



## Summit for Democracy Commitments March 2023

The following provides brief updates on the status of planning, development, partnering, and implementation of Finland's commitments under the Summit for Democracy.

<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Government / Authority</b>	<b>Summit Pillar</b>	<b>Commitment and Goals</b>	<b>Progress to Date</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>
	<i>Which government / authority has made this commitment?</i>	<i>Which one of the following Summit pillars does this commitment fall under (1) strengthening democracy and defending against authoritarianism;</i>	<i>What are the objectives of this commitment?  What will be the outcome when this commitment is fulfilled?  When will this commitment be fulfilled by?</i>	<i>What steps have been taken to fulfill this commitment since the commitment was made?  Who has taken these steps and when?</i>	<i>What are the planned next steps to fulfill this commitment? When will these next steps be taken and who will they be taken by? Will there be follow-up related to this commitment that go beyond the second Summit for Democracy in March 2023?</i>
<b>Finland works for democratic renewal at home</b>					
National Democracy Program 2025	Government of Finland /Ministry of Justice	Pillars 1, 2 and 3	Developing new ways of participation, promoting the transparency of preparation, improving consultation practices, strengthening the operating conditions of the civil society, and promoting democracy and human rights education.	The tasks that were outlined in the Action Plan of the Democracy Program for 2019-2022 have been achieved or are close to being finished. A Government Resolution on Democracy Policy, was approved by the Government in November 2022.	The Government Resolution on Democracy Policy is intended to be enacted, by a new Democracy Action Plan during the beginning of the next Government term.

<p>Updating Democracy Project</p>	<p>Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra</p>	<p>Pillar 1</p>	<p>Strengthening the capacity for the renewal of Finland’s democracy. The Updating Democracy project focuses on national policymaking and state administration and therefore specifically on supporting the reform of the methods adopted by Parliament and the Government. It brings together political parties, local authorities and civil society. With the call for more direct citizen participation and inclusion, there is a need for new ways of working and platforms.</p>	<p>Under the <i>Updating Democracy project</i> (2018-2021), Sitra conducted preliminary studies on building a modern democratic user interface with a possibility of implementation by the government in the future. Through different studies, this project has supported parliament’s own reform work as well as the reform of the legislative processes across parliament and the government. The project has developed new ways for people to learn about, influence and engage in the decision-making taking place within representative democracy.</p> <p>As part of work done in EDMO-NORDIS consortium, Sitra and its collaborators published a Guide for Digital Information Literacy (DIL) in Sept 2022. This guide can be used as a basis for educational materials on the topic and broadens the concept of “media literacy” up to the challenges of hybrid media environment.</p> <p>Sitra participates in Summit for Democracy Cohort Technology for Democracy.</p>	<p>The objectives of the <i>Updating Democracy project</i> continue to be promoted by Sitra’s projects <i>Reforming the Decision-Making Process</i>, <i>Digital Power and Democracy</i> and <i>New Forms of Participation</i>.</p> <p>Sitra aims to increase the transparency and traceability of legislation preparation and decision-making by bringing together the separate public services for citizens' participation and influence into one interactive democracy platform.</p> <p>Sitra will continue to enhance the readiness of citizens (information, skills, enthusiasm) to affect matters that are of importance to themselves for example through dissemination and development of its Digiprofile test. It provides everyone a free tool to assess their digital skills and perceptions of their own privacy.</p> <p>Together with DigiFinland, Sitra is building a GDPR-compliant version of the digital discussion tool ‘Polis’. The tool makes digital participation possible without the polarizing effects of social media.</p>
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<p>Ministerial Group on Internal Security and Strengthening the Rule of Law</p>	<p>Government of Finland /Ministry of Justice</p>	<p>Pillars 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>Addressing questions related to the development of judicial administration, prevention of exclusion and realization of fundamental rights.</p>	<p>The Ministerial Working Group on Internal Security and Strengthening the Rule of Law was appointed by the Government in July 2019. The working group is chaired by Minister of Justice Anna-Maja Henriksson. The Ministerial Working Group meets regularly and discusses matters relating to the development of judicial administration, prevention of exclusion, prevention of over-indebtedness, and realisation of fundamental rights. It also discusses matters of internal security and asylum and refugee policy.</p>	<p>The mandate of the Ministerial Working Group on Internal Security and Strengthening the Rule of Law runs for the duration of the parliamentary term until the end of March 2023.</p>
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A comprehensive report on judicial system	Government of Finland /Ministry of Justice	Pillars 1 and 3	The Government Report on the Administration of Justice provides a comprehensive and concise overview of the current state of the administration of justice in Finland and its operating conditions and development trends, and presents required measures.	<p>The Government Report that was handed to Parliament on 17 November 2022 sets medium-term objectives for achieving reasonable quality in the administration of justice. It also presents proposals for measures to ensure sufficient resources for the administration of justice, to improve the internal structures and processes, and to improve the availability of legal services and customer service.</p> <p>The Report focuses on the activities of the court system, the National Prosecution Authority, the National Enforcement Authority, the Prison and Probation Service, the public legal aid and guardianship districts, the Legal Register Centre, the Consumer Disputes Board and the Non-Discrimination and Equality Board.</p>	The Government report is at the moment discussed by the Parliament based on which further actions will be taken during next government term.
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**Human rights-based approach at the core of Finland's national and international actions**

