

26.11.2018

“Part 2 – national action plans on business and human rights”.

Finland, update on progress with regards to the National Action Plan

Finland appreciates the opportunity to provide this update on progress with regards to its National Action Plan launched in 2014. Allow me to elaborate upon three concrete steps of progress.

First, with regard to building a dialogue, a document called [Human rights impacts of own operations: insights for due diligence was published](#) earlier in 2018. This document has been elaborated through stakeholder dialogue together with representatives of business, non-governmental organisations, and labour and employers' organisations with a view to further enhance understanding of the UN Guiding Principles and their practical implications for the corporate responsibility to respect human rights. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs have facilitated the dialogue and acted as the secretariat for producing the document on the basis of the participating organisations' dialogue. The process leading up to the document has raised awareness nationally and been a significant step in raising awareness of the key concepts of the UN Guiding Principles, especially the corporate responsibility to respect human rights and human rights due diligence, potential adverse human rights impacts linked to business activity, and crucial elements of human rights risks assessments.

Second, a capacity building exercise on business and human rights for public financing instruments was launched earlier this year. This is an initiative to essentially increase policy coherence across different public financing instruments. The aim of this exercise is to offer support for public financing instruments, including investment facilities, but also with key actors such as export credit agency Finnvera, to raise the awareness of importance of human rights as part of all trade and investment activities. Finland has engaged Shift, which is supporting the Finnish government by providing a set of recommendations to each of the instruments on strengthening the human rights lens at all stages of their processes. Further, the aim is to offer business human rights training to all stakeholders, to take firm steps to build capacity on a broad scale, including private sector representatives, government officials, civil society and consultancies.

Third, an updated guidance on how to take social aspects into account in public procurement was published. The guide describes what the different options are, what kind of requirements are laid down for responsible procurement in legislation and the approaches to social responsibility adopted by different contracting entities in Finland.

Finland looks forward to accelerate progress with regards to implementation of its National Action Plan.

Thank You.