

Translation from Finnish

Legally binding only in Finnish and Swedish

Ministry of Justice, Finland

Constitution of Finland

(731/1999; amendments up to 817/2018 included)

By decision of Parliament, made in accordance with section 67 of the Parliament Act, the following is enacted:

Chapter 1

Foundations of the system of government

Section 1

Constitution

Finland is a sovereign republic.

The constitution of Finland is established in this constitutional act. The constitution shall safeguard the inviolability of human dignity and the freedom and rights of the individual and promote justice in society.

Finland participates in international cooperation for the safeguarding of peace and human rights and for the development of society. Finland is a Member State of the European Union. (1112/2011)

Section 2

Democracy and the rule of law

The powers of the State in Finland are vested in the people, who are represented by Parliament.

Democracy entails the right of the individual to participate in and influence the development of society and their living environment.

The exercise of public powers shall be based on law. In all public activity, the law shall be strictly observed.

Section 3

Parliamentarism and separation of powers

Legislative powers are exercised by Parliament, which also decides on the central government finances.

Governmental powers are exercised by the President of the Republic and the Government, the members of which shall enjoy the confidence of Parliament.

Judicial powers are exercised by independent courts, with the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court as the highest instances.

Section 4

Territory of Finland

The territory of Finland is indivisible. The national borders cannot be altered without the authorisation of Parliament.

Section 5

Finnish citizenship

A child acquires Finnish citizenship by birth and on the basis of the citizenship of the parents, as further specified by an Act of Parliament. Citizenship may also be granted on the basis of a declaration or on application under the conditions provided by an Act of Parliament.

A person may only be released from Finnish citizenship on the grounds provided by law and subject to the condition that the person holds or will be granted the citizenship of another state.

Chapter 2

Fundamental rights

Section 6

Equality

Everyone is equal before the law.

No one shall, without an acceptable reason, be treated differently from other persons on the grounds of sex, age, origin, language, religion, belief, opinion, state of health or disability or on other grounds related to the person.

Children shall be treated as equal individuals, and they shall have the right to influence matters concerning themselves in accordance with their maturity.

Gender equality is promoted in societal activity and working life, especially in the determination of pay and other terms of employment, as further specified by an Act of Parliament.

Section 7

Right to life and to liberty and integrity of person

Everyone has the right to life and to liberty, integrity and security of person.

No one shall be sentenced to death, tortured or otherwise treated in a manner violating human dignity.

The integrity of a person shall not be interfered with, nor shall anyone be deprived of their liberty arbitrarily or without a reason provided by law. A punishment involving deprivation of liberty may only be imposed by a court. The lawfulness of other cases of deprivation of liberty may be referred to a court for review. The rights of individuals deprived of their liberty shall be safeguarded by an Act of Parliament.

Section 8

Principle of legality in criminal law

No one shall be held guilty of a criminal offence or be sentenced to a punishment on account of an act that did not constitute a criminal offence under law at the time when it was committed. The punishment imposed for an offence shall not be more severe than that provided by law at the time of commission of the offence.

Section 9

Freedom of movement

Finnish citizens and aliens legally resident in Finland have the right to freely move in the country and choose their place of residence.

Everyone has the right to leave the country. Restrictions to this right may be provided by an Act of Parliament if they are necessary for safeguarding judicial proceedings or the enforcement of a punishment or for ensuring the fulfilment of the national defence obligation.

Finnish citizens shall not be prevented from entering Finland, be deported from Finland or, against their will, be extradited or transferred from Finland to another country. However, it may be provided by an Act of Parliament that a Finnish citizen may, due to a criminal offence, for the purposes of judicial proceedings or to enforce a decision concerning the custody or care of a child, be extradited or transferred to a country in which their human rights and protection under the law are guaranteed. (802/2007)

Provisions on the right of aliens to enter Finland and to stay in the country are laid down by an Act of Parliament. An alien shall not be deported, extradited or returned to a country where there is a risk of them being subjected to the death penalty, torture or other treatment violating human dignity.

Section 10

Protection of private life

Everyone's right to respect for private life, honour and home are safeguarded. Further provisions on the protection of personal data are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

The secrecy of correspondence, telephony and other confidential communications is inviolable.

Provisions on measures interfering with the right to respect for home that are necessary for safeguarding fundamental rights or for investigating criminal offences may be laid down by an Act of Parliament. (817/2018)

Provisions on such restrictions to the secrecy of communications may be laid down by an Act of Parliament that are necessary in the investigation of criminal offences that endanger the right to respect for home or the security of the individual or society, in judicial proceedings and security checks, during deprivation of liberty, and for the purpose of collecting intelligence on military activities or on other such activities that pose a serious threat to national security. (817/2018)

Section 11

Freedom of religion and conscience

Everyone has the freedom of religion and conscience.

Freedom of religion and conscience entails the right to profess and practice a religion, the right to express one's belief and the right to be or not to be a member of a religious community. No one is under the obligation to participate in the practice of a religion against their conscience.

Section 12

Freedom of expression and right of access to information

Everyone has the freedom of expression. Freedom of expression entails the right to express, impart and receive information, opinions and other communications without prior prevention by anyone. Further provisions on the exercise of the freedom of expression are laid down by an Act of Parliament. Provisions on restrictions applicable to audiovisual programmes that are necessary for the protection of children may be laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Documents and other recordings in the possession of the authorities are public, unless their publicity has, for necessary reasons, been separately restricted by an Act of Parliament. Everyone has the right of access to public documents and recordings.

Section 13

Freedom of assembly and freedom of association

Everyone has the right, without obtaining a permit, to arrange meetings and demonstrations and to participate in them.

Everyone has the freedom of association. Freedom of association entails the right, without a permit, to form an association, to be or not to be a member of an association and to participate in the activities of an association. The freedom to form trade unions and the freedom to organise in order to look after other interests are likewise safeguarded.

Further provisions on the exercise of the freedom of assembly and the freedom of association are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 14

Electoral and participatory rights

Every Finnish citizen who has reached the age of 18 years has the right to vote in national elections and referendums. Separate provisions laid down in this Constitution apply to the eligibility to stand as a candidate in national elections.

Every Finnish citizen and every citizen of the European Union resident in Finland, having reached the age of 18 years, has the right to vote in elections to the European Parliament as provided by an Act of Parliament. (1112/2011)

Every Finnish citizen and every alien permanently resident in Finland, having reached the age of 18 years, has the right to vote in municipal elections and municipal referendums as provided by an Act of Parliament. Provisions on the right to otherwise participate in municipal administration are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

The public authorities shall promote the opportunities for individuals to participate in societal activity and to influence decisions that concern them.

Section 15

Protection of property

The property of everyone is safeguarded.

Provisions on the expropriation of property, for a general interest and against full compensation, are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 16

Educational and cultural rights

Everyone has the right to primary and lower secondary education free of charge. Provisions on compulsory education are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

The public authorities shall, as further specified by an Act of Parliament, safeguard equal opportunities of everyone to receive education other than primary and lower secondary education based on their abilities and specific needs and to develop themselves without being prevented by lack of means.

The freedom of science, the arts and higher education is safeguarded.

Section 17

Right to one's language and culture

The national languages of Finland are Finnish and Swedish.

The right of everyone to use their own language, either Finnish or Swedish, in their own matter before courts and other authorities and to receive official documents in that language shall be safeguarded by an Act of Parliament. The public authorities shall provide for the educational, cultural and societal needs of the Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking populations of the country on equal grounds.

