



**International Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms
of Racial Discrimination**

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**Combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic
reports submitted by Finland under article 9 of
the Convention, due in 2021* ****

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The appendices to the present report may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



I. Introduction

1. The combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic report of the Government of Finland on the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination covers the period from spring 2017 to August 2021.

2. In its conclusions, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination requested Finland to provide written information on the measures taken to implement Recommendations 19 and 25 by 5 May 2018. Finland's response was submitted on 2 May 2018.

3. During the reporting period, a second National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2017–2019 and a third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights have been adopted, the content of the latter includes human rights indicators, an action plan for combating racism and promoting good relations has been drawn up, and a number of project packages have been implemented to combat discrimination and promote equality, and to promote the identification, investigation and reporting of hate speech and hate crimes.

COVID-19 and emergency conditions

4. During the reporting period, due to the COVID-19 communicable disease pandemic, the Government concluded on 16 March 2020 in cooperation with the President of the Republic that the emergency conditions referred to in sections 3(3) and (5) of the Emergency Powers Act (1552/2011) were in effect in Finland. It was not possible to control the situation with the regular powers of the authorities. It was therefore determined that the Government could rightfully exercise the powers of the Emergency Powers Act. The purpose of the Act is to secure the livelihood of the population and the national economy, to maintain legal order and constitutional and human rights, and to safeguard the territorial integrity and independence of Finland in emergency conditions. In emergency conditions, the authorities may be authorised to exercise only those powers which are necessary and proportionate to achieve the aforementioned purpose.

5. In spring 2020, the Government adopted a number of restriction policies and issued to Parliament decrees on the implementation, application and continuation of the Emergency Powers Act and decrees on their repeal. The Government issued decrees on the repeal of the powers under the Emergency Powers Act on 15 June 2020, stating that the emergency conditions referred to in section 3 of the Emergency Powers Act were no longer in place in Finland. The coronavirus situation eased during the summer but worsened again in the autumn, when Finland among others was hit by a second wave. At the beginning of 2021, the situation was initially stable, but by the end of February infections were rising again and the Government noted the need for more stringent measures. The Government with the President of the Republic determined that Finland was again experiencing emergency conditions due to the coronavirus situation. The emergency conditions entered into force on 1 March 2021 and emergency powers were re-established under the Act.

6. On 27 April 2021, the Government again issued decrees on the repeal of the powers under the Emergency Powers Act and stated that the emergency conditions referred to in section 3 had passed. The Government determined that going forward it was possible to manage the coronavirus epidemic with regular powers.

7. The second chapter of the Constitution of Finland (731/1999) contains provisions on fundamental rights and the obligation to safeguard them. Section 23 of the Constitution contains provisions on the conditions under which fundamental rights can be derogated from in exceptional circumstances, and in what ways. According to the section, such provisional exceptions to basic rights and liberties that are compatible with Finland's international human rights obligations and that are deemed necessary in the case of an armed attack against Finland or in the event of other situations of emergency, as provided by an Act, which pose a serious threat to the nation may be provided by an Act or by a Government Decree to be issued on the basis of authorisation given in an Act for a special reason and subject to a precisely circumscribed scope of application.

8. The provisions of section 23 facilitate the deprivation of fundamental rights beyond the imposition of restrictions of the rights. Emergency conditions do not justify derogation from Finland's obligations under binding international agreements, as section 23 of the Constitution explicitly states that the exceptions must be compatible with Finland's international human rights obligations. This means that, in the event of an emergency or disaster, the rights specified in international human rights treaties may only be derogated from to the extent as provided for in each treaty.

9. During the COVID-19 pandemic, authorities in Finland have ensured that information about coronavirus is available in several languages. An ESF project (2021-2023) funded by the European Social Fund was launched in Finland in February 2021, the purpose of which is to examine the realisation of the rights of persons with disabilities or immigrant backgrounds in emergencies and crisis situations. The purpose of the study is to investigate the experiences of these groups during the pandemic and use the findings to find ways to improve preparedness for future emergencies.

10. In oversight of legality by the Chancellor of Justice, the COVID-19 pandemic has been manifested particularly as a significant increase in the number of complaints.

II. Implementation of Articles 1–7

Article 1

Population

11. According to Statistics Finland's preliminary data, the Finnish population was 5,543,659 at the end of July 2021.

12. According to Statistics Finland's demographic data in 2020, at the end of 2020 there were 444,031 people with an immigrant background living permanently in Finland, which represents 8% of the population. The number of first-generation immigrants, i.e. those born in another country, was 367,417, and the number of second-generation immigrants, i.e. those born in Finland, was 76,614.

13. The largest group of people with an immigrant background were, by a significant margin, those who originated from Russia or the former Soviet Union. At the end of 2020, their number was 90,801, which is one fifth of the total population with an immigrant background. The next most common backgrounds were Estonian (50,590), Iraqi (25,439) and Somali (22,534).

14. At the end of 2020, more than half (53%) of first-generation immigrants originated from European countries. 30% came from Asian countries, and 11% came from African countries.

15. Among second-generation immigrants (those born in Finland), 46% had a European background, 28% had an Asian background, and 22% had an African background. The proportion of second-generation immigrants with an African background is double that of first-generation African immigrants.

Statistics

16. Statistics Finland produces statistics on persons living in Finland according to their nationality, language and country of birth. The statistics may also be compiled according to origin, which means the country in which the individual's parents were born. According to Article 9(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council), the processing of personal data revealing racial or ethnic origin, *inter alia*, is prohibited. Exceptions to the prohibition may be made only in the circumstances set out in Article 9(2) and provided that appropriate safeguards are in place to protect the rights of the data subject. In addition, section 6(1) of the Data Protection Act (1050/2018) provides for certain situations in which the prohibition of processing is not applied. As the census is based on register data, official statistics on ethnic groups cannot be produced in Finland.

17. The Ministry of Justice has established national stakeholder and network cooperation to develop data collection in order to harmonise the methods and improve the availability of disaggregated data (2021–2022) (recommendation 7). Network cooperation includes five thematic round tables and five information forms, which will include recommendations and conclusions on the topic.

18. Surveys can provide information about the situation of members of minority groups. However, insufficient numbers of minority members in the samples is a common problem. For this reason, studies have been carried out with a focus on certain groups (e.g. the survey on work and well-being among people of foreign origin in Finland (UTH) and the National Institute for Health and Welfare survey on well-being among the foreign-born population (FinMonik)).

19. The Gender Equality in Finland 2021 publication of Statistics Finland contains extensive statistical data by gender. The English version will be published in autumn 2021.

Article 2

Government Programme

20. The Government of Prime Minister Sanna Marin, which was appointed on 10 December 2019, has adopted “a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable Finland by 2030” as its programme. In accordance with the Government Programme, the need to intervene in the most serious forms of organised racism by legislative means will be assessed. In addition, the Government monitors the impacts of the use of artificial intelligence on equality and aims to ensure that AI systems do not use models that lead to direct or indirect discrimination. The Government Programme also contains several points relating to combating racism and promoting equality. The programme points are related to both the development of legislation and the intensification of anti-racism policy measures.

Non-Discrimination Act

21. The purpose of the Non-Discrimination Act (1325/2014) is to promote equality, prevent discrimination and enhance the protection provided by law to those who have been discriminated against. The Act entered into force on 1 January 2015. According to the Programme of Prime Minister Marin’s Government, a partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act will be implemented during the Government term. In addition, the programme states that equality and non-discrimination plans will be made obligatory across the education system and that provisions will also be introduced regarding obligatory equality and non-discrimination plans for early childhood education and care.

22. The results of the project on the effectiveness of the Non-Discrimination Act (the VN-TEAS project) were published on 25 November 2020. At the level of legislation, many of the objectives of the Non-Discrimination Act have been successful, and the range of available legal instruments is generally considered good. The strands of discrimination are now addressed better compared to the previous Act, and regulation has been harmonised. The main challenges in the realisation of the objectives of the Non-Discrimination Act are related to its implementation and the fact that the different strands and settings of discrimination relate to different redress channels.

23. The project examining the Act’s effectiveness, as well as other practical applications, have highlighted various needs for clarifying and developing the legislation. Regulation requires reform measures, some of which are technical, but others require more in-depth assessment of the content and structure of regulation. Therefore, it should be assessed whether other changes are needed in the Non-Discrimination Act in connection with the partial reform in addition to those set out in the Government Programme.

24. The partial reform of the Non-Discrimination Act is currently being prepared, and the reform working group and a sub-group focusing on workplace discrimination were appointed in June 2021. The term of office of both groups is 10 June 2021–31 May 2022.

Fundamental and human rights indicators

25. On 23 June 2021, the Government adopted the third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights for 2020–2023. The objective of the Action Plan is to fulfil the obligation laid down in section 22 of the Constitution to guarantee the observance of fundamental and human rights. The preparation of the action plan was led by the Ministry of Justice and involved broad-based cooperation with a number of ministries and consultations with stakeholders. The drafting of the action plan is steered by the Government's network for fundamental and human rights. A working group of experts appointed in February 2020 is responsible for its practical preparation.

26. Fundamental and human rights indicators have been developed as part of the action plan. A systematic monitoring system will be developed for monitoring the realisation of fundamental and human rights based on measurable indicators (recommendation 7).

27. The fundamental and human rights indicators support informed decision-making in matters related to fundamental and human rights. The aim is that the indicators could monitor the realisation of fundamental and human rights in both the short and long term. The indicators also support impact assessment relating to fundamental and human rights.

Government's third network for fundamental and human rights

28. The Government's third network for fundamental and human rights has been appointed for the term 12 February 2020–31 December 2023. The aim of the network is to strengthen the realisation of fundamental and human rights by improving the flow of information and cooperation in matters concerning fundamental and human rights in the Government's work. The network includes human rights contact persons from all ministries and permanent advisers from the Parliamentary Ombudsman's office, the Office of the Chancellor of Justice and the Human Rights Centre. The network monitors, for example, the implementation of recommendations issued to Finland by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Action Plan to Combat Racism and Promote Good Relations

29. The Action Plan to Combat Racism and Promote Good Relations has started with an evaluation to examine legislation, measures to combat discrimination and experiences of different populations of racism and discrimination in Finland. Based on the situational picture, a broad-based Action Plan will be issued as a government resolution in 2021. The objective of the Plan is to combat racism and discrimination and promote good community relations.

30. The Action Plan is intended to address issues such as combating hate speech and hate crime, non-discrimination in the workplace, and how to influence general attitudes and relations between populations. In addition, efforts will be made to promote a culture of intervention to combat racism in Finland. The work will continue in various administrative branches until the end of 2022.

Other work promoting equality

31. The national discrimination monitoring system and its advisory group, which have been appointed for the period 1 October 2020 to 31 December 2022, will include various development measures such as the development of a national monitoring model for structural discrimination.

32. The All in For Equality project aims to increase public awareness about racism and ways to combat it. In particular, the project aims to combat discrimination and harassment of ethnic and religious minorities. In 2021, all police departments will organise training on ethnic profiling and its consequences and on non-discriminatory police work in general.

33. Efforts will be made to develop the implementation and oversight of equality planning: tools, training and guides will be produced especially for local authorities.

Discrimination in Finland 2017–2019

34. The Ministry of Justice has published a report on discrimination in Finland 2017–2019 (Appendix I). The report describes discrimination and associated trends in Finland in 2017–19. The report is structured according to the indicator areas of the Ministry of Justice discrimination monitoring system: general climate and attitudes, experiences and observations of discrimination, complaints and decisions, hate speech and hate crimes, and equality promotion.

35. According to the report, Finnish people’s attitudes towards minorities, persons with disabilities and older people are becoming more tolerant. They mostly align with the prevailing attitudes in the European Union. The most discriminated immigrant minorities are those of African origin, and discrimination based on ethnicity and skin colour seems to be quite common in Finland. New information has been obtained about discrimination against the Roma. In Finland, attitudes towards Roma people are rather negative in comparison with the EU level. There are indications of structural discrimination in the situation of Sámi people. With regard to persons with disabilities and older people, issues are largely related to access to services and information about services, and physical inaccessibility. Discrimination and harassment of gender and sexual minorities remains common, although the situation has clearly improved during the period under review. The number of cases is relatively small, but the contents of the decisions are significant.

Fundamental Rights Barometer

36. The National Fundamental Rights Barometer is a research project that examined the experiences of persons with disabilities and linguistic minorities with regard to certain fundamental rights. The research carried out in 2019 was part of the implementation of the National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights.

