

The Rule of Law Report 2025: Input of Finland

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Summary

Justice system: In line with the recommendation on continuing the work of the working group ‘Rule of Law Guarantees and Development of the Judicial System’ the work of the named working group has continued. The subgroups of the working group made 168 preliminary development proposals that were subjected under a round of comments. The proposals and comments will be further examined in the working group. A working group on Constitutional guarantees for the independence of the judiciary has begun to examine and assess whether the current Constitution and other legislation directly affecting the independence of the judiciary safeguard the independence of the judiciary. Further, in line with the recommendation to reform the appointment of the lay judges Ministry of Justice has started with the evaluation of alternatives for selection procedure, an assessment memorandum will be drafted during the spring 2025.

Anti-corruption framework: As regards the recommendation on adopting legislation on trading in influence, regulatory changes will be considered as part of the national implementation of the anti-corruption directive, currently in trilogue phase. Regulatory changes concerning foreign bribery will also be considered as part of the national implementation of the anti-corruption directive. A study on “Development Needs for Legislation on Bribery Offences”, published 2024, proposes alternative models for simplifying the essential elements, criminalising trading in influence, improving the efficiency of imposing confiscation in bribery of a foreign party and clarifying the definition of a foreign public official. The new action plan of the national anti-corruption strategy is currently under preparation, and it is estimated to be completed during the first half of 2025. Further, regarding the recommendation on adopting a code of conduct for ministers and other persons entrusted with top executive functions, the issue of code conduct for ministers has been discussed in connection with the updating of national anti-corruption policy documents. Further reflection is needed. As reported previously, Code of Conduct for Civil Service Ethics, which was published in 2021, concerns all civil servants, including senior top civil servants.

Media pluralism and media freedom: As regards the recommendation on further advancing the reform of the Act on the Openness of Government Activities the report of the working group tasked to preparing a legislative proposal was sent to a wide consultation round during spring 2024. Along with the comments on the proposals in the report, the feedback emphasized the need to evaluate potential changes to the Act’s secrecy provisions. Due to changes in the national security environment the secrecy provision will be now assessed before any changes to the Act are proposed. This ensures that reform needs of the Act are viewed as a whole. The objective is to prepare a government proposal that balances the need for transparency in government activities with secrecy requirements. Finalizing the complete government proposal is expected to take place during next government term. A parliamentary working group assessing the role, and the funding of the Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) published its report in September 2024. Amendments, for instance, to safeguard the independence and editorial autonomy of the YLE will be introduced into a government proposal during spring 2025.

Other institutional issues related to checks and balances: The Government put forward a ‘Border Security Act’, which entered into force in the end of July 2024. The act is an exceptive act, which may be used to enact limited exceptions to the Constitution for compelling reasons. The act lays down the conditions under which the Government can decide to restrict the reception of applications for international protection in a limited area on Finland’s eastern border and for a limited time. The act will remain in force for one year. The Government is currently preparing an extension to the validity of the act. A comprehensive reform of the Emergency Powers Act is ongoing, a government proposal for a new Act is expected in the beginning of 2026.

I. Justice System

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2024 Report regarding the justice system (if applicable):

Continue the work of the working group 'Rule of Law Guarantees and Development of the Judicial System' with a view to strengthen the independence of the justice system and increase the quality of legal protection.

The work of the working group '[Rule of Law Guarantees and Development of the Judicial System](#)', appointed in February 2023 by the Ministry of Justice, has continued successively. In 2024, the sub-groups of the working group made [168 preliminary development proposals](#). An extensive [round of comments](#) was organised on them, and 136 comments were received within the set time limit. The summary of comments has not been made public. It is available to the working group. The proposals and comments will be further examined and evaluated by the working group in 2025 - 2026. The group has no mandate on law drafting.

As reported in the previous cycle, the working group '[Rule of Law Guarantees and Development of the Judicial System](#)' has a subgroup called '[Working Group on Constitutional guarantees for the independence of the judiciary](#)' (in short, 'Independence Subgroup'). In 2024, the Independence Subgroup began its work to examine and assess whether the current Constitution and other legislation directly affecting the independence of the judiciary safeguard the independence of the judiciary. The work will result in a memorandum in which the needs to amend the Constitution and other legislation necessary from the perspective of the strong independence of the judiciary are assessed and proposals for legislative projects to implement this are made. The term of the subgroup lasts from 15.1.2024 until 31.12.2026.

Reform the appointment of lay judges, taking into account European standards on judicial independence.

As reported previously, the Prime Minister Petteri Orpo's [Government Programme](#) (p.209) states that the Government will seek alternatives to the current selection procedure for lay judges in district courts so that political parties would no longer have a role in the selection procedure. After the publication of an assessment report on the procedure for selecting lay judges by the Ministry of Justice in February 2023, the Ministry committed in proceeding with the evaluation of alternatives for selection procedures in 2024 accordingly with the current Government Programme. The evaluation will continue in 2025. An assessment memorandum will be drafted during the spring 2025. However, at the moment there is no funding for the reform.

A. Independence

No developments

If there have been developments related to the independence of justice, please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

[Appointment and selection of judges¹, prosecutors and court presidents \(incl. judicial review\)](#)

Nominations in the Supreme Court and in the Supreme Administrative Court from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024: Two judges were appointed to a permanent position in the Supreme Court and in the Supreme Administrative Court, in addition to which one judge was appointed in the Supreme

¹ The reference to 'judges' concerns judges at all level and types of courts as well as judges at constitutional courts.

Administrative Court for a fixed term of 1.5.2025-31.12.2033 based on an off duty of a permanent position holder.

Prosecutors: No significant developments.

Irremovability of judges; including transfers (incl. as part of judicial map reform), dismissal and retirement regime of judges, court presidents and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

-

Promotion of judges and prosecutors (incl. judicial review)

-

Allocation of cases in courts

-

Independence (including composition and nomination and dismissal of its members), and powers of the body tasked with safeguarding the independence of the judiciary (e.g. Council for the Judiciary)

There have been changes in the leadership of the National Courts Administration (NCA) that began its operations 2020. The term of the NCA's first board of directors ended on 3.4.2024, and a new board has been appointed for the next five-year term (4.4.2024 – 3.4.2029). In this process, approximately half of the board members were replaced. Additionally, the five-year term of the NCA's Director General ended at the end of 2024, and a new Director General was appointed for the years 2025–2029.

Accountability of judges and prosecutors, including disciplinary regime and bodies and ethical rules, judicial immunity and criminal/civil (where applicable) liability of judges (incl. judicial review)

-

Independence/autonomy of the prosecution service

-

Independence of the Bar (chamber/association of lawyers) and of lawyers

-

Significant developments capable of affecting the perception that the general public has of the independence of the judiciary

-

B. Quality of justice²

No developments

If there have been developments related to the quality of justice, please specify which, regarding in particular topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

Accessibility of courts (e.g. court/legal fees, legal aid, language)

² Under this topic, Member States are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined under section 2.

As reported last year, the Ministry of Justice has reorganized the six (6) legal aid and public guardianship districts into a National Legal Services Authority, which became operational on 1 January 2025. ([Act on National Legal Services Authority in Finnish](#)) The National Legal Services Authority consists of central administration and legal aid and public guardianship offices. No changes to the current locations of the offices have been made. The establishment of the authority is considered to allow for more efficient and coherent development and better resourcing of activities than before.

Changes to the conditions for granting legal aid that would improve access to legal aid are under consideration.

Increases corresponding to the change in the value of money were made to the court and application fees laid down in section 2; subsections 1-5 and section 3 of the Act on Court fees (1455/2015) applicable from 1st of January 2025, which is in line with the established practice of adjusting these fees every three years.

The Government has submitted a proposal ([HE 152/2024 vp](#)) which aims to promote the possibilities of the Supreme Court to issue preliminary rulings and so enhance the possibilities of the court to ensure the consistency and proper development of the administration of justice by its case law. The proposed means should steer legal questions of a precedential nature more effectively from lower courts to the Supreme Court and, additionally, enhance the Supreme Court's possibilities to issue precedents in matters that fall within the scope of the leave for continued consideration system in the Courts of Appeal. (See project information in English [here](#)).

The Ministry of Justice has appointed a working group to prepare a proposal for a small claims procedure for rental disputes. Such a procedure could simplify the proceedings and be a cheaper way for parties to resolve their dispute in court. The proposal is expected to be published in spring 2025.

The Ministry of Justice has set up a project to support the development of services in Swedish provided by courts of law. The project will be implemented in cooperation with the National Courts Administration. The project's term of office is 1.4.2024-31.3.2025. Courts can utilise the outcomes of the project when developing their Swedish-language services, which supports the realisation of linguistic rights. The two official languages in Finland are Finnish and Swedish, and both languages can be used before courts and other authorities as provided in the Language Act (148/1922).

