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Online processing of cases and e-communication with courts

Finland

1 Is it possible to initiate court proceedings via the internet?

Yes.

2 If so, for what types of cases is it available? Are any proceedings available exclusively via the internet?

Automatic processing is available for submitting applications for a summons in the case of uncontested claims, for legal aid applications (and for applying for defence counsel or a public legal aid attorney to be appointed and for attorneys applying for reimbursement for fees and costs from the State) and for enforcement applications (in the case of private law applications for the enforcement of debts that are based on a district court's (*käräjäoikeus*) ruling or judgment).

Finland has no proceedings that are available exclusively via the internet.

3 Is the facility available at all times (i.e. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or just during specific hours? If so, what are those hours?

The facility is available at all times.

4 Should the details of the claim be provided in any particular format?

An XML template is available for corporations and organisations that frequently file applications for a summons. A separate electronic online form is available for citizens and businesses.

5 How is transmission and storage of data secured?

The automatic processing facility of Finnish courts is secured by an encrypted https file transfer protocol. Data submitted by courts are kept on a secure server from where interested parties can download their documents.

6 Is it necessary to use any kind of electronic signature and/or time record?

Users need to log in to download files from the secure server.

7 Are court fees payable? If so, how can they be paid and are they different to those for non-electronic procedures?

The same fees are charged for electronic procedures as for non-electronic procedures. District courts charge fees to applicants and claimants at the end of each procedure. The amount of the fee depends on the nature of the case and the complexity of the procedure.

8 Is it possible to withdraw a claim that has been initiated via the internet?

The same principles apply to electronic procedures as to claims filed by conventional, non-electronic means.

9 If the claimant initiates proceedings via the internet is it possible and/or compulsory for the defendant to respond using the internet as well?

Defendants can respond via the internet but using the internet is not compulsory.

10 In terms of the electronic procedure what happens if the defendant responds to the claim?

In civil cases there are no differences between electronic and non-electronic procedures.

11 In terms of the electronic procedure what happens if the defendant does not respond to a claim?

In civil cases there are no differences between electronic and non-electronic procedures.

12 Is it possible to submit documents to a court electronically and if so in what type of proceedings and under what conditions is it possible?

Yes. Applications for a summons, responses and other court documents can also be sent to courts via email.

13 Can judicial documents, and particularly judgments, be served via the internet?

Documents that do not require acknowledgement of receipt (such as responses, summonses to preliminary and main hearings and court summaries) can be sent to the interested parties via email.

14 Can judicial decisions be given electronically?

Judicial decisions can be sent to the interested parties electronically upon request. The recipient or his or her agent must log in to download judicial decisions from the online facility.

15 Can an appeal be made and its decision served via the internet?

It is not currently possible to make appeals electronically.

16 Is it possible to initiate enforcement proceedings via the internet?

Applications for the enforcement of judgment debts can be submitted electronically. Automatic processing is available for private law applications for the enforcement of debts that are based on a district court's ruling or judgment.

17 Can the parties or their legal representatives consult on-line cases? If so, how this can be done?

Yes. Claimants can monitor the progress of their cases by logging into an online facility if the proceedings were initiated via the internet.

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