the corresponding figure was 16.6% (896,000 people). This is the fourth lowest figure in Europe, after Iceland, the Czech Republic and Norway.

[6] A research and development institute working under the MSAH.

Furthermore, in 2016, the percentage of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion had further reduced, to 15.7% (849,000 people). This is the lowest figure in the whole of the available 11-year reference period. According to the Official Statistics of Finland (2018a), the percentage of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion has varied between 15.7% and 17.9% during the 2005–16 period.

The 'at risk of poverty or social exclusion' (AROPE) indicator, used in the EU-SILC survey to measure the level of risk, corresponds to the number of people who are either at risk of poverty, severely materially deprived or living in a household with very low work intensity. Accordingly, people are classified as being at risk of poverty and social exclusion on three dimensions:

- They live in a household whose disposable monetary income per consumption unit is below 60% of the national median income.
- People living in a household with low work intensity are all persons aged under 60 who work less than 20% of their potential in the survey year.
- People are considered to be in a household that suffers deprivation if it meets at least four indicators from the following nine: experiencing payment difficulties, difficulty coping with unexpected financial expenses, the household cannot afford a telephone, washing machine, television, car, protein-rich meal every other day, one week's holiday per year outside the home or keep the home warm enough.

This classification helps to illustrate the overall picture of poverty in Finland. In 2016, 68.5% of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion were disadvantaged on one of those three dimensions. Most of them (378,000) were low-income earners. 159,000 people were members of underemployed households, and 44,000 people (2%) suffered severe material deprivation. Only 0.5% of the population were disadvantaged on all three dimensions of the AROPE indicator (Official Statistics of Finland, 2018a). In addition, as measured by the food component of the EU-SILC indicators on material deprivation, the percentage of individuals in Finland who are not able to afford a protein-rich meal – with meat, chicken, fish or a vegetarian equivalent – every second day has varied between 2.5% and 3.3% over the period 2009–17, against the EU average of 7.9% (Eurostat, 2019b).

Even if, statistically, the poverty rate looks relatively good in European comparisons of income inequality and the AROPE rate, there are still people in need of food aid. Who are

these people, and how have they ended up in such a situation? Although the public social security system has adopted more means testing in its procedures, there is no authoritative means testing for food aid delivery. Consequently, no accurate official statistics or reliable time series of the numbers of people receiving food assistance are available. Also, the depth of poverty the recipients are suffering is obscure.

Practices in the field vary considerably. Some charities – for example, the ELCF in its welfare work – may survey potential recipients about their individual needs and circumstances before giving them food aid. However, in many cases, recipients of food aid are not required to prove their need for assistance using any official document or referral. On the other hand, some actors request a Finnish passport or a *Kela* card (personal health insurance card). This is done mostly to ensure that recipients are registered under the Finnish welfare system and to avoid the misuse of aid. The practice excludes potential recipients of aid who do not hold Finnish citizenship, official documentation or right of residence (a *Kela* card is issued to all permanent residents of Finland). The latest data available is from 2014, when one in 10 food aid distributors reportedly requested a *Kela* card or other form of identification. However, it is impossible to obtain up-to-date numbers as these requests for identification do not result in any publicly available records (Ohisalo et al, 2014).

In the absence of official statistics, there are multiple estimates about Finnish food aid, though these figures do not encompass all of the country's food aid operations. This is due to the fragmentation of the field, which means that numbers and estimates often either cover only a portion of operations or may overlap. According to FEAD partner organisations, 284,352 people received food aid in 2017 (Mavi, 2018). In addition to the FEAD statistics, the ELCF – as one of the biggest food aid distributors – has produced some figures relating to its own food delivery. According to the Church Research Agency (Kirkkopalvelut, 2014; 2018), parishes alone distribute food aid to approximately 100,000 people in need every year. Moreover, according to the extensive information collected under the hard-to-survey-populations strategy during 2012/13, over 22,000 people turn to charitable food assistance every week (Ohisalo, 2014, page 40; 2017, page 51). Many individual organisers also provide estimates on aspects such as the amount of donated food they receive (for example, Samaria, 2018).

Recipients of food assistance are a very heterogeneous group, consisting of single parents, families with several children, and people outside or on the periphery of the labour market:

under- and unemployed people, low-income pensioners, people with mental health problems and/or substance abuse problems, students and immigrants (Ohisalo, 2014; Kirkkopalvelut, 2017; Mavi, 2018). In 2017, there was disruption to income assistance payments as a result of administrative reorganisation in which income assistance was transferred from municipal social services to the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (*Kela*). As a result, there were serious delays in the processing and payment of benefits (Kela, 2017). According to food charities, this disruption led to 'an avalanche of people' in need of food aid (Samaria, 2018). This clearly indicates the high level of risk of food insecurity among people living on benefits.

