



20
DEMO
FINLAND

Annual report 2025



Contents

Defending democracy requires collaboration	3
Demo Finland’s Theory of Change.....	4
Demo Finland’s programmes in 2025	6
Main results of the programmes.....	9
Outcome 1: Political Parties are more Programmatic, Inclusive, and Democratic.....	9
Outcome 2: Political Parties Perform Strengthened Inclusive Multi-Party Dialogue.....	14
Outcome 3: Finnish Parliamentary Parties’ Commitment to Democracy Support Translates into Policies.....	17
Advocacy and communications.....	18
Human resources	20
Financial resources	20

Cover image: Demo Finland celebrated its 20th anniversary in September 2025 together with its international partners. Photo: Veera Kontula

© Political Parties of Finland for Democracy – Demo Finland 2026
Design and layout: Marja Hautala / Muuks Creative

PHOTO: PIPS



School of Politics participants in Kosovo.

PHOTO: NEWA



Training for Ethiopian women politicians on communication and public speaking.

Defending democracy requires collaboration

Democracy is increasingly under threat worldwide, with as many as 74% of people living under authoritarian regimes. As democracy is being challenged both from outside and within our societies, democracy needs its defenders. Defending democracy requires strengthened collaboration between governments, institutions, and civil society.

In 2025, the European Commission launched the Democracy Shield initiative, which is a roadmap for protecting democracy and electoral processes from foreign interference and information manipulation. At a time when democracy is being eroded both within the European Union and globally, this is a welcome initiative.

Democracy remained at the core of Finland's foreign, security and development policies despite the pressures to link trade and development and to raise defence spending in response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Overall, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law continued to be upheld as important principles in rhetoric, but their practical implementation weakened globally, as democratic decline and the narrowing of civic space persisted throughout 2025, alongside cuts to democracy support.

Demo Finland promotes dialogue among political parties and creates opportunities for constructive engagement.

Under Demo Finland's new programme in Kosovo, representatives from political party youth wings participated in facilitated dialogue processes to identify shared challenges. Following the participation, they reported increased readiness to engage in multi-party dialogue in the future, which also led to a joint statement by political party youth wings calling for restraint from hate speech and disinformation during political campaigns.

In Ethiopia, the Ethiopian Political Parties Joint Council contributed to inclusive political participation by publishing minimum standards for disability inclusion within political parties, developed in co-operation with civil society organisations. Demo Finland's partners provided targeted coaching to facilitate the political participation of women with disabilities. As a result, 25 women with disabilities were prepared to stand as candidates in the 2026 general elections.

These, along with other positive results of Demo Finland's work, are showcased in this Annual Report. Our work to support and safeguard democracy continues!

Anu Juvonen
Executive Director



Demo Finland's Theory of Change

Demo Finland's Strategy 2021–2025 was built on the proven strengths of the organisation, taking into consideration its unique mandate. Multi-party dialogue, inclusion of underrepresented groups in politics, and promotion of stronger democracy support policy are the core areas of work.

Since the founding of Demo Finland, its work has focused on providing support to political parties and rested on two pillars: multi-party dialogue and supporting the political participation of underrepresented groups in politics, in particular women, young people and persons with disabilities. These pillars remain relevant in the work of Demo Finland, while also building on the strong experience of Finnish political parties.

Multi-party democracy requires vibrant, representative, and programmatic parties that can carry out their multifaceted role at the core of both the political system and society. Parties play an important role in the identification of the needs and interests of citizens and specifically in channelling those needs into decision-making, in reconciling conflicts of interest between groups of people, and in producing credible political programs to guide the decision-making. In addition, they help sustain

democracy over the long term by connecting citizens with political leaders.

When in power, parties are responsible for decision-making, while in opposition, they are expected to hold decision-makers accountable. As political parties play a key role in democratic systems, they are the primary stakeholders of Demo Finland's programmes.

The assumption of Demo Finland's Theory of Change is that policy-based and inclusive parties contribute to the accountability of politics towards citizens and thus to more democratic societies. This means that political systems that are based on multi-party democracy might gain more confidence amongst citizens and decrease polarisation. Another assumption is that when political parties practise dialogue, they can enhance the weight, trustworthiness, and transparency of their political system and decrease polarisation and conflicts. Finally, Demo Finland also assumes that when political parties and government officials have increased knowledge and awareness of the modalities and opportunities for democracy support, it is also given higher priority in policies.

