

## **ANNEX to Finland’s response to the recommendations made on the occasion of its Fourth Cycle Universal Periodic Review**

Finland is pleased to provide further information on the following supported and supported/noted recommendations.

### **Supported Recommendations**

<i>Scope of International Obligations</i>	
138.5, 138.6, 138.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parliament has approved a government proposal (HE 87/2022) for the approval of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. National implementation and ratification preparations will begin.</li> </ul>
138.9, 138.10, 138.13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the Government Programme entry, a memorandum will be prepared on the prerequisites for ratification. The memorandum updates the situation, for example with regard to legislative amendments that have already taken place. The Sámi will be included in the statement phase of the study.</li> </ul>
138.15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland considers ILO Convention No. 190 on the Elimination of Violence and Harassment important. Finland has been preparing a government proposal for the adoption and implementation of Convention No. 190. However, the matter involves an EU dimension (Commission proposal COM (2020) 24 final, Council decision authorising the Member States to ratify the Convention), and the processing of the proposal is still under way. The aim is to proceed with the matter, taking account of the processing of the EU matter.</li> </ul>
<i>National Legal and Institutional Framework</i>	
138.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights for 2020-2023 was adopted as a Government Resolution on 23 June 2021. The objective of the Action Plan is to promote the public authorities’ obligation laid down in section 22 of the Constitution of Finland to guarantee the observance of basic rights and liberties and human rights. The Action Plan strengthens the monitoring of the realisation of rights in Finland, thus supporting knowledge-based decision-making and the assessment of fundamental and human rights impacts. Fundamental and human rights indicators have been developed as part of the Action Plan, providing a new tool for monitoring the realisation of fundamental and human rights in both the short and long term. The Action Plan is used to comprehensively develop fundamental and human rights monitoring in the Government.</li> </ul>
138.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government commits itself to a transparent selection procedure in the national nomination of candidates for the elections of the UN Treaty Bodies, as it already does with regard to similar Council of Europe candidates through public application procedures.</li> </ul>
138.27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to the Bill Drafting Instructions, government proposals must assess the proposal’s impacts on the realisation of fundamental and human rights. The development of assessments of fundamental</li> </ul>

	and human rights impacts will continue on the basis of a project carried out during this government term.
138.42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Human Rights Institution is independent and autonomous. The budget of the National Human Rights Institution is included in Parliament's operating expenses, and Parliament decides on its budget. The institution's resources have increased in recent years.</li> </ul>
138.83	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The role of cities in protecting human rights defenders has strengthened. Many countries like Finland have introduced a so-called shelter city system, which offers temporary shelter for human rights defenders whose lives are threatened in their home countries. Similar support schemes have been or are being developed in individual municipalities in Finland, too. In accordance with the Government Report on Human Rights Policy 2021, the Government will examine possibilities for expanding the practices in Finland.</li> </ul>
138.125	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government Programme (2019-2023) includes several entries related to the promotion of democracy and human rights education, and they will be implemented within the framework of the National Democracy Programme, the National Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme (VANUPO) and the Right to Learn Programme. In spring 2022, the Finnish National Agency for Education awarded discretionary government grants to nine comprehensive schools for a pilot project in democracy and human rights education. The purpose of the transfer is to promote and develop democracy and human rights education in primary and lower secondary education in accordance with the objectives of the curriculum for primary and lower secondary education. The purpose is that the practices developed will remain a part of the established activities of schools.</li> </ul>
<i>Equality, non-discrimination, racism and hate speech</i>	
138.28-138.31, 138.71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Act on the partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act (HE 148/2022) has been approved and the amendments will enter into force on 1 June 2023. The amendment gives the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman the authority to process individual cases in working life and to issue a reasoned opinion on them. In addition, the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal may recommend the payment of compensation.</li> </ul>
138.43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups will continue until the end of 2023. The objective of the Action Plan is to combat racism and discrimination and to promote good relations between population groups. Concrete measures in different sectors of society will be implemented within the framework of the Action Plan.</li> </ul>
138.44-138.48, 138.50, 138.51, 138.54, 138.56, 138.57, 138.59-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finland will continue its work against hate speech in 2023 by implementing the Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups and by engaging in cross-administrative work between different ministries in racism and hate</li> </ul>