The Sami, as an indigenous people, as well as the Roma and other groups have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. Provisions on the right of the Sami to use the Sami language before the authorities are laid down by an Act of Parliament. The rights of

persons using sign language and persons in need of interpretation or translation aid owing to disability shall be safeguarded by an Act of Parliament.

Section 18

Right to work and freedom to conduct a business

Everyone has the right, under the law, to earn their livelihood by the employment, occupation or business of their choice. The public authorities shall ensure the protection of the labour force.

The public authorities shall promote employment and seek to safeguard the right of everyone to work. Provisions on the right to receive employment-promoting training are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

No one shall be dismissed from employment without a reason laid down in an Act of Parliament.

Section 19

Right to social security

Anyone who cannot obtain the security required for a life of dignity has the right to indispensable subsistence and care.

The right of everyone to basic subsistence during unemployment, illness, incapacity for work and old age, and upon the birth of a child and loss of a provider shall be guaranteed by an Act of Parliament.

The public authorities shall safeguard, as further specified by an Act of Parliament, adequate health and social services for everyone and promote the health of the population. Moreover, the public authorities shall support families and others responsible for the care of children so that they can ensure the wellbeing and individual development of the children.

The public authorities shall promote everyone's right to housing and support everyone's opportunities to arrange their own housing.

Section 20

Responsibility for the environment

Nature and biodiversity, the environment and cultural heritage are the responsibility of everyone.

The public authorities shall seek to safeguard everyone's right to a healthy environment and everyone's opportunities to influence decisions that concern their living environment.

Section 21

Protection under the law

Everyone has the right to have their matter considered appropriately and without undue delay by a court or other authority competent under the law and to have a decision pertaining to their rights and obligations reviewed by a court or other independent judicial body.

The publicity of proceedings, the right to be heard, the right to receive a reasoned decision, the right to request a review and other guarantees of a fair trial and good administration shall be safeguarded by an Act of Parliament.

Section 22

Protection of fundamental rights

The public authorities shall ensure the realisation of fundamental and human rights.

Section 23 (1112/2011)

Fundamental rights in emergency conditions

Provisions on temporary derogations from fundamental rights may be laid down by an Act of Parliament, or by government decree to be issued by virtue of an authorisation with a precisely circumscribed scope of application laid down in an Act of Parliament for a special reason, if the derogations are necessary during an armed attack against Finland or other emergency conditions specified by law that pose a serious threat to the nation and are compliant with Finland's international human rights obligations. Provisions on the grounds for any temporary derogations shall, however, be laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Government decrees concerning temporary derogations shall be submitted to Parliament for consideration without delay. Parliament may decide on the validity of the decrees.

Chapter 3

Parliament and Members of Parliament

Section 24

Composition and electoral term of Parliament

Parliament is unicameral. It consists of two hundred Members of Parliament who are elected for a term of four years at a time.

The term of Parliament begins when the results of the parliamentary elections have been confirmed and lasts until the next parliamentary elections have been conducted.

Section 25

Conducting parliamentary elections

Members of Parliament are elected by a direct, proportional and secret vote. Each eligible voter has an equal right to vote in the elections.

For the purposes of parliamentary elections, the country is divided, on the basis of the number of Finnish citizens, into at least twelve and at most eighteen electoral districts. In addition, Åland forms an electoral district of its own for the purpose of electing one Member of Parliament.

Registered political parties and groups consisting of a statutory minimum number of eligible voters have the right to nominate candidates in parliamentary elections.

Further provisions on the timing of parliamentary elections, the nomination of candidates, the conduct of the elections and the electoral districts are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 26

Ordering extraordinary parliamentary elections

The President of the Republic may, on the reasoned motion of the Prime Minister, after having heard the parliamentary groups and while Parliament is in session, order that extraordinary parliamentary elections be conducted. After this, Parliament shall decide when it will conclude its work before the elections.

After extraordinary parliamentary elections, Parliament shall convene in session on the first day of the calendar month that begins next after ninety days have elapsed from the issue of the order to conduct elections, unless Parliament has decided on an earlier date.

Section 27

Candidate eligibility and eligibility for the office of Member of Parliament

Each eligible voter with legal capacity is eligible to stand as a candidate in parliamentary elections.

However, a person holding a military office cannot be elected a Member of Parliament.

The Chancellor of Justice of the Government, the Parliamentary Ombudsman, a justice of the Supreme Court or the Supreme Administrative Court and the Prosecutor General cannot serve as a Member of Parliament. If a Member of Parliament is elected President of the Republic or appointed or selected to one of the offices referred to above, the person ceases to be a Member of Parliament on the date of election, appointment or selection. A person also ceases to be a Member of Parliament if the person forfeits their candidate eligibility.

Section 28

Suspension, release and dismissal from the office of Member of Parliament

The exercise of the responsibilities of Member of Parliament is suspended for the time during which the person is serving as a Member of the European Parliament. During that time, their deputy Member of Parliament shall exercise the Member's responsibilities. The exercise of the responsibilities of Member of Parliament is also suspended for the duration of military service.

Parliament may grant a release from the office of Member of Parliament at the request of the Member if it deems that there is an acceptable reason for granting such a release.

If a Member of Parliament substantially and repeatedly neglects the exercise of their responsibilities as a Member of Parliament, Parliament may, after having obtained the opinion of the Constitutional Law Committee, dismiss the Member from office either permanently or for a fixed period by decision supported by at least two thirds of the votes cast.

If a person elected as a Member of Parliament has been sentenced by an enforceable judgment to imprisonment for an intentional offence or to a punishment for an electoral offence, Parliament may examine whether the person can be allowed to continue to serve as a Member of Parliament. If the offence is such that the sentenced person does not command the trust and respect required for the office of Member of Parliament, Parliament may, after having obtained the opinion of the Constitutional Law Committee and by a decision supported by at least two thirds of the votes cast, declare that the person has ceased to hold the office of Member of Parliament.

Section 29

Independence of Members of Parliament

Members of Parliament are obliged to adhere to the principles of justice and truth when exercising their responsibilities. They shall abide by the Constitution and are not bound by other orders.

Section 30

Parliamentary immunity

No one shall prevent a Member of Parliament from exercising their responsibilities as a Member of Parliament.

A Member of Parliament shall not be charged in a court nor be deprived of their liberty owing to opinions that the Member has expressed in a parliamentary session or owing to their conduct in the consideration of a matter, unless Parliament has authorised this by a decision supported by at least five sixths of the votes cast.

If a Member of Parliament is arrested or remanded, the Speaker of Parliament shall immediately be notified of this. A Member of Parliament shall not be arrested or remanded before the

commencement of judicial proceedings without the authorisation of Parliament, unless the Member is, on serious grounds, suspected of having committed a criminal offence for which the minimum punishment provided by law is imprisonment for at least six months.

Section 31

Conduct and freedom of speech of Members of Parliament

Members of Parliament have the right to speak freely in Parliament about all matters under debate and about the consideration of these matters.

Members of Parliament shall conduct themselves with dignity and decorum, and they shall not behave offensively towards other persons. If a Member of Parliament is in breach of such conduct, the Speaker of Parliament may remark on this or prohibit the Member from continuing to speak. Parliament may issue a warning to a Member of Parliament who has repeatedly breached the order or suspend them from attending sessions for a maximum of two weeks.

