

Universal Periodic Review – Finland’s Fourth National Report

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I. Process for the preparation of the report

1. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs drafted and coordinated Finland's fourth National Report for the Universal Periodic Review and finalised it jointly with other Ministries.
2. Drafting the report right after the publication of the third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rightsⁱ and the Government Report on Human Rights Policyⁱⁱ, offered a fruitful continuation of a close dialogue with civil society on Finland's human rights situation. It also provided a prime opportunity to merge into one procedure aspects covering developments both at a practical and a policy level – the National Action Plan having strengthened the monitoring of fundamental and human rights and the Government Report having outlined the Government's policy on fundamental and human rights in international, European Union and national contexts.
3. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs presented an overview of the next UPR cycle to civil society organisations in an event organized by the Finnish League of Human Rights on 16 September 2021 and sent on 27 December 2021 to authorities and NGOs an information note on Finland's next review along with a reminder of the call for stakeholders' input.
4. A public hearing was organised online on **NN** for civil society organisations to comment the structure and the priorities of the national report as well as the Government's views on the level of implementation of the recommendations of the previous cycle.
5. In **NN**, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs circulated the draft report for comments to more than **X** stakeholders, including public authorities, the supreme overseers of legality and the special ombudspersons, the National Human Rights Institution, advisory boards, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, the Sámi Parliament, churches and religious congregations, and numerous civil society organisations. The draft was based on Finland's mid-term report submitted in 2019 and a second review that was conducted in autumn 2021.
6. Attention is called to the Universal Periodic Review and Finland's preparations for it through the social media and the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

II. Implementation of recommendations from the previous cycle

Government's objectives to strengthen the fulfilment of human rights

7. The Government has made the fulfilment and promotion of human rights one the cornerstones of its programme. According to the Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government (2019)ⁱⁱⁱ, to make sure that Finland can continue to be a safe and secure state governed by the rule of law, the Government must ensure that fundamental and human rights and legal protection are implemented equitably.
8. Most of the challenges identified in the previous national report (equal pay, prevention of exclusion, services for the elderly, migrants' situation, the Sámi people's status, and the status and rights of sexual and gender minorities) have a corresponding set of actions identified in the Government Programme. Only the questions linked to remand imprisonment do not have a specific set of actions.
9. The previous report also identified achievements of the Finnish society (freedom of expression, digitalisation and electronic government, and gender equality), and there are actions in the Government Programme in order to further enhance the situation.

Third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights

10. The third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights, which covers the period 2020–2023, was adopted as a government resolution on 23 June 2021. During the preparation of the Action Plan, there was a broad cooperation with stakeholders, and special consideration was given to the Government Programme and the recommendations issued to Finland by the bodies monitoring compliance with international human rights treaties.

11. The Action Plan was drafted by the Government network of contact persons for fundamental and human rights^{iv}, founded in 2012 and appointed for a new four-year term at the beginning of 2020. The network monitors the national fundamental and human rights situation, compliance with international obligations and the implementation of the Government's fundamental and human rights policy.

12. The objective of the Action Plan is to ensure that the public authorities meet their obligation to guarantee the observance of fundamental and human rights. It serves as an instrument strengthening the monitoring of fundamental and human rights in Finland, and in this role, it supports knowledge-based policy-making and fundamental and human rights impact assessment.

13. Building on the experiences gained from the previous action plans, the focus was on developing the monitoring of fundamental and human rights. In this regard, fundamental and human rights indicators, which provide a new instrument for monitoring fundamental and human rights in the short term and the long term, were developed.

14. The indicators are grouped under 30 categories covering all aspects of society from the rule of law to environmental and climate issues. Resources have been allocated to create a website providing interactive and up-to-date information in order to track the indicators and trends revealed by them.

15. The implementation of the Action Plan will be evaluated independently when the next electoral term begins. Moreover, independent supervisory authorities, *e.g.* the special ombudspersons, the Human Rights Centre including its Human Rights Delegation, and civil society organisations, are important independent supervisors of the implementation.

Government Report on Human Rights Policy

16. The Government Report on Human Rights Policy was adopted as a government resolution on 9 December 2021. It is a result of two years' work and a wide public consultation.

17. The Report outlines the Government's long-term policy on fundamental and human rights in international, European Union and national contexts. According to the Report, Finland defends the universal and legally binding nature of human rights and promotes fundamental and human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

18. The Report describes and presents actions that the public authorities use to safeguard the fulfilment of fundamental and human rights in Finland, and illustrates Finland's priorities in global forums. It stresses the importance of strengthening non-discrimination, equality and participatory rights, and emphasises the rights of women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities and, in European forums, the rights of the Roma. Two themes that are more recent are presented as well – digitalisation and electronic communications, and environment and sustainability.

New human rights structures

19. The Government believes that comprehensive human rights structures play a crucial role in ensuring a positive development in human rights. The Government is pleased that recently the Finnish

institutional framework has been further expanded with an ombudsperson for the rights of the elderly, a special rapporteur on violence against women, and with the new Rule of Law Centre operating within the University of Helsinki.

Sustainable development goals

20. The mandate of the National Commission on Sustainable Development, chaired by the Prime Minister, is to ensure that the international sustainable development goals are included in national policy. The most recent roadmap to reach the goals was adopted in February 2022^v. Finland's commitment has yielded tangible results, and it has been ranked at the top of international sustainable development comparisons^{vi}.

21. The state of sustainable development in Finland is monitored annually. Experts from different sectors draw up descriptions of the situation in different areas of sustainable development on the basis of selected indicators^{vii}. The annual Citizens' Panel on Sustainable Development enables citizens to participate in the assessment of the state of sustainable development in Finland.

22. According to the 2020 State of Sustainable Development report^{viii}, summarising the progress made from 2016 to 2020, Finland has almost reached the goals related to social and economic sustainability. Key challenges are related to consumption and production patterns, climate action and the state of biodiversity. Furthermore, obesity is an increasing problem, and gender equality challenges remain. Finland bears global responsibility by contributing to international crisis management, but it has not reached the target level set for the official development assistance.

Implementation of recommendations from the previous cycle

23. Under the Constitution of Finland (*Suomen perustuslaki; Finlands grundlag*; 731/1999), public authorities must guarantee the observance of fundamental and human rights. The Constitution requires that public authorities guarantee actively the observance of these rights even despite significant changes in the operating environment.

24. After the previous UPR review of Finland, at least three global phenomena have influenced the setting for realising fundamental and human rights. First, the global community understands more and more the existential threat of the climate crisis, environmental degradation and the loss of biodiversity. Second, the use of electronic communications, artificial intelligence and digital technologies in general have continued to widen across different sectors of society. Third, the ongoing COVID19-pandemic has brought a global health, economic, and social crisis. Nationally, major structural reforms are still going on *e.g.* in social welfare and health care.

25. Of the 153 recommendations of the second UPR round, Finland accepted entirely or partly 120 and noted 33. Finland has also given due consideration to the areas raised by the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the time in his letter of 23 October 2017. The implementation of the entirely or partly accepted recommendations has produced progress in many respects. With a wide array of actions to make steady progress, most recommendations have been implemented. However, the Government recognises that in many fields, such as ending domestic violence and discrimination, further work will be needed and that the question of what level of funding can be considered adequate resourcing is a perpetual dilemma.

26. In 2019, Finland assessed the implementation of the recommendations comprehensively and submitted a voluntary interim implementation report to the Human Rights Council. A second comprehensive assessment was made nationally in autumn 2021.

Acceptance of international norms, cooperation with Treaty Bodies, and follow-up to the UPR

Full implementation of recommendations

27. The Government's commitment to strengthen the fulfilment of human rights has been concretised with Finland's continued commitment to the international human rights law framework. While Finland has already ratified nearly all central human rights treaties of the UN and the Council of Europe, the Government has actively examined its possibilities to make further progress^{ix}.

28. According to the Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government, the work to assess the preconditions for ratification of ILO Convention No 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries will continue. The Sámi Parliament is and will be engaged in this process.^x At the moment, the start of the ratification process is waiting for the approval of the amended Act on the Sami Parliament (current law is *laki saamelaiskäräjistä; sametingslag; 974/1995*).