In a food aid user survey conducted at FEAD partner organisation distribution sites in 2017, most of the respondents (57%) were women, with 34% of them under 49 years old and 66% 50 years or older. Up to 95% of the respondents were living without earned income, and 90% of them had Finnish citizenship (Mavi, 2018). When considering these figures, it is important to keep in mind that many of the biggest food aid distributors in urban areas rely totally on donated food and, hence, they are not included in this survey of FEAD partners' food aid users.

Furthermore, the demographic and socio-economic structures in cities are different from those of rural Finland. It has previously been reported that in sparsely populated northern and eastern Finland, access to food is becoming more difficult for many elderly people without a car and driving licence due to the closure of village shops and ever-lengthening distances involved in shopping for groceries (Kirkkopalvelut, 2014). Consequently, EU food aid funded by the FEAD is especially important in remote rural areas in these parts of Finland, where no large-scale food industry and big supermarkets are present to donate food to charitable actors. In some of those rural localities, food aid delivery is fully dependent on the FEAD (Kirkko ja kaupunki, 2017). Naturally, this has an impact on the quality and quantity of the food available for charity provision. From an equality perspective, this kind of geographical variation in the availability of donated food highlights one of the weaknesses of the charitable relief of food poverty. There may be a burning need for food assistance in a certain region but no food available for provision.

Preventing food waste as part of the emerging charity economy <1>

In the Finnish context, there are two intertwining new trends of development in charitable food provision that reflect the current transformation of the welfare state and indicate a shift in the organisation of social security. These trends are connecting charitable food provision to food waste recovery as part of a circular economy (Hanssen et al, 2014; FEBA, 2016), and emerging forms of the so-called charity economy (Kessl, 2015; Kessl et al, 2016). From a social policy perspective, it is symptomatic that food poverty – meaning a situation where the basic human right to food and nutrition is endangered – has returned permanently to the social welfare agenda, and that there is no serious political effort to find a solution to this enduring problem based on state welfare responsibilities.

Therefore, charitable food provision serves as an excellent example of the shift from public forms and practices of poverty reduction to a mixed model of private-public poverty relief. In turn, emerging 'alternative forms of economy' – the circular economy and the charity economy – are employed to manage, not solve, the stubborn food poverty problem. Within this mixed private-public model of poverty relief, distressed people cannot rely on public social support. Instead, they are dependent on the voluntary donations of those with surplus who are willing to give. This kind of social policy evolution seriously undermines the fundamental promise of welfare universalism specific to the traditional Nordic welfare regime.

A circular economy, in summary, is proposed as a more sustainable alternative to the linear economic model of 'take-make-dispose' or 'take-produce-consume-discard', though the concept is still highly contested (for example, Korhonen et al, 2018; Prieto-Sandoval et al, 2018). A common definition is the three, or increasingly four,[7] Rs: 'reuse-repair-(refurbish/repurpose/rethink)-recycle'. In scientific literature, a multitude of definitions has been suggested in recent years within various disciplines (Kirchherr et al, 2017). Arguably the most widely used definition is that of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2013, page 14), which introduced the concept as 'an industrial system that is restorative or regenerative by intention and design' and which is based on three principles: designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2019). From a food system perspective, redistribution of edible surplus via food aid, in fact, bypasses the principle of designing out waste, focusing instead on keeping food in use. Hierarchically, waste prevention should be the primary objective in

[7] At the high end of the R-scale, the 'six Rs of sustainability' – prominently used by NGOs – adds 'reduce' and 'refuse' to the list (for example, Practical Action, 2019).

waste management, with redistribution or food donation second (for example, European Union, 2010; Zero Waste Europe, 2019).

Yet during the 2010s, the focus of media discussion about food aid has slowly moved from regarding it as a poverty-related problem towards preventing food waste as a means of environmental protection. It is often argued that charitable food aid based on food waste recovery solves two problems: food waste and food poverty. Donating expiring food to charities seems to offer a genuine win-win situation as it evokes a strong feeling of doing good – saving the planet by fighting food poverty. Essentially, the environmental motive behind emergency food aid delivery offers a positive interpretational framework for food charities, in contrast to the earlier image labelling food poverty an iniquitous societal problem (Tikka, 2019). The significance of this shift is in its potential to guide public opinion even further from defending state welfare responsibilities towards acceptance of a more liberal welfare regime that includes mixed private-public solutions to structural social problems like food poverty (Tikka, 2019).

Furthermore, food waste recovery is explicitly endorsed by the FEAD, which supports schemes that collect and distribute food donations with the intention of reducing food waste. Actually, one of the main principles of the programme is 'considering the possible impact of the earth's climate when purchasing food, and making an effort to reduce food waste' (European Commission, 2015). Thus, the programme directly encourages the redistribution of expiring food and market excess to food charities. Again, this connects the FEAD to the disposal end of the prevailing food system and, finally, to a circular economy (Salonen and Silvasti, 2019).