Section 32

Disqualification of Members of Parliament

A Member of Parliament is disqualified from participating in the preparation of or decision-making in a matter that concerns the Member personally. However, a Member of Parliament may participate in the debate on such a matter in a plenary session. In addition, a Member of Parliament shall not participate in the consideration of a matter pertaining to the inspection of the Member's official acts.

Chapter 4

Parliamentary activities

Section 33

Parliamentary session

Parliament convenes in session every year at a time decided by Parliament, after which the President of the Republic declares the parliamentary session open.

The parliamentary session continues until the time when Parliament convenes in the following parliamentary session. However, the last parliamentary session of an electoral term continues until Parliament decides to conclude its work. After this, the President declares the work of Parliament finished for that electoral term. However, the Speaker of Parliament has the right, if needed, to reconvene Parliament in session before the new elections have been conducted.

Section 34

Speaker of Parliament and Speaker's Council

Parliament elects a Speaker and two Deputy Speakers from among its members for each parliamentary session.

The election of the Speaker and the Deputy Speakers is conducted by secret ballot. The Member of Parliament receiving more than half of the votes cast is elected. If no one receives the required majority of the votes cast in the first two ballots, the Member of Parliament receiving the most votes in the third ballot is elected.

The Speaker, the Deputy Speakers and the chairpersons of the parliamentary committees form the Speaker's Council. The Speaker's Council issues instructions on the organisation of the work of Parliament and decides, as separately provided in this Constitution or in Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on the procedures to be followed in the consideration of matters during the parliamentary session. The Speaker's Council may submit motions for the enactment or amendment of Acts of Parliament pertaining to parliamentary officials or Parliament's Rules of Procedure and present proposals for other provisions governing the work of Parliament.

Section 35

Parliamentary committees

For each electoral term, Parliament appoints the Grand Committee, the Constitutional Law Committee, the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Finance Committee, the Audit Committee and the other standing committees specified in Parliament's Rules of Procedure. In addition, Parliament may appoint ad hoc committees for the preparation or examination of a given matter. (596/2007)

The Grand Committee has twenty-five members. The Constitutional Law Committee, the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Finance Committee have at least seventeen members each. The other

standing committees have at least eleven members each. In addition, each committee has a requisite number of alternate members.

A committee has a quorum when at least two thirds of its members are present, unless a higher number of members required for a quorum in a given matter is separately provided by law.

Section 36

Other bodies and representatives to be elected by Parliament

Parliament elects Parliamentary Trustees to supervise the administration and operations of the Social Insurance Institution of Finland as further specified by an Act of Parliament.

Parliament elects other requisite bodies as provided in this Constitution, in another Act of Parliament or in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Provisions on the election of parliamentary representatives for a body established under an international treaty or for another international body are laid down by an Act of Parliament or in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Section 37

Election of parliamentary bodies

The committees and other parliamentary bodies are appointed during the first parliamentary session of an electoral term for the duration of that term, unless otherwise provided in this Constitution, Parliament's Rules of Procedure or the rules of procedure adopted by Parliament for a given parliamentary body. However, Parliament may, on the proposal of the Speaker's Council, decide to reappoint a body during the electoral term.

Parliament elects the members of the committees and other bodies. Unless the election is by consensus, it is held by proportional vote.

Section 38

Parliamentary Ombudsman

Parliament elects the Parliamentary Ombudsman and two Deputy Ombudsmen for a term of four years. They all shall have an outstanding knowledge of law. A Deputy Ombudsman may have a substitute as further specified by an Act of Parliament. The provisions concerning the Parliamentary Ombudsman apply, as appropriate, to the Deputy Ombudsmen and to the Deputy Ombudsmen's substitutes. (802/2007)

Parliament may, after having obtained the opinion of the Constitutional Law Committee and if there are very serious grounds for this, dismiss the Parliamentary Ombudsman before the end of their term by a decision supported by at least two thirds of the votes cast.

Section 39

Introduction of matters in Parliament

A matter comes before Parliament through a government proposal or a Member of Parliament's motion or in another manner provided in this Constitution or in Parliament's Rules of Procedure. (1112/2011)

Members of Parliament may put forward:

- 1) legislative motions containing a proposal for the enactment of an Act of Parliament;
- 2) budgetary motions containing a proposal for an appropriation or for another decision to be included in the Budget or a supplementary budget; and
- 3) petitionary motions containing a proposal for the drafting of a bill or for taking another measure.

Section 40

Preparation of matters

Government proposals, Member of Parliament's motions, reports submitted to Parliament and other matters specified in this Constitution or in Parliament's Rules of Procedure shall be prepared in a committee before their final consideration in a plenary session of Parliament.

Section 41

Consideration of matters in plenary session

A bill and a proposal for Parliament's Rules of Procedure are considered in a plenary session in two readings. However, a bill left in abeyance and an unapproved bill are considered in one reading only. Other matters are considered in a plenary session in a single reading.

Decisions in a plenary session are made by a simple majority of the votes cast, unless otherwise separately provided in this Constitution. In the event of a tie, the decision is made by drawing lots, except where a qualified majority is required for the adoption of a bill or proposal. Further provisions on the voting procedure are laid down in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Section 42

Duties of the Speaker in plenary session

The Speaker convenes the plenary sessions, presents the matters on the agenda, leads the debate and ensures that the Constitution is complied with in the consideration of matters in a plenary session.

The Speaker shall not refuse to include a matter on the agenda or a proposal in a vote, unless the Speaker considers it to be contrary to the Constitution, another Act of Parliament or a prior decision of Parliament. In this event, the Speaker shall state reasons for the refusal. If Parliament does not accept the action of the Speaker, the matter is referred to the Constitutional Law Committee, which shall without delay rule whether the action of the Speaker was correct.

The Speaker does not participate in debates or votes in plenary sessions.

Section 43

Interpellations

A group of at least twenty Members of Parliament may submit an interpellation to the Government or to an individual minister concerning a matter falling within the remit of the Government or the minister. An interpellation shall be replied to in a plenary session of Parliament within fifteen days of the date on which the interpellation was brought to the attention of the Government.

At the end of the consideration of an interpellation, a vote of confidence in the Government or the minister shall be taken, provided that a resolution of no confidence in the Government or the minister was proposed during the debate.

Section 44

Government statements and reports

The Government may submit a statement or report to Parliament on a matter relating to the governance of the state or its international relations.

At the end of the consideration of a statement, a vote of confidence in the Government or a minister shall be taken, provided that a resolution of no confidence in the Government or the minister was proposed during the debate. No decision on confidence in the Government or a minister can be made in conjunction with the consideration of a report.

Section 45

Questions, announcements and debates

Members of Parliament have the right to submit questions to a minister on matters falling within the minister's remit. Provisions on submitting the questions and on replying to them are laid down in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

The Prime Minister or a minister designated by the Prime Minister may make an announcement to Parliament on a topical issue.

A debate on any topical issue may be held in a plenary session as further specified in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Parliament makes no decisions on matters referred to in this section. In the consideration of these matters, the provisions of section 31, subsection 1 on the freedom of speech may be deviated from.

