

IHMISOIKEUSKESKUS  
MÄNNISKORÄTTSCENTRET  
HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE



# HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE

## Annual Report 2022

**HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE**  
ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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# 1 Human Rights Centre and the National Human Rights Institution of Finland

The Finnish National Human Rights Institution consists of the Human Rights Centre (HRC), the Human Rights Delegation and the Parliamentary Ombudsman.<sup>1</sup>

The HRC monitors and promotes the implementation of fundamental and human rights and promotes cooperation between actors in the field of fundamental and human rights, especially in the activities of the Human Rights Delegation. Its statutory tasks include international and European cooperation on human rights. The HRC's competence also covers private parties, such as companies and thereby corporate human rights responsibility.

The Human Rights Delegation promotes the flow of information and cooperation between different actors, discusses fundamental and human rights matters of far-reaching importance and significant principles, and approves the HRC's action plan and report annually.<sup>2</sup>

The Parliamentary Ombudsman supervises the legality of the activities of authorities and the implementation of fundamental and human rights, investigating complaints, carrying out inspections and making their own initiatives.<sup>3</sup>

The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI<sup>4</sup>) granted the Finnish NHRI 'A' status in 2019 by application. The A status, which is valid for five years at a time, was granted for the first time in 2014.

The status entitles the Finnish NHRI to participate and take the floor during UN Human Rights Council sessions. As a rule, the HRC represents the Finnish National Human Rights Institution in networks of human rights institutions and other international and European cooperation on human rights. The Ombudsman participates in European and international cooperation between ombudsmen.

In December 2021, at the general assembly of ENNHRI (European Network of National Human Rights Institutions), the Human Rights Centre was elected as a member of ENNHRI's Board of Directors and a representative of the European Network of GANHRI's Board of Directors. Sirpa Rautio, Director of the Human Rights Centre, was also elected Chairman of ENNHRI for a three-year term starting on 31 March 2022.

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1 <https://www.humanrightscentre.fi/about-us/national-human-rights-institutio/>

2 <https://www.humanrightscentre.fi/about-us/human-rights-centre/>

3 <https://www.oikeusasiamies.fi/fin>

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4 <https://ganhri.org/>

### The Human Rights Centre's tasks are:

- to promote information, education, training and research associated with fundamental and human rights
- to monitor the implementation of fundamental and human rights and prepare reports on them
- to present initiatives and issue statements in order to promote and implement fundamental and human rights
- to participate in European and international cooperation associated with promoting and safeguarding fundamental and human rights
- to perform other comparable tasks associated with the promotion and implementation of fundamental and human rights.
- to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

### The National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) meet the requirements of the Paris Principles<sup>5</sup> adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993:

- They are statutory bodies.
- They are autonomous and independent.
- They are pluralist in composition.
- They must promote and safeguard human rights.
- They must be guaranteed adequate powers of investigation, resources and a mandate to carry out their functions.

### Administration and finance

The HRC is administratively part of the Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman and receives some of its administrative services and infrastructure from the Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman and Parliament.

The HRC's budget proposal for 2022 stated a budget of 997,000 euros for operational costs, of which 775,930 euros was for personnel costs and 193,000 euros for consumption expenses. Service purchases accounted for 185,070 euros of the consumption expenses.

In 2022, the HRC had seven permanent posts (the director, five expert officials and an administrative assistant) and two fixed-term employment relationships for junior experts under the Junior Expert Programme. Due to the presidency of ENNHRI, an international affairs advisor was also hired for a fixed-term employment relationship as well as fixed-term experts and junior experts for various development projects and as substitutes. Appendix 1 contains a list of personnel.

The Human Rights Delegation adopted the Human Rights Centre's Action Plan<sup>6</sup> for 2022 in December 2021 and Annual Report 2022 in March 2023. The HRC has achieved the objectives set in the Action Plan rather well. The Human Rights Delegation is tasked with the final assessment on the implementation of the Action Plan on the basis of the Annual Report.

5 <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/StatusOfNationalInstitutions.aspx>

6 <https://www.ihmisoikeuskeskus.fi/julkaisut2/toimintakertomukset-ja-toimintas/>

## 2 General monitoring of fundamental and human rights

### Knowledge base on the state of fundamental and human rights in Finland

Monitoring fundamental and human rights means collecting information on the implementation of fundamental and human rights, analysing the data and maintaining up-to-date knowledge of the situation.<sup>7</sup> Based on the collected data, it is possible to assess how best to promote the fulfilment of rights. Monitoring data helps estimate how the rights of different persons and groups are respected formally and in practice. Monitoring is based on the utilisation of existing, reliable information and on the Centre's own investigations which are carried out according to opportunities and needs.

During the year, the HRC continued to systematically develop monitoring. In 2021, the HRC had introduced a monitoring tool (Lempi) which created technical preconditions for continuous and more systematic monitoring and reporting of fundamental and human rights. In 2022, the use of Lempi was established as part of monitoring the human rights situation.

The aim of monitoring is to ensure that the HRC has a comprehensive understanding of Finland's fundamental and human rights situation and to create a report that could be submitted to Parliament every four years, for example.

### Monitoring the implementation of international human rights treaties

Finland is committed to eight human rights treaties under the UN and eight under the Council of Europe. The mechanisms for monitoring compliance with human rights treaties are usually defined in the treaties themselves. A specific monitoring body has been established for most treaties. The main monitoring body is the European Court of Human Rights, whose decisions are legally binding and mandatory.

The tasks of the monitoring bodies include the processing of the periodic reports on the national implementation of the treaties submitted regularly by states, issuing expert statements on the interpretation of the treaties, and, with regard to certain treaties, processing complaints made by individuals or groups. Monitoring is also carried out as peer review by Member States in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council.

The HRC is actively involved in the periodic reporting through statements and participation in processing the reports. The HRC also promotes the participation of NGOs in different ways. Wider participation brings key problem areas to the committees' attention more effectively, and their recommendations focus more on these problem areas.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ihmisoiikeuskeskus.fi/seuranta/>

The aim of the HRC is to bring its own justified stances and recommendations to the attention of the committees so that they can ask relevant questions from the government and thus issue targeted and enforceable recommendations. This was successful in the latest reporting rounds of the committee monitoring civil and political rights and the committee monitoring economic, social and cultural rights.

