

## Finland's government resigns

10th March, 2019



Finland's entire government has resigned. It wanted to pass some laws on social welfare and healthcare reform. Its goals were an important part of its plans for Finland. However, politicians in the government voted against the plans.

Finland's Prime Minister Juha Sipila said he was "hugely disappointed". He said he and his colleagues would stay on as a "caretaker" government until elections in April. Mr Sipila wanted to change Finland's health and welfare system. He said it must change because Finland's population is aging. It is under a lot of financial pressure. The government hoped its planned reforms would save up to \$3.4 billion over the next decade.

Many politicians in Finland believe the government is making a big mistake by resigning. They think it would have been better for the government to stay in power until next month's elections. Prime Minister Sipila said resigning was the right thing to do because it did not get support for its plans. He told reporters: "The conclusion I've drawn is that my government has no choice but to hand in its letter of resignation. I'll shoulder my responsibility." One of Mr Sipila's colleagues agreed that it was right for the government to resign. Antti Kaikkonen, a senior member of the Centre Party, said: "If anyone asks what political responsibility means, then I would say that this resignation is an example".

Sources: [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [foxnews.com](http://foxnews.com) / [helsinkitimes.com](http://helsinkitimes.com)

## Writing

Our government knows what is best for our country. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

government / resigned / politicians / reforms / disappointed / financial / pressure / mistake / power / elections / support / choice / colleagues / senior / responsibility

## True / False

- Everyone in Finland's government has retired. T / F
- Finland's Prime Minister was happy that his government resigned. T / F
- The population of Finland is getting younger and younger. T / F
- The government hoped to save up to \$3.4 billion next year. T / F
- Finnish politicians think the government resignation is a mistake. T / F
- Politicians think the government should have stayed in power until April. T / F
- Finland's leader said he had a responsibility to his shoulder and elbow. T / F
- A politician said the resignation was an example of political responsibility. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <b>entire</b>     | a. arrived at   |
| 2. <b>goals</b>      | b. continue     |
| 3. <b>hugely</b>     | c. error        |
| 4. <b>stay on</b>    | d. aims         |
| 5. <b>next</b>       | e. high-ranking |
| 6. <b>mistake</b>    | f. upcoming     |
| 7. <b>right</b>      | g. whole        |
| 8. <b>drawn</b>      | h. co-workers   |
| 9. <b>colleagues</b> | i. correct      |
| 10. <b>senior</b>    | j. greatly      |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you know about Finland?
- Do you think it is a big mistake for a government to resign?
- What do you think of your country's government?
- Would you be a good politician?
- What would you do as leader of your country?
- What responsibility do you shoulder?
- What questions would you like to ask Finland's prime minister?

## Phrase Match

- |                                      |                           |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. It wanted to pass some            | a. in power               |
| 2. stay on as a "caretaker"          | b. over the next decade   |
| 3. Finland's health and              | c. big mistake            |
| 4. It is under a lot of              | d. laws on social welfare |
| 5. save up to \$3.4 billion          | e. responsibility         |
| 6. the government is making a        | f. welfare system         |
| 7. better for the government to stay | g. of resignation         |
| 8. resigning was the right           | h. financial pressure     |
| 9. hand in its letter                | i. thing to do            |
| 10. political                        | j. government             |

## Discussion – Student B

- What is your country's welfare system like?
- What is your country's healthcare system like?
- Would you like to live in Finland?
- When was the last time you were hugely disappointed?
- What problems does an aging population cause?
- When have you been under financial pressure?
- What advice do you have for Finland's prime minister?
- Why do people become politicians?

## Spelling

- pass some laws on social weearlf
- he was hugely pinapoitedsd
- he and his lolucaeseg would stay
- Finland's uioonptalp is aging
- smorefr would save up to \$3.4 billion
- over the next dceda
- making a big isematk
- next month's ntescileo
- The iolnocucns I've drawn
- a oenirs member
- political lnsybpsioreiti
- this resignation is an elmpxae

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. j	4. b	5. f
6. c	7. i	8. a	9. h	10. e

## Role Play

### Role A – A Parent

You think a parent has the biggest responsibility. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people don't have so much responsibility. Also, tell the others which of these has the least responsibility (and why): a company CEO, a teacher or a president.

### Role B – A Company CEO

You think a company CEO has the biggest responsibility. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people don't have so much responsibility. Also, tell the others which of these has the least responsibility (and why): a parent, a teacher or a president.

### Role C – A Teacher

You think a teacher has the biggest responsibility. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people don't have so much responsibility. Also, tell the others which of these has the least responsibility (and why): a company CEO, a parent or a president.

### Role D – A President

You think a president has the biggest responsibility. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their people don't have so much responsibility. Also, tell the others which of these has the least responsibility (and why): a company CEO, a teacher or a parent.

## Speaking – Responsibility

Rank these with your partner. Put the people with the biggest responsibilities at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| • a teacher   | • a parent      |
| • a pilot     | • a soldier     |
| • a student   | • a company CEO |
| • a president | • a doctor      |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.