29. Finland has always supported and given great weight to the work of Treaty Bodies as an integral part of the human rights system. When nominating national candidates to their elections, Finland emphasises independence and impartiality, recognized competence in the relevant field of human rights, availability to attend the sessions of the Committee in question and balanced gender representation. Finland has not nominated national candidates for the UN Treaty Bodies' elections since 2012. However, national candidates for the Council of Europe's monitoring bodies are selected through a public call. The selection process is open and merit-based. A similar procedure would be used for the UN Bodies, too.^{xi}

30. The Government has been committed to implementing the accepted recommendations of the second and third cycles. The implementation of the third cycle's recommendations have been followed, and Finland submitted a voluntary mid-term report in 2019. Furthermore, the Government prepared a third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights in 2021. The Government hopes that the indicator work of the action plan and the future interactive website presenting the progress made can develop into a future best practice.^{xii}

31. Furthermore, it should be highlighted that the resources of the Finnish Council of Regulatory Impact Analysis have been strengthened, and a government-level system for ex post regulatory impact analysis will be introduced. The Government will also draw up a comprehensive action plan for better regulation. A monitoring system covering all state administrative sectors will be created for monitoring equality. A gender impact assessment will be a compulsory part of public administrative functions in all government departments. Studies have been conducted and reports drafted in many areas, *ia.* the rights of child and education^{xiii, xiv}.

32. Finnish citizens are quite well aware of the international protection of human rights and appreciate them. According to a study by the Ministry of Justice, 89 % had heard of the European Convention on Human Rights and 63 % of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and 95 % thought that human rights are important when developing a more fair Finnish society^{xv}.

Partial implementation of recommendations

33. The Government is in the middle of ratifying the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. The Government proposes that Finland recognises the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances in full. **The Government Bill will be issued to Parliament in June 2022.**^{xvi}

34. Finland agrees that every member of the international community has the responsibility to prevent atrocity crimes. Finland has analysed potential risk factors and viewed that it is not a high-risk country. Thus, Finland's work to promote responsibility to protect is mostly preventive. A 2021 publication^{xvii} clarifies the implementation of Finland's commitments in this regard.^{xviii}

Pending recommendations

35. The Government has not found new reasons to change its view that it would be necessary for Finland to ratify the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity, since Finland is a State Party the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1 July 2002. Its article 29 covers *ratione materiae* the scope of application of the Convention.

Constitutional and legislative framework

Full implementation of recommendations

36. The Government has worked to ensure that the Finnish legislation is constantly up to date and promotes the fulfillment of human rights.

37. The work against discrimination has continued. The legislative framework already is rather comprehensive – discrimination based on sexual orientation as well as on several other grounds is prohibited in the Non-discrimination Act (*yhdenvertaisuuslaki; diskrimineringslag*; 1325/2014). The work on eliminating discrimination has continued, and in accordance with the Government Programme, a partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act is **currently ongoing**^{xix} – a public consultation on the draft proposal was held in Spring 2022. Discrimination based on gender, gender identity or gender expression are prohibited in the Act on Equality between Men and Women (*laki naisten ja miesten välisestä tasa-arvosta; lag om jämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män*; 609/1986).

38. There are several projects to support the implementation of these laws on multiple levels of the public sector – *ia.* the Ministry of Justice and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities as a partner carried out the RainbowRights project^{xx} in order to support equality planning and its implementation in the municipalities and cities, and the Government of Åland has proposed an action plan on equal opportunities for LGBTQIA people in the Ålandic society 2019–2025^{xxi}. Furthermore, the Government aims to give to the Parliament **in 2022** a proposal for an Act on the legal recognition of gender that respects people’s right to self-determination. A public consultation of the proposal was held in Spring 2022^{xxii}. The National Child Strategy^{xxiii} will establish for health professionals a National Best Practice Guidelines for families being told of their child’s intersex.^{xxiv}

39. More efforts have been put to ensure accessibility. The Government Decree on Accessibility of Buildings (*Valtioneuvoston asetus rakennuksen esteettömyydestä; Statsrådets förordning om byggnaders tillgänglighet*; 241/2017) entered into force on 1 January 2018. The decree is applicable to new construction and repair or alteration work requiring a building permit. The Ministry of the Environment has published guidelines^{xxv} on accessible construction to supplement the new decree. Additionally, the Ministry of Transport and Communications published an action programme for 2017–2021 to ensure that common digital services are suitable for as many people as possible^{xxvi}. The action programme puts forward concrete priority measures that can be implemented and monitored in the short term in order to increase equal access to digital transport and communications services. The work was continued with a report on the definition and availability of accessibility information and increasing awareness among providers of mobility services complemented with a set of recommendations^{xxvii}. The Government of Åland has set up a disability council for the county^{xxviii} (*Rådet för personer med funktionsnedsättning*).^{xxix}

40. The Government has continued its work to effectively promote and protect the human rights for refugees, migrants and ethnic minorities. The Government’s action programme to combat racism and to promote good relations^{xxx} was adopted in October 2021 and will be implemented in different administrative sectors during 2021–2023. The action programme includes eight key objectives and 52 concrete policy measures for different areas of life. In addition, the special needs of minority groups, migrants and refugees have been addressed in the national core curricula. Additionally, Finland's current legislation provides a good foundation for the promotion of the equality of the Roma. The National

Roma Policy 2018-2022^{xxxii} has mainstreamed actions and measures that create further capacities for improvements in the human rights and socioeconomic status of Roma. Furthermore, the national asylum process has recently been evaluated in co-operation with different kinds of actors in the field of asylum. Its recommendations have been noted, and the Finnish Immigration Service has created a plan on how to improve its work. Finally, in summer 2021, legislative amendments enhancing refugees' legal aid and access to justice entered into force (*laki ulkomaalaislain eräiden säännösten kumoamisesta; lag om upphävande av vissa bestämmelser i utlänningslagen; 737/2021*). The Government has also improved the situation of minors with a refugee status or a residence permit when applying for residence permits for the rest of the family abroad.^{xxxii}

41. Not any kind of violence should be tolerated in the Finnish society. The corporal punishment of children is prohibited in the Finnish Criminal Code, and all matters of physical abuse towards children can be considered assault crimes. According to follow-up data, the use of disciplinary violence has decreased considerably over the past 20 years. Further work and guidance is included in the National Child Strategy.^{xxxiii}

42. One of the Government's priorities is to fight human trafficking. Consequently, Finland's Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings^{xxxiv} was released in May 2021. The Action Plan is based on five strategic objectives and 55 actions. One of the goals is to ensure that the necessary training is provided to state officials and other relevant professionals. A new national anti-trafficking unit of the police was established by the National Police Board in February 2021. The unit is based in the Helsinki Police Department and the National Bureau of Investigation. Nevertheless, there has been evidence that there remains difficulties in identifying and inspecting offences related to human trafficking, and further actions will be taken.^{xxxv}

Partial implementation of recommendations

43. According to the Gender Equality Act, discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and family leaves is forbidden. However, further work is needed to fully stop this kind of discrimination from happening.^{xxxvi}

44. According to the Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government, the Government will carry out a comprehensive reform of legislation governing sexual offences based on the principle of physical integrity and the right to sexual self-determination. The definition of rape in the Criminal Code will be amended so that it will be based on the absence of consent while simultaneously ensuring appropriate legal safeguards. The Government submitted its legislative proposal to the Parliament in February 2022 (HE 13/2022 vp).^{xxxvii}

45. According to the Government Programme, an act on the legal recognition of gender that respects people's right to self-determination will be enacted. The requirement of infertility will be removed from the act, and medical treatments will be separated from the change of legal gender. A public consultation of the draft proposal was held at the beginning of 2022.^{xxxviii}

46. The Finnish Immigration Service has updated its instructions for the consideration of children's cases and the related decision-making in the Service, in particular regarding hearing of a child in light of the views adopted by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in the communication A.B. v. Finland (Communication No. 51/2018). Reviewing the family reunification criteria is included also in the Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government.^{xxxix}

Noted recommendations

47. According to the Government Programme, in cooperation with the business sector, Finland will develop a binding regulatory framework on corporate responsibility as a part of the reform work under way in the UN and the OECD. The work is currently ongoing^{xl}. In Spring 2022, the Ministry of

Economic Affairs and Employment published a memorandum^{xli} investigating the options for the content of due diligence obligation in national legislation that would apply to Finnish companies.^{xlii}

48. Finnish legislation provides a possibility to conduct a non-military service instead of conscription. The Act on the exemption of Jehovah's Witnesses from military service under certain conditions was repealed on 1 April 2019 to treat all religious communities in Finland the same.^{xliii}

Human rights policies, and national plans of action on human rights (or specific areas)

Full implementation of recommendations

49. Finland has continued its efforts to further improve its relevant legal and administrative frameworks and policies, in conformity with its international commitments. The several specific policy actions that have been taken are described under the corresponding sections. In addition to these more targeted measures, more general and overarching actions have been taken and their implementation has been monitored and continued as needed.