### **Council of Europe human rights treaties and monitoring bodies**

#### **European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)**

The Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, known as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), is a human rights treaty that mainly protects classic freedoms. All Member States of the Council of Europe must ratify the treaty. The treaty also includes optional protocols, the ratification of which is not mandatory. The Convention was opened for signature in 1950, and Finland ratified it in 1990.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) monitors compliance with the Convention through the individual complaints procedure, the state complaints procedure and the reporting procedure. The ECtHR may issue financial compensation on the infringed appellant. The judgment may require general measures, such as legislative amendments, and individual measures, such as dissolution or referral. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe monitors the implementation of the ECtHR's judgments.

At the end of 2022, 11 human rights complaints against Finland were pending at the ECtHR. Of the judgments issued, 18 remain

partially unimplemented and nine of them are leading cases. The average implementation period for leading cases in Finland was 11 years and 11 months at the end of 2022.

Due to a delay in implementation, the ECtHR's 2012 ruling in case X v. Finland (34806/04) was postponed in December 2021 to an enhanced review by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The case involves among other things the forced medication of a patient in a psychiatric hospital and the lack of effective legal remedies. The case will again be before the Committee of Ministers in March 2023. There are also two new appeals pending at the ECtHR concerning forced administration of medication and lack of legal remedies, for which a response has been requested from the government.

Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe allows the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) and non-governmental organisations to submit opinions to the Committee of Ministers monitoring of the implementation of the ECtHR judgments. The HRC used this opportunity in 2021 and January 2023.

#### **Implementation of the (Reformed) European Social Charter**

The Government issued its 18th periodic report on the implementation of the reformed European Social Charter. This was a report on the implementation of decisions concerning complaints by organisations against Finland, which is still ongoing in several cases. Some solutions are already being examined for the fifth time. No progress has been found in implementing any of the decisions.

### Implementation of the urgent recommendations of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

In August 2019, in its fifth country report on Finland, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) issued 20 recommendations for the prevention of racism and intolerance. The Government was requested to report on two recommendations in 2021 as they were classified as urgent. The urgent recommendations concerned the mandates of the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal to deal with discrimination in employment, the Tribunal's resources and the reform of the Trans Act by removing the requirement of infertility as a precondition for legal confirmation of gender. In its conclusions of March 2022, the ECRI concluded that the authorities have not implemented either of these recommendations.

The Human Rights Centre finds it extremely concerning that, although ECRI issued similar recommendations on the situation of the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal in 2013, 2016, 2019 and now, in 2022, the problem has still not been resolved.

### Lanzarote Convention

The theme of the second supervision round of the Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) was the use of information and communication technology for the protection of children from sexual exploitation and abuse. Finland responded to the survey of the second supervision round in November 2017, and since then, the response has been supplemented four times. The implementation report of the Lanzarote Committee was published on 10 March 2022.

The first national implementation plan for 2022-2025 was published on 26 April 2022. The 33 measures in the implementation plan are divided into three categories: prevention of violence, protection of children from violence and promotion of national and international cooperation against sexual exploitation and sexual violence.

### UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

A Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is conducted for each member state of the UN in intervals of four and a half years. During the review, UN members can present recommendations to the member under review on the promotion and safeguarding of human rights and present questions about the human rights situation in the country in question. It is an intergovernmental 'peer review' mechanism working in connection with the UN Human Rights Council and as such incomparable with the monitoring carried out by the UN treaty bodies.

The fourth round of the UPR was launched in autumn 2022, and Finland was among the first countries. Before the review, the Government, the Human Rights Centre and non-governmental organisations submitted their reports on the human rights situation in Finland to the UN.

A total of 229 recommendations from 89 countries were issued to Finland at the 41st session of the UPR Working Group on 9 November 2022. During the previous round in 2017, Finland received a total of 153 recommendations from 70 countries. Again, the highest number of recommendations was issued on violence against women, racism, hate speech and discrimination in general. Recommendations were also issued on the implementation of the rights of the Sámi, conscientious objectors and older people. Finland will state its stance on the recommendations no later than the first session of the UN Human Rights Council in 2023.



## UN human rights treaties and treaty bodies

The UN human rights treaties define the basic level at which human rights should at least be implemented. The Government's Periodic reports on the implementation of the treaties and the recommendations issued by treaty bodies are a central way of monitoring the development of human rights in a Member State.

### Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

In January 2023, Parliament adopted the UN International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Enforced disappearance means that a state or its representatives arrest, imprison or abduct a person by depriving them of their liberty.

Finland made a reservation to the provision on repealing adoption, as permanent adoption is considered to be in the best interest of the child, and Finland's focus is on the advance supervision of adoption. As the reservation would maintain the current state, it would not have any concrete effects on the rights of the child.

In its statement on the draft government proposal, the HRC considered that the adoption of the convention strengthens the rule of law, individual rights and international monitoring of human rights through special national legislation, international supervision and the possibility of individual and state complaints, for example.

The convention is topical, for example, due to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. As a result of the changed global security situation and disregard for international law and human rights, disappearances of human rights defenders, media representatives, politicians and ordinary citizens may also increase.

In addition to amendments to the Criminal Code, the convention requires training for the authorities. In its statement, the HRC emphasised increasing the resources needed for

human rights training. The HRC also drew attention to improving the national implementation of the solutions and decisions issued by the treaty monitoring committees.

### Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

In October 2022, the CEDAW Committee overseeing the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) issued recommendations to Finland based on the review of Finland's eighth periodic report. The HRC participated in periodic reporting by issuing two opinions to the Committee and by participating in the Committee's consultation in October 2022.

Finland must report on the implementation of the five recommendations within two years already. These recommendations concern hate speech based on gender, repealing section 2 of the Act on Sterilisation, ending mediation in cases of domestic violence, and increasing the representation of women on party candidate lists and in decision-making tasks of the Defence Forces. In other respects, the next report must be submitted at the time indicated by the Committee, possibly in 2026-2027.

### Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

In October 2022, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which supervises the Convention on the Rights of the Child, submitted to the Finnish Government a list of issues concerning the implementation of the CRC and its additional protocols in Finland. The issues are based on the periodic reports previously submitted by the Government and information provided by organisations and the National Human Rights Institution.

The HRC participated in the reporting process by submitting a draft statement to the Committee in June 2022 and an additional statement in September 2022. The HRC also

participated in the Pre-Sessional Working Group of the Committee in September with several NGOs.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child also issued a decision on 12 September 2022 concerning Finnish children in the al-Hol camp in North-East Syria. The Committee considered that Finland has violated Article 6(1) (right to life) and Article 37(a) (prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment) of the CRC. The complaint had been lodged by relatives of certain children in the camp.

