



European Network of
National Human Rights Institutions

Implementing the Council of Europe Recommendation on National Human Rights Institutions: The State of Play

The situation in Finland



Finland Country Report

Overview

Name of NHRI and mandate:

- The Finnish National Human Rights Institution (FNHRI)
- NHRI, Also: Ombudsperson, NPM and NMM.

Sources:

- NHRI: [ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, Finland Country Report; ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in the European Union in 2023](#)
- Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA): [SCA Report October 2019](#)
- CoE Independent Bodies: [CPT Report on Finland \(2020\)](#)

Good practices and improvements:

- **CM Principle 1:** The Finnish National Human Rights Institution (FNHRI) is an A-Status institution. The Finnish NHRI is comprised of the Human Rights Centre (HRC), its Human Rights Delegation (HRD), and the Parliamentary Ombudsman.
- **CM Principle 8: adequate access to information:** the FNHRI reports having adequate access to information. The constitution allows the Ombudsman access to all information, even classified. The Parliamentary Ombudsman's Act stipulates that the FHRC has a right to receive any necessary information for its tasks from authorities, free of charge.

- **CM Principle 14 b): legal framework enabling civil society cooperation:** the NHRI law includes the set-up of the Human Rights Delegation, thereby institutionalizing cooperation with and impact of civil society on the NHRI's functioning.

Key areas where improvement is needed:

- **CM Principle 3§1 and 9: follow-up of annual reports and recommendations:** In line with the SCA recommendations (2019), a legal obligation should be in place to table and discuss the HRC's annual reports with recommendations in the Parliament, as is the case for the Parliamentary Ombudsman. While the Parliamentary Ombudsman's annual reports are tabled and discussed in Parliament and its recommendations are generally well observed, there is no legal obligation for state authorities to ensure a timely and reasoned response.
- **CM Principle 6 and 10: adequate resources, including for additional mandates:** while noting an increase in the FNHRI funding in recent years, the SCA (2019) recommended further funding to be made available to expand its promotion and protection functions, including on business and human rights and its NPM and NMM mandates.
- **CM Principle 13, c): legal framework entailing fragmentation of human rights institutions and independence vulnerabilities:** as reported by the FHRC, the tendency to create new thematic human rights bodies and tasks without holistic and strategic analysis on impacts to existing structures risk further fragmenting and complicating the Finnish human rights architecture. Moreover, laws applicable to various specialised institutions tend not to have a similar level of independence safeguards as the FNHRI.

Specific findings per Principle

The tables below include data on the assessment of the implementation of each Principle (i.e. the individual parts) within the Recommendation from three sources: the National Human Rights Institutions, the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of GANHRI and the Council of Europe independent bodies. Overall, the findings are considered in four overall groups: the establishment of NHRIs; the strengthening of NHRIs; a safe and enabling environment for NHRIs; and cooperation with and support for NHRIs.

I. Establishment of NHRIs

Principle 1	<p>Member States should ensure that NHRIs are in place and that they are established, accredited and function in full compliance with the Paris Principles</p>
Assessment of implementation by Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI	<p><i>SCA Report October 2019, p. 8</i> It is recommended that the FNHRI be re-accredited with A status.</p>
Principle 2	<p>Member States should provide a firm legal basis for NHRIs, preferably at the constitutional level, and/or in a law which defines the mandates and functions of such institutions, guarantees their independence and provides them with the means necessary to accomplish their functions effectively, both at national and international levels, bearing in mind existing standards and recommendations on NHRIs, in particular the Paris Principles and their interpretation developed by GANHRI's Sub-Committee on Accreditation.</p>

<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>Information provided by the NHRI in 2023:</i></p> <p>The Parliamentary Ombudsman is constitutionally entrenched, while the FHRC and the HRD have a legal basis. A government bill establishes these institutions as three components of one NHRI.</p> <p>The tasks and powers of the Parliamentary Ombudsman are defined in the Constitution and in the Parliamentary Ombudsman’s Act. The tasks and powers of the Finnish Human Rights Centre and Human Rights Delegation are defined in the Parliamentary Ombudsman’s Act.</p> <p><i>Information provided by the NHRI for ENNHRI's report State of the Rule of Law in the European Union 2023</i></p> <p>The HRC’s general task to follow-up the realisation of human rights in Finland (monitoring function) should be more clearly stipulated in the Parliamentary Ombudsman’s Act. Currently, only the promotion of fundamental and human rights is a clear statutory task of the HRC, while the mandate to monitor and follow-up is expressed indirectly through Centre’s more specific legislative tasks.*</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI</p>	<p><i>SCA Report October 2019, p. 9</i></p> <p>The SCA takes note of the particular structure of the Finnish National Human Rights Institution as an umbrella structure composed of the Parliamentary Ombudsman (Ombudsman), the Human Rights Centre (HRC) and the Human Rights Delegation (HRD). While the SCA understands that the government bill establishing these three components as the NHRI is a source of law in Finland, it encourages the FNHRI to continue to advocate for legislative amendments that clearly stipulate the existence of the FNHRI as one NHRI in compliance with the Paris Principles with three distinct structures.</p>