50. For example, the third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights continues the resolved work set out in the previous plans. Only two out of 43 projects listed in the second National Action Plan were not implemented, and they were mainly linked to the health and social services reform that failed in 2019. Monetary resources are allocated to implement the Third Action Plan.^{xliv}

51. In addition, the 2016–2017 National Action Plan against Human Trafficking has yielded many follow-up measures. For example, the National Police Board has issued guidelines to the police on identification, protection, referral and investigation of the trafficking in human beings. The guidelines were updated in 2020. In addition, occupational safety and health inspectors have a duty to recognise potential victims and direct them to the Assistance System, given that they consent to it. However, despite the actions taken, a need for further work has been identified. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has appointed a working group until the end of 2022 to prepare new regulation on assisting the victims of human trafficking^{xlv}. The aim is to clarify and simplify the current legislation so that services are better available to all victims.^{xlvi}

National human rights institution (NHRI)

Partial implementation of recommendations

52. The Human Rights Centre, its Human Rights Delegation and the Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman together form the Finnish National Human Rights Institution (NHRI). The National Human Rights Institution is an independent and autonomous institution and its funding is included in budget of Parliament of Finland. The funding is granted by Parliament. The budget allocated to the National Human Rights Institution has increased from 6 201 000 euros in 2017 to 7 145 000 euros in 2020, which included six new staff members (two for the Human Rights Centre and four for the Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman). In 2021, the budget was increased to 7 517 000 euros.^{xlvii}

Human rights education

Full implementation of recommendations

53. The Government believes in the strength of human rights education in ensuring an inclusive society. Therefore, multiple actions have been taken to advance human rights education. For example, in June 2020, a Steering Group for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights Education (2020–2023)^{xlviii} was set up. To support the work of the Steering Group, a database on existing democracy and human rights education projects and good practices was created in 2021. Since ensuring sufficient human rights education is a widely shared goal across the Finnish society, the Human Rights Centre, the Finnish League for Human Rights and many other civil society organisations as well as

education development networks provide platforms, in-service training and materials. For example, there was a large-scale project by the Finnish League for Human Rights where there is training for municipal youth workers on issues related to the promotion of human rights.^{xlix}

Partial implementation of recommendations

54. Knowledge and skills relating to education for democratic citizenship and human rights education are seen as one of the important components of a teacher's expertise in Finland. While many actions have been taken^l, providing sufficient resources to continue with systematic human rights education and training of teachers at all levels of national education is an open-ended target. Nevertheless, the Finnish National Agency for Education has an annual budget (around 10 million euros) for the in-service training of 23 000 teachers, and human rights education and training is one of the training themes. These themes are taught also in teachers' pre-service training that is provided by universities and teacher training units.^{li}

Discrimination against women

Full implementation of recommendations

55. The Government notes that determined actions are needed to address gender discrimination and for that reason robust institutions must be in place. In Finland, the Ombudsperson for Equality and the National Non-discrimination and Equality Tribunal supervise compliance with the Act on Equality between Women and Men in private activities and in public administration. In addition, there is a Gender Equality Unit within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, which it prepares and develops the governmental gender equality policies and gender equality legislation, promotes gender mainstreaming in state administration and is in charge of tasks related to the EU gender equality legislation and policies. Lastly, the Council for Gender Equality (TANE) works to promote gender equality in society. TANE drafts proposals and provides statements to develop legislation and other measures that affect gender equality.^{lii}

56. Legislative changes have been made regarding family leaves. The aim is an equal division of family leaves and care responsibilities between both parents in families, stronger non-discrimination and equality in the world of work, and reduced pay disparities between the sexes. Families will have more opportunities for choice and flexibility in taking family leave. Additionally, according to the Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government, discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy will be prevented. Legislation will be clarified to ensure that pregnancy and use of family leave may not affect the continuation of temporary employment. In addition, the elimination of unjustified pay disparities and pay discrimination will be promoted through statutory measures to improve pay transparency. In 2018, the Government of Åland reserved budget funds for the next five years for preventive work in order to counteract stereotype gender norms and to combat words and acts of sexual violence among children and young people in Åland.^{liii}

Partial implementation of recommendations

57. While the work to end all kind of discrimination has progressed, there remains work to do. Therefore, in accordance with the current Government Programme, a partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act is currently on the way as mentioned above. The issues to be assessed include, among others, the competence and tasks of the authorities supervising the Non-Discrimination Act, the definition of harassment, and the obligation to address harassment. The Government of Åland has initiated a revision of the Non-discrimination Act of Åland.^{liv}

58. The Government has decided that an Action Plan for Gender Equality will be drawn up to coordinate measures for achieving a gender equal society in various sectors. Furthermore, pay equality

will be promoted by continuing the Equal Pay Programme. Legislative changes to promote transparency of remuneration are being drafted^{lv}. The Government acknowledges that adequate human technical and budgetary resources are needed to make progress, and funding has been increased. The Government has allocated resources for a new permanent position for the Ombudsperson of Equality's Office as of 2022. The Action Plan for Gender Equality and Equal Pay Programme will have a 2-million-euro yearly funding.^{lvi} Pay equality is monitored as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. The pay gap between women and men has continued to narrow consistently but slowly in the 2000s. In the early 2000s, women's monthly earnings were on average 80 per cent of men's earnings, and 84 per cent in 2020.^{lvii}

Racial discrimination

Full implementation of recommendations

59. The Programme of the Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government states that the Government will combat racism and discrimination in all sectors of society. The Government's Action Programme to combat racism and to promote good relations was adopted in October 2021 and will be implemented during 2021–2023.^{lviii}

60. Various other actions have been taken as well. The Ministry of Justice implements together with different partners a range of projects to promote non-discrimination^{lix}. In addition, there are projects focusing on the development of hate crime reporting and data collection, improving the capacity of the police, prosecutors and judges to act against hate crime and hate speech, and producing material to support work against hate crime and hate speech. Consequently, fighting hate crime is set as one priority in the Police Strategy and there has been a wide array of training^{lx}. Police officers are also actively present in various social media platforms to lower the threshold of contacting the police and their presence has been seen as a good means to prevent illegal hate speech online. The National Child Strategy, on its hand, will implement a website against bullying, sexual harassment, violence, hate speech, and discrimination in cooperation with the Finnish National Agency for Education.^{lxi}

Partial implementation of recommendations

61. The Government has provided the Non-discrimination Ombudsperson new resources for her duties. One reason is the need to monitor the increased amount of deportations. New resources enabled the establishment of three new permanent positions in the office of the Non-discrimination Ombudsperson.^{lxii} The partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act is currently on the way is expected to be submitted to Parliament in 2022.^{lxiii} In 2021, the Office of the Non-discrimination ombudsperson was contacted 1.584 times on discrimination, and the number has been growing in the last years (984 times in 2018)^{lxiv}.