37. The results, published in June 2021, offer new kinds of comparable demographic data for the preparation of fundamental and human rights policies. Differences between respondent groups were in particular related to experiences of harassment, discrimination and violence. For example, men whose native language was Arabic had more experiences of harassment, discrimination and violence than respondents from other groups. In the future, the intention is to further develop the barometer and consolidate it as part of the national monitoring of fundamental and human rights. In addition, the need and possibility of extending the sample of the barometer to include further population groups will be examined.

Eurobarometer survey on discrimination

38. The European Union’s Barometer survey on discrimination has been carried out in the Member States since 2008. It produces a wealth of information about attitudes and makes it possible to compare the situation in Finland with that in other EU Member States.

39. According to the latest Eurobarometer 2019 (<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2251>), a total of 73% of Finns consider discrimination against the Roma to be common in Finland, while the EU-wide figure was 61%. Discrimination based on ethnic origin or skin colour is also considered very common in Finland (65%). On the other hand, religious discrimination is clearly considered less common than ethnic discrimination. The views of Finns are close to the European Union average, except that discrimination against the Roma is considered to be more common than in other countries.

40. Only 23% of Finns consider gender-based discrimination to be common, while the EU-wide average is 35%. 45% of Finnish people thought that discrimination against transgender people was common, and 32% thought that discrimination against non-binary people was common. These rates were somewhat lower than the EU average. In terms of gender attitudes, Finns are more tolerant than the EU average, and tolerance has increased in this respect both in Finland and in the European Union since 2015.

41. Discrimination based on sexual orientation (lesbian, gay and bisexual) is considered to be common at 42%, compared to 53% on average in the European Union. 69% of Finns would not see any problem if their colleagues were lesbian, gay or bisexual, and 61% would

accept their child's same-sex partner. Attitudes towards sexual orientation have also become more tolerant both in Finland and in the European Union.

42. According to the Eurobarometer, 40% considered discrimination against persons with disabilities to be common in Finland, while the EU-wide average was 44%. Tolerance has also increased in this respect both in Finland and in the EU as a whole since 2015.

43. 37% of Finns consider age discrimination to be common, while the EU-wide average is 40%. 78% of Finns are happy to work with young people, and 76% are happy to work with elderly colleagues. These figures are among the lowest in the European Union. Finns also see youth or old age as a significant disadvantage in job-seeking (63%). Attitudes towards ageing are also reflected in data on workplace discrimination.

Being Black in the EU – Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey

44. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has published a second EU-wide study on minorities and discrimination (Being Black in the EU - Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey). According to the survey, almost one-third (30%) of respondents with an African background had experienced racist harassment in the five years preceding the survey. The number of people who had experienced racist harassment in the five years preceding the survey was 63%. The most common forms of racist harassment experienced by respondents were offensive non-verbal cues (22%), offensive or threatening comments (21%) and violent threats (8%). Young respondents were more likely to experience racist harassment. Only 14% of the most recent cases of racist harassment were reported to the police or other bodies.

45. Approximately 5% of the respondents had experienced racist violence (including police brutality) in the five years preceding the survey. The figures were highest in Finland (14%) and Ireland and Austria (both 13%).

Report on multiple discrimination

46. The Ministry of Justice has produced a report on multiple discrimination (Tensions all the time – Multiple discrimination as experienced by persons belonging to sexual and gender minorities). The study investigated multiple discrimination experienced by persons belonging to sexual and gender minorities who are also part of an ethnic or religious minority or persons with disabilities. The report also gives a broader overview of attitudes experienced by minority groups in Finland and the experience of belonging to more than one minority. In the report, multiple discrimination refers to situations in which a person experiences unlawful discrimination based on more than one protected characteristic, either simultaneously or at different times. The concept of multiple discrimination is not unambiguous and is not mentioned in the Non-Discrimination Act.

47. Interviews were carried out between 30 November 2017 and 15 March 2018 with 27 interviewees who belonged to a sexual and/or gender minority and one or more of the following groups: ethnic minorities, religious minorities and persons with disabilities. According to the interviewees, the general attitudes towards sexual minorities have become more positive; even at the legislative level, equality has increased and the prohibitions of discrimination have been strengthened. However, sexual minorities still encounter discrimination, harassment and heteronormative assumptions in their lives. Belonging to a sexual minority can be particularly difficult for persons from religious or ethnic minorities. There are still major shortcomings in the legal status of transgender and non-binary persons, and gender minorities are generally not as well known as sexual minorities. They encounter in their daily lives the prevailing gender binary, in which they are unable to situate themselves. It often leads to situations in which they are subject to negative attention or exclusion. The problem is exacerbated if they also have disabilities or belong to an ethnic minority group.

48. Persons of colour in particular experience general harassment and discrimination in everyday situations. They are also discriminated against in the labour market. Persons with disabilities are also often excluded in the labour market. Inaccessible physical environments hinder their participation, and their sexuality is not taken into account. Hetero- and cisnormativity is a problem in services for persons with disabilities. Life can be particularly

difficult for persons who belong to two minorities between which tensions exist. Those who had experienced discrimination or harassment said that they had limited their participation in various events when they anticipated the possibility of discrimination.

Youth Barometer 2020

49. According to the Youth Barometer 2020, 7% of young people have encountered discrimination or prejudice in at least one of the reviewed services. Discrimination was experienced most commonly by young people who identified with more than one minority. One out of six of them had experienced discrimination in a service.

Reform of the Act on Legal Recognition of the Gender of Transsexuals

50. A working group has been appointed for the term 15 March 2021–31 January 2022 to prepare a government proposal for the reform of the Act on Legal Recognition of the Gender of Transsexuals (563/2002). In accordance with the Government Programme for the purpose of respecting the right of self-determination, an Act on the verification of gender will be put into force.

Combating discrimination against sexual minorities

51. The Government established an informal rainbow network at the end of 2019. The network meets several times a year to discuss topical fundamental and human rights issues related to sexual and gender minorities.

52. The Ministry of Justice is currently preparing a report together with other ministries on the realisation of fundamental and human rights of sexual and gender minorities.

53. The discrimination monitoring system also aims to promote the monitoring of discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people. The monitoring system has produced aggregated data on topics such as the equality of LGBTIQ+ people and the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on equality, again including from the perspective of LGBTIQ+ people. Also within the framework of the monitoring system, a report on the impacts of hate speech and harassment will be launched as a follow-up to the report published in 2016. One of the target groups of the survey is LGBTIQ+ people.

54. Finland holds the presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2021. One of the projects under Finland's presidency focuses on hate crimes and harassment encountered by LGBTIQ+ people.

Report on integration and the Government Integration Programme

55. The Government report on the need to reform integration-promoting measures was submitted to Parliament on 17 June 2021. Its purpose is to provide an outline for developing the promotion of integration, to ensure the social inclusion of the growing immigrant population and the harnessing of immigrants' skills in the response to major changes in society, such as the decline in the working age population.

56. The programme also creates a structure for promoting the integration of immigrants outside the workforce. This will improve the integration opportunities especially for immigrant women who are stay-at-home mothers.

Integration monitoring system, overview and statistical database

57. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is responsible for monitoring integration measures and outcomes, and demographic relations. At the beginning of 2019, the Ministry published the Integration Indicators monitoring system. The monitoring system consists of indicators that describe the conditions for immigrants. The indicators include data derived from databases and research on employment, education, well-being, inclusion and two-way integration. For example, measured by income, health and housing indicators, well-being outcomes for immigrants are clearly lagging behind the rest of the population, and the rate of immigrant children in low-income families is approximately fourfold compared to children with a Finnish background.

58. A review based on scientific articles will be published in each government term to assess the current state of integration and demographic relations. Among other findings, the 2019 review noted that the labour market position of immigrant women was very weak despite their relatively high level of education and language proficiency. The hierarchy of the labour market is illustrated by clear discrimination in recruitment based solely on the applicant's name.

59. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment also maintains an open, register-based statistical database, which contains extensive information about the structure of the immigrant population in Finland.

Family reunification of beneficiaries of international protection

60. In July 2020, the Ministry of the Interior set up a project to evaluate the legislation on family reunification of beneficiaries of international protection in order to promote the protection of family life and the best interests of children. The aim of the project is to prepare the necessary legislative amendments to the Aliens Act (301/2004) in order to remove the subsistence requirement as a condition for residence permits for family members of minors receiving international protection. The project will use the findings to draft suggestions for a government proposal to amend the Aliens Act.

Developing legislation to prepare for mass influx

61. The Ministry of the Interior has set up a project to prepare legislative amendments with the aim of developing preparedness and management of mass influx into the country. In a mass influx scenario, both existing and new reception centres for asylum seekers and surplus accommodation are about to reach their full capacity, immigrants continue to arrive and the number of arrivals is higher than the number of people leaving the country.

62. The project will clarify the provisions on preparedness for mass influx of the Act on the Reception of Persons Applying for International Protection and on the Identification of and Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (746/2011). It will also draft provisions for the Act on the treatment of detained foreign nationals and the detention units (116/2002) to facilitate increasing the detention capacity during non-emergency exceptions faster than is currently possible, and provisions for national legislation on seeking assistance from the European Asylum Support Office (EASO).

63. The draft government proposal for legislation on the development of preparedness for mass influx was submitted for consultation from June to August 2021, and it is expected to come before Parliament in autumn 2021.

Action Plan for the Prevention of Irregular Entry and Stay

64. The Ministry of the Interior has prepared a fourth national action plan for the prevention of irregular entry and stay, which covers the period 2021–2024.

65. People migrate to Finland primarily for work, study, or because of family ties. Illegal entry and residence in Finland are still rare compared to other European countries and Finland's total immigration volume.

66. The action plan examines measures against illegal immigration and residence and related phenomena in a comprehensive manner. Proactive measures cover the whole process from countries of origin and transit to border and in-country measures. The plan also addresses return and reintegration and people who are in the country without a right of residence. The measures are intended to combat illegal entry and residence in a holistic manner and to expose abuses, cases of exploitation and human trafficking. It will also help to prevent the emergence of parallel societies. The action plan emphasises respect for fundamental and human rights and exposing human trafficking in a cross-cutting manner. All actions need to pay particular attention to vulnerable people, especially children.

A phenomenon-based approach as part of the implementation of the national cooperation model for internal security

67. In 2020, the Ministry of the Interior carried out phenomenon-based work as part of the implementation of the national cooperation model for internal security. Cross-administrative phenomenon-based work seeks to find ways to influence new and complex phenomena relating to internal security. One of the eight explored phenomena was asylum seekers who remain in the country without a residence permit. The phenomenon task group proposed measures that could influence the number and status of those staying in Finland without a residence permit after their asylum application is rejected and to reduce the risks that the situation poses to these individuals and society. Based on the outputs of the phenomenon task group and on stakeholder materials five priority proposals for influencing this phenomenon were drawn up:

- (i) Exploring the possibility of setting up a firewall so that e.g. vulnerable victims of crime who are in the country without a residence permit would be able to visit the authorities without fear of immediate return;
- (ii) Finding ways to develop residence permits so that those without a residence permit would have better opportunities to apply for a residence permit;
- (iii) Establishing a coherent and clear nationwide service system that ensures essential care and subsistence;
- (iv) Facilitating return to countries of origin by various means. The primary aim is that persons who do not have a residence permit in Finland return or are returned to their countries of origin;
- (v) Improving communication with countries of origin both for individuals without a residence permit and between the authorities.

68. These priority proposals were approved by the national cooperation group on 30 September 2020.

Together towards adulthood and ‘Forward’ projects

69. Funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Yhdessä Aikuisuuteen (‘Together towards adulthood’) develops and models services in child protection follow-up and supported services for unaccompanied minors and young immigrants who are entitled to support services under the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration. The project will last until mid-2023.

70. Another ESF project coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is the Eteenpäin (‘Forward’) project of the Finnish Red Cross, which supports young adults aged 18 to 25 who need support in becoming independent and their immediate communities using digital methods and network-based methods. Young people with an immigrant background are one of the groups targeted by the activities and expected to benefit from this project in particular. The final funding decision for the project is expected soon. The project will last until the end of 2022.

National child strategy

71. Finland is currently implementing a national child strategy based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other fundamental and human rights obligations. One of the priorities in implementing the strategy is the promotion of the rights of children belonging to minorities and who have experienced discrimination. The aim is e.g. to promote the equality of children, develop ways of taking into account both the impacts of structural discrimination and situation-specific vulnerabilities, collect information on differences in well-being and their causes, use information to support decision-making that promotes children’s rights, and ensure that different services and forms of support are available equally and in a non-discriminatory manner to all children.

