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NHRI contribution for the 118th CERD session in August 2026

This document contains observations by the Finnish Human Rights Centre (HRC¹, NHRI) to the CERD-committee for the formal dialogue with the Government of Finland during the Committee's 118th session in August 2026.

Should you have any further questions or need for additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us at leena.leikas@parliament.fi

This document may be published on the Committee's website.

The Human Rights Centre will attend the informal meetings as well as the formal dialogue in August 2026, making also an oral statement. We will register in due course for the said meetings and statements.

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¹ The Human Rights Centre represents the Finnish National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) in international NHRI cooperation and other international and European cooperation in human rights. The NHRI comprises the Human Rights Centre, its pluralistic 39-member Human Rights Delegation, and the Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman. The institution complies with the UN Paris Principles and the Global Alliance of NHRIs (GANHRI) accredited it with A-status in 2014, 2019 and 2025.

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Introduction

1. The National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) welcomes the opportunity to contribute in writing as well as orally to the dialogue with the CERD Committee and the delegation of the Government of Finland during the examination of Finland's combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic reports under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD).
2. Reference is made, among others, to recent [observations](#) made by the NHRI to CERD committee for the List of Themes as well as submissions to other UN Committees in 2025:

[CAT - 8th periodic report – NHRI submission for follow up](#) (24 July 2025)

[CED - NHRI submission for the LOI in 2025](#) (12 June 2025)
3. The submission follows the structure of List of themes, when applicable.

Legal, institutional and public policy framework for combating racial discrimination

National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights

4. The [third NAP on Fundamental and Human Rights](#) (2024-2027) was adopted only in November 2025. Its main aim is to strengthen the structures of Rule of Law. This includes [55 projects](#), but it is all to be implemented within existing resources. Many of the projects were already planned prior to inclusion in the NAP and very few totally new, especially politically controversial yet necessary, themes/projects were included in the NAP.
5. The themes in NAP can be summarised in three categories, all equally important yet equally underfunded or overlooked.
6. The categories are
 - a. access to justice and its structures (independent courts, legal protection, legal aid, accessible proceedings and good governance),
 - b. Equal realisation of rights (groups and situations in vulnerable positions), and
 - c. information, knowledge and monitoring (training and knowledge of authorities, impact assessments, indicators and international recommendations).
7. According to the Government almost all these projects are proceeding as planned and only in a few cases some challenges exist. More specific details are not publicly available.
8. With recent repeated budgetary reductions on all levels and instances of administration, it is to be suspected that the implementation also suffers from lack of financing.

Recommendation

Enable timely implementation of the NAP projects and evaluate its effectiveness before embarking on preparation and speedy adoption of the inclusive, forward thinking and well financed fourth NAP on Fundamental and Human Rights.

Human Rights Structures - Independent institutions

9. In recent years, and especially in 2025-2026, concerns have been raised about the impact of budgetary reductions and increasing responsibilities on the ability of Independent national human rights institution, equality bodies and ombuds institutions to effectively carry out their statutory mandates. Furthermore, the caseload of all ombuds institutions examining individual complaints has continuously increased putting additional pressure on the resources.

10. At the same time, the analysing, monitoring and follow up of the implementation of recommendations issued by international and regional human rights monitoring bodies requires sufficient institutional capacity and resources.
11. Ensuring the independence and adequate resourcing of these institutions is essential for the effective promotion and protection of human rights and equality. Budgetary decisions should be made in a manner that does not undermine the capacity of institutions and organisations working to combat racism and racial discrimination, among other topics.
12. Additionally, some political actors have questioned the very necessity for such institutions to exist, especially in the current financial situation. This international trend combined with increasing inequalities and marginalisation of many in the society, this is a worrying development.

Recommendation:

Ensure that National Human Rights Institution, equality bodies, and ombudsman institutions remain independent and that budgetary decisions do not undermine the capacity of these institutions to carry out their statutory functions.