Conditions of detention

Pending recommendations

62. No general prohibition has been planned or implemented to prohibit the detention of minors. However, according to the Criminal Code (Chapter 6, Section 9), a sentence of unconditional imprisonment shall not be imposed for an offence committed by a person under 18 years of age, unless there are serious reasons for this. When assessing the significance of a serious reason, the placement of the perpetrator in a child welfare institution referred to in section 57 of the Child Welfare Act (*lastensuojelulaki; barnskyddslag*, 417/2007) shall be taken into account. As of 1 January 2019, the law provides for new alternatives to remand prison both pre-trial and post-trial that are also applicable to minors.^{lxv}

Trafficking, and prohibition of slavery

Full implementation of recommendations

63. The Government has stressed the importance of protecting victims of human trafficking. This is highlighted by the fact that actions against human trafficking and to assist victims of it were included in the Government Programme. A wide set of measures have been taken to continue combatting human trafficking, and there is a National Action Plan against Human Trafficking.

64. The Finnish National Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking is a central authority in victim assistance. The assistance system maintains a website that provides different kinds of tools on how to identify a victim of human trafficking and how to help them to find guidance and services. Materials are provided in several different languages, and the assistance system has a 24/7 phone service for information. The assistance system provides to victims a possibility to rest and evaluate their situation with the help of professionals. Reporting the offence to the police or an ongoing investigation related to human trafficking is not needed to be able to taken in for the assistance system. In the asylum process, children who have faced or face possible exploitation are given special attention, and their needs are being considered in relation to housing, for example. A victim of human trafficking has the right to safe housing. Housing can be organized in reception centres, (supported) rental apartments or safe houses. The individual circumstances are taken into consideration when making the arrangements. In addition, social and health care professionals have been trained in different parts of the country.^{lxvi}

Gender-based violence, violence against women, and domestic violence

Full implementation of recommendations

65. Domestic violence is one of the most persistent human rights problems in the Finnish society. The Government has continued its determined actions to end domestic violence as well as gender-based violence and violence against women.

66. The Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE)^{lxvii} has drawn up an action plan for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention for 2018-2021^{lxviii}. The Action Plan has altogether 46 measures focusing on different branches of administration. Additionally, an intersectoral working group, led by the Ministry of Justice, prepared an action plan for combatting violence against women^{lxix}, which was published in October 2020. The Action Plan contains 32 measures, which will be implemented by spring 2023. Furthermore, the new Strategy on Preventive Police Work 2019–2023^{lxx} and the Action Plan by the National Police Board focuses on ensuring the safety, security and the sense of security of different population groups. Women, young people and children are especially taken into consideration.^{lxxi}

67. One key element is to provide protection to the victims of violence. Shelter services are funded by the State and they provide immediate help in a crisis situation, 24/7 living and psychosocial support, and counselling and guidance for every person in need regardless of residence and free of charge. In May 2017, a rape crisis centre, as stipulated by the Istanbul Convention, opened in Helsinki University hospital. In 2021, crisis centres have been established in all five university hospitals covering the whole country and additionally five satellite centres have been opened. Under the Act of Åland on shelters (2015:117), the county must ensure access to shelters by victims of domestic violence.^{lxxii}

68. A child victim research will be carried out under the National Child Strategy. The study is an extensive survey-based study on children's experiences of violence. The Strategy also implements a guide and education set on determining situations of separation and post-separation violence in cooperation with The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL).^{lxxiii}

69. The Act on State Compensation to Producers of Shelter Services (*laki valtion varoista maksettavasta korvauksesta turvakotipalvelun tuottajalle; lag om ersättning som betalas av statens*

medel till producenter av skyddshemstjänster; 1354/2014) entered into force on 1 January 2015. For the year 2021, a total of 25.55 million euros have been allocated to 29 shelters that accommodate altogether 211 family places. The shelters are open for anyone — women, men, and children of all ages — who have experienced or have been threatened of domestic violence. Children usually stay in the shelter with a parent. The law in question also enabled adults with no children to enter a shelter while previously shelters accepted only women accompanied with children. The shelters cover geographically different parts of Finland and include also places for the Swedish-speaking minority, as well as migrant women and children. The majority of the shelters are also accessible for persons with disabilities.^{lxxiv}

Partial implementation of recommendations

70. While substantive actions have been taken to end all kind of violence, especially domestic violence, along with funding, the Government acknowledges that it is dealing with a problem that requires further work, follow-up and continuous assessment. Therefore, the above mentioned programs are multiannual to ensure constant action.^{lxxv}

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Full implementation of recommendations

71. The new Strategy on Preventive Police Work 2019–2023 and the Action Plan by the National Police Board focus on ensuring the safety, security and the sense of security of different population groups. Accordingly, the police will further increase interaction with minority groups and develop expertise in issues specific to these groups. Special focus is given to preventing people from becoming victims of violence and perpetrators of violent acts.^{lxxvi}

Rights related to marriage and family

Full implementation of recommendations

72. The Government notes the importance of protecting children and guaranteeing the rights of the child. Provisions on child welfare are laid down in the Child Welfare Act. All decisions concerning children must be based on the primacy of the child's best interests. Despite efforts to support families, sometimes children must unfortunately be taken into care (in 2019, this was the case of 11 178 children^{lxxvii}). However, all decisions are subject to appeal. The appeals are considered by a regional administrative court or the Supreme Administrative Court.^{lxxviii}

Right to social security

Full implementation of recommendations

73. The Government has continued with structural reforms in the social welfare and health care in order to ensure high-quality services in every part of the country. A major advancement was the legislation on establishing wellbeing services counties and reforming the organisation of healthcare, social welfare and rescue services that was adopted by Parliament on 23 June 2021 after years of preparation^{lxxix}. The responsibility for health, social and rescue services duties will rest with 22 organisers. New wellbeing services counties will be established in Finland and entrusted with the health, social and rescue services duties that are currently the responsibility of municipalities and joint municipal authorities. The activities of the wellbeing services counties will be funded mainly by central government and partly from client fees to be collected from the users of services. A county council, elected by direct popular vote, will be the highest decision-making body of each wellbeing services county. The first county elections were held on 23 January 2022.

74. In parallel to this considerable organisational reform, other development work has continued within the social and health sector. This includes protecting the rights of women, children and people in vulnerable situations. For example, the National Child Strategy involves a cross-administrative research project to address the situation of children and young people at risk of exclusion. The Strategy will also implement a project to strengthen child inclusion in the preparation of social security reform and develop an action plan to support children and young people with substance symptoms in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.^{lxxx} As part of the Sustainable Development goals, the number of people receiving long-term social assistance per age group is monitored. The coronavirus pandemic impaired many people's financial situation, and especially in young age groups. The number of recipients was at its highest in June 2020, when 251,827 people received assistance in 169,431 households.^{lxxxi}

Right to work, right to just and favourable conditions of work, and economic growth, employment and decent work

Full implementation of recommendations

75. The Government has continued its efforts on the promotion of opportunities of productive and paid employment for people with disabilities. Many actions are taken or being planned: a working capacity programme for people with partial work capacity; the rehabilitation system will be redesigned; intermediate labour market will be developed; the availability of mental health services will be ensured; the operating conditions of social enterprises will be improved by revising their funding and providing support to strengthen business expertise; the Government of Åland intends to study the need for legislative measures concerning, for example, the social service system supporting inclusion in the labour market. The Government has proposed a law creating Työkanava Oy, a public company with the aim of providing work to people with partial disability (HE 198/2021 vp).^{lxxxii} However, further work is needed – according to a study, 28 % of people with disabilities had faced discrimination in work or in search for work due to their disability^{lxxxiii}.