II. Strengthening of NHRIs

<p>Principle 3.1</p>	<p>Member States should ensure that the mandate given to NHRIs to protect and promote human rights is as broad as possible and in full compliance with the Paris Principles and that it allows them, inter alia, to:</p> <p>- monitor and analyse the human rights situation in the country, publish reports on these findings and address recommendations to public authorities at national, regional and local levels and, when applicable, to private entities, and present an annual report to the relevant authorities, including before parliament, for its consideration.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p.5</i></p> <p>The statutory tasks of the HRC include (...) to draft reports on the implementation of fundamental and human rights; to take initiatives and give statements for the promotion and implementation of fundamental and human rights. [...]The Parliamentary Ombudsman has a duty to oversee legality and to monitor the implementation of fundamental and human rights whereas general human rights promotion is a task given to the HRC. The FNHRI has been given a joint task to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Parliamentary Ombudsman functions as NPM.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI</p>	<p><i>SCA Report October 2019, p.10</i></p> <p>In accordance with Section 12 of the Parliamentary Ombudsman Act, the annual report of the Ombudsman is tabled in Parliament and is discussed in the presence of the Ombudsman. The report of the HRC is presented to the Constitutional Law Committee, to other Committees depending upon the content of the report, and to the Parliament. However, it is neither tabled nor discussed in Parliament. The SCA is of the view that, as a result of this difference in procedure, Parliament is not</p>

	<p>provided with a complete account of the work of the FNHRI. The SCA considers it preferable for the HRC to also have the ability to table its reports in Parliament for discussion. It encourages the FNHRI to continue to advocate for this competence.</p>
<p>Principle 3.2</p>	<p>Member States should ensure that the mandate given to NHRIs to protect and promote human rights is as broad as possible and in full compliance with the Paris Principles and that it allows them, inter alia, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - freely address public opinion, raise public awareness on human rights and carry out education and training programmes;
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 5</i></p> <p>The statutory tasks of the HRC include: to promote information provision, training, education and research on fundamental and human rights (...) to participate in European and international cooperation related to the promotion and protection of fundamental and human rights; to perform other similar tasks associated with the promotion and implementation of fundamental and human rights.</p>
<p>Principle 3.3</p>	<p>Member States should ensure that the mandate given to NHRIs to protect and promote human rights is as broad as possible and in full compliance with the Paris Principles and that it allows them, inter alia, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fully address all alleged human rights violations by all administrative authorities, other relevant State entities and, when applicable, private entities

<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 6</i></p> <p>The Parliamentary Ombudsman oversees and promotes the legality of actions taken by authorities and other parties performing public tasks as well as the implementation of fundamental and human rights.</p> <p>The HRC has a mandate to</p> <p>[...] draft reports on the implementation of fundamental and human rights; to take initiatives and give statements for the promotion and implementation of fundamental and human rights. [...]</p> <p>The Human Rights Delegation serves as a national cooperative body for actors in the sector of fundamental and human rights; deals with fundamental and human rights matters that are of far-reaching significance and principal importance [...]</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI</p>	<p><i>SCA Report October 2019, p. 8</i></p> <p>[...] It further notes the FNHRI's activities to promote and protect human rights, including by monitoring places of detention, and encourages it to continue to expand this work, including in the area of business and human rights.</p>