<p>138.62, 138.64-138.69, 138.73-138.77</p>	<p>crimes against immigrants and asylum seekers. Broad-based cooperation between the authorities will be further developed. Finland is also implementing EU-funded Capable and Peer Action against Hate projects. Efforts will be made to continue this work during the next government term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Action Plan also includes an impact assessment with non-governmental organisations, regional advisory boards for ethnic relations and a group of experts on the monitoring of discrimination.</li> <li>• Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice will allocate public officials' resources to work against acts of hatred in 2023. The Ministry of Justice promotes the equality of vulnerable groups in its basic activities as well.</li> <li>• With regard to the Criminal Code, menace obtained at work is subject to public prosecution, gender has been added to the grounds for increasing the punishment for racist motivation, and the Ministry of Justice has prepared an assessment memorandum on online targeting and shaming.</li> <li>• Previous measures will be continued in accordance with a statutory obligation.</li> <li>• The development of measures against ethnic profiling will be continued in broad-based cooperation. Attention will be paid to the oversight of legality.</li> <li>• Finland follows national and international case law and proceedings to ensure adequate resourcing of judicial authorities. The Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups includes guidelines on the promotion of equality in the administrative branches of the ministries as part of performance guidance practices.</li> <li>• The basic, further and in-service training of the police will be continued. In summer 2022, the Police University College published new curricula for Bachelor's degrees and Master's degrees, in which the theme is more clearly visible than before. In addition, a mandatory online training course on non-discrimination, encountering clients, the ethical code and values of the police, hate crimes and the prohibition of ethnic profiling has been created as supplementary training for all police officers. The Police University College organises an annual course on hate crimes.</li> </ul>
<p>138.99</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finland has a clear ban on discrimination in legislation, and many measures are also taken to help different groups in a more difficult position find employment.</li> </ul>
<p>138.100</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finland has striven to narrow the gender pay gap through a tripartite equal pay programme and by implementing the Government's own research and development projects. Through its own projects, the Government has strengthened equal work value and the gender impact assessment of collective agreements in the Finnish labour market. The results of the projects will be used in the further work on equal pay. The Government has carried out an external and independent overall</li> </ul>

	assessment of equal pay measures, which will be completed in early 2023. This supports further work on equal pay.
<i>Climate, environment, business and human rights</i>	
138.126-138.128	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Climate Change Act (423/2022) entered into force in July 2022. The Act's most important means of achieving climate objectives are climate policy plans, which set out measures for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Achievement of the targets and sufficiency of the measures will be monitored in the annual climate change report. If the monitoring reveals that the objectives will not be achieved, the Government may decide on the setting of additional measures.</li> <li>• Key stakeholders and citizens are, as a rule, well placed to participate in the preparation of legislative projects and to present their views. Citizens were consulted particularly widely during the preparation of the new Climate Change Act. In 2022, the Ministry of the Environment prepared guidelines for stakeholders, which focus on the participation of vulnerable groups, such as children and persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• In the reform of the Climate Change Act, provisions on taking the rights of the Sámi into account were added to the Act. Under the Climate Change Act, negotiations with the Sámi Parliament must be held when climate policy plans are prepared. The new Climate Change Act also lays down provisions on the Sámi Climate Council. The Government has prepared guidelines for public officials on how to take children's rights into account in climate issues, for example.</li> </ul>
138.131	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finland has actively participated in the negotiations on EU regulation on corporate social responsibility covering companies' international value and production chains and supports the implementation of EU-wide regulation in the next few years. In accordance with the Government Programme, Finland has also examined the possibilities of enacting a general act on corporate social responsibility.</li> </ul>
<i>Right to life, liberty and security of persons</i>	
138.89	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Finland, the majority of crimes, including violent crimes, are subject to public prosecution and are always investigated by the police after becoming aware of them. For example, assault and rape are subject to public prosecution also when they have taken place at home or when the perpetrator is a family member. Even minor intimate partner violence is subject to public prosecution.</li> <li>• In a criminal investigation, the police investigate what has happened, who are the parties to the matter and what are the damages caused by the offence. After the criminal investigation, the offence proceeds to the consideration of charges and then to the trial if the prosecutor prosecutes the case (for more information, see the Criminal Code and the Criminal Investigation Act).</li> </ul>
138.90, 138.91, 138.92	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On 16 December 2019, the Government issued guidelines for the repatriation of Finnish nationals from the refugee camp in al-Hol in Syria. Based on these guidelines, a Government Resolution</li> </ul>