Civil society

13. Civil society organisations play an important role in preventing and combating racism, supporting victims of discrimination and violence against women and promoting the rights of racial and ethnic minorities. They also contribute to the preparation, implementation and monitoring of legislation and public policies and provide expertise that complements the work of public authorities.
14. In recent years, the operating conditions of civil society organisations have worsened. The Government has significantly reduced funding for NGOs in general, but specifically lately for those active in the social and health services or those concentrating on non-discrimination and equality.
15. A major source of funding for these organisations is STEA (Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations), a governmental body that until 2024 distributed proceeds from state gambling revenues to NGOs providing social and health-related services and advocacy. In 2021 planning started to change the funding model and as of 2024 the gambling revenues were paid to States general budget as such without further specification on their use and State started allocating funds to STEA instead from its budget. One reason for this was to increase and secure the predictability of funding, as gambling revenues were in decline.
16. In 2024 STEA funding allocated to NGOs amounted to a total of 384 million euros. It was allocated to c. 800 applicants for c. 1.800 activities. Close to 40 % of the recipients covered 80-100 % of their costs with said funding alone. The rest used STEA funding as one of the sources for funding their activities.

17. Since then, STEA funding has been reduced through a series of successive budget cuts. In 2026 the funding amounts to 190 million euros, having effectively been cut by 50% in two years. These cumulative cuts have significantly weakened the financial sustainability of many civil society organisations. Also budgeting and planning activities are increasingly difficult as budget cuts have emerged mid-year and with immediate effects.
18. In addition to reducing funds, the Government has introduced stricter funding criteria. Priority is increasingly given to organisations providing direct health promotion and service activities, while organisations engaged in advocacy, human rights, equality, non-discrimination, or influencing legislation and public policy face reduced access to public funding. Under the revised criteria, organisations whose primary purpose is to influence legislation or public policy are expected to be excluded from STEA funding entirely in the future.
19. Finland lacks strong traditions of private funding or tax incentives for donations. NGOs depend heavily on public funding. These cuts therefore silence the weak and weaken the civil society, including organisations that address racism and hate speech. In general, the changes limit public participation in policymaking.
20. These changes are also expected to disproportionately affect organisations representing migrants, asylum seekers and minorities, as funding is becoming less available for advocacy, counselling and identity-based support, while responsibility for financing some activities is being shifted from central government to the wellbeing services counties, who are notoriously short of funds already in their daily activities.
21. This also risks setting different standards for funding according to the geographical location of the NGOs and adds potentially unequal treatment discrimination.

Recommendation:

Ensure an enabling environment for civil society organisations working to combat racism and racial discrimination by safeguarding their operating conditions, including sustainable funding and meaningful opportunities to participate in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of legislation and public policies affecting racial and ethnic minorities.

Equality Data

22. The CERD Committee has repeatedly recommended that Finland improve the collection of equality data to better identify and address racial discrimination. While statistics are collected, comprehensive data about persons belonging to racial and ethnic minorities remains limited. This makes it difficult to identify structural discrimination, monitor trends and assess the effectiveness of legislation and public policies.
23. The collection of equality data has advanced in recent years through research projects and public discussion. However, there is still no comprehensive and

systematic approach based on voluntary self-identification, informed consent and appropriate data protection safeguards.

24. At the same time, funding cuts of nearly €6 million (around 10% of its 2023 budget) have been made to the budget of Finland's national statistical institute and it is currently reviewing the possible discontinuation or reduction of more than 40 sets of statistics. Many categories have already been diminished or discontinued earlier.
25. Sufficient resources are needed to ensure the regular collection, analysis and publication of equality data to support evidence-based policymaking and the implementation of Finland's human rights obligations.

Recommendations:

Develop and maintain a comprehensive system for collecting equality data and other relevant statistical information, based on voluntary self-identification, informed consent and data protection safeguards.

Ensure sufficient resources that are necessary for the systematic collection, analysis and publication of data necessary to identify structural racial discrimination and evaluate the effectiveness of public policies.

EU legislation – infringement procedure

26. In recent years, the European Union has strengthened its legal and policy framework to combat racism, xenophobia, hate speech, and racial discrimination. As a Member State, Finland is required to ensure that its national legislation fully complies with EU anti-racism and equality law and that these provisions are effectively implemented in practice, including through effective investigation, prosecution, and sanctions.
27. In 2021, the European Commission initiated an infringement procedure against Finland concerning the implementation of the Council Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law (2008/913/JHA). According to the Commission, Finnish criminal legislation does not fully meet the minimum requirements of the Framework Decision. In particular, the Commission considers that Finnish law does not adequately criminalise certain forms of hate speech, including incitement to hatred directed at an individual member of a protected group rather than only at the group as a whole. The Commission has also raised concerns regarding the effectiveness of the investigation and prosecution of offences involving racism and xenophobia.
28. The infringement procedure remains relevant to ongoing legislative reform in Finland. In 2024 an assessment of the amendments required to bring Finnish criminal legislation into compliance with EU law concluded that the scope of criminal liability should be expanded to cover incitement to hatred and violence directed at individual members of protected groups, that these offences should become subject to public prosecution, and that victims should have a

corresponding right to claim criminal damages. Similar legislative solutions have already been adopted in Sweden, another EU member state.