<p>Membership at the UN Human Rights</p>	<p>Government of Finland /Ministry for Foreign Affairs</p>	<p>Pillar 3</p>	<p>Finland pledges to respect and promote the principle of universality of human rights over the sovereignty of nation states. We put emphasis on four themes: the rights of women and girls, new technologies and digitalization, sustainable development and climate change, and education. These themes capture many longstanding and emerging challenges to the fulfilment of human rights, in all countries.</p>	<p>In the UN HRC, Finland has actively participated in negotiations on resolutions on our priority sectors and promoted ambitious and human rights based language, also together with like-minded countries. We raise our priorities systematically in our national statements at the Council. We have successfully fought back hostile amendments that aimed at weakening the language on resolutions on our priority issues, for example before the vote for the resolution on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls (A/HRC/RES/50/18) and the renewal of the IE SOGI mandate (A/HRC/RES/50/10) in HRC50. Since the beginning of our membership, The Permanent Representation of Finland in Geneva has organized multiple side events on our priorities, such as the rights of persons with disabilities and human rights defenders. In all our activities, we actively seek partners also outside our most traditional like minded countries in order to build common ground and form new alliances.</p>	<p>We will continue these efforts, among others, constantly aiming at improving our impact, till the end of our membership in December 2024.</p>
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<p>A third National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights</p>	<p>Government of Finland /Ministry of Justice</p>	<p>Pillar 3</p>	<p>Addressing shortcomings related to the recognition of human rights problems and to human rights reporting by developing the monitoring of fundamental and human rights. The objective is to provide systematic data on the realization of rights of different population groups to support knowledge-based fundamental and human rights policy. The NAP also aims to develop capacities for fundamental and human rights monitoring through measures relating to data collection and research.</p>	<p>The NAP was adopted as a government resolution on 23 June 2021. Fundamental and human rights indicators, which provide a new instrument for monitoring fundamental and human rights in the short term and the long term, have been developed and published as part of the action plan. The first monitoring round of the indicators has commenced and will be conducted by the end of 2023.</p> <p>Research on gathering data disaggregated by population group has been commissioned in the beginning of 2023 to develop fundamental and human rights research and data collection.</p> <p>New guidelines and training on fundamental and human rights impact assessment have been developed.</p>	<p>Monitoring data will be published on a public website and the indicator work will be further developed in the coming years.</p> <p>Online training on fundamental and human rights impact assessment will be created and available in 2023.</p> <p>Research on gathering data disaggregated by population group will be published in 2023.</p> <p>The efficiency of follow-up on recommendations by international treaty monitoring bodies will be increased.</p>
<p>National Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security</p>	<p>Government of Finland /Ministry for Foreign Affairs</p>	<p>Pillars 1 and 3</p>	<p>Finland is the first country to adopt a National Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security in August 2021 to implement the UNSCR 2250. Young people's ownership and participation were the key principles in the preparation of the Action Plan. Its cross-cutting theme is intersectionality, while other important themes are climate change and new technologies.</p>	<p>The implementation of the first National Action Plan on Youth Peace and Security (YPS) has begun in collaboration with several ministries and youth organizations, who also meet regularly in a follow-up group. Internationally, Finland has supported UN OSGEY, shared experiences on NAP and organised a workshop on YPS implementation for government officials and youth. MFA coordinates the work.</p>	<p>Mid-term report on the implementation of the NAP will be prepared and shared to the parliament by the MFA. Indicators work continues. Discussion of the next National Action Plan will begin in the follow-up group in the autumn 2024.</p>