Right to health

Partial implementation of recommendations

76. The Government will boost the economy of wellbeing by investing in measures that foster people's health and wellbeing and reduce their need for services. Various actions are taken or being planned: assessing the health and wellbeing impacts of decisions comprehensively; more effective prevention and treatment of chronic diseases; updating the substance abuse strategy; reducing smoking and the overall consumption of alcoholic beverages; preparing a mental health strategy; and developing under the National Child Strategy an action plan to support children and young people with substance symptoms. The Government of Åland commissioned a programme to prevent suicides.^{lxxxiv}

Children – general principles and protection, and juvenile justice

Full implementation of recommendations

77. The National Child Strategy creates a strong basis for the implementation, monitoring and assessment of the obligations included in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Strategy aims at strengthening a child-rights-based approach in administration and decision-making. Its objective is to ensure that the rights of the child are realised in all policy areas and levels of administration. The Executive Plan of the National Child Strategy includes 30 measures complementing projects promoting the rights and welfare of the child by the state government. Child welfare legislation will be amended so that the contents and structure of substitute care in child welfare would better meet the needs of children who require demanding special support^{lxxxv lxxxvi}.

78. The National Courts Administration provides regularly training on the rights of the child for judges, and the Ministry of Justice provides annual training on the rights of the child for public legal aid attorneys. Furthermore, in 2021–2023, the Ministry of Justice runs a project called the Voice of Children and Young People in Europe^{lxxxvii}, which is part of a joint European project (CP4Europe), coordinated by the Council of Europe and co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe. In addition, the Police University College is arranging annually a year-long training programme in dealing with crimes committed against children. Relevant professionals were also provided with training on the amendments to the new Social Welfare Act and Child Welfare Act, and the Handbook for Child Welfare^{lxxxviii} was updated.^{lxxxix}

79. The role and nomination of the legal guardian or representative for the asylum seeking unaccompanied minor is defined in the Reception Act (*laki kansainvälistä suojelua hakevan vastaanotosta sekä ihmiskaupan uhrin tunnistamisesta ja auttamisesta; lag om mottagande av personer som söker internationellt skydd och om identifiering av och hjälp till offer för människohandel*; 746/2011). A legal guardian or representative must be appointed for an unaccompanied minor without any delay. The reception centre where the child is registered finds a suitable legal guardian or representative for the child and makes an application to the district court. The child must be heard before the application is made. The final decision is made by the district court.^{xc}

Persons with disabilities

Partial implementation of recommendations

80. Since the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force in Finland in June 2016, the National Disability Policy Program (VAMPO) was replaced by a national action plan^{xcⁱ}, which defines the national objectives for the implementation of the Convention, the concrete measures promoting the implementation, and the follow-up measures. The action plan is drawn up for each term of office of the Advisory Board for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (VANE). The second national action plan for years 2020–2023^{xcⁱⁱ} was published in February 2021. It comprises of 110 measures, and different ministries have committed themselves to their implementation. The implementation of the measures will be monitored during the action plan period and assessed at the end of the period.^{xcⁱⁱⁱ}

Members of minorities

Full implementation of recommendations

81. Finland's National Roma Policy's (2018–2022) primary objective is to support the progress in the societal integration of Roma and positive development of Roma linguistic, cultural and social rights. The National Child Strategy will draw up a report on the implementation of the welfare and rights of Roma children in Finland in cooperation with the Ombudsperson for Children in Finland. Discrimination has been taken into account in Policy as a crosscutting theme with specific measures among all policy guidelines. The Government's Action programme to combat racism and to promote good relations 2021–2023, as well as the National youth work and youth policy programme 2020–2023^{xc^{iv}}, include concrete measures that address discrimination against Roma.^{xc^v}

Partial implementation of recommendations

82. The Government has increased its efforts to protect the economic, social and cultural rights of the Sámi people. According to the Constitution of Finland (Section 17.3) the Sámi, as an indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups, have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. In their native region, the Sámi have linguistic and cultural self-government, as provided by an Act (Section 121.3). In the natural resource planning for the Sámi homeland, the objectives of forest use and management are set both for the homeland in its entirety and for each reindeer herding cooperative separately. The Akwé: Kon Group for natural resource planning takes stock of the needs of

those using the area from the perspective of traditional livelihoods, conveys them to the planning process, and assesses the impacts on Sámi culture. The coordination of forestry operations is based on the agreement concluded in 2014 by the Sámi Parliament, the Skolt Village Assembly, the reindeer herding cooperatives in the Sámi homeland and Metsähallitus concerning the practices to be followed in the homeland and the conclusion of more detailed local agreements. The implementation of the agreement is monitored annually in negotiations between the parties. Furthermore, in October 2021, the Government appointed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Concerning the Sámi People^{xcvi}. The aim of the commission is to collect Sámi people's experiences of the actions of the Finnish state and its various authorities and to make this information visible to the public. Negotiations are ongoing regarding amendments to the law on the Sámi Parliament.^{xcvii}

83. The Government believes that the representation of all kinds of people in political and public life is a vital part of a democratic society and the legitimacy of public administration. The objective of the Government's current cross-administrative National Democracy Programme 2025^{xcviii} is to promote participation and new forms of interaction between the public administration and civil society. The Government of Åland has taken multiple actions, too. In 2019, the Parliament of Åland passed a new elections act for Åland, with accessibility and increased equality as key factors. "An elections school" will be arranged especially for immigrants, incomers, refugees and others voting for the first time, such as young people and people with disabilities, in order to help them understand both the political system itself and the electoral system and the voting procedure.^{xcix}

84. The Government wants to ensure that services are provided to all without any kind of discrimination. According to the Non-discrimination Act, authorities, education providers and employers have an obligation to promote equality, which can include the provision of culture-sensitive services. These key actors are provided with training, practical tools and capacity-building in the framework of different policy initiatives such as the Government's Action Programme to combat racism and to promote good relations. The Finnish Immigration Service developed its competences in the OSAKA project^c in supporting and improving the studying and working possibilities of asylum seekers. Furthermore, the Sámi art and culture is supported with an appropriation in the state budget each year. The appropriation strengthens the realization of Sámi cultural self-government. In addition, the Finnish Roma Policy Program (ROMPO) 2018–2022 supports the preservation and development of the Roma language, art and culture (action line 4).^{ci}

Migrants

Full implementation of recommendations

85. One aim of the Government's action programme to combat racism and to promote good relations is to develop more accessible structures and methods for consultations to ensure participation opportunities for groups at risk of discrimination. As part of the National Democracy Programme 2025, the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations, which operates within the Ministry of Justice, will set up a working group on multilingual and immigrant Finns as societal actors. The objective of the working group is to increase understanding of the obstacles, solutions, actions, and necessary resources for multilingual and immigrant Finns' societal participation.^{cii}

86. The Integration Act (*laki kotoutumisen edistämisestä; lag om främjande av integration om främjande av integration; 1386/2010*) sets the basis for measures promoting the integration of migrants. It is complemented by the Government report on the need to reform the integration promotion services^{ciii}. The report establishes guidelines for the development of integration promotion in a way that ensures the inclusion of growing immigrant population in society and that utilises the skills of immigrants in responding to major changes in society, including the decline in the working-age population.^{civ}

Partial implementation of recommendations

87. The new Strategy on Preventive Police Work 2019–2023 and the Action Plan by the National Police Board focuses on ensuring the safety and security and the sense of security of different population groups. Accordingly, the police will increase interaction with minority groups and develop expertise in issues specific to these groups. Special focus will be given to preventing people from becoming victims of violence and perpetrators of violent acts. In the Finnish Immigration Service, there are several ongoing projects aiming to improve the legal assistance provided to asylum seeker and to improve their overall situation while in asylum process. More social workers with specific skills (family social work, crisis support) have been hired to reception centres.^{cv}

III. Status of implementation of voluntary pledges

International peace, security and human rights

88. Finland is a well-known and trusted actor in international development policy, peacekeeping and mediation operations. Finland strives to continue on this course and is honoured to serve as a member of the Human Rights Council from 2022 to 2024. As a member of the Council, Finland will work to defend and promote human rights worldwide^{cvi}.

89. The Centre for Mediation established in 2020 under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will strengthen Finland's expertise and capacity in mediation matters as well as coordinate activities within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and with other actors.

90. Finland is strongly committed to the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and the subsequent resolutions^{cvi}. At the national level, the 1325 agenda has been incorporated in the Government Programme. At an international level (in international organisations) and at a local level (in regions affected by crises and conflicts), the objectives are pursued through crisis management, development cooperation, humanitarian aid, expert assistance, training and diplomacy. The Government is currently drafting its fourth National Action Plan on the implementation of 1325.