29. In 2025, the Ministry of Justice launched a separate legislative project to examine the amendments required to address the shortcomings identified by the European Commission. The issue has also become linked to the implementation of the new EU Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence, which contains provisions requiring Member States to criminalise certain forms of online incitement to hatred and violence. Although the Ministry of Justice has continued preparatory work, it remains unclear what concrete progress has been made since the expert assessment was completed in 2024. Timely legislative reform is necessary to ensure Finland's compliance with both the Framework Decision and the new EU Directive and to bring national law in line with evolving European standards on combating racism and hate speech.

Recommendations:

Ensure timely and effective implementation of European Union anti-racism and equality legislation, including adequate institutional resources for implementation and effective monitoring of implementation.

Address swiftly shortcomings identified through European Union monitoring and infringement procedure by finalising intended legislative changes.

Hate speech and hate crimes

Hate speech, racism and political parties

30. Although Finland has maintained a comprehensive legal framework prohibiting incitement to hatred and has adopted several policy measures to combat racism, the prevalence and visibility of racist speech continue to undermine the rights of persons belonging to racial and ethnic minorities.
31. Hate speech directed at minorities, including persons of African descent, Muslims, Roma, Jews and migrants, remains widespread and contributes to an increasingly hostile social climate. Also, the indigenous Sami population is affected. Hatred and hate speech encompass all but white middle-aged middle-income men. Also, anti-gender hatred is increasing, and it too is fuelled by politicians, among others.
32. The public debate surrounding racism has intensified in recent years following repeated incidents involving elected representatives and political office holders.
33. Public controversy concerning racist statements and historical racist writings by politicians has highlighted the importance of political leadership in promoting equality and combating racism. While some political parties and parts of the Government have publicly reaffirmed their commitment to equality and adopted measures such as the Government's Action Plan to Combat Racism and Promote Equality, these developments have also demonstrated

that existing political accountability mechanisms are not sufficient to effectively address racist conduct by elected representatives or to maintain public confidence in democratic institutions.

34. The Government action plan also lacked legislative measures to address racism, hate speech or hate crimes, and its overall approach showed limited commitment to tackling racism. While a 2023 evaluation commissioned by the Ministry of Justice found that the previous 2021–2023 anti-racism action plan met EU criteria, it also recommended allocating greater resources, developing targeted measures to combat Afrophobia, Islamophobia and antisemitism, and amending the Criminal Code to comply with EU standards. These recommendations remain largely unimplemented.

Recommendation:

Encourage political parties to take more effectively and openly action against hate speech and racism among their members in their behaviour, on-line writing and appearances in media.

Ensure that racist conduct and hate speech by elected representatives are effectively addressed through legislation, parliamentary rules of procedure and political party accountability mechanisms.

Strengthen measures to prevent and combat racist hate speech, including online, through effective legislation, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences motivated by racial hatred, while fully respecting freedom of expression.

Promote public awareness and education initiatives that foster a culture of equality, inclusion and respect for diversity, and address the root causes of racism and prejudice.

Violence against women

35. Violence against women and girls continues to be a serious topic in Finland. Victims and especially victims from minorities, including indigenous Sami and Roma as well as women with substance abuse issues, for example have difficulties in accessing culturally appropriate and women specific services. Geographically remote areas are short of services.

36. Services in matters of domestic violence and violence against women are insufficient and with increasing budgetary cuts, shifting priorities and emerging anti-gender and hatred towards women situation is less than ideal. Lack of adequate data collection and statistic, in addition to lack of funding, can lead to insufficient support, services and protection.

Recommendations:

Ensure the means for full and timely implementation of the Istanbul Convention, including the work of the NAPE committee, to protect women and girls from violence and abuse and provide necessary assistance, support and guidance.

Provide protection for women, girls and LGBTI persons, minorities, older women and women with disabilities and other persons who are at a higher risk of being violated and discriminated due to intersectional qualities.

Take action to a continuous mental and physical change in society to strongly disapprove violence against women and girls and to enable life free from violence to everyone.