	<p>(UM/2019/203) was drawn up and adopted on 19 December 2019. According to the resolution, it is the Government's unequivocal and common resolve to repatriate the children from the camp[s] as soon as possible. The Special Envoy, appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, directs the activities of the authorities and makes the repatriation decisions in compliance with the Constitution of Finland, international treaty obligations and applicable national legislation. The decisions to repatriate a number of Finnish children together with their mothers have been taken based on a case by case assessment, with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration.</p>
138.96-138.98	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient funding has been obtained for the implementation of the Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2023).</li> <li>• The posts of the Government Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and his or her pairs became permanent in 2022.</li> <li>• Investigations related to human trafficking have been reinforced during the government term. However, resources have been allocated for a fixed term.</li> <li>• One of the strategic objectives of the Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2023) is to ensure that criminal liability for human trafficking offences is effectively enforced and that it includes a number of related measures.</li> <li>• In February 2023, the Parliament approved amendments to the Criminal Investigation Act and Code of Judicial Procedure, according to which, if the preconditions set out in the law are met, interrogations of the injured party recorded in criminal investigation can be used as evidence in human trafficking offences and related offences. In this case, the recording will replace hearing the victim in court proceedings.</li> <li>• The report on improving the efficiency of criminal proceedings proposed that criminal investigations and lead investigations concerning persons in need of special protection be centralised to investigators and lead investigators specialised in these matters.</li> </ul>
<i>Legal System</i>	
138.86	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous measures will be continued in accordance with a statutory obligation. Finland will continue its work against hate speech in 2023 by implementing the Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups. Finland is also implementing EU-funded Capable and Peer Action against Hate projects.</li> </ul>
138.87	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings (2021-2023) includes measures that aim to improve the status of victims of human trafficking and victims of intimate partner offences as well as measures that concern the training of criminal investigation and judicial authorities.</li> <li>• The National Courts Administration is responsible for training the personnel of the courts.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finland follows national and international case law and proceedings to ensure adequate resourcing of judicial authorities. The Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups includes guidelines on the promotion of equality in the administrative branches of the ministries as part of performance guidance practices.</li> <li>• The report on improving the efficiency of criminal proceedings proposed that criminal investigations and lead investigations concerning persons in need of special protection be centralised to investigators and lead investigators specialised in these matters.</li> <li>• The police will continue to provide comprehensive training, including training on appropriate encounters with victims.</li> </ul>
138.88	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigations related to human trafficking have been reinforced during the government term. However, resources have been allocated for a fixed term.</li> <li>• The Ministry of Justice has prepared an assessment memorandum on the criminalisation of forced marriage.</li> <li>• One of the strategic objectives of the Action Plan against Trafficking in Human beings (2021-2023) is to ensure that criminal liability for human trafficking offences is effectively enforced and that it includes a number of related measures.</li> <li>• In February 2023, the Parliament approved amendments to the Criminal Investigation Act and Code of Judicial Procedure, according to which, if the preconditions set out in the law are met, interrogations of the injured party recorded in criminal investigation can be used as evidence in human trafficking offences and related offences. In this case, the recording will replace hearing the victim in court proceedings.</li> <li>• The report on improving the efficiency of criminal proceedings proposed that criminal investigations and lead investigations concerning persons in need of special protection should be centralised to investigators and lead investigators specialised in these matters.</li> <li>• At the end of 2022, Parliament adopted the Acts on the urgent handling of offences against children (HE 144/2022).</li> <li>• At the end of 2022, Parliament adopted the acts on improving the effectiveness of restraining orders (HE 143/2022).</li> </ul>
<i>Right to an adequate standard of living</i>	
138.101	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A parliamentary committee is preparing a social security reform with the aim of creating a clearer and more effective social security system. The aim of the social security reform is to ensure the structural and functional development of social security. In March 2023, the parliamentary Social Security Committee will publish a report outlining the social security reform and proposing legislative drafting, analysis and development projects concerning the current system that the next Government can incorporate into its Government Programme.</li> </ul>

	The parliamentary Social Security Committee started its work in 2020 and its term will end in 2027.
138.102-138.104	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amendments to the Social Welfare Act and the Act on Care Services for Older Persons, which entered into force at the beginning of 2023, enable flexible and needs-based housing solutions for older people and the provision of necessary services at home. The national programme on ageing, which emphasises preparation for ageing, carries out project work to increase accessible and age-friendly housing stock.</li> <li>• The Government will continue to use investment subsidies to support the construction and repair of sheltered housing intended for older people.</li> <li>• In the wellbeing services counties that started operating at the beginning of 2023, the importance of self-monitoring is emphasised also in terms of the housing and quality of housing for older people.</li> </ul>
138.111	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A government proposal for an overall reform of the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (HE 208/2022) was approved by Parliament in March 2023.</li> </ul>
138.202	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finland has set a target of reducing the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by 100,000 by 2030. The aim is to reduce inequality, for example, by implementing the action plan to reduce poverty and social exclusion.</li> </ul>
<i>Right to health</i>	
138.105-138.108, 138.112	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objective of the health and social services reform, which entered into force on 1 January 2023, is to create a more equal access to services and to reduce differences in health and wellbeing between people.</li> <li>• In autumn 2023, the statutory maximum period (from three months to 14 days) will be significantly shortened, which means that the person must be able to access primary healthcare services in the public sector. The maximum period will be tightened further from autumn 2024 (7 days). This will increase equality, as patients using public healthcare can also access treatment quickly.</li> </ul>
138.109-138.110	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following a legislative amendment that entered into force at the beginning of 2023, undocumented adults have the right to receive not only urgent healthcare services but also non-urgent services considered necessary by healthcare professionals. The assessment of necessity takes into account the assumed duration of the person's residence in Finland. Minors have the right to health care services of the same scope as minors who have a municipality of residence in Finland. As a rule, the person is responsible for the costs of the care, but the service provider may decide not to collect the costs for the part exceeding the client fee of the residents of the municipality if the person receiving the care is apparently insolvent.</li> </ul>