See also answer in Section I C.

[Resources of the judiciary \(human/financial/material³\), remuneration/bonuses/rewards for judges and prosecutors, including observed changes \(significant and targeted increase or decrease over the past year\),](#)

Financial resources for the administration of justice:

Government's budget proposition 2025 for the Ministry of Justice is ca. 1,2 billion euros. Compared with the budget 2024, there is an increase of ca. 40 million euros (expenses of parliamentary and other elections excluded because they are not annual.)

Courts:

The strengthening of resources for the administration of justice, which began in previous years, has continued, allowing the courts personnel resources to be increased by approximately 90 person-

³ Material resources refer e.g. to court buildings and other facilities. Financial resources include salaries of staff in courts and prosecution offices.

years for 2025. Despite this positive development, the resources have not yet reached a level where it would be possible to clear the whole backlog accumulated in previous years.

Prosecutors:

In 2022 the total number of personnel was 617 (586 staff-years) and in 2023 the number of personnel was 642 persons (625 staff-years). The estimation for the number of staff-years in 2024 is 632 and the goal for 2025 is 679 staff-years. There was significantly less growth in staff-years in 2024 than in the previous two years because the staff turnover was high, with a total of 20-30 experienced staff members in the biggest prosecution districts leaving the Prosecution Authority. Despite this, the human resources at The Prosecution Authority are expected to grow in the near future.

In 2021 the total number of open cases was approximately 18 000. This number peaked in 2022, with almost 18 900 open cases. In 2023, the number fell to a total of 17 300 open cases. The positive trend did not continue in 2024, and the number of open cases increased back to the level of year 2021 with around 18 100 open cases in the end of 2024. The goal set for 2025 is 17 400 open cases. This goal will be achieved by increasing the number of prosecutors. In addition, a separate centralized project to reduce the number of open criminal cases will be set up in 2025.

The Prosecution Authority reports the criminal cases, which have been under consideration of charges for over 6 months and over one year. In 2022, these numbers were 4 200 cases (over 6 months) and 1 600 cases (over 12 months). At the end of 2023, there were 4 400 cases open for over 6 months and 1 600 cases open for over 12 months. For the year 2024 the amounts are 4 200 (over 6 months) and 1 600 (over 12 months). The goal for 2025 is 3 900 (over 6 months) and 1 600 cases (over 12 months).

Material resources (court houses):

In 2024, the rents of the court premises are approximately EUR 41 million.

Training of justice professionals (including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, clerks/trainees)

As reported last year, according to the [Government Programme](#) (p.188), court training will be developed into a stage of the legal career that will serve the entire judicial administration and promote recruitments in the administrative branch.

As reported last year, the Ministry of Justice received a regulatory impact assessment report on the Development of the Court Training System in October 2023, stemming from the Courts Act (673/2016) implemented in 2017. This report addresses Parliament's requirements to monitor the effectiveness of the reforms in judicial training, focusing on aspects like costs, resources, appointment procedures, and transparency in judges' career paths. The report, affirming the achievement of reform objectives, also includes recommendations for further development of Court Training. The Ministry of Justice has delivered the report to Parliament at the end of 2023 and received opinions on it in 2024. Preliminary ideas of possible reforms have also been presented during the work of the working group "Rule of Law Guarantees and Development of the Judicial System". However, there is no specific funding for any major development in the state budget. The NCA has been able to add few posts for court training in its negotiations with the courts in 2023 and 2024.

The Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Justice have published a [report](#) on assessment of legal education in 2024. The report proposed a slight increase in the number of students starting legal training, taking into account regional labour needs.

In 2024, the NCA decided to enhance future trainings by increasing the availability of online training.

To support this, an e-learning specialist was recruited to NCA's training team at the end of 2024.

Prosecutors: Prosecutors' training program has been updated to match the demands of the prosecutors' work. No major reforms were made.

Digitalisation (e.g. use of digital technology, including electronic communication and AI tools, within the justice system and with court users, procedural rules, access to judgments online)⁴

Courts

Development project AIPA, the digitalization project and case management system for general courts and prosecutor's offices, concluded in June 2024. However, the development of the system continues in order to implement further activities, despite the end of the intensive project phase. In the final implementation phase of the project, the system was introduced for criminal cases in district courts (it had already been in use for other case types earlier). At the same time, the system was also implemented in appellate courts.

Use of video recordings in taking of evidence

A long-prepared project regarding the recording of oral testimony moved into the implementation phase in the spring of 2024. In the future, oral testimony presented in district courts will be recorded as both video and audio. During 2024, the basic functionalities of the new system were implemented, and the functionality of the equipment to be installed in courtrooms was tested in two pilot courtrooms. Development of the system will continue in 2025. The installation of the necessary equipment in approximately 200 courtrooms is expected to take place during 2025. Legislative amendments related to the reform are scheduled to take effect at the beginning of 2026.

Remote connections

See answer in Section I C regarding the use of remote connections.

Electronic service of documents

Launched by the Ministry of Finance, [The Digital First Programme](#) is currently working on legislative amendments, the purpose of which is to ensure the widest possible use of electronic service of documents in official activities, including legal proceedings. The aim is for the amendments to enter into force on the 1st of January 2026.

Prosecutors:

The AIPA project will be the most essential step to advance digital case management tools for prosecutors. As for prosecutors, these tools are planned to be launched in full in 2025. Some elements of the tools were taken in action already in 2024 (so called "minimum AIPA").

Court hearings are held remotely in some cases. The short-term objective is to increase remote court hearings, but this is dependent on the Court's approval.

The criminal investigation material used by prosecutors is mainly electronic. Court judgement documents are handled digitally, but the documents are usually sent by email and are not available currently online. The Prosecution Authority participates in the police's project called Timantti, which aims to produce a joint working environment between the criminal investigation and prosecutors and later the entire chain of criminal proceedings.

⁴ Factual information presented in Commission Staff Working Document of 2 December 2020, SWD(2020) 540 final, accompanying the Communication on Digitalisation of justice in the European Union, COM(2020) 710 final and Figures 40 to 48 of the 2024 EU Justice Scoreboard, does not need to be repeated.

Use of assessment tools and standards (e.g. ICT systems, including AI-based systems, for case management, court statistics and their transparency, monitoring, evaluation, surveys among court users or legal professionals)

The NCA and Legal Register Centre have continued to work together in providing statistical information and answering to requests from outside the judiciary. However, some challenges have occurred in producing sufficient statistical information and reports. The case management systems used by courts do not include reporting systems in themselves, so the information must be gathered from the case management systems and then transferred to a separate platform, from which the report will be produced.

Prosecutors: No significant developments (before the AIPA project is ready for prosecutors).

Geographical distribution and number of courts/jurisdictions (“judicial map”) and their specialisation, in particular specific courts or chambers within courts to deal with fraud and corruption cases.

As a result of a proposal of the NCA three venues of district courts (Salo, Kauhava and Utsjoki) were closed in 2024. (Decree [135/2024](#)).

At the end of 2024, the NCA made a new proposal to the Ministry of Justice to close another three venues of district courts as part of efforts to improve the efficiency of the judiciary. The venues proposed for closure have low demand and are in Varkaus, Nurmes and Pietarsaari. The initiative is under consideration in the Ministry of Justice.

Specialisation (of judges/specific courts/chambers within courts) and training for the judiciary to deal with commercial cases.

The Market Court is a special court that deals with procurement, competition and supervision matters, market law matters and intellectual property rights matters. See [Market Court Proceedings Act](#).

The jurisdiction of the Market Court covers the entire country. The Market Court commenced its operations in 2002. The Market Court is headed by the Chief Judge. Its members include the Chief Judge, Market Court Judges, and Market Court Engineers. In addition to the general eligibility requirements for judges, the Chief Judge and Market Court Judges must have expertise in competition or supervisory matters, procurement issues, intellectual or industrial property rights, or market law. Market Court Engineers, on the other hand, must hold an advanced university degree in the field of technology and have expertise in patent matters.

The Market Court is generally quorate when composed of three legally trained members. In certain intellectual and industrial property cases, the panel includes a Market Court Engineer. The Market Court also has part-time expert members appointed by the State Council for a term of four years at a time that may also participate in the handling of cases.

Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and mediation

In Finland, there are three ADR bodies which are the [Consumer Disputes Board](#), the Traffic Accident Department of the [Traffic Accident and Patient Injury Board](#), and the [Finnish Financial Ombudsman Bureau](#) (FINE). Further information on each body is available on their websites.

The Consumer Disputes Board is an ADR body operating in the administrative branch of the Ministry of Justice. Its activities are based on the Consumer Disputes Board Act ([8/2007](#)). The Consumer Disputes Board provides resolution recommendations for legal disputes between consumers and businesses.