Situation of the Sámi

37. Self-determination is essential for the implementation of the rights of indigenous (Sámi) people. The reformed Act on Sami Parliament emphasises this, especially with regard the elections but also in other aspect. The functioning of the renewed Act with regard the elections remains to be seen.
38. One important aspect of the Self-determination is the respect for free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) in matters that concern the Sami, their lands and traditional use of land and water, among others. In the reformed Act on Sami Parliament the principle has been addressed as duty to cooperate and negotiate but as there is no requirement for the consent of the Sámi, there is a real risk of treating the improved requirement as a process of consultation only.
39. In the light of increased activities in the Sámi homeland, green energy projects, increased tourism and military presence, the various negotiations with and submissions to various authorities and international human rights monitoring and other mechanisms require resources from the Sámi Parliament. The often-lacking willingness to implement the indigenous rights without recommendations or decisions from international actors is tasking for the Sami Parliament and increased knowledge and respect for Sámi rights is needed.
40. Climate change is a visible threat to the livelihood and traditional way of life for the Sàmi. With increasingly unreliable weather conditions, quick and drastically changing temperatures and snow cover, continuous ban on fishing due to declining fish populations and spreading of new flora and fauna to arctic areas, including decease and pest, the traditional activities, livelihoods and life are in transition. This brings additional difficulties and costs to the community in loss of traditions but also monetary losses in assisted reindeer feeding and loss of reindeer to predators and illnesses.
41. Truth and Reconciliation Commission Concerning the Sámi People concluded its work in December 2025. There is a need for a speedy implementation of the commission's recommendations. The Psycho-Social unit Uvja, active during process, is in risk of losing its funding.
42. Language and education of and in Sami languages needs to be strengthened in order to enable the continuous existence of living Sami languages.

Recommendations:

Ensure that Article 9 of the renewed Sami Parliament Act is respected by early and meaningful participation especially with regard increased military use of land in the Sámi Homeland, use of lands for extracting minerals and

building infrastructure, including for wind power production for green transition.

Ensure sufficient resources for Sámi Parliament to enable smoothly functioning cooperation with authorities and improved implementation of the rights of the Sámi.

Protect the Sámi communities from harmful effects of the climate change and enable just transition to green energy production, respecting Free Prior and informed consent principle.

Ensure the timely implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission from 2025, in the full cooperation of the Sami Parliament and provide permanent funding for the related psychosocial support unit Uvja.

Increase funding and support for the education of and in Sami languages.

Situation of Roma and other ethnic minorities

43. Finland has adopted the third National Roma Policy (ROMPO) for 2023–2030, which aims to promote the equality, inclusion and participation of Roma in different areas of society. The Policy recognises the need to address discrimination and improve the socio-economic situation of Roma through coordinated measures across different sectors.

44. Despite these efforts, Roma, who number around 10,000 in Finland, continue to face widespread discrimination across all areas of life, including housing, employment, education and access to and use of their language. They are also disproportionately affected by hate speech, ethnic profiling and socioeconomic disadvantage, while Roma women face additional discrimination based on their traditional dress, also in employment and education.

45. Moreover, different manifestations and forms of racism are not always adequately identified; the various minority groups in Finland, including Roma, use varied narratives to describe the diverse forms of racism they experience.

46. The effective implementation of the National Roma Policy requires adequate financial and human resources, continuous monitoring and close cooperation with Roma communities and organisations.

Recommendations:

Develop and implement, in close cooperation with Roma communities and organisations, targeted measures to eliminate structural discrimination against Roma in education, employment, housing and access to public services.

Ensure the effective implementation of the Finnish National Roma Policy (ROMPO) by providing adequate financial and human resources for relevant authorities.

