



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Finnish Bar Association

1. RULE OF LAW PROGRAMME OF THE FINNISH BAR ASSOCIATION

To coordinate legal policy work, the Delegation of the Finnish Bar Association adopted an updated [Rule of Law Programme](#) in March 2022. The guiding principle in the Programme is to seek to uphold the rule of law and uphold it when the society is preparing for Parliamentary Elections of 2023.

Key elements:

- Rule of law: independence of courts and attorneys requires amendment of the Finnish constitution
- Reform of the Advocate Act (1957): thorough revision of the act, especially to enhance supervision of attorneys, move from attorneys personal liability to corporate liability and strengthen confidentiality
- Access to justice: raise of the legal aid fee (110 € / hour), improve the cover of the legal expense insurances
- Work reform to tackle lengthy and expensive procedures: process planning and scheduling, focus on preliminary handling of matters, evaluation of evidence, use of interim decisions and review of cost distribution between parties

2. NEW PREMISES AT HELSINKI CITY CENTRE

After a centennial in the same building, the Finnish Bar Association moved to new address: Mikonkatu 25, 00100 Helsinki. The new office is located next to the main railway station of Helsinki with beautiful views to the Kaisaniemi Park, the oldest park of Helsinki, and historical outdoor garden of the University of Helsinki.

Prior moving to premises, a huge renovation was made to alter a block office to multipurpose space in aim to arrange majority of the Bar Association's events, trainings and meetings in own premises without arranging events in various locations.

3. DIGITALIZATION AND E-SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

The Finnish Bar Association has taken in use a document management system in addition to new member register (SALLI) and case management system (ASSI). All paper archives (over 1 500 000 paper documents) have been digitalized and now securely accessible via the document management system.

New systems decreased manual procedures and paper consumption when all bar and disciplinary matters can be handled electronically, and the Finnish Bar Association can provide its communications and services to its members enabling strong identification.

4. COMMUNICATIONS – BRAND CAMPAIGN

The Finnish Bar Association carried out a brand campaign (in tv, radio, cinemas, outdoor advertisements, social media channels etc.) to increase conspicuousness of attorneys in general but also communicate that attorneys differ from other lawyers, are committed to the ethical guidelines of the profession and are the most skilled providers of legal services.



Helsingin Sanomat – the main newspaper in Finland and JCDecaux outdoor advertisement on 7 Sep 2022

5. PROPOSED WORK REFORM FOR COURTS

Delayed trials have been a problem in Finland for a long time and has been recognized both nationally and internationally. Despite some legislative reforms that have improved the situation, trials can still be unreasonably prolonged.

The pandemic has had negative effect on the court handling times, and the Finnish Bar Association has serious concerns on the prolonged procedures, however the independence of courts has been improved despite the situation.

The cost of a trial and legal fees may be prohibitive from the perspective of legal rights.

The Finnish Bar Association has suggested [a work reform](#) for legal proceedings to tackle the cost issue including e.g. process planning and scheduling, focus on preliminary handling of matters, evaluation of evidence, use of interim decisions and review of cost distribution between parties.

The Finnish Bar Association has discussed on the proposal e.g. with the Ministry of Justice and the National Courts Administration.

6. SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has escalated into a crisis causing immense human suffering. The Finnish Bar Association stands with other European bar organizations, and as a member of the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and the International Bar Association (IBA) seeks to promote discussions on the rule of law in order to support Ukraine and justice in the context of human rights. Direct donations, coordinated support, communications and other actions of the Finnish Bar Association are listed in our [Support for Ukraine webpage](#).

7. STATISTICS

Members 31.12.2022

Altogether 2255

- men 63,7 %

- women 36,3 %

Of new members

- men 42,6 %

- women 57,4 %

Age groups:

- 30 :1.1 %

30-37: 20.4 %

38-45: 23.9 %

46-53: 20.8 %

54-61: 18.1 %

62-69: 11.8

70 <: 3.9 %

Number of law firms: 743

Of which were new firms: 10

Membership fee: 1125 € (of which 254 EUR is considered a "supervisory fee")

Members disbarred: 1

Hanna Riih -M ntyharju

Chairman of the Board of Directors

Finnish Bar Association