

State of civil service ethics and morals in Finland

Results of 2022 survey of citizens

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Results of 2022 survey of citizens

Jaakko Hyry

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State of civil service ethics and morals in central government administration
Results of 2022 survey of citizens

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Abstract

The focus of the survey was to understand citizens' opinions of the importance of the values of central government administration and how these values are reflected in the work of public officials. The survey was carried out in Kantar's Forum panel. A total of 1018 people, representing people aged 15–79 in Finland's population, responded to the survey.

When the values are listed in order of importance, the values that take the lead and are considered very important are expertise, trust, impartiality and independence, the rule of law and responsibility, openness, equality, and the service principle. The importance of these values is at the same level as in 2016. Respondents now consider economic efficiency to be slightly more important than before. When asked whether any of the values of central government administration are realised so well that it makes the respondent feel proud to be a Finn, the rule of law and responsibility stand above the rest.

The respondents are of the opinion that the values of openness, impartiality and independence, and now also economic efficiency, would require urgent action more than the others. Compared to 2016, people are less concerned about openness and trust, but clearly more concerned about economic efficiency and, to some degree, about impartiality and independence.

The majority of Finns (62%) consider central government administration and the work of its public officials to be worthy of their trust. The share of people who do not feel this trust has decreased slightly since 2016.

Keywords values, ethics, corruption, public officials, governance policy

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Valtionhallinnon virkamiesetiikan ja -moraalin tila Kansalaiskyselyn tulokset 2022

Valtiovarainministeriön julkaisuja 2023:49		Teema	Hallintopolitiikka
Julkaisija	Valtiovarainministeriö		
Tekijä/t	Jaakko Hyry		
Kieli	englanti	Sivumäärä	40
Tiivistelmä			
<p>Kyselytutkimuksen kohteena olivat kansalaisten mielipiteet valtionhallinnon arvojen tärkeydestä ja toteutumisesta virkamiesten toiminnassa. Tutkimus toteutettiin Kantarin Forum-paneelissa. Kyselyyn vastasi yhteensä 1 018 henkilöä, jotka edustavat maamme 15–79-vuotiasta väestöä.</p> <p>Kun arvot listataan tärkeysjärjestyksessä, kärkeen nousevat erittäin tärkeinä pidetyt asiantuntemus, luottamus, puolueettomuus ja riippumattomuus, laillisuusperiaate ja vastuullisuus, toiminnan avoimuus, tasa-arvo sekä palveluperiaate. Arvojen tärkeys on samalla tasolla kuin vuonna 2016. Toiminnan taloudellisuutta pidetään nyt hieman tärkeämpänä kuin aikaisemmin. Kysyttäessä toteutuvatko jotkut valtionhallinnon arvoista niin hyvin, että niistä tuntee suomalaisena ylpeyttä, muita korkeammalle arvioissa nousevat laillisuusperiaate ja vastuullisuus.</p> <p>Kansalaisten mielestä pikaisia toimenpiteitä vaatisivat muita useammin avoimuus, puolueettomuus ja riippumattomuus sekä nyt myös taloudellisuus. Vuoteen 2016 verrattuna kansalaisten huoli avoimuudesta ja luottamuksesta on vähentynyt, mutta huolta koetaan selvästi aikaisempaa enemmän toiminnan taloudellisuudesta ja jossain määrin toiminnan puolueettomuudesta ja riippumattomuudesta.</p> <p>Enemmistö suomalaisista (62 %) pitää valtionhallintoa ja sen virkamiesten toimintaa oman luottamuksensa arvoisena. Epäluottamusta kokevien osuus on vähentynyt hieman vuodesta 2016.</p>			
Asiasanat	arvot, etiikka, korruptio, virkamiehet, hallintopolitiikka		
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Tjänstemannaetiken och -moralen inom statsförvaltningen

Resultat av medborgarenkät 2022

Finansministeriets publikationer 2023:49		Tema	Förvaltningspolitiken
Utgivare	Finansministeriet		
Författare	Jaakko Hyry		
Språk	engelska	Sidantal	40
Referat	<p>Enkäten gällde medborgarnas åsikter om hur viktiga värderingar är i statsförvaltningen och hur de förverkligas i tjänstemännens arbete. Undersökningen genomfördes av panelen Kantar Forum. Enkäten besvarades av 1 018 personer som representerar finländare i åldern 15–79 år.</p> <p>När respondenterna rangordnar värderingarna från viktigaste till minst viktig toppas listan av sakkunskap, förtroende, opartiskhet och oberoende, legalitetsprincipen och ansvarsfullhet, öppenhet, jämlikhet och serviceprincipen, som alla anses vara ytterst viktiga. Värderingarnas betydelse ligger på samma nivå som 2016. Verksamhetens ekonomiska effektivitet anses nu vara aningen viktigare än tidigare. På frågan om någon av statsförvaltningens värderingar förverkligas så väl att man som finländare känner stolthet över dem, framgår det att legalitetsprincipen och ansvarsfullheten skattas högst.</p> <p>Enligt medborgarna kräver bevarandet av öppenheten, opartiskheten och oberoendet och nu också en ekonomisk effektivitet snabba åtgärder. Jämfört med 2016 känner medborgarna mindre oro för öppenheten och förtroendet, medan det finns en klart större oro för verksamhetens ekonomiska effektivitet och i viss mån för dess opartiskhet och oberoende.</p> <p>Majoriteten av finländarna (62 %) anser att statsförvaltningen och dess tjänstemän handlar på ett förtroendeingivande sätt. Andelen personer som känner misstro har minskat något sedan 2016.</p>		
Nyckelord	värden, etik, korruption, tjänstemän, förvaltningspolitiken		
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1 Introduction

This report presents the key results of a survey on Finnish people's views of the state of civil service ethics and morals in the State administration in Finland. The results were compared with the results of a similar survey carried out in 2016.

The aim of the survey was to ascertain citizens' opinions on the importance of administrative values and how they are realised in the activities of central government employees. The set of values relating to the State administration explored in the survey was examined from various perspectives. The respondents were asked for their evaluations on which of the values are realised exceptionally well, which are at a worryingly poor level, and which of the values can be regarded as core values in the State administration.

The survey also looked into the perceived occurrence of unethical practices and citizens' opinions towards different claims related to civil service ethics, such as citizens confidence in central government and the activities of its civil servants.

The survey was carried out in TNS Gallup's Forum panel, which has approximately 40,000 respondents available for different survey samples. Before the survey results were reviewed, respondents who work for the government were excluded from the analyses.

A total of 1,018 individuals responded to the survey. The sample represents the Finnish mainland population aged between 15 and 79 years of age.

The results are reported in two parts. This is the basic part of the report, verbalizing and visualizing the main results of the survey. There are many graphic diagrams in this report because the matters studied are fairly concrete and the diagrams are largely self-explanatory.

All results of the survey are presented in detailed diagrams in a separate part of the report. It also contains information on the structure of the research material and the size of respondent groups.

All survey results based on samples include a certain degree of uncertainty due to possible random errors. The uncertainty is managed by calculating confidence intervals for samples of different sizes or parts thereof, on the basis of the probability of possible errors.

The confidence interval calculated for a certain survey result indicates the limit values between which a correct result concerning the entire fundamental set remains with a certain degree of certainty. For the survey, the confidence intervals of the results have been calculated for the percentage distribution.

Table 1. Statistical margin of error in some example cases.

RESULT OBTAINED, %	SIZE OF THE GROUP N						
	100	200	300	500	1 000	1 500	2 000
10% or 90%	+6.0	+4.3	+3.5	+2.7	+1.9	+1.6	+1.4
20% or 80%	+8.0	+5.7	+4.6	+3.6	+2.5	+2.1	+1.8
30% or 70%	+9.2	+6.5	+5.3	+4.1	+2.9	+2.4	+2.0
40% or 60%	+9.8	+7.0	+5.7	+4.4	+3.1	+2.6	+2.2
50%	+10.0	+7.1	+5.8	+4.5	+3.2	+2.7	+2.2

Table 1 shows the sizes of the confidence intervals, as percentages, for groups of different sizes. In it, the scope of the confidence interval is agreed to be at a level of 95%. This means that if the survey were repeated, the result shown by the sample would land outside of the confidence interval, due to coincidence, in only five cases out of 100. Hence, the criterion of statistical reliability is quite strict. In practice, the deviation is considerably narrower.

The confidence intervals are narrower at the ends of the percentage distribution, because random deviations there are probably smaller than in the middle of the distribution. For instance, a result of 50% obtained from a group with 500 interviews is, evaluated at a degree of certainty of 95%, between 46% and 55% and can land outside of these limits in only five cases out of 100. If the result is 10% or 90%, the theoretical error is smaller.

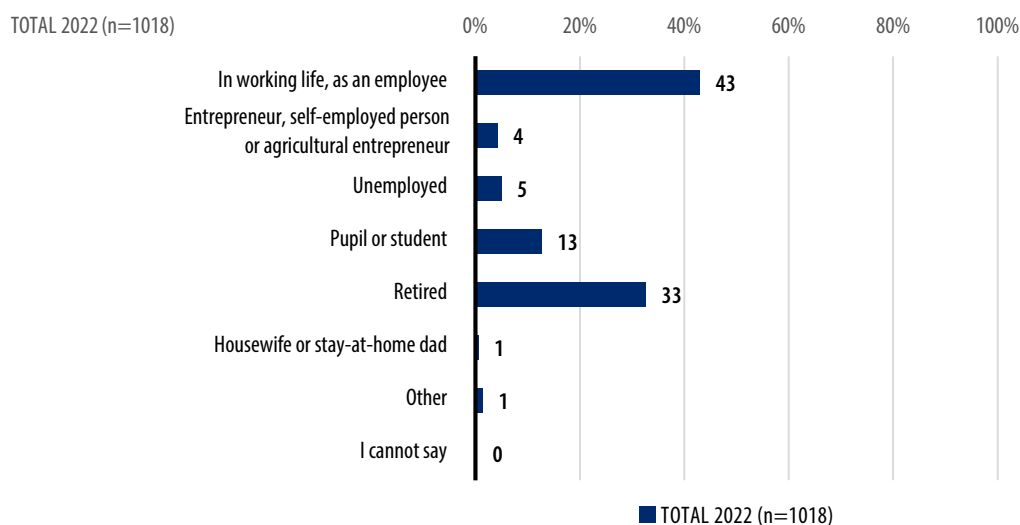
2 Background information on respondents

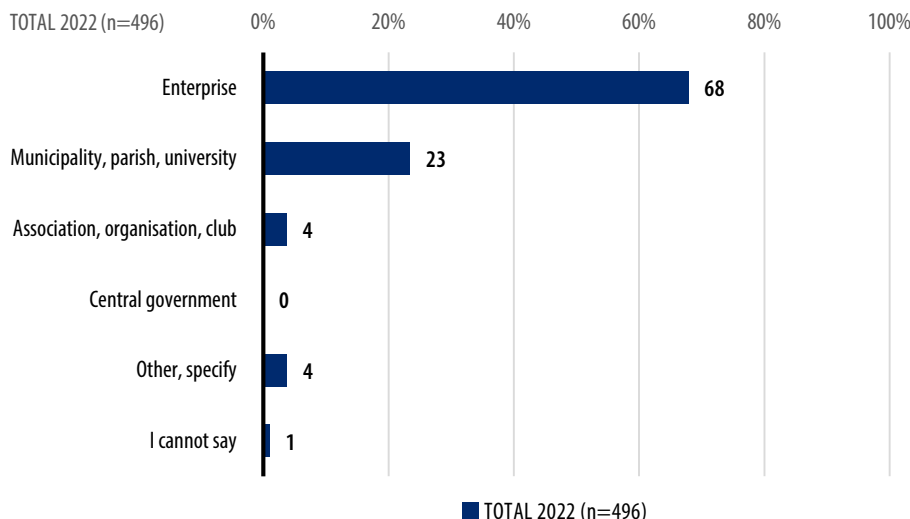
2.1 Employment status

Survey questionnaire began with exploring the respondents' employment status and their labour-market position.

Of all the respondents, 47% were employed, working as an employee, entrepreneur or self-employed person. The share of unemployed persons of the respondents was 5% and that of pupils and students was 13%. Retired people accounted for 33% of all respondents.

Which of the following best describes your situation?



Is your employer...

Most of the people in working life were employed by an enterprise (68 %), with one-fifth of them working for a municipality, parish, or university (23 %). Central government employees were excluded from the analysis of the results.

Of the respondents, 4% worked for an association, organisation or club.

2.2 Contacts with State administration

In order to facilitate their answers, respondents were given definitions of the key concepts and their content at the start of the survey. The aim was to ensure that they had a clear idea and understanding of the questions asked in the survey.

These were as follows:

1. Central government means ministries and central government agencies and institutions.
2. Central government is responsible for maintaining and developing the constitutional state, for securing and evaluating fundamental rights, and for duties related to security. It is also in charge of many international and nationwide duties and for supervising people's equality and the public interest.
3. Central government employees, among others, refer to civil servants and public employees working for the central government, e.g., judges, police officers, revenue officials and soldiers.