Situation of non-citizens, including migrants, asylum seekers and refugees

Health Care Services for Paperless Persons

47. Access to health care for undocumented persons in Finland remains limited and has become more restrictive following legislative amendments that entered into force in 2026. While all undocumented persons are entitled to emergency health care, access to non-emergency care depends on their legal status. Adults who are lawfully present in Finland but lack a municipality of residence are entitled to medically necessary non-emergency health care.
48. However, undocumented persons who are staying in Finland unlawfully are now subject to a narrower entitlement. They are only entitled to medically necessary non-emergency treatment where refusing care would be manifestly unreasonable considering their health condition or would seriously endanger public health or the well-being of a dependent child.
49. These restrictions create a differentiated system of access to health care based on migration status rather than medical need. The distinction may delay access to treatment, increase the risk that preventable conditions deteriorate into emergencies, and create uncertainty for both patients and health care professionals when assessing eligibility for care. Such restrictions also risk discouraging undocumented persons from seeking timely medical treatment, with negative consequences for both individual and public health.
50. Although undocumented children continue to have the right to health care on the same basis as children with a municipality of residence, in accordance with Finnish legislation, continued attention should be paid to ensuring that this right is effectively realised in practice throughout the country. In addition, undocumented persons remain primarily liable for the costs of their treatment, which may constitute a significant practical barrier to accessing health care even where services are legally available.
51. Restricting access to medically necessary health care raises concerns regarding Finland's obligations under international human rights law. Finland should ensure that all undocumented persons have access to necessary health care based on medical need rather than migration status and that financial or administrative barriers do not prevent individuals from obtaining timely treatment.

Recommendations:

Amend the legislation so that all undocumented migrants have access to both necessary and emergency health care services.

Ensure that undocumented minors are provided all health care services defined by the Health Care Act.

Truth and Reconciliation Process for Deaf and Sign Language Communities

52. The Finnish NHRI welcomes the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Process concerning Deaf persons and Sign Language users. The process acknowledges historical injustices experienced by Deaf and sign language communities and provides an important opportunity to strengthen their rights and promote reconciliation between the communities and the State. The process is intended not only to examine past violations but also to identify current structural challenges and propose measures to prevent similar injustices in the future.
53. The Truth and Reconciliation Process is led by an independent secretariat established within the Ministry of Justice, which commenced its work in autumn 2025. The secretariat is responsible for documenting experiences, organising hearings and meetings with Deaf persons and Sign Language users, and preparing a final report containing findings, conclusions and recommendations by the end of 2027.
54. The process is supported by a steering group comprising representatives of Deaf and Sign Language communities and relevant ministries. It includes culturally and linguistically appropriate psychosocial support for participants and is conducted in Finnish Sign Language, Finland-Swedish Sign Language, Finnish and Swedish. The Government has allocated a dedicated budget of EUR 1.8 million for the implementation of the process.
55. The success of the process depends on continued adequate resources, meaningful participation of Deaf persons and Sign Language users throughout the process, and effective implementation of its recommendations.

Recommendation:

Ensure the timely completion of the Truth and Reconciliation Process concerning Deaf persons and Sign Language users by securing adequate resources, allowing meaningful participation of affected communities and effective implementation of final recommendations, including potential restitution.

Access to justice

56. In Finland, complaints concerning discrimination may be brought before several authorities. Complaints can be examined in domestic courts but also, depending on the basis for discrimination, by the quasi-judicial Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal, the Equality Ombudsman and also the occupational safety and health authorities. One can also turn to the Parliamentary Ombudsman or the Chancellor of Justice in some cases.
57. While the system provides several avenues for redress, it is also difficult to navigate, particularly for persons with limited knowledge of the legal system or the national languages.

58. The Finnish NHRI remains concerned that racial discrimination is significantly underreported. Legal, linguistic, digital and practical barriers continue to limit access to justice for many persons belonging to racial and ethnic minorities. Increasing awareness of available remedies, strengthening legal aid and ensuring that legal remedies, including complaint mechanisms are easily accessible to all, including children and young people, older persons and persons with disabilities, would improve the effective protection of rights.

Recommendation:

Ensure access to effective judicial and quasi-judicial proceedings for victims of racial discrimination by removing legal, financial, physical, linguistic and digital barriers to complaints

Provide judicial and quasi-judicial bodies examining increasing amounts of complaints sufficient funding to fulfil their statutory tasks.

Increase public awareness and outreach to affected communities on available remedies and complaint mechanisms, particularly among children and young people, older persons and persons with disabilities belonging to racial, ethnic and linguistic minorities.

Human Rights Education and research

59. The Finnish NHRI welcomes the inclusion of human rights and equality in the national core curricula. However, the implementation of human rights education remains uneven across different levels of education and teacher training. More systematic teaching of human rights, including equality, non-discrimination and anti-racism, as well as adequate resources and support for education providers, are needed to ensure that all learners acquire sufficient knowledge of human rights.

60. At the same time, the Finnish NHRI is worried about cuts made to public funding to science and research, as well as potential political involvement in the processes.