The ramifications of framing food aid for the poor as food waste recovery can already be seen at the policy level. For example, France banned large shops from throwing away or destroying unsold food in 2016. Instead, retailers are obliged to donate this food to charities or send it away for animal feed. Once again, the rationale behind the legislation is tackling food waste and food poverty in tandem (Chrisafis, 2015). Similar laws are being advocated all over Europe, and in 2016, over 100 members of the Finnish parliament signed a corresponding legislative initiative (Lakialoite, 2016). The initiative was positively received by the media, but retailers have opposed the proposed legislation, pointing out that bilateral agreements with charities already address the issue adequately and that these practices, relying heavily on volunteer work, might not be able to handle the sudden influx of donations

(Kärppä, 2016). At the time of writing, the initiative is still going through the parliamentary process.

Reducing food waste is necessary both ethically and on the grounds of environmental protection. However, in the context of charitable food poverty relief, food waste recovery as part of a circular economy needs to be critically explored. Basically, food waste recovery means transforming food once classified as ‘inedible’ (for example, expiring or otherwise unmarketable food) back into 'edible' food in order to prevent food waste. In the case of food charity, food classified as inedible for wealthy consumers, who can afford to satisfy their basic need for food in the market, is transformed back into being edible for people suffering food poverty.

Food charities usually depend on donations consisting mostly of expiring and surplus food. The supply varies according to market conditions, and charities can distribute only what is donated to them. This means that the only way to guarantee charitable food provision for the people in need of food aid is to guarantee the availability of market excess. From an environmental point of view, this is absolutely unsustainable because securing charitable food delivery is, in fact, based on overproduction and oversupply in the primary market. For environmental protection, minimising overproduction is the only satisfactory solution. From a social policy perspective, again, charitable food provision can, at best, be a temporary remedy for acute hunger, but it does not contribute in any way to solving the structural root causes of poverty. Thus, food charity as part of a circular economy is an indication of, rather than a solution to, the stubborn problems of food poverty as well as food waste (Kortetmäki and Silvasti, 2017; Salonen and Silvasti, 2019). Food waste recovery can be used in the management and rerouting of surplus food, but in the end, it does not offer a proper tool for environmental protection. Instead, it raises concerns over social justice and equity.

Alongside the circular economy, emerging forms of the so-called charity economy bring up new ways to frame charitable food provision as part of a social security system, as well as part of the general economic system. The prevailing food system is part of the market economy. The charity economy forms a kind of ‘secondary market’, distributing surplus produced in the primary market to people whose lack of purchasing power excludes them from this primary market. Thus, a charity economy is mostly based on donations. Basically, it creates an alternative distribution system, where donated necessities – which are in demand to satisfy basic needs – are distributed further down the line to people in need (Kessl, 2015;

Kessl et al, 2016). Food donations mainly comprise products that remain unsold in the primary market. Other consumer goods, like clothes and shoes, may be personal donations consisting of used or useless goods. These usually unwanted or discarded consumer goods are then redistributed from primary markets or primary users for charitable purposes. In charities, the logistics and delivery of donated necessities are often arranged by volunteers and low-paid workers – for example, supported rehabilitees – or by people performing community or civilian services.

The charity economy serves and seamlessly supplements the contemporary capitalist business model based on supply-side economics by organising new ways to get rid of system-based market excess while saving money on waste management. As donors, private businesses can pose as benefactors and report positive outcomes of their corporate social responsibility activities because, as previously mentioned, donating surplus food to charities evokes a strong feeling of contributing to saving the planet while fighting food poverty. The people who rely on food aid benefit the primary market by utilising its excess. The more dependent poverty relief efforts are on charity, the more necessary donations are. Furthermore, by taking care of surplus produced in the primary market, a charity economy paves the way for the continuation of systematic overproduction in the prevailing unsustainable production system (Kortetmäki and Silvasti, 2017; Salonen and Silvasti, 2019).

The rise of the charity economy is based on changes in public welfare responsibilities and, especially, on giving up the former social policy goal of eradicating poverty. Actually, charities operate, grow and develop their functions in awareness of the fact that there is a permanently large enough number of people who live constantly or repeatedly in poverty deep enough to threaten their ability to satisfy their basic needs. As a result of austerity policies connected to growing income inequalities and harsh activation policy measures, an increasing number of people living on basic social security cannot cope without charitable assistance. What is more, work is evidently not the best social policy, as the breakdown of the traditional connection between poverty and unemployment is becoming more apparent (Tanner, 2019). The permanent precariousness of paid work – in the form of temporary positions and jobs without a living wage – increases the poverty that leads to the need for charity.