<p>Principle 3.4</p>	<p>Member States should ensure that the mandate given to NHRIs to protect and promote human rights is as broad as possible and in full compliance with the Paris Principles and that it allows them, inter alia, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have unfettered access to all relevant premises, including places of deprivation of liberty, and to all relevant individuals, in order to be able to carry out a credible examination of all issues covered by their mandate and to all relevant information, subject to possible restrictions stemming from the protection of other rights and legitimate interests and with due respect for the confidentiality of information obtained;
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 6 and information provided by the NHRI in 2023</i></p> <p>According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman Act, the Ombudsman takes initiatives on his own and carries out inspections of administration and, in particular, at prisons, military garrisons and other closed institutions.</p> <p><i>Information provided by the NHRI in 2023</i></p> <p>It is also stipulated in the Parliamentary Ombudsman’s Act that when carrying out his or her duties in capacity of the National Preventive Mechanism, the Ombudsman inspects places where persons are or may be deprived of their liberty, either by virtue of an order given by a public authority or at its instigation or with its consent or acquiescence (place of detention).</p> <p>In the context of an inspection, the Ombudsman and his or her representatives have the right of access to all premises and information systems of the public office or institution, as well as the right to have confidential discussions with the personnel of the office or institution and the inmates there.</p>

	<p>Confidential discussions can be also held with persons who may give relevant information in the context of NPM related inspections.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI</p>	<p><i>SCA Report October 2019, p. 8</i></p> <p>It further notes the FNHRI's activities to promote and protect human rights, including by monitoring places of detention [...]</p>
<p>Principle 3.5</p>	<p>Member States should ensure that the mandate given to NHRIs to protect and promote human rights is as broad as possible and in full compliance with the Paris Principles and that it allows them, inter alia, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitor existing and draft policies and legislation with human rights implications before, during and after their adoption in order to advise the State about the impact of such policies and legislation on human rights and on the activities of human rights defenders, including by making relevant and concrete recommendations.
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>Information provided by the NHRI for ENNHRI's report State of the Rule of Law in the European Union 2023</i></p> <p>The FHRC has recommended that the Finnish Government and in particular the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) should urgently establish a comprehensive mechanism to protect human rights defenders and their families, including a fast and flexible visa procedure to relocate to safety in Finland and the necessary support. Despite the policy priority of the Government to protect human rights defenders, the lack of protection mechanism diminishes the credibility of the otherwise important work done by the MFA politically, and in supporting many international NGOs working to protect defenders.</p>

	<p>In late 2022, the MFA finally started the process of preparing a special humanitarian visa for defenders, but this initiative was launched too late and as a result, the process was not finished before the end of the Government term in 2023.</p>
<p>Principle 3.6</p>	<p>Member States should ensure that the mandate given to NHRIs to protect and promote human rights is as broad as possible and in full compliance with the Paris Principles and that it allows them, inter alia, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contribute to an effective justice system for all, through awareness-raising measures and facilitating access to rights and remedies and, as applicable, by providing legal assistance, being a party before the courts or, when applicable, receiving individual complaints;
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 6</i></p> <p>The Ombudsman examines complaints, takes initiatives on his own and carries out inspections of administration [...]</p> <p><i>Information provided by the NHRI in 2023</i></p> <p>The Ombudsman has judicial oversight on courts in procedural matters, such as delayed proceedings. Under section 110 of the Constitution, the Ombudsman may prosecute or have charges brought in all matters falling within the purview of his supervision of legality. The Ombudsman therefore has the right to prosecute all activities under the Ombudsman’s oversight, meaning all crimes committed by civil servants or persons performing a public task.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by CoE independent bodies</p>	<p><i>CPT Report on Finland 2020, p. 39</i></p>

	<p>61. As regards complaints' procedures, the Committee is pleased to note that external complaints' mechanisms continued to be well established; further, in the two prisons visited the delegation gained the impression that prisoners generally knew and understood these mechanisms and were making use of them.</p> <p><i>[...]p. 54</i></p> <p>Written complaints could generally be addressed internally to the hospital's director or otherwise to the Regional State Administrative Agency, the Parliamentary Ombudsman or the Chancellor of Justice.</p>
<p>Principle 3.7</p>	<p>Member States should ensure that the mandate given to NHRIs to protect and promote human rights is as broad as possible and in full compliance with the Paris Principles and that it allows them, inter alia, to:</p> <p>- encourage the signature, ratification of and accession to international human rights treaties and contribute to the effective implementation of such treaties, as well as related judgments, decisions and recommendations as well as to monitor States' compliance with them.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>Information provided by the NHRI for ENNHRI 2023 Rule of Law report</i></p> <p>Despite FHRC's actions to encourage the implementation of European Courts' judgments, Finland has several judgments pending implementation. Several of them would only require updated information on the implementation status to be sent to the Committee of Ministers and could be closed.</p>