Section 46

Reports to be submitted to Parliament

The Government shall annually submit to Parliament a report on the Government's work and on the measures undertaken in response to decisions made by Parliament, as well as a report on the management of central government finances and adherence to the Budget. (1112/2011)

Other reports shall be submitted to Parliament as provided in this Constitution, in another Act of Parliament or in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Section 47

Parliament's right to information

Parliament has the right to receive from the Government any information it needs for the consideration of matters. The competent minister shall ensure that the committees and other parliamentary bodies receive, without delay, any documents and other information they need that are in the possession of authorities.

A committee has the right to receive a report from the Government or the competent ministry on a matter falling within the committee's remit. The committee may issue a statement to the Government or the ministry on the basis of the report received.

A Member of Parliament has the right to receive information in the possession of authorities that the Member needs for the exercise of their responsibilities, provided that the information is not non-disclosable and that it does not pertain to a budget proposal under preparation.

In addition, the right of Parliament to receive information on international affairs is governed by provisions laid down elsewhere in this Constitution.

Section 48

Right of ministers, the Parliamentary Ombudsman and the Chancellor of Justice to be present

A minister has the right to be present and participate in debates in plenary sessions even if the minister is not a Member of Parliament. A minister cannot be a member of a parliamentary committee. When attending to the duties of the President of the Republic under section 59, a minister may not participate in parliamentary work.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman and the Chancellor of Justice of Government may be present and participate in debates in plenary sessions when reports submitted by them or other matters taken up on their initiative are being considered.

Section 49 (1112/2011)

Continuity of consideration

The consideration of matters unfinished in one parliamentary session continues in the following parliamentary session, unless parliamentary elections have been conducted in the meantime. If needed, the consideration of an international affair pending in Parliament may also continue in the parliamentary session following parliamentary elections.

Section 50

Openness of parliamentary activities

The plenary sessions of Parliament are open to the public, unless Parliament, on very serious grounds, decides otherwise in respect of a given matter. Parliament publishes parliamentary documents as further specified in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

The meetings of the parliamentary committees are not open to the public. However, a committee may order that its meeting be open to the public in so far as the committee is obtaining information for the consideration of a matter. The minutes and other related documents of the committees are public unless, for necessary reasons, otherwise provided in Parliament's Rules of Procedure or otherwise decided by a committee in respect of a given matter.

The members of a committee shall observe the level of non-disclosure that the committee, for necessary reasons, considers that a given matter specifically requires. However, when considering matters relating to Finland's international relations or European Union affairs, the members of a committee shall observe the level of non-disclosure considered requisite due to the nature of the matter by the Foreign Affairs Committee or the Grand Committee after having heard the Government.

Section 51

Languages to be used in parliamentary work

The Finnish or Swedish language is used in parliamentary work.

The Government and the other authorities shall submit the documents required for a matter to be taken up for consideration in Parliament both in Finnish and Swedish. Likewise, parliamentary replies and communications, committee reports and statements and written proposals of the Speaker's Council shall be written in Finnish and Swedish.

Section 52

Parliament's Rules of Procedure and other rules of procedure

Further provisions on the procedure to be followed in parliamentary sessions, on parliamentary bodies and on parliamentary work are laid down in Parliament's Rules of Procedure. Parliament's Rules of Procedure shall be adopted in a plenary session in accordance with the procedure provided by law for the consideration of bills and published in the Statute Book of Finland.

Parliament may issue rules of procedure for Parliament's internal administration, for elections to be conducted by Parliament and for the organisation of other parliamentary work in detail. In addition, Parliament may adopt rules of procedure for the bodies it has elected.

Section 53

Referendum and citizens' initiative (1112/2011)

A decision to hold a consultative referendum is made by enacting an Act of Parliament that shall contain provisions on the time of the referendum and on the choices to be presented to the voters.

Provisions on the procedure to be followed in a referendum are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

A minimum of fifty thousand Finnish citizens entitled to vote have the right to submit an initiative to Parliament for the enactment of an Act of Parliament as provided by an Act of Parliament. (1112/2011)

Chapter 5

President of the Republic and Government

Section 54

Election of the President of the Republic

The President of the Republic is elected by a direct vote for a term of six years. The President shall be a native-born Finnish citizen. The same person may be elected President for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

The candidate who receives more than half of the votes cast in the election shall be elected President. If none of the candidates receives a majority of the votes cast, a new election shall be conducted between the two candidates who received the most votes. In the new election, the candidate receiving more votes is elected President. If only one presidential candidate has been nominated, the person is elected President without conducting an election.

Registered political parties from whose list of candidates at least one Member of Parliament was elected to Parliament in the most recent parliamentary elections and groups consisting of a minimum of twenty thousand eligible voters have the right to nominate a candidate in a presidential election. Further provisions on the timing of the presidential election and on the procedure to be followed in the election are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 55

Presidential term

The President of the Republic assumes office on the first day of the calendar month following their election.

The term of the President ends when the President elected in the next election assumes office.

If the President dies or if the Government declares that the President has become permanently prevented from performing the presidential duties, a new President shall be elected as soon as possible.

Section 56

Solemn affirmation of the President

When the President of the Republic assumes office, they shall make the following solemn affirmation before Parliament:

"I, --, elected by the people of Finland as the President of the Republic, hereby affirm that in my presidential duties I shall sincerely and conscientiously observe the Constitution and the laws of the Republic, and to the best of my ability promote the wellbeing of the people of Finland."

Section 57

Duties of the President

The President of the Republic performs the duties specified in this Constitution or separately specified in another Act of Parliament.

Section 58

Decision-making by the President

The President of the Republic decides a matter in a government session on the basis of a proposal submitted by the Government.

If the President does not decide a matter in accordance with the proposal submitted by the Government, the matter is returned to the Government for preparation. In such a case, the Government may submit a report to Parliament on the matter, provided that it does not concern bill approval or appointment to an office or position. After this, the matter is decided in accordance with the position adopted by Parliament on the basis of the report, if so proposed by the Government. (1112/2011)

By derogation from subsection 1, the President decides the following matters without a proposal submitted by the Government:

- 1) appointing the Government and its members and accepting the resignation of the Government or a member of the Government;
- 2) ordering extraordinary parliamentary elections;
- 3) pardons and such other matters separately provided by an Act of Parliament that concern private individuals or have such content that they need not be considered in a government plenary session; and
- 4) other matters referred to in the Act on the Autonomy of Åland than those concerning the finances of Åland.

The competent minister presents matters to the President for decision. In the case of a proposal for a change in the composition of the Government, where this concerns the Government as a whole, the matter is presented by the appropriate presenting official of the Government.

The President decides on military command matters with the contribution of a minister as further specified by an Act of Parliament. The President decides on military appointments and matters pertaining to the Office of the President of the Republic as provided by an Act of Parliament.

Decisions on Finland's participation in military crisis management are made as separately provided by an Act of Parliament. (1112/2011)

Section 59

Substitutes of the President

When the President of the Republic is prevented from attending to their duties, they are taken over by the Prime Minister or, if the Prime Minister is also prevented, by the minister deputising for the Prime Minister.

Section 60

Government

The Government consists of the Prime Minister and a requisite number of other ministers. The ministers shall be Finnish citizens who are known to be honest and competent.

The ministers are accountable to Parliament for their official acts. Every minister participating in the consideration of a matter in a government session is responsible for any decision made, unless the minister has issued a dissenting opinion that has been entered in the minutes.

Section 61

Formation of the Government

Parliament elects the Prime Minister, who is after this appointed to the office by the President of the Republic. The President appoints the other ministers in accordance with a proposal made by the person elected as Prime Minister.