Sámi truth and reconciliation commission

72. In cooperation with the Sámi Parliament and the Skolt Village Assembly, the Government has prepared the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission for the Sámi. The intention is to set up a five-member commission which would be independent in its activities. The commission will review historical events and identify lessons learned. The commission is currently mandated until the end of November 2022. Work has been delayed, and it has been proposed to the commission that it could continue its work until the end of 2023. The plenary assembly of the Sámi Parliament and the Skolt Village Assemblies have unanimously supported the extension. The Government is also committed to extending the working period until the end of the current government term.

73. In 2018, the Universities of Lapland and Oulu, the Sámi Education Centre and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers delivered a learning module on reconciliation (15 ECTS credits), which complements the truth and reconciliation process. The module provided tools for solving local disputes by peaceful means.

Action programme for making digital transport and communication services accessible

74. Promoting digitalisation is one of the key objectives of the Government Programme. New digital services should facilitate the everyday lives of as many citizens as possible, regardless of their abilities, and should not increase social exclusion. The focus of the “Making digital transport and communication services accessible” action programme for 2017–2022 is to ensure that digital services are suitable for as many people as possible. A further focus is the availability of information concerned with physical accessibility and communicating it to service providers. The action programme aims at implementing the Design for All (DFA) principle and mainstreaming it in the administrative branch of transport and communications, preventing social exclusion in transport and communication services, and promoting multi-channel services and technology neutrality. The programme covers digital services for both transport and communications.

Anti-discrimination work in Åland

Integration

75. The Provincial Act of the Åland Islands on the Promotion of Integration (ÅFS 2012:74) entered into force on 1 January 2013. It is supplemented by application provisions which entered into force on 24 January 2013. The Act and the related provisions pertain to the promotion of good ethnic relations between population groups. Non-discrimination and equal treatment are important to promoting the sense of inclusion.

76. In 2017–2021, the Government of Åland has implemented two integration programmes, the current one covering the period 2020–2023. Both programmes include objectives and actions to promote integration, and they are continuously monitored and evaluated.

77. The focus areas of Åland’s integration policy (in both the previous and the current programme) include facilitating the use of Swedish, education, gainful employment and employment outcomes, supporting young immigrants and their families, and promoting positive attitudes and zero tolerance of racism. Both programme documents explicitly state that discrimination and equal treatment are linked to the equality of all people and to UN conventions and that they should be seen as political statements.

78. The Provincial Government’s integration programme for 2020–2023 draws attention to human rights and the associated conventions in its introductory chapter. It also points to the EU action plan on human rights and democracy 2020–2023.

79. In 2018–2021, the Provincial Government has held lead responsibility for the three-year AMIF project, which concerns actions by municipalities, authorities and the third sector to develop cooperation in the reception and integration of refugees in the region.

80. In the winter of 2019–2020, training was organised for 13 social and health communication officers whose first language is not Swedish. In this way, the aim is to

disseminate information to the residents of Åland in several different languages. Some of the information deals with human rights, human rights treaties and legislation related to non-discrimination.

81. The new Provincial Act of Åland on children's day care and comprehensive school contains a non-discrimination section (section 5), according to which all children and pupils have the right to equal day care and basic education without harassment and bullying, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, intersex identity or gender expression, disability, ethnic origin, religion, belief or other reason.

Experiences of discrimination

82. The integration work of the Province of Åland also involves monitoring and evaluation. The Provincial Government commissioned a follow-up study from the Åland Statistical and Research Office (ÅSUB) to map the situation of people who have moved to the islands, including experiences of discrimination. The research report published in June 2020 described the experiences of Nordic and non-Nordic immigrants who have moved to Åland. According to the report, 14% of the interviewees from 316 non-Nordic countries reported having experienced discrimination due to their foreign background, nationality, lack of Swedish proficiency or foreign appearance. According to the same study, 9% of the 305 interviewees who spoke Swedish or other Scandinavian language had experienced discrimination on the grounds that they had moved to the region from elsewhere.

83. During the review period, the Office of Special Delegates of Åland commissioned a follow-up study for the discrimination survey conducted in 2010. At the beginning of 2021, ÅSUB published the results of the study in its report on discrimination experienced in the province. According to the report, 33% of the 576 respondents interviewed reported having experienced discrimination in Åland. This is slightly more than in the previous discrimination surveys in 2007 and 2010 (30% and 28% respectively). The report shows that the most common reason for discrimination experienced is gender, i.e. being the "wrong" gender in a particular situation (33%). Another relatively common reason was age, i.e. being considered too young (19%) or too old (13%). Some forms of discrimination related to a person's language background (18%) or national or ethnic origin (16%).

The Non-Discrimination Ombudsman of Åland

84. According to the case statistics of the Åland Non-Discrimination Ombudsman (Ålands ombudsmannmyndighet), in 2017–2020 the agency was contacted 20 times for advice on matters concerning discrimination on the basis of ethnic or other origin. Thirteen of the contacts were women and seven were men. During the same period, a total of 136 cases (15% of which were related to ethnic discrimination) were recorded by the Office of the Special Delegates of Åland.

Article 3

Housing policy and neighbourhood programme

85. Housing policy promotes equality and non-discrimination in housing. The working group for the housing policy development programme submitted its report on 18 December 2020. The programme describes the current state of the housing market in Finland, housing policy objectives and principles outlining decision-making in housing policy. The programme also includes proposed actions for 2021–2028.

86. Although segregation between residential areas has intensified in Finland over the last 20 years, it is still relatively minimal in international comparison. The segregation of residential areas according to income has intensified in particular, but the concentration of people with a foreign background in low-income areas has also increased.

87. The development of the suburbs of Finland's largest cities will continue in line with the neighbourhood development programme (Lähiöohjelma) to be implemented in 2020–2022 in accordance with the Government Programme. The objective is to facilitate positive long-term development of residential areas to support residents' well-being and regions'

vitality. Cross-administrative measures are sought to prevent issues such as segregation in residential areas.

Development programme for quality and equality in comprehensive education

88. The objective of the Right to Learn programme is to reduce and prevent learning differences, to strengthen support for learning and for special needs, and to improve literacy. The intended measures include strengthening the status of local schools, reducing group sizes and reforming funding to better support equality in education. The implementation aims for long-term impact through legislation and through the system of central government transfers to local government. A total of EUR 120 million will be allocated to the measures for the period 2020–2022.

89. According to the Government Programme, funding will be allocated to measures aimed at reducing the impacts on attainment outcomes of parents' educational background, social background, residential area or gender.

Article 4

Hate speech, incitement to racial hatred and hate crimes

90. Combating hate crime has been set as a priority area for the police (recommendation 11 a and b). The police have invested both in training and in the investigation of reported cases. In 2017, the police, in cooperation with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), implemented the TAHCLE training (Training Against Hate Crimes for Law Enforcement). Hate crime is also addressed in basic and continuing policing education. A group was established in 2017 with additional funding granted by the Ministry of the Interior at the Helsinki Police Department to identify and investigate online hate speech offences. In addition, departments have assigned officers who focus on these areas. The group has now been merged with the general cyber-crime team.

91. The National Police Board has issued guidelines on the identification and recording of hate crimes and a separate guideline on referring victims to support services.

92. On 20 May 2021, the Ministry of the Interior appointed a working group to prepare practical proposals to better combat online harassment. Online harassment has increased in recent years. Targets include police officers, prosecutors, judges, researchers, journalists, representatives of ethnic minorities and their allies. Ordinary members of the public can also be targeted. The working group investigated the current state and scope of online harassment and ways for authorities to combat it more effectively and improve legal protection for its victims.

93. The police also carries out preventive activities in order to intervene in hate crimes and encourage reporting. The strategy for preventive policing 2019–2023 and the associated action plan prepared by the National Police Board contain several measures related to hate crime.

94. As one form of prevention, the police use a local problem-solving operating model in which the police work with various local actors to address security issues. The Police University College of Finland runs a continuing training course for police officers on polarisation, identity conflicts and defusing polarisation in policing.

95. In recent years, the Ministry of Justice has carried out several projects focusing on hate crimes and hate speech that have received funding from the European Union's Fundamental Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. All of these projects have involved the development of law enforcement's competencies in identifying, investigating and reporting hate crime.

96. The Facts against Hate project (1 December 2019–30 November 2021) develops data collection and hate crime reporting. As part of the project, the Police University College has mapped how hate crime cases proceed in the criminal process and the use of aggravated sentencing provisions by courts. The report identified shortcomings in the identification and processing of hate motives in the criminal process. The proposed solutions include e.g. the

mandatory use of hate crime classification when reported incidents are recorded, improving cooperation during pre-trial investigation and updating the guidance on questioning suspects. In October 2020, the project also organised a webinar for political parties and people who work in their constituency parties, regional or district organisations or as elected officials, and for candidates of the spring 2021 local elections. The webinar's purpose was to raise awareness of harassment, hate speech and the limits of freedom of expression, and to provide perspectives on protection against harassment in order to mitigate the effects of harassment on, for example, candidate selections. In addition, in February 2021, a set of materials was published for local election candidates explaining what hate speech is and advice for those who become targeted by hate speech or harassment.

97. Training on anti-Semitism was organised for the police on 21 January 2021 as part of the Facts against Hate project. In addition, a guide for police officers and stakeholders "Good practices for identifying and preventing acts of hatred" was produced.

98. In spring 2021, the Ministry of Justice launched a two-year Osaavat project to combat hate crime and hate speech. The purpose of the project is to strengthen the competencies of key authorities in combating hate crime and hate speech. The project develops a model for a national centre for anti-discrimination and tests it. The project also supports the establishment of TAHCLE training as part of the regular training activities of local police departments and continues to develop the reporting model for hate crimes at the national level.

99. The Action Plan to Combat Racism and Promoting Good Relations (see paragraphs 29–30) aims to strengthen in particular the competencies of authorities and policy-makers at different levels to intervene in hate speech and recognise their responsibility for social climate (recommendation 11c).

100. According to the annual hate crime report produced by the Police University College of Finland (recommendation 11), hate speech offences are on the rise even though the total number of hate crimes has stabilised. In recent years, online shaming, threats and abuse have increased and become visible phenomena. Although the most common type of hate crime reported to the police is still assault, statistics for 2019 show an increase in the number of incidents involving verbal abuse, threats and harassment. Most commonly, these reports concern defamation and illegal threats. In 2019, the number of suspected ethnic agitation offences tripled from the previous year.

Table 1
Ethnic agitation

<i>C cases</i>	<i>1 Charge</i>	<i>2 SJP</i>	<i>3 ETR</i>	<i>4 Other decision</i>	<i>ETR cases</i>
2016	7	2	3	14	13
2017	17	6	2	24	36
2018	37	8	2	17	9
2019	28	27	1	8	9
2020	15	4	1	10	11
Total	104	47	9	73	58

SJP = decision not to prosecute, ETR = restriction of pre-trial investigation, C cases = Criminal cases

Table 2
Aggravated ethnic agitation

<i>C cases</i>	<i>1 Charge</i>	<i>ETR cases</i>
2017	1	1
2018	1	1
Total	2	1

SJP = decision not to prosecute, ETR = restriction of pre-trial investigation, C cases = Criminal cases

101. The Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations NYTKIS has pointed out that hate speech has an impact on the willingness of women, and especially minority ethnic women, to become active in politics and to stand as candidates.

Ban on the Nordic Resistance Movement

102. In December 2016, the National Police Board made a decision to seek a ban for the Nordic Resistance Movement on the grounds that the group's activities were fundamentally unlawful, in breach of common standards, violent and openly racist. The case has been dealt with in all courts, and the group was finally banned by decision of the Supreme Court (KKO: 2020: 68). The National Police Board has instructed police departments to take action if the group is found to be active again.

Homophobic and transphobic violence

103. The police receives few reports of hate crimes against sexual and gender minorities, even though victim surveys indicate that the phenomenon is considerably more common. One of the objectives of the Facts against Hate project is to increase awareness among sexual and gender minorities about hate crimes and reporting channels and to support reporting of hate crimes. The project also aims to develop support services for victims of hate crime.

Violence in reception centres

104. The Government does not have statistics on violent incidents against clients of reception centres perpetrated outside the reception system. However, according to the Finnish Immigration Service's observations, violence targeted at reception centres has decreased since the previous reporting period.