FINE is an independent organization whose operations are based on an agreement between the Financial Supervisory Authority, the Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority, and Finance Finland. Both businesses and consumers can initiate disputes concerning financial services at FINE.

The operations of the Traffic Accident and Patient Injury Board are based on the Act on the Traffic Accident and Patient Injury Board (959/2019), see for more information [here](#).

Arbitration is a method of dispute resolution that serves as an alternative to court proceedings. It is particularly used for resolving disputes between businesses, and the parties themselves are responsible for covering the costs of the proceedings. The [Arbitration Act](#) includes provisions on arbitration that is to take place in Finland. The Act also applies to the effects in Finland of an arbitration agreement in a foreign state as well as to the recognition and enforcement in Finland of an arbitration award made in a foreign state. The Act (Section 2) provides that any dispute in a civil or commercial matter which can be settled by agreement between the parties may be referred for final decision to be made by one or more arbitrators. It may also be agreed that disputes which arise in the future from a particular legal relationship specified in the agreement shall be finally decided by one or more arbitrators, unless otherwise provided in statutory law.

According to the [Government Programme](#) (p.112), the Arbitration Act will be modernised in technical respects to correspond to the best international practices. The Ministry of Justice has appointed a working group to prepare this proposal. The aim is to take into account current international standards and best practices, make Finnish legislation more well-known and promote the competitiveness of Finnish arbitration.

The [act on mediation in civil matters and confirmation of settlements in general courts](#) applies to mediation in civil matters and contested petitionary matters in general courts (*court mediation*). The Act also provides for confirmation of enforceability of a settlement reached in out of court mediation. More information on mediation in English on the National Court Administration's [webpage](#).

General courts develop and harmonise court mediation as a part of their normal work. The National Courts Administration reports on the development measures to the Ministry of Justice annually.

According to the [Government Programme](#) (p.211), court mediation will be developed, and the use of alternative dispute resolution procedures increased. The responsibility for mediation in criminal and civil matters will be transferred from the administrative branch of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to the administrative branch of the Ministry of Justice.

C. Efficiency of the justice system⁵:

No developments

If there have been developments related to efforts to improve the efficiency of the justice system (*e.g. as regards length of proceedings*), please specify: ...

As previously reported, the Government aims to reform civil procedure, criminal procedure and the procedure for considering petitionary matters (Government Programme, p.189). The objective is to expedite and streamline judicial proceedings while safeguarding the legal protection and fundamental rights of parties. The means to achieve this include increasing the number of written

⁵ Under this topic, Member States are not required to give statistical information but should provide input on the type of information outlined under section 2.

procedures; easing the requirement to appear in court; reviewing the requirements and the scope of application of the Finnish out-of-court fine procedure, enhancing the use of electronic practices, remote connections, and video recordings; assessing the appropriateness of court compositions; and reviewing the possibilities of expanding the scope of application of the Finnish plea bargaining.

In 2024, the Government enacted a comprehensive reform of the use of **remote connections in judicial proceedings**. The conditions for accepting evidence on video and for participating in court proceedings via video connection were eased. At the same time, the possibility to arrange a trial via video conference was provided for. The aim of the reform is to streamline and speed up legal processes.

Use of remote connections in administrative judicial matters: The Ministry of Justice is preparing Government proposal to assess the need for legal provisions to clarify, streamline, and establish conditions for the use of remote connections in administrative judicial proceedings. This includes cases handled solely through written procedures (internal remote session) and cases involving oral preparation or oral hearings (remote oral sessions). As part of the project, the feasibility and requirements for conducting oral preparation or hearings entirely or partially via remote connections will be evaluated. This includes assessing the possibilities and conditions for remote participation by the legally trained member of the adjudicating panel in oral preparation and hearings. The aim is to submit the Government proposal to Parliament in the autumn of 2025.

Updating the composition regulations within administrative procedural law: A legislative project is underway to assess the necessity of updating the composition regulations of the Supreme Administrative Court, regional administrative courts (including the Administrative Court of the Åland Islands) and the Insurance Court. The objective of revising composition regulations within administrative procedural law is to streamline the administration of justice and expedite judicial proceedings. To ensure the effective implementation of legal protection, the project also aims to ensure that the composition of the aforementioned courts is appropriate for the specific cases being adjudicated. The aim is to submit the Government proposal to Parliament in early 2026.

See also answers to questions in Section I B, regarding “accessibility of courts”, “digitalisation” and “mediation”.

Other – please specify

A new online eOppiva training [course on the Finnish administration of Justice](#) was launched. The course is open access and free of charge.

II. Anti-Corruption Framework

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2024 Report regarding the anti-corruption framework (if applicable):

Adopt legislation on trading in influence and propose a revision on the criminal offence of foreign bribery.

Adopting the legislation on trading in influence is connected to the anti-corruption directive proposal that is currently negotiated in the trilogues. Regulatory changes will be considered as a part of the national implementation of the anti-corruption directive, as also reported previously.

The independent [study](#) “Development Needs for Legislation on Bribery Offences”, commenced by the Ministry of Justice, was published on 31.5.2024. The study examines the Criminal Code provisions on bribery and foreign bribery offences and also addresses the recommendations of the

OECD. The report proposes alternative models for simplifying the essential elements, criminalising trading in influence, improving the efficiency of imposing confiscation in bribery of a foreign party, and clarifying the definition of a foreign public official. The study provides valuable analysis on bribery regulation and possible needs for amendments and is carefully looked into at the Ministry of Justice. Regulatory changes concerning foreign bribery will be considered in conjunction with the implementation of the anti-corruption directive.

In conjunction with the publication seminar of the study “Development Needs for Legislation on Bribery Offences”, a two-day round-table session with researchers and the national anti-corruption network was organized in May 2024 by the Ministry of Justice, covering themes related to bribery regulation, liability for act in office, liability of legal persons, ethical culture and compliance in organization, and measurement of corruption.

Strengthen the integrity and accountability framework applicable to ministers and other persons entrusted with top executive functions by adopting a code of conduct for them.

The issue of a code of conduct for ministers has been discussed in connection with the updating of national anti-corruption policy documents. Further reflection is needed.

Ministry of Finance refers to its 2024 reporting on the Code of Conduct for Civil Service Ethics and training of senior civil servants. The Code of Conduct for Civil Service Ethics, which was published in 2021, concerns all civil servants, including senior top civil servants. Ministry of Finance has nothing new to report on this recommendation.

A. The institutional framework capacity to fight against corruption (prevention and investigation / prosecution)

No developments

If there have been developments related to the institutional framework capacity to fight corruption, please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

List any **changes** as regards relevant authorities (e.g. national agencies, bodies) in charge of prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of corruption and the resources allocated to each of these authorities (the human, financial, legal, and technical resources as relevant), including the cooperation among domestic and with foreign authorities. Indicate any relevant measures taken to effectively and timely cooperate with OLAF and EPPO.

Two projects funded by the EU Internal Security Fund (ISF) enabled further resources and capacity for the anti-corruption team in the Ministry of Justice. MoJ was granted EU ISF funding for a project titled “Strengthening the fight against corruption” which will continue until mid-2026. The partially ISF funded training project on whistleblower legislation will be completed by the end of April 2025. See answer to the question “Measures to enhance integrity in the public sector” in Section II for further information about these projects.

Safeguards for the functional independence of the authorities tasked with the prevention and detection of corruption.

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Information on the implementation of measures foreseen in the strategic anti-corruption framework (if applicable). If available, please provide relevant objectives and indicators.

The action plan of the national anti-corruption strategy 2021–2023 contained altogether 79 measures, out of which 54% (43 measures) were completed, 25% (20 measures) were well-advanced, 17% (13 measures) were started, and 4% (3 measures) were not started. See Annex 2 for more detailed data on the implementation of the measures.

The new action plan of the national anti-corruption strategy is currently under preparation (in an interministerial preparation and steering group), and it is estimated to be completed during the first half of 2025, and the implementation period would be until 2027.

In the spring of 2024, The National Police Board laid down the following principles of the Police Anticorruption Policy, to be followed throughout the administration: 1) Maintaining high trust in the Police, 2) The Police has zero tolerance to corruption, 3) We are aware of, recognise and manage corruption risks, 4) We ensure the detection and reporting of misconducts, and 5) Faced with any corruptive features, we take immediate action.

In the summer of 2024, The National Police board has supplemented the Policy with an implementation plan. National Police Board and the police units under it are required to: 1) ensure that the police Anticorruption Policy is taken into account in supervisor and other personnel training and in the introduction of personnel, and 2) ensure that all officers of the unit complete the online course to be published later, as separately instructed.