The Committee noted that Finland can protect children by taking measures to return them from the camp or by providing consular services. Finland has already successfully brought children home from the area. According to the Committee, Finland has been aware of the long-term detention of children in life-threatening conditions. Finland has thus had a positive obligation to protect children against violations of their rights. In particular, the lack of health, food, water, sanitation and education meets the criteria for the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (CRC, Article 37(a)). Finland has neglected the obligation to protect children from immediate and foreseeable risks, which violates their right to life (CRC, Article 6(1)).

According to the Committee, Finland must grant appropriate compensation to complainants and child victims for the violations they have suffered and prevent similar violations from occurring in the future. 1) Finland must take urgent measures to return the children, 2) support the integration or resettlement of every child returned or resettled in Finland, and 3) in the meantime, take further measures to mitigate the risks to their lives, survival and development while they are in North-East Syria.

### Decision by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on a matter concerning the electoral roll of the Sámi Parliament

On 13 June 2022, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) adopted an opinion on a matter concerning eligibility to the electoral roll of the Sámi Parliament. This is the first CERD decision concerning Finland.

The appeal was related to the decisions of the Supreme Administrative Court concerning entries in the electoral roll of the Sámi Parliament. The Committee found that Finland violated Article 5(c) of the Convention (political rights, particularly the rights to take part in elections, vote and stand as a candidate). The Committee considers that the Supreme Administrative Court's rulings may have artificially modified the electoral constituency of the Sámi Parliament, affecting its capacity to truly represent the Sámi people and their interests. Consequently, the Supreme Administrative Court's rulings, which departed without any apparent justification from the existing proper interpretation of the applicable law, have violated the petitioners' right, as members of the Sámi indigenous people, to collectively determine the composition of the Sámi Parliament and take part in the conduct of public affairs.

The Committee recommends that Finland provide an effective remedy to the petitioners by urgently initiating a genuine negotiation for the review of section 3 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament. This ensures that the criteria for eligibility to vote in Sámi Parliament elections are defined in a manner that respects the right of the Sámi people to provide a free, prior and informed consent on matters relating to their own membership and their political participation for the enjoyment and full realisation of other rights, in accordance with Article 5 (c) and (e) of the Convention.

### The first decision of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities regarding Finland

The Committee overseeing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) adopted its first decision concerning Finland in April 2022. In its decision, the Committee considered that Finland had infringed Articles 19 and 5 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The complainant had sought personal assistance in order to be able to live independently. The application had been rejected at all national courts on the basis of resource criteria. The resource criteria restricts personal assistance only to those people who have the resources to define the contents and modalities of implementation of the assistance themselves. The complainant considered that the resource criteria is practically discriminatory against persons with intellectual disabilities and prevented them from living in their own home and as part of the community with personal assistance.

In its decision, the Committee considered that Finland had not been able to demonstrate that the complainant's right to independent living and inclusion in the community under Article 19 had been realised with another service, or that such service was planned for them. As a result of the rejected application for personal assistance, the complainant did not receive the service that would have promoted their life as part of the community.

## 3 Promotion of fundamental and human rights

### Communications and advocacy work

Communications and advocacy work were strengthened at the beginning of 2022 when the HRC established a communications and advocacy team to support management and experts. Since February, two junior experts have worked with the team leader, and a fourth expert joined the team in the autumn. The new structure improved the planning and coordinated implementation of communications in particular.

In addition to the new team structure, communications and advocacy processes as well as monitoring the implementation of communications and advocacy work were developed. Communications policies and a plan were drawn up to support work planning. In spring 2022, the staff's communication skills and needs were surveyed so they could be developed and improved.

News, press releases, statements and reviews were published on the HRC's website and shared on the Centre's social media channels. The news articles covered the HRC's activities as well as international and domestic fundamental and human rights themes and events. An Instagram account for the Human Rights Centre was a new channel, the content of which is produced by the Centre's Junior Expert Programme. The HRC also used other media for communications. For example, during the

Helsinki Pride week, the Centre's junior expert wrote a guest column to Helsingin Sanomat together with the lawyer of the Ombudsman for Children, defending the rights of transgender youth.

More attention was paid to the accessibility and comprehensibility of the HRC's communications during the year. All communications of the Centre must be as accessible as possible to different target groups. This was taken into account in areas such as technical solutions and the language used. Efforts were made to make communications more understandable by explaining the backgrounds of different human rights issues as plainly as possible and avoiding the use of unknown abbreviations, for example.

The target of the Centre's communications is to develop communications aimed at different target groups. Young adults were a new target group in 2022. The Junior Expert Programme surveyed young people's perceptions of human rights and their wishes and needs, especially with regard to communications. According to their feedback, there is an increasing need for communication on human rights that explains the basics in as general language as possible. This was a particular development focus with the Centre's Instagram account.

One of the objectives of communications and advocacy is to develop activities towards the Parliament. The Parliament is regularly informed of the HRC's publications and events.

The HRC's recognition within Parliament was improved by organising events to introduce the Centre to the Parliament staff during the year (such as library, information service, communications and interns), for example.

The opinions and oral hearings to committees are a key part of the advocacy work. In 2022, the HRC was consulted several times in committees, and based on monitoring, the opinions and hearings had an impact on the content of committee reports. The monitoring of the effectiveness of the Centre's opinions as well as the monitoring of other opinions will be further developed in future.

In 2022, the national fundamental and human rights structures and their effectiveness were one of the focus areas of communications and advocacy work. In June, the Centre published an extensive report on the topic, and the report and its contents were utilised in many ways during the year in its advocacy work. For example, the Centre has emphasised fundamental and human rights structures when presenting its activities and the National Human Rights Institution to international visitors. Many statements also mentioned the fundamental and human rights structures. In addition, the structure diagram prepared for the report on fundamental and human rights actors was used in communications.

In addition to fundamental and human rights structures, the Centre's advocacy work focused on topical human rights issues and legislative projects during the year. By issuing statements and sharing information about the topic, the Centre influenced the reform of the Trans Act paying particular attention to the status of transgender youth. In addition, the Centre closely monitored amendments to the Border Guard Act, issued statements and cooperated nationally and internationally to highlight the problem areas of the legislative amendments. They also promoted the work of human rights defenders, highlighting the need for protection mechanisms for human rights defenders at risk and a rapid and flexible visa

procedure so that human rights defenders could also enter Finland.