Article 5

A. Right to equal treatment in courts and other judicial proceedings

105. The All in For Equality project coordinated by the Ministry of Justice (see paragraph 31) includes e.g. development of training for the police on ethnic profiling. In 2021, all police departments will organise training on the consequences of ethnic profiling and non-discriminatory police work in general.

B. Right to personal safety and protection against violence

Foreign nationals in the Finnish prison system

106. Finland's prison population is among the smallest in Europe. In 2019, the average number of prisoners was 2,952, of which foreign nationals accounted for approximately 17%. The increase in the proportion of foreign prisoners has stopped in recent years. As a result of the travel restrictions caused by the coronavirus epidemic, the number of foreign prisoners was somewhat smaller in 2020 than in the previous year.

107. The equal treatment of prisoners in Finland is determined by the Imprisonment Act (767/2005) and the Non-Discrimination Act. The circumstances of incarceration must not

constitute an additional penalty. The special needs of immigrants, relating to e.g. religion, language, housing arrangements and the reception of civilian visitors, should be taken into account in prisons. The Criminal Sanctions Agency has a Non-Discrimination and Equality Plan for prisoners and community service workers dating from 2015.

108. Immigrant prisoners, in particular those of African origin, are often held in secure units for security reasons, with limited access to the prison's activities. In 2012, the Criminal Sanctions Agency published a study on immigrants' life in a Finnish prison. According to the study, foreign prisoners experience abuse such as name-calling by guards and other prisoners.

109. There is no up-to-date information on foreign prisoners housed in secure and segregated units. The last report of the Criminal Sanctions Agency on the matter is from 2015. According to it, 25% of prisoners housed in closed conditions were foreign nationals. At that time, 16% of the total prison population were foreign prisoners, which means that foreigners were overrepresented in closed sections of prisons.

110. Since 2019, foreign prisoners have had access to English versions of the Imprisonment Act and the Remand Imprisonment Act (768/2005). In 2014, the Criminal Sanctions Agency produced a publication titled "Everyday life in prison – guide for prisoners arriving in a closed prison", which deals with prisoners' rights, obligations and practical matters related to imprisonment. In addition, the Criminal Sanctions Agency and prisons have produced translations of prison-specific guides for new prisoners in some of the more common languages.

111. In oral communications with foreign prisoners, interpretation can be used, which is usually organised remotely. In 2019, a glossary of criminal-sanctions terms for conversations with prisoners was translated into ten different languages and published on the Criminal Sanctions Agency website.

Programme to combat violence against women

112. Finland is currently implementing a new Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women for 2020-2023. The cross-cutting theme of the Action Plan is the prevention of violence. The programme includes 32 measures aimed at reaching women across population groups who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, violence. Of the various forms of violence, so-called honour-based abuse and online abuse have been included in the programme. The working group will prepare a report on the implementation of the programme in early 2023.

113. The Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government mentions increasing the number of places and resources for victims' support services and shelters, establishing an independent rapporteur on violence against women, expanding the service offer of support centres for victims of sexual offences and improving national coverage. Further measures include targeting anti-violence measures at individuals who recognise violent tendencies in themselves, securing resources for work to end female genital mutilation, enabling the annulment of forced marriages and investigating the possibility of their criminalisation. The Government Programme also states that a plan is to be drafted for the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention to prevent sexual offences against children and to ensure service provision for the victims, and expansion of the Lastenasiainntalo (Barnahus) children's advocacy centre model.

114. In the decision on complaint no. OKV/1325/1/2018 (12 April 2019), the Deputy Chancellor of Justice strongly urged the police to pay attention to its obligation to record a report of an offence for cases of domestic assault. Further, the Deputy Chancellor of Justice drew attention to the obligation to ensure that the injured party receive sufficient information about victims' support services.

115. The "EU Gender-based violence" study carried out by Statistics Finland maps experiences of violence among 25,000 people aged 16 to 74 living in Finland. The project responds extensively to the need for information on gendered violence both nationally and internationally (the Istanbul Convention) and is also expected to provide information on experiences of so-called honour-based violence nationally.

116. The National Council of Women of Finland has pointed out that, according to a study published in 2014 by the National Research Institute of Legal Policy, immigrant women in Finland have a fourfold risk of becoming a victim of homicide.

Strengthening competencies relating to so-called honour-based violence

117. As part of the programme to combat violence against women, a coordinator post was set up at the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) on 1 January 2021 with funding from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment to strengthen efforts to combat so-called honour-based violence nationwide. The National Institute for Health and Welfare is responsible for launching a national resource or expertise centre, including the coordination of national efforts against honour-based violence, managing the network, compiling training materials for professionals, and stakeholder engagement.

Measures to combat human trafficking

118. The Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government contains a number of points to improve the effectiveness of work against human trafficking. The aim is to reform legislation pertaining to the assistance of victims of human trafficking so that the victims' right to assistance can be realised regardless of where the victim lives and whether they have a municipality of residence. In addition, the intention is to weaken the link between assistance and the criminal process so that victims can receive the necessary assistance and protection irrespective of the commencement of criminal proceedings or their stage or outcome. The legislative reform will be prepared in cross-administrative cooperation led by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health between 2020 and 2022.

119. The Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings for 2021-2023 was adopted by a government resolution on 6 May 2021. It aims to prevent and reduce human trafficking. The programme is based on five strategic objectives and 55 measures, whose implementation will be monitored and reported on by a working group. An external evaluation of the implementation of the programme will be commissioned.

120. The Action Plan will promote the detection of human trafficking, improve the standing of victims and enhance the establishment of criminal liability. The Plan will also strengthen the mainstreaming of anti-trafficking into the wider activities of the Government and intensify cooperation with civil society. The Plan links anti-trafficking closely with analysis, assessment and research activities.

121. Finland will develop its authorities' efforts to proactively reach and identify victims of human trafficking. Awareness of human trafficking will be increased and competencies will be strengthened. In particular, response by occupational safety and health authorities will be developed, and in 2021 an additional resource of 15 person-years has been allocated for monitoring the use of foreign labour. The measures will also be extended to those actors who work with particularly vulnerable groups but are not yet sufficiently involved in the efforts to combat human trafficking. Legislation and authorities' practices will also be developed.

122. The Action Plan also improves the position of victims by, for example, strengthening the skills of social welfare and health care professionals and their ability to identify and assist victims of human trafficking through e.g. training, guidance and the development of cooperation.

123. The Action Plan also promotes due application of criminal responsibility in various ways. Finland aims to ensure that pre-trial investigation authorities have a comprehensive and national situational picture of human trafficking offences and that the work of the authorities, especially the police, is managed in a goal-oriented manner based on performance management towards more effective and high-quality crime prevention and investigation of human trafficking offences. A national group with a capacity of 20 person-years specialising in human trafficking has been established by the police in 2021.

124. In the Action Plan, the work to combat human trafficking is seen as a cross-administrative effort that will be advanced collaboratively by several ministries and agencies. The Action Plan establishes a strong link between research and the development of measures to combat human trafficking. For example, Finland is developing statistics on human

trafficking and implementing several studies on the practical application of legislation related to human trafficking. On the basis of the studies, the possible need for legislative amendments will be assessed, for example with regard to the Aliens Act and the Criminal Code.

125. In 2020, a coordinator was appointed for the Government's work against human trafficking to coordinate different ministries' work in this area.

126. Between 2017 and 2020, charges were brought in 25 cases of human trafficking or aggravated human trafficking.

127. The Office of the Prosecutor General organises regularly training related to human trafficking for prosecutors. The trainings always include the victim's perspective in the pre-trial investigation and criminal proceedings as well as the psychological impacts on the victim. As part of the Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings, a national network of special prosecutors specialising in human trafficking has been established.

128. The objective of the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, who also acts as a National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings, is to promote the identification and assistance of victims of human trafficking and the realisation of their rights. The Ombudsman may provide legal advice to victims of human trafficking, and in exceptional cases, also assist victims of human trafficking in court. The Rapporteur's most recent report was submitted to Parliament in 2018. According to the Rapporteur, human trafficking is detected more efficiently than before, and action against human trafficking has developed in Finland. In the report, the Rapporteur drew special attention to the challenges related to identifying victims of human trafficking, referring them to assistance, and access to assistance.

129. All officials of the Finnish Immigration Service who are involved in asylum interviews and decision-making have received training and guidance on human trafficking in 2017–2021. In addition, all new recruits also receive orientation on human trafficking and identifying signs of human trafficking. Some of the Immigration Service officials have also completed the training module of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO). Training has also been organised on specific themes related to human trafficking, such as forced marriages. The Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings includes a measure which requires the Finnish Immigration Service to prepare an internal training plan on human trafficking. Implementation of this measure is under way.

130. The Finnish Immigration Service has also developed guidance relating to human trafficking and the decision-making and application practices of the asylum procedure. The Service has reviewed its decision-making practices regarding residence permits granted to victims of human trafficking, for example following certain decisions published in the Yearbook of the Supreme Administrative Court (KHO 2017: 42 and 43). The decisions assessed the risk of becoming a victim of human trafficking again and the vulnerable position of victims of human trafficking.

131. In autumn 2020, the Finnish Immigration Service issued guidance on handling cases with possible victims of human trafficking. Its purpose is to promote uniform application of the Aliens Act when processing the asylum or residence permit applications of potential victims of human trafficking. The Government's action plan also includes a measure requiring the Finnish Immigration Service to review its application practices and the case law of continuous residence permits granted to victims of human trafficking.

132. The assistance system for victims of human trafficking functions as part of the Joutseno reception centre. The assistance system plays an important role in training other agencies and increasing awareness of human trafficking. The assistance system maintains a human trafficking helpline and the ihmiskauppa.fi website, which provides information about human trafficking and assistance offered to victims and witnesses in several different languages.

133. The assistance system has also regularly trained the border guards and other personnel of the Border Guard on how to recognise victims of human trafficking. Training has also been delivered to the police, the security sector and the criminal sanctions sector. In addition, the assistance system has provided training relating to human trafficking in cooperation with Victim Support Finland (RIKU) for advocates and lawyers.

134. In March 2021, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Employment and the Economy commissioned a study on the criteria for granting residence permits to victims of human trafficking. The report will be prepared by the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, who acts as the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings. The report is due to be completed in September 2021. The report examines, among other things, what types of victims of human trafficking have been identified by the Finnish Immigration Service, what types of exploitation the victims have been subjected to, and their chances of recovering from exploitation. One of the key research questions is how the vulnerability of victims of human trafficking is identified and assessed on the basis of the Aliens Act.

135. On 25 April 2021, the Deputy Chancellor of Justice announced that he would open an inquiry into police response in suspected cases of human trafficking. The Deputy Chancellor of Justice will produce an extensive report on investigations in suspected cases of human trafficking and the response of police officers in such cases, e.g. delays in pre-trial investigations. The inquiry will also examine whether the police recognise the essential elements of human trafficking and whether there is a structural problem in police investigations into human trafficking.

136. Statistics are available on human trafficking offences reported to authorities and investigated cases. The datasets are derived from the PATJA system of the police. Statistics are also available on charges and convictions.

137. The National Council of Women of Finland has pointed out that 59% of the clients of the assistance system for victims of human trafficking in Finland were women or girls in 2020. Sexual exploitation and forced marriages are common forms of exploitation in the case of women and girls, whereas forced labour is common for men and boys. Certain nationalities are common amongst victims of human trafficking, and it is thought that people who reside in Finland without a legal right of residence, or so-called paperless migrants, are particularly vulnerable to multiple forms of exploitation.

Combating the exploitation of foreign labour

138. According to the Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government, the exploitation of foreign labour will be taken into account when developing measures relating to labour migration. It is not possible to develop a sustainable labour immigration policy without preventing the exploitation of migrant workers.

139. According to the 2020 report on monitoring equality and non-discrimination in the workplace, there were 430 inspections involving the prohibition of discrimination with regard to the use of foreign labour. Almost 60 of them found discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin, language or nationality in pay or other minimum conditions. A number of inspection audits also contained orders regarding incomplete or missing working time records and shift lists.

140. The working group appointed on 12 March 2020 by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has launched several measures to combat the exploitation of foreign labour. Several amendments to the Aliens Act have been made to combat the exploitation of foreign labour and to improve the status of victims of exploitation. The Act is amended to enable employees to seek employment with another employer in the same or a different field in exploitation cases. In addition, they are entitled to a new fixed-term residence permit to enable them to apply for a new job. Also new sanctions for fraudulent employers and clients are introduced. The legislation will enter into force on 1 October 2021.