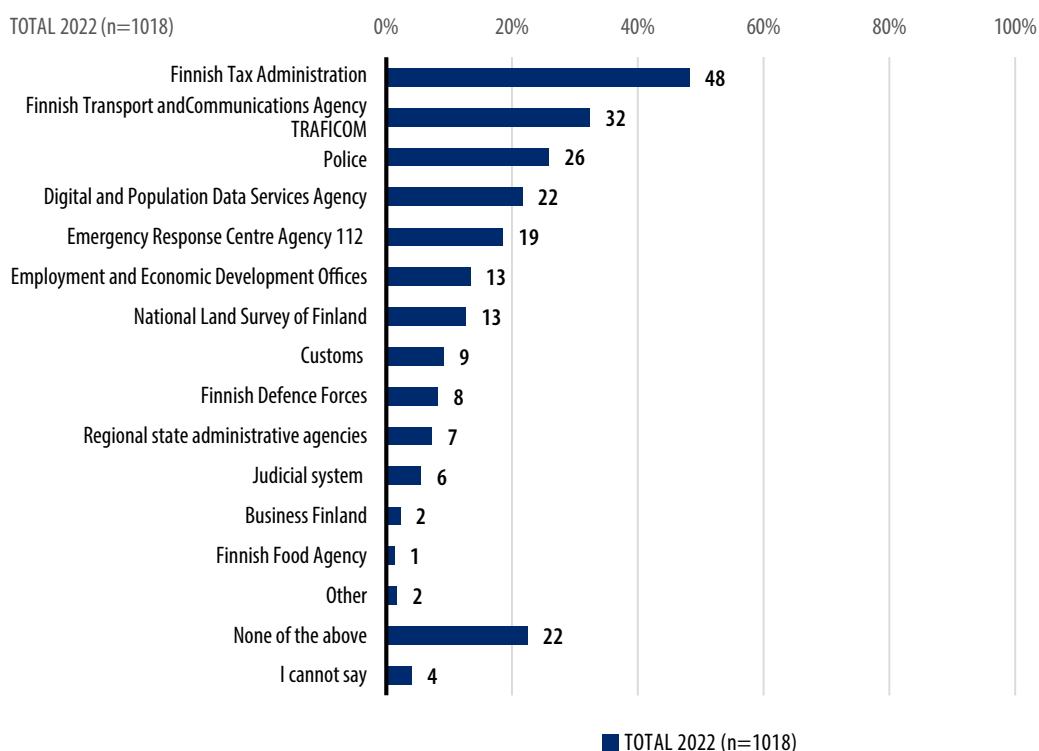
4. Civil service ethics and morals mean that civil servants abide by the law and the principles of good administration.
5. It was also specified that the survey did not deal with the local government or Ministers or Members of Parliament and their activities.

The purpose of giving definitions of the key concepts and their content was to ensure that the respondents would be able to assess the questions presented in the survey on as right a basis as possible and from a right perspective.

Next, the survey determined the contacts of the respondents or persons close to them with central government authorities in recent years.

The share of those with three or more contacts with the authorities was 36%, those with two contacts 19%, and those with one contact 19%. About a quarter of the respondents (26%) had no contacts with government authorities over the last 12 months, or they could not say about the matter.

Have you or a person close to you been in any contact with the following government authorities in recent years?

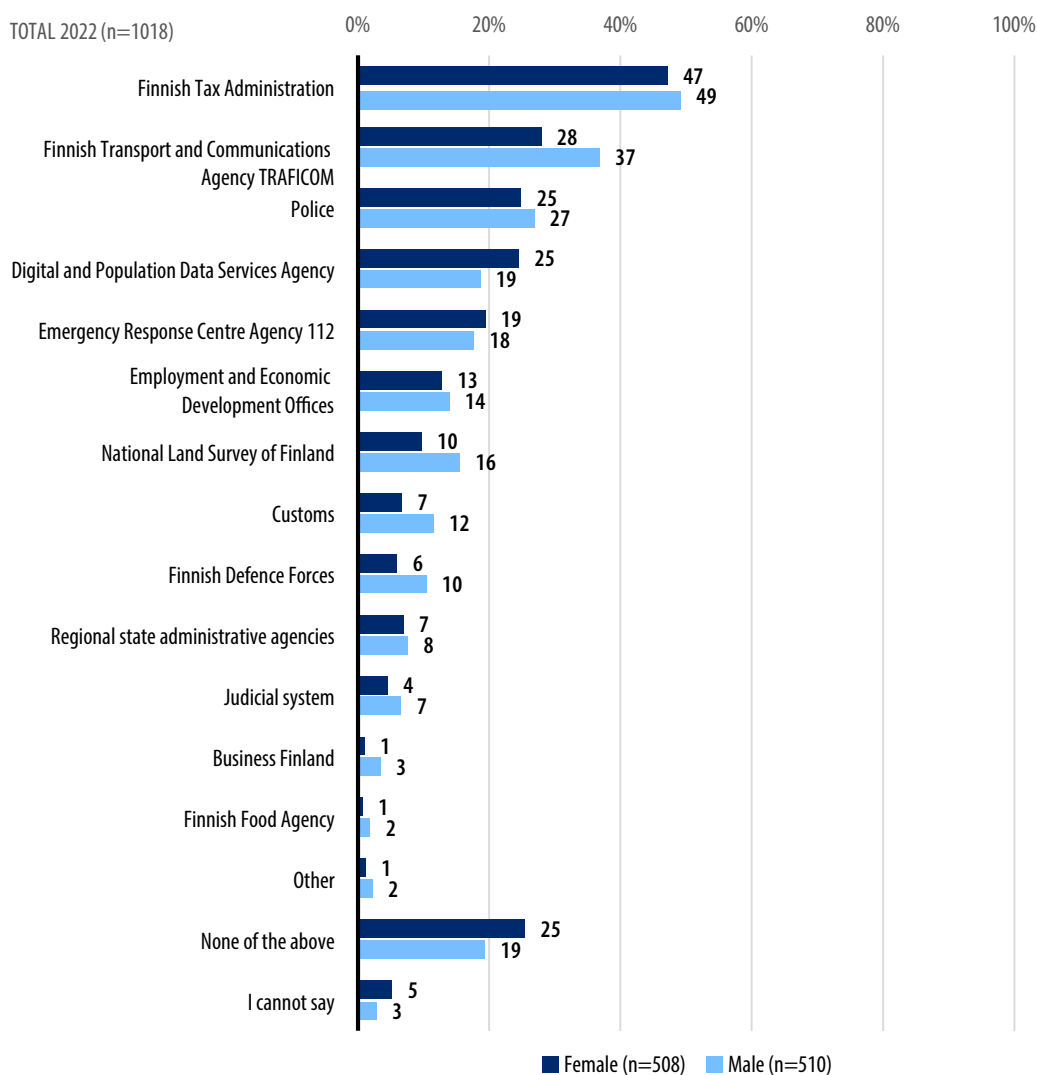


Finnish people or persons close to them have had contacts or interacted with the authorities frequently.

Approximately half of all Finns (48%) or people close to them have had contacts or interacted with the Tax Administration. About a third had interacted with the Finnish Transport and Communications Agency TRAFICOM. Slightly more than a quarter of Finns had interacted with the police.

The fewest contacts had been with the Finnish Food Agency or Business Finland. Of the respondents or persons close to them, 22% had had no contacts with government authorities.

Have you or a person close to you been in any contact with the following government authorities in recent years?



3 Values

3.1 The importance and realisation of values

When the focus shifted to the actual aims of the survey, the respondents were asked to assess how important in their opinion are values related to the activity of different civil servants and public employees, and how well these values are realised in State administration and the activities of civil servants.

First, the respondents were asked how important they considered different values, one at a time, and then for an assessment of the realisation of each in the State administration and the activities of civil servants.

The values were asked with a detailed description and in a random order to minimise the effect of the order of evaluation.

To save space, graphic presentations use abridged wordings of the values studied.

The unabridged descriptions of the different values given in the survey were as follows:

- **General acceptability:** central government employees act in line with public opinion, such that most people can accept their activities and practices.
- **Expertise:** civil servants are competent, and services are of a high quality; duties are managed well, and matters are prepared and decided on carefully.
- **Service principle:** civil servants act respectfully and assist citizens and other clients.
- **Economic efficiency:** central government aims to reach the goals set for its activities with the lowest costs possible.
- **Impartiality and independence:** decisions made by civil servants can be justified objectively and in terms of the subject matter, they act independently and in line with the public interest, without any inappropriate external influence.
- **Openness:** civil servants act openly and transparently without concealing matters.
- **Effectiveness:** civil servants' actions and work are effective, and attention is focused on results.

- **Rule of law and responsibility:** civil servants act according to laws and statutes, and they are responsible for the lawfulness of their official actions.
- **Equality:** civil servants treat all citizens fairly, provide services in both national languages and promote equality among sexes.
- **Dedication:** civil servants perform their tasks with dedication and diligence.
- **Trust:** people can trust that the authorities always promote the public interest and increase people's trust of one another.
- **Innovativeness:** central government employees aim to boldly try new ways of working.

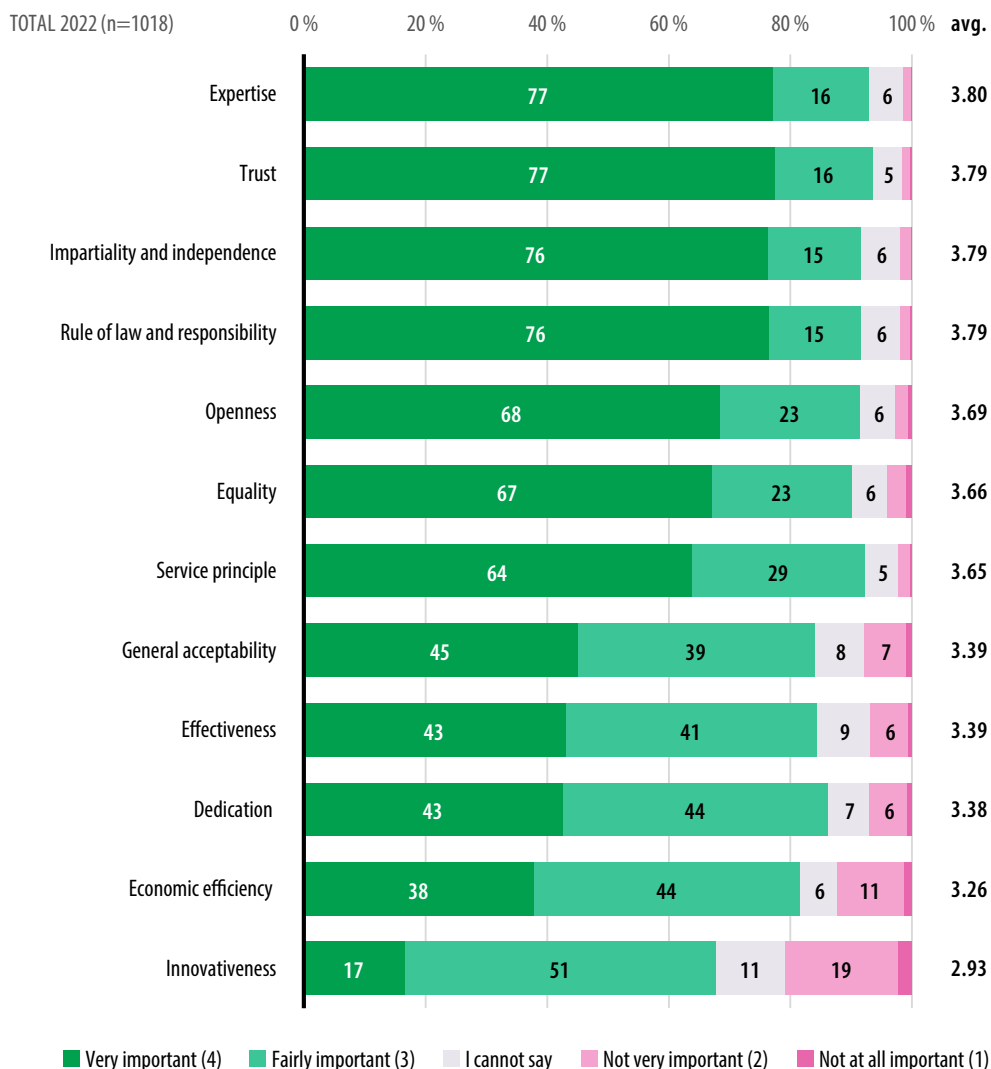
Overall review of the results of how important various values are deemed indicates that the values listed in the study are important for Finnish people. On a scale from 1 to 4 used in the survey, the average for all values was 3.54.

When values related to the actions of civil servants are sorted in order of importance, the following take the lead and are deemed very important: expertise, trust, impartiality and independence, rule of law and responsibility, openness, equality and service principle.

Of the values studied, the least important is innovativeness of operation, but even this is deemed very important or fairly important by 68% of Finns. However, a fifth of respondents (21%) assessed that innovativeness is not important in the activities of civil servants.

Economic efficiency of operation is also at the bottom end on the list of important values, being second to last. It is not deemed important by 11% (in 2016: 16%) of the respondents, but slightly over one-third of Finns (38%) find it very important and 44% fairly important. With good reason, even these values that came in last in the comparison can be regarded as fairly important matters in the actions of civil servants.

How important do you consider each of the following values?