<p>Principle 4</p>	<p>The process of selection and appointment of the leadership of a NHRI should be competence based, transparent and participatory, in order to guarantee the independence and pluralist representation of these institutions. It should also be based on clear, predetermined, objective and publicly accessible criteria.</p> <p>The duration of the appointment should be clearly set out in the founding legislation, so that the leadership posts of the NHRI do not stay vacant for any significant period of time.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>Information provided by the NHRI in 2023</i></p> <p><u>Director of the Finnish Human Rights Centre</u></p> <p>Act of Parliament’s Civil Servants (1197/2003) is applicable to the Director of the Human Rights Centre. Pursuant to section 7 of the Act a prerequisite for an appointment to an office is a public method of application with a minimum 14 days of application time. Selection must be made from the applicants who fulfil the publicly announced criteria.</p> <p>Additionally, the applicable rules set in the Act of Civil Servants (1994/750) are followed in the selection procedure of the Director. Pursuant to section 6a of the Act, the announcement of a vacant office must be made publicly nationwide.</p> <p>Also, the Act on the Openness of Government (621/1999) safeguards the transparency of the selection and appointment process, as all the documents of the FNHRI are in principle public. The Administrative Procedure Act (424/2003) guarantees that the principles of good administration are strictly followed in all decisions taken by the FNHRI.</p> <p>As for the other requirement concerning the broad consultation and participation in the process, the Constitutional Law Committee, as provided for in section 19 c of the Parliamentary Ombudsman Act,</p>

	<p>issues its Opinion of the top candidates. The Constitutional Law Committee has members from multiple parties representing various societal groups.</p> <p>Finally, the general qualifications for public office and other grounds for appointment are set by the Constitution of Finland. Pursuant to section 125, paragraph 2, "The general qualifications for public office shall be skill, ability and proven civic merit".</p> <p><u>Parliamentary Ombudsman</u></p> <p>Section 38 of the Finnish Constitution provides for the election of the Parliamentary Ombudsman. According to the provision, the Parliament appoints for a term of four years one Parliamentary Ombudsman and two Deputy Ombudsmen, who must have outstanding knowledge of the law.</p> <p>The selection procedure for the Ombudsman is open to all, which means that everyone willing to assume the office of the Ombudsman may apply for it. The Constitutional Law Committee interviews every candidate personally and submits a statement to be considered at the Parliament's plenary session where a secret ballot is conducted. In practice, the election of the Ombudsman complies with the standpoint expressed by the Constitutional Law Committee.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI</p>	<p><i>SCA Report October 2019, p. 9</i></p> <p>In accordance with Section 19(c) of the Parliamentary Ombudsman Act, the Ombudsman, after having received the Constitutional Law Committee's opinion, appoints the Director of the HRC for a period of four (4) years. The SCA notes that this process is not sufficiently broad and transparent. In particular, it does not</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require the advertisement of vacancies; or • specify the process for achieving broad consultation and/or participation in the application, screening, selection and appointment process.

	<p><i>NB: please note the NHRI reports this SCA recommendation is not factually correct"</i></p>
<p>Principle 5</p>	<p>To ensure independence, the enabling legislation of a NHRI should contain an objective dismissal process for the NHRI leadership, with clearly defined terms in a constitutional or legislative text. The dismissal process should be fair and ensure objectivity and impartiality and should be confined to only those actions which impact adversely on the capacity of the leaders of NHRIs to fulfil their mandate.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>Information provided by the NHRI in 2023</i></p> <p>As stipulated in the Finnish Constitution and its Section 38, the Parliament, after having obtained the opinion of the Constitutional Law Committee, may, for extremely weighty reasons, dismiss the Ombudsman before the end of his or her term by a decision supported by at least two thirds of the votes cast. This possibility is thus available only to the Parliament.</p> <p>According to the preparatory work for the Constitution, extremely weighty reasons may, for example, refer to situations where the Ombudsman is permanently unable to carry out his/her duties due to illness or due to strong lack of confidence. However, it is explicitly ruled out that strong criticism concerning Ombudsman’s individual decisions could constitute sufficient distrust for the dismissal to take place.</p> <p>As already mentioned, the Director of the FHRC is a Parliament’s civil servant, to whom the Act of Parliament’s Civil Servants (1197/2003) is applicable. Pursuant to Section 29 of the said Act, the Director of the Human Rights Centre may be removed from office, in addition to what is stipulated in Section 30 if there are acceptable and justified reasons for it considering the nature of the office in question. The Section 30 concerns, for example, situations where the civil servant’s agency or unit ceases to exist.</p>