Seasonal workers

141. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has published a brochure on employees' rights and points of contact for assistance, and launched a multilingual advisory service for seasonal workers arriving from abroad. "The Working in Finland" brochure provides information about the terms of employment in Finland and advice for exploited workers. The brochure has been published in Finnish, Swedish, English, Russian, Ukrainian, Nepalese and Thai languages.

Strategy for tackling the grey economy and economic crime

142. The Government resolution on a strategy and an Action Plan for Tackling the Grey Economy and Economic Crime for 2020–2023 was adopted on 11 June 2020. The objectives of the strategy are to promote healthy competition between companies and a fair labour market, prevent the grey economy and economic crime, ensure the ability of authorities to combat the grey economy and economic crime, and develop measures to combat the grey economy and economic crime and improve cooperation between authorities. The Action Plan contains 23 projects and a number of concrete actions (around 50) to address abuses in a holistic manner.

143. One of the key projects is to enhance cooperation between the authorities and increase the effectiveness of supervision in order to prevent crime and undeclared work. The project is designed to advance, among other things, systematic control measures and efforts to combat undeclared work in cooperation between national and international authorities, and examine the related provisions on information-sharing and legal competence.

144. The measures of the new strategy and the Action Plan are designed to combat abuses of foreign labour, such as underpay, undeclared work and trafficking in human beings. The Action Plan was supplemented with a number of new projects approved on 10 September 2020, which are aimed at advancing the measures to combat the exploitation of foreign labour.

Recruitment strategy of the Police University College

145. One of the objectives of the recruitment strategy of the Police University College of Finland is to increase the representation of minorities in the police. A separate project on student recruitment was launched at the Police University College in 2019. The project identifies and develops tools to more efficiently recruit policing students from different backgrounds.

Cooperation between the police and the Roma community

146. The police has active cooperation with the Roma community. The National Forum for Police Cooperation includes a Roma representative, and the National Advisory Board on Roma Affairs includes a representative of the National Police Board of Finland. At the request of the Roma community, the police now includes information on hate crimes committed against Roma in the hate crimes report produced by the Police University College of Finland. The police and the Roma community are currently preparing a guidebook on cooperation and interaction.

C. Political rights*Democracy programme*

147. The Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government sets out a new cross-administrative democracy programme which will run until 2025. The Action Plan for the Democracy Programme was published in March 2020, which defines the measures and timetable for democracy projects to be implemented during the government term. On the basis of the Action Plan, a government resolution on the democracy programme 2025 will be drawn up in 2022.

Steering group for the development of democracy and human rights education

148. The Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government contains several entries related to the promotion of democracy and human rights education. In June 2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture appointed a steering group for the development of democracy and human rights education. The steering group will support the implementation of the Government Programme's measures on democracy and human rights education in schools and educational institutions, the inclusion of pupils and the development of competencies of teaching staff.

Party registration

149. The puoluekisteri.fi online service for registering political parties and collecting declarations of support opened in January 2021. The service is free of charge and enables users to submit a party registration online. Support notifications required for registration can also be collected online using strong electronic identification. The new service is intended to make the party registration process more reliable and to promote political engagement.

Self-determination of the indigenous Sámi people

150. The Ministry of Justice appointed a preparatory committee for the amendment of the Act on the Sámi Parliament (974/1995) for the period 1 December 2020–15 May 2021. The Committee included representatives of the Sámi Parliament and government parties. The Committee discussed, among other things, section 3 of the Act, which specifies the eligibility criteria for voting in the elections of the Sámi Parliament (recommendation 15).

151. The Committee submitted its report on 15 May 2021, and it was publicly open for comments from 21 May to 6 August 2021. Only a proposal approved by the Sámi Parliament's assembly will be submitted to Parliament.

152. In its report, the Committee proposes that the eligibility criteria for the electoral list of the Sámi Parliament be amended and the electoral list be compiled on the basis of the revised criteria. The right of the indigenous Sámi people to determine who is a Sámi, is to be strengthened.

153. It is proposed that the definition of Sámi people with regard to the right to vote in elections of the Sámi Parliament (section 3) be amended to extend the scope of the language criterion to the fourth generation and remove the so-called "Lapp" clause. The section would specifically concern the right to vote and stand as a candidate in the elections of the Sámi Parliament and would not serve as a definition of who is a Sámi.

Obligation to negotiate

154. According to section 9 of the Act on the Sámi Parliament, government authorities have an obligation to negotiate with the Sámi Parliament on all wide-ranging and significant measures that may directly and specifically affect the status of the Sámi as an indigenous people. The obligation to negotiate applies to issues such as the Sámi language, culture and status as indigenous people. The obligation requires that the relevant authority provide the Sámi Parliament an opportunity to be heard and negotiate on the matter.

155. In 2017, the Ministry of Justice prepared a memorandum in cooperation with the Sámi Parliament containing good practices concerning the implementation of the obligation to negotiate. The purpose of the negotiation procedure is to facilitate genuine, timely and consensus-seeking discussion. The purpose of the memorandum was to give practical examples of how the obligation to negotiate was implemented.

156. It is proposed that the provision on the obligation of the authorities to negotiate be revised in order to improve policy-influencing opportunities for the Sámi people. The proposed reform also includes further provisions on the consideration of the rights of the Sámi in official matters. There is also a desire to develop the provisions on the powers of the Sámi Parliament and to add a reference to the right to self-determination of the Sámi people in the purpose clause of the Act. In the future, motions supported by 250 Sámi with voting rights could be submitted to the Sámi Parliament in matters that are part of its remit.

D. Other civil rights*Reception of persons requesting international protection*

157. The number of first-time applications for international protection has decreased. Since 2019, the majority of applications have been subsequent applications. The number of first-time applications was particularly low in 2020 and 2021 due to the global coronavirus pandemic. However, the pandemic has not affected the number of placements of residence permit recipients to municipalities from reception centres. It has remained at the level of previous years.

158. The Finnish Immigration Service has continued and developed its oversight of the reception system. Oversight activities are carried out in accordance with the reception system monitoring programme and the annual compliance monitoring plan of the Finnish Immigration Service. Each year, oversight activities are reported in a separate annual report and as part of the compliance monitoring report of the Finnish Immigration Service. According to the reports, the operation of reception centers has generally been appropriate.

159. Since 2018, it has become increasingly common for asylum seekers to arrange accommodation for themselves outside reception centres. Especially in 2020 and 2021, the number of applicants who organised their own accommodation has been affected by cuts in the reception system, the significant number of repeat-applicants who have been in the system for a long time, and the number of applicants who had spent a considerable time in Finland before applying for international protection. Applicants who arrange their accommodation themselves receive the same services as applicants staying in the centres.

Decisions of the Chancellor of Justice

160. Delays in the processing of applications for international protection and decision-making by the Finnish Immigration Service have been noted as part of the oversight of legality by the Chancellor of Justice. A number of complaints have been issued in this area. In addition, decisions on complaints have drawn attention to discrepancies between administrative courts in the handling of cases concerning foreign nationals (OKV/22/50/2018, 8 April 2020), responses to enquiries concerning asylum seekers' right to work (OKV/804/1/2019, 6 May 2020) and asylum seekers' right to record their asylum interviews (OKV/211/1/2017, 14 December 2017).

Reception of unaccompanied minors

161. As part of the refugee quota, Finland has expressed its willingness to receive unaccompanied minors. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have also been received as part of voluntary internal transfers from Mediterranean EU Member States with external borders.

Detention

162. The Finnish Immigration Service has continued and developed its oversight of detention facilities. A separate monitoring programme for detention facilities was drawn up in 2020. Section 121 of the Aliens Act provides exhaustive criteria for the detention of foreign nationals. Detention cannot be used as a punishment. Provisions on the treatment of detainees are laid down in the Act on the Treatment of Aliens Placed in Detention and Detention Units (116/2002). According to section 11 of the Act, accommodation, full subsistence, interpreter services and other essential basic amenities must be provided to detainees. In addition, the special needs of vulnerable detainees must be taken into account in the provisions (recommendation 25b). In 2019, the Parliamentary Ombudsman carried out an unannounced audit of the Helsinki detention unit and in 2018 an audit of the Joutseno detention unit. The Ombudsman also carried out a pre-announced inspection of the Joutseno detention unit in June 2021.

163. According to section 123 of the Aliens Act (813/2015), a decision to detain an alien, when taken by the police, is made by a commanding police officer at the local police department, the National Bureau of Investigation or the Finnish Security Intelligence Service, and when taken by the Border Guard, by an official of the Border Guard with the power of arrest or a border guard of at least the rank of lieutenant. The person detained or his or her legal representative shall be notified in writing immediately, in a language that he or she understands or which he or she can reasonably be expected to understand, of the grounds for detention and shall be given information about the processing of the matter on which the detention is based and of the possibility of obtaining legal aid.

164. As regards detention at a police facility, the immigration administration has no powers unless the placement is based on an executive request for assistance. These are cases where the detainee cannot be held at a detention unit for security reasons even in isolation. These situations are relatively rare.

165. Several organisations have expressed their concerns about the detention of foreign nationals and especially children. The organisations have emphasized that children applying for asylum with their guardians or children who are about to be removed from the country should also not be detained under any circumstances.

Processing of applications for international protection and the associated decision-making

166. The Finnish Immigration Service has developed its asylum decision-making process. Decision-making officials of the Service's Asylum Unit have been given training that includes internal trainings, training modules of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), and training as part of the Asylrättens kärna project led by Sweden which started in 2018 and focuses on country information, interviewing and risk assessment. The orientation includes comprehensive training on the asylum process.

167. The guidance of the Finnish Immigration Service's Asylum Unit has been developed, and additional guidance and training has been provided specifically around certain applicant profiles, such as gender-based violence and gender and sexual minorities. In 2017–2018, the Asylum Unit developed its oversight of legality and quality control through the LAAVA project on quality control, which is funded by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). The project concerned a systematic method for assessing and reporting the quality of the asylum decision-making process. The quality of interpreting has been developed in the TULPPAANI project funded by AMIF.

168. Decisions issued under the Aliens Act can be appealed in accordance with the Aliens Act and the Administrative Judicial Procedure Act (808/2019). According to section 201(3) of the Aliens Act (437/2019), a decision on refusal of entry to an application for international protection must not be enforced until a legal ruling has been issued on the matter. Section 201 of the Act also contains exhaustive provisions for cases in which a refusal decision can be enforced even if the applicant has requested international protection.

Appeal periods in international protection cases

169. Since September 2016, shorter appeal periods have been in place exclusively for cases concerning international protection. Legal aid for asylum seekers paid from public funds was also restricted, and case-specific fees were introduced exceptionally for attorneys assisting asylum seekers. On 17 December 2020, Prime Minister Marin's Government submitted legislative proposals to Parliament (Government proposal 247/2020) on repealing these provisions. After the amendments, which entered into force on 1 August 2021, the appeal periods in matters concerning international protection are consistent with other case types, asylum seekers can access legal aid paid from public funds also in asylum interviews if necessary, and attorneys' fees in asylum cases are determined on the same grounds as in other types of cases. In addition, particular attention will be paid to the expertise of attorneys assisting asylum seekers, and new ways of ascertaining attorneys' competence and diligence will be evaluated. The amendments strengthen the legal protection of asylum seekers by better ensuring their right to equal treatment in courts and other judicial bodies (recommendation 25a).

170. Because the country of origin of a person seeking international protection is a significant factor in the assessment of the need for international protection, and because human rights situations vary greatly from country to country, it is very difficult to reliably compare decision-making practices across nationalities. The same applies to application criteria, because different sets of application criteria can be in place for one country and they can significantly influence the assessment of the need for international protection and thus also the appeal stage. It should also be noted that in some applicant groups the majority of applications are subsequent applications, i.e. at least one previous application has been rejected, while in some others the majority of applications are first-time applications.

Statistics on removal decisions by nationality

171. The Finnish Immigration Service assesses each case concerning removal from the country specifically from the point of view of non-refoulement. Each case is examined individually in the light of the human rights situation in the country in question. Statistics on

decisions of the Finnish Immigration Service concerning refusal of entry and deportation for the period from the beginning of 2017 to the end of March 2021 are appended (Appendix II).