It is characteristic for the values that rise among the top seven in the importance comparison that people are quite unanimous about them. Furthermore, there are no significant differences specific to a group of respondents in their background.

These matters are important for both women and men, respondents of different ages regardless of their place of residence, education, income level or political views. This was also the case in the 2016 survey.

However, what has changed since 2016 is that, today, the youngest Finns aged 15–29 consider these values, except for equality, slightly less important than the older Finns. On the other hand, young people find equality, deemed one of the most important values, as important as the other age groups, but equality is valued less by Finns Party supporters than among those who support other parties.

Instead, values that come at the bottom of the comparison are the ones that divide the respondents' opinions most strongly.

Innovativeness of operation is equally important for men and women, and importance assessments among different age groups do not diverge significantly, either. The same applies to comparisons made in terms of education, occupational groups and place of residence.

On the other hand, supporters of the Centre Party of Finland ("KESK") regard innovativeness as a much more important value in the actions of civil servant than supporters of the Finns Party ("PS") or the Left Alliance ("VAS").

Women and men find the economic efficiency of operation to be equally important, and so do different age groups. On the other hand, the economic efficiency is less important for those with a basic-level education compared to those with an academic education and less important for pupils and students than for employees.

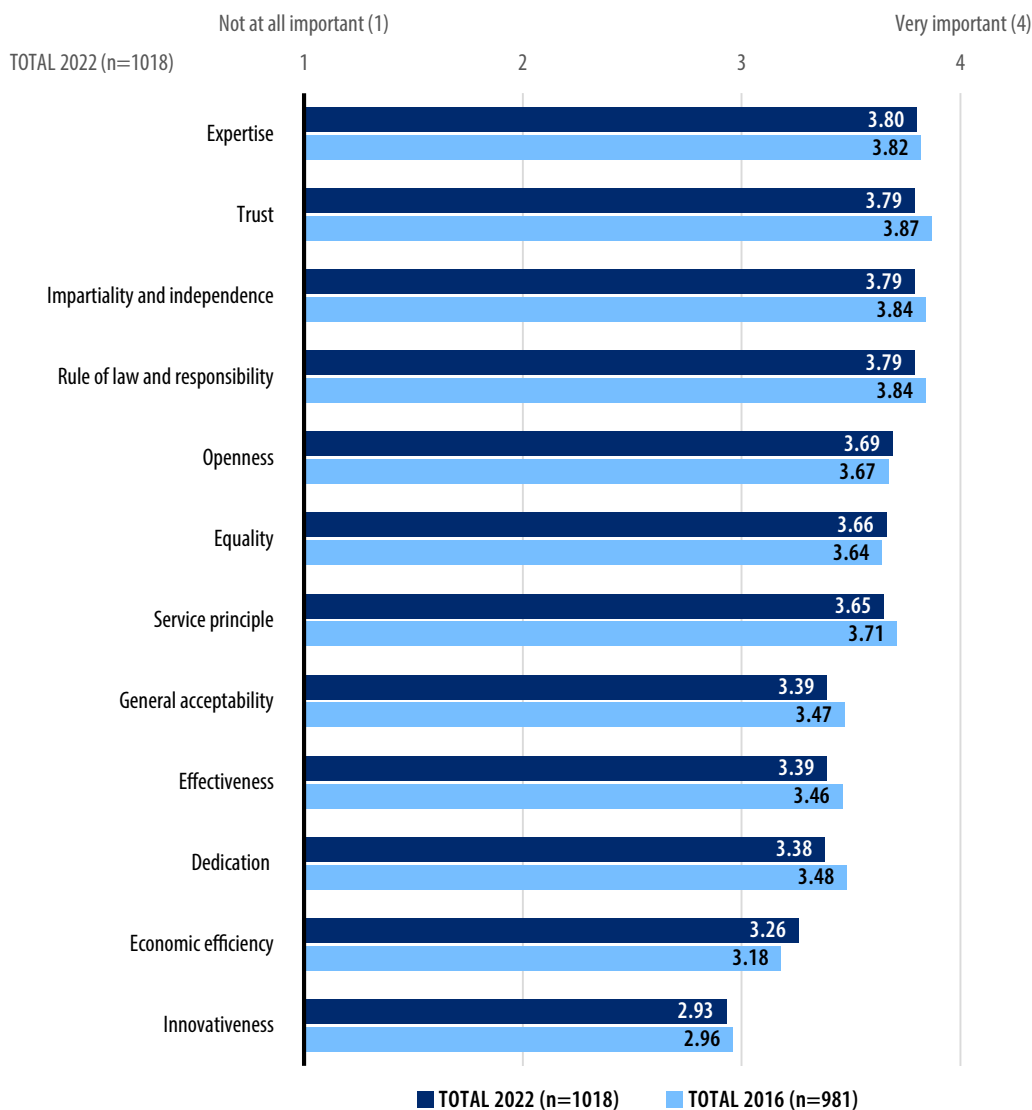
The importance of economic efficiency is emphasised among the supporters of the National Coalition Party of Finland ("KOK"), and it is clearly the least important for the supporters of the Left Alliance and the Green League ("VIHR").

The importance of effectiveness also increases among those aged over 55 and those with an average income. Effectiveness is least important for Left Alliance supporters. It is clearly most important for supporters of the National Coalition.

The importance of values is currently at a very similar level to what it was in 2016. The economic efficiency of operation is now considered slightly more important. There has been a minimal decrease in the importance assessments in terms of dedication, operational effectiveness and overall acceptability of activities.

The comparison of the importance of values 2022 vs. 2016 is presented in the figure below.

How important do you consider each of the following values?



For further information split by different background groups, please see the original publication's appendices (available only in Finnish language)

As in 2016, the scores of the assessments on the realisation of different values in the activities of state civil servants are lower than those of the importance evaluations. By way of generalisation, one can also say that the values studied are deemed important but, in

practice, citizens are of the opinion that they are realised only fairly well. In the survey, the average for the realisation of all the values was 2.59 (2016: 2.54) on a scale of 1 to 4. Again, there are large differences in the levels of realisation of the various values.

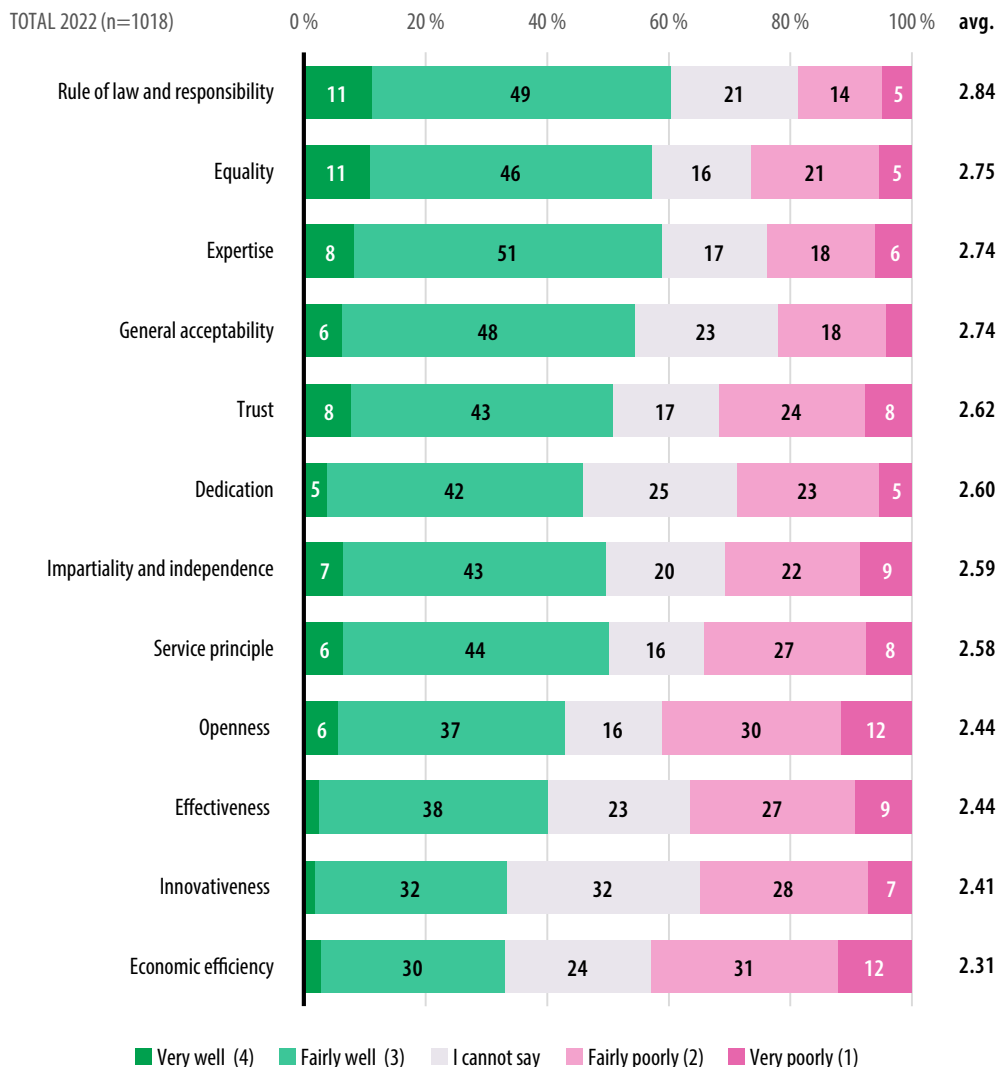
The rule of law and responsibility is estimated to be realised best, either very well or fairly well among 60% (2016: 68%) of the respondents. Of the citizens, 19% (2016: 20%) evaluate that the rule of law and responsibility has been realised fairly poorly or very poorly.

Equality and expertise of civil servants, followed by the general acceptability of activities, now rise among the three best-realised values.

Respondents assess economic efficiency, innovativeness of operation, effectiveness and openness to be realised poorest in the actions of civil servants. With all these subjects, the result has a negative tone: there are fewer positive responses (very good or fairly good) than critical responses (very poor or fairly poor).

Evaluating how values are realised in practice is not very easy for citizens. In terms of different values, the shares of those who do not take a stand varies between 16% and 32%. Issues that are easier to evaluate include equality, the service principle and the openness of activities. The most difficult issues to evaluate are the innovativeness of activities, which 32% of the respondents fail to evaluate. Among the most difficult issues to assess, they are followed by dedication, economic efficiency and effectiveness.

In your opinion, how well is this value realised in the actions of civil servants?



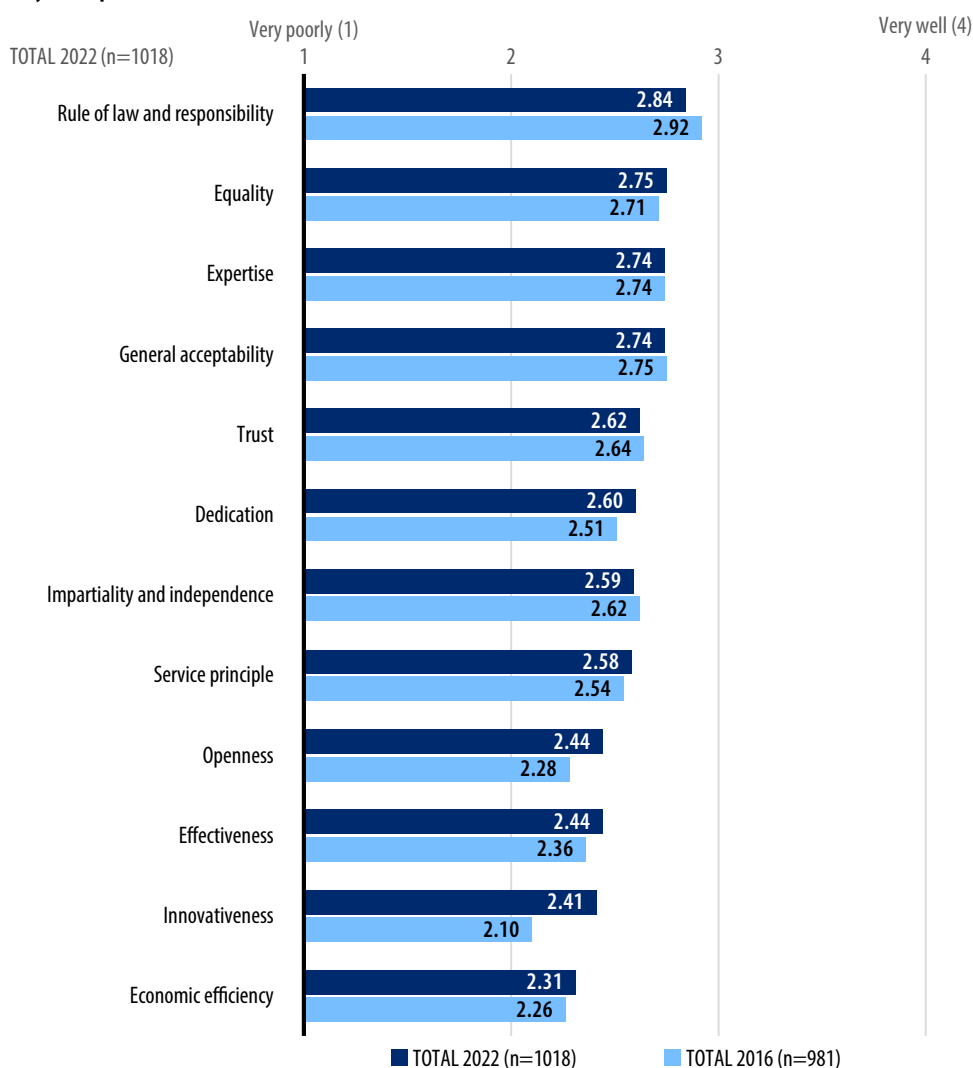
Those who consider the rule of law and responsibility to be best realised include respondents with an academic education, pupils and students and those living in the capital region. It is doubted most by the 56–65-year-olds, workers and supporters of the Finns Party.