The policy and its implementation plan both have been implemented in every unit of the Finnish police. As well the policy is introduced for the Police Chiefs (inc. Police Commissioners and Assistant Police Commissioners), educated for new employees of the National Police board, and twice for new Commanding Officer students. The policy is available via an online course for everyone in the Finnish police.

B. Prevention

No developments

If there have been developments related to the prevention of corruption, please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

Measures to enhance integrity in the public sector (including as regards incompatibility rules, revolving doors, codes of conduct, ethics).

Awareness-raising measures and anti-corruption training organized and coordinated by the Ministry of Justice continued during 2024. A new section on anti-corruption was introduced for the civil servants induction course (VN-passi). A training session on the anti-corruption guidelines and whistleblower legislation was organized for public sector in November 2024 and it gathered nearly 400 participants. Similar training was organized in the beginning of 2023 after the publication of the anti-corruption guidelines. The national anti-corruption day seminar on 9 of December gathered also an audience of 400, with a keynote speech from the Chancellor of Justice. The theme of the day was whistleblower protection and ethical culture in organization.

Projects funded by the EU Internal Security Fund

1) Ministry of Justice launched the partially EU funded, **Whistleblower Protection Training Project** in September 2023. The project will last until end of April 2025. The goal of the project is to raise awareness and train government, public sector, and private sector organizations in relation to the

recently adopted Whistleblower Protection Act (1171/2022). The Act transposed the Whistleblower Directive (EU) 2019/1937 into national legislation. Subsequently, the Act obliges all government agencies as well as public and private sector organizations with 50 or more employees to have a confidential internal reporting channel where also certain acts of suspected corruption may be reported. However, the material scope of the Act does not categorically include all suspected corruption offences.

The project has offered trainings to two different groups: 1) experts who are responsible of handling the whistleblowing reports in their organization as well as leadership personnel; 2) all other personnel. Trainings for group 1 were in-depth and extensive training sessions, and trainings for group 2 were more compact and specifically aimed for all potential reporters to improve their understanding and responsibility in reporting suspected wrongdoings. The project also provided multiple ad hoc training sessions and attended multiple different seminars and public events. As of January 2025, the project's trainings and other awareness raising events have reached approximately 6,500 persons within Finnish government, public sector, and private sector organizations.

Additionally, a dedicated [section on Whistleblower Protection](#) has been published at Ministry of Justice's www.anti-corruption.fi -website, offering information about the whistleblower protection legislation. Additionally, a digital study [course on Whistleblower Protection](#) has been launched during March 2024 at eOppiva.fi. The course is open access and free of charge. To raise awareness, the project has also created an informational animated video about Whistleblower Protection which has been published via Ministry of Justice's social media platforms and will be utilized in public service announcements aired via Finnish Broadcasting Company's (YLE) channels in January 2025. A promotional campaign will also take place during the beginning of 2025.

2) The ISF-funded project "**Strengthening the fight against corruption**" was launched in April 2024 and continues until mid-2026. The project aims to produce a national corruption situation report in Finland to serve as training material, as a tool for monitoring the corruption situation and as a basis for planning anti-corruption measures. It will also develop an online eOppiva training course on corruption for public officials. The general objective is to increase knowledge and awareness of corruption and of how to prevent and fight corruption, as well as to strengthen anti-corruption efforts carried out by public authorities.

A key project output will be a regularly updated national corruption situation report to monitor any possible changes in the situation in the long term. A publication seminar on a corruption situation report will be organised. An online training course for public officials (especially targeted to prosecutors and judiciary) will be created on the eOppiva digital learning platform during 2025. Several training sessions will be organized targeted to the high-risk areas of corruption, such as procurement.

See also answer in the beginning of part II regarding measures to follow-up on anti-corruption recommendations.

See also GRECO 5th [round evaluation addendum to the compliance report](#).

The UNCAC second cycle review of Finland was progressed and recommendations were given to Finland concerning the prevention of corruption and asset recovery. [The executive summary](#) has been published.

Moreover, the Government has submitted a proposal to the Parliament for [an act on the non-compete period in the duties of government members](#) in September 2024. Consideration of the proposal in the Parliament is under way.

Ministry of Finance conducted a survey among the ministries and central government agencies concerning waiting period agreements under section 44a of the State Civil Servants` Act (750/1994) in 2023. The analysis of the responses is still under way, and the intention is to use them in the assessment of existing legislation and possibly to support legislative drafting.

Ministry of Finance monitors citizens' and civil servants' opinions and perceptions of public integrity on a regular basis. The latest citizen survey was conducted in 2022 and published in 2023 ([link](#)). The newest civil servant survey was conducted in autumn 2024 and its findings will be published in early 2025. The survey is linked to the implementation of the new Central Government Human Resources Strategy, launched in spring 2024. In particular, the survey analyses the importance of core civil service values and how they are realised in practice, informing the HR strategy work whether the core values should be revisioned and/or better communicated. The deadline for the HR strategy work is December 2025.

Ministry of Finance has appointed [Public management group \(2024–2025\)](#) to which senior managers from a broad range of public administration were invited. The task of the group is to prepare the principles of good public management and leadership. In the preparation of the principles, the aim is to achieve broad consensus on:

- the identity and value base of public management,
- accountability and independence of senior officials and a clear division of responsibilities between senior political officials and senior officials,
- systematic management support and development and
- network management and partnerships as part of public management.

The group has drafted the value base of public management and leadership including such values as respect for democracy, equal treatment of citizens, the demand for justice, trust between different actors, the professionalism of leadership and the independence of leaders and people-orientation. The goal is that, in addition to values, practical leadership is guided by principles such as effectiveness, cooperation, solution-focusedness, professionalism and ethics.

[Measures to enhance general transparency of public decision-making \(including rules on lobbying, asset and interest disclosure rules, gifts policy, transparency of political party financing\).](#)

The legislative proposal on transparency of political party financing was notified to Parliament in November 2024 ([HE 190/2024](#)). Parliament has not yet discussed the matter. It has been proposed that the legislative amendments enter into force on 1.7.2025.

Finland is currently preparing national legislation required by the EU regulation on political advertising, which also has a link to political party financing.

[Measures to prevent conflicts of interest in the public sector. Please specify the features and scope of their application \(e.g. categories of officials concerned, types of checks and corrective measures depending on the category of officials concerned\).](#)

See the Annex 1 on data on offences in office. See also GRECO 5th [round evaluation addendum to the compliance report](#).

→ For the three previous points, please also provide information and figures on their application/enforcement, such as number of detected breaches/irregularities of the various rules in place and the follow-up given (investigations, sanctions, etc.).

Measures to ensure whistleblower protection and encourage reporting of corruption, including their application (i.e. number of reports received, and the follow-up given).

See the Report by the Office of the Chancellor of Justice to the Commission.

See also the “Whistleblower Protection Training Project” (question on “Measures to enhance integrity in the public sector” in Section II B).

Specific measures to enhance transparency, integrity and accountability in sectors with high risks of corruption, with a view to monitor and prevent corruption and conflict of interests, and where applicable measures to prevent and address corruption committed by organised crime groups.

- *Such high-risk sectors could include: public procurement, including construction, transport/infrastructure, defence, cohesion, agriculture, environment, healthcare, citizen/residence investor schemes, large-scale investments of national interest and the spending of EU funds, urban planning.*

Concerning high-risk sectors, measures to identify corruption risks and to raise awareness on prevention of corruption are being discussed in the contexts of updating the action plan of the national anti-corruption strategy (see question number 20) and preparing an action programme on combatting organised crime. See also project “Strengthening the fight against corruption” (question “Measures to enhance integrity in the public sector” in Section II B).

In the joint ProcurFinland program of the public and private sectors, measures to strengthen transparency, integrity, and accountability will continue. The measures for the program period (2024–2027) will focus significantly on training, with the most important initiatives being a mentoring program and learning clinics. Open peer-learning networks will also be organized comprehensively across various sectors. Sharing best practices will be a central focus, particularly from the perspectives of procurement tendering and management.

Measures for the prevention of corruption in relation to the issuing of official permits (e.g. related to environment, energy and various types of construction)

In Finland, combating corruption in public procurement is implemented in accordance with the Public procurement Act (<https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2016/20161397#O1L2P6>), for example, by increasing the transparency of procurement processes and the use of public funds. This is achieved by publishing procurement notices in the HILMA procurement database. Additionally, many procurement authorities publish procurement decisions in open data repositories. The State Treasury promotes the publication of procurement units’ purchase invoice data and continues to develop the system and the scope of its data content (<https://www.hankintailmoitukset.fi/en/> and <https://tutkihankintoja.fi/>).