Demo Finland's work in 2025 in numbers



Programmes supported in
8 countries
(including Finland)



139 political parties
reached



1760 politicians and civil society actors reached
through Demo Finland's international programmes
(936 women, 823 men, 1 other)

The overall Theory of Change of Demo Finland

Demo Finland Strategy 2021–2025



1 Political parties are more inclusive, programmatic and democratic

 **We assume** that policy-based and inclusive parties contribute to a politics of accountability and more democratic societies.

 **We assume** that inclusive parties reflect better the diversity of societies and contribute to the realization of civil and political rights.

2 Political parties perform strengthened inclusive multiparty dialogue

 **We assume** that when political parties practise dialogue, they can enhance the weight, trustworthiness and transparency of political system and decrease polarization and conflicts.

 **We assume** that when political parties reach agreements through dialogue, the decisions are more sustainable and less likely to be reversed with a change of power.

3 Finnish parliamentary parties' commitment to democracy support translates into strengthened policies

 **We assume** that when political parties and government officials have increased knowledge and awareness of the modalities and opportunities for democracy support, it will lead to more effective policies in support of democracy.

Overall goal: Strengthened and inclusive multi-party democracy



Demo Finland's programmes in 2025

PHOTO: NEWA



PHOTO: WFD KENYA



PHOTO: PIPS



Ethiopia

Partners: Network of Ethiopian Women's Associations (NEWA), Ethiopian Women with Disabilities National Association (EWDNA)

Demo Finland has co-operated with NEWA since 2019 and EWDNA since 2020 to strengthen women's capacity and their political participation on a multi-party basis. The objective of the programme is that women and women with disabilities participate actively in political parties and political processes. The programme is implemented at the national level in Addis Ababa and at regional levels in Oromia and Benishangul-Gumuz, and its activities include capacity-building training for women politicians, awareness-raising on disability inclusion for a wider group of actors in governance and supporting political parties in better accommodating women and persons with disabilities into their decision-making processes. In 2025, women were mentored and trained to stand as candidates in the general elections of 2026.

Kenya

Partner: Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)

In 2025, Demo Finland's counterparts in Kenya supported a selected group of political parties in developing their intra-party democracy, sustainability, inclusivity, accountability and transparency. The political parties were consulted individually to identify their particular areas for development, which were, for instance, youth inclusion, strategy development, or communicating the strategy to the electorate and members. After the identification, all targeted parties received a tailored support programme. In 2025, the programme engaged with the University of Nairobi to include more young persons in the work.

Kosovo

Partner: Prishtina Institute for Political Studies (PIPS)

Demo Finland and PIPS started collaboration in 2024. In 2025, a pilot programme was implemented with the aim of strengthening the political participation of young people and increasing cross-party collaboration among young politicians. During the pilot programme, young politicians and civil society actors participated in the School of Politics, in which they strengthened their skills in political communication, leadership, dialogue and negotiation. Through a newly established multi-party dialogue platform, young politicians identified shared challenges and paved the way for more cross-party collaboration, despite heightened political tensions in the country.

PHOTO: IMD



PHOTO: NIMD



PHOTO: CEMI



Mozambique

Partner: Instituto para Democracia Multipartidária (IMD)

Demo Finland and the IMD have supported the democratic governance of extractive industries and natural resources in Mozambique since 2017. In the beginning, the programme aimed to enhance the oversight role of the Parliament and six Provincial Assemblies on the extractive industries and to increase their capacity to assess the implementation of the existing legislation on natural resource management. Trainings were organised for relevant parliamentary committees, and members of these committees visited communities affected by the extractive industry to interact with citizens and to evaluate the impact of the industry. The current programme (2025–2027) continues to build on this work by further reinforcing the oversight role of parliamentarians and provincial-level decision-makers in natural resource management and climate governance.

Myanmar

Partner: Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

Demo Finland and NIMD implemented democracy education programmes and supported multi-party co-operation and capacity building in Myanmar from 2014 to 2021. Following the military coup in February 2021, new approaches to supporting democratic actors in Myanmar were explored. In 2022, trainings were relaunched online or outside the country, focusing on capacity building and supporting democratic dialogue processes at the subnational level. The programme continues to focus on political actors affiliated with political parties, as direct work with political parties has been hampered due to the post-coup context, and the programme's connection with relevant and active CSOs has also been strengthened. Participants for the trainings are primarily recruited from the alumni network of the previous democracy education programmes. The interest in participating in the trainings has remained strong, and the alumni have played a key role in extending the impact of the trainings into broader communities.