Before the Prime Minister is elected, the parliamentary groups negotiate on the government programme and the composition of the Government. On the basis of the outcome of these negotiations and after having heard the Speaker of Parliament, the President informs Parliament of the nominee for Prime Minister. The nominee is elected Prime Minister if their election is supported by more than half of the votes cast in an open vote in Parliament.

If the nominee does not receive the required majority, another nominee shall be put forward in accordance with the same procedure. If the second nominee fails to receive more than half of the votes cast, the election of the Prime Minister shall be held in Parliament by open vote. In this event, the person receiving the most votes is elected.

Parliament shall be in session when the Government is being appointed and when the composition of the Government is being significantly changed.

Section 62

Statement on the government programme

The Government shall submit the government programme to Parliament in the form of a statement without delay. The same procedure shall be followed when the composition of the Government is significantly changed.

Section 63

Ministers' private interests

While holding the office of minister, a member of the Government shall not hold any public office or undertake any other post which may obstruct the performance of their ministerial duties or compromise confidence in their actions as a member of the Government.

A minister shall, without delay after being appointed, submit a declaration addressed to Parliament concerning the minister's business activities, business holdings and other significant assets and of any duties outside the official ministerial duties and of other private interests which may be of relevance when their actions as a member of the Government are being evaluated.

Section 64

Resignation of the Government or a minister

The President of the Republic grants, upon request, the resignation of the Government or a minister. The President may also grant the resignation of a minister on the motion of the Prime Minister.

If the Government or a minister no longer enjoys the confidence of Parliament, the President shall grant the resignation of the Government or the minister even if no request to this effect is made.

If a minister is elected President of the Republic or Speaker of Parliament, the person shall be considered to have resigned from the office of minister as of the day on which they were elected.

Section 65

Duties of the Government

The Government is responsible for the duties separately specified in this Constitution and for the other governmental and administrative matters which the Government or a ministry shall decide under law or which have not been assigned to the competence of the President of the Republic or another authority.

The Government implements the decisions of the President.

Section 66

Duties of the Prime Minister

The Prime Minister directs the work of the Government and is responsible for coordinating the preparation and consideration of matters within the authority of the Government. The Prime Minister chairs the plenary sessions of the Government.

The Prime Minister represents Finland in the European Council. Unless the Government exceptionally decides otherwise, the Prime Minister also represents Finland in other activities of the European Union that require participation of state leadership at the highest level. (1112/2011)

If the Prime Minister is prevented from attending to their duties, these are taken over by the minister designated to deputise for the Prime Minister or, when the minister deputising for the Prime Minister is also prevented from attending to the duties, by the longest-serving minister.

Section 67

Decision-making in the Government

Matters within the authority of the Government are decided in government plenary sessions or at the competent ministry. Matters that are far-reaching or important as matters of principle and those other matters the significance of which so requires are decided in government plenary sessions. Further provisions on the foundations for organising the Government's power of decision are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

The matters to be considered by the Government shall be prepared at the competent ministry. The Government may have ministerial committees for the preparation of matters.

A government plenary session has a quorum when five members are present.

Section 68

Ministries

The Government has a requisite number of ministries. Each ministry is, within its remit, responsible for the preparation of matters within the authority of the Government and for the proper functioning of administration.

Each ministry is headed by a minister.

Provisions on the maximum number of ministries and on the general grounds for the establishment of ministries are laid down by an Act of Parliament. Provisions on the remits of the ministries, on the division of matters among them and on the other forms of organisation of the Government are laid down by an Act of Parliament or by government decree.

Section 69

Chancellor of Justice of the Government

Attached to the Government, there is a Chancellor of Justice and a Deputy Chancellor of Justice, who are appointed by the President of the Republic and who shall have an outstanding knowledge of law. In addition, the President assigns a substitute for the Deputy Chancellor of Justice for a fixed period of a maximum of five years. When the Deputy Chancellor of Justice is prevented from attending to their duties, the substitute shall attend to them.

The provisions concerning the Chancellor of Justice apply, as appropriate, to the Deputy Chancellor of Justice and their substitute.

Chapter 6

Legislation

Section 70

Legislative initiative

A proposal for the enactment of an Act of Parliament comes before Parliament through a government proposal or a Member of Parliament's legislative motion. Legislative motions may be submitted when Parliament is in session.

Section 71

Supplementation and withdrawal of a government proposal

A government proposal may be supplemented by submitting a new supplementary proposal, or it may be withdrawn. A supplementary proposal cannot be submitted after the committee preparing the matter has issued its report.

Section 72

Consideration of a bill in Parliament

A bill is taken up for consideration in a plenary session of Parliament in two readings after the committee preparing the matter has issued its report on the bill.

In the first reading of the bill, the committee report is presented and debated and a decision on the contents of the bill is made. In the second reading, which takes place on the third day after the conclusion of the first reading at the earliest, Parliament decides whether the bill is passed or rejected.

A bill may be referred to the Grand Committee for consideration during the first reading.

Further provisions on the consideration of a bill are laid down in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Section 73

Procedure for constitutional enactment

A bill pertaining to the enactment, amendment or repeal of the Constitution or the enactment of a limited derogation from the Constitution shall in the second reading be left in abeyance, by a majority of the votes cast, until the first parliamentary session following the next parliamentary elections. The bill shall then, once the relevant committee has issued its report, be passed with no amendments to its substantive content in an approval reading in a plenary session by a decision supported by at least two thirds of the votes cast.

However, a bill may be declared urgent by a decision that is supported by at least five sixths of the votes cast. In this event, the bill is not left in abeyance and it can be passed by a decision supported by at least two thirds of the votes cast.

Section 74

Supervision of constitutionality

The Constitutional Law Committee of Parliament shall issue statements on the constitutionality of bills and other matters brought for its consideration and on their relation to international human rights treaties.

Section 75

Special acts concerning Åland

The enactment procedure for the Act on the Autonomy of Åland and the Act on Land Acquisition in Åland is governed by separate provisions laid down in the said Acts.

Provisions on the right of the Parliament of Åland to introduce motions and on the enactment of acts of Åland are laid down in the Act on the Autonomy of Åland.

Section 76

Church Act

Provisions on the organisation and administration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church are laid down in the Church Act.

The enactment procedure for the Church Act and the right to introduce motions relating to the Church Act are governed by separate provisions laid down in the said Act.

Section 77

Bill approval

A bill passed by Parliament shall be presented to the President of the Republic for approval. The President shall decide on the approval within three months of the submission of the bill for approval. The President may obtain a statement on the bill from the Supreme Court or the Supreme Administrative Court.

If the President does not approve the bill, it is returned to Parliament for reconsideration. If Parliament passes the bill again without amending its substantive content, it enters into force without the President's approval. If Parliament does not pass the bill again, it is deemed to have lapsed.

Section 78

Consideration of an unapproved bill

If the President of the Republic has not approved a bill within the prescribed time limit, the bill shall be taken up for reconsideration by Parliament without delay. Once the relevant committee has issued its report on the bill, Parliament shall, in one reading in a plenary session and by a majority of the votes cast, either pass the bill without amending its substantive content or reject it.

Section 79

Publication and entry into force of an Act of Parliament

If an Act of Parliament has been enacted in accordance with the procedure for constitutional enactment, this shall be indicated in the Act of Parliament.