Conclusions <1>

Within the Nordic welfare state model, distributing non-monetary social assistance, such as food, has always been considered to be disrespectful. In the current consumer society, replacement of monetary benefits with goods is construed as patronising poor people by restricting their freedom of choice (Lorenz, 2015). Even though providing charitable food aid as a means to alleviate poverty is incompatible with the Nordic welfare regime, over the last 25 years, charitable food aid provision has become established as part of the poverty relief of last resort in Finland.

Retrospectively, it can be seen that, during the 1990s and 2000s, the development of food aid provision was haphazard and poorly coordinated. The most important policy sectors to have an impact on cementing the position of charitable food aid were agriculture (the ministry with executive responsibility for the MDP) and social affairs (the ministry with executive responsibility for poverty policy). Decision-making on food aid happened without explicit leadership, or proper coordination and communication between these policy sectors. Given the differing goals and contexts of different policies, no government department made any informed drive to establish charity food provision permanently in Finland. Rather, this establishment was the outcome of a confused situation involving different policy actions and economic developments that took place simultaneously but were independent in practice.

Once established, charitable food provision seems to be very hard to abolish, and there has been no serious attempt in Finland to do so. Instead, food aid – originally interpreted as a symptom of poverty – is nowadays often framed as food waste recovery and, as such, a positive environmental act as part of a circular economy. This interpretative combination of a poverty frame and an environmental frame constitutes a new form of legitimisation for charitable responses to the issue of poverty, as they promise to solve two problems at the same time: food poverty and food waste. The relevance of this shift lies in its potential to guide public opinion from defending public welfare responsibilities to accepting charity-based, mixed private-public solutions to the structural social problem of poverty (Tikka, 2019).

The circular economy is intertwined with emerging forms of the charity economy as food charities are utilised in redistributing market excess, by delivering market surplus to people afflicted with poverty. Charities actually operate, grow and develop in awareness of the fact that there is a permanently large enough number of people living precariously in poverty deep enough to threaten their ability to satisfy their basic needs. The most serious problem in

presenting charity as a solution to poverty is social injustice. The right to food is a basic human right. People afflicted by food poverty do not have any legal right to charitable food aid. It is not possible to fully respect, protect and fulfil this human right to food through charitable gifts (Poppendieck, 1999; Ziegler et al, 2011). Thus, food waste recovery performed as a part of a circular economy and relying on charities can be used in the management of surplus food, but it does not provide a solution to the root causes of environmental problems or poverty. Instead, it raises concerns over social justice and equity.

Recent developments in charitable food provision in Finland have been characterised by the introduction of various private-public solutions to poverty relief. The process behind this situation is still obscure. The MSAH publicly maintains its commitment to a Nordic welfare state regime and the ideal of public responsibility by explicitly stating that charitable food aid is not part of the national social security system, but is a form of 'civic activity' (MSAH, 2017a). However, between 2016 and 2019, the MSAH allocated funding for charitable food aid provision for the first time ever. This proves that the MSAH is actively taking part in building new charity-based private-public food aid provision models in Finland.

Many of these new initiatives emphasise the social and communal aspects of the aid, shifting the focus from hunger alleviation to providing opportunities for people in need to engage in society. Therefore, the primary social problem addressed is not so much poverty but social exclusion. Food provision is presented as more of an initial incentive for prospective recipients, not the main focus of these practices. These new developments also present an unprecedentedly high level of coordination in the otherwise patchy field of food aid in Finland. The changes may foreshadow a shift away from spartan breadlines towards more humane practices, where food aid provision is a kind of secondary element behind other social policy measures aiming to boost social inclusion. On the other hand, this mode of operation is likely to exclude some of the people in need of food aid, as they are not able or willing to partake in social interaction.

Furthermore, the development of this mixed private-public charitable system of poverty relief still falls disturbingly between administrative sectors, as the FEAD (which replaced the MDP in 2014) comes under the administrative domain of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. This fragmentation of the administration, funding and leadership of food aid provision leads to a situation where no one has overall control. Instead, the development of future food aid provision actually takes place in the shadow of the public institutional

arrangements of the welfare state without any transparent democratic process. This increases the risk of future policy mismatches and arbitrary end results. In addition, the role of emerging intermediary organisations – such as *Yhteinen pöytä* and its regional counterparts, and the planned Food Aid Network – is not yet fully known. Currently, the fragmented food aid sector as a whole is poorly documented, lacks coordination and arguably does not cover the nation fairly, comprehensively or inclusively. It remains to be seen whether the new initiatives can provide solutions to these issues.