Only the development of personnel's dialogue skills using the Timeout method remained unfulfilled of the annual action plan's objectives for communications and advocacy work. This objective was transferred to 2023: at the start of the year, the Timeout method will be presented to the entire personnel, and after that, the actual Timeout training will be arranged for those interested in it.

## Events

The various events for the public and specialists are important for the HRC as a means of providing information related to topical fundamental and human rights themes. During the coronavirus pandemic, the number of events decreased significantly, but in 2022, the HRC had several events, some also outside the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.

In June, a seminar was organised to mark the HRC's tenth anniversary, and partners from over the years filled up the whole auditorium. In October, a seminar focusing on human rights issues in the Arctic region was organised in Rovaniemi together with the Arctic Centre. Kalle Könkkölä symposium was organised for the second time in December to celebrate the work of the late Könkkölä. This time, the theme of the symposium was the rights of persons with disabilities in crisis situations.

In December, the HRC organised a human rights week in Parliament (3-10 December), the theme of which was climate change and environmental issues as human rights issues that are particularly important for young people. During the week, they also hosted a live discussion on Instagram account maintained by the Junior Expert Programme, in which a junior expert from the Centre and Allianssi's youth climate delegate discussed climate, human rights and young people.

## The HRC's Events in 2022

- 6 April 2022 Combating anti-Semitism in Finland and Europe. The event was organised in Parliament's auditorium in connection with Katharina von Schnurbein's, EU coordinator on combating antisemitism, visit to Finland.
- 25 April 2022 Meeting of fundamental and human rights actors. Before the HRC's report on national fundamental and human rights actors was published, a meeting was held in Parliament between the actors included in the report. The meeting discussed the report and the opportunities for cooperation and coordination arising from it.
- 24 May 2022 Network meeting of young influencers. The Junior Expert Programme organised an event in Parliament where human rights and the approachability of human rights debate were discussed with young activists.
- May–June 2022 Roma youth meetings. The HRC and the Ministry of Justice organised "human rights, dreams and pizza" discussion events for young Roma aged 18–29 in Mikkelä, Tampere, Kajaani and Helsinki, where young Roma talked about the racism and discrimination they had experienced and their wishes for the future.
- 9 June 2022 Human Rights Centre 10 years - cooperation to promote the implementation of fundamental and human rights. The HRC organised an event in Parliament about the activities of the HRC and the National Human Rights Institution over the past ten years. A report on the HRC's national fundamental and human rights actors was also published at the event.
- 14 September 2022 Lunch discussion on topical human rights issues. An event discussing the ENNHRI and topical human rights issues was held at Parliament in connection with ENNHRI's Board meeting in Helsinki.
- 20 September 2022 Side event in connection with the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. The HRC organised a hybrid event on the rights of older people belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples.
- 11 October 2022 "Building the future of Sámi youth" event. The event was organised in cooperation with the Youth Council under the Sámi Parliament, and its topic was the reform of the Act on the Sámi Parliament from the perspective of the Sámi youth and human rights.
- 18 October 2022 Discussion event with Swedish-speaking law students. Security and human rights were discussed at the event.
- 26 October 2022 Arctic dimensions of human rights and the security environment. An online event organised from Rovaniemi to discuss current human rights issues in the Arctic region and the changed security environment. The event was organised in cooperation with the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland, the Institute for Northern Institute for Environmental and Minority Law (NIEM) and the UArctic Network on Arctic Law.
- 23 November 2022 Workshop to develop the Human Rights Centre and Parliamentary Ombudsman's right to self-determination tool. The online workshop discussed the development of a self-determination tool created by the Human Rights Centre and the Parliamentary Ombudsman.
- 12 December 2022 Kalle Könkkölä Symposium. The event was organised in cooperation with the Human Rights Delegation's Disability Rights Committee and the Parliamentary Ombudsman. The event was held at Parliament and streamed online. The symposium was organised for the second time already to commemorate Kalle Könkkölä's life's work as a defender of the rights of persons with disabilities.

## Human rights education and training

The HRC's lecture series on fundamental and human rights from 2017 was updated in 2022. The lecture slides on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the Council of Europe were updated and they will be published on the Centre's website at the end of 2023.

The HRC has been closely involved in developing the education package on the rights of the child set out in Finland's National Child Strategy. The Centre worked in the steering group of the package and also participated in the implementation of several different training sections.

The HRC provided online training for participants in the EU structural funds' Innovation and Skills in Finland 2021–2027 on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Centre also took part in a specialisation course on fundamental and human rights intended for government legislators that was organised by the Ministry of Justice on 16 November 2022.

## Publications and statements

### Publications

The HRC's reports and other publications promote fundamental and human rights by producing new information on topics in which data has been found to be lacking.

### Report on fundamental and human rights operators

In June 2022, the Centre published an in-depth report on national fundamental and human rights actors. The actors included in the report were the supreme overseers of legality, the National Human Rights Institution, special Ombudsmen and the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal. Each actor was examined

with regard to their tasks and powers, independence and objectiveness, effectiveness and awareness, operating environment and resilience, cooperation and coordination as well as observations on the entity of fundamental and human rights actors.

The purpose of the report is to produce comprehensive information on the current state of the fundamental and human rights structures in question and to submit proposals for clarifying and strengthening the structures.

The study was carried out by interviewing and involving fundamental and human rights actors. The Centre also consulted other key stakeholders on the entity formed by the above-mentioned actors. In addition, the study made extensive use of existing materials.

### Other publications

The HRC published a background paper on European human rights institutions, equality bodies and relevant standards. National models for establishing human rights institutions, equality bodies and other specialised human rights bodies vary in European countries. The background paper discusses the strengths and weaknesses of different models and standards related to their structures.

In autumn 2022, the public discussed the rights of the Sámi and the reform of the Act on the Sámi Parliament. The HRC prepared a background paper on the reform of the Act on the Sámi Parliament providing background information and answers to key questions (Saamelaiskäräjälain uudistus - taustatietoa ja vastauksia keskeisiin kysymyksiin). The publication discusses human rights issues related to the reform of the Act on the Sámi Parliament and the background to its development. The aim is to provide a factual basis for the debate on the legislative reform.

During 2022, the HRC also started working on the application of the Aliens Act in administrative courts and especially its section 36, subsection 2 regarding evading provisions on entry

into the country. The aim of the report is to create an overall picture of the different situations to which the prohibition of circumvention of entry provisions is currently applied. Based on this, we can examine what kind of regulation would be appropriate in future.