91. In 2021, first in the world, Finland adopted its first National Action Plan on the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security in collaboration with active youth and representatives of youth organisations, central Government, research institutes and civil society. The implementation of the Action Plan will be followed by a monitoring group, which will submit a mid-term report and a final report to Parliament.^{cvi}

Commitment to achieve the development aid goal

92. Finland reiterates its aim to increase the development budget as the national economy recovers, in the long term to 0.7% of the gross national income in line with the UN goals. In 2021, it was budgeted around 1 257 million euros (estimated to be around 0.5 %) for development cooperation^{cix}.

Commitment to submit a voluntary interim UPR report

93. Finland commits itself to submitting to the Human Rights Council, in autumn 2024, a voluntary interim report on implementing the recommendations of the fourth UPR round.

IV. New and emerging issues – advances and challenges

Climate crisis, environmental degradation and the loss of biodiversity

94. Peace, security, sustainable development and human rights are closely interlinked, and Finland emphasises their interconnectivity for example in UN activities^{cx}. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will also contribute to the realisation of fundamental and human rights in Finland and internationally^{cx}. Climate change, biodiversity and environmental degradation are linked with many human rights enshrined in human rights conventions and treaties and with the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Finland. Finland takes action for climate change mitigation and adaptation and to safeguard biodiversity so that fundamental and human rights can be fully realised.

95. Climate change and biodiversity loss as well as environmental degradation will have the greatest negative effects globally on those who already have less opportunities to adapt to changes and instabilities caused by weather events and biodiversity loss. The longestlasting effects will be experienced by children and future generations. Finland emphasises actions to strengthen non-discrimination and gender equality as part of sustainable development and effective environmental policy. Finland promotes development that is socially just and implemented through the full and non-discriminatory realisation of fundamental and human rights.

96. The SDGs and targets of the 2030 Agenda apply to all States, including Finland. Finland has committed itself to the implementation of the SDGs as well as the Paris Agreement on climate change also as a part of the EU. States have the primary responsibility for implementing the goals, targets and objectives, but implementation takes place in close cooperation with civil society, business enterprises and other stakeholders. In Finland, this cooperation is supported, among others, by the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development chaired by the Prime Minister as well as by ‘The Finland we want by 2050 – Society’s commitment to sustainable development’. The Government Programme of Prime Minister Marin’s Government (2019) is based on sustainable development.

97. Finland aims to be carbon neutral by 2035, and the national Climate Change Act (*ilmastolaki; klimatlag; 609/2015*) is undergoing reform to reflect this target. The national Nature Conservation Act (*luonnonsuojelulaki; naturvårdslag; 1096/1996*) is also being reformed in response to biodiversity loss. The transition to a carbon neutral economy must take place in a socially just manner, with ecological boundary conditions also taken into account.

98. International climate and environmental movements have become stronger and include more young people in particular. The climate and environmental movements are a significant part of the global activities of environmental human rights defenders. Finland condemns violence against environmental human rights defenders and supports their capacity to act.

Sámi people’s status and rights

99. The Constitution of Finland protects the linguistic and cultural rights of the Sámi people. According to the Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin’s Government, the Government will respect and promote the realisation of the linguistic and cultural rights of all Sámi people and Sámi groups, taking into account international treaties. As part of this work, the possibility of ratifying ILO Convention No. 169 will be examined. The Government will continue its work to reform the Act on the Sámi Parliament and the work of the truth and reconciliation Commission.

100. The Government has worked in accordance with its programme. However, the discussion has been animated and sometimes difficult. Therefore, legislative amendments are still under preparation. The aim is to first reform the Act on the Sámi Parliament, after which it will be possible to better assess the requirements for ratifying ILO Convention No. 169.

101. The Government recognizes the importance of completing its work on the rights of the Sámi people. The decision of the UN Human Rights Committee in 2019 states that Finland has violated Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and political Rights (including the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs directly or through freely chosen representatives, and to vote and be elected in elections) read separately or together with Article 27 (minority rights). In its rulings, the Committee emphasised the right of the Sámi to self-determination in regard to their status and membership of their Community and recommended that the Act on the Sámi Parliament be reassessed.

102. Preparatory work for the Truth and reconciliation commission concerning the Sámi people^{cxii} began in 2017 at the initiative of the Sámi Parliament. The Commission's work began when it was named in October 2021. The Commission an impartial and independent body.

103. The purpose of the truth and reconciliation process is to identify and assess historical and current discrimination, including the assimilation policy of the state and violations of rights, to find out how they affect the Sámi and their communities in the current situation, and to propose ways to promote links between the Sámi and the state of Finland and among the Sámi people. The truth and reconciliation process aims to raise awareness about the Sámi as the indigenous people of Finland. A further aim is to ensure that, as a result of the truth and reconciliation process, the state of Finland will bear responsibility for its actions and, together with the Sámi Parliament, the Skolt Village Assembly and other Sámi operators, will work to strengthen the realisation of the rights of the Sámi people in Finland.

Electronic communication and digital technologies

104. Society and the world are digitalising at an ever faster pace and are becoming increasingly reliant on data and information transmitted online and on knowledge and services created from them. Rapidly evolving sectors have included machine learning, analytics, blockchains, cloud services and cognitive technologies that affect the ways in which people think. Growing volumes of information resources and flows as well as the development and introduction of new technology has increasing impacts – positive and negative alike – on many fundamental and human rights (*ia.* freedom of expression, participatory rights, privacy and personal data protection, right to education, and equality and non-discrimination).

105. Finland's starting point and aim is for fundamental and human rights to be respected and the rule of law to be upheld and for these to be supported by efficient oversight of legality when developing and taking up new technology. We act so that technological development can result in privacy protection, democracy and gender equality becoming stronger. Regulation to strengthen fundamental and human rights in the development and use of digital technology is being negotiated internationally as well as in Europe. Finland participates actively in this work so that digital development and its regulation comply with the provisions of human rights conventions and treaties and implement adopted guidelines in a human rights-based manner.

106. Disinformation – false and harmful information that is created deliberately and spread publicly – has been disseminated extensively in Internet and social media services across national borders and in contexts such as ahead of elections. Disinformation may erode trust in democratic institutions and the information provided by them, create rifts and discord between population groups and intensify labelling and discrimination of persons belonging to minorities. All measures taken must be in compliance with international human rights obligations and must not violate fundamental rights.

Business and human rights

107. The significance of business enterprises operating internationally and other business activities for the realisation of human rights has increased. Multinational enterprises often operate within the jurisdiction of multiple states under a variety of ownership and contractual arrangements. Business activities have particular significance in the realisation of fundamental labour rights, several economic, social and cultural rights and rights relating to the use of natural resources.

108. Alongside states, private business enterprises may restrict civil society activity either directly or indirectly. However, the most conducive operating environment for business development is predictable, democratically governed and open, and supportive to a strong civil society that is reforming society. Finland promotes sustainable business, states' obligation to protect human rights in business activities and the obligation of business enterprises to respect human rights both nationally and internationally.

109. Finland is committed to complying with and actively promoting the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights as well as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. There is a national action plan, and studies have been conducted on the current situation of Finnish enterprises. The need for national legislation on due diligence has been assessed.

COVID19-pandemic

110. The COVID-19 pandemic is a test to the realisation of civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights throughout the world. It has posed a particular threat to the right to life and the right to adequate healthcare services. The global pandemic has tested the Finnish fundamental rights system and the capacity of the rule of law. Managing the COVID-19 pandemic and curbing the spread of infection has required restrictive measures that have interfered with people's fundamental rights in Finland, too. Restrictions have managed to curb the pandemic and, consequently, protected people's right to health and the right to life.