Since the Second World War, the Finnish welfare state has been developed in the spirit of the Nordic ethos of welfare. The course of development has been from individual responsibility to collective social insurance and risk management, from church and philanthropy to public sector and state responsibility and, notably, from charity to social rights. In an apparently Nordic welfare state, leaving people afflicted by poverty to the mercy of charity represents a clear change in the development of social policy. Food aid provision can be interpreted as a form of residual social policy supplemented by private charity that is the opposite of the universalism integral to the Nordic welfare model. From a social justice perspective, charitable actors delivering food aid actually jeopardise social rights by taking an active part in dismantling the welfare state and public responsibility for the most vulnerable. In the end, rooting a charitable response to the basic need for food in 'civic activity' inevitably violates universal social rights. Respecting social rights universally, as has been previously emphasised, is a cornerstone of the Nordic welfare state model.

References <1>

Arcuri, S. (2019) 'Food poverty, food waste and the consensus frame on charitable food redistribution in Italy', *Agriculture and Human Values*, 36(2): 263–75. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-019-09918-1.

Chrisafis, A. (2015) *France to force big supermarkets to give unsold food to charities*, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/22/france-to-force-big-supermarkets-to-give-away-unsold-food-to-charity.

Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2013) *Towards the circular economy Vol. 1: An economic and business rationale for an accelerated transition*,

https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications/towards-the-circular-economy-vol-1-an-economic-and-business-rationale-for-an-accelerated-transition.

Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2019) *What is a circular economy?*, https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/concept.

European Commission (2015) *The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD): Breaking the vicious circle of poverty and deprivation.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

European Commission (2017) *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: On the implementation of the Circular Economy Action Plan*, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circulareconomy/implementation_report.pdf.

European Commission (2018) *Annual implementation report summary – Finland*, https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1239&langId=en&intPageId=3611.

European Social Charter (2018) *European Committee of Social Rights: Conclusions 2017 Finland*, https://um.fi/documents/35732/0/12.+uudistettu+raportti%2C+lokakuu+2016+p%C3%A4%C3%A4telm%C3%A4t.pdf/333396f8-8b5b-2f8f-e1ac-aa572135925d.

European Union (2010) *Being wise with waste: The EU's approach to waste management*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

Eurostat (2019a) *Gini coefficient of equivalised disposable income – EU-SILC survey*, http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_di12.

Eurostat (2019b) *Inability to afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day – EU-SILC survey*, http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_mdes03&lang=en.

Evira (2013) *Foodstuffs Donated to Food Aid*, https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/globalassets/tietoa-meista/asiointi/oppaat-ja-lomakkeet/yritykset/elintarvikeala/food-lomakkeet---ohjeet/eviran_ohje_16035_2_uk.pdf.

FEBA (2016) *Circular economy in favour of the most deprived: Addressing food waste through food redistribution. European Federation of Food Banks position paper*,

https://www.eurofoodbank.org/images/cont/position-paper-eu-waste-policy--23-nov-2016---fina_file.pdf.

Hänninen, S. (1994) 'Nälästä (*On Hunger*)', in M. Heikkilä, S. Hänninen, J. Karjalainen, O. Kontula and K. Koskela (eds) *Nälkä* (Hunger), Helsinki: Stakes and STM, pp 3–13.

Hanssen, O.J., Ekegren, P., Gram-Hanssen, I., Korpela, P., Langevad-Clifforth, N., Skov-Olsen, K., Silvennoinen, K., Stare, M., Stenmarck, Å. and Svanes E. (2014) *Food redistribution in the Nordic region: Experiences and results from a pilot study*, Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers.

Heikkilä, M. and Karjalainen, J. (1998) *Leaks in the safety net: The role of civil dialogue in the Finnish inclusion policy*, Helsinki: Stakes.

Karjalainen, J. (2008) 'Nälkä-äläkästä Nälkäryhmään. Tutkimus, ruokapankit ja politiikka lehdistössä (*From hunger-uproar to the Hunger Group: Research, food banks and politics in media*)', in S. Hänninen, J. Karjalainen, K.-M. Lehtelä and T. Silvasti (eds) *Toisten Pankki. Ruoka-apu Hyvinvointivaltiossa* (A bank for the others: Food aid in a welfare state). Helsinki: Stakes, pp 69–114.

Kärppä, H. (2016) *Kaupat tyrmäävät hävikkiruuan pakollisen jakelun* (Stores shoot down mandatory redistribution of food waste), https://www.hs.fi/talous/art-2000002903241.html.

Kela (2017) *Perustoimeentulotuen siirto Kelaan, Kelan sisäinen arviointi 2017* (Transfer of basic income support to Kela, Internal assessment 2017), https://www.kela.fi/documents/10180/3571044/toturaportti0806.pdf/06f4fd6b-50de-4302-b6ea-ac5c2adb0ae9.

Keskitalo, E. (2008) *Balancing social citizenship and new paternalism: Finnish activation policy and street-level practice in a comparative perspective* (doctoral dissertation), Helsinki: University of Helsinki.

