



OHCHR  
Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
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## **Closing Statement for the Public Dialogue on Finland's Initial Report to the CRPD**

This document contains observations by the Finnish Human Rights Centre (HRC<sup>1</sup>, NHRI) to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities / 33rd session (11 to 29 August 2025).

Should you have any further questions or need for additional information, do not hesitate to contact us at [info@ihmisoikeuskeskus.fi](mailto:info@ihmisoikeuskeskus.fi).

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

Madame Chair, distinguished members of the committee, colleagues and friends,

We wish to reiterate some of the concerns we voiced earlier, and comment on some the responses made by the representatives of the government.

There are clear setbacks in the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities in Finland. These include restrictions in social protection and services that would enable persons with disabilities to live independently in their communities and to enjoy the same rights as everybody else. Moreover, the possibilities of persons with disabilities and their organisations to participate in decision-making and to advocate for their rights have diminished.

Contrary to the position held by the government, we are convinced that one of the main reasons for the latest revision of the scope of application of the Disability Services Act was the foreseeable costs incurred by the service needs of oldest age groups. There will be negative consequences for older persons with disabilities who will not be granted disability services. Home-based services and housing services based on Social services Act do not meet their needs. Furthermore, in recent years, access to essential services such as informal care support, home care, and 24-hour assisted living has drastically declined even as the older population has grown. As services have narrowed to basic and medical care, other needs – including social participation, cognitive support, household tasks, errands, and outdoor activities – are often left unmet.

We want to rectify some information presented here yesterday. It was stated that the additional positions granted by the Parliament in 2019 to the Finnish National Human Rights Institution were assigned to work on international human rights conventions and this would also benefit the Independent Monitoring Mechanism of the CRPD. In reality, they were specifically assigned to work on the rights of older persons due to national crisis in care services of older persons. They were not meant to be for the IMM.

As stated here yesterday, in autumn 2024, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health appointed a follow-up group on strengthening the self-determination of clients and patients. This was made in accordance with the government programme. However, we wish to stress that shortly after the appointment the government decided that no resources would be allocated to the group. Therefore, the group cannot draft and advance a legislative proposal.

The Human Rights Centre considers the government's responses to the rapid and severe weakening of the operating conditions of civil society organisations as insufficient. A government representative stated that the cuts to NGO funding were necessary to balance the economy and to ensure that organisations could operate autonomously with private funding. We want to underline that the speed and unpredictability of the cuts effectively prevent controlled reorganisation of civil society organisations.

Austerity measures combined with lack of promotional policies deteriorate the status of rights of persons with disabilities. We feel that the government representatives have not convinced us that things are getting any better but have settled in repeating the political arguments that has been used to justify shortcomings in, for example, social services, situation of organisations of persons with disabilities and social security and employment.

Thank you. We are looking forward to the Committees recommendations.