The oversight and development of procurement practices are key components. The Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority (FCCA) focuses its procurement oversight on illegal direct procurements. Amendments to the Procurement Act that took effect on July 1, 2024, enhanced the FCCA's capacity to carry out its oversight functions. The Ministry of Finance is currently undertaking a project to establish a procurement information repository, which aims to increase transparency in public procurement and the public sector's purchase invoices. Moreover, a proposed amendment to the Procurement Act is being prepared to expand the FCCA's oversight measures in national construction contracts.

[Guidelines](#) have been prepared for procurement units to help them identify corruption in public procurement. At the national level, the FCCA and the action program responsible for implementing the national procurement strategy play a central role.

See also [guidelines](#) for combatting the black economy and [a report](#) on black economy and public procurement.

In addition, there are various anonymous reporting channels where potential misconduct can be reported.

A report by the Ministry of Finance on “The roles, structures, practices and tools of public supervisory authorities in anti-corruption work” has been published in 2023 (available in Finnish [here](#)). The report proposes measures to develop anti-corruption measures. Concerning official permits, the report recognizes corruption risks related e.g. to construction permits.

[Reporting on the use of digital technologies to enhance transparency and oversight in public procurement](#)

In January 2025, the Ministry of Finance initiated a project to establish National Public Procurement Data Repository and facilitate the publication of public sector purchase invoices. The project's goal is to comprehensively collect and publish information on public procurement and public sector purchases, including non-competitive purchases. The initiative involves preparing the necessary legislative amendments and implementing the technical solutions required for data collection and publication. Additionally, the project will ensure adequate change management support for contracting authorities.

C. Repression

No developments regarding the repression of corruption

If there have been developments related to the repression of corruption, please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

[The legal framework on the criminalisation and sanctions for corruption and related offences, including foreign bribery.](#)

See answer in the beginning of part II regarding measures to follow-up on anti-corruption recommendations.

Official data on the number of investigations, prosecutions, final judgments, and the application of sanctions for corruption offences (differentiated by offence if possible)⁶. Please indicate whether the cases: involve legal persons; are related to the implementation of EU or national funds⁷; involve high level corruption. Please indicate which data is publicly available and how policy-making is informed by the data.

See Annex 1, and Annex 3.

Potential obstacles identified in law or in practice to the investigation and prosecution of high-level and complex corruption cases (e.g. political immunity regulation, procedural rules, statute of limitations, cross-border cooperation, pardoning).

No significant developments.

Information on effectiveness of criminal and non-criminal measures and of sanctions (e.g. recovery measures and administrative sanctions) on both public and private offenders.

No significant developments.

Other – please specify

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III Media pluralism and media freedom

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2024 Report regarding media pluralism and media freedom (if applicable):

Further advance with the reform of the Act on the Openness of Government Activities to ensure effective and wider access to documents taking into account the European standards on access to official documents.

The working group tasked with preparing a proposal on reforming the Act on the Openness of Government Activities finished its work in late 2023, and the [working group report](#) has been published. The report was sent for a wide consultation round during spring 2024. A lot of feedback was received in the public consultation. Most of the feedback related to the proposals of the working group to expand the institutional scope of the Act to private parties responsible for certain public administrative duties and also to corporations or foundations controlled by a public body. Along with comments on the proposals in the report, the feedback emphasized the need to evaluate potential changes to the Act's secrecy provisions. Particular attention was drawn to security-related aspects. A [summary](#) of the consultation feedback has been published.

When the working group was established, a broader review of secrecy provisions and potential reforms was deferred for a later time. However, due to changes in the national security environment, the need for amendments to the Act's secrecy provisions will now be assessed before any changes to the Act are proposed. This ensures that reform needs of the Act are viewed as a whole, taking into

⁶ Please include, if available the number of (data since 2022 or latest available data): indictments; first instance convictions, first instance acquittals; final convictions; final acquittals; other outcomes (final) (i.e. excluding convictions and acquittals); cases adjudicated (final); imprisonment / custodial sentences through final convictions; suspended custodial sentences through final convictions; pending cases at the end of the reference year.

⁷ For MS participating in the EPPO, data on cases related to EU funds does not encompass investigations and prosecutions carried out by the EPPO.

account recent developments in the security environment. The review of the need for changes to the secrecy provisions will begin by gathering feedback during the spring of 2025. Following this, it will be assessed whether additional external studies are needed. Once sufficient information on the reform needs has been collected, the working group process will begin.

The objective is to prepare a government proposal that balances the need for transparency in government activities with secrecy requirements. In preparing the overall proposal, the aim is to evaluate and reconcile the earlier report's proposals with the need for changes to the secrecy provisions, taking into consideration the changed security situation. The complete government proposal will be finalized during the next government term.

A. Media authorities and bodies⁸

No developments

If there have been developments related to media authorities and bodies, please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution:

Measures taken to ensure the independence, enforcement powers and adequacy of resources (financial, human and technical) of media regulatory authorities and bodies.

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Conditions and procedures for the appointment and dismissal of the head / members of the collegiate body of media regulatory authorities and bodies.

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Existence and functions of media councils or other self-regulatory bodies.

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B. Safeguards against government or political interference and transparency and concentration of media ownership

No developments

If there have been developments related government or political interference or transparency and concentration of media ownership, please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

Measures taken to ensure the fair and transparent allocation of state advertising

The Ministry of Finance is currently working on [a project](#) for a national database of public procurement and purchase invoices. The aim of the project is to implement a national public procurement database covering public sector-wide data on public procurement throughout the procurement lifecycle in an aggregated and comparable format and to prepare the necessary legislative changes. The project would, amongst other things, make data on public advertising expenditure public and easily accessible.

⁸ Cf. Article 30 of Directive 2018/1808.

Safeguards against state / political interference, in particular:

- *safeguards to ensure editorial independence of media (private and public)*
- *specific safeguards for the independence of heads of management and members of the governing boards of public service media (e.g. related to appointment, dismissal), safeguards for their financial and operational independence (e.g. related to reporting obligations and the allocation of resources) and safeguards for plurality of information and opinions*
- *information on specific legal provisions and procedures applying to media service providers, including as regards granting/renewal/termination of licences, company operation, capital entry requirements, concentration, and corporate governance*

The government set up a parliamentary working group to assess the role and the funding of Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE). The working group published its [report](#) in September 2024.

The working group considered it important to safeguard the independence and editorial autonomy of the Finnish Broadcasting Company in line with the obligations of the European Media Freedom Act and proposed that the legislation on Finnish Broadcasting Company should include criteria for the selection and dismissal of executives involved in decisions on editorial policy. The working group also agreed to add a provision requiring YLE to promote transparency in its finances and operations.

The above-mentioned amendments will be introduced in the government's proposal in the spring 2025.

Transparency of media ownership and public availability of media ownership information, including on direct, indirect and beneficial owners

The [research report](#) of a research project related to the concentration of media in Finland was published. As reported last year, the main objective of the project was to find out the current state of media ownership concentration in Finland

C. Framework for journalists' protection, transparency and access to documents

No developments

If there have been developments related to the framework for journalists' protection or transparency/access to documents, please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below:

...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

Rules and practices guaranteeing journalist's independence and safety, including as regards protection of journalistic sources and communications, referring also, if applicable, to follow-up given to alerts lodged with the Council of Europe's Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists.

No new alerts concerning Finland were created on the Council of Europe's platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists in 2024 and in 2025 (by 16 January). The most recent alerts were created in 2023 ([Alert No. 167/2023](#), [Alert No. 210/2023](#) and [Alert No. 113/2023](#)).

Law enforcement capacity, including during protests and demonstrations, to ensure journalists' safety and to investigate attacks on journalists

The Police always take the safety of journalists into consideration when upholding the public order and safety in demonstrations. Therefore, it is recommended to wear clothing or an accessory that

identifies one as a journalist. The Police can also reserve spots for safe observation. The Police also have frequent discussions with journalist's organizations about how to solve different safety issues to enable the freedom of press in demonstrations.

Access to information and public documents by public at large and journalists (incl. transparency authorities where they exist, procedures, costs/fees, timeframes, administrative/judicial review of decisions, execution of decisions by public authorities, possible obstacles related to the classification of information).

On access to information and public documents, please see the answer regarding follow-up on recommendations in the beginning of Section III.

Lawsuits (incl. SLAPPs - strategic lawsuits against public participation) and convictions against journalists (incl. defamation cases) and measures taken to safeguard against manifestly unfounded and abusive lawsuits.

The government is currently in the process of implementing the SLAPP directive. There have been no reports of new SLAPP cases. However, official statistics on lawsuits or convictions against different professions are not available.

As for criminal cases against journalists, in November 2024, the District Court of Helsinki dismissed all charges against three journalists of the newspaper Helsingin Sanomat for aggravated defamation and aggravated dissemination of information.