Kessl, F. (2015) 'Charity economy – a symbol of fundamental shift in Europe', *Tidsskrift for Socialpedagogik*, 18(1): 147–52.

Kessl, F., Oechler, M., Schroeder, T. (2016) 'Charity economy', in F. Kessl, W. Lorenz, H.-U. Otto and S. White (eds) *European social work – a compendium*, Leverkusen and Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich Publishers.

Kirchherr, J., Reike, D. and Hekkert, M. (2017) ‘Conceptualizing the circular economy: An analysis of 114 definitions’, *Resources, Conservation & Recycling*, 127: 221–32.

Kirkko ja kaupunki (2017) *Seurakuntien ruoka-apua tarvitsee paljon enemmän kuin 100 000 suomalaista* (More than 100,000 Finns in need of food assistance from parishes), https://www.kirkkojakaupunki.fi/-/seurakuntien-ruoka-apua-tarvitsee-paljon-enemman-kuin-100-000-suomalaista.

Kirkkopalvelut (2014) *EU-elintarviketuki – Ruokaa tarvitseville* (EU food aid – Food for those in need), http://www.kirkkopalvelut.fi/eu-elintarviketuki.

Kirkkopalvelut (2017) *Ruokaturva* (Food security), https://kotimaanapu.fi/ruokaturva/.

Kirkkopalvelut (2018) *Ruoka-avusta loppukuun oljenkorsi: Seurakunnat jakoivat ruokaa 100 000 ihmiselle* (Getting by with food aid: Parishes distributed food to 100,000 people), https://www.kirkkopalvelut.fi/Ruokaavusta+loppukuun+oljenkorsi%3A+Seurakunnat+jakoivat+ruokaa+100+000+ihmiselle.

Kontula, O. and Koskela, K. (1993) *Taloudellisen laman terveysvaikutuksia 1992–1993* (Impact of economic recession on health during 1992–1993). *Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriön julkaisuja*, Helsinki: STM.

Korhonen, J., Nuur, C., Feldmann, A. and Birkie, S.E. (2018) ‘Circular economy as an essentially contested concept’, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 175: 544–52.

Kortetmäki, T. and Silvasti, T. (2017) ‘Charitable food aid in a Nordic welfare state: A case for environmental and social injustice’, in A.-L. Matthies and K. Närhi (eds) *The ecosocial transition of societies: The contribution of social work and social policy*, Abingdon: Routledge, pp 219–33.

Kuivalainen, S. (2010) ‘Kestääkö suomalainen vähimmäisturva pohjoismaisen vertailun? Vertaileva analyysi vähimmäisturvan tasosta ja sen köyhyyttä ehkäisevästä vaikutuksesta neljässä Pohjoismaassa 1990–2005 (*Does Finnish basic social security stand up to Nordic comparison? Comparative analysis of the level of basic social security and its anti-poverty impact in four Nordic countries in 1990–2005*)’, *Yhteiskuntapolitiikka*, 75(4): 377–88.

Laihiala, T. (2018) *Kokemuksia ja käsityksiä leipäjonoista: Huono-osaisuus, häpeä ja ansaitsevuus* (Disadvantagedness, shame and deservingness among the recipients of charity food aid in Finland). Kuopio: Publications of the University of Eastern Finland.

Lakialoite (2016) *Lakialoite laiksi elintarvikelain muuttamiseksi* (Bill to amend Food Act), https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/KasittelytiedotValtiopaivaasia/Sivut/LA_29+2016.aspx.

Lorenz, S. (2015) 'Having no choice: Social exclusion in the affluent society', *Journal of Exclusion Studies*, 5(1): 1–17.

McMahon, M., 2011. Personal correspondence (October 16th). Food Sovereignty versus Global Philanthropy Conference, University of British Columbia, Vancouver. 10 October, 2011.

Malkavaara, M. (2002) 'Nälkä ja köyhyys kirkon asiaksi. Näkökulmia laman ja markkinakilpailun aikaan (*Hunger and poverty into Churches agenda. Perspectives on the era of recession and market competition*)', in V. Mäkinen (ed) *Lasaruksesta leipäjonoihin. Köyhyys kirkon kysymyksenä* (From Lazarus to breadlines: Church and the question of poverty.), Jyväskylä: Atena, pp 283–312.

Mavi (2018) *Tiivistelmä komission 17.07.2018 hyväksymästä Vähävaraisten avun toimenpideohjelman 2014-2020 vuoden 2017 täytäntöönpanoraportista* (Implementation Report summary for the FEAD Action Program 2017-2020), https://www.ruokavirasto.fi/globalassets/tietoa-meista/asiointi/oppaat-ja-lomakkeet/yhteisot/tuet-ja-kehittaminen/tiivistelma_taytantoonpanoraportti_2017_fead.pdf.

