



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020**

### **Finnish Bar Association**

#### **1. THE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

During 2020 the Finnish Bar Association was not completely able to follow its planned strategy. The challenging situation required the Finnish Bar Association's reactions and unplanned measures throughout the year. These actions were related to changes in the Finnish society and we took an active role in communicating the changing situation and its effects regarding the judicial administration of.

#### **2. STRATEGICAL WORK**

During the period 2019-2020 the Finnish Bar Association had a lot of important strategical topics to address: We started the reform process of our office inspection processes, worked to clarify our base values and mission, examined our 10 year strategy, worked actively with authorities in order to safeguard the attorney-client privilege, founded new expert working groups and proceeded into the final stage of our project to develop our registers, case-management and electronic services.

As a result of the strategy work, we decided to take precise measures, such as updating the ethical standards concerning attorneys-at-law, concentrating to basic human and civil rights on our legal policy work, and to providing our members with more information regarding topical matters, trainings, events and legal policies.

#### **3. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND BAR EXAMINATION**

The Finnish Bar Association launched a new "Academy for Attorneys" -service in order to further develop the training of its members. In addition to the aforementioned, a completely new online-based learning platform was designed and launched. The new platform was successfully adopted, as the first six online trainings were held with over 200 participants.

The Bar examination had a good year as a record breaking 1109 candidates took part in the examination. Due to the Covid-19 situation, the written exam was held online for the first time. In addition, the other two parts of the examination, the ethical part and the trial part, were held successfully online.

#### **4. COMMUNICATIONS**

The Finnish Bar Association contracted a brand-related research in the summer of 2020. There were also many other activities as the Bar Association aimed to increase the awareness of the general public to the terms, proceedings and practices related to the legal field, that are sometimes understandably difficult for laymen to understand and assimilate.

In addition, there was a lot of other important activity in communications in 2019-2020. A website relaunch of the Disciplinary Board operating under the Finnish Bar Association was planned. The

Disciplinary Board also created a new content strategy. The requirement of exceptionally active communications related to the Covid-19 situation was present throughout the year.

## **5. GREEN OFFICE AND OTHER OFFICE RELATED ACTIVITIES**

The Finnish Bar Association's office entered into the global Green Office program by the WWF. We aim to receive the official Green Office certification by the end of June 2021. We were also active in promoting equality matters as a participant of the Helsinki Pride week. In addition to the above, our office facilities were modernized as we took action in order to ensure the functioning of our daily operations also through remote working connections.

## **6. RULE OF LAW PROGRAMME**

To coordinate legal policy work, the Finnish Bar Association has adopted the Rule of Law Programme for 2017-2026. The key aim of the Programme is to define the ways in which the voluntary work of attorneys-at-law involved in the Bar Association's legal policy work can be integrated into long term advocacy work. The guiding principle in the programme is to seek to uphold the rule of law. The independent and impartial role of Finnish attorneys-at-law is of particular importance in this regard.

The Finnish Bar Association's legal policy work is guided by a respect for human and fundamental rights and the core values of attorneys-at-law. The Rule of Law Programme is updated annually.

The 'Measures' section of the Rule of Law Programme is divided into four parts, including:

- Finnish attorneys-at-law
- Judicial administration and other actions taken by the authorities
- Legislative drafting and legislative projects
- Legal Aid

The aim of the Finnish Bar Association is to further strengthen and develop the legal policy and advocacy work.

## **7. STATISTICS**

Members 31.12.2020

Altogether 2 211

- men 65 %
- women 35 %

Of new members

- men 42 %
- women 58 %

4 % of all members were public legal aid attorneys and 96 % of all members worked in a firm of attorneys-at-law.

Age groups:

- 30 :1 %

30-37: 21 %

38-45: 25 %

46-53: 18%

54-62: 22 %

63 - : 13

Number of law firms: 775

Of which were new firms: 9

Membership fee: 1 050 € (the same since 2019)

Members disbarred: 2

**Hanna Räihä-Mäntyharju**

**Chairman of the Board of Directors**