138.113, 138.115, 138.116	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The availability of mental health services has been improved in the reform of the mental health and substance abuse legislation that entered into force at the beginning of 2023.</li> <li>• The health and social services reform, which entered into force on 1 January 2023, improves the regional equality of health services, including mental health services.</li> </ul>
138.118	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finland advocates a human rights-based approach to global health work and, for example, in the WHO's negotiations on a pandemic agreement. Finland will also continue its efforts to strengthen the equal availability of COVID-19 vaccines. The fundamental and human rights perspective will also be taken into account at the national level, for example when reforming the Communicable Diseases Act.</li> </ul>
<i>Right to education</i>	
138.119-138.121	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the comprehensive programme for quality and equality in early childhood education and care and primary and lower secondary education, special discretionary government grants have been awarded for measures promoting the quality and equality. Among other things, discretionary government grants have been used to support local measures to strengthen equality in schools and to promote the local school principle and an inclusive operating culture.</li> <li>• Needs-based funding for early childhood education and care, pre-primary education and primary and lower secondary education has been established as part of the legislation as of 1 January 2023.</li> <li>• Together with the Finnish National Agency for Education, the Ministry of Education and Culture launched a programme to improve the basic skills and language of instruction of pupils with an immigrant background.</li> <li>• The aim is for immigrants to have the prerequisites for further studies. The programme seeks solutions to support and strengthen the basic skills and language skills of learners with an immigrant background.</li> </ul>
<i>Women and domestic violence</i>	
138.34, 138.35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An amendment to the Criminal Code, under which the punishment imposed for an offence may be increased if the act is based on the victim's gender, entered into force at the beginning of 2023. Finland will actively participate in the negotiations on the European Commission's proposal for a directive to combat violence against women and intimate partner violence.</li> <li>• The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has proposed that the need to enact provisions on the prevention and coordination of intimate partner violence in the wellbeing services counties should be assessed. In 2022, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare published guidelines for municipalities and wellbeing services counties on the organisation of structures for coordinating the prevention of intimate partner violence and measures against intimate partner violence.</li> </ul>