National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325	Government of Finland /Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Pillars 1 and 3	Finland has been a strong promoter of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and is currently drafting a new National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325.	The fourth National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security for 2023-2027 has been published. The drafting process was conducted in an inclusive and participatory process with civil society and government ministries coordinated by the MFA.	The fourth National Action Plan will be presented to the parliament and its national implementation supported by implementation guidelines. The indicators work for the NAP will begin.
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**Finland promotes the principle of the rule of law and democracy globally**

Rule of Law Centre	Government of Finland /Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Pillars 1 and 2	Finland pledges to increase its support to the rule of law in response to the current global trends of increasing violations of the rule of law and undermining the independence of judiciary. With the Rule of Law Centre established in 2021, Finland enhances its financial and technical assistance to developing countries in creating and reinforcing the foundation of the rule of law, in developing the capacity of rule of law institutions, and in strengthening legislation by providing expertise and training.	The RoL Centre has promoted the principle of rule of law by providing training, support, advice and information since autumn 2021. The Centre has fostered awareness raising, the interagency cooperation and the interdisciplinary research, produced examples of effective RoL work and identified Finland's strengths in the sector. The international work has focused on strengthening institutions, supporting the processes of creating laws and focusing on promoting the transparency of election and party funding, anti-corruption, cybersecurity and the information society, as well as education and awareness-raising on rule of law issues. The RoL Centre has implemented projects in Mozambique and in Albania and it has had other activities during 2022 in Kosovo, Uzbekistan and in Vietnam as well as in Finland.	The RoL Centre will continue to promote the principle of the RoL by providing advice, education, and other necessary support. The project activities, awareness raising, networking, and influencing work continue throughout the 2023. The RoL Centre focuses on linking anti-corruption and the rule of law efforts even stronger. The RoL Centre examines the rule of law work implemented in fragile contexts. Follow-up of activities and results go beyond the second Summit for Democracy in March 2023.
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Demo Finland	Government of Finland /Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Pillars 1 and 3	Promoting political dialogue and inclusive multi-party democracy through Demo Finland, a Finnish multi-party co-operative organization of all the parliamentary parties of Finland. Enhancing inclusive political participation through political parties on a multi-party basis, currently in 6 African and 2 Asian countries and in Finland, in order to create a culture of democracy where political rights are realized. Special attention is paid to enhancing the political participation of women, young people and persons with disabilities as underrepresented groups – and the inclusivity of political parties.	In 2021, Demo Finland supported the political participation of underrepresented groups and multi-party dialogue in Ethiopia, Finland, Kenya, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Tunisia and Zambia. In Mozambique, Demo Finland supported democratic governance and parliamentary oversight of extractive industries and natural resources. In addition, Demo Finland started to support multiparty cooperation and political participation of women and female candidates in Somalia in 2022. Demo Finland has advocated for stronger democracy support policies especially in Finland and in the European Union. Demo Finland participates in the Summit for Democracy Cohort Gender Equality as a Prerequisite for Democracy and is involved in the Summit for Democracy event in Zambia.	Demo Finland will continue to support the political participation of underrepresented groups, support political parties to be more programmatic, inclusive and democratic and strengthen multi-party dialogue. Demo Finland will continue to foster the multi-party cooperation of young politicians. Demo Finland continues to advocate for stronger democracy support policies in Finland and in the European Union.
<b>Finland fights against corruption globally and at home</b>					
National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan	Government of Finland /Ministry of Justice	Pillar 2	The Anti-Corruption Strategy supports the implementation of sustainable development objectives, such as those aimed at the strengthening of the rule of law and good governance, and the reduction of corruption and bribery.	Out of the 79 actions in the strategy, 13 have been completed and 27 actions are well-advanced. 9 actions remain with the status not started. Several ministries and law enforcement authorities participate in the implementation of the national strategy and are responsible for carrying out the actions.	Implementation period of the current strategy will continue until the end of 2023. Several stakeholders are responsible for carrying out the actions. The steering group of the strategy may commence the preparation of the following national anti-corruption strategy.