## Statements

The task of the Human Rights Centre is to promote the implementation of fundamental and human rights through initiatives and statements. The HRC issues statements either on the basis of a request for a statement or on its own initiative on themes related to its activities and structural fundamental and human rights issues.

### National statements by the HRC in 2022

- 30 November 2022 Statement on the Government Report on Gender Equality Policy
- 24 November 2022 Statement on the government proposal for a law on legal recognition of gender and related acts
- 8 November 2022 Statement on a border barrier's construction, impact on asylum applications and illegal entry
- 31 October 2022 Statement on Finland's National Roma Policy 2023-2030
- 14 October 2022 Statement on the draft National Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2030 (KISS2030)
- 21 June 2022 Statement on the government proposal to amend the Mental Health Act
- 15 June 2022 Statement on the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman's report to Parliament 2022
- 2 June 2022 Statement on the report of the Ombudsman for Equality to Parliament 2022
- 2 June 2022 Statement on the draft government proposal to amend the Border Guard Act
- 18 May 2022 Statement on the draft Climate Change Plan for the Land Use Sector (MISU)
- 18 May 2022 Statement on the draft Carbon neutral Finland 2035 - national climate and energy strategy
- 18 May 2022 Statement on the reports on the partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act
- 26 April 2022 Statement on the draft Guidelines for Impact Assessment in Law Drafting
- 12 April 2022 Statement on the government proposal for an Act amending the Mining Act
- 1 April 2022 Statement on the draft government proposal for a law on legal recognition of gender and amending the related acts
- 31 March 2022 Statement on the government proposal for an Act on the Supervision of Healthcare and Social Welfare Services
- 16 March 2022 Statement on the adoption and entry into force of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
- 1 February 2022 Statement on the draft government proposal on an agency for the special authorities within judicial administration
- 14 January 2022 Statement on the Medium-Term Climate Change Policy Plan



### Statements on the report on human rights policy in 2022

- 8 April 2022 Statement to the Foreign Affairs Committee on the human rights policy report
- 28 March 2022 Statement to the Constitutional Law Committee and the Administration Committee on the human rights policy report
- 4 March 2022 Statement to the Grand Committee on the human rights policy report
- 2 March 2022 Statement to the Employment and Equality Committee on the human rights policy report
- 2 March 2022 Statement to the Social Affairs and Health Committee on the human rights policy report
- 24 February 2022 Statement to the Legal Affairs Committee on the human rights policy report

### International statements by the HRC in 2022

- 12 October 2022 Contribution from the Finnish NHRI/Human Rights Centre on the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities to the 52nd session of the Human Rights Council, HRC/61/2022
- 26 September 2022 Additional statement to the CRC for the PWG session on periodic reporting
- 13 September 2022 Contribution from the Finnish NHRI/Human Rights Centre on Human Rights Council resolution 49/12 on the rights of persons with disabilities, HRC/60/2022
- 3 September 2022 Additional statement to CEDAW for 8th periodic reporting
- 29 August 2022 Statement on an advance session related to Finland's Universal Periodic Review (UPR)
- 26 August 2022 Statement: EC Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings: Finland's third evaluation round
- 30 June 2022 Statement to the CRC for periodic reporting under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (combined 5th and 6th periodic reports of the Government)
- 6 June 2022 Statement on the National Report - UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR), fourth review round
- 31 March 2022 Report on Finland's fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

## 4 Monitoring and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities and older people

The HRC has a statutory duty to promote and monitor the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Together with the Ombudsman and the Human Rights Delegation, the Centre shall constitute the independent mechanism for the promotion, protection and monitoring of the implementation required by the Convention. One of the Human Rights Centre's important focus points is to monitor and promote the rights of older people.

For these specific tasks, the HRC has a team that monitors and promotes not only the rights of persons with disabilities and older people, but also the rights of other potentially vulnerable people.

### Strengthening the legal perspective

The HRC promotes awareness of the UNCRPD by translating the General Comments of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the UNCRPD and by emphasising the importance and content of the UNCRPD in its statements and speeches. For example, when participating in the preparation of the training package under the National Child Strategy, the Centre highlighted the perspectives of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The HRC continued their work on practices that strengthen the fundamental and human rights of persons with disabilities and the right to self-determination, in particular, by developing material that promotes them.

The HRC also participated as an expert in the monitoring group on strengthening the client's and patient's right to self-determination and its subgroups. In addition, the Centre issued a number of statements calling for the acknowledgement of fundamental and human rights and making them the starting point in various legislative projects and programmes.

The HRC also participated in the work of the monitoring committee of the EU structural funds' Innovation and Skills in Finland 2021–2027 programme and organised training for ELY Centres on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the UN Convention on the

Rights of Persons with Disabilities to support the evaluation work related to their funds.

### **Strengthening inclusion**

The HRC developed and systematised practices that promote inclusion in its work. As part of this work, the activities of the Human Rights Delegation's Disability Rights Committee and the Division for the Rights of Older Persons were developed, and a survey was prepared for the Division for the Rights of Older Persons in which the viewpoints of its members on a possible international instrument on the rights of older persons were examined.

During the year, members of the Human Rights Delegation's Disability Rights Committee participated in different ways in the HRC's activities, such as the translation of the Committee's general comments and the development of a tool that promotes the right of self-determination of persons with disabilities. A workshop was organised to support the development of the self-determination tool, involving a wide range of stakeholders, such as supervisory authorities, other authorities and NGOs.

The HRC invited the new Ombudsman for older people to become a member of the Human Rights Delegation and cooperated with the Ombudsman by, for example, inviting her to join the UN Human Rights Council meeting in Geneva in autumn 2022.

### **Strengthening and monitoring the knowledge base of disability research and older people's rights**

The HRC promotes disability research and data collection that meets the needs of the CRPD as well as the research and knowledge base on the rights of older people in cooperation with different research institutes and researchers. In 2022, the HRC took part in a research project on the rights of older people with the Institute of Criminology and Legal Policy (Krimo), the University of Eastern Finland and the University

of Tampere. The Centre also participated in the steering group of the SOLDEX project studying the exclusion of older people in home care at the University of Eastern Finland and the steering group of the ESF project "The survival of people with disabilities and a foreign background in exceptional and crisis situations - Creating the future based on COVID-19 experiences".