Women felt that equality is realised more poorly than men. The differences between various age groups are not very big. On the other hand, the evaluation of academically educated respondents is clearly higher than that of less educated respondents. In terms of political parties, a weaker assessment is given by the supporters of the Left Alliance, while the supporters of the National Coalition Party give the highest evaluation.

Young people of the age of 15–29, those with an academic education, salaried employees, entrepreneurs and students, and supporters of the National Coalition and the Social Democratic Party of Finland (“SDP”) have the most faith in the expertise of civil servants. The lowest score is given by 46–55-year-olds, workers, those whose gross annual income exceeds EUR 85,000 euros and especially those who support the Finns Party.

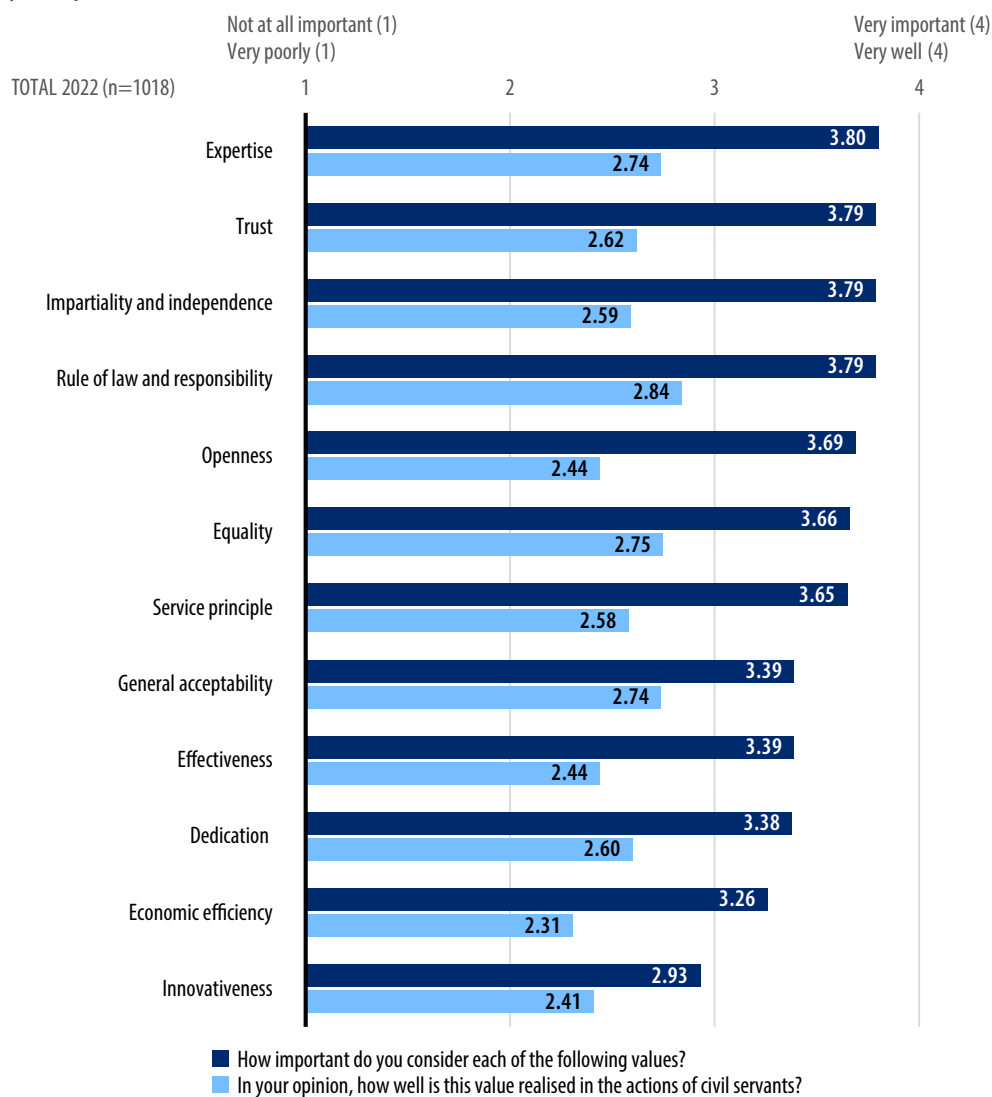
Based on the evaluations, in comparison with the results of 2016 positive development has taken place regarding the innovativeness of operations, openness and also dedication. The only matter with minor decrease in evaluations since 2016 is the rule of law and responsibility.

In your opinion, how well is this value realised in the actions of civil servants?



For further information split by different background groups, please see the original publication's appendices (available only in Finnish language).

**How important do you consider each of the following values?
In your opinion, how well is this value realised in the actions of civil servants?**



When the averages of importance and realisation assessments of the different values are placed side by side, one can see that the proportional difference between importance and realisation is again highest in the realisation of openness, trust, impartiality and independence, and the service principle.

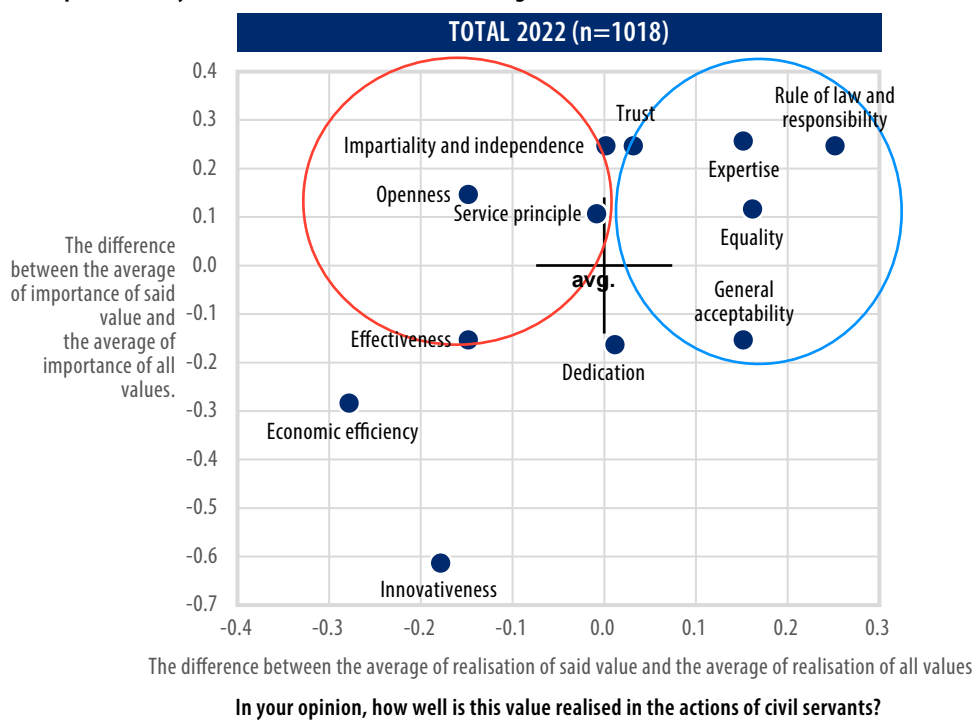
The difference between expectations and their realisation is also visible in the following four-fold diagram. From it, one can also deduce which values are such that particular attention should be paid to their realisation from the citizens' perspective.

Openness of activity, on the left, still arises as the factor where the relationship between importance and realisation is the most crucial. It is also joined by impartiality and independence, and the service principle because their estimated importance is great.

Based on data, the strongest values are again the rule of law and responsibility, expertise and equality. The general acceptability of activities is also one of the strengths.

The next areas of development are the effectiveness and economic efficiency of operations.

How important do you consider each of the following values?



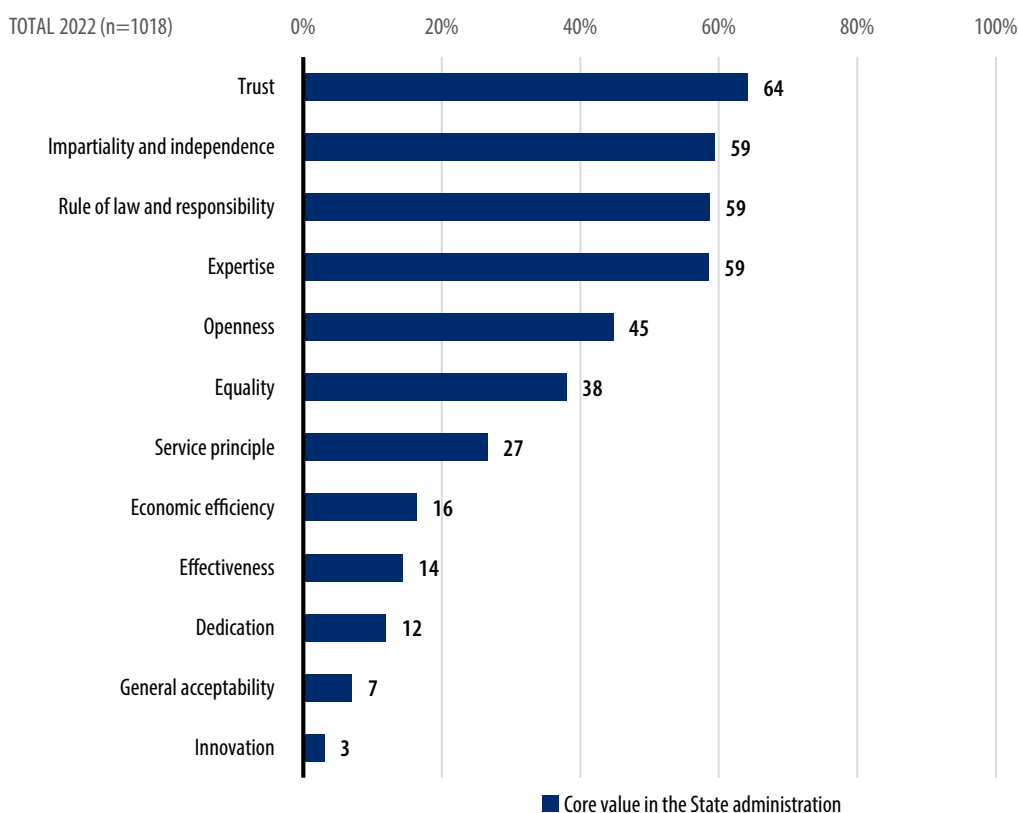
3.2 Core values in State administration

Next, the respondents could assess from among the values they recently reviewed the ones they would like to elevate as the core values of State administration. Each respondent was asked to choose from among the values listed in random order no more than five values they deemed most essential.

The assessments distinguish a clear top group of four values. The most important values for citizens are trust, impartiality and independence, the rule of law and responsibility, and expertise. These core values are the same as in 2016.

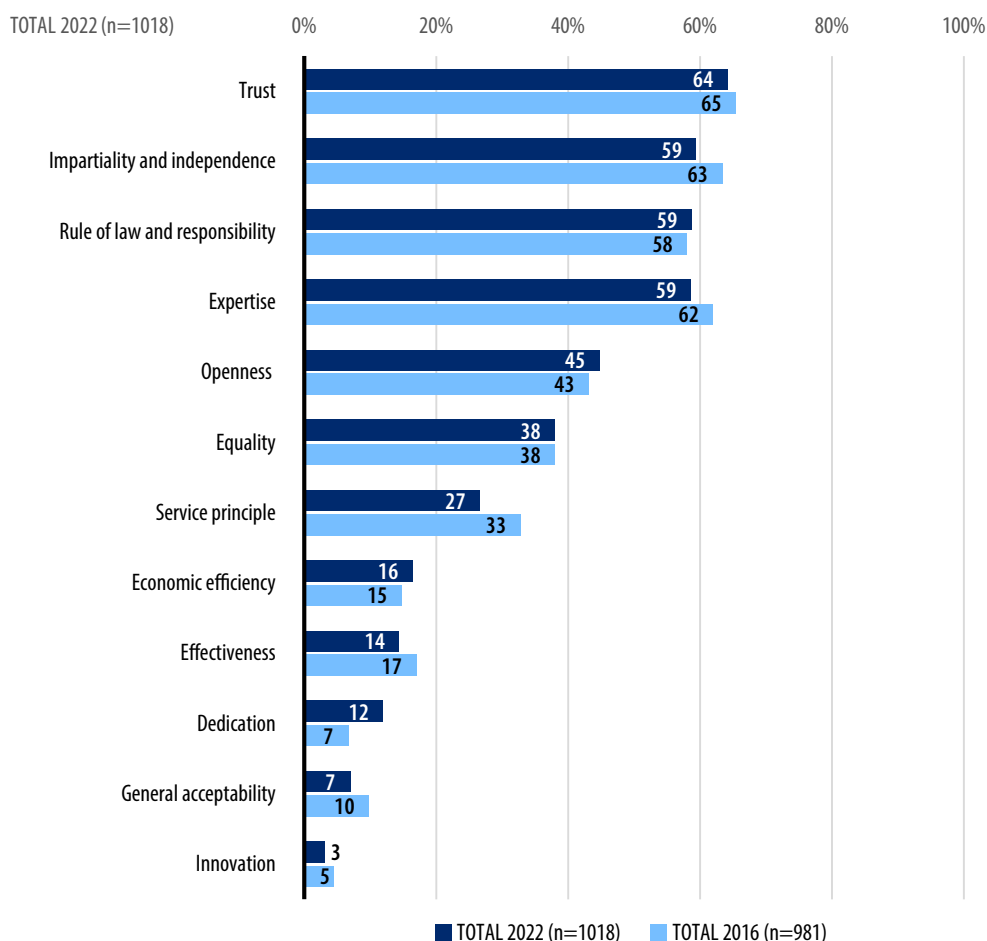
When core values were selected, innovativeness of operation, general acceptability of activity, dedication, and operational effectiveness came in last. Economic efficiency, which in 2016 belonged to this group, has risen as the value with the fifth lowest score.

