

Report on the Study Visit to the Finnish Judiciary (28 September – 3 October 2025)

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The study visit to the Finnish judiciary, held from 28 September to 3 October, provided a comprehensive overview of the structure, functioning, and core principles of the Finnish judicial system, with particular focus on administrative justice. The visit offered valuable opportunities for professional exchange and comparison between Finnish and Czech judicial practice. The programme included meetings and discussions with representatives of several key institutions: the Supreme Administrative Court, the Supreme Court, the Data Protection Office, the Immigration Office, the Tax Office, and a Regional Administrative Court. I was grouped with two more European judges for the study visit.

On the first day we were received by the President of the Supreme Administrative Court (SAC), who presented the organisation, jurisdiction, and priorities of the SAC. The discussion emphasised the court's role in safeguarding legality in administrative actions and ensuring uniform application of law. Particular attention was given to the transparent case allocation system, collegial decision-making, and the emphasis on quality and timeliness of judgments. Discussions addressed also the criteria for leave to appeal and the importance of precedent.

Visit to the Supreme Court provided an overview of the general courts' hierarchy and the Supreme Court's role as the final instance in civil and criminal matters.

At the Data Protection Office, we learned about Finland's implementation of the GDPR and the supervisory authority's interaction with both public bodies and courts. The Office presented its inspection procedures, sanction mechanisms, and cooperation with EU counterparts.

The Immigration Office introduced its structure and decision-making processes, focusing on asylum and residence permit procedures.

During the visit to the Tax Office, officials outlined the principles of tax administration, digital filing systems, and the relationship between administrative decision-making and judicial review. We were introduced to the Office's customer-oriented approach, which places strong emphasis on assisting taxpayers and ensuring voluntary compliance. This includes clear guidance materials, online tools for self-service, and proactive communication aimed at preventing disputes before they arise. The Finnish Tax Administration seeks to build trust between authorities and taxpayers through transparency, simplicity, and respect for taxpayers' rights. These practices highlighted how technological innovation, proactive communication, and a service-oriented approach can reduce administrative burdens, improve transparency, and foster public trust.

We visited also the Regional Administrative Court in Hämeenlinna, where judges presented their case handling, use of electronic files, and internal deliberation practices. The open discussion provided valuable insights into the cooperation between regional and supreme levels of the judiciary.

The study visit also allowed discussions with judges of the Supreme Administrative Court. The discussions focused on challenges in administrative justice, recruitment and training of judges. These conversations reaffirmed the importance of continuous judicial education, mutual dialogue between courts, and openness to comparative perspectives.

The study visit offered deep insights into the Finnish administrative judiciary. Key takeaways include: the value of transparent and digitalised case management; the significance of judicial cooperation across levels and institutions; the benefits of strong ethical and quality frameworks and the effectiveness of customer-oriented public administration.

These experiences will inform my own approach to case handling and engagement with administrative authorities, contributing to the overall quality of judicial decision-making.