### **Diversity of people with disabilities and older people**

In its activities, the HRC paid particular attention to the status of persons with disabilities and older persons belonging to minorities. In the monitoring and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities and older persons, the HRC takes into account the diversity of people extensively, such as the rights of the disabled and older Sámi, Roma and foreign-language speakers. The HRC has created website content on their rights, participated in events and discussed extensively with representatives of these population groups and their organisations.

### **Improving the level of education and participation in working life of persons with disabilities**

The HRC and the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman published a handbook on promoting the employment of persons with disabilities and strengthening their rights at work. The purpose of the publication is to support employers and experts from the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA), TE Offices and disability services in promoting the employment of persons with disabilities.

## **Rights of older people and international cooperation**

In April 2022, the HRC participated in a meeting of the UN Open-ended Working Group in Ageing (OEWGA), for which the HRC issued two written opinions. At the meeting, the Centre's expert gave two speeches, one on sustainable development and one on access to rights.

The HRC also participated in various working groups of ENNHRI and GANHRI to discuss a possible international instrument for the rights of older people. In August 2022, the Centre participated in the UN Multi-stakeholder meeting on the human rights of older persons.

At the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Council on 19 September 2022, Claudia Mahler, an independent expert on the rights of older persons, issued a report on Finland's situation based on her visit to Finland. The HRC has translated the report into Finnish and Swedish. After the presentation of the report and Finnish Government's talk, the HRC gave a talk at the Human Rights Council in connection with the processing of the report under the mandate of the Human Rights Institution. In connection with the session of the Human Rights Council, the HRC also organised the first side event in its history on the rights of older minority and indigenous people.

## 5 Junior expert programme

In February 2022, the Human Rights Centre launched the Junior Expert Programme for those in the early stages of their career. The first term of the programme is 1.5 years (1 Feb. 2022–31 July 2023), and its aim is to strengthen the voice of young people in the debate on fundamental and human rights and the activities of the Human Rights Centre. The programme also strengthens the fundamental and human rights competence of junior experts and provides a springboard for the field also after the programme. Sanni Myllyaho and Elsa Korkman were selected for the first term of the programme. The Junior Expert programme is part of the communications and advocacy team.

The Junior Expert Programme focuses on the rights of young people and human rights issues of interest to them. Junior experts also carry out expert work related to other themes in order to strengthen their professionalism and introduce the perspective of young people with different human rights issues in a cross-cutting manner. Junior experts have worked on issues such as the rights of persons with disabilities, human rights defenders, corporate responsibility, the rights of foreigners and LGBTI people, and the rule of law.

The first year of the programme focused on planning activities and learning about different actors in the field of human rights and young people. Learning about the actors in the field

and various training are an essential part of the programme. For example, junior experts took an online course on the UN Human Rights Council and visited the Council of Europe's World Forum for Democracy to strengthen their expertise in international human rights structures. Junior experts also participate in EN-NHRI's various working groups.

Junior experts do communications as part of the communication and advocacy team. In March 2022, junior experts set up an Instagram account for the HRC to communicate from young people to young people. In the channel, the Junior Expert Programme communicates about human rights issues in general and in a manner approachable to young people. The channel has gained rapid popularity, and it had more than 700 followers by the end of 2022, of which more than half were under 35 years of age. In December, the channel broadcast an Instagram live event on climate and human rights during the Human Rights Week. In addition to Instagram, the HRC has highlighted young people's perspectives and observations on human rights in its other communication channels, such as the blog.

In May 2022, junior experts met young influencers to get their views on young people's participation in the human rights debate. In the meeting, young people pointed out that the language of human rights is difficult and

they barely dare to speak it. The discussion identified several ways with which the Junior Expert Programme could lower the threshold for participation. In particular, young people wished for more communications about human rights in a way that is simplified and appealing to the youth.

One observation made at the meeting of young influencers was that mental health is not recognised as a human rights issue. However, mental health is a very important issue for many young people. During autumn 2022, the Junior Expert Programme focused on mental health as a human rights issue as its communications theme. To learn about the theme and get ideas, junior experts met with the Youth Mental Health Association Yeesi. The Junior Expert Programme also participated in the preparation of the youth welfare programme of MIELI Mental Health Finland, in which the HRC sought to raise awareness of human rights in mental health issues and to strengthen the human rights base of the welfare programme.

Through The Junior Expert Programme, the HRC hears the views and experiences of young people on different human rights issues. In spring 2022, the Ministry of Justice and The Junior Expert Programme organised four discussion events around Finland where they met Roma youth and discussed the racism and discrimination they experienced. Roma young people spoke about how experiences of racism and discrimination were becoming more common, about the discrimination they face in different services and about the inappropriate behaviour of security guards. The Junior Expert programme brought information on human rights and legal remedies to the discussion and collected information to form a basis for its own advocacy work. The Junior Expert Programme highlighted these observations in its statement issued in autumn 2022 on the draft for the third National Roma Policy.

## 6 National and international human rights cooperation

### The activities of the human rights delegation

The Human Rights Delegation is part of Finland's National Human Rights Institution and the HRC's most important channel for cooperation, advocacy and communication. The third Human Rights Delegation began its four-year term on 1 April 2020. The Delegation has 38 members, including special ombudsmen, representatives of the supreme overseers of legality and the Sámi Parliament of Finland. The Human Rights Delegation and its working committee are chaired by Sirpa Rautio, the director of the HRC. Esa Iivonen, member of the Delegation, is the deputy chairman.

The permanent divisions under the Delegation include the division for the rights of persons with disabilities, i.e., the Disability Rights Committee (VIOK), and a working committee, and the division on the rights of older people. The working committee participates in preparing the Delegation's meetings.

The Human Rights Delegation met four times in 2022.

Experts spoke at the meetings and there were discussions on the impacts the war in Ukraine has on the human rights situation, the Human Rights Centre's new Junior Expert Programme, the assessment of the fundamental and human rights impacts of government proposals, the situation of human rights defenders

in Finland (special focus on Afghanistan), the need for a humanitarian visa, amendments to section 16 of the Border Guard Act (centralisation of international protection at certain border crossing points), the reform of the Act on the Sámi Parliament and the implementation of the Government Programme's fundamental and human rights and the priorities for influence in the upcoming 2023 Government Programme.

The meetings regularly discussed the themes of the work of the Disability Rights Committee and the Division for the Rights of Older Persons as well as the members' and the HRC's current events, publications and opportunities for participating in periodic reporting rounds of international human rights conventions.

In October, the delegation issued a statement on human rights defenders. The delegation approved the HRC's annual report for 2022 and the action plan for 2023.

