



GROWING STRONGER

TOGETHER

Social responsibility campaign Zero Exclusion by Mantsinen brought together companies whose values entail helping out young people in Finland.

In cooperation with **Finnish NGO** Hope and Albright Knox, one of the world's leading art galleries, Mantsinen and Neste launched a Zero Exclusion campaign aimed at drawing attention to the marginalization of young people in Finland. During the campaign, three young people painted 42 pictures with the theme "Hope". Particularly noteworthy was the tool used by the young artists - the Mantsinen 300 material handler weighing almost 400 tonnes.

"Responsibility work is part of Mantsinen's strategy. Supporting children and young people, especially those from low-income or disadvantaged backgrounds, has always been important to us", **Mia Mantsinen**, CEO of Mantsinen Group Ltd Oy, comments.

At the end of the campaign, the paintings painted by young people were sold and the proceeds donated to Hope ry's anti-exclusion work. One of the companies that acquired a Zero Exclusion painting is Häggblom Oy, an engineering company specializing in track applications, mining equipment and spare parts for earthmoving machinery. For example, Häggblom designs and manufactures undercarriages and track solutions for Mantsinen material handling machines. Product development requires close cooperation.

"We are in constant contact and through this, Mantsinen also came in contact with Zero Exclusion. The decision to participate was quickly made", **Jukka Karhula**, CEO of Häggblom, says.

Karhula adds that Häggblom's corporate responsibility campaigns are most often related to children and adolescents and those in challenging situations.

"We have regularly donated to various associations and organizations that work for these groups locally and nationwide. In addition, Häggblom works closely with educational institutions from primary level to vocational schools and high schools."

"Through this work we have come to know the situation of young people in Finland today. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of marginalization and division."

MANTSINEN GROUP LTD OY

According to estimates, there are some 60,000 marginalized young people in Finland. Studies imply that exclusion and disadvantage can also be cross-generational: Problems especially in the home environment have the potential to be passed on to the next generation.

The exclusion of young people affects society in many ways: For example, according to a study by The Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare THL and The Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra, the cost to society of a young person leaving primary school alone can be up to € 370,000.

Karhula believes that corporate responsibility has an increasingly important role to play in addressing societal challenges.

“The bond between society and businesses is strong in many ways. If there is disenfranchisement in society, it will soon be reflected in the activities of companies. Therefore, it is important for companies to come forward and be involved, even if it is not always possible to make a substantial financial contribution. Businesses should weigh in to the best of their potential”, Karhula says.

Not to dwell on errors

A provider of HR services, Go On Oy, also took part in the campaign by acquiring one of the paintings. The purchase decision was made by **Henri Lomu**, head of Go On Joensuu office. He subscribes to Jukka Karhula's thoughts on the importance of corporate responsibility.

“In the long run, businesses fare better if there is a tangible value base behind their actions. Of course, it is also applaudable that the value of solidarity is not only seen through profits.”

In particular, Lomu was convinced of the empowering approach of Zero Exclusion campaign.

“The freshness of the idea got me interested. It is quite extraordinary how young artists were promoted in this campaign. The experience was undoubtedly great for these young people”, says Henri Lomu.

Inactivity is a major cause of youth exclusion in Finland. Therefore, in the prevention of exclusion, activating and empowering children and young people at risk is crucial.

Lomu has coached top athletes as a side job, which has helped to recognize the power of good examples. Coaching has taught to see the strengths of positive, forward-looking pedagogy that could be utilized more generally in youth work.

MANTSINEN GROUP LTD OY



“Young people are under all kinds of pressure to move forward in life. It is important to see everyone's own resources and be able to focus on them. Everyone has the chance to find the joy of doing things and a bright perspective on the future, as long as they are given the opportunity to focus and invest in what they are best at.”

Lomu calls for resolute actions to help excluded Finnish youth back on track.

“We should not dwell on mistakes, rather than see how we can do better in the future. This is how people grow to dare to try new things”, says Lomu.

Mia Mantsinen is grateful that several socially accountable companies joined the campaign. She considers Zero Exclusion a success, and believes that the campaign will pave the way for similar collaborative projects in the future.

“In this way, we are getting more good done together with other companies while strengthening our networks. By doing campaigns like this, we want to encourage other companies to take action and to signal that we are also open to suggestions”, Mia Mantsinen says.