111. However, the measures to combat the pandemic have themselves too human rights implications. In Finland, distance learning has weakened the learning conditions of many young people. Educational inequality is estimated to increase. Restrictions on personal contacts have had negative impacts on the living conditions, human contacts and access to services of those who are in institutional care, older people or persons with disabilities. Restrictions have also extensively affected the freedom to conduct a business and access to income particularly in the culture and arts as well as service and tourism sectors and, to some extent, affected the practice of religion.

112. The COVID-19 pandemic is not over, and the Government will use the lessons learnt in its actions to curb the pandemic and its effects. The assessment of actions taken, including scientific analyses and policy discussions, is important so that the global community is more prepared in the future.

V. Challenges and support from the international community

113. Nothing to report.

ⁱ Finnish Government (2021): National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2020–2023: Developing the monitoring of fundamental and human rights (in Finnish) (<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-630-3>, 12.1.2022).

- ii Finnish Government (2021): Government Report on Human Rights Policy (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163838/VN_2022_10.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y, 22.4.2022).
- iii Finnish Government (2019): Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government 2019 (<https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/marin/government-programme>, 12.1.2022).
- iv <https://oikeusministerio.fi/en/project?tunnus=OM024:00/2020> (in Finnish, 12.1.2022).
- v <https://kestavakehitys.fi/documents/2167391/109172057/Agenda2030+tiekartta,+FINAL+2022.pdf/75abd43f-abb2-9c45-2881-041d9736ad3a/Agenda2030+tiekartta,+FINAL+2022.pdf?t=1644589535363> (in Finnish, 25.2.2022).
- vi <https://kestavakehitys.fi/en/-/finland-tops-european-comparison-of-sustainable-development> (25.2.2025), <https://kestavakehitys.fi/en/-/10616/finland-ranks-first-in-international-sustainable-development-comparison> (25.2.2025).
- vii <https://kestavakehitys.fi/en/indicator-baskets> (25.5.2022).
- viii <https://kestavakehitys.fi/documents/2167391/2186383/Towards+the+Finland+we+want+to+by+2050+-+2020-06-02/0e3e74f9-650e-eb2f-1565-88aa026a7dae/Towards+the+Finland+we+want+to+by+2050+-+2020-06-02.pdf?t=1591101338000> (25.2.2022).
- ix Recommendations 93.1-6 (noted). All references to recommendations are to Finland's previous UPR cycle.
- x Recommendations 93.14 (noted), 93.15 and 93.16 (noted).
- xi Recommendation 9.17.
- xii Recommendation 93.18.
- xiii For example, the Ministry of Education and culture has published several reports and policies concerning accessible higher education, marginal groups in Higher education as well as gender equality and non-discrimination in higher education. In addition, the Ministry of Education and Culture has published a report on the Sami languages and Sami language education.
- xiv Recommendation 93.19.
- xv Ministry of Justice (2021): Fundamental right barometer, p. 104 and 108 (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163261/OM_2020_17_SO.pdf, in Finnish)(25.4.2022.)
- xvi Recommendations 93.7 – 93.11 and 93.12 (partly accepted).
- xvii Ministry for Foreign Affairs (2020): Finland and the Responsibility to protect. fifteen years since the adoption of the responsibility to protect principle (https://editorum.fi/documents/35732/0/UM_Suomi+ja+suojeluvastuu_English_NET.pdf/3cf564d4-3314-e495-88f7-6aed7d7903fd?t=1611730614830, 12.1.2022).
- xviii Recommendation 93.75.
- xix <https://oikeusministerio.fi/en/project?tunnus=OM013:00/2021> (partly in Finnish, 22.4.2022).
- xx <https://oikeusministerio.fi/rainbow-rights> (in Finnish, 12.1.2022).
- xxi Ålands lanskapsregering (2019): Handlingsplan för hbtqia-personers lika villkor i det åländska samhället 2019-2025 (in Swedish) (<https://www.regeringen.ax/sites/www.regeringen.ax/files/attachments/page/hbtqia-handlingsplan-for-lika-villkor.pdf>, 12.1.2022).
- xxii <https://stm.fi/en/project?tunnus=STM009:00/2021> (partly in Finnish, 22.4.2022).
- xxiii Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:81: Implementation plan for the National Child Strategy Government resolution (<https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/163541>, 12.1.2022).
- xxiv Recommendations 93.44-45.
- xxv https://ym.fi/documents/1410903/38439968/Ohje_esteettomyys_2018-A2B183D6_3C10_40A3_AE1F_DB0898AAC3D8-137003.pdf/86e77f87-c19d-4139-f744-531b500b9a86/Ohje_esteettomyys_2018-A2B183D6_3C10_40A3_AE1F_DB0898AAC3D8-137003.pdf?t=1603260121408 (in Finnish, 13.1.2022).
- xxvi Publications of the Ministry of Transport and Communications 15/2017: Making digital transport and communication services accessible, https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/80806/LVM_15_2017.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y (in Finnish, 14.1.2022).
- xxvii Publications of the Ministry of Transport and Communications 2021:18: Report on the definition and availability of accessibility information and increasing awareness among providers of mobility services, https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163205/LVM_2021_18.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.
- xxviii <https://www.regeringen.ax/halsa-omsorg/funktionsnedsattning/radet-personer-funktionsnedsattning> (in Swedish, 12.1.2022).
- xxix Recommendations 93.136 and 93.138.
- xxx Publications of the Ministry of Justice, Memorandums and statements 2021:34: An Equal Finland

Government Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups (in Finnish)

(https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163577/OM_2021_34_ML.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 12.1.2022).

xxxⁱ Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö (2018): Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma (Rompo) (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/160845/03_18_Suomen%20romanipoliittinen%20ohjelma_2018_2022_web.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 12.1.2022).

xxxⁱⁱ Recommendations 100.129, 93.147 and 93.152-153.

xxxⁱⁱⁱ Recommendation 93.131.

xxx^{iv} Publications of the Ministry of Justice, Memorandums and statements 2021:15: Finland fights human trafficking. Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163078/OM_2021_15_ML.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 12.1.2022).

xxx^v Recommendation 93.77.

xxx^{vi} Recommendation 93.92.

xxx^{vii} Recommendations 93.20–24 and 93.110-111 (noted).

xxx^{viii} Recommendations 93.50 (partly accepted), 93.46-49 (noted) and 93.51-53 (noted).

xxx^{ix} Recommendation 93.126.

xl <https://tem.fi/en/enterprises-and-human-rights> (14.1.2022)

xli <https://tem.fi/documents/1410877/0/Memorandum+on+the+due+diligence+obligation.pdf/768b3219-db5b-7643-4a98-889d5f351515/Memorandum+on+the+due+diligence+obligation.pdf?t=1649930584536> (22.4.2022).

xlii Recommendation 93.74 (noted).

xliii Recommendation 93.84 (noted).

xli^v Recommendations 93.31-32 and 93.72.

xli^v <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/hanke?tunnus=STM054:00/2020> (in Finnish, 13.1.2022).

xli^{vi} Recommendations 93.80-81.

xli^{vii} Recommendations 93.27-28.

xli^{viii} <https://okm.fi/en/project?tunnus=OKM035:00/2020> (in Finnish, 12.1.2022).

xli^{ix} Recommendation 93.33.