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (2019) *The Fund for European Food Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) 2014–2020*, https://tem.fi/en/the-fund-for-european-aid-to-the-most-deprived-fead-2014-2020.

MSAH (2016) *Yli miljoona euroa valtionapua erityisen tuen tarpeessa olevien auttamiseksi* (Over €1 million in state aid to help those in need of special support). *Tiedote 165/2016*, https://stm.fi/artikkeli/-/asset_publisher/yli-miljoona-euroa-valtionapua-erityisen-tuen-tarpeessa-olevien-auttamiseksi.

MSAH (2017a) *STM: Suomalaisten osallisuuteen vaikutetaan ruoka-apua tehokkaammin varmistamalla yhteiskunnan rakenteiden toimivuus* (Social inclusion in Finland is more effectively advanced by ensuring functioning structures in society, not via food charity). *Tiedote 205/2017*, https://stm.fi/artikkeli/-/asset_publisher/stm-suomalaisten-osallisuuteen-vaikutetaan-ruoka-apua-tehokkaammin-varmistamalla-yhteiskunnan-rakenteiden-toimivuus.

MSAH (2017b) *Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö jakoi valtionavustuksia ruoka-apuun ja päihderiippuvaisten tukemiseen* (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health granted state aid to food aid and to support for addicts). *Tiedote 139/2017*, https://stm.fi/artikkeli/-/asset_publisher/sosiaali-ja-terveysministerio-jakoi-valtionavustuksia-ruoka-apuun-ja-paihderiippuvaisten-tukemiseen.

MSAH (2019a) *Valtionavustukset ruoka-apuun* (State grants to food charity), https://stm.fi/rahoitus-ja-avustukset/ruoka-apu.

MSAH (2019b) *Activation model for unemployment security*, https://stm.fi/en/unemployment/activation-model-for-unemployment-security.

Official Statistics of Finland (2018) *Income distribution statistics: Income inequality international comparison 2016*, http://www.stat.fi/til/tjt/2016/04/tjt_2016_04_2018-05-24_tie_001_en.html.

Ohisalo, M. (2013) 'EU:n ruoka-apuohjelman vaikutus ruoka-avun vakiintumiseen Suomessa (*The impact of EU food aid programme on the entrenchment of food aid in finland)*', in M. Niemelä and J. Saari (eds) *Huono-osaisten hyvinvointi Suomessa* (Welfare of the disadvantaged in Finland), Helsinki: Kela, pp 146–72.

Ohisalo, M. (2014) 'Kuka tahansa meistä? Sosioekonominen asema ruoka-avussa (*Anyone of us? Socio-economic status in food aid*)', in M. Ohisalo and J. Saari (eds) *Kuka seisoo leipäjonossa? Ruoka-apu 2010-luvun Suomessa* (Who stands in line? Food charity in 2010s Finland), Helsinki: KAKS – Kunnallisalan kehittämissäätiö, pp 27–41.

Ohisalo, M. (2017) *Murusia hyvinvointivaltion pohjalla: Leipäjonot, koettu hyvinvointi ja huono-osaisuus* (Crumbs at the bottom of a welfare state. Charity food aid and subjective well-being of the disadvantaged), Kuopio: Publications of the University of Eastern Finland.

Ohisalo, M. and Määttä, A. (2014) 'Viimeisen luukun jälkeen – ruoka-avussa käyvien paikka julkisessa palvelu- ja tulonsiirtoverkossa (*After the final counter – positioning food-aid-goers in the network of public services and income transfers*)', in M. Ohisalo and J. Saari (eds) *Kuka seisoo leipäjonossa? Ruoka-apu 2010-luvun Suomessa* (Who stands in line? Food charity in 2010s Finland), Helsinki: KAKS – Kunnallisalan kehittämissäätiö, pp 42–58.

Ohisalo, M., Eskelinen, N., Laine, J., Kainulainen, S. and Saari, J. (2014) *Avun tilkkutäkki: suomalaisen ruoka-apukentän monimuotoisuus* (Patchwork quilt of aid: The diversity of the field of Finnish food aid). *Avustustoiminnan julkaisuja*, Helsinki: Raha-automaattiyhdistys.

Poppendieck, J. (1999) *Sweet charity? Emergency food and the end of entitlement*, New York: Penguin Books.

Practical Action (2019) *Introducing the Six R's*, https://practicalaction.org/6rs.

Prieto-Sandoval, V., Jaca, C. and Ormazabal, M. (2018) 'Towards a consensus on the circular economy', *Journal of Cleaner Production,* 179: 605–15.

Riches, G. and Silvasti, T. (2014) *First world hunger revisited: Food charity or the right to food?* (2nd edn), Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Salonen, A. (2016) *Food for the soul or the soul for food: Users' perspectives on religiously affiliated food charity in a Finnish city* (doctoral dissertation), Helsinki: University of Helsinki.