Tunisia

Partners: Centre des Etudes Méditerranéennes et Internationales (CEMI), Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)

Since 2021, the political and civil society environment in Tunisia has been restricted, as the President has centralised power in an authoritarian manner. Demo Finland, together with the NIMD, has supported the Tunisian School of Politics (TSoP), run by CEMI, since 2012. The objective of the programme in 2021–2025 was to enable youth leaders to act as influential actors of change and ensure that political parties and civil society collaborate peacefully based on trust. This was achieved through various training programmes for young politicians and civic actors, as well as through facilitated multi-party and multi-stakeholder dialogues. In 2025, CEMI also provided opportunities for civic participation for youth who are not active in politics or civil society and trained young and female members of parliament to effectively fulfil their roles in line with democratic principles. In addition to Tunisia, young people from North African, Middle Eastern and French-speaking African countries benefited from the trainings and networking of the programme.

PHOTO: DRW



PHOTO: ELISA MALALO



PHOTO: DEMO FINLAND



Zambia

Partners: Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL), Disability Rights Watch (DRW)

In 2025, Demo Finland and its partners strengthened the inclusive multi-party system in Zambia and, in particular, equal opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWDs) in politics. The programme activities focused on supporting political parties in finalising and publishing their disability inclusion plans, such as strategies, guidelines or action plans that better reflect the inclusion of PWDs. 19 PWDs were selected and mentored to stand as candidates in the 2026 general elections. The program also supported the Electoral Commission of Zambia to implement the inclusive amendments that the Zambian parliament ratified in the Constitution and the Election law at the end of 2025.

WYDE / East Africa

Partners: NIMD as the cluster-lead, cluster members WFD & Demo Finland

The WYDE Civic Engagement project is a component of the Women and Youth in Democratic Engagement (WYDE) programme of the European Commission. The project is led by the European Partnership for Democracy, and the consortium has a total of 14 democracy organisations working in different countries. Demo Finland participates in the pillar of the project that focuses on capacity building of youth leaders from politics and civil society in East Africa. The objective is to strengthen youth participation at national, regional and global levels. In 2025, Demo Finland participated in the organisation of a Democracy School in Kenya and specifically in its training modules on disability inclusion and gender equality. Demo Finland also supported youth from Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somaliland in the drafting of a regional roadmap for enhancing youth political participation in East Africa and facilitated peer-learning between Finnish and East African youth politicians.

Finland

Demo Finland builds the capacity and commitment of Finnish political parties to democracy support and enhances multi-party dialogue. Demo Finland supports, in particular, the inclusivity of Finnish political parties by providing targeted training and offering opportunities for peer exchange with the participants in Demo Finland's international programmes. Democracy Academy for political youth and student organisations is organised annually to increase the understanding of young politicians on democracy and to create a safe space for dialogue. The Democracy Academy alumni network had 77 members by 2025. In addition, the Democracy Defenders training program, held every two years for political women's organisations, focused on women's political participation and combating violence against women in politics. To increase the awareness and deepen the understanding of democracy issues in Finland, Demo Finland also organises public events and discussions on different aspects of democracy.

Main results of the programmes

Outcome 1: Political Parties are more Programmatic, Inclusive, and Democratic

To reflect the diversity of societies and to foster their representational role, political parties must promote access to decision-making by underrepresented groups on various levels. In a functioning multi-party democracy, and according to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, every citizen has the right to participate in decision-making, which makes inclusivity an objective. Moreover, the quality of decision-making is improved if more diverse voices and experiences are heard and involved. Demo Finland encourages political parties to develop strategies for the inclusion of women, young people and persons with disabilities and provides support for the competence and empowerment of politicians belonging to these groups.

Political parties need to respond to the interests of their voters and draw up policies that support the realisation of accountability towards the citizens. Demo Finland strengthens political parties in terms of strategic thinking, political programming and good command of the principles of democracy. Demo Finland supports strengthening the internal democracy of political parties and dialogue with civil society.

With the support of Demo Finland, political party structures and legislation have been strengthened to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, politicians, political party actors, other leaders, and parliamentary staff have enhanced their skills and understanding of democratic governance.