¹ E.g. the University of Helsinki, in cooperation with and co-funded by the Ministry of Justice, the Human Rights Centre and the Ministry of Education and Culture, carried out a project in 2018-2019 to develop democracy and human rights education in teacher education; in 2020-2021, learning materials on various themes, such as fundamental and human rights in general, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, inclusion, and indigenous Sámi people, were produced; teacher education curricula and study contents have been developed further.

li Recommendations 93.34 and 93.94.

lii Recommendations 93.26, 93.98-99.

liii Recommendations 93.86 (noted), 93.91 and 93.95-96.

li^v Recommendations 93.35, 93.43 and 93.61.

li^v Reports and Memorandums of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2021:67: Increasing pay transparency in the Act on Equality between Women and Men. Final report of the working group (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163607/STM_2021_27_rap.pdf?sequence=1, 13.1.2022).

li^{vi} Recommendations 93.25, 93.88, 93.89 (noted), 93.90 and 93.93 (noted).

li^{vii} https://kestavakehitys.fi/-/tyoelaman-laatu-ja-muutos-2021-tyoelaman-laatu-sailyi-vakaana-koronapandemiasta-huolimatta-tyollisyys-notkahti-ja-tyotunnit-vahenivat?languageId=en_US (25.4.2022).

li^{viii} Recommendation 93.42.

lix All in for Equality project (2020-2022) (<https://oikeusministerio.fi/en/project?tunnus=OM072:00/2020> (12.1.2022).); use of the European Commission's Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) programme; equality and hate crimes are monitored as part of the fundamental and human rights indicator framework of the third National Action Plan 2020–2023.

lx Over 1000 police officers have been trained to identify Hate Crime through the OSCE/ODIHR TAHCLE-programme, an annual Hate Crime Detection and Investigation Course is being arranged by the Police University College, the police launched a compulsory online training for all personnel on non-discrimination and recognizing punishable hate crime at the beginning of 2021, and a campaign featuring two videos that aired on national television (1.6 million viewers).

lxⁱ Recommendations 93.36-41, 93.54-58, 93.59 (noted), 93.60, 93.62-64, 93.65 (partly accepted), 93.66-72, 93.73 (noted) and 93.148-149.

lxⁱⁱ Recommendation 93.29.

lxⁱⁱⁱ Recommendation 93.30.

- lxiv Non-discriminations ombudsperson's report to Parliament 2022, p. 19–20 ([https://syrjinta.fi/documents/25249352/42720545/Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutetun+kertomus+eduskunnalle+2022+\(pdf\).pdf/c83caf57-a7c4-a907-9a19-c37c61eec75e/Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutetun+kertomus+eduskunnalle+2022+\(pdf\).pdf/Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutetun+kertomus+eduskunnalle+2022+\(pdf\).pdf?t=1648705129557](https://syrjinta.fi/documents/25249352/42720545/Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutetun+kertomus+eduskunnalle+2022+(pdf).pdf/c83caf57-a7c4-a907-9a19-c37c61eec75e/Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutetun+kertomus+eduskunnalle+2022+(pdf).pdf/Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutetun+kertomus+eduskunnalle+2022+(pdf).pdf?t=1648705129557), in Finnish) (25.4.2022).
- lxv Recommendations 93.132 and 93.133–134 (noted).
- lxvi Recommendations 93.78–79 and 93.82–83.
- lxvii <https://stm.fi/en/project?tunnus=STM183:00/2020> (in Finnish, 12.1.2022).
- lxviii Publications of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2017:16: Combating violence against women and domestic violence (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/160401/16_2017_Istanbulin%20sopimuksen%20tps%202018-21_suomi.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 12.1.2022).
- lxix Publications of the Ministry of Justice, Memorandums and statements 2020:15: Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women for 2020–2023 (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162499/OM_2020_15_ML.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 12.1.2022).
- lxx <https://intermin.fi/documents/1410869/4024872/Poliisin+ennalta+est%C3%A4v%C3%A4n+ty%C3%B6n+strategia+2019-2023.pdf/ae0d1f5-8fc9-fac6-1e60-68c0374e296f/Poliisin+ennalta+est%C3%A4v%C3%A4n+ty%C3%B6n+strategia+2019-2023.pdf.pdf> (in Finnish, 12.1.2022).
- lxxi Recommendations 93.100–106, 93.109 (partly accepted), 93.115–117, 93.118 (partly accepted), 93.120 and 92.122.
- lxxii Recommendations 93.108, 93.112, 94.114 (partly accepted) and 93.119.
- lxxiii Recommendation 93.107.
- lxxiv Recommendation 93.76.
- lxxv Recommendations 93.113, 93.121 and 93.123.
- lxxvi Recommendation 93.63.
- lxxvii <https://thl.fi/fi/web/lastensuojelun-kasikirja/toimijat-tyon-tuki-hallinto/lastensuojelu-ja-thl/lastensuojelun-tilastoa> (in Finnish, 12.1.2022).
- lxxviii Recommendation 93.128.
- lxxix <https://soteuudistus.fi/en/-/1271139/government-proposal-for-health-and-social-services-reform-and-related-legislation-adopted-by-parliament> (12.1.2022).
- lxxx Recommendation 93.87.
- lxxxi https://kestavakehitys.fi/-/yhteiskunnallinen-eriarvoisuus-2021-koronapandemia-kasvatti-pitkaaikaisesti-toimeentulotukea-saavien-nuorten-aikuisten-maaraa?languageId=en_US (25.4.2022).
- lxxxii Recommendation 93.137.
- lxxxiii Ministry of Justice (2021): Fundamental right barometer, p. 90– (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163261/OM_2020_17_SO.pdf, 25.4.2022).
- lxxxiv Recommendation 93.97.
- lxxxv Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2020): Final report of the working group appointed to reform demanding substitute care in child welfare (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162414/STM_2020_28_rap.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 12.1.2022).
- lxxxvi Recommendations 93.124 and 93.130 (noted).
- lxxxvii <https://oikeusministerio.fi/en/project?tunnus=OM016:00/2021> (12.1.2022).
- lxxxviii <https://thl.fi/fi/web/lastensuojelun-kasikirja> (in Finnish, 12.1.2022).
- lxxxix Recommendation 93.125.
- xc Recommendation 93.127.
- xci Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (2021): Right to social inclusion and equality. National Action Plan on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2020–2023) (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162687/STM_2021_2_J.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 12.1.2022).
- xcii Publications of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2021:2: Right to social inclusion and equality. National Action Plan on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2020–2023) (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162687/STM_2021_2_J.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 13.1.2022).
- xciii Recommendation 93.135.
- xciv <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/delegate/file/65439> (in Finnish, 12.1.2022).

- ^{xcv} Recommendations 93.141-142.
- ^{xcvi} <https://vnk.fi/en/truth-and-reconciliation-commission-concerning-the-sami-people> (12.1.2022).
- ^{xcvii} Recommendation 93.143.
- ^{xcviii} <https://oikeusministerio.fi/en/national-democracy-programme-2025> (12.1.2022).
- ^{xcix} Recommendation 93.85.
- ^c <https://migri.fi/en/-/turvapaikanhakijoiden-osaaminen-esille-ja-lisaa-aktivoivaa-tekemista-vastaanottokeskuksiin> (13.1.2022).
- ^{ci} Recommendation 93.139.
- ^{cii} Recommendation 93.140.
- ^{ciiii} Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:62: Report of the Finnish Government on the need for a reform in integration promotion (in Finnish) (https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163237/VN_2021_62.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, 12.1.2022).
- ^{civ} Recommendations 93.144-146.
- ^{cv} Recommendations 93.150-151.
- ^{cvi} <https://um.fi/hrc-our-commitment> (14.1.2022).
- ^{cvi} https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/160747/03_18_Women_Peace_Security.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- ^{cviii} <https://www.2250finland.fi/en/national-process/>.
- ^{cix} <https://um.fi/suomen-kehitysyhteistyon-maararahat> (in Finnish, 14.1.2022).
- ^{cx} In October 2021, Finland co-sponsored the Human Rights Council's Resolution on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
- ^{cx} As part of monitoring the sustainable development goals, e.g. the following indicators were selected: Carbon footprint of private consumption, consumption of different foods, carbon dioxide emissions from passenger transport by modes of transport, total municipal waste, municipal waste in per treatment type, carbon footprint of public procurement, amount of decaying wood on forest lands and fields of high natural value, nutrient loading from rivers to the Baltic Sea, atmospheric sulphur, nitrogen and fine particulate emissions, and subsidies that are harmful to the environment. See statistics: https://kestavakehitys.fi/-/yksityinen-kulutus-2021-suomalaisten-kulutuksen-hiilijalanjalki-on-pysynyt-liian-suurena?languageId=en_US and https://kestavakehitys.fi/-/luonnon-ja-ympariston-tila-2021-elonkirjo-hupenee-edelleen-ymparistonsuojelussa-myos-monia-onnistumisia?languageId=en_US (25.4.2022).
- ^{cxii} <https://sdtsk.fi/en/home/>.