138.132	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding and promoting equal participation rights is one of the key objectives of Finland’s democracy policy. Finland will continue and intensify the work already begun to improve the position of women and to promote diversity in the senior positions of listed companies.</li> <li>• Finland will continue its efforts to increase equal gender representation on the boards of directors of listed and state-owned companies.</li> </ul>
138.133, 138.134	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finland has taken measures to bridge the gender pay gap by means of the tripartite equal pay programme and by implementing the Government’s own research and development projects. The projects have reinforced work of equal value and the gender impact assessment of collective agreements in the Finnish labour market. The equal pay programme has invested heavily in reducing segregation in working life and improving women’s careers in particular. Finland will make use of the results of the projects and continue to implement the measures.</li> </ul>
138.135-138.137, 138.139-138.148, 138.150-138.153, 138.155, 138.158-138.163, 138.165, 138.167-138.171, 138.173-138.175, 138.177, 138.178	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention 2022-2025 includes a total of 36 measures aimed at, for example, preventing violence against women and improving access to services intended for victims and perpetrators of violence. One of the main objectives of the plan is to strengthen the consideration of the gender perspective in the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. The Government Action Plan for Gender Equality includes a number of measures related to combating violence against women. The Government Report on Gender Equality also pays strong attention to gender-based violence.</li> <li>• The Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE), which acts as the coordination body referred to in Article 10 of the Istanbul Convention, is allocated permanent funding. In addition, Parliament has allocated additional funding for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.</li> <li>• The Non-Discrimination Ombudsman acts as a Rapporteur on violence against women. The Rapporteur was appointed to the Ombudsman on 1 January 2022. The task of the Rapporteur on violence against women is to monitor violence against women and domestic violence, the functioning of national legislation and the fulfilment of international obligations. The rapporteur is independent and autonomous.</li> <li>• The Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention were drawn up in cooperation to avoid overlaps. The implementation of the Action Plan to Reduce Violence against Women will end in spring 2023. Instead, the preparation and implementation of the Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention (current plan for the period 2022-2025) is a continuous process.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Action Plan for the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention 2022-2025 includes altogether 33 measures that deal with the protection of children against sexual harassment and sexual violence. The National Action Plan on Non-Violent Childhoods 2020-2025 also contains a number of measures aiming to eliminate violence and consider girls.</li> <li>• Finland has an Action Plan for the Prevention of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). An interim evaluation of the programme will be carried out in 2023.</li> <li>• See comments for 138.149.</li> </ul>
138.138, 138.149, 138.164, 138.166, 138.172, 138.176	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since 2015, the number of shelters has increased from 19 shelters to 29 shelters, and the number of family places in shelters has been increased from 114 to the present 228 family places. According to current plans, there will be 240 family places in shelters in Finland by the beginning of 2024. Another priority is to find shelter places also in the Sámi areas in Northern Finland.</li> <li>• A total of 21 support centres for victims of sexual violence have been established in Finland (Seri support centres). The aim is to have 24 support centres by the end of 2023.</li> <li>• At the end of 2022, Parliament adopted the Acts on improving the effectiveness of restraining orders, which will enter into force on 1 October 2023 (HE 144/2022). The reform will make applying for a restraining order free of charge even if the application is rejected or the matter is withdrawn. This means that in future, matters concerning restraining orders will always be free of charge.</li> <li>• The criminal investigation shall be conducted without undue delay. Once the criminal investigation has been completed, the police will refer the case to the prosecutor. The prosecutor shall bring charges for the suspected offence if he or she considers that there are probable grounds to support the guilt of the suspect. The prosecutor is obliged to see to the enforcement of criminal liability in a matter being considered by him or her without delay.</li> <li>• Offences subject to public prosecution proceed in the criminal proceedings even if the victim does not request the investigation of the offence.</li> <li>• Low and middle incomes may be eligible for state legal aid. In this case, the attorney's fee is paid in part or in full by the state.</li> <li>• The court may, under certain conditions, also appoint a legal counsel and a support person for a victim of intimate partner violence, a sexual offence or a serious offence against life, health or liberty regardless of income. In this case, their fees are paid by the State regardless of the victim's income.</li> <li>• Previous development measures will be continued. In recent years, special attention has been paid to violence against women in the police, for example by reforming guidelines and providing training on the comprehensive reform of the legislation on sexual offences.</li> </ul>

138.196	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finland will continue its efforts to increase equal gender representation on the boards of directors of listed and state-owned companies.</li> <li>• In addition, the Parliament approved a government proposal for a new Act on Services for Persons with Disabilities (HE 191/2022) in March 2023. The Act is supposed to enter into force in October 2023. The purpose of the act is, among other things, to implement the social inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities as well as to prevent and remove obstacles to their realisation.</li> <li>• The national Policy on Roma 2023-2030 also pays attention to gender equality.</li> </ul>
<i>Children</i>	
138.114	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a result of the implementation of the national mental Health Strategy, 1,700 interaction programme professionals operating in young people's everyday environments have been trained during the past two years. The purpose is to prevent and treat depression.</li> </ul>
138.179	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the Aliens Act, when making decisions on children under eighteen years of age, special attention must be paid to the best interests of the child and to matters related to the child's development and health.</li> </ul>
138.186, 138.188	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preventive services for children, young people and families and child welfare have been developed as part of the programme to address child and family services. The amendment to the child Welfare Act concerning limiting the maximum number of clients of a social worker responsible for a child's affairs entered into force at the beginning of 2022. Its objective is to strengthen the realisation of the rights of the child in child welfare and to ensure the realisation of the objectives of child - and family-specific child welfare. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is preparing an overall reform of child welfare, in connection with which the development needs of child welfare are assessed.</li> </ul>
<i>Minorities</i>	
138.21-138.26, 138.199-138.201	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The indigenous Sámi have a constitutional right to maintain and develop linguistic and cultural self-government in the Sámi homeland.</li> <li>• A government proposal to amend the Act on the Sámi Parliament was submitted to Parliament on 18 November 2022. The proposal was discussed in various parliamentary committees in 2023, but there was no plenary decision taken. Due to time constraints related to the upcoming parliamentary elections, the Constitutional Law Committee, which served as the Committee for reports, did not have the prerequisites to draw up an appropriate report on the matter. However, the Committee considers it important that the Government submits a new proposal on the matter immediately at the beginning of the next parliamentary term in order to safeguard the provisions on the status and rights of the Sámi in section 17, subsection 3 and section 121, subsection 4 of the Constitution of Finland and to fulfil Finland's</li> </ul>