Transparency Register	Government of Finland /Ministry of Justice	Pillar 2	In accordance with the Government Programme, an act on a transparency register will be enacted in Finland on the basis of parliamentary preparation and in consultation with civil society. The purpose of the act is to improve the transparency of decision-making and, by doing this, to prevent undue influence and reinforce public confidence.	The Government Proposal was handed to Parliament in June 2022. The law proposal was accepted by the Parliament on 26 February 2023. The act will enter into force 1 January 2024. The Act requires lobbyists to register in a transparency register. The register is maintained and monitored by the National Audit office of Finland. The register is published on internet. The Audit office can issue a fine if one fails to comply with the Act. The National Audit office reports to the Parliament on the use of the register.	The Parliament required the next government to conduct an ex ante evaluation and follow-up on how the transparency register works in practice and make a review on the possibilities of expanding the transparency register to cover also regional and local authorities.
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**Finland fights for free, open and safe internet for all**

<p>The Freedom Online Coalition (FOC)</p>	<p>Government of Finland /Ministry for Foreign Affairs</p>	<p>Pillars 1 and 3</p>	<p>Finland focuses on developing FOC’s activities to protect human rights and democracy, on promoting open, safe and accessible internet for all, including women and girls and persons in vulnerable situation, and on fighting against disinformation which is crucial in defending against authoritarianism.</p>	<p>During Finland's chairship of FOC in 2021, the chairship priorities (disinformation, digital inclusion, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and challenges by authoritarian regimes) were advocated in numerous events throughout the year and in the first ever virtual Freedom Online Conference. Finland organized outreach activities, virtual discussions, as well as a dialogue with representatives of the African Union. In December 2021 The FOC adopted the Helsinki Declaration for open and accessible internet and human rights based digitalization. In 2023 Finland remains an active member of FOC’s steering group Friends of the Chair. In this way, Finland actively participates in FOC's norm building efforts, diplomatic coordination and multishareholder collaboration through the FOC Advisory Network and its Task Forces on Digital Equality and Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights. The Ministry for Foreign affairs coordinates Finland's participation within FOC.</p>	<p>Finland will continue to promote open safe and accessible internet for all, including women and girls, and persons and groups in a vulnerable situation, such as LGBTIQ+ people, Indigenous Peoples and persons with disabilities. Finland keeps these priorities in the core of its efforts to support FOC's work and its norm building by actively participating in the creation of JSTs, co-shaping the agenda and goals of the coalition, and further supporting the outreach and engagement of possible new members. The Ministry for Foreign affairs coordinates Finland's participation within FOC, and assesses the Finnish participation in a regular manner.</p>
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<p>The Generation Equality campaign</p>	<p>Government of Finland /Ministry for Foreign Affairs</p>	<p>Pillars 1 and 3</p>	<p>The Generation Equality campaign, coordinated by UN Women and lasting until 2026, brings together multilateral organizations, states, the private sector, and civil society actors, in support of gender equality worldwide. In the process, Finland holds a lead role in the Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality. The Action Coalition promotes the use of technology and innovations in enhancing gender equality and has set clear global objectives that concentrate on questions such as closing the digital gender gap and investing in feminist technology and innovation. In Generation Equality, preventing and eliminating online gender-based violence (OGBV) is a priority for Finland.</p>	<p>As a committed co-leader of the Action Coalition on Technology and Innovations for Gender Equality, Finland’s commitments cover a variety of topics and are promoted through advocacy, programs, financial support, as well as policy.</p> <p>In 2021, Finland allocated over 17 million EUR development funding to the intersection of technology &amp; innovation and gender equality. Finland’s funding is used, among other things, to supporting the digital safety of women human rights defenders and to enhancing the digital literacy of women and girls in several countries. Aiming for global impact, Finland vigorously advocates for the prevention and elimination of online gender-based violence (OGBV) in relevant international fora, especially in the context of Finland’s membership in the UNHRC. Finland’s current national Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women covers digital violence for the first time and does this with concrete measures and emphasis on the prevention of violence.</p>	<p>Finland continues efforts as a co-leader of the Action Coalition on Technology and Innovations for Gender Equality to advance gender-transformative technology and innovation, more inclusive innovation ecosystems, closing of the digital gender gap, and preventing and eliminating online gender-based violence.</p>
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