

**Work package title:** WP1: Prevalence and related social and economic costs

**Presentation title:** ASD Prevalence Study in Finland

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**Update on activities:**

The Finnish study is based on register information only. All the children born in 2006-2009 who has received an ASD-diagnosis (F84) will be identified from the hospital inpatient and outpatient care (collected by THL National Institute for Health and Welfare) and from the disability benefit register (collected by KELA Social Insurance Institution).

Three control children matched by birth month, region and sex will be taken from the Medical Birth Register (collected by THL). The number of live born children in Finland in the study year was 237 776.

The information on cases and controls will be linked to the following databases to get data on their utilisation of health care and social welfare services:

- 1) THL National Institute for Health and Welfare
  - hospital inpatient care
  - outpatient care
  - primary health care
  - institutionalised care in social welfare
  - home care
  
- 2) KELA Social Insurance Institution
  - use of medication, especially psychotropic medication
  - special reimbursements of chronic diseases

The linkage will cover years from 2006 until 2016 (or 2015 depending when the register data are available). Currently, the study permissions from the two register-keeping organizations, THL and KELA, are still pending.

**Key learning:**

***What worked well?***

- The planning of the study went well, and we were able to combine our knowledge in the register-based studies, epidemiology, health care services research and psychiatry in the planning phase.

***What could be done differently?***

- The time to get the study permissions has been significantly longer than expected.
- A PhD student could have been selected to work with the study permissions.

**Next steps:**

After the study permissions have been received:

- Link the THL data on hospitalised children with ASD diagnoses to KELA data on disability benefits due to ASD.
- Select the control group from THL Medical Birth Register.
- Link cases and controls to THL and KELA data on use of health and social welfare services.