

Finland

National level

Finland is a multiparty representative democracy with a rather weak role of direct democracy and democratic innovations

- **A revision of the constitution requires 2/3 majority and a majority by the subsequent parliament**
- ***Advisory referendums* decided by a parliamentary majority (article 53 since 1987)**
- **Only two national referendums: 1931 on the prohibition of alcohol, 1994 on EU membership**
- ***Citizens' initiatives* (article 53 since 2012)**
- **An agenda initiative dealt with by the parliament like other legislative proposals**
- **50 000 signatures needed**
- **30 initiatives submitted to parliament, 2 passed as laws, several have had policy impacts**
- **Platform for online collection of signatures provided by the Ministry of Justice www.kansalaisaloite.fi**

Municipal level

Multiparty representative democracy also at the local level
Direct participation in municipalities

- ***Advisory municipal referendums* (decided by municipal councils); mostly on municipal mergers**
- **A referendum motion made by 4% of over 15-year-old residents**
- **Residents' initiative (Initiative of a single resident or a group of residents; if more than 2% of residents sign, the municipal council has to process the initiative)**

2017 The Local Government Act

- **Municipalities obliged to take action to secure residents' opportunities to participate**
Democratic innovations
- **A large majority of municipalities have organized discussions between officials and residents**
- **Workshops and joint planning sessions are commonly used in technical services**
- **Over 30 % of municipalities have used Citizens' Juries (not always randomly selected) in 2015**
- **Participatory budgeting used increasingly (since 2010)**