

## FINLAND REVIEW

---

### I. Justice System

#### B. Quality of justice

*Training of justice professionals (including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff, clerks/trainees)*

Under the 4<sup>th</sup> cycle of Universal Periodic Review, Finland supported recommendations to develop training programs and enhance capacities (including through allocation of sufficient resources) of law enforcement and justice administration authorities to deal with migrant children; women victims of violence; victims of gender-based violence; victims of violence; victims of racial discrimination and profiling. Mandatory training on combatting hate crime and hate speech in general; hate crime and hate speech specifically targeting asylum seekers/refugees/Muslims anti-discrimination and human rights is recommended for law enforcement, judicial and security authorities ([A/HRC/52/9/Add.1](#))

In its concluding observations, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended Finland to provide guidance and training to all professionals who work to provide services to children and adolescents and to uphold their rights, and reinforce and intensify training for all authorities responsible for applying the principle of the best interests of the child ([CRC/C/FIN/CO/5-6](#), para. 17).

#### C. Efficiency of the justice system

*Length of proceedings*

In its 2023 concluding observations on Finland, the Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern about the administration of child justice, notably: a) The length of trials; b) The fact that children are sometimes held in isolation during pretrial detention; c) The fact that some children serve their sentences in the same facilities as adults; d) The low quality of education in detention facilities. Recalling its general comment No. 24 (2019) on children's rights in the child justice system, the Committee recommended that Finland:

- (a) Develop a strategy for the prevention of child offending on the basis of research on and an analysis of the root causes of children's involvement in crime, in particular organized crime, and ensure that it provides for early intervention directed at children at risk or in vulnerable situations and support for their families;
- (b) Reduce the length of trials;
- (c) Ensure that children are not held in isolation during pretrial detention;
- (d) Actively promote non-judicial measures, such as diversion, mediation, counselling and evidence-based therapeutic services, for children accused of criminal offences

and, wherever possible, the use of non-custodial measures, such as probation or community service, establish time frames for probation and clarify that it does not imply proof of guilt;

(e) Ensure, for the exceptional situations in which deprivation of liberty is justified as a measure of last resort, that children do not serve sentences in the same facilities as adults, that the deprivation of liberty is for the shortest possible period and that it is reviewed on a regular basis with a view to its withdrawal;

(f) Systematically provide long-term services to children who are detained and ensure the quality of education in detention facilities ([CRC/C/FIN/CO/5-6](#), paras. 40, 41)

#### *Other*

In its 2023 concluding observations on Finland, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended Finland to establish mechanisms to monitor the impact of the application of the principle of the best interests of the child in the execution of programmes, in legislative, administrative and judicial procedures and in relation to custody and contact with parents, alternative care modalities, justice for adolescents in conflict with the law, asylum, in particular in the event of the return of parents whose asylum applications have been refused, and support for children who are victims or witnesses of crimes. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of a legislative framework to ensure multisectoral coordination and quality standards for conducting forensic interviews in a child-friendly environment, the lack of comprehensive support services for victims of violence (the barnahus model) and the fact that not all children have access to specialized support ([CRC/C/FIN/CO/5-6](#), para. 17).

### **E. Initiatives to foster a rule of law culture**

#### *Other*

**UPR** - Under the 4<sup>th</sup> cycle of Universal Periodic Review, Finland supported recommendations made in relation to legislative amendments: a) insert a provision in the criminal code criminalizing forced marriage; b) revise anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation to provide better and intersectional victims protection; c) Continue strengthening national laws on offences related to violence against women and girls; d) Adopt legislation obligating regions and municipalities to establish effective preventive measures to combat violence against women; e) Decriminalize defamation and place it within a civil code in accordance with international standards; f) Review criminal legislation to adequately identify and reflect the aggravating factors required under article 46 of the Istanbul Convention; g) Ensure that government legislation, including the Animal Welfare Act, does not restrict individuals' ability to practice their religion or belief freely in a manner which is incompatible with international human rights law, including article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ([A/HRC/52/9/Add.1](#))

While welcoming the legal reforms relating to the well-being services counties and the proposal put before Parliament to speed up the handling of crimes against children, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Finland:

(a) Consider the possibility of i

(b) Take measures to strengthen children's rights impact assessments in the legislative process;

(c) Reform legislation relating to Sami people, in particular with regard to the cultural and linguistic rights of Sami children ([CRC/C/FIN/CO/5-6](#), para 7)