	<p>international human rights obligations. Parliamentary elections will be held on 2 April 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the objectives of the legislative reform is to strengthen the realisation of the FPIC principle by strengthening the current negotiation obligation of the authorities.</li> <li>• In cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, the Sámi Parliament organised on 3 November 2022 a training event on how to take the rights of the Sámi into account in the practical work of the authorities, especially in the land use sector. The training was part of the implementation of the Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups prepared by the Ministry of Justice.</li> <li>• The Government appointed a Truth and Reconciliation Commission for the Sámi people at the Government session on 28 October 2021. The Commission's task is to identify and assess historical and current discrimination against the Sámi, including the assimilation policy of the State and violations of rights, and to find out how this affects the Sámi and their communities in the current situation. In addition, the Commission should propose ways to promote links between the Sámi and the State of Finland and among the Sámi and to raise awareness of the Sámi as an indigenous people of Finland. The Commission will prepare the report by 30 November 2023.</li> <li>• The National Policy on Roma 2023-2030 will enhance the equality and inclusion of the Finnish Roma population through measures that support the education and employment, housing conditions and health of the Roma.</li> <li>• The health and social services reform, which entered into force at the beginning of 2023, will improve the right of the Sámi to receive health and social services in their own language, for example through the Sámi Language Board.</li> </ul>
138.204, 138.205, 138.211, 138.212	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A government proposal to Parliament for an Act on Legal Recognition of Gender and related Acts (HE 189/2022) was approved at the beginning of February 2023 as amended. The aim of the proposal was to enact an act on gender recognition that respects the right to self-determination. A key reform in the legislative project was that the legal recognition of gender would be separated from medical examinations and treatments, and a medical examination or diagnosis of transsexuality would no longer be required for the recognition of gender. The Act would remove the requirement of infertility. As part of the preparation of the government proposal, the rapporteurs examined the concrete effects of the age limit laid down in the current Act on the status of minors and on the realisation of their fundamental and human rights as well as the models for regulating the recognition of gender with regard to minors. Parliament also adopted a statement according to which Parliament requires that the Government assess and prepare the necessary</li> </ul>

	legislative amendments to promote the right of transgender children and young people to self-determination in the recognition of gender.
138.209-138.2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The working group for reforming the transgender legislation made proposals for strengthening the right to self-determination of intersex children. These proposals will be discussed by the relevant ministries.</li> <li>• A government proposal to Parliament for an Act on Legal Recognition of Gender and related Acts (HE 189/2022) was approved at the beginning of February 2023 as amended. The aim of the proposal was to enact an act on gender recognition that respects the right to self-determination. A key reform in the legislative project was that the legal recognition of gender would be separated from medical examinations and treatments, and a medical examination or diagnosis of transsexuality would no longer be required for the recognition of gender. The current Act would remove the requirement of infertility. As part of the preparation of the government proposal, the rapporteurs examined the concrete effects of the age limit laid down in the current Act on the status of minors and on the realisation of their fundamental and human rights as well as the models for regulating the recognition of gender with regard to minors. Parliament also adopted a statement according to which Parliament requires that the Government assess and prepare the necessary legislative amendments to promote the right of transgender children and young people to self-determination in the recognition of gender.</li> </ul>
<i>Persons with disabilities</i>	
138.117	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With regard to non-involuntary treatment, legislative amendments to mental health and substance abuse legislation that entered into force in 2023 have improved the availability and integration of mental health services with other healthcare and social welfare services. With regard to involuntary treatment, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health continues to prepare the right to self-determination.</li> </ul>
138.190	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding and promoting equal participation rights is one of the key objectives of Finland's democracy policy.</li> <li>• The Act on the partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act (HE 148/2022) has been approved and the amendments will enter into force on 1 June 2023. The amendment gives the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman the authority to process individual cases in working life and to issue a reasoned opinion on them. In addition, the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal may recommend the payment of compensation. The regulation on reasonable accommodation has been specified as well.</li> <li>• As part of the Working Capacity Programme in accordance with the Government Programme, services promoting the employment of persons with disabilities, such as job coaching based on quality criteria, will be examined. The ongoing projects will produce experiences that can be utilised in future legislative projects.</li> <li>• In addition, the Parliament approved a government proposal for a new Act on Services for Persons with Disabilities (HE 191/2022) in</li> </ul>