61. Concerns have recently been raised following the Minister of Social Affairs and Health's decision to overrule an independent expert panel and reject funding for several social work research projects he personally deemed unimportant. Such developments risk undermining the independence of research and peer review within scientific community and may have a disproportionate impact on research addressing racism, discrimination and the rights of racialised groups.

62. Researchers and especially female researchers and those working on racism, migration, discrimination, hate speech, anti-gender, violence against women, women studies, minorities etc. have also increasingly been subjected to public disparagement, hate speech and intimidation, including on social media, creating a chilling effect on research, in particular in the abovementioned fields.

Recommendations:

Ensure that more resources and time are allocated to human rights education at all levels of the education system, including teacher training

and professional basic and continuous education.

Support, also financially, independent research, especially on racism, racial discrimination, hate speech, hate crime, anti-gender and violence against women.

Intersectionality

63. The preparation and evaluation of legislation and public policies in Finland do not systematically consider the combined effects of discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin together with other prohibited grounds, such as disability, age or language.
64. Human rights and equality impact assessments often examine individual grounds of discrimination separately, making it more difficult to identify the specific challenges faced by persons experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. This leaves personal experiences of many undetected.

Recommendations:

Systematically integrate an intersectional approach into the preparation, implementation and evaluation of legislation, policies and other measures relating to racial discrimination.

Ensure that human rights and equality impact assessments identify and address the specific impacts on persons experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including persons with disabilities, older persons, children and young people belonging to racial, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and involve affected communities in decision-making processes.

Labour Market Discrimination

65. Despite measures to promote equality in working life, racial discrimination continues to affect access to employment and career advancement in Finland.
66. Studies consistently show that job applicants with foreign names or backgrounds receive fewer invitations to job interviews than equally qualified applicants with Finnish background. Although some improvement has been observed in recent years, significant disparities remain, particularly for applicants of African and Middle Eastern background.
67. People with foreign background also continue to experience discrimination in working life more broadly. According to a recent national survey, discrimination based on origin, ethnicity or skin colour remains common among persons who have moved to Finland. Structural barriers in recruitment, employment and career progression continue to limit equal opportunities and contribute to lower employment rates among many racial and ethnic minority groups. Despite persons' ability to use Finnish (or Swedish) language in work environment, the background, name or even "foreign" looks often prevent employment. This results in many being forced into entrepreneurship.

Recommendations:

Adopt targeted measures to eliminate racial discrimination in recruitment,

employment and career advancement, including discrimination based on actual or perceived racial, ethnic or national origin.

Monitor regularly labour-market outcomes for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities and take stronger measures against cases with apparent discrimination.

Views and recommendation of international monitoring mechanisms

68. Finland regularly engages actively with all international and regional human rights monitoring mechanisms. However, the implementation and follow-up of views and recommendations issued by international and regional monitoring bodies remain fragmented.
69. Responsibility to implement the findings is shared between multitude of ministries and authorities, and there is no timely, effective and comprehensive mechanism to coordinate implementation, monitor progress and systematically report on the measures taken. Reporting process relies too heavily on human rights minded individual civil servants while structural implementation remains sporadic and connected to political priorities. Too many authorities disregard treaty body observations or remain ignorant of them.
70. A more structured approach, with clear responsibilities, measurable objectives and regular public reporting, would strengthen the implementation of Finland's international human rights obligations.

Recommendation:

Ensure systematic review, also in Parliament, and effective implementation of recommendations issued by international and regional human rights monitoring bodies with clear responsibilities, measurable indicators and regular public reporting.

Compilation of suggested recommendations

National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights

- Enable timely implementation of the NAP projects and evaluate its effectiveness before embarking on preparation and speedy adoption of the inclusive, forward thinking and well financed fourth NAP on Fundamental and Human Rights.

Human Rights Structures - Independent institutions

- Ensure that National Human Rights Institution, equality bodies, and ombudsman institutions remain independent and that budgetary decisions do not undermine the capacity of these institutions to carry out their statutory functions.

Civil society

- Ensure an enabling environment for civil society organisations working to combat racism and racial discrimination by safeguarding their operating conditions, including sustainable funding and meaningful opportunities to participate in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of legislation and public policies affecting racial and ethnic minorities.

Equality data

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive system for collecting equality data and other relevant statistical information, based on voluntary self-identification, informed consent and data protection safeguards.
- Ensure sufficient resources that are necessary for the systematic collection, analysis and publication of data necessary to identify structural racial discrimination and evaluate the effectiveness of public policies.