Review of legally valid asylum decisions

172. Following the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) of November 2019 (*N.A. v. Finland*, no. 25244/18), the Finnish Immigration Service launched an investigation to review its asylum decisions in order to identify any similar cases. In particular, as regards the content of the judgment, the ECHR was not convinced of the quality of the assessment of evidence by the national authorities. In its ruling, the ECHR also raised a question regarding the actual voluntariness in voluntary departure where the person's asylum application has been refused. In total, 319 final asylum decisions made by the Finnish Immigration Service were reviewed. The reviewed cases included numerous nationalities, but the most common countries of origin were Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia. Ten (3%) of the reviewed decisions indicated problems in the processing of the application. The Finnish Immigration Service has launched development measures based on the findings made during the review. Subsequently, the ECHR has revised its judgment and declared the application inadmissible on 13 July 2021.

E. Economic, social and cultural rights

National Roma Policy

173. The National Roma Policy (ROMPO2, 2018–2022) includes measures to prevent racial discrimination and promote equality (recommendation 13). ROMPO2 includes eight strands of action, one of which is measures to promote equality outcomes and non-discrimination of the Roma in all aspects of life.

174. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health implemented an EU-funded project titled “From Policy to Practice 2” in 2018–2019. The objective of the project was to promote awareness of ROMPO2 at the province level, both locally and regionally. The project developed regional cooperation networks of local authorities and the Roma, the aim of which was to draw up regional Roma policy action plans based on the national programme (so-called MAARO programmes).

Follow-up report on equality of the Roma in housing

175. In 2018–2019, the Ministry of the Environment produced a follow-up report on equality outcomes for the Roma in housing and subsequent recommendations. The report examined housing problems and equality outcomes within the Roma community and relative to the mainstream population. According to the report, equality outcomes in housing for the Roma people relative to the mainstream population have improved, and population groups have become more equal as applicants for housing. However, economic problems have increased for both the mainstream population and the Roma. Young Roma in particular often experience economic problems that also affect housing. Some Roma are at risk of being excluded from the regular housing market. Certain Roma customs, namely the moving-permit system and the obligation of an assailant's family to avoid a victim's family, pose additional challenges. The report recommends service referrals and closer cooperation between authorities in housing services.

Roma well-being survey

176. The Roma well-being survey (ROOSA) of the National Institute for Health and Welfare was carried out in cooperation with the Roma community in 2017–2018. According to the results, experiences of discrimination, low levels of education, and poor employment and economic situations are common. The study highlighted issues such as high prevalence of numerous common chronic diseases and associated risk factors and impairments in physical functional capacity. Strengths included active social participation, communality and mutual assistance among the Roma. On the basis of the results, measures have been proposed which draw from the self-resourcefulness and community spirit of the Roma.

Employment of the Roma

177. According to the employment follow-up survey, employment outcomes and entrepreneurship among the Roma are estimated to have developed in a positive direction over the past 10 years. The average level of educational attainment has increased, although the education paths are still more fragmented compared to the mainstream population. Unemployment rates are still higher than in the mainstream population. Roma customs and dress code appear to be common employment barriers. Ultimately, however, decisions are made at the individual and workplace level. Employers' attitudes can still be an obstacle to employment.

Education of the Roma

178. The Finnish National Agency for Education published a general upper secondary education guide for the Roma in 2018. The purpose of the guide is to provide information about general upper secondary education and subsequent further education pathways.

179. In 2019, the Finnish National Agency for Education published a guide for young and adult Roma, which contains information about the purpose of adult education, life skills, study skills, how to balance study and life, the costs of studying, funding opportunities, and descriptions of education offerings for adults. The Finnish National Agency for Education will continue to organise meetings with the Roma around these topics at various locations in order to communicate about the importance of education.

180. As regards vocational education and training, the Roma population has been taken into account in the revised requirements of qualifications in education and guidance. There is a specialised Romani area of expertise in the Further Vocational Qualification in Education and Guidance programmes. In addition, the new qualification requirements include an optional module on the use of the Romani language in guidance work.

181. Equality trainings have been organised for Roma organisations, local working groups and NGOs on preventing and combating discrimination, multiple discrimination and internal discrimination; the partners have included e.g. the Ministry of Justice, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman and the National Advisory Board on Roma Affairs, which operates under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Revitalisation of the Romani language

182. The Romani language is very endangered in Finland, especially among young adults, teenagers and children. It is also on the UNESCO's list of endangered languages. According to the Institute for the Languages of Finland, only a third of the Roma in Finland are fluent in the Romani language, and two thirds do not use the language at all. The Romani language is introduced to new users primarily as a taught language. One challenge is to empower the Roma community so that people are encouraged to use the language.

183. There is a shortage of Romani language teachers. The University of Helsinki offers courses in the Romani language and culture, and the number of students is on the rise. The Finnish National Agency for Education has launched a project to develop distance-learning opportunities in the Romani language. This would enable the Romani language to be offered to Roma pupils across the country.

184. One of the objectives of the National Roma Policy (ROMPO2, 2018–2022) is to draw up an action plan for revitalising the Romani language during the programme period. The aim is to expand the university-level offering in Romani language education to provide advanced studies in addition to basic and intermediate studies, and content that focuses on revitalisation.

Social inclusion

185. One of the objectives of the ROMPO2 is to promote inclusion and empowerment. The inclusion and engagement of the Roma in the planning phase of policies, actions, programmes and projects that are relevant to them helps to promote non-discrimination and transparency across the board.

186. The European Roma and Travellers Forum has pointed out that anti-gypsyism is also widespread in Finland. It manifests in e.g. admission to public spaces, the housing market, young people's access to work placement and job opportunities, the media, suspicious attitudes towards Roma women in shops due to their ethnicity, violence which has been particularly targeted at Roma women in recent years, and an increase in hate speech towards the Roma on social media.

Language and cultural rights of the Sámi

187. By virtue of the Constitution, the Sámi, as an indigenous people, have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. In Finland, the Sámi have cultural autonomy and thus their own cultural institutions. In arts and culture, one of these institutions is the Cultural Committee, which operates under the auspices of the Sámi Parliament. The Cultural Committee prepares the proposals, initiatives and statements of the Sámi Parliament concerning Sámi culture. The central government budget includes an annual special appropriation for supporting Sámi culture and the activities of Sámi organisations.

188. Equal rights and opportunities are promoted in Finland by ensuring that general services and forms of support in arts and culture are available to the Sámi under the same conditions as for other population groups. Finland has also implemented special measures to protect and develop Sámi culture. Each year, the Ministry of Education and Culture grants support to key actors in Sámi arts and culture. The beneficiaries include the Sámi Children's Culture Centre Mánnu, Sámi cinema and music, the Sámi Museum Siida and the Sámi Library. The Sámi Museum Siida in Inari is a central institution that preserves and exhibits Sámi culture.

189. Sámi artists can also apply for general grants and discretionary government transfers for the promotion of the arts. There are approximately 230 Sámi artists. 78% of Sámi artists live in the Sámi Homeland.

190. In decision OKV/1161/1/2018 (26 September 2019), the Deputy Chancellor of Justice stated that the Social Insurance Institution (Kela) had neglected to develop Sámi-language services in the way required by the Constitution and the Sámi Language Act. The lack of Sámi-language online services impacts the equality of Sámi speakers in accessing services, and, particularly in the Sámi Homeland, services must be able to be delivered in Sámi. Kela was strongly advised to correct the matter.

Working group on the development of teaching of and in Sámi languages

191. In February 2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture appointed a working group for the development of Sámi language education, including language-learning and the provision of education in Sámi language (recommendation 19). The working group investigated the current state of Sámi-language provision in early childhood education, cultural and language nests, and Sámi education and training, and drew up proposals regarding the availability of Sámi-language learning materials, increasing awareness of the Sámi languages, Sámi history and culture, and strengthening cooperation among Nordic schools in Sámi education. Four separate reports were commissioned and a range of experts were consulted to support the group's work. The final report was submitted on 15 April 2021.

Sámi languages in higher education and teacher education

192. The Ministry of Education and Culture and the University of Oulu have concluded an agreement which assigns the University's Giellagas Institute national responsibility for organising and promoting high education and research in Sámi languages and Sámi culture in Finland. The Sámi languages (Northern Sámi, Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi) are available as major subjects in the degree programme in languages and literature. The Giellagas Institute also offers Northern Sámi as a foreign language and studies in Sámi culture.

193. The spring 2021 admissions to the University of Oulu degree programmes for early childhood education and care (ECEC) teachers and classroom teachers include quotas for two Sámi-speaking students. The University of Lapland's programme for class teachers also has two quota places for Sámi-speaking students.

194. In 2016–2019, the Ministry of Education and Culture provided special funding for a project on early childhood education with emphasis on Sámi language and culture, which was implemented by the University of Oulu and the Sámi Education Institute.

195. In January 2016, the Ministry of Education and Culture appointed the Teacher Education Forum to reform teachers' basic, introductory and continuing education. The term of the current forum ends at the end of 2022. The delivery and objectives of the Teacher Education Development Programme, which has been designed by the Teacher Education Forum in extensive cooperation with various actors, are promoted through development projects funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Language nest activities for Sámi language

196. The Ministry of Education and Culture supports Sámi language nest activities in cooperation with the Sámi Parliament. The need for cultural and language nests has arisen from situations where the Sámi language is no longer transferred from parents to children in family settings. The chain of intergenerational transmission has broken, and children do not learn the family's ancestral language at home. Without the language, these children cannot participate in early childhood education and care intended for Sámi-speaking children. In 2020, there were 12 cultural and language nests for Sámi in Finland: three for Inari Sámi, two for Skolt Sámi and seven for Northern Sámi. Nine of the language nests were located in the Sámi Homeland and three were outside it. Central government funding for language nests has been increased, and the 2020 allocation was EUR 1,200,000.

Sámi-language health and social care services

197. In health and social care, the Sámi have the right to use Sámi language at services located in the Sámi Homeland (recommendation 19). This means services organised by the municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari, Utsjoki and (partly) Sodankylä. In addition, the Sámi have the right to use Sámi language when accessing services provided by a joint municipal authority in which one of the above-mentioned municipalities is a member. In practice, in health care this means the Lapland Hospital District.

198. In addition, according to national legislation pertaining to all language groups, the patient's first language, individual needs and culture must be taken into account in care plans. If reasonably possible, interpreting services must be provided where health and social care personnel do not speak the patient's language.

199. Finland grants discretionary government transfers for the provision of health and social care services for the Sámi-speaking people. In 2021, the grant amount was increased from EUR 480,000 to EUR 562,000. The government discusses the allocation of the funds with the Sámi Parliament, but in principle they are intended for supporting the development or improvement of Sámi-language services.

200. On 8 December 2020, the Government submitted to Parliament the legislative proposal on the reform of the provision of health and social services and their restructuring into a regional system (Government proposal 241/2020). Parliament adopted the proposal on 23 June 2021. The bills will enter into force gradually, some on 1 July 2021, and the last ones in early 2023.

201. The aim is to reduce inequalities in health and well-being, ensure equal and high-quality health and social services for all, improve accessibility and ensure the availability of skilled labour. The starting point is that the current language rights will also be safeguarded after the reform. This would be ensured by amendments to the Sámi Language Act (1086/2003) and the bill on the provision of health and social services, in which section 5(2) would provide for the use of Sámi language in health and social services.

202. SámiSoster has pointed out that there are still major problems in the availability of Sámi-language health and social services. According to a survey carried out by the Sámi Parliament on the availability of services in Sámi language, the Sámi people's right to Sámi-language services is poorly realised. The main reasons are the scarcity of Sámi-speaking personnel and lack of resources.

Activities in the Sámi Homeland

203. The Sámi Homeland comprises Enontekiö, Inari and Utsjoki as well as the Lappi reindeer herding cooperative area in Sodankylä. 90% of the area is managed by the Finnish Forest Administration (Metsähallitus). Of this, 72% is protected and wilderness area, 13% is traditional land-use area and 15% is managed forest, about half of which is in economic use.

204. The Finnish Forest Administration safeguards the right of the Sámi to maintain and develop their language and culture by reconciling the needs of reindeer husbandry, other traditional livelihoods and other forms of land use in the Sámi Homeland through agreements and negotiations and by supporting Sámi-language communication and cultural projects.