Which of the aforementioned values would you elevate as the core values of the State administration? Please select no more than five values that you find most essential.



Compared to 2016, the service principle, and impartiality and independence were now selected among the core values less frequently. There was no significant increase in the mentions gained by any of the values, with the exception of dedication. On the other hand, the popularity of openness slightly increased among the core values.

Which of the aforementioned values would you elevate as the core values of the State administration? Please select no more than five values that you find most essential.



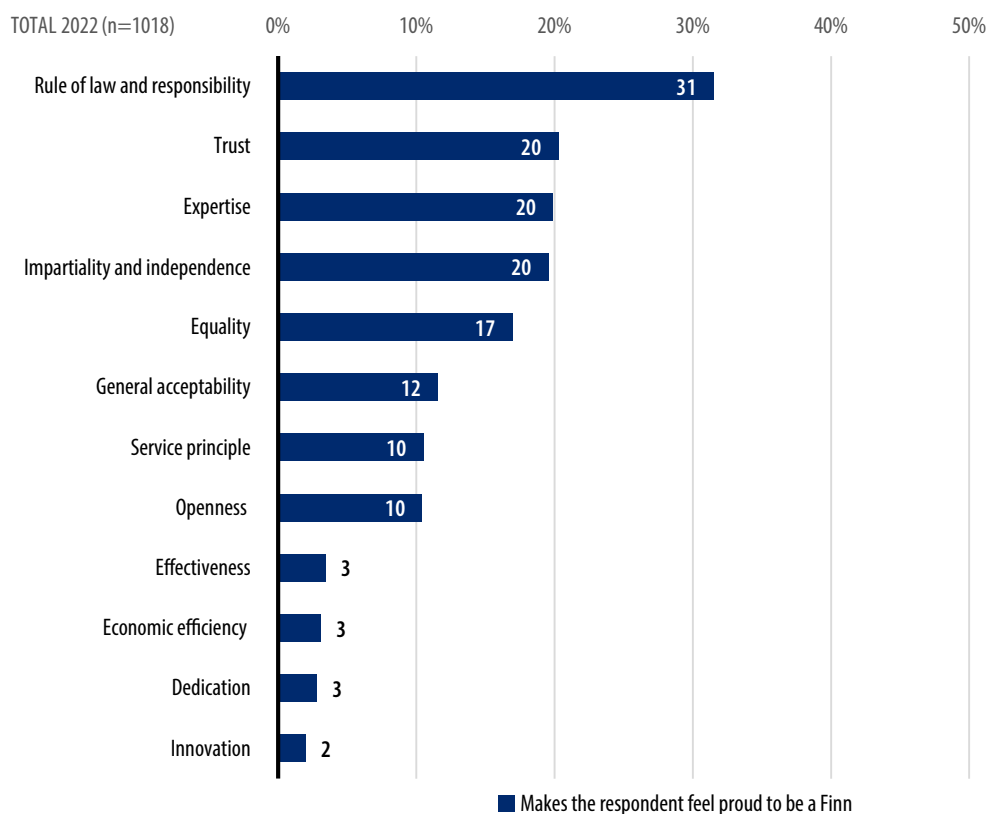
3.3 Values that are realised very well

Respondents were also asked to assess whether one or several of the values reviewed were realised so well that it makes them feel proud to be a Finn.

In terms of percentages, the estimates obtained are now higher than in 2016 when the respondents were asked to select values that were realised so well that “the state of affairs could even be slightly applauded”. The highest place is taken by the rule of law and responsibility, which makes 31% of the respondents feel proud that they are Finns.

It is followed by trust, expertise, and impartiality and independence, of which 20% of the respondents feel national pride. Equality is selected by 17% of Finns.

Is one or several values of State administration realised so well that it makes you feel proud to be a Finn?

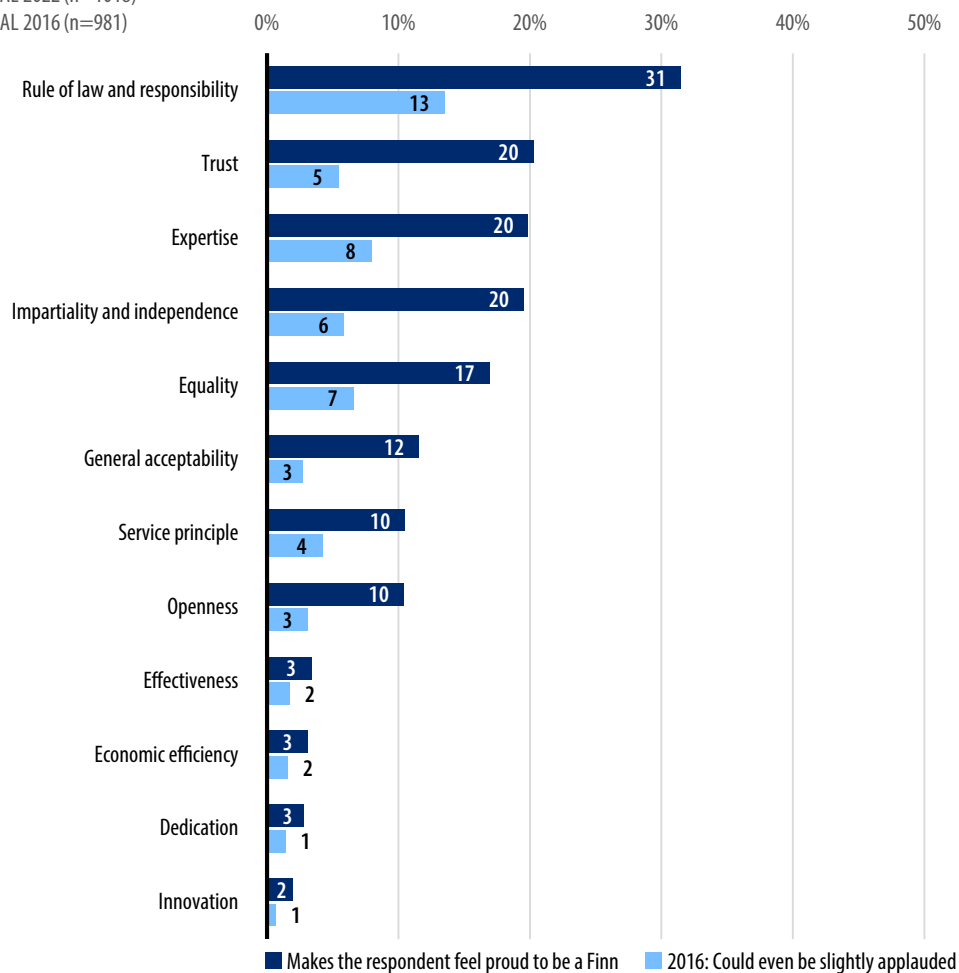


Compared to the values deemed “worth applauding” in 2016, the most frequently selected values were largely the same. In direct comparison, the greatest increase in popularity happened with trust, which rose from the sixth to second place when the question was set in a new way.

Is one or several values of State administration realised so well that it makes you feel proud to be a Finn?

TOTAL 2022 (n=1018)

TOTAL 2016 (n=981)



3.4 Values that are at a worrisome level

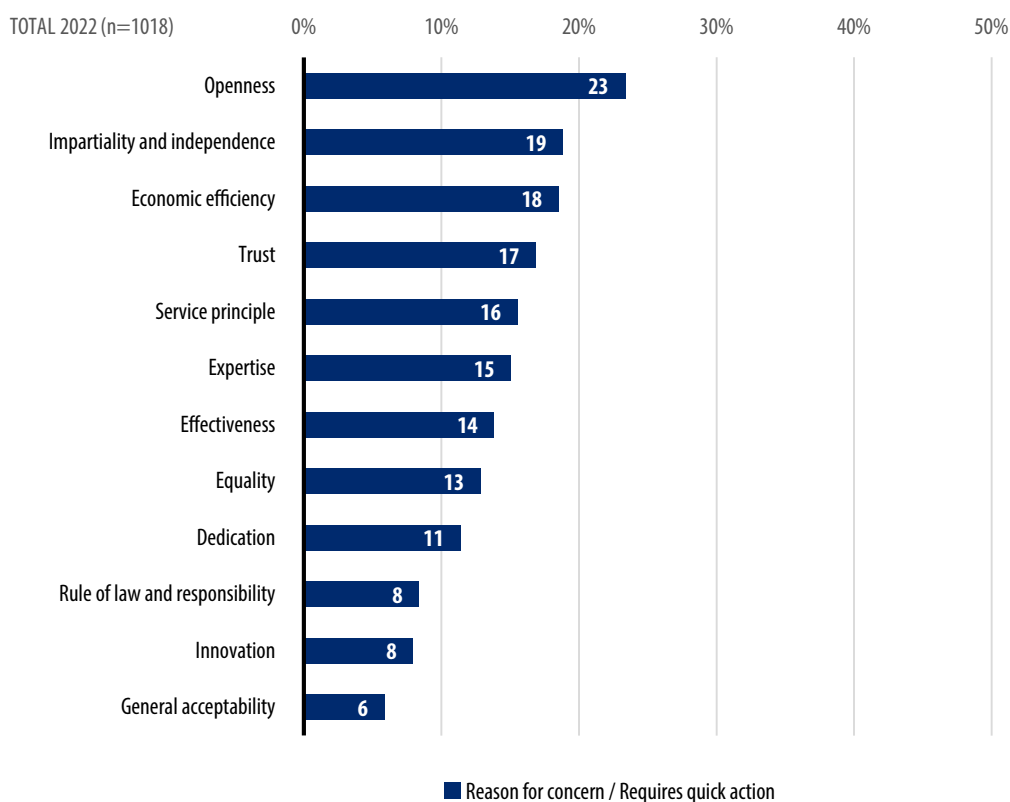
After the respondents had assessed values that were realised well, they were further asked to evaluate if the present state of some value(s) was such that it gave reason for concern or if any of the values required quick action.

Even when the angle of the questions is turned into a search for negative aspects, the level of evaluations remains fairly unchanged. It seems that the respondents see a rather equal amount of both sources of pride and causes for concern in the State administration.

According to the respondents, the realisation of openness, impartiality and independence, economic efficiency and trust in the activities of civil servants would require quick action most often.

The next most frequently mentioned matter raising concern is the state of the service principle and expertise in the State administration.

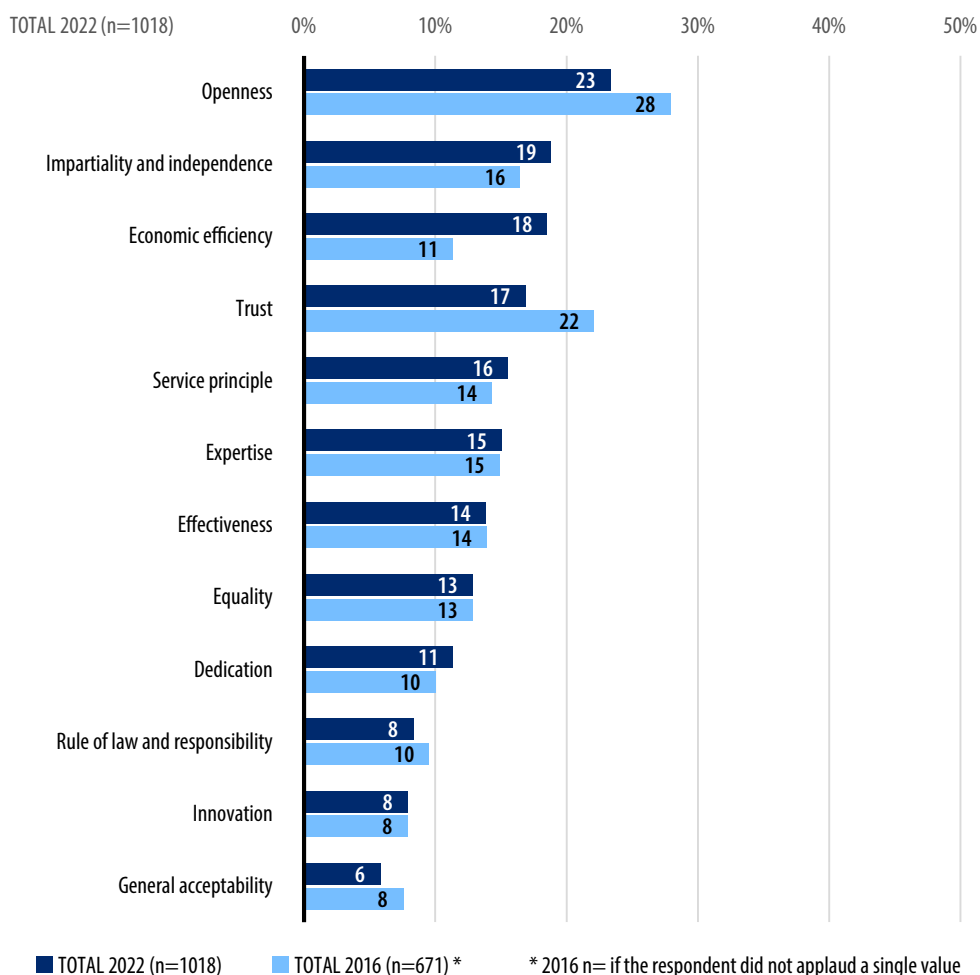
In your opinion, is the present state of some value(s) such that it gives reason for concern or that it requires quick action?