As reported last year, there is another case still pending in the Helsinki Court of Appeals. Currently, the court is deliberating. The District Court of Helsinki had previously convicted two journalists for disclosure of national secrets and sentenced one of them to 50 unit fines. For the second one, the punishment was waived.

Other – please specify

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IV Other institutional issues related to check and balances

Please provide information on measures taken to follow-up on the recommendations received in the 2024 Report regarding the system of checks and balances (if applicable): ...

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A. The process for preparing and enacting laws

No developments

If there have been developments related to the process for preparing and enacting laws, please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

Framework, policy and use of impact assessments and evidence based policy-making, stakeholders⁹/public consultations (including rules and practices on the transparent participation of civil society to policy development and decision-making processes, and transparency and quality of

⁹ This includes also the consultation of social partners.

the legislative process both in the preparatory and the parliamentary phase.

[An interministerial working group](#), initiated in June 2023, finalized a draft for updated governmental guidelines on stakeholder engagement in law drafting. The project aims to promote consultations and transparency earlier in the law drafting process than the current praxis. Another objective is to take into better consideration the differences between law drafting projects. The plan is to finalize and adopt the updated guidelines in spring 2025 after a public consultation in December 2024 – January 2025.

A second survey round on quality indicators for the law drafting process was conducted in December 2024 – January 2025. The survey, which has separate versions for law drafters and stakeholders, measures the quality of the law drafting process across seven thematic areas, including impact assessment and stakeholder engagement. Results from the survey will be available in February 2025, and they will be used to map changes in perceptions, highlight potential improvements or deteriorations, and guide further development work. The indicator system was established, and the first survey round was conducted, in 2022 as part of a [government-commissioned research project](#).

Ministries also ran pilots on the use of AI in law drafting during 2024. In relation to public consultations, one pilot tested the use of AI in drafting summaries of received consultation statements. Based on the results, summaries created with current AI tools were of limited use in drafting work.

Rules and use of fast-track procedures and emergency procedures (for example, the percentage of decisions adopted through emergency/urgent procedure compared to the total number of adopted decisions)

On 16 July, the President of the Republic approved the Act on Temporary Measures to Combat Instrumentalised Migration (Border Security Act). The act is an exceptive act. Exceptive acts may be used to enact limited exceptions to the Constitution for compelling reasons. The aim of the Act is to improve border security and ensure that Finland has effective means at its disposal to combat instrumentalised migration, which is being used to put pressure on Finland. The act lays down the conditions under which a government plenary session can decide to restrict the reception of applications for international protection in a limited area on Finland's national border and in its immediate vicinity. Such a decision would be made following cooperation with the President of the Republic. Applying the act requires highly exceptional and pressing reasons. Doing so always requires knowledge or reasonable grounds that a foreign state is seeking to exert influence Finland in a way that poses a serious threat to the sovereignty or national security and other means not are sufficient to safeguard the sovereignty or national security of Finland. A decision to apply the act may be made for up to one month at a time. The act entered into force on 22 July 2024 and will remain in force for one year. (A press release in English [here](#)). The Government is currently preparing an extension to the validity of the Border Security Act (see more [here](#)).

Rules and application of states of emergency (or analogous regimes), including judicial review and parliamentary oversight.

[A comprehensive reform of the Emergency Powers Act](#), which began in the fall 2022, is ongoing. A working group, consisting of representatives from all ministries and experts of constitutional and EU law as experts, is currently preparing its proposal for a new Act. The government proposal for a new Emergency Powers Act is expected to be presented no later than by January 2026.

Finland is reforming the Communicable Disease Act during the years 2023-2025. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has appointed a [steering group and a preparatory working group](#) for the project. The aim is to enhance the fight against communicable diseases and strengthen preparedness for epidemics and pandemics.

Regime for constitutional review of laws

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Safeguards to ensure legal certainty, the stability of the legal framework and non-discrimination. [this question complements the exiting question on rules and use of fast-track and emergency procedures]

The Government applies instructions and recommendations which aim at harmonising law drafting practices in different Ministries and ensuring that quality requirements for legislation are met. A government proposal for legislation must include a section on the proposal's relation with the Constitution. This includes assessing the proposal's relation with non-discrimination as equality before the law is guaranteed in Section 6 of the Constitution. This assessment on the relation with the Constitution must be conducted even when adopting legislation under section 23 of the Constitution, which deals with adoption of state of emergency legislation. Also, the Emergency Powers Act has undergone such scrutiny, and the powers provided therein must in a state of emergency be activated by means of a Government Decree, which must then be submitted to the Parliament for a review of its compatibility with e.g. fundamental rights. The Parliament decides whether the Decree is allowed to stay in force.

The Constitutional Law Committee of the Parliament issues statements on the constitutionality of bills sent to it for consideration and on their bearing on international human rights instruments.

According to Section 106 of the Constitution, if, in a matter being tried by a court of law, the application of an Act would be in evident conflict with the Constitution, the court of law shall give primacy to the provision in the Constitution. Correspondingly, according to Section 107 of the Constitution, if a provision in a Decree or another statute of a lower level than an Act is in conflict with the Constitution or another Act, it shall not be applied by a court of law or by any other public authority.

B. Independent authorities

No developments regarding independent authorities

If there have been developments related to independent authorities, please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

Independence, resources, capacity and powers of national human rights institutions ('NHRIs'), of ombudsman institutions if different from NHRIs, of equality bodies if different from NHRIs and of supreme audit institutions¹⁰

After consulting the Constitutional Law Committee, Parliamentary Ombudsman Petri Jääskeläinen has appointed Dr Jarna Petman as the new Director of the Human Rights Centre on 25 April 2024. The Director's term of office started on 15 May 2024 and will last for four years.

On 26 March 2024, Parliamentary Ombudsman Petri Jääskeläinen [nominated](#) a new Human Rights Delegation to serve a term from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2028. The Delegation has 28 members.

The budget allocated to the National Human Rights Institution has increased in the last years: 7 517 000 euros in 2021, 8 087 000 euros in 2022, 8 531 000 euros in 2023 and 9 455 000 euros in 2024.

¹⁰ Cf. the website of the European Court of Auditors: <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/Pages/SupremeAuditInstitutions.aspx#>

As previously reported, according to the Government Programme, the Government will examine the duties of the specialised ombudsmen to identify possible overlaps and any potential for savings in this respect. In October 2024, the Ministry of Justice appointed [a working group](#) to examine the development and possible merger of the tasks of the Non-discrimination Ombudsman and the Ombudsman for Equality. At the same time, the duties and position of the Ombudsman for older people will be examined. The aim of the merger would be to make more efficient use of resources and increase the effectiveness of the work of the equality bodies. Another objective would be to harmonise the processing of cases based on different grounds for discrimination so that legal protection is available from one authority on all grounds of discrimination.

It was previously reported that in December 2023, the Parliament passed a legislative proposal ([HE 31/2023](#)) to establish a new agency for special authorities in the judicial administration. The new agency started its operations on 1.1.2025. As reported last year, the agency has 11 independent and autonomous authorities, and its administrative services unit organises administrative services to all of them. The objective was to bring together the authorities' operative administrative tasks and strengthen their administrative expert support, which would reduce overlapping administrative work. One purpose of the amendment was to emphasise the independence of the authorities and their structural distance from the Ministry of Justice. In the new agency, the authorities retain their independence and their mandate.

Amendments to the Non-discrimination Act entered into force at the beginning of 2025. The Act no longer obligates providers of early childhood education and care to draw up unit-specific operational equality plans. All public and private service providers of early childhood education and care must draw up an equality plan, but it may be common to all the establishments of the actor in question. The change reduces the number of subjects under the supervision of the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman. However, the Ombudsman must still oversee the promotion and planning of equality in early childhood education and provide related guidance.

[Statistics/reports concerning the follow-up to recommendations by National Human Rights Institutions, ombudsman institutions, equality bodies, and supreme audit institutions in the past two years.](#)

As previously reported, fundamental and human rights indicators, serving as a new instrument for monitoring fundamental and human rights in the short and long term, have been developed as part of the [National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2020–2023](#). The recommendations of different institutions have been taken into consideration in the development of the indicators. In 2024, a public website (www.perusoikeusseuranta.fi) was launched, providing information on the indicators and thus systematic data on the realization of rights. With regard to the indicators, updated data has been gathered but not yet published in view of the second monitoring round. A report building on the indicator data is expected to be published in spring 2025.

[Safeguards to ensure the effective independence of supervisory and regulatory authorities with a direct impact on economic operators](#)

In general, the independence of supervisory and regulatory authorities is guaranteed by law. This includes clear mandates and legal protections against undue influence. Legislation and rules of procedure can ensure the independence of the authorities' management, decision-making and resources. In the organization of these authorities, it is necessary to take into account the actual independence as well as that the functions look independent from an external perspective. Authorities' governance structures are designed to prevent conflicts of interest. Proposals for measures to develop anti-corruption measures on the basis of assessment of the situation in Finland are presented in the report "The roles, structures, practices and tools of public supervisory authorities in anti-corruption work" (published in Finnish in 2023 [here](#)).