	<p>March 2023. The Act is supposed to enter into force in October 2023. The purpose of the act is, among other things, to implement the social inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities as well as to prevent and remove obstacles to their realisation.</p>
138.192	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Act on the partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act (HE 148/2022) has been approved and the amendments will enter into force on 1 June 2023. The amendment gives the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman the authority to process individual cases in working life and to issue a reasoned opinion on them. In addition, the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal may recommend the payment of compensation. In addition, the regulation on reasonable accommodation has been specified.</li> <li>• The Ministry of the Environment has appointed an accessibility working group to draw up a situation picture of the implementation of accessibility in the built environment and to make proposals for legislative development and other measures. The aim is to launch a project to develop accessibility legislation during the next Government term.</li> <li>• The purpose of a new Act on services for persons with disabilities would be to implement the equality, inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in society as well as to prevent and remove obstacles to their realisation. In addition, the purpose of the Act would be to support independent living and the realisation of the right to self-determination as well as to ensure adequate and high-quality services that meet individual needs and interests.</li> </ul>
138.193	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Government's Working Capacity Programme has promoted the employment and coping at work of persons with partial work ability and persons with disabilities.</li> </ul>
138.195	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Sterilisation Act is old (1970). It is justified to assess whether the regulation is up to date.</li> </ul>
138.197, 138.198	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Act on the partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act (HE 148/2022) has been approved and the amendments will enter into force on 1 June 2023. The amendment gives the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman the authority to process individual cases in working life and to issue a reasoned opinion on them. In addition, the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal may recommend the payment of compensation. In addition, the regulation on reasonable accommodation has been specified.</li> <li>• Legislation on the accessibility of transport services will be specified and the implementation of accessibility will be monitored (implementation of the Accessibility Directive).</li> </ul>
<i>Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers</i>	
138.52	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Courts Administration is responsible for training the personnel of the courts. The provision of training is determined around different legal themes.</li> <li>• Finland follows national and international case law and proceedings to ensure adequate resourcing of judicial authorities. The Action Plan</li> </ul>

	<p>for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups includes guidelines on the promotion of equality in the administrative branches of the ministries as part of performance guidance practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The basic, further and in-service training of the police will be continued. In summer 2022, the Police University College published new curricula for Bachelor's degrees and Master's degrees, in which the theme is more clearly visible than before. In addition, a mandatory online training course on non-discrimination, encountering clients, the ethical code and values of the police, hate crimes and the prohibition of ethnic profiling has been created as supplementary training for all police officers. The Police University College organises an annual course on hate crimes.</li> </ul>
138.214, 138.215, 138.217	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ministry of the Interior is working on a project aiming to overhaul the Aliens Act, which focuses not only on content provisions but also on general principles guiding the application of the Act. The current Act also contains special provisions aiming to secure the needs of vulnerable groups, as well as the Act on the reception of persons applying for international protection and on identifying and assisting victims of trafficking in human beings. In the area of international protection, Finnish legislation is based on EU law and the fundamental and human rights obligations binding on Finland.</li> <li>• An amendment to the Aliens Act entered into force on 1 February 2023, removing the requirement for sufficient financial resources from the family members of minors receiving international or temporary protection and amending the determination of a child's minor status in family reunification cases. At the moment, no legislative amendments are being prepared to change the family reunification criteria. However, the family reunification criteria will probably be examined to some extent as part of the overall reform of the Aliens Act.</li> </ul>
138.216	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Particular attention is paid to unaccompanied children applying for asylum and temporary protection both in legislation and in practical activities. For example, their accommodation is organised in separate units for minors and a representative is appointed for them.</li> </ul>
138.218, 138.219	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration and the equality of immigrants will be promoted as part of the implementation of the Government Report on Integration and in the reformed Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration that was approved by Parliament in march 2023 .</li> <li>• Immigrant women and people with a refugee background will be raised as a special target group for employment measures in the implementation of the Government Report on Integration and in the reformed Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration.</li> </ul>
138.220	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strategy against work-related exploitation will be drawn up, on the basis of which needs for legislative amendments will be examined</li> </ul>

	and implemented in the future, and work against work-related exploitation will be developed.
138.222	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government prepares an amendment to the Seasonal Workers Decree that would allow wild-berry pickers to become employed. The effectiveness of the change and the need for further measures will be monitored.</li> </ul>
138.223-138.226	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An amendment to the Aliens Act entered into force on 1 February 2023, removing the requirement for sufficient financial resources from the family members of minors receiving international or temporary protection and amending the determination of a child's minor status in family reunification cases. At the moment, no legislative amendments are being prepared to change the family reunification criteria. However, the family reunification criteria will probably be examined to some extent as part of the overall reform of the Aliens Act.</li> <li>Legal aid for asylum seekers has been strengthened through legislative amendments introduced on 15 August 2021. Legal aid can be provided at all stages with public funds if there is no own funds.</li> <li>In Finland, asylum seekers have the right to receive reception services to secure the necessary subsistence and care during the processing of their asylum application. Asylum seekers can receive a reception allowance for their essential basic needs. If an asylum seeker is issued with a residence permit and lives permanently in Finland, he or she is entitled to residence-based social security.</li> </ul>
138.228	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The asylum procedure is based on EU legislation and the fundamental and human rights obligations binding on Finland. The provisions on the asylum procedure will also be reviewed as part of the overall reform of the Aliens Act, taking into account the relevant new EU legislation that is still being negotiated.</li> </ul>
138.229	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lawyers providing legal aid have been trained by the Ministry of Justice, and the qualifications of the legal counsels are reviewed annually.</li> </ul>