The causes of concern experienced by citizens have changed since 2016.

The concerns over openness and trust have decreased, but the respondents clearly seem to be more concerned about the economic efficiency of activities and, to some extent, also the impartiality and independence than before.

In your opinion, is the present state of some value(s) such that it gives reason for concern or that it requires quick action?



3.5 Overall review of values

When the results are combined according to how often each of the values assessed was selected as a core value, a value giving reason for pride, or a value whose realisation gives cause for concern, the following overall result is obtained.

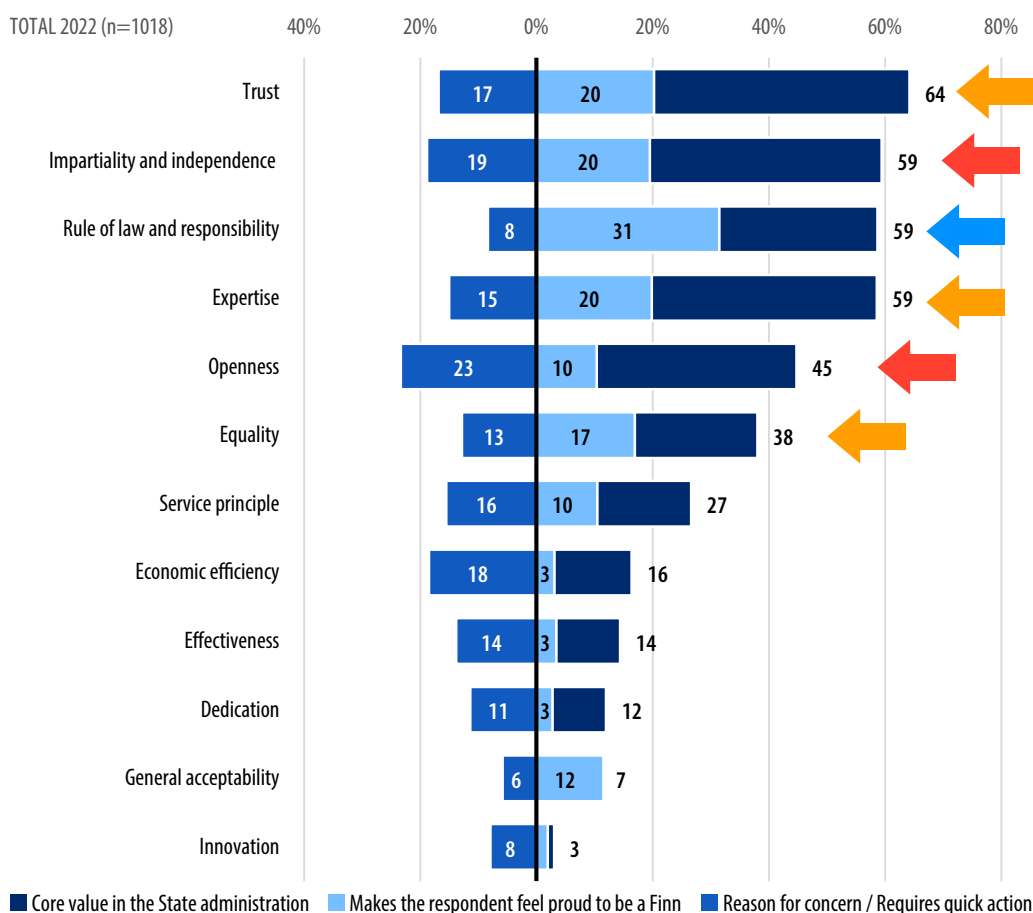
The review combines three different 'extreme evaluations' and supports the previous four-fold analysis that used a direct cross-review of the importance and realisation of the values, on the basis of their averages. The present result highlights two values where the combination of importance (core value), excellent level (a value giving reason for pride) and a critical level (requires quick action) is more crucial than in the case of other values. These include impartiality and independence, and openness.

The next most crucial values are trust, expertise and equality. From this perspective, the value emerging as strength is the rule of law and responsibility.

Which of the aforementioned values would you elevate as the core values of the State administration?

Is one or several values of State administration realised so well that it makes you feel proud to be a Finn?

In your opinion, is the present state of some value(s) such that it gives reason for concern or that it requires quick action?



For further information split by different background groups, please see the original publication's appendices (available only in Finnish language).

4 State of civil service ethics and morals

4.1 Overall assessment of the state of civil service ethics and morals

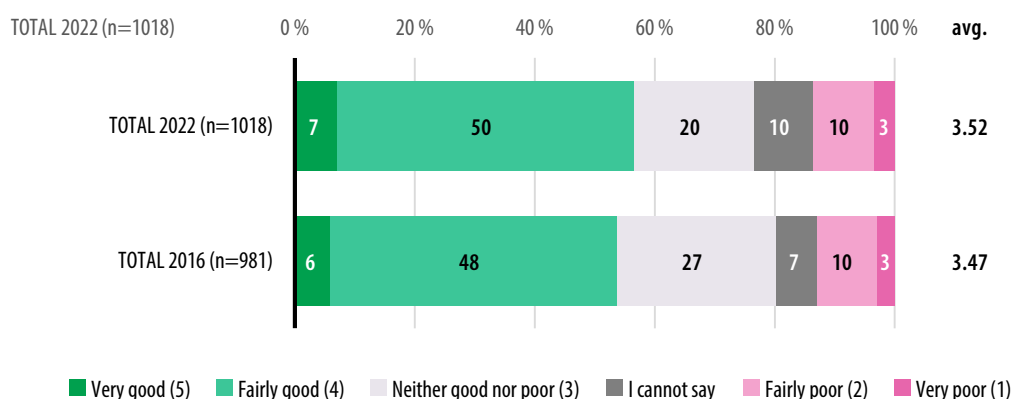
According to a fairly extensive evaluation of the various values from different perspectives, the respondents were asked for an overall assessment of the present state of Finnish civil service ethics and morals in the State administration.

On the whole, the situation is deemed to be fairly good. More than half of the respondents (57%) found the state of civil service ethics and morals to be very good or fairly good. The situation was deemed very poor by 3% of the respondents, and one in ten finds the situation fairly poor.

Respondents with neither a positive nor negative opinion account for a fifth (20%) of the respondents.

The result is slightly better than in 2016.

In your opinion, how good is the present state of civil service ethics and morals in State administration?
The present state of civil service ethics and morals in State administration



There is no significant difference between women's and men's assessments on the overall state of civil service ethics and morals. In terms of age cohorts, the best assessment is submitted by respondents 15–29 years of age and over 65 years of age.

The higher the respondent's level of education, the better the assessment of the overall state of ethics; the evaluation is clearly best among those with an academic education and worst among those with a basic-level education.

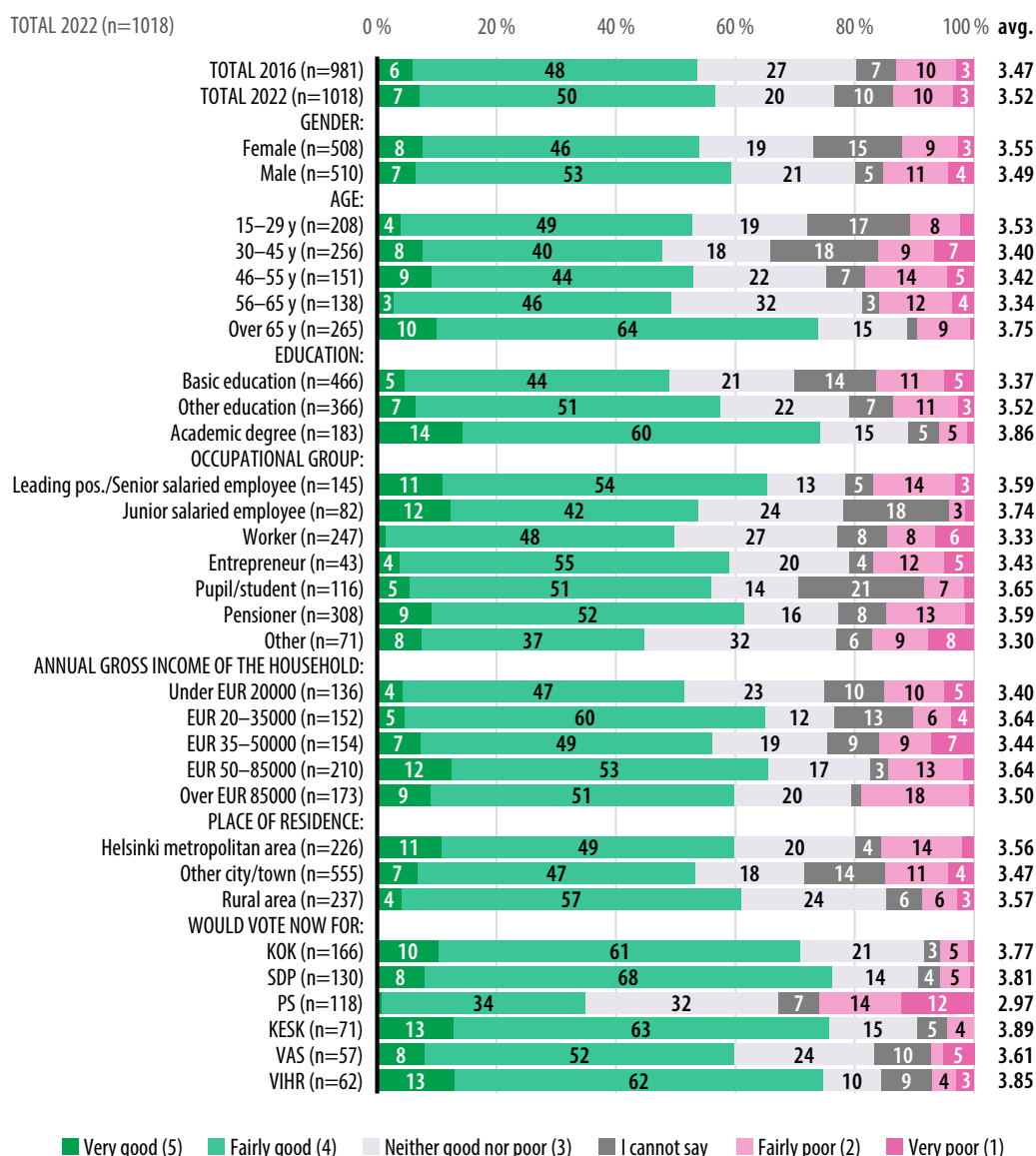
Of the different occupational groups, workers give the lowest score while pupils and students and junior salaried employees give the highest score.

With regard to the various parties, the overall assessment of the state of civil service ethics and morals is at about the same level. The exception to this is the supporters of the Finns Party, whose assessment is clearly lowest, as was also the case in 2016.

In your opinion, how good is the present state of civil service ethics and morals in State administration?

In your opinion, how good is the present state of civil service ethics and morals in State administration?