In Ethiopia, altogether 20 political parties made efforts to amend their structures, rules and practices to better accommodate persons with disabilities and women into their operations. The engaged parties represent almost a third of all political parties in Ethiopia. Eight political parties collaborated in a multi-party setting proactively, without the support or facilitation of the program, in 2025 to share good practices in disability inclusion.

The election official of Ethiopia appointed 200 women with disabilities to work as observers and coordinators at the polling stations during the general elections of 2026. In the previous general elections in 2021, only 15 women with disabilities worked as polling station observers.

PHOTO: EWDNA



Training for aspiring women candidates with disabilities in Addis Ababa.

The women politicians' network, established in 2024, advocated strongly for the inclusive amendments to the Ethiopian Election law. The Ethiopian parliament ratified several disability inclusive amendments to the law in December 2025.

In Kenya, all five political parties that participated in the programme supported by Demo Finland in 2025 are now working independently to develop their short-term, middle-term and long-term plans on intra-party democracy and strategy development. Two of them focus on developing inclusion frameworks to accommodate youth leaders and persons with disabilities into their operations.

15 Kenyan political parties, the National Disability Multi-Party Caucus (NDMC) and the Kenyan Parliamentary Disability Association reviewed the Political Parties Act 2011 and made recommendations for its amendment process. One of the recommendations was to anchor the Disability Caucus of the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) into the law.

In Kosovo, the knowledge, skills and confidence of young politicians and civic actors to participate in public affairs were reportedly strengthened through their participation in the School of Politics in the first year of the programme.

In Mozambique, the Parliament's and Provincial Assemblies' engagement with citizens and civil society on natural resources and climate change was strengthened through support to the Climate Change Platform, inclusive workshops, and oversight visits. Civil society representatives were invited as experts to trainings, and the decision-makers' engagement with regional actors and civil society was strengthened through three different conferences on critical minerals, energy transition, climate change and just transition.

Altogether 180 Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of the Provincial Assemblies (MPAs) and the parliament's technical staff took part in trainings on better law approval, oversight and representation regarding both extractive industries and climate adaptation governance. Expert support was provided for the development of parliamentary advisory papers to enable the parliament to carry out its oversight role in an informed way. MPs and MPAs demonstrated increased ability to apply

PHOTO: IMD



Committee members learning about the local impacts of natural gas and oil production in Inhassoro, Mozambique.

technical knowledge and assess environmental compliance, labour conditions, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and the management of the legally mandated community development funds.

In Myanmar, the programme showed significant evidence of its cascading effect to support the upholding of democratic values in the country. In 2025, the programme contributed towards democratic leadership skills in Myanmar with two in-person trainings outside the country, with a total of 39 participants, and three online learning seminars on topics such as federalism and inclusive governance. Each seminar reached 60–70 participants, and since 70% of them were women, the sessions particularly strengthened women's skills in the aforementioned topics.

In 2025, the programme focused on supporting alumni in expanding the reach of their learnings within their communities. One of the two in-person trainings was specifically designed as a training-of-trainers course, equipping alumni with the skills needed to create a cascading impact. Through various

Applying their newly acquired skills, Myanmar programme alumni have advocated for more inclusive and accountable governance processes.

community training sessions and platforms, 2,500 people were reached by the alumni. This demonstrates that the programme's impact extends well beyond those who participate directly in the trainings.

Applying their newly acquired skills, the alumni have advocated for more inclusive and accountable governance processes. In 2025, 26 alumni from six states and regions have actively advocated for inclusive politics towards 86 consultative councils, the interim government, state and region-level policymakers, political party leaders, ethnic resistance organisations' leaders, civil society organisations and religious leaders.

In Tunisia, 228 young politicians, civic actors and new Members of Parliament who participated in different training activities gained new skills and knowledge in pluralism, democratic values and political action. Young leaders have been able to put the skills into use, for example, by advancing to leadership positions in their organisations and further training other organisations and civic actors.

As a result of regional trainings, 58 youth leaders from North African, Middle Eastern and French-speaking African countries are now better able to participate in decision-making processes.

Youth-led organisations reported increased organisational capacity to work for their mission and contribute to democratic development.

PHOTOS: CEMI



Tunisian School of Politics training.

This enables young people to effectively operate and lead change through their organisations. In addition, the publication of evidence-based information widened the knowledge base on youth participation in the country and in the wider region and offered accessible ways for youth to learn about current events.