Both the Parliamentary Ombudsman and the Chancellor of Justice oversee the legality of the actions of authorities and officials. They oversee the legality of actions taken by the authorities, primarily by investigating complaints received or by taking matters under investigation on their own initiative. They also conduct on-site investigations in public offices and institutions.

The supervision of the lawfulness of processing of personal data has a direct impact on economic operators in the single market. The Data Protection Ombudsman is the independent supervisory authority in Finland, as required by the GDPR. The autonomous and independent role of the Data Protection Ombudsman is guaranteed by specific provisions of law (section 8 of the [Data Protection Act](#)). The independent role of the Data Protection Ombudsman has been further underlined by a recent amendment of the Data Protection Act.

C. Accessibility and judicial review of administrative decisions

No developments

If there have been developments related to the accessibility and judicial review of judicial decisions please specify which, in particular regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

Transparency of administrative decisions and sanctions (incl. their publication and rules on collection of related data)

Regarding access to information and public documents, please see the answer regarding follow-up on recommendations in the beginning of Section III. No other significant developments.

Judicial review of administrative decisions: short description of the general regime (in particular competent court, scope, suspensive effect, interim measures, and any applicable specific rules or derogations from the general regime of judicial review).

In the general review of administrative decisions, no significant developments have occurred since January 2024.

In September 2023, the Government submitted a proposal to the Parliament concerning the legal safeguards for administering involuntary medication to patients under observation, undergoing mental examination or receiving involuntary psychiatric treatment ([HE 14/2023 vp](#)). The amendments to the Mental Health Act ([15/2024](#)) and the Administrative Court Act ([16/2024](#)) entered into force on 1 April 2024, finalizing the implementation of the European Court of Human Rights judgment in *X v. Finland* (Application No. 34806/04).

According to these amendments, an administrative decision shall be issued if a patient objects to the medication or if their will cannot be ascertained. The patient also otherwise has the right to an administrative decision at their request. Patients have the right to appeal against this decision to the administrative court within 14 days of the notification of the decision. Due to the urgency, this appeal period is shorter than the regular 30 days specified in the [General Administrative Judicial Procedure Act](#). The administrative court must adjudicate the matter urgently, with an expert member participating in the decision-making process. The administrative decision on involuntary medication can be enforced immediately, regardless of whether an appeal has been filed. However, while an appeal is pending, the administrative court may prohibit the enforcement of the administrative decision, order a suspension of enforcement or issue another order concerning the enforcement of the decision.

Rules and practices related to the application by all courts, including constitutional jurisdictions, of the preliminary ruling procedure (Art. 267 TFEU)

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Implementation of final judgments by the public administration and State institutions and follow-up given to supranational judgments, including decisions from the European Court of Human Rights, as well as available remedies in case of non-implementation

In 2024, the examination of one leading judgment of the European Court of Human Rights concerning Finland was closed. On 1 January 2025, Finland has, thus, one leading judgment and altogether five judgments pending implementation. The leading judgment and four repetitive cases concern violations of the right not to be punished twice. The leading judgment in this group of cases was delivered in 2014 and the repetitive cases were delivered in 2014 and 2015. With respect to judgments delivered after 2015, the measures taken to execute the judgments, and the reporting thereof have been done in due time and the examination of the execution of the judgments has been closed.

Respect of the good administration principle (including the obligation of the administration to give reasons for decisions) [this question complements the existing question on transparency of administrative decisions]

According to [the Constitution of Finland](#), provisions concerning the publicity of proceedings, the right to be heard, the right to receive a reasoned decision and the right of appeal, as well as the other guarantees of a fair trial and good governance shall be laid down by an Act (Section 21).

The guarantees of the good administration principle are included in [the Administrative Procedure Act](#). Chapter 2 of this Act, titled "Foundations of good administration", includes Sections 6 to 10 with provisions concerning the legal principles of administration, the service principle and the appropriateness of services, the provision of advice to customers, the requirement of appropriate language and the cooperation between authorities.

Additionally, the Administrative Procedure Act provides in its Section 45 that the reasons for a decision shall be stated. The reasons shall indicate the circumstances and evidence that influenced the decision and specify the provisions applied. Section 45 also regulates the conditions under which no reasons need to be stated for a decision.

Safeguards (other than judicial review) regarding decisions or inaction of administrative authorities, including remedies. [this question complements the existing question on judicial review of administrative decisions]

The Chancellor of Justice of the Government and the Parliamentary Ombudsman serve as the supreme guardians of the law and oversee that the authorities comply with the law and fulfil their duties. Citizens can submit complaints to these supreme guardians of the law regarding activities of an authority if they suspect these activities to be unlawful.

The Administrative Procedure Act also provides that anyone may file, with the authority that oversees the respective activities, an administrative complaint concerning the unlawful conduct of an authority, a person employed by an authority or another entity performing a public administrative duty, or about their failure to fulfil an obligation (Section 53a).

According to the Constitution, the exercise of public powers shall be based on an Act. In all public activity, the law shall be strictly observed. (Section 2.) Furthermore, a civil servant is responsible for the lawfulness of his or her official actions. He or she is also responsible for a decision made by an official multi-member body that he or she has supported as one of its members. A rapporteur shall be responsible for a decision made upon his or her presentation, unless he or she has filed an objection to the decision. Everyone who has suffered a violation of his or her rights or sustained loss through an unlawful act or omission by a civil servant or other person performing a public task shall have the right to request that the civil servant or other person in charge of a public task be sentenced to a punishment and that the public organisation, official or other person in charge of a public task be held liable for damages, as provided by an Act. However, there is no such right to bring charges, if, under the Constitution, the charges are to be heard by the High Court of Impeachment. (Section 118.)

Chapter 40 of [Criminal Code](#) regulates offences in public office and lays down the framework for criminal sanctions in such matters. Provisions concerning liability and compensation for damages are laid down in [the Damages Act](#) .

Regarding inaction, the Constitution provides that everyone has the right to have his or her case dealt with appropriately and without undue delay by a legally competent court of law or other authority, as well as to have a decision pertaining to his or her rights or obligations reviewed by a court of law or other independent organ for the administration of justice (Section 21). In addition, according to the Administrative Procedure Act, a matter shall be considered without undue delay (Section 23).

It should however be noted that, according to established interpretation, the inaction of administrative authorities cannot be addressed by submitting an appeal or initiating an inactivity lawsuit. The failure of an authority to act or to make a decision required by law can be addressed by submitting an administrative complaint with the supreme guardians of the law or other supervisory authorities. Legal protection against the inactivity of an authority is also provided by provisions concerning official liability and the possibility to initiate a matter of administrative litigation in the administrative court under the conditions prescribed by Section 20 of [the General Administrative Judicial Procedure Act](#). However, when it comes to the Data Protection Ombudsman, the inactivity of the Data Protection Ombudsman can be addressed by lodging an appeal with an administrative court, in line with EU law (see Section 21 of the [Data Protection Act](#)).

D. The enabling framework for civil society

No developments

If there have been developments related to the enabling framework for civil society, please specify which, regarding topics listed below: ...

Relevant topics to be covered in your contribution include:

Measures regarding the framework for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. legal framework and its application in practice incl. registration, transparency and dissolution rules)

A cross-administrative working group appointed by the Ministry of Justice been preparing the [National Programme to Promote Democracy and Participation](#) outlined in Prime Minister Petteri Orpo's Government Programme. The aim is to strengthen democracy, participation and trust in society. During 2024, multiple hearings were held and the draft programme was sent to a wide

consultation round. The Programme is expected to be published in spring 2025.

A report commissioned by the Ministry of Justice will look into regulatory barriers to organizational and voluntary activities. The report is expected to be published in February 2025. The report can be used as a source for information when reducing excess regulation and developing practices.

The [report](#) “Regional Differences in Civic and Voluntary Activities – Needs for Support and the Role of Network Organisations in the Wellbeing Services County Reform” was published in May 2024. The main objective of the report is to provide information on any regional differences in the state of and conditions for civic and voluntary activities and on how these activities could be supported while taking the regional differences into consideration. The report was drawn up as part of the Vapaa! – Fri! project (2021-2023) which aimed to make voluntary activities an established part of an ageing society.

Ministry of Finance organises national level Civil Society Academy events yearly. The aim of the Civil Society Academy is to strengthen civil servants’ knowledge of non-governmental activities and to increase mutual understanding, dialogue and networking between the administration and CSOs. The 2024 event acted as one of the hearings to support the drafting of the National Civil Society Strategy by the Ministry of Justice. See more on the Civil Society Academy [here](#).