An Act of Parliament which has been approved or which enters into force without approval shall be signed by the President of the Republic and countersigned by the competent minister. After this, the Government shall publish it in the Statute Book of Finland without delay.

An Act of Parliament shall indicate the date on which it enters into force. For a special reason, it may be provided in an Act of Parliament that the date on which it enters into force will be specified by decree. If an Act of Parliament has not been published on the date of entry into force specified by law at the latest, it enters into force on the date on which it is published.

Acts of Parliament are enacted and published in Finnish and Swedish.

Section 80

Issuing decrees and delegating legislative powers

The President of the Republic, the Government and the ministries may issue decrees by virtue of an authorisation laid down in this Constitution or in another Act of Parliament. However, provisions on the grounds for the rights and obligations of private individuals and on matters that under the Constitution shall otherwise be regulated by an Act of Parliament shall be laid down by an Act of Parliament. If there is no provision specifically determining who shall issue a decree, it is issued by the Government.

Other authorities may also be authorised by an Act of Parliament to issue legal rules on given matters, if there are special reasons related to the object of regulation for this and if the substantive significance of the regulation does not require that provisions on the matter be laid down by an Act of Parliament or decree. The scope of such an authorisation shall be precisely circumscribed.

General provisions on the publication and entry into force of decrees and other legal rules are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Chapter 7

Central government finances

Section 81

State taxes and charges

State tax is governed by an Act of Parliament that shall contain provisions on the grounds for tax liability and the amount of the tax and on the protection under the law of persons and entities liable to taxation.

Provisions on the general grounds for charges for the official acts, services and other activities of central government authorities and for the amount of the charges are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 82

Central government borrowing and guarantees

Central government borrowing shall be based on the authorisation of Parliament, which indicates the maximum amount of the new borrowing or central government debt.

Central government guarantees may be issued under the authorisation of Parliament.

Section 83

Budget

Parliament decides on the Budget for one fiscal year at a time. The Budget is published in the Statute Book of Finland.

The budget proposal and the other related government proposals shall be submitted to Parliament for consideration well in advance of the beginning of the next fiscal year. The provisions of section 71 apply to the supplementation and withdrawal of the budget proposal.

On the basis of the budget proposal, a Member of Parliament may submit a budgetary motion proposing that an appropriation or another decision be included in the Budget.

The Budget is adopted in a plenary session in a single reading once the Finance Committee of Parliament has issued its report on the Budget. Further provisions on the consideration of the budget proposal in Parliament are laid down in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

If the publication of the Budget is delayed beyond the beginning of the next fiscal year, the budget proposal shall be complied with as a provisional budget in a manner decided by Parliament.

Section 84

Contents of the Budget

Estimates of annual revenues, appropriations for annual expenditures, the purposes of the appropriations and other budget justifications shall be included in the Budget. It may be provided by an Act of Parliament that, for certain revenues and expenditures immediately linked to each other, revenue estimates or appropriations corresponding to their difference may be included in the Budget.

The revenue estimates included in the Budget shall cover the appropriations included in it. When covering the appropriations, the central government final accounts surplus or deficit may be taken into account as provided by an Act of Parliament.

The estimates of annual revenues or appropriations corresponding to revenues and expenditures linked to each other may be included in the Budget for several fiscal years as provided by an Act of Parliament.

Provisions on the general foundations of the operations and finances of unincorporated state enterprises are laid down by an Act of Parliament. With regard to unincorporated enterprises, revenue estimates and appropriations are included in the Budget only to the extent provided by an Act of Parliament. When considering the Budget, Parliament approves the key service objectives and other operational objectives for unincorporated enterprises.

Section 85

Budget appropriations

Appropriations are included in the Budget as fixed appropriations, variable annual appropriations or deferrable appropriations. A variable annual appropriation may be exceeded and a deferrable appropriation may be carried over from one fiscal year to another as provided by an Act of Parliament. A fixed appropriation and a deferrable appropriation shall not be exceeded and a fixed appropriation shall not be carried over to subsequent years unless this has been allowed by an Act of Parliament.

An appropriation shall not be moved from one budget item to another, unless this has been allowed in the Budget. However, an appropriation may be moved to a budget item to which its purpose is closely linked if allowed by an Act of Parliament.

A budget authority, limited in terms of size and purpose, may be granted in the Budget to commit, during the fiscal year in question, to certain expenditure for which appropriations are to be included in the Budgets of the following fiscal years.

Section 86

Supplementary budget

A supplementary budget proposal shall be submitted to Parliament if there is a justified need to amend the Budget.

A Member of Parliament may submit a budgetary motion for a budget amendment that is immediately linked to the supplementary budget.

Section 87

Off-budget entities

An off-budget entity may be established by an Act of Parliament if this is necessary for the performance of a permanent central government duty. To pass a bill for the establishment of an off-budget entity or for a significant extension of such an entity or of its intended use, a majority of at least two thirds of the votes cast in Parliament is required.

Section 88

Legitimate receivables from the State to private parties

Regardless of the Budget, everyone has the right to collect their legitimate receivables from the State.

Section 89

Approval of terms of employment for central government officials and employees

The appropriate parliamentary committee approves, on behalf of Parliament, an agreement on the terms of employment for central government officials and employees, in so far as the authorisation of Parliament is required.

Section 90

Financial control of central government finances

Parliament supervises national financial administration and adherence to the Budget. For this purpose, Parliament has an Audit Committee that shall report any significant supervisory findings to Parliament. (596/2007)

For the purpose of auditing national financial administration and adherence to the Budget, there is an independent National Audit Office in connection with Parliament. Further provisions on the status and duties of the National Audit Office are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

The Audit Committee and the National Audit Office have the right to receive the information they need for the performance of their duties from authorities and other entities that are subject to their supervision. (596/2007)

Section 91

Bank of Finland

The Bank of Finland operates under the guarantee and care of Parliament as provided by an Act of Parliament. Parliament elects the members of the Parliamentary Supervisory Council to supervise the operations of the Bank of Finland.

The relevant parliamentary committee and the members of the Parliamentary Supervisory Council have the right to receive the information they need for the supervision of the operations of the Bank of Finland.

Section 92

State assets

Provisions on the competence and procedure for the exercise of the State's shareholder authority in companies in which the State has a controlling interest are laid down by an Act of Parliament. Provisions on the necessity of authorisation of Parliament for the acquisition or relinquishment of effective control by the State in a company are likewise laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Central government real estate may only be conveyed with the authorisation of Parliament or as provided by an Act of Parliament.

Chapter 8

International relations

Section 93

Competence in international affairs

The President of the Republic directs the foreign policy of Finland in cooperation with the Government. However, Parliament approves Finland's international obligations and withdrawal from them and decides on the bringing into force of international obligations to the extent provided in this Constitution. The President decides on matters of war and peace with the authorisation of Parliament.

The Government is responsible for the national preparation of decisions to be made in the European Union and decides on Finland's measures related to such decisions, unless a decision requires the approval of Parliament. Parliament participates in the national preparation of decisions to be made in the European Union as provided in this Constitution.

The communication of important foreign policy positions to foreign states and international organisations is the responsibility of the minister whose remit includes international relations.

Section 94

Approval of international obligations and withdrawal from them

Parliament's approval is required for such treaties and other international obligations that contain provisions of a legislative nature, are otherwise of great significance, or under the Constitution require Parliament's approval for some other reason. Parliament's approval is also required for withdrawal from such obligations.