In Zambia, eight out of nine political parties that participate in the programme finalised and published their disability inclusion plans. These parties also established functional disability wings. The role of the disability wing in a political party is to recruit persons with disabilities (PWDs) as members to the party and inspire them to be active within the party. It provides the PWD members a platform to engage party leadership in promoting political inclusion.

All the established disability wings now have a representation in the political parties' National Executive Committees, which serve as the ruling bodies of the parties. A National Executive Committee has the rule over key organisational decisions and is charged with setting the strategic direction of the party. Having representation in the Committee, persons with disabilities can participate in the key programming of the party. All political parties in the programme nominated 16 new PWDs altogether for leadership positions. With the 17 PWDs nominated in 2024, the political parties now have 33 PWDs serving in political party leadership.

The Persons with Disabilities Political Dialogue Network (PPDN), established in the previous programme phase and now acting independently, advocated for inclusive amendments to the Constitution and to the Election Law. Some of these amendments were ratified at the end of 2025 by the Zambian parliament. As a result, persons with disabilities now have a guaranteed representation in both the national and the regional parliaments. This has also created a motivation for the political parties to nominate PWDs to stand as candidates in the elections. The Minister for Community Development and Social Services publicly confirmed commitment to the 2025 Disability Policy and structural reforms to improve coordination of disability services across government ministries and organisations of persons with disabilities.

In Zambia, persons with disabilities now have a guaranteed representation in both the national and the regional parliaments.

PHOTO: DRW



DRW Board member David Mukwasa delivering a speech at the launch event of the parties' disability inclusion plans.

In the WYDE Civic Engagement programme,

Demo Finland participated in organising a Democracy School for young political and civic leaders in Kenya. Through Demo Finland's support, the youth leaders strengthened their skills and understanding of gender equality and disability inclusion both in theory and in practice.

Demo Finland also supported Youth Ambassadors from Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Somaliland in drafting a regional roadmap for strengthening youth participation in politics with their peers. As part of this process, peer-learning with young Finnish politicians was organised around youth political participation in Finland and in East Africa.

Through Demo Finland's support, Kenyan youth leaders strengthened their skills and understanding of gender equality and disability inclusion both in theory and in practice.

In Finland, 26 representatives of the youth and student organisations from all nine parliamentary parties took part in the Democracy Academy training programme. The Democracy Academy enhanced young politicians' understanding of democracy-related issues and international democracy support, with a focus on civic space and a case example of Mozambique, giving them useful knowledge and skills that they could use in their political activities.

In addition, 25 representatives of the nine parliamentary parties' women's organisations participated in the Democracy Defenders training, deepening their understanding of promoting the political participation of women and tackling violence against women in politics.

PHOTO: ELISA MALALO



WYDE Civic Engagement East Africa Regional Conference in Nairobi.

PHOTO: DEMO FINLAND



One of the topics of the Democracy Academy was Demo Finland and IMD's programme in Mozambique.

Outcome 2: Political Parties Perform Strengthened Inclusive Multi-Party Dialogue

Constructive dialogue between political parties is essential to a functioning multi-party democracy. Dialogue may lead to mutual respect and listening and create space for policies that take different views into account. Constructive and respectful political dialogue improves citizens' confidence in representative democracy as a political system. Demo Finland supports its partners in facilitating dialogue and in creating and reinforcing safe spaces for an ongoing dialogue between political parties.

Multi-party dialogue is also a tool for building peace and engaging political parties as relevant actors in peace-building processes. This paves the way towards enhanced commitment of such actors, who in post-conflict contexts and within post-peacebuilding time are responsible for transparent and accountable decision-making structures.

With Demo Finland's support, new multi-party and multi-stakeholder platforms were created, and existing ones continued to convene diverse political actors for constructive collaboration and dialogue. These efforts also ensured safe spaces for dialogue in politically sensitive and restrictive environments.

In Ethiopia, the activities for intergenerational exchange and peer learning for young women politicians yielded a group where more experienced women politicians mentor their younger colleagues towards standing as candidates in the general elections of 2026 and working as elected leaders. This work in particular gathered together 60 political parties towards the same goal, representing 88% of all political parties in Ethiopia.

Seven political parties approached other political parties for multi-party dialogue on sharing good practices in disability inclusion. The Political Parties Joint Council (PPJC), a co-operative forum for all political parties in Ethiopia, created a manual of minimum inclusion standards for the political parties.