Salonen, A.S. and Silvasti, T. (2019) 'Faith based organizations as actors in the charity economy: A case study of food assistance in Finland', in H. Gaisbauer, G. Schweiger and C. Sedmak (eds) *Absolute poverty in Europe: Interdisciplinary perspectives on a hidden phenomenon*, Bristol: Policy Press, pp 289–312.

Samaria (2018) *Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriön myöntämän valtionavustuksen vaikutus järjestöjen ruoka-avustustyöhön 2016-2017 Samarian hakemissa avustuskokonaisuuksissa* (Impact of the state grant issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health on food aid activities in 2016–2017 in the grant units applied to by Samaria). *Arviointiraportti 1/2018*, https://www.samaria.fi/documents/582388/716268/Ruoka-apu%2C+arviointiraportti+2018/39bbd0a0-533d-4b77-aa89-e85d08e52cee.

Silvasti, T. (2014) 'Participatory alternatives for charity food delivery? Finnish development in an international comparison', in A.-L. Matthies and L. Uggerhøj (eds) *Participation, marginalization and welfare services: Concepts, politics and practices across European countries*, Farnham: Ashgate, pp 183–97.

Silvasti, T. (2015) 'Food aid – normalising the abnormal in Finland', *Social Policy and Society,* 14(3): 471–82.

Silvasti, T. and Karjalainen, J. (2014) 'Hunger in a Nordic welfare state: Finland', in G. Riches and T. Silvasti (eds) *First world hunger revisited: Food charity or the right to food?*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp 72–86.

Sitra (2016) *Leading the cycle – Finnish road map to a circular economy 2016–2025*, https://media.sitra.fi/2017/02/24032659/Selvityksia121.pdf.

Sitra (2019) *Spreading the Shared Table model of community food assistance,* https://www.sitra.fi/en/projects/spreading-shared-table-model-community-food-assistance/.

Tanner, N. (2019) *Töissä, mutta köyhä. Palkkatyköyhyys ja sen kustannukset ravintola- ja kiintoistöpalvelualoilla* (Working poor: Income poverty and its costs in the restaurant and real estate services sectors). *PAM 3/2019*, https://www.pam.fi/media/1.-materiaalipankki-tiedostot-nakyvat-julkisessa-materiaalipankissa/tilastot-ja-tutkimukset/1342_palkkatyokoyhyys.pdf.

THL (2019) *Evaluation report on the adequacy of basic social security 2015–2019*, http://www.julkari.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/137711/URN_ISBN_978-952-343-296-3.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

Tikka, V. (2019) 'Charitable food aid in Finland: From a social issue to an environmental solution', *Agriculture and Human Values,* 36(2): 341–352. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-019-09916-3.

UNICEF Finland (2019) *Kun UNICEF auttoi Suomea* (When UNICEF aided Finland), https://www.unicef.fi/unicef/historia/.

Valtioneuvosto (2015) *Finland, a land of solutions: Strategic programme of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's government,* https://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/10184/1427398/Ratkaisujen+Suomi_EN_YHDISTETTY_netti.pdf/8d2e1a66-e24a-4073-8303-ee3127fbfcac.

Valtioneuvosto (2017) *Finland, a land of solutions: Mid-term review. Government action plan 2017–2019*, https://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/10184/321857/Government+action+plan+28092017+en.pdf.

Yhteinen keittiö (2019) *Yhteinen keittiö* (Communal Kitchen) *home page*, https://yhteinenkeittio.fi.

Yhteinen pöytä (2016) *Ruoka-avusta kansalaistoiminnaksi* (From food charity to civil activity), https://www.slideshare.net/Havikkiviikko/yhteinen-pyt-hankkeen-esitys-hvikkiruoan-hydyntmisest.

Yhteinen pöytä (2019) *Yhteinen Pöytä – Shared Table briefly in English*, https://www.yhteinenpoyta.fi/en/.

YLE (1990) *Pääministeri Holkeri kehotti suomalaisia syömään silakkaa* (Prime Minister Holkeri advised citizens to eat herring), https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2014/09/04/paaministeri-holkeri-kehotti-suomalaisia-syomaan-silakkaa?fbclid=IwAR20FnLyS_aW03wXDadTYnKRg9M40EEJmDDyqoegYtDqihavAVMi-JgsSyk.

Zero Waste Europe (2019) *Food systems: A recipe for food waste prevention. Policy briefing*, https://zerowasteeurope.eu/downloads/food-systems-a-recipe-for-food-waste-prevention/.

Ziegler, J., Golay, C., Mahon, G. and Way, S. (2011) *The fight for the right to food: Lessons learned*, Geneva: Palgrave Macmillan.