A decision concerning the approval of or withdrawal from an international obligation is made by a majority of the votes cast. However, if the proposal for the approval of an obligation concerns the Constitution or an alteration of the national territory, or such a transfer of competence to the European Union, an international organisation or an international body that is of significance with regard to Finland's sovereignty, it shall be approved by a decision supported by at least two thirds of the votes cast. (1112/2011)

An international obligation shall not endanger the democratic foundations of the Constitution.

Section 95

Bringing into force of international obligations

The provisions of a legislative nature laid down in treaties and other international obligations are brought into force by an Act of Parliament. In other respects, international obligations are brought into force by decree. (1112/2011)

A bill for the bringing into force of an international obligation is considered in accordance with the enactment procedure for ordinary Acts of Parliament. However, if the bill concerns the Constitution or an alteration of the national territory, or such a transfer of competence to the European Union, an international organisation or an international body that is of significance with regard to Finland's sovereignty, Parliament shall pass it, without leaving it in abeyance, by a decision supported by at least two thirds of the votes cast. (1112/2011)

It may be provided in an Act of Parliament on the bringing into force of an international obligation that provisions on its entry into force are laid down by decree. General provisions on the publication of treaties and other international obligations are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 96

Participation of Parliament in the national preparation of European Union matters

Parliament considers proposals for such legislation, treaties and other measures which are to be decided in the European Union and which otherwise, under the Constitution, would fall within the competence of Parliament.

The Government shall, through its communication, submit a proposal referred to in subsection 1 to Parliament without delay after having been informed of the proposal so that Parliament can establish its position on it. The proposal is considered by the Grand Committee and usually by one or more other committees that submit their statements to the Grand Committee. However, a proposal pertaining to foreign and security policy is considered by the Foreign Affairs Committee. If needed, the Grand Committee or the Foreign Affairs Committee may issue a statement on the proposal to the Government. The Speaker's Council may also decide that such a matter be taken up for debate in a plenary session, during which, however, no decision on the matter is made by Parliament.

The Government shall provide the relevant committees with information on the consideration of the matter in the European Union. The Grand Committee or the Foreign Affairs Committee shall also be informed of the position of the Government on the matter.

Section 97

Parliament's right to information on international affairs

The Foreign Affairs Committee of Parliament shall, when it so requests and when otherwise needed, receive from the Government a report on foreign and security policy matters.

Correspondingly, the Grand Committee of Parliament shall receive a report on the preparation of other matters in the European Union. The Speaker's Council may decide that a report be taken up for debate in a plenary session, during which, however, no decision on the matter is made by Parliament.

The Prime Minister shall provide Parliament or a committee with information on matters to be dealt with in a European Council meeting beforehand and without delay after the meeting. The same applies when amendments to the treaties establishing the European Union are being prepared.

The relevant parliamentary committee may issue a statement to the Government due to the reports or information referred to above.

Chapter 9

Administration of justice

Section 98

Courts

General courts are the Supreme Court, the courts of appeal and the district courts.

General administrative courts are the Supreme Administrative Court and the regional administrative courts.

Provisions on special courts that exercise judicial powers in separately defined fields are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Provisional courts shall not be established.

Section 99

Duties of the highest courts

The highest judicial powers are exercised in civil and criminal matters by the Supreme Court and in administrative judicial matters by the Supreme Administrative Court.

The highest courts oversee the administration of justice in their own fields of competence. They may submit proposals to the Government on taking legislative action.

Section 100

Composition of the highest courts

The Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court are composed of the President and a requisite number of other justices.

The Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court have a quorum when five justices are present, unless another number of justices is separately specified by an Act of Parliament.

Section 101

High Court of Impeachment

The High Court of Impeachment hears charges brought against a member of the Government, the Chancellor of Justice, the Parliamentary Ombudsman or a justice of the Supreme Court or the Supreme Administrative Court for unlawful conduct in office. The Court of Impeachment also hears charges referred to in section 113.

The High Court of Impeachment is composed of the President of the Supreme Court as the chairperson, the President of the Supreme Administrative Court, the three longest-serving presidents of the courts of appeal and five members elected by Parliament for a term of four years.

Further provisions on the composition, quorum and procedures of the High Court of Impeachment are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 102

Appointment of judges

The President of the Republic appoints permanent judges in accordance with the procedure laid down by an Act of Parliament. Provisions on the appointment of other judges are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 103

Right of judges to remain in office

A judge may not be declared to have forfeited their office in any other manner than by court judgment. Furthermore, a judge shall not be transferred to another office without their consent, except where the transfer takes place as a result of reorganisation of the court system.

Provisions on the obligation of a judge to resign upon attainment of a given age or after losing their ability to work are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Provisions on the other terms of employment of judges are separately laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 104

Prosecutors

The National Prosecution Authority is headed by the Prosecutor General as the supreme prosecutor, who is appointed by the President of the Republic. Further provisions on the National Prosecution Authority are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 105

Pardon

In individual cases, the President of the Republic may, after obtaining a statement from the Supreme Court, grant a full or partial pardon to a person sentenced to a punishment or other criminal sanction by a court.

Provisions on a general amnesty shall be laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Chapter 10

Oversight of legality

Section 106

Primacy of the Constitution

If, in a matter being considered by a court, the application of a provision of an Act of Parliament would be in manifest conflict with the Constitution, the court shall give primacy to the provision of the Constitution.

Section 107

Restriction on the application of subordinate statutes

If a provision of a decree or another statute that is subordinate to an Act of Parliament is in conflict with the Constitution or another Act of Parliament, it shall not be applied by a court or any other authority.

Section 108

Duties of the Chancellor of Justice of the Government

The Chancellor of Justice shall oversee the lawfulness of the official acts of the Government and the President of the Republic. The Chancellor of Justice shall also oversee that the courts and other authorities as well as public officials, employees of public sector entities and other parties, when performing a public duty, comply with the law and fulfil their obligations. In the performance of their duties, the Chancellor of Justice oversees the implementation of fundamental and human rights.

The Chancellor of Justice shall, upon request, provide the President, the Government and ministries with information and statements on legal issues.

The Chancellor of Justice submits an annual report on their official acts and observations on how the law has been complied with to Parliament and the Government.

Section 109

Duties of the Parliamentary Ombudsman

The Parliamentary Ombudsman shall oversee that the courts and other authorities as well as public officials, employees of public sector entities and other parties, when performing a public duty, comply with the law and fulfil their obligations. In the performance of their duties, the Parliamentary Ombudsman oversees the implementation of fundamental and human rights.

The Ombudsman submits to Parliament an annual report on their activities, on the state of the administration of justice and on any shortcomings they have observed in legislation.

Section 110

Right of the Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman to bring charges and the division of responsibilities between them

A decision to bring charges against a judge for unlawful conduct in office is made by the Chancellor of Justice or the Parliamentary Ombudsman. The Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman may also pursue a charge or order that a charge be brought in other matters falling within the scope of their oversight of legality.

Provisions on the division of responsibilities between the Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman may be laid down by an Act of Parliament. These provisions shall not, however, reduce the competence of either of them in the oversight of legality.

Section 111

Right of the Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman to information

The Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman have the right to receive from authorities and other parties performing public duties the information they need for the oversight of legality.

The Chancellor of Justice shall be present in government sessions and when matters are presented to the President of the Republic in presidential sessions of the Government. The Parliamentary Ombudsman has the right to be present in these sessions.