In Kenya, 20 political parties engaged in cross-party meetings for mutual learning and sharing good practices. The programme developed the first multi-party platform in Kenyan history to share good practices in intra-party democracy. The platform is now serving as a think tank where political parties discuss political events and emerging political issues of Kenyan society.

As an outcome of Demo Finland and WFD's previous programme 2020–2024, the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) merged the National

PHOTO: WFD KENYA



Representatives from Kenyan political parties engage in dialogue on reform priorities on strengthening intra-party democracy.

Multiparty Disability Caucus into itself in 2025, thus giving the Caucus a formal status and mandate to increase disability inclusion in the Kenyan political sphere. The ORPP is inviting all Kenyan political parties to join the caucus, and so far, it works as a multi-party platform for over 50 political parties.

In Kosovo, representatives of political parties' youth wings participated in facilitated multi-party dialogue to identify shared challenges. After participating in the new dialogue platform, they reported interest and increased readiness to participate in multi-party dialogue in the future. As a result of multi-party collaboration in the programme, youth wings of political parties published a joint statement, calling for abstinence from hate speech and disinformation in political campaigns.

Youth wings of Kosovar political parties published a joint statement, calling for abstinence from hate speech and disinformation in political campaigns.

In Myanmar, substate dialogue forums continued in 2025, demonstrating that political actors remain engaged in dialogue despite the country's complex and challenging context. Trust is further evidenced by their joint efforts to improve the state-level constitution draft. The dialogue members proposed amendments to several articles in the Bill of Rights and added new recommendations, addressing freedoms of religion, association, mobility, property, as well as rights of women, youth, minorities, farmers, and persons with disabilities. All 18 recommendations were accepted in principle for integration into the fourth draft of the state-level constitution.

In Tunisia, despite the highly restrictive operating environment, multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms were kept active in 2025. Dialogues were organised in different formats for political parties and civil society actors. 11 multi-stakeholder dialogues took place, and 12 political parties participated in them, which creates an enabling environment for further collaboration.

In addition, young people outside of political parties and civil society organisations, as well as young people in remote areas of the country, were provided opportunities to practice dialogue and participate in political discussion.

PHOTO: PIPS



Multi-party dialogue in Kosovo.

In Zambia, the Persons with Disabilities Political Dialogue Network (PPDN), established earlier in the programme and developed into a multi-party platform during 2024, is growing and has now over 170 active members. It works independently, advocating for disability rights in Zambian political life. The PPDN had a remarkable contribution to the inclusive amendments to the constitution and the election law.

The programme's Technical Working Group, established in 2023, works as a multi-party and multi-actor platform that has successfully promoted peaceful and neutral discussion and collaboration among Zambian political parties, thus setting an example for the political parties outside of the programme. These, along with all the informal engagements described above that the programme has created or yielded, help the actors in political parties to get to know each other, which lowers the threshold to spontaneous multi-party dialogue.

In Finland, Demo Finland serves as a unique dialogue platform for Finnish political parties to discuss and collaborate on supporting democracy as part of Finland's foreign and development policy. These dialogue platforms include the Board of Demo Finland, the Democracy Academy training programme and its alumni network. Multi-party dialogue was also practised in the Democracy Defenders training for women politicians.

By 2025, the alumni network had 77 members, and it had an increasing role in supporting Demo Finland's international programmes as its representatives shared experiences on youth participation with the directors of all Demo Finland's partner organisations during the partners' meeting in Helsinki. In addition, two representatives participated in the WYDE Youth Conference in Kenya, where youth representatives from Finland and East Africa exchanged experiences and started the development of the East Africa Roadmap for Youth Political Participation.

Four joint statements by political party representatives were produced in 2025: To mark Demo Finland's 20th anniversary year, the leaders of all parliamentary parties signed a joint statement reaffirming their continued commitment to Finland's support for democracy internationally. The participants of the Democracy Academy study visit published a joint statement calling all political youth organisations to engage in a culture of constructive dialogue, and the participants of the Democracy Defenders study visit to Kosovo published two joint statements calling for stronger measures to combat violence against women in both countries.

To mark Demo Finland's 20th anniversary year, the leaders of all Finnish parliamentary parties signed a joint statement reaffirming their continued commitment to Finland's support for democracy internationally.

PHOTO: DRW



Ceaser Liteta (Forum for Democracy and Development) in a political parties' peer learning session in Lusaka.