	Only the Ombudsman – as the appointing authority - may remove the Director of the FHRC from his/her office.
Principle 6	Member States should provide NHRIs with adequate, sufficient and sustainable resources to allow them to carry out their mandate, including to engage with all relevant stakeholders in a fully independent manner and freely determine their priorities and activities.
Assessment of implementation by the NHRI	<i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p.8</i> The Government should pay more attention to the relevant international and regional standards and recommendations and be strategic when developing human rights structures with a view of strengthening them. The resources given should be commensurate with the tasks given.
Assessment of implementation by Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI	<i>SCA Report October 2019, p.10</i> The SCA notes the increase of FNHRI funding in the recent years. However, the SCA recommends that adequate funding be made available to the FNHRI to perform its functions as NPM under the OPCAT and the NMM under CRPD, as well as for the HRC to work on business and human rights. The SCA encourages the FNHRI to continue to advocate for the funding necessary to ensure that it can effectively carry out its mandate.
Principle 7	NHRIs should have the authority to determine their staffing profile and recruit their own staff , as well as sufficient resources available, in order to fulfil their mandate, so as to permit the employment and retention of staff and to ensure that they receive adequate training.

<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>Information provided by the NHRI in 2023</i></p> <p>The FNHRI has authority to recruit its own staff within the budgetary framework.</p> <p>The budget of the Parliamentary Ombudsman’s office (including the FHRC) is presented to and decided upon by the Parliament’s Office Commission. The FHRC’s budget is discussed and decided by the Office Commission on its own merits. When considering the budget proposal, the Office Commission does not discuss on the activities, nor the objectives related to the functions of the Finnish NHRI. The Office commission can only accept or reject the proposal or suggest amendments to the budget amount.</p> <p>The Office Commission is composed of the following members: Speaker of the Parliament, the Deputy speakers and four Members of the Parliament.</p>
<p>Principle 8</p>	<p>Member States should ensure that NHRIs enjoy adequate access to information and to policy makers and legislators, including timely consultations on the human rights implications of draft legislation and policy strategies.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 7</i></p> <p>The FNHRI has adequate access to information.</p> <p>[...] According to Parliamentary Ombudsman Act Section 7 “The right of the Ombudsman to receive information necessary for his or her oversight of legality is regulated by Section 111 (1) of the Constitution.” The Ombudsman has access to all information, including classified. According to Section 19 d “In order to carry out its tasks, the Human Rights Centre shall have the right to receive the necessary information and reports free of charge from the authorities.” The FHRC may receive classified information for research purposes if permission is given.</p>

<p>Principle 9</p>	<p>Member States should implement the recommendations of NHRIs and are encouraged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to make it a legal obligation for all addressees of NHRI recommendations to provide a reasoned reply within an appropriate time frame, - to develop processes to facilitate effective follow-up of NHRI recommendations, in a timely fashion and - include information thereon in their relevant documents and reports.
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 7</i></p> <p>The Parliamentary Ombudsman’s decisions with recommendations issued to the authorities usually have a high compliance rate. The addressees generally comply and report back to the Ombudsman on the measures they have taken as a standard procedure, but there is no legal obligation for them to do that.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI</p>	<p><i>See above SCA Recommendation linked to Principle 3§ 1 (SCA Report October 2019, p.10):</i></p> <p>The FHRC annual reports are neither tabled nor discussed in Parliament.</p>

<p>Principle 10</p>	<p>When member States grant NHRIs additional competences to perform functions foreseen by international conventions in the field of human rights, such as the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the NHRI should have access to sufficient resources to develop the capacity to effectively discharge its functions, including having appropriately qualified and trained staff.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI</p>	<p><i>SCA Report October 2019, p. 10</i> <i>See Principle 6 on adequate, sufficient and sustainable resources.</i></p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by CoE independent bodies</p>	<p><i>CPT Report on Finland 2020, p. 25</i> External monitoring was carried out by staff of the Parliamentary Ombudsman’s Office in their capacity as the NPM. <i>CPT Report on Finland 2020, p. 39</i> Regarding the independent monitoring of prisons, this was performed on a regular basis by the Parliamentary Ombudsman (and his staff), in his capacity as the NPM.</p>