Rules and practices having an impact on the effective operation and safety of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. This includes measures to protect them from attacks – verbal, physical or on-line –, intimidation, legal threats incl. SLAPPs, negative narratives or smear campaigns, measures capable of affecting the public perception of civil society organisations, etc. It also includes measures to monitor threats or attacks and dedicated support services, as well as available remedies.

As reported last year, PM Petteri Orpo’s Government has pledged to promote equality and non-discrimination and to reduce racism. The Government adopted [an action plan](#) for combating racism and promoting equality. The action plan elaborates on the [statement](#) on promoting equality, gender equality and non-discrimination in Finnish society, which the Government submitted to Parliament on 31 August 2023. The action plan consists of 62 measures to improve the social climate and relations between population groups, increase awareness of equality issues and combat racism and discrimination, especially in working life and education. Resources are also allocated to strengthening and expanding tried and tested practices.

The work on non-discrimination and the promotion of equality was also strengthened by two EU-funded projects [Well Planned](#) and [Peer Action against Hate](#) coordinated by the Ministry of Justice. The projects were finalized at the end of the year 2024.

Interaction with civil society is sought in the monitoring of the implementation of international human rights treaties. **The Ministry for Foreign Affairs** organized in cooperation with the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) a new kind of event where GREVIO’s thematic recommendations on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Finland were published in Helsinki on 3 December 2024. The event brought together authorities, civil society organisations and an independent monitoring body and enabled an interactive discussion on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Finland. Some 80 participants gathered to discuss the [first thematic evaluation report](#) on Finland, placing GREVIO’s findings within the broader context of the first evaluation round, together with comments from the authorities and civil society. The event also marked the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is preparing a voluntary mid-term report on the implementation of the recommendations made during the fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council. The draft report will be discussed with civil society organisations by organising an event at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in February 2025. Broad-based UPR recommendations provide a good platform for national human rights dialogue. A summary of the key observations made by civil society organisations will be drawn up in the report.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has a regular dialogue with civil society on issues related to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The Government's Human Rights Report (2021) outlines in detail Finland's cooperation, policy on and support to civil society and human rights defenders. Civil society's role is also emphasized in the Government report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy (2024).

During its membership in the UN Human Rights Council (2022-2024), Finland cooperated with civil society on various events. Finland organized several side-events on supporting human rights defenders. Finland also organized closed events where human rights defenders had an opportunity to tell about their work to a more selected group of guests. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, under the lead of Minister for Foreign Affairs, consulted Finnish civil society actors before each regular session of the Council. In addition, the Ministry organized working level meetings to consult civil society on a number of Finnish priority topics. The Ministry also briefed the Advisory Board for International Human Rights Affairs prior to and after each regular session of the Council. A representative nominated by the Advisory Board was also included as an independent expert (since summer 2022) in the Finnish delegation. The Advisory Board for International Human Rights Affairs is an independent expert body appointed by the Government. Furthermore, a youth delegate representing youth organizations in Finland, was included in the Finnish delegation as an independent expert once per year, in 2023 and 2024 respectively.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, under the lead of its Ministers, consults every autumn civil society organizations as regards the work of the UN General Assembly, including UNGA High Level Week, and the Finnish priorities in the UN more broadly. The Ministry has also organized consultations with civil society organizations in the context of the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

Organisation of financial support for civil society organisations and human rights defenders (e.g. framework to ensure access to funding, and for financial viability, taxation/incentive/donation systems, measures to ensure a fair distribution of funding)

A significant amount of discretionary government grants is awarded to registered associations and foundations every year. The amount of discretionary government grants will decrease in the next few years as part of the general government savings which will affect the operating conditions of the civil society. A comprehensive picture of discretionary government grants awarded to associations and foundations will be available for the first time at the beginning of next year thanks to the Explore Grants -service introduced in 2023. Information on applying for discretionary government grants is currently published in a shared service Apply for Grants.

The development of discretionary government grant activities and the development and introduction of [discretionary government grant services](#) will continue. New measures include the reform of the act on discretionary government grants and practices related to such grants, which is partly based on a previously ongoing project to develop and digitalize discretionary government grant activities. The measures are also part of the implementation of the [civil society organization strategy](#) adopted as a government resolution in June 2024. The strategy also outlines the development of discretionary government grant activities. (Press release [here](#)).

As reported last year, the civil society organization strategy aims to reduce excess regulation related to organizational and voluntary activities, explore opportunities to enhance fundraising activities for

civil society organizations, and improve the interaction between public authorities and the civil society. The implementation of the strategy will continue in 2025, when, for example, a visionary discussion will be held on the relationship between the administration and civil society.

During 2025, a government proposal will be prepared to extend the right to deduct tax on donations to civil society organizations. The measure is related to the objective of the CSO strategy to promote the conditions for their own fundraising. The strategy also aims to ensure that an increasing number of CSOs apply for EU funding.

In 2024, the **Ministry for Foreign Affairs** continued to actively promote the use of the national [guidelines on supporting human rights defenders updated in 2022](#) and monitor their implementation based on indicators included in the guidelines. Employees of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs have also attended trainings on supporting human rights defenders, organized by international non-governmental organizations.

The Guidelines are based on the European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders. The guidelines on supporting human rights defenders are intended especially for Foreign Service employees in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and in Finland's missions abroad. The guidelines describe the activities and status of human rights defenders around the world. They give a number of practical examples from projects supported by Finland and encourage active efforts to support human rights defenders by providing many examples.

In December 2022, the **Ministry of the Interior** launched a two-year project "*Fight against money laundering and terrorist financing and non-profit actors (NPO actors)*". The aim of the project was to map Finland's NPO sector, and the main objective of the project was to produce *The National Risk Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing in the Non-Profit Organisations 2024*. The project also increased the awareness of NPOs of risks, developed cooperation between authorities and supervision, and identified possible needs for legislative amendments.

The risk assessment describes the threats, vulnerabilities and risks of money laundering and terrorist financing in all the operations of non-profit organisations. The risk assessment also examines the risks of money laundering and terrorist financing in relation to selected phenomena. In addition to the assessment of risks, it is aimed at increasing awareness of the Finnish NPO sector among obliged entities specified in the Act on Preventing Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing, supervisory authorities as well as operators in the sector itself. The risk assessment also makes it easier for an individual NPO to identify the risk of money laundering (ML) and terrorist financing (TF). The risk assessment highlights, in particular, the importance of obliged entities taking a risk-based approach towards NPO customers. The risk assessment can be found [here](#).

Public authorities, supervisors in accordance with the Act on Preventing Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing, and NPOs of different sizes contributed to the preparation of the risk assessment. In addition to the coordinating ministry, the NPO project working group included experts from the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, FIU Finland at the National Bureau of Investigation, the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service, the National Police Board and the Gambling Administration of the National Police Board, the Finnish Patent and Registration Office, the Tax Administration and the Grey Economy Information Unit under the Tax Administration.

E. Initiatives to foster a rule of law culture

No developments

If there have been developments related to initiatives to foster a rule of law culture, please specify which, (e.g. debates in national parliaments on the rule of law, public information campaigns on rule of law issues, contributions from civil society, education initiatives, etc.): ...

Other – please specify

The Government discussed the recommendations, decisions and conclusions issued to Finland by the international human rights monitoring bodies on 3 October 2024. The discussion was held as part of the implementation of the Government's equality statement of August 2023 ([Government statement to Parliament on promoting equality, gender equality and non-discrimination in Finnish society](#)). Based on the discussion, the State Secretaries of the parties in Government decided on further measures related to the recommendations (press release [here](#)).

As mentioned in Section I, the Independence Subgroup has begun its work to examine and assess whether the current Constitution and other legislation directly affecting the independence of the judiciary safeguard the independence of the judiciary. In September 2024, the Subgroup held a hearing “An independent judiciary to safeguard the rule of law” in which participated i.a. members of the judiciary, the supreme overseers of legality, civil society organisations (CSO) and academics.

According to the Government Programme, the Government will strengthen the basic structures of the rule of law by preparing and implementing Finland's [fourth national Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights](#). The Action Plan thus focuses on the basic structures of the rule of law in Finland. In 2024, the preparation of the Action Plan has been ongoing, and it's expected to be published in 2025. In November 2024, the Ministry of Justice held a hearing, after which the participants, including CSOs, had an opportunity to present their views on the preparation of the Action Plan.

The Ministry of Justice published the [report](#) “Preliminary Study on Ageism and Age Discrimination Recognising Age Discrimination against Older People in Decision-Making in December 2024.” In the report, recommendations of the Ombudsman for Older People are presented, including a recommendation to further develop the existing age-related indicators on fundamental and human rights and on discrimination data.