Outcome 3: Finnish Parliamentary Parties' Commitment to Democracy Support Translates into Policies

The strengthening of and support for democracy around the world requires strong advocacy and international co-operation. Finland and the European Union have committed to supporting democracy internationally, but a value-based commitment may not be sufficiently evident in the policies being applied. Demo Finland supports the democracy support policies of Finland and the European Union by offering its expertise to governmental actors and decision-makers.

Demo Finland's mandate to work in the field of international democracy support and with political actors is based on the collaboration and commitment to democracy development of all parliamentary parties within Demo Finland. All programme work in Finland is linked to Demo Finland's international programmes via peer-learning as well as experience and knowledge sharing.

Demo Finland's mandate to work in the field of international democracy support and with political actors is based on the collaboration and commitment to democracy development of all parliamentary parties within Demo Finland.

In 2025, Demo Finland celebrated its 20th anniversary. As a democracy support organisation of all the Finnish parliamentary parties, Demo Finland is globally unique. The theme of the anniversary year, "democracy builds on collaboration", reflected both Demo Finland's long-standing focus on supporting multi-party dialogue and the need to build bridges in times when the state of democracy keeps declining globally and there is a growing risk of societal polarisation. In addition to being a sign of political parties' ability to co-operate, the joint statement by the leaders of all parliamentary parties on Demo Finland's anniversary signalled their continued commitment to supporting democracy.

In 2025, Demo Finland also developed a new five-year strategy through an inclusive process that actively engaged political parties, international partners and other key stakeholders.

The Executive Director of Demo Finland acted as the President of the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) and served as the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Civil Society, appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland. These roles demonstrated that Demo Finland's expertise is widely recognised. In her role as the OSCE Special Representative for Civil Society, Demo Finland's Executive Director developed the Map for the Future document, which

provides recommendations for strengthening the systematic involvement of civil society actors across OSCE activities.

Demo Finland attended four party congresses in 2025, reaching hundreds of party members, distributing materials on democracy and giving speeches to emphasise the importance of democratic development globally as well as the role of political parties and multi-party co-operation for a functioning democracy.

PHOTO: DEMO FINLAND



Demo Finland participated in its member parties' party congresses.

Advocacy and communications

Demo Finland's advocacy aims to translate value-based commitments to democracy into well-implemented, long-term policies to support democracy. As the global state of democracy is declining, democracy support should be invested in and developed more strategically. Demo Finland advocates for Finland to set democracy as the priority for foreign and security policy, and for the EU to take a more prominent role in defending democracy globally.

In 2025, Demo Finland was consulted in 13 policy processes through Parliament's committee hearings, written statements and roundtables on topics related to democracy. In addition, Demo Finland joined several statements released by European democracy support networks.

Demo Finland's Board and staff members gave 43 speeches and lectures in events organised by different stakeholders, of which eight events were requests from Finnish political parties.

Demo Finland is a founding member of the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) and actively participated in its working groups and meetings, offering its knowledge and expertise to the network of European democracy support organisations and EU decision-makers. EPD utilises the know-how of

its members for publications, policy briefs and events. EPD has created, together with Carnegie Europe, the European Democracy Hub, which brings together researchers and policymakers to produce policy briefs and new perspectives on EU democracy support and democratic challenges in Europe. Demo Finland is recognised for its expertise on inclusivity and continues to provide its knowledge for EPD and the European Democracy Hub.

In Finland, Demo Finland highlighted the importance of democracy support as a member of Finland's Development Policy Committee and Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development. Demo Finland was also an active member in Finland's Women, Peace and Security Network and Finland's Youth, Peace and Security Monitoring Group contributing to the development and implementation of National Action Plans.

PHOTO: VEERA KONTULA



The speakers at the International Day of Democracy seminar included Finnish members of parliament and representatives from Demo Finland's partner organisations.

Demo Finland's communications aims to increase the understanding of the importance of democracy to sustainable development and security globally and on the importance of inclusive political parties and dialogue to a functioning multi-party democracy, to strengthen Demo Finland's position as an expert in democracy support and to highlight the results and outcomes of Demo Finland's international programmes. Target groups of Demo Finland's communications are mainly political parties and politicians in Finland, donors, and democracy experts and practitioners in Finland and abroad.

The content of Demo Finland's communications is based on Demo Finland's work with its international partners, as well as its expertise in inclusive multi-party democracy.