III. Safe and Enabling Environment

<p>Principle 11</p>	<p>Member States should ensure that NHRIs can operate independently, in an environment which is conducive to them carrying out their mandate in an effective manner and in a climate of impartiality, integrity, transparency and fairness.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>Information provided by the NHRI for ENNHRI's report State of the Rule of Law in the European Union 2023</i></p> <p>In view of the Finnish NHRI, the authorities sufficiently ensure enabling space for the institution to carry out its work independently and effectively.</p>
<p>Principle 12</p>	<p>Member States should foster awareness and the co-operation of all relevant public authorities in relation to the mandate, independence and role of NHRIs, including through training and awareness-raising activities.</p>
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 6-7</i></p> <p>The Parliamentary Ombudsman is a well-known old institution and enjoys high standing and respect in the Finnish society. It is also known by the public due to its long history, the connection to the Parliament and in particular its complaints handling mandate. The HRC has been established more recently and is not yet as widely known to the public. The HRC has gradually become a respected expert body in the field of human rights through its advisory, advocacy, outreach and international and European co-operation activities.</p>

	<p><i>Information Provided by the NHRI in 2023</i></p> <p>However, the FNHRI as a whole and as an institution is not yet well-known.</p>
Principle 13	<p>Member States should take all measures necessary to protect and support NHRIs against threats and harassment and any other forms of intimidation, including through ensuring functional immunity. Any cases of alleged reprisals or intimidation against NHRIs, their membership and staff, or against those who co-operate or seek to co-operate with them, should be promptly and thoroughly investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice.</p>
Assessment of implementation by the NHRI	<p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 6</i></p> <p>The working environment for the FNHRI is safe and enabling and there have not been threats or harassment towards the FNHRI.</p> <p><i>Please see also Principle 5</i></p>
Principle 14	<p>Member States should ensure that confidential information collected by NHRIs in the context of their mandate is privileged and is not unduly made public.</p>
<p><i>No information</i></p>	

IV. Co-operation and Support

<p>Principle 15</p>	<p>Member States should take effective measures to enable NHRIs to communicate and co-operate with, in addition to the various levels of administration in the member States, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. counterpart institutions, where appropriate through networking and exchange of information and practices, as well as through regular meetings such as those taking place within the framework of ENNHRI and GANHRI; b. civil society stakeholders, in particular non-governmental organisations and human rights defenders, who should enjoy easy and safe access to NHRIs as part of an enabling environment; c. other human rights structures, including regional, local and/or specialised institutions, notably Ombudsman institutions and equality bodies and their respective networks, where appropriate through jointly organised activities; d. international and regional organisations working in related or similar fields.
<p>Assessment of implementation by the NHRI</p>	<p>Regarding b) civil society</p> <p><i>ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 5</i></p> <p>The Human Rights Delegation (established by law) includes NGOs and human rights defenders. The Human Rights Delegation serves as a national cooperative body for actors in the sector of fundamental and human rights; deals with fundamental and human rights matters that are of far-reaching significance and principal importance.</p>

Regarding c) other human rights structures:

ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 5

New human rights bodies and tasks were created in Finland during 2021 (Ombudsperson for Older Persons and a Rapporteur for Gender Based Violence). These new additions, although as such created to engage with important human rights topics, risk fragmenting and complicating the Finnish human rights architecture even further. [...]

ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 9

The fact that equality bodies are structurally connected to the Government and financed by the Ministry, may have an indirect impact on their ability to set up their own objectives and priorities. This does not seem to be a problem for the moment but is still a vulnerability that could be addressed.

ENNHRI, State of the Rule of Law in Europe in 2022, p. 6

The legislative reform process to divide the tasks of the Chancellor of Justice and the Ombudsman came into force in October 2022. The new law will not change the constitutional competences and tasks of the two supreme guardians of legality.

Information provided by the NHRI in 2023:

The Act on the Division of Duties strengthens the role of the Ombudsman as regards the rights of vulnerable persons and the oversight of security authorities. Based on the new Act the Ombudsman will be the main institution to supervise the implementation of fundamental and human rights at the individual level. The reform of the Act by increasing the focus on vulnerable persons and increasing

	the specialization of the Ombudsman staff provides opportunities also to further strengthen the cooperation within the FNHRI.
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