EU legislation – infringement procedure

- Ensure timely and effective implementation of European Union anti-racism and equality legislation, including adequate institutional resources for implementation and effective monitoring of implementation.
- Address swiftly shortcomings identified through European Union monitoring and infringement procedure by finalising intended legislative changes.

Hate speech, racism and political parties

- Encourage political parties to take more effectively and openly action against hate speech and racism among their members in their behaviour, on-line writing and appearances in media.
- Ensure that racist conduct and hate speech by elected representatives are effectively addressed through legislation, parliamentary rules of procedure and political party accountability mechanisms.
- Strengthen measures to prevent and combat racist hate speech, including online, through effective legislation, investigation and prosecution of criminal offences motivated by racial hatred, while fully respecting freedom of expression.
- Promote public awareness and education initiatives that foster a culture of equality, inclusion and respect for diversity, and address the root causes of racism and prejudice.

Violence against women

- Ensure the means for full and timely implementation of the Istanbul Convention, including the work of the NAPE committee, to protect women and girls from violence and abuse and provide necessary assistance, support and guidance.
- Provide protection for women, girls and LGBTI persons, minorities, older women and women with disabilities and other persons who are at a higher risk of being violated and discriminated due to intersectional qualities.
- Take action to a continuous mental and physical change in society to strongly disapprove violence against women and girls and to enable life free from violence to everyone.

Situation of the Sámi

- Ensure that Article 9 of the renewed Sami Parliament Act is respected by early and meaningful participation especially with regard increased military use of land in the Sámi Homeland, use of lands for extracting minerals and building infrastructure, including for wind power production for green transition.
- Ensure sufficient resources for Sámi Parliament to enable smoothly functioning cooperation with authorities and improved implementation of the rights of the Sámi.
- Protect the Sámi communities from harmful effects of the climate change and enable just transition to green energy production, respecting Free Prior and informed consent principle.

- Ensure the timely implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission from 2025, in the full cooperation of the Sami Parliament and provide permanent funding for the related psychosocial support unit Uvja.
- Increase funding and support for the education of and in Sami languages.

Situation of Roma and other ethnic minorities

- Develop and implement, in close cooperation with Roma communities and organisations, targeted measures to eliminate structural discrimination against Roma in education, employment, housing and access to public services.
- Ensure the effective implementation of the Finnish National Roma Policy (ROMPO) by providing adequate financial and human resources for relevant authorities.

Health Care Services for Paperless Persons

- Amend the legislation so that all undocumented migrants have access to both necessary and emergency health care services.
- Ensure that undocumented minors are provided all health care services defined by the Health Care Act.

Truth and Reconciliation Process for Deaf and Sign Language Communities

- Ensure the timely completion of the Truth and Reconciliation Process concerning Deaf persons and Sign Language users by securing adequate resources, allowing meaningful participation of affected communities and effective implementation of final recommendations, including potential restitution.

Access to Justice

- Ensure access to effective judicial and quasi-judicial proceedings for victims of racial discrimination by removing legal, financial, physical, linguistic and digital barriers to complaints
- Provide judicial and quasi-judicial bodies examining increasing amounts of complaints sufficient funding to fulfil their statutory tasks.
- Increase public awareness and outreach to affected communities on available remedies and complaint mechanisms, particularly among children and young people, older persons and persons with disabilities belonging to racial, ethnic and linguistic minorities.

Human Rights Education and research

- Ensure that more resources and time are allocated to human rights education at all levels of the education system, including teacher training and professional basic and continuous education.
- Support, also financially, independent research, especially on racism, racial discrimination, hate speech, hate crime, anti-gender and violence against women.

Intersectionality

- Systematically integrate an intersectional approach into the preparation, implementation and evaluation of legislation, policies and other measures relating to racial discrimination.
- Ensure that human rights and equality impact assessments identify and address the specific impacts on persons experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including persons with disabilities, older persons, children and young people belonging to racial, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and involve affected communities in decision-making processes.

Labour Market Discrimination

- Adopt targeted measures to eliminate racial discrimination in recruitment, employment and career advancement, including discrimination based on actual or perceived racial, ethnic or national origin.
- Monitor regularly labour-market outcomes for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities and take stronger measures against cases with apparent discrimination.

Views and recommendation of international monitoring mechanisms

- Ensure systematic review, also in Parliament, and effective implementation of recommendations issued by international and regional human rights monitoring bodies with clear responsibilities, measurable indicators and regular public reporting.