Demo Finland's main channels of communication are its website, regular newsletter in Finnish and English and social media platforms. Website statistics are not fully comparable to the previous year, but the number of visitors to the site grew significantly, by 30% according to the most conservative figures, in 2025. The number of newsletter subscribers grew by 8%, the average opening rate being 33%.

On social media, the most important platforms were LinkedIn, where the number of followers grew by 27%, and Instagram, where the number of followers grew by 16%. On these two platforms and

on Facebook, Demo Finland's posts reached more than 75,400 users. The number was smaller than the previous year as Demo Finland invested less in paid advertising on social media. Demo Finland also continued its presence on Bluesky.

On the International Day of Democracy, Demo Finland successfully launched an opinion poll on how Finnish people see the state of democracy globally, which got national visibility as Demo Finland's Executive Director was interviewed on the national broadcasting company Yle's Morning TV, contributing to Demo Finland's increased public outreach. In addition, the political party media *Kansan Uutiset* interviewed Demo Finland's Mozambican partner on the country's political situation and the topic of Demo Finland's programme in the country, the democratic governance of natural resources.

Demo Finland's anniversary celebrations focused on the International Day of Democracy in September with a seminar organised in collaboration with the Parliament, and an anniversary reception the previous day. Other events included a seminar on election observation together with the Crisis Management Centre and the Council of Europe visibility day, which was organised with several partners and coordinated by Demo Finland. Demo Finland also organised a roundtable discussion in the Parliament on NATO's work on democratic resilience.

On the International Day of Democracy, Demo Finland successfully launched an opinion poll on how Finnish people see the state of democracy globally, which got national visibility.

Altogether, Demo Finland organised 13 events in-person and online, with around 820 participants. The events got highly positive feedback in the post-event surveys, and the comments from participants show that the events succeeded in increasing the understanding of the topics and offering new perspectives.

Demo Finland produced two policy briefs in 2025: *Making climate policy more just through democratic means* discusses how democracy and new democratic ways of decision-making can facilitate more just or more ambitious climate policies. *Multi-party co-operation as an asset for democracy in Finland* showcases how and where Finnish political parties co-operate, as Finland's long tradition of multi-party co-operation often interests political party actors and democracy practitioners in other countries. In addition, a compilation of democracy innovations used and developed in Finland was published.

Human resources

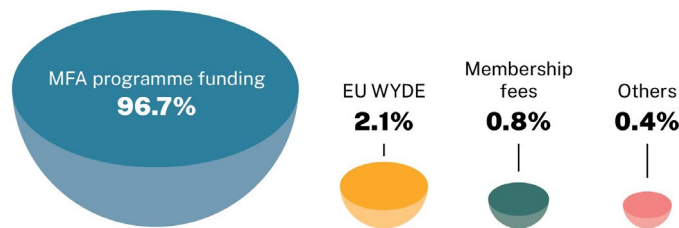
A strong and skilled secretariat is Demo Finland's most valuable resource, as it allows the organisation to deliver high-quality programmes. Demo Finland invests in a work environment that encourages professionalism and supports staff in staying motivated and engaged with their roles.

This is supported through tailored individual capacity-building plans, as well as by promoting shared learning in regular annual or biannual meetings between programme managers and partner organisations. In addition, maintaining a supportive and well-functioning physical workspace is crucial. Capacity-building efforts are designed not only to enhance knowledge and skills, but also to strengthen commitment and overall well-being. Staff well-being is further tracked through regular employee surveys.

In 2025, there were ten members of the secretariat working at Demo Finland's office in Helsinki. Demo Finland provides its staff with occupational health services and organises recreational activities. Occupational training is also available.

Financial resources

Sources of funding



Use of funds



The total revenue in 2025 was EUR 1.84 million, compared to EUR 1.75 million in 2024. The organisation's total expenses in 2025 were EUR 1.83 million, compared to EUR 1.74 million in 2024.

The MFA-funded programmes' total costs during 2025 were around EUR 1.78 million. Demo Finland also received funding from the European Commission for the WYDE Civic Engagement programme.

Demo Finland also collected 15,000 euros as membership fees from its Finnish member parties.



Political Parties of Finland for Democracy – Demo Finland is a co-operative organisation of all Finnish parliamentary parties. It enhances democracy by strengthening the political participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities in particular and by supporting dialogue between political parties.