205. According to the Act on Finnish Forest Administration, the management, use and protection of natural resources governed by the Finnish Forest Administration in the Sami Homeland referred to in the Act on the Sami Parliament (974/1995) shall be adjusted to ensuring the conditions of the Sami people to practice their culture, and in the reindeer herding area referred to in the Reindeer Husbandry Act (848/1990) they shall be adjusted to fulfilling the obligations laid down in the Reindeer Husbandry Act.

The Akwé: Kon model

206. The objectives of the Akwé: Kon guidelines are the conservation of biodiversity, indigenous peoples' relationship with nature, traditional knowledge and enable the full participation of indigenous peoples in all stages of projects and plans, including their preparation, impact assessments, decision-making, implementation and monitoring. The Akwé: Kon guidelines describe the approach.

207. Cultural impact assessments are carried out in accordance with the Akwé: Kon model. The Finnish Forest Administration produces current-state descriptions of land use in state-owned land areas, nature and process and provides insights on the prerequisites of Sámi cultural practices relative to the contents of the plan.

Natural resources planning by the Finnish Forest Administration

208. In 2020, the Finnish Forest Administration began preparing a new natural resource plan for the Sámi Homeland. The planning area covers the Sámi Homeland as a whole. The area comprises the municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari and Utsjoki and the Lappi reindeer herding cooperative in Sodankylä. The upcoming natural resource plan for the Sámi Homeland utilises the updated model approved by the Sámi Parliament on 30 October 2019 on the application of the Akwé: Kon guidelines in the interactions of the Finnish Forest Administration and the Sámi Parliament.

209. The new natural resource plan will steer the operations the Finnish Forest Administration in the Sámi Homeland in 2022–2027. A large number of residents of the Sámi Homeland and the Finnish Forest Administration stakeholders participate in the planning. The planning process includes an assessment of the current state of state-owned land areas and water bodies in terms of their use and natural resources. Safeguarding of the prerequisites of Sámi culture directs the planning process.

The Mining Act provisions concerning the Sámi

210. The Mining Act (621/2011) contains provisions that take into account the right of the Sámi as an indigenous people and the aims set out in the Skolt Act on the preservation of the livelihoods and living conditions of the Skolts. The provisions also regulate ore finding, mining and gold panning based on the restrictions concerning the special reindeer herding area. The Act defines the procedures for processing permit applications concerning these special areas.

211. In the Sami Homeland, the permit authority shall – in co-operation with the Sami Parliament, the local reindeer owners' associations, the authority or institution responsible for management of the area, and the applicant – establish the impacts caused by activity in accordance with the mineral exploration permit, mining permit, or gold panning permit on the rights of the Sami as an indigenous people to maintain and develop their own language and culture and shall consider measures required for decreasing and preventing damage. The

provisions shall also apply to projects implemented outside the Sami Homeland that are of considerable significance as regards the rights of the Sami as an indigenous people.

212. In the Skolt area, the permit authority shall request a statement from a Skolt village meeting concerning assessment of the impacts of activity under the permit on the sources of livelihood and living conditions of the Skolt Sámi. Provisions concerning the statement procedure are laid down in the Skolt Act. In a special reindeer herding area, the permit authority shall, in co-operation with the local reindeer owners' associations, assess the damage caused to reindeer herding through activity under the permit.

213. According to the Mining Act, an exploration permit, mining permit, or gold panning permit must not be granted if activities under the permit: 1) alone, or together with other corresponding permits and other forms of land use would, in the Sami Homeland, substantially undermine the preconditions for engaging in traditional Sami sources of livelihood or otherwise to maintain and develop the Sami culture; 2) would substantially impair the living conditions of the Skolt and the possibilities for pursuing a livelihood in the Skolt area; 3) in a special reindeer herding area, would cause considerable harm to reindeer herding. However, a permit may be granted regardless of an impediment referred to in subsection 1 if it is possible to remove such an impediment through permit regulations.

214. The Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government includes a commitment to renew legislation on mining. The purpose of the reform is to improve the level of environmental protection and ensure the operating conditions of mines, while also improving local acceptability and influencing opportunities. On the basis of the Government Programme, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has launched a project to reform the Mining Act, and the working group's term of office has been extended until 31 December 2021.

215. In the Deputy Chancellor of Justice's decision on a complaint (OKV/8/50/2019, 3 October 2019), the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment was considered to have neglected to hear the Sámi Parliament during the preparation of the amendment of the Mining Act. The proposed amendment was not only a matter of a technical nature, but a significant change that had an impact on e.g. citizens' right to participate and a particularly significant impact from the point of view of the living environment and indigenous rights of the Sámi.

Report on cross-border cooperation between Finland and Norway, and its obstacles

216. The Ministry of Finance investigated obstacles to cross-border cooperation between Finland and Norway in a report published on 14 February 2020. The purpose of the project was to examine authorities' cooperation in healthcare and social welfare services, rescue services and education as well as the availability and usability of services in these sectors, and to examine the operating conditions for labour mobility and business operations in the border regions of Finland and Norway. Particular attention was paid to questions concerning the organisation and availability of services in the Sámi languages.

Working life diversity programme

217. There is considerable discrimination in recruitment practices in the Finnish labour market, particularly against persons whose name suggests a non-European background. The Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government includes the objective of creating a working life diversity programme to increase the recruitment and diversity skills of employers and to identify and develop immigrants' skills in the workplace.

218. In order to achieve this objective, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has launched an action plan for diversity and inclusiveness in working life from the perspective of immigrants (recommendation 21). The aim of the plan is to enable businesses and organisations to benefit from diversity and make it easier for immigrants to find jobs that match their skills and progress in their careers. The programme includes measures to raise awareness in workplaces of the benefits of diverse workplace communities and to promote skills relating to diversity and inclusiveness. It also includes measures to facilitate the employment of people with developing language skills and the recognition of immigrants' skills in workplaces.

Labour protection

219. Labour protection authorities oversee compliance with labour protection legislation and the terms of the employment relationship in all workplaces. The aim is to ensure that all employees in Finland have lawful working conditions, working hours and wages. In monitoring the use of foreign labour, inspectors assess compliance with the minimum requirements of employment relationships, including from the point of view of equality and non-discrimination. If work is assigned unreasonably without taking into account labour protection aspects or in conditions that violate workers' dignity, the affected workers can be considered victims of human trafficking. Finland has a system in place for assisting victims of human trafficking.

220. The fight against undeclared work is part of a national Action Plan for Tackling the Grey Economy and Economic Crime (see paragraphs 142–144). Labour protection authorities provide both employees and employers with advice and instructions on matters related to occupational health and safety and terms of employment. The national helpline received nearly 600 inquiries related to discrimination at work in 2020.

221. Discrimination is monitored as part of labour protection inspections, which in 2020 resulted in 87 written advice notices and 12 improvement notices regarding breaches of the prohibition of discrimination. Labour protection authorities have a statutory duty to notify the police if there are reasonable grounds to suspect discrimination at work. During 2019, labour protection authorities filed 13 pre-trial investigation requests on suspected workplace discrimination offences. The most common reasons for discrimination in the investigation reports were health, ethnicity, nationality and language.

222. Occupational safety and health supervision is mainly carried out in the form of workplace inspections. In 2020, there were fewer inspections than normal due to the difficulties relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, but over 14,000 inspections were still carried out.

223. The University of Tampere has carried out a project funded by the Finnish Work Environment Fund to investigate workplace discrimination and its impact on careers, and multiple discrimination. In the European comparison, Finland had high rates of workplace discrimination.

Integration and language education for immigrant women

224. According to the Labour Force Survey, the employment rate of men with foreign background is almost the same as that of men with Finnish background, whereas the employment rate of women with foreign background is almost 20 percentage points lower than that of women with Finnish background.

225. Women's lower employment rate is explained by a number of factors. Many women are educated to degree level but unable to find work that matches their education. On the other hand, there are also proportionally more women with lower levels of education compared to women with Finnish background. In addition, many immigrant women are at the age where they have young families, and the integration process is sometimes delayed when women stay at home to care for children. The likelihood of staying at home is also increased by the fact that, on average, women with foreign background start families younger and have more children than women with Finnish background.

226. There are also structural barriers to women's employment. Immigrant women are much more likely than immigrant men to arrive in Finland via the family reunification process and considerably less likely to relocate for work. Reasons for migration are often linked to the social structure of the country of origin: in most countries of origin, women have clearly lower employment rates than men, and women tend to bear the main responsibility for child-rearing and housekeeping. The long childcare leave and the home-care allowance paid for childcare without municipal daycare services for children under the age of three can create an incentive trap especially for women with a foreign background, who are less likely to find well-paid work than women with a Finnish background.

227. The employment outcomes of immigrant women are also affected by the highly gendered labour market in Finland. Many typically male-dominated sectors (e.g. construction

and transport) require only basic Finnish, whereas female-dominated sectors (e.g. nursing and many customer service roles) require more advanced language skills.

228. Actions proposed in the report on the need to reform integration-promotion measures include improving reach to people outside the labour force, so that the authorities responsible for referrals could have better awareness of individuals who need integration-promoting services and, conversely, so that immigrants have better access to information about available services. Measures include improving the flow of information, and making use of low-threshold guidance and advisory services, cooperation between authorities and NGOs, and multilingual communications in order to reach women and refer them to services (recommendation 21).

229. Projects to strengthen and develop early support for families will be funded with discretionary government grants targeted at the development of services for children and families. As part of these projects, the needs of families with immigrant background are taken into account to ensure that they have equal access to early support (recommendation 23).

Guidance and counselling services and skills centres for immigrants

230. As part of the implementation of the Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government, guidance for immigrants has been intensified by supporting the establishment of permanent guidance and counselling service points at key locations. The availability of information, advice and counselling services will be improved by promoting rapid entry into the integration process and referral to appropriate services.

231. Since 2018, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy and the Ministry of Education and Culture have distributed discretionary government subsidies to local authorities for the operation of skills centres for immigrants. The centres are multisectoral and funded by discretionary government subsidies in seven cities.

Healthcare of undocumented migrants

232. The Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government states that healthcare services for undocumented migrants will be extended to cover necessary healthcare in addition to urgent medical care (recommendation 25c). In spring 2021, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health launched a project for the implementation of the Government Programme measure on the healthcare of undocumented migrants. As part of the project, in addition to clarifying healthcare legislation, a decision has been made to produce a report on the realisation of the social rights of undocumented migrants. After the completion of the report, a review will be carried out to determine whether the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health should clarify its guidance note on social services to local authorities, and whether amendment of social care legislation is also needed.

233. The Finnish Refugee Council has stated that undocumented children are particularly vulnerable because they are at high risk of being excluded from the services of child health clinics and child welfare services. It also notes that children's right to early childhood education and care and their right to go to school are not realised in all Finnish municipalities. According to the 2020 survey conducted by the Finnish National Agency for Education and the Ministry of Education and Culture with local authorities, only 2.5 per cent of the local authorities reported that they organised early childhood education and care for undocumented children.

Hilma – Support Centre for Immigrants with Disabilities

234. The Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA), which operates under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, funds the Hilma Support Centre for Immigrants with Disabilities, which operates in connection with the Finnish Disability Forum. The centre is a publicly funded third-sector operation. Hilma promotes the rights and equal opportunities of immigrants with disabilities and long-term illnesses in Finnish society. It produces materials related to social security in several languages, provides guidance and advice, and organises peer support activities for immigrants with disabilities, especially women.

235. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment published its report on structural barriers to employment of persons with disabilities in June 2020. The aim of the report is to identify structural or legislative barriers that place persons with disabilities in an unequal position in participation in working. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has launched a road-map project for the elimination of the structural barriers identified in the report.

Article 6

Legal remedies in cases of discrimination

236. The enclosed statistics include the prosecutor's decisions from 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 concerning discrimination (Criminal Code, chapter 11, section 11), work discrimination (Criminal Code, chapter 47, section 3) and extortionate work discrimination (Criminal Code, chapter 47, section 3a, RL), which may have involved racial discrimination (recommendation 9).