Section 112

Oversight of legality of the official acts of the Government and the President of the Republic

If the Chancellor of Justice finds that a remark is warranted regarding the lawfulness of a decision or measure taken by the Government, a minister or the President of the Republic, the Chancellor shall present the remark with reasons. If the remark is ignored, the Chancellor of Justice shall have their opinion entered in the minutes of the government session and, where needed, undertake other measures. The Parliamentary Ombudsman has the corresponding right to make a remark and to undertake measures.

If a decision made by the President is unlawful, the Government shall, after having obtained a statement from the Chancellor of Justice, notify the President that the decision cannot be implemented and propose to the President that the decision be amended or revoked.

Section 113

Criminal liability of the President of the Republic

If the Chancellor of Justice, the Parliamentary Ombudsman or the Government deems that the President of the Republic has committed an offence of treason, an offence of high treason or a crime against humanity, Parliament shall be notified of this. If Parliament in this event decides, by three fourths of the votes cast, that a charge shall be brought, the Prosecutor General shall pursue the charge in the High Court of Impeachment and the President shall refrain from performing their duties for the duration of the proceedings. In any other case, no charges shall be brought against the President for their official acts.

Section 114

Bringing and hearing charges against ministers

A charge against a member of the Government for unlawful conduct in office is heard by the High Court of Impeachment as further specified by an Act of Parliament.

Parliament decides on the bringing of a charge after having obtained an opinion from the Constitutional Law Committee concerning the unlawfulness of the actions of the member of the Government. Before deciding whether to bring a charge, Parliament shall give the member of the Government an opportunity to provide an explanation. When considering the matter, the Committee has a quorum when all of its members are present.

A charge against a member of the Government is pursued by the Prosecutor General.

Section 115

Institution of a matter concerning alleged malfeasance by a minister

An investigation of the lawfulness of an official act of a member of the Government may be instituted in the Constitutional Law Committee of Parliament by way of:

- 1) a notice submitted to the Constitutional Law Committee by the Chancellor of Justice or the Parliamentary Ombudsman;
- 2) a notice signed by at least ten Members of Parliament; or
- 3) a request for an investigation submitted to the Constitutional Law Committee by another parliamentary committee.

The Constitutional Law Committee may also launch an investigation of the lawfulness of an official act of a member of the Government on its own initiative.

Section 116

Preconditions for bringing a charge against a minister

A decision to bring a charge against a member of the Government may be made if the member has, intentionally or through gross negligence, substantially violated their ministerial duties or otherwise acted clearly unlawfully in office.

Section 117

Legal liability of the Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman

The provisions of sections 114 and 115 concerning a member of the Government apply to the investigation of the lawfulness of the official acts of the Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the bringing of charges against them for unlawful conduct in office and the procedure for hearing such charges.

Section 118

Liability for official acts

Public officials are responsible for the lawfulness of their official acts. They are also responsible for such decisions made by a multi-member body that they have supported as one of its members.

A presenting official is responsible for a decision made upon their presentation, unless they have issued a dissenting opinion on the decision.

Anyone who has suffered a violation of rights or damage due to an unlawful act or omission by a public official or another person performing a public duty has the right to request that the public official or the other person performing a public duty be sentenced to a punishment and to claim damages from the public sector entity, the public official or the other person performing a public duty as provided by an Act of Parliament. However, the right to bring charges referred to here does not exist if, under the Constitution, the charges shall be heard by the High Court of Impeachment. (1112/2011)

Chapter 11

Administration and self-government

Section 119

State administration

In addition to the Government and the ministries, central state administration may include agencies, public bodies and other institutions. The State may also have regional and local authorities. Separate provisions on administration subordinate to Parliament are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Provisions on the general foundations of the institutions of state administration shall be laid down by an Act of Parliament, if their duties involve the exercise of public powers. Provisions on the foundations of regional and local state administration shall likewise be laid down by an Act of Parliament. In other respects, provisions on the units of state administration may be laid down by decree.

Section 120

Special status of Åland

Åland has self-government in accordance with the separate provisions laid down in the Act on the Autonomy of Åland.

Section 121

Municipal and other regional self-government

Finland is divided into municipalities whose administration shall be based on self-government by their residents.

Provisions on the general foundations of municipal administration and the duties of municipalities are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

The municipalities have the right to levy taxes. Provisions on the grounds for tax liability and for the determination of tax as well as provisions on the protection under the law of persons and entities liable to taxation are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Provisions on self-government in administrative areas larger than a municipality are laid down by an Act of Parliament. In the Sami homeland, the Sami have linguistic and cultural self-government as provided by an Act of Parliament.

Section 122

Administrative divisions

In the organisation of administration, the objective shall be compatible territorial divisions that safeguard opportunities for the Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking populations to receive services in their own language on equal grounds.

Provisions on the grounds for the division into municipalities are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 123

Universities and other education providers

The universities are self-governing as further specified by an Act of Parliament.

Provisions on the foundations of other education provided by the State and municipalities and on the right to provide corresponding education in private educational institutions are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 124

Delegation of administrative duties to parties other than authorities

A public administrative duty may be delegated to parties other than authorities only if so provided by an Act of Parliament or by virtue of an Act of Parliament, if this is required for the appropriate performance of the duty and if this does not endanger fundamental rights, protection under the law or other requirements of good administration. However, duties involving significant exercise of public powers may only be delegated to authorities.

Section 125

Required qualifications for public offices and grounds for appointment to public offices

It may be provided by an Act of Parliament that only Finnish citizens are eligible for appointment to certain public offices or duties.

The general grounds for appointment to public offices are skill, ability and proven civic merit.

Section 126 (1112/2011)

Appointment to central government offices

The Government appoints central government officials unless it has been provided by law that the President of the Republic, a ministry or another authority is responsible for the appointment.

The President appoints the Chief of Staff of the Office of the President of the Republic and the heads of Finnish diplomatic and consular missions abroad.

Chapter 12

National defence

Section 127

National defence obligation

Every Finnish citizen is obligated to participate or assist in national defence as provided by law.

Provisions on the right to be exempted from participating in military national defence for reasons of conscience based on conviction are laid down by an Act of Parliament.

Section 128

Supreme Commander of the Finnish Defence Forces

The President of the Republic is the Supreme Commander of the Finnish Defence Forces. On the proposal of the Government, the President may, under emergency conditions, relinquish this task to another Finnish citizen. (1112/2011)

The President appoints the officers of the Finnish Defence Forces.

Section 129

Mobilisation

On the proposal of the Government, the President of the Republic decides on the mobilisation of the Finnish Defence Forces. If Parliament is not in session at that time, it shall be convened at once.

Chapter 13

Final provisions

Section 130

Entry into force

This Constitution enters into force on 1 March 2000.

The provisions required for the implementation of the Constitution are laid down by a special Act of Parliament.

Section 131

Constitutional acts to be repealed

This Constitution repeals the following constitutional acts, as amended:

- 1) The Constitution Act of Finland of 17 July 1919;
- 2) The Parliament Act of 13 January 1928;
- 3) The Act on the High Court of Impeachment (273/1922) of 25 November 1922; and
- 4) The Act on the Right of Parliament to Inspect the Lawfulness of the Official Acts of the Members of the Council of State, the Chancellor of Justice and the Parliamentary Ombudsman (274/1922) of 25 November 1922.