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CLIMATE POLICY CHOICES: PAYOFFS AND TRADE-OFFS

Mikko Paunio, MD, MHS

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Mikko Paunio, MD, MHS was born in Turku, Finland in 1961. He graduated and then completed and defended his doctoral thesis (evaluation of national measles, mumps and rubella elimination program) at the University of Helsinki in 1990. He has postgraduate training from the Free University of Brussels in 1991. He has graduated from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (Master of Health Science in 1993 in chronic disease epidemiology). He is a certified (University of Helsinki) specialist in public health (1999) and is an adjunct professor in general epidemiology at the University of Helsinki.

He is currently holding a cabinet position (Medical Counselor) at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of Finland in the area of environmental health. The duties cover a wide range of regulatory issues including ionizing and non-ionizing radiation and liaison officer duties between the cabinet and the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Authority. He is the chairman of the national board of radiation safety set up by the Council of State.

He comes from a family with academic traditions and is a third generation social democrat. He joined Finland's Social Democratic Party in 1977. He has worked in the following institutions: the Institute of Health and Welfare of Finland, University of Helsinki, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, the European Commission, the World Bank and Finland's Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. He is a member of the American Council on Science and Health Board of Scientific and Policy Advisors. He has 40 publications listed in the US National Library of Medicine at the National Institutes of Health. His co-authored papers have been published e.g. in the New England Journal of Medicine, The Lancet, The Lancet Infectious Diseases, Journal of Infectious Diseases, Journal of the American Medical Association, Circulation and American Journal of Epidemiology.

His most notable scientific achievement relates to refuting the 50-year-long belief that a single successful measles vaccination would give a life-long immunity to children. This finding (published in 1999), which is now corroborated also by the researchers of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in several recent studies. This change of belief has led to global adoption of two-dose measles elimination strategy.

As a junior medical researcher in 1987–8, he was responsible for analyzing health impacts of primary energy sources in the Energy Committee set up by the Finnish Prime Minister. Throughout his career including the two years in the World Bank, he has continued to work on energy issues.



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