### Supported/noted Recommendations

<i>Scope of International Obligations</i>	
138.11, 138.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notes: Pursuant to the entry in the Government Programme, a memorandum on the criteria for ratification of the Convention will be drawn up to provide an update <i>inter alia</i> because of legislative amendments already enacted.</li> <li>Supports: A government proposal to amend the Act on the Sámi Parliament was submitted to Parliament on 18 November 2022. The proposal was discussed in various parliamentary committees in 2023, but there was no plenary decision taken. Due to time constraints related to the upcoming parliamentary elections, the Constitutional Law Committee, which served as the Committee for reports, did not have the</li> </ul>

	<p>prerequisites to draw up an appropriate report on the matter. However, the Committee considers it important that the Government submits a new proposal on the matter immediately at the beginning of the next parliamentary term in order to safeguard the provisions on the status and rights of the Sámi in section 17, subsection 3 and section 121, subsection 4 of the Constitution of Finland and to fulfil Finland's international human rights obligations. Parliamentary elections will be held on 2 April 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See comments for 138.23, 138.199, 138.200.</li> </ul>
138.18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes: The recommendation to remove the reservation made to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons is noted.</li> <li>• Supports: The recommendation to improve the effectiveness of the asylum system is supported. Finland's legislation is based on EU law, which specifies minimum requirements for how to treat asylum seekers and how to process their applications. Finland is actively involved in work at the EU level to reform the EU asylum system.</li> </ul>
<i>Equality, non-discrimination, racism and hate speech</i>	
138.49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes: The recommendation is noted in respect of resources. Finland follows national and international case law and proceedings to ensure adequate resourcing of judicial authorities. The Government Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups includes the drafting of guidelines for the administrative branches of ministries on how to promote non-discrimination as part of their performance management.</li> <li>• Supports: Basic training, continuing education and further training for the police in this respect will be continued. The Police University College published new curricula for their Bachelor's and Master's degrees, with a clearer statement of this theme than previously. Also, all police officers now have mandatory online continuing education on non-discrimination, client encounters, the ethical code and values of the police, hate crimes and the ban on ethnic profiling. A course on hate crime is given at the Police University College every year.</li> </ul>
138.58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes: Prompt investigation measures are resource-related.</li> <li>• Supports: In 2023, Finland will continue efforts to combat hate speech by implementing the Government Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups, including drafting guidelines for the administrative branches of ministries on how to promote non-discrimination as part of their performance management. With regard to the Criminal Code, menace at work is subject to public prosecution, gender has been added to the grounds for increasing the punishment for racist motivation, and the Ministry of Justice has prepared an assessment memorandum on online targeting and shaming.</li> </ul>
<i>Climate, the environment, business and human rights</i>	
138.40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes: Current development cooperation policies do not enable bilateral support.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports: Finland is committed to the implementation of the guiding principles globally. Finland’s development policy aims to promote responsible business conduct in developing countries.</li> </ul>
<i>Legal System</i>	
138.85	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes: Thorough investigation measures are resource-related.</li> <li>• Supports: See comments for 138.58.</li> </ul>
<i>Women and domestic violence</i>	
138.33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes: The recommendation for legislative amendments is noted.</li> <li>• Supports: An amendment of the Criminal Code entered into force at the beginning of 2023 whereby a more severe penalty for an offence may be imposed if the act was due to the victim’s gender. Finland is actively involved in talks on the draft Directive of the European Commission to combat violence and intimate partner violence against women.</li> </ul>
<i>Children</i>	
138.180, 138.182, 138.183, 138.185	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes: The recommendation for the termination of detention of minors is noted. There is no intent or goal to completely ban the taking of minors into detention in the context of the overall reform of the Aliens Act or indeed in any other context at the national level.</li> <li>• Supports: The recommendation is supported regarding the alternatives to detention. The detention of minors, when allowed under the Aliens Act, is always a last resort and is only done when all other preventive measures, including mandated residence for a minor, are inadequate.</li> </ul>
<i>Minorities</i>	
138.208	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes: No separate action plan is currently planned.</li> <li>• Supports: The working group for reforming the transgender legislation made proposals for strengthening the right to self-determination of intersex children. These proposals will be discussed by the relevant ministries.</li> </ul>
<i>Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers</i>	
138.227	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes: The recommendation to reinstate humanitarian protection is noted.</li> <li>• Supports: The overall reform of the Aliens Act will cover all grounds for issuing residence permits.</li> </ul>