Table 3

Discrimination

<i>C cases</i>	<i>1 Charge</i>	<i>2 SJP</i>	<i>3 ETR</i>	<i>4 Other decision</i>	<i>ETR cases</i>
2016	11	3	5	1	11
2017	7	5	3	1	19
2018	11	12	4		15
2019	6	7	4		15
2020	11	5	3		7
Total	46	32	19	2	53

R cases = criminal cases, SJP = decision not to prosecute, ETR = restriction of pre-trial investigation

Table 4

Work discrimination

<i>C cases</i>	<i>1 Charge</i>	<i>2 SJP</i>	<i>3 ETR</i>	<i>4 Other decision</i>	<i>ETR cases</i>
2016	10	10	4		18
2017	6	15	4		22
2018	13	7	4	2	11
2019	9	8	3		12
2020	9	6	4	2	14
Total	47	46	19	4	61

R cases = criminal cases, SJP = decision not to prosecute, ETR = restriction of pre-trial investigation

Table 5

Extortionate work discrimination

<i>C cases</i>	<i>1 Charge</i>	<i>2 SJP</i>	<i>3 ETR</i>	<i>4 Other decision</i>	<i>ETR cases</i>
2016	2	4	4		7
2017	1	7	2		5
2018	3	3	3		11
2019	5	4	3	1	13

<i>C cases</i>	<i>1 Charge</i>	<i>2 SJP</i>	<i>3 ETR</i>	<i>4 Other decision</i>	<i>ETR cases</i>
2020	1	2	3		8
Total	12	20	15	1	34

R cases = criminal cases, SJP = decision not to prosecute, ETR = restriction of pre-trial investigation

237. When working with victims of hate crime, the police assess the need for protection in accordance with the EU Directive on Victims of Crime in the same way as with victims of all crimes, in order to ensure a safe legal process. The police refer all victims to support services, most commonly Victim Support Finland, which will provide individual support during the pre-trial investigation and the entire legal process. Victims of human trafficking are referred to the assistance system for victims of human trafficking.

238. Regardless of their status, persons being questioned by the police are informed of their rights in their own language, using an interpreter if necessary. The detainees' rights and obligations form has been translated into 20 different languages. The website of the police was redesigned in 2020 and provides comprehensive information about rights, police procedures and principles, and crimes.

Article 7

A. Education and training

Government Programme measures to reform education

239. The education reforms set out in the Government Programme to promote equality will improve learning and study for learners with immigrant background. Specific measures include the expansion of compulsory education, the development of guidance counselling and, in lifelong learning, the identification of prior learning and measures targeting under-represented groups.

240. Key policies for increasing educational equality and narrowing the learning differences are set out in the education policy report, which was submitted to Parliament in spring 2021. The proposed measures on early childhood education and care, pre-primary and basic education, secondary education and higher education will improve learning opportunities and pathways for all currently disadvantaged groups. In addition, targeted measures are needed at different levels of education for immigrants. Development needs that apply to all education levels include language awareness in teaching and communication, and smoother transitions.

241. All Border Guard officials complete an online module on inappropriate treatment and a course on responsible workplace behaviour. The Border Guard recently adopted an equality and non-discrimination plan for 2021–2022. The plan emphasises equality and non-discrimination in the work of the Border Guard. Training on the prevention of racial discrimination is included in fundamental and human rights education for government officials, especially in the basic and cadet courses for border guards. Other courses for government officials also include fundamental and human rights education.

B. Culture

Accessibility of arts and culture

242. The Ministry of Education and Culture set a Working Group for Cultural Policy, Immigrants and Promotion of Cultural Diversity for the period 9 January–31 December 2020. The working group reviewed issues related to cultural policy, the funding of arts and culture, working as an artist, the use of cultural services, the contents of arts and culture, integration of immigrants, interaction with different groups, research and statistics, and drafted proposals on policies and measures.

243. The report contains forty concrete proposals for measures. They are grouped under eight themes that mirror the working group's mandate and examined policies: cultural policy, funding of culture, employment, professional development, cultural services, intercultural dialogue, statistics and research, and the preparation of an action plan. The final report of the working group was published on 20 January 2020.

244. The working group of the Ministry of Education and Culture on immigration issues, which was set up to coordinate the short- and long-term measures of the Ministry and the administrative branch in response to the asylum seeker situation of autumn 2015 and the general increase in immigration, published two reports in 2017 and 2019. In the Culture administrative branch, the primary objective was to increase interactions between immigrants and the Finnish population, to facilitate introductions to Finnish customs and culture, and to facilitate and accelerate social inclusion through arts and culture.

Awareness of Sámi people and culture among children and young people

245. Dihtosis is a joint project of the Youth Council of the Sámi Parliament and the Youth Academy for raising awareness of the Sámi people and their culture among children and young people in the mainstream population. The project organises school visits on Sámi topics and encourages schools across Finland to discuss the topics in class, for example by celebrating the Sámi National Day in February each year. Over 160 school visits have been organised across Finland during the project.

Reform of the Antiquities Act

246. In autumn 2020, the Ministry of Education and Culture began work on the reform of the Antiquities Act (295/1963), which is expected to be finished by the end of 2021. The Antiquities Act contains provisions on the protection and investigation of ancient structures, objects and shipwrecks, and on related procedures. The Sámi people's rights as indigenous people and their right to self-government in matters relating to the Sámi language and culture are taken into account in the preparation of the reform.

Participation of Russian speakers in cultural activities

247. The Cultura Foundation is funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture and started its operations in 2013. The foundation promotes integration and diverse interactions between Russian speakers and other population groups in Finland by sharing information primarily through culture and dialogue. The Foundation provides opportunities for Russian speakers in Finland to participate in Finnish culture regardless of language skills. In addition, the Foundation supports the development of the linguistic identity and culture of the Russian-speaking population as part of Finland's diverse cultural heritage.

248. The Cultura Foundation has implemented numerous cultural and social projects and published several reports on the Russian-speaking population in Finland.

249. The bilingual Culturalist publication and the Culturafest festival promote linguistic and cultural interaction. The Foundation represents Finland in two international projects.

250. The Foundation produces reports for official use on topics related to the participation of Russian speakers and the access to information of Russian speakers, for example, on participation of Russian speakers in decision-making processes of the City of Helsinki, and access to information during the coronavirus crisis.

Discretionary government subsidies supporting multiculturalism

251. The Ministry of Education and Culture has provided grants totalling EUR 80,000 annually for the promotion of religious dialogue, consisting of general grants to NGOs and a special grant to projects promoting religious dialogue in 2017–2021. The “Merkityksellinen Suomessa” Action Plan (2016) defined measures to strengthen multiculturalism, inclusion and equality and to combat hate speech and racism. The Ministry commissioned the Cupore Foundation for Cultural Policy Research to produce a report on equality in culture in 2016–2017. A 2017 report on discretionary government transfers to disability organisations for

cultural activities and accessibility recommended that the promotion of accessibility and positive attitudes be linked to public funding for arts and culture more generally.

252. The Ministry of Education and Culture commissioned the Cupore Foundation to investigate the situation of foreign-born artists and cultural workers in Finland (the Avaus study, 2017–2020).

253. Each year, the Ministry of Education and Culture grants discretionary government transfers for multiculturalism and anti-racism work, integration promotion in arts and culture, and equality in sports and recreation. The multiculturalism grants support the cultural activities of Finland's minorities. A separate fund is allocated to the Sámi Parliament for supporting Sámi-language culture and NGOs' activities.

254. In 2017–2021, the Arts Promotion Centre has distributed EUR 683,000–EUR 765,000 per year in grants to NGOs and artists for work tackling racism and promoting cultural diversity.

255. The Ministry of Education and Culture has prepared the Government's cultural policy strategy until 2025. One of the objectives of the strategy is to support cultural and language rights in a broad-based manner and to strengthen the status of Sámi culture as an indigenous culture.

256. The Ministry of Education and Culture has continued to allocate arts, culture and youth work funds to support Roma organisations' activities and civil projects relating to the Roma with a view to promoting civic engagement and equality. The preservation and development of the Finnish Romani language are supported by allocating funds for language nests and the teaching of Romani as first language in comprehensive education and general upper secondary education.

257. Karjalan Kielen Seura (the Karelian Language Society) implemented a programme for the revitalisation of the Karelian language in 2017–2019. The University of Eastern Finland will continue the programme in 2021–2022. A total of EUR 700,000 has been allocated for this purpose.

C. Communication

Guidance for police communications

258. In accordance with the 2020 revised communication guidance, communications in policing will follow the government communication guidelines and the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (62171999), the principles of which have been compiled in a handbook on policing communications published in 2019. In its communications, the police must not reveal any personal information that could be harmful to a person or provoke prejudice or hatred towards a population group.

III. Other Recommendations

Ratification of other conventions

International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families

259. The Government does not have plans to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and thus will not implement the recommendation in this regard (recommendation 26). Finland's legislation does not make a distinction between migrant workers and other immigrants. They are protected by the same constitutional rights and conventions ratified by Finland that apply to everyone. They are in the scope of social security legislation if they are employed or reside in Finland. In addition to national social security legislation, the status of foreign workers is affected by the social security agreements that Finland has entered into and the European Union's social security legislation, which contain an obligation to equal treatment.

ILO Convention No. 169

260. The Government proposal on the adoption of Convention No. 169 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) concerning Indigenous and Tribal Populations and on the amendment of the Act on the Finnish Forest Administration (Metsähallitus) was submitted to Parliament in November 2014 (Government proposal 264/2014). The Government proposal was withdrawn in January 2019 because it had expired and it was not possible to prepare a new proposal in cooperation with the Sámi Parliament by the end of the government term. Extensive studies and preparatory work on this subject have been carried out over the years. In accordance with the Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government, the Ministry of Justice will prepare a memorandum on the prerequisites for ratification, which will update the situation, for example, in light of legislative amendments that have taken place (recommendation 26).

Nordic Sámi Convention

261. The draft text of the Nordic Sámi Convention approved in 2017 was discussed at the meeting of Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish ministers responsible for Sámi affairs and the chairpersons of the Sámi parliaments in November 2020. The parties agreed that it was important to make progress on the matter. Sweden will convene a working group for follow-up action. According to the draft text, the Convention must be approved by the Sámi Parliaments before its ratification by the State parties.

Monitoring the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

262. The Programme of Prime Minister Marin's Government includes measures for tackling racism and discrimination in all areas of society (recommendation 27). For example, the Government has drawn up an Action Plan to Combat Racism and Promote Good Relations (see paragraphs 29–30).

International Decade for People of African Descent

263. In January 2019, the Ministry of Justice, the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs organised a seminar on afrophobia and structural discrimination (recommendation 28). The seminar marked the launch in Finland of the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024) proclaimed by the UN General Assembly. The seminar discussed topics relating to structural discrimination and afrophobia and how these phenomena affect people of African descent in Finland. The discussion was based on an introduction of the Being Black in the EU study of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and its findings in the Finnish context.

Report by the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman on discrimination experienced by people of African descent

264. In spring 2020, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman published a report on discrimination experienced by people of African descent. The report and the related events and follow-up measures are intended to contribute to raising awareness of the situation of people of African descent in Finland.

265. In particular, the report examined discrimination in work and education and reasons for under-reporting. The majority of respondents had encountered discrimination on a monthly, weekly or even daily basis. According to the report, racial discrimination and harassment was experienced especially in urban public settings, in work, job-seeking and education. Racial discrimination also occurred in public services, such as health and social services. Just over half of respondents had experienced ethnic profiling by the police, security guards or other types of security personnel. It is highly concerning that respondents had first experienced discrimination at a very young age, in early childhood (pre-school) education or in the first years of comprehensive school. Well over half of the respondents had not reported discrimination to any official body. The most common reason for not reporting discrimination was the expectation that nothing would be done.

Public consultation during the preparation of the periodic report

266. Finland's combined twenty-fourth, twenty-fifths and twenty-sixth periodic reports has been prepared by the Legal Service of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in close cooperation with various sector ministries and other key authorities. The draft report was published for public consultation in the lausuntopalvelu.fi service in June 2021 (recommendation 29).

Raising awareness of the Committee's concluding observations

267. On 15 May 2017, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs issued a press release on the concluding observations adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Racism.

268. Immediately after their adoption, the recommendations were translated into Finnish and Swedish and also into Northern Sámi. The recommendations were sent to all ministries, Parliament, the supreme overseers of legality and special ombudsmen, the supreme courts, advisory boards, churches and religious communities, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, human rights research institutes, and various bodies and NGOs representing minorities. The recommendations were accompanied by a note advising the recipients to disseminate them as widely as possible.

269. The Convention and its Finnish and Swedish translations have been published in the Treaty Series of the Statutes of Finland (SopS 37/1970). The Statutes of Finland publication is available in the largest public libraries. In addition, the text of the Convention is published in the Finlex database of judicial information and on the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Internet access is provided free of charge in public libraries.

270. The Government's periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention and the Committee's concluding observations have been published on the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Common core document

271. The common core document was submitted on 17 March 2020 (recommendation 30).