### International and European human rights cooperation

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and its consequences, especially in the neighbouring countries, and the dramatic change in the security situation dominate European human rights cooperation. In spring 2022, ENNHRI'S delegation, led by the Director of

the HRC, visited Poland and the Poland-Ukraine border to learn about the situation and reception of refugees.

As chair of ENNHRI, the Director of the HRC was also closely involved in supporting the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine. In this role, the Director visited Lviv and Kyiv in August 2022 as a guest of the Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. During the visit, they met with the chair of the Verkhovna Rada of the Ukrainian Parliament and visited the site of destruction from the war in Irpin. In addition to the visit, ENNHRI has striven to support the Ukrainian human rights institution by developing forms of support for directors of human rights institutions in crisis situations.

The ENNHRI Board also closely monitored the activities of the Commissioner for Human Rights of Russia and acted as a facilitator in meetings and exchanges of information on humanitarian issues between the Ukrainian and Russian Ombudsmen.

As chair of ENNHRI, the Director of the HRC participated in the meetings of ENNHRI's Board of Directors. The meetings were held in Warsaw (June 2022), Helsinki (September 2022) and Brussels (November 2022). The Board also met several times remotely.

In addition, an expert from the HRC chaired the ENNHRI Legal Working Group. During 2022, the working group also focused on promoting the implementation of the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and creating tools to facilitate this. The promotion work included the preparation of a third-party intervention in four cases concerning climate change and a case concerning abortion rights under investigation at the ECHR.

The Centre's experts also participated actively in the ENNHRI working groups on economic and social rights, the rights of persons with disabilities, the rights of older people, corporate responsibility and immigration. In addition, an expert of the Centre participated in the NHRI Academy of National Human Rights

Institutions in Albania in June 2022, to learn about AI and human rights.

In addition to ENNHRI, close cooperation with the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the Council of Europe was continued. The Centre met and exchanged information particularly with Dunja Mijatovic, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, and Michael O'Flaherty, Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights.

In addition to meetings and exchanges of information, the Director of the HRC participated in several European events on the rule of law and the role of National Human Rights Institutions. The Director of the Centre was a speaker at ODIHR's Building Resilient National Human Rights Institutions event organised which was organised for directors of National Human Rights Institutions in Warsaw from 5 to 6 September. The two-day event dealt with strengthening institutions in different ways. ODIHR also published a tool on the theme. The Director of the HRC also attended a meeting of European Human Rights Directors convened by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights in Rust, Austria in September, entitled "Putting Human Rights at the Heart of Europe's Future". In October, the Director of the HRC spoke at the Human Dimension Implementation meeting in Warsaw about the challenges facing democracy, the rule of law and human rights in Europe and the role of National Human Rights Institutions.

In addition to European cooperation, there was cooperation with the UN institutions. In 2022, cooperation focused especially on the rights of persons with disabilities and the rights of older people, and as a new theme, on the environment and climate change.



## Annex 1.

# Ihmisoikeuskeskuksen henkilöstö vuonna 2022

### Director

**Sirpa Rautio**, Chairman of the Human Rights Delegation (2012-)

### Experts

**Sanna Ahola**, Expert/Team Leader (2019-)

**Mikko Joronen** (2016-), leave of absence 1 March 2022-

**Kristiina Kouros**, (2012-, leave of absence as of 1 June 2019), resigned 31 September 2022

**Leena Leikas**, Expert/Team Leader (2012-)

**Susan Villa**, Expert/Team Leader (2019-)

**Elina Hakala**, report on fundamental and human rights actors, 1 March 2022- international affairs expert

**Nitin Sood**, 15 September 2022-

### Junior Experts

**Emmi Kupiainen**, (2020-)

**Elsa Korkman**, Junior Expert Programme, 1 February 2022-

**Sanni Myllyaho**, Junior Expert Programme, 1 February 2022-

**Rasmus Johnson**, 20 June - 31 December 2022

**Jasmin Airinen**, 1 July - 31 December 2022

### Assistant

**Katariina Huhta**, (2019-), leave of absence 1 December 2022-

**Minna Haapaniemi**, 1 December 2022-

## Annex 2.

# Members of the Human Rights Delegation 2020-2024

1. **Kimmo Hakonen**, Intelligence Ombudsman
2. **Jukka Maarianvaara**, Ombudsman for Equality (2020-2022)
3. **Elina Pekkarinen**, Ombudsman for Children
4. **Mikko Puumalainen**, Deputy Chancellor of Justice
5. **Maija Sakslin**, Deputy Parliamentary Ombudsman
6. **Stenman Kristina**, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman
7. **Talus Anu**, Data Protection Ombudsman
8. **Päivi Topo**, Ombudsman for the Elderly (2022-)
9. **Juuso Tuomas Aslak**, Chair, Sámi Parliament
10. **Atik Ali**, LL.M, Managing Partner, Lakiasiaintoimisto Allianssi Oy

11. **Inga Angersaari**, MSSc, Project Manager, Diak
12. **Laura Arikka**, MTh, CEO, Timeout Foundation
13. **Anna Caldén**, Bachelor of Social Services (UAS), Coordinator, Samarbetsförbundet kring funktionshinder SAMS
14. **Anca Enache-Kotilainen**, MA, Development Manager, Helsinki Deaconess Institute Foundation
15. **Outi Haanperä**, PhD (Economics), Leading Specialist, Sitra
16. **Esa Iivonen**, LL.M, Leading Expert, Mannerheim League for Child Welfare
17. **Anu Juvonen**, MA (Development Studies), Executive Director, DEMO ry
18. **Marja Jylhä**, Ph.D., Professor of Gerontology, University of Tampere
19. **Laura Kalliomaa-Puha**, LL.D, Professor of Social Rights, University of Tampere
20. **Arto Kallioniemi**, Ph.D., M.Sc. (Econ.), Professor of Religious Didactics, University of Helsinki
21. **Sakris Kupila**, MB, Chair, SETA ry
22. **Niina Laajapuro**, Pol.Mag, MBA, Policy Director, Amnesty International, Finnish section
23. **Janne Laukkanen**, LL.M, MSSc, Director (Communications and Influencing), Association of Finnish Lawyers
24. **Pirkko Mahlamäki**, MA, LL.M, Secretary General, Finnish Disability Forum
25. **Kaari Mattila**, D.Soc.Sc., Secretary General, Finnish League for Human Rights
26. **Yrjö Mattila**, D.Soc.Sc., LL.Lic., LL.M, Consulting Lawyer, Carers Finland
27. **Anna Mäki-Petäjä-Leinonen**, LL.D, Docent., Director, Institute of Law and Welfare / University of Eastern Finland
28. **Kimmo Nuotio**, LL.D, Professor of Criminal Justice, University of Helsinki
29. **Tuomas Ojanen**, LL.D, Docent, Professor of Constitutional Law, University of Helsinki
30. **Laura Okkonen**, fil.stud., Senior Human Rights Manager, Vodafone Group Plc
31. **Natalia Ollus**, LL.D, M.Soc.Sc., Director, European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI)
32. **Lea Rankinen**, M.Sc. (Tech) in Environmental Technology, Director of Sustainability and Public Affairs, Paulig Group
33. **Mirva Salminen**, MSSc, Researcher, University of Lapland
34. **Nitin Sood**, M.Soc.Sc., BA (Liberal Arts and Sciences), Non-Discrimination Advisor, City of Helsinki (2020-2022)
35. **Katariina Suomu**, MSSc, Executive Director, Alzheimer Society of Finland
36. **Leena Suurpää**, D.Soc.Sc., Docent, Director, Youth Shelter Support activities, Finnish Red Cross
37. **Antti Teittinen**, DSSc, Docent, Research Manager, Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
38. **Astrid Thors**, LL.M
39. **Jukka Viljanen**, Ph.D., Professor of Public Law, University of Tampere