The present state of civil service ethics and morals in State administration



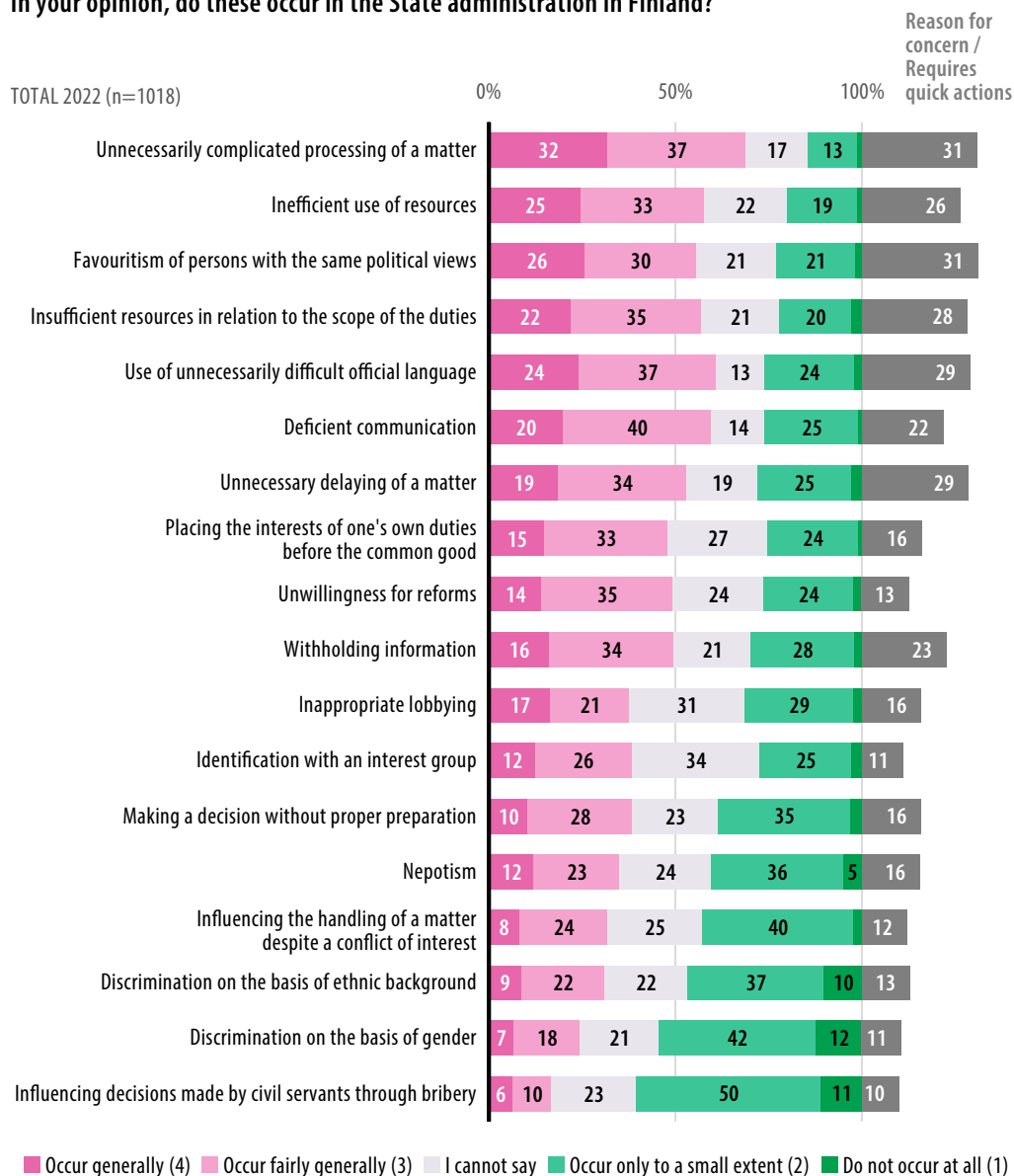
5 Occurrence of unethical practices in State administration

Next, the survey continued with asking the respondents' opinion on whether there are any unethical activities in the State administration. For this purpose, each respondent was presented with a long list of different practices that can be deemed inappropriate in the public administration.

If a respondent evaluated that some unethical practice(s) occur fairly generally or generally, one or several further questions were asked. They were asked to assess whether, in their opinion, these were things that raise concern or require action. The result, shown with the **dark grey** column, can be interpreted as such that the greater the proportion of those giving a critical evaluation find a matter worrisome, the closer to them the matter itself is deemed to be.

Before answering, the various practices were named as ones that are generally regarded as unethical.

**The following practices are generally regarded as unethical.
In your opinion, do these occur in the State administration in Finland?**



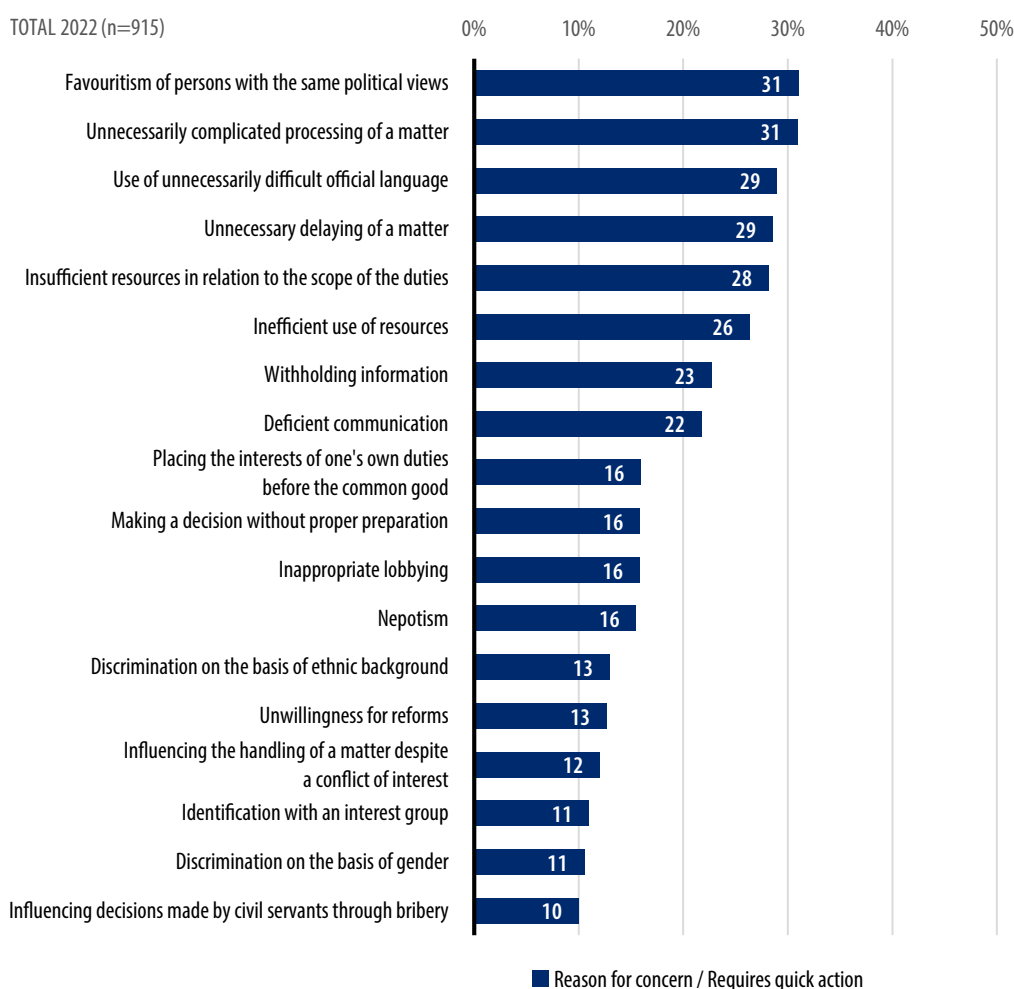
Based on the respondents' assessments, at the top of the list for areas of development are unnecessarily complicated processing of matters, inefficient use of resources, favouritism of persons with the same political views, insufficient resources in relation to the scope of the duties and the use of difficult official language.

Respondents believe that the practices occurring to the least extent include influencing decisions made by civil servants through bribery, discrimination on the basis of gender, and discrimination on the basis of ethnic background.

Since it is deemed that almost all of the matters asked about occur to a worrisome extent, we should also look at the list of areas of development people find most important.

Favouritism of persons with the same political views and unnecessarily complicated processing of matters take the top of this list. Respondents find that the next most crucial practices comprise the use of unnecessarily difficult official language, unnecessary delaying of a matter and resources deemed insufficient in relation to the scope of the duties.

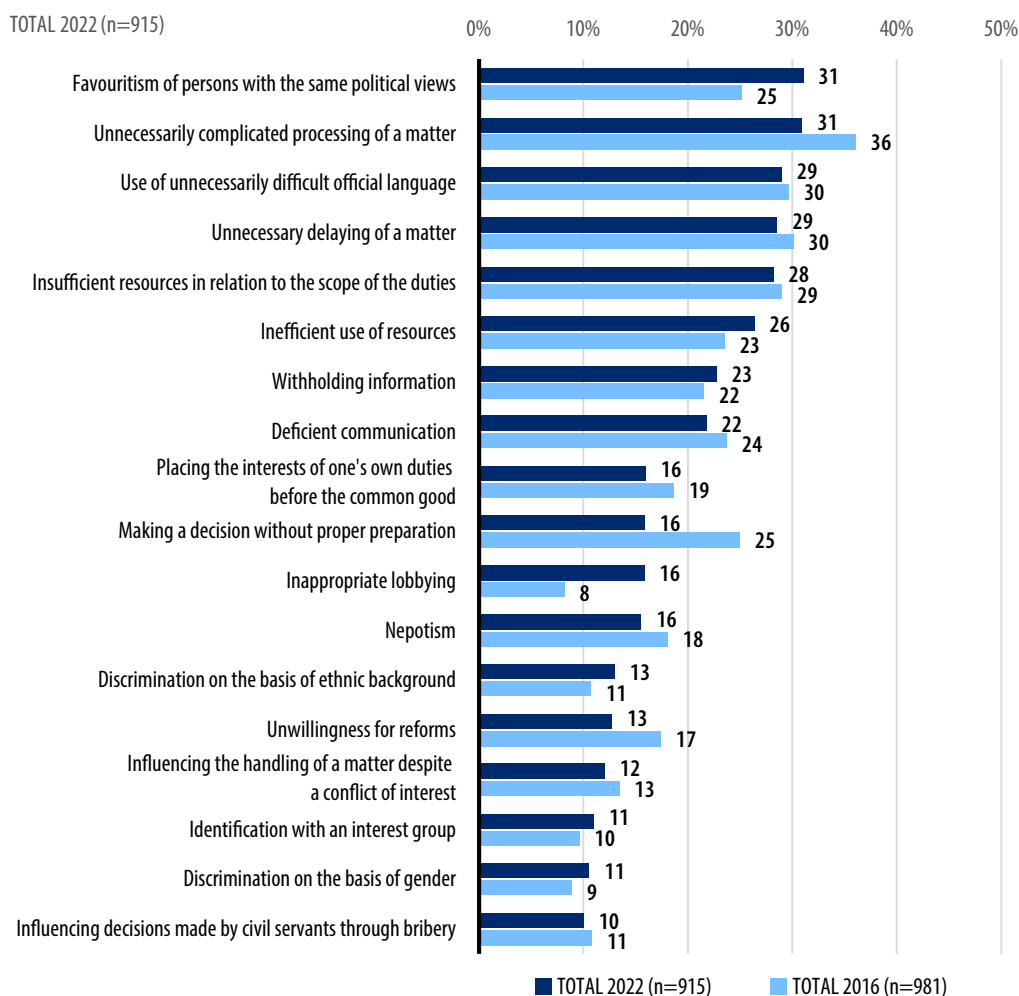
In your opinion, is the present state of some matter(s) such that it gives reason for concern or that it requires quick action?



Compared to 2016, favouritism of persons with the same political views gives more reason for concern now.

The concerns over decisions being made without proper preparation or in an unnecessarily complicated manner have dissipated the most.

In your opinion, is the present state of some matter(s) such that it gives reason for concern or that it requires quick action?



For further information split by different background groups, please see the original publication's appendices (available only in Finnish language).