#### Members of the Human Rights Delegation's working committee 2020-2022

1. **Esa Iivonen** (Deputy Chair)
2. **Atik Ali**
3. **Inga Angersaari**
4. **Niina Laajapuro**
5. **Pirkko Mahlamäki**
6. **Laura Okkonen**
7. **Nitin Sood**
8. **Astrid Thors**

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5. **Niina Laajapuro**
6. **Pirkko Mahlamäki**
7. **Yrjö Mattila**
8. **Laura Okkonen**
9. **Astrid Thors**

## Annex 3.

### Members of the divisions

#### Committee on human rights of persons with disabilities (viok) 2020-2024

**Anna Calden**  
**Pirkko Mahlamäki**  
**Yrjö Mattila**  
**Antti Teittinen**

#### Expert members

HRC - **Mikko Joronen** until 1 March 2022  
 HRC - **Sanna Ahola** 1 March 2022-  
 HRC - **Nitin Sood**, 15 September 2022-  
 Parliamentary Ombudsman - **Minna Verronen**

#### External experts

**Elina Nieminen** (The Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities)  
**Markku Jokinen** (Kuurojen Liitto ry, the Association of the Deaf)  
**Sari Kokko** (Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired)  
**Pirkko Justander** (Ruseti - National Association of Women with Disabilities)  
**Anssi Karhu** (Me Itse ry, Kotka subdivision)

#### Division for the rights of older persons 2020-2024

**Marja Jylhä**  
**Laura Kalliomaa-Puha**  
**Pirkko Mahlamäki**  
**Yrjö Mattila**  
**Anna Mäki-Petäjä-Leinonen**  
**Laura Okkonen**  
**Katariina Suomi**  
**Päivi Topo**

#### External experts

**Virpi Dufva**  
**Lotta Hämeen-Anttila**  
**Ristenrauna Magga** (2022-)  
**Eva Rönkkö** (2022-)

## Annex 4.

### Human Rights Centre's participation in working and steering groups

European Union Home Affairs Funds 2021-2027: Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), Internal Security Fund (ISF), Border Management and Visa Policy Instrument (BMVI). Expert in monitoring committees.

Committee for Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE) - Ministry of Social Affairs and Health - 21 January 2021-20 January 2025. A coordination body

for combating violence against women and domestic violence within the meaning of Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention.

Steering group for the project Old-Age Social Exclusion in Home Care - Prevalence, Meanings & Intervention. Research project funded by the Academy of Finland. University of Eastern Finland. 2021-2025. A steering group was appointed to monitor the research project.

Monitoring group for strengthening the client's and patient's right to self-determination - Ministry of Social Affairs and Health - 1 September 2021-31 December 2023. Set up to monitor and support work on strengthening the client's and patient's right to self-determination, including the preparation of legislation.

Innovation and Skills in Finland 2021–2027 Monitoring Committee for the EU Regional and Structural Policy Programme - Prime Minister's Office - Programme period 2021–2027. Appointed to monitor the implementation, impacts and effectiveness of the programme.

Steering group of the National Child Strategy. Prime Minister's Office - 15 November 2021–30 April 2023. Set up to support the planning and implementation of the education package on the rights of the child set out in the Child Strategy and, in particular, the planning and implementation of the education module on the inclusion of children, and to monitor its implementation.

Government Network on Fundamental and Human Rights - Ministry of Justice - 12 February 2020–31 December 2023. The purpose of the network is to strengthen the implementation of fundamental and human rights by improving the flow of information and cooperation in matters concerning fundamental and human rights in the activities of the Government.

The Government's Fundamental and Human Rights Action Plan 2020-2023 Developing the monitoring of fundamental and human rights - 28 February 2020–31 March 2023.

Advisory Body on International Human Rights Affairs - Ministry for Foreign Affairs - 8 April 2020–31 December 2023. An advisory body appointed by the government and used by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to act as a communication channel between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and civil society on human rights issues.

The Ministry of Justice's Discrimination Monitoring Group - The monitoring group is responsible for developing the government's monitoring system.

Ministry of Justice's Action programme against racism and for good relations - monitoring group. The monitoring group steers the implementation and evaluation of the Government action programme against racism and for good relations.

Network of the Ministry of Justice's Capable project - The aim of the project is to enhance the work against hate crime and harassment, especially by developing the competence of professionals in different fields.

Amnesty's Joku raja! working committee. The working committee is a network of civil society actors that includes organisations, projects, parties, researchers and activists. The committee's objective is to jointly promote measures to strengthen policies against violence against women.

### Finished working groups

17 August 2021–30 November 2022 Working group on liability of public bodies. The working group prepared a proposal on the reform of legislation concerning the liability of public bodies.

### Working groups of the european network of national human rights institutions (ennhri)

- ENNHRI Legal Working Group
- ENNHRI Business and Human Rights Working Group
- ENNHRI Migration & Asylum Working Group
- ENNHRI Core Group on Climate Change
- ENNHRI AI Working Group
- ENNHRI ESR Working Group
- ENNHRI CRPD Working Group
- ENNHRI Core Group on Human Rights of Older Persons

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