6 Attitudes related to the activities of civil servants

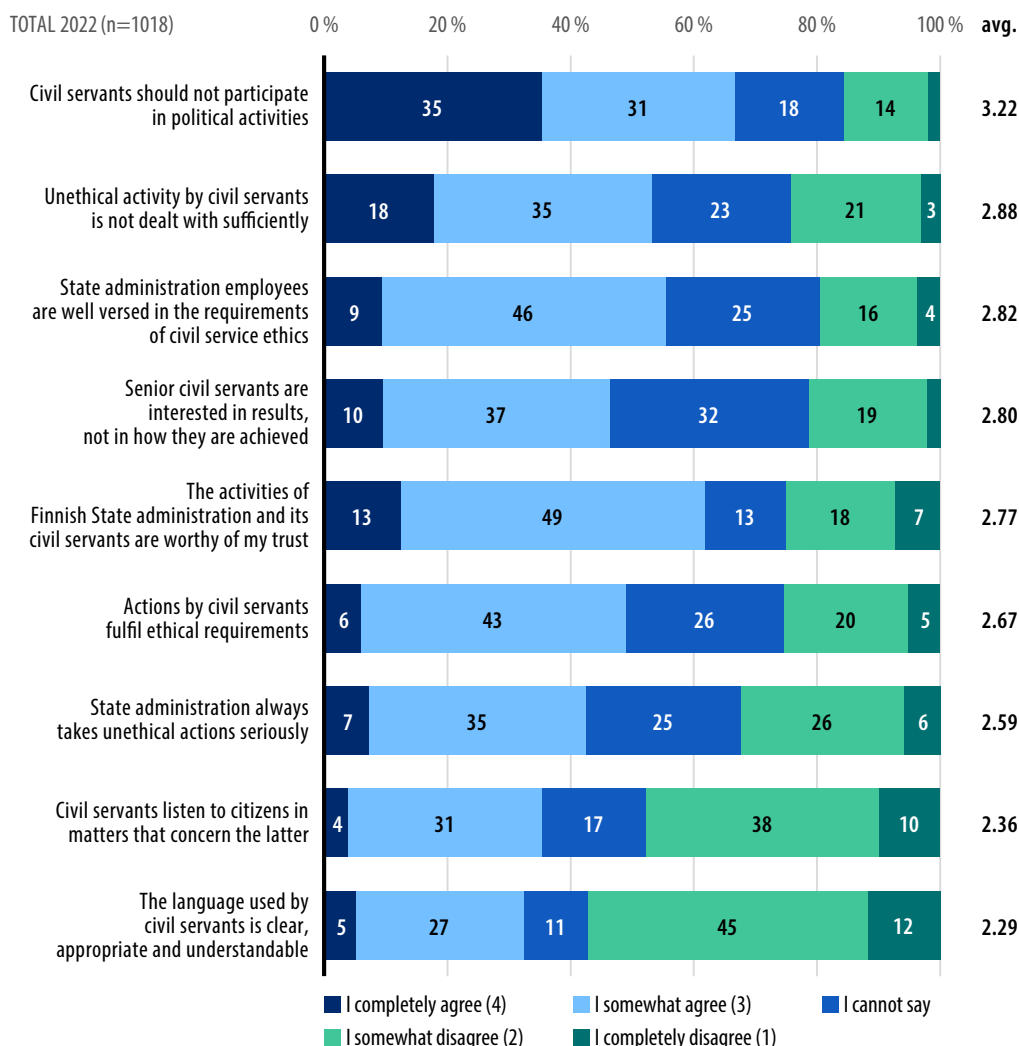
6.1 Attitudes on civil servants' activities

Finally, the respondents were asked about the extent to which they agree or disagree with some statements presented to them concerning the activities of civil servants, and how much they trust the Finnish State administration and its civil servants. The respondents' opinions regarding the statements diverged rather significantly.

Like in 2016, the majority of the respondents (66%) agreed that civil servants should not participate in political activities. Of the respondents, 15 % disagreed and 18% could not assess the matter.

Majority of the respondents (53%) also agreed that unethical activity by civil servants is not dealt with sufficiently, while almost a quarter disagreed, and 23% could not comment on the matter.

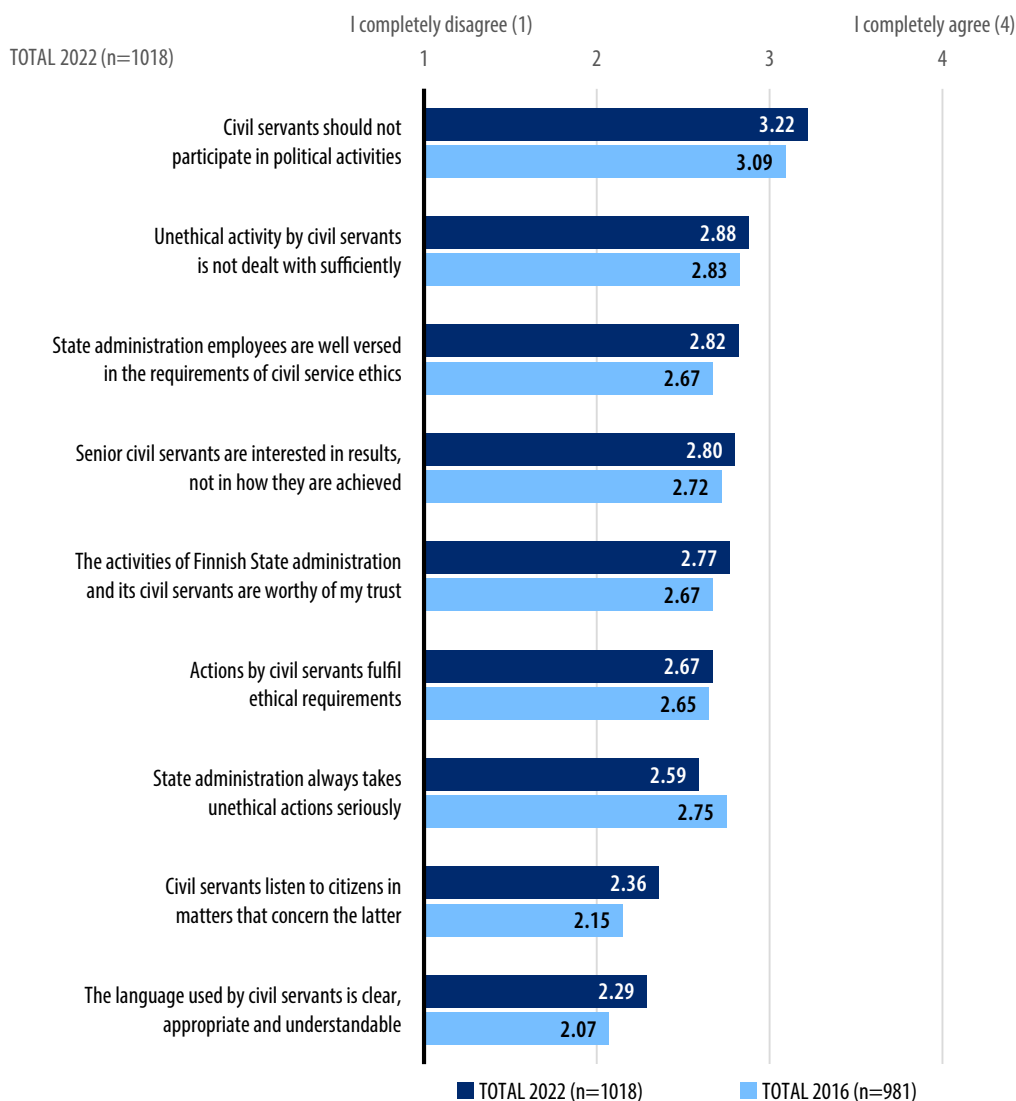
Describe the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following claims related to civil service ethics.



Most often (57%) the respondents disagreed with the claim that the language used by civil servants is clear, appropriate and understandable. Almost half (48%) disagreed with the claim that civil servants listen to citizens in matters that concern the latter. However, compared to 2016, the results have improved on these matters.

On the other hand, citizens' belief that state administration always takes unethical actions seriously has decreased since 2016.

Describe the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following claims related to civil service ethics.



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6.2 Trust in the Finnish State administration and the activities of its civil servants

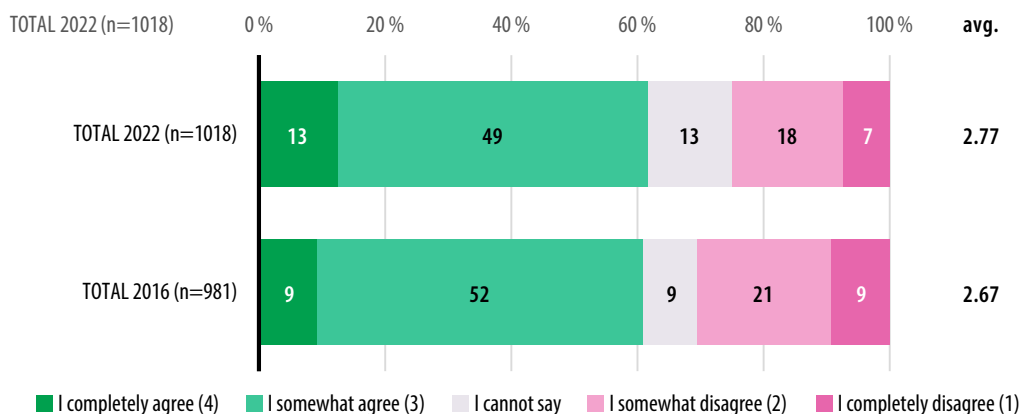
Special attention should be paid to whether the Finnish State administration and the activities of its civil servants are deemed worthy of people's trust.

As in the earlier survey, trust in the State administration and its civil servants is not without reservations. One reason for this is that the respondents are not very familiar with details related to the matter, as indicated by the results of the attitude claims discussed in the previous section.

The personal trust experienced by citizens has increased somewhat since 2016. The share of those who regard the State administration and the activities of its civil servants as worthy of their trust is now 62%, while a quarter of the population disagrees. The share of those who express mistrust has reduced by 5 percentage points from 2016.

The perceived trust does not depend on how often the respondent or persons close to them have been in contact with government authorities in the past 12 months. The level of trust is slightly higher among those who have been twice in contact with government authorities during the year compared to those who have had more contacts than that or none at all. However, the difference is not significant.

Describe the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following claims related to civil service ethics.
The activities of Finnish State administration and its civil servants are worthy of my trust



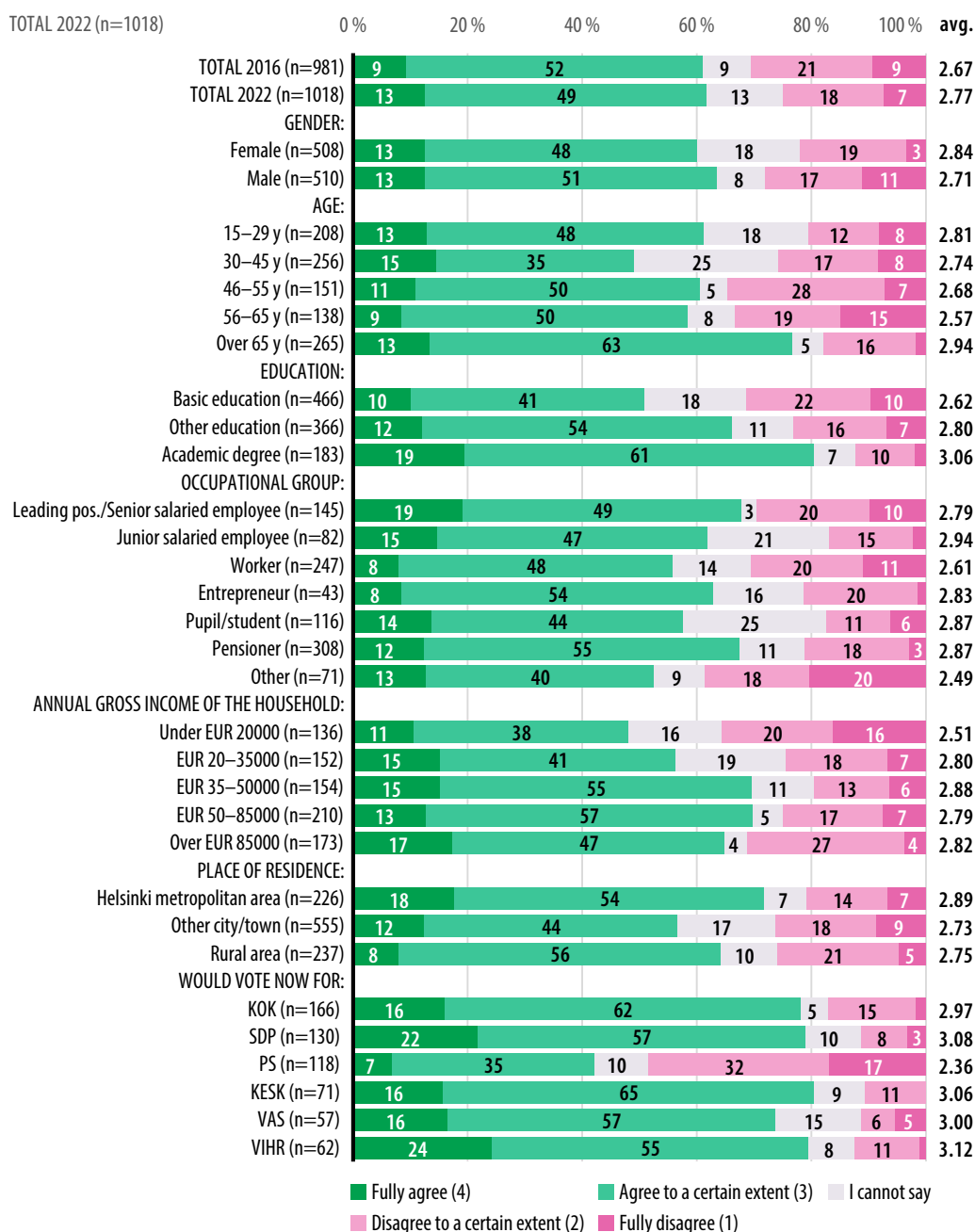
Women and men have the same amount of trust in the State administration. A review by age group shows that the youngest and oldest age groups have the greatest amount of trust, but this trust is cracking the most among 56–65-year-olds.

The higher the education a respondent has, the more the person trusts the State administration; trust is clearly highest among those with an academic education and lowest with those who have a basic education. Of the different occupational groups, most mistrust can be found among workers, while junior salaried employees are most trustful (disagree the least).

Also, trust increases as the income level of the respondent's household rises. Trust is greater in the Helsinki metropolitan area than in other cities/towns or in rural areas. Trust is steadily high among the supporters of different parties, but mistrust is clearly highest among the Finns Party (PS).

Describe the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following claims related to civil service ethics.

- The Finnish State administration and the activities of its civil servants are worthy of my trust





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