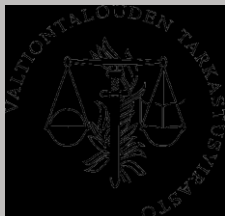




# National Audit Office of Finland

Communications Director Juuli Hurskainen

Prague 5.6.2014



# National Audit Office of Finland

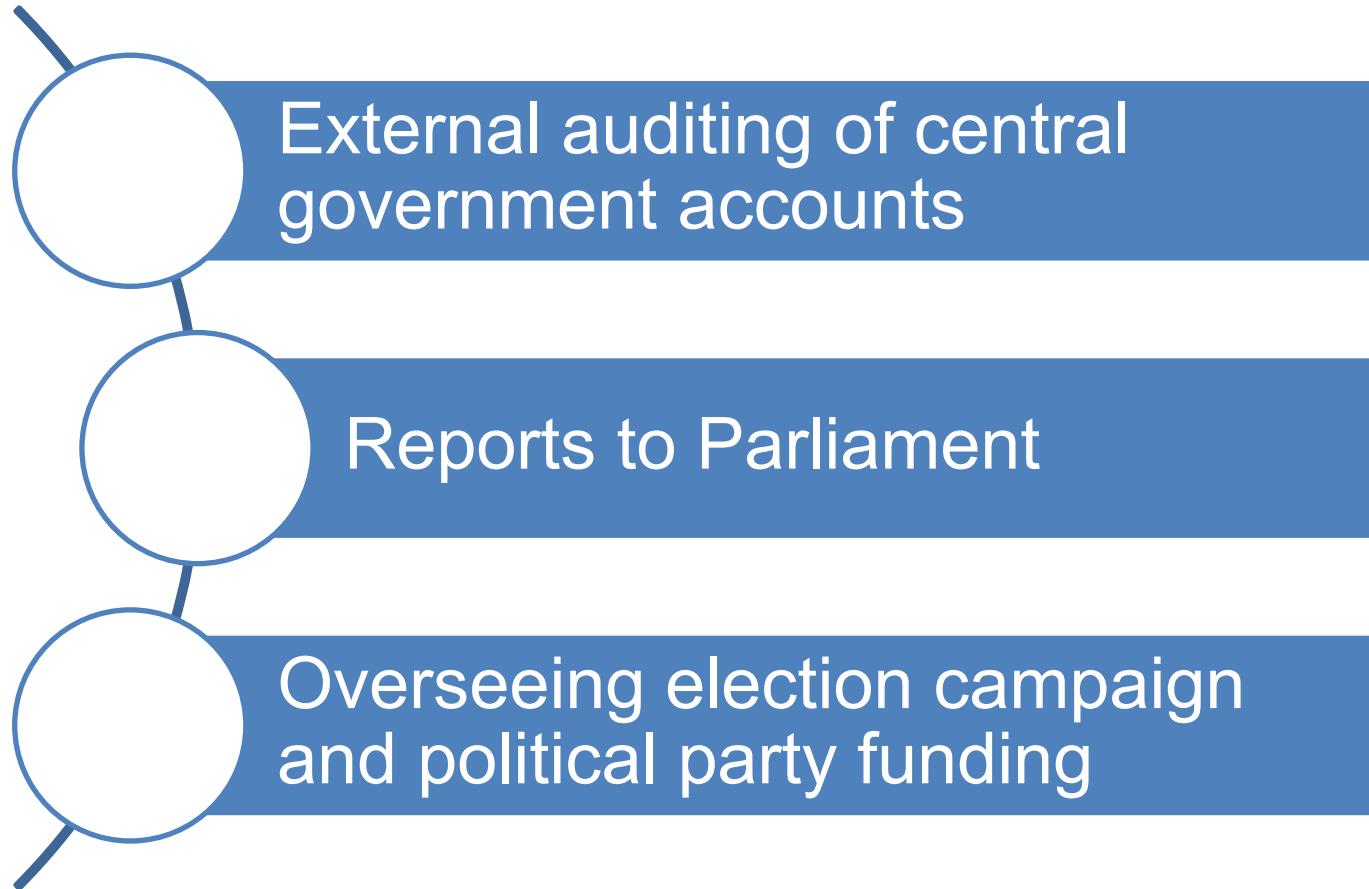
- ▶ Operates in connection with the Parliament
- ▶ Audits the state's finances, monitors and evaluates fiscal policy and oversees party and election funding
- ▶ Main strategic objectives:  
to promote sustainable and effective management of the state's finances, reliability of information on the state's finances and trust in the state's financial management

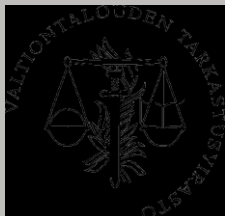
★ 78 %

of performance audit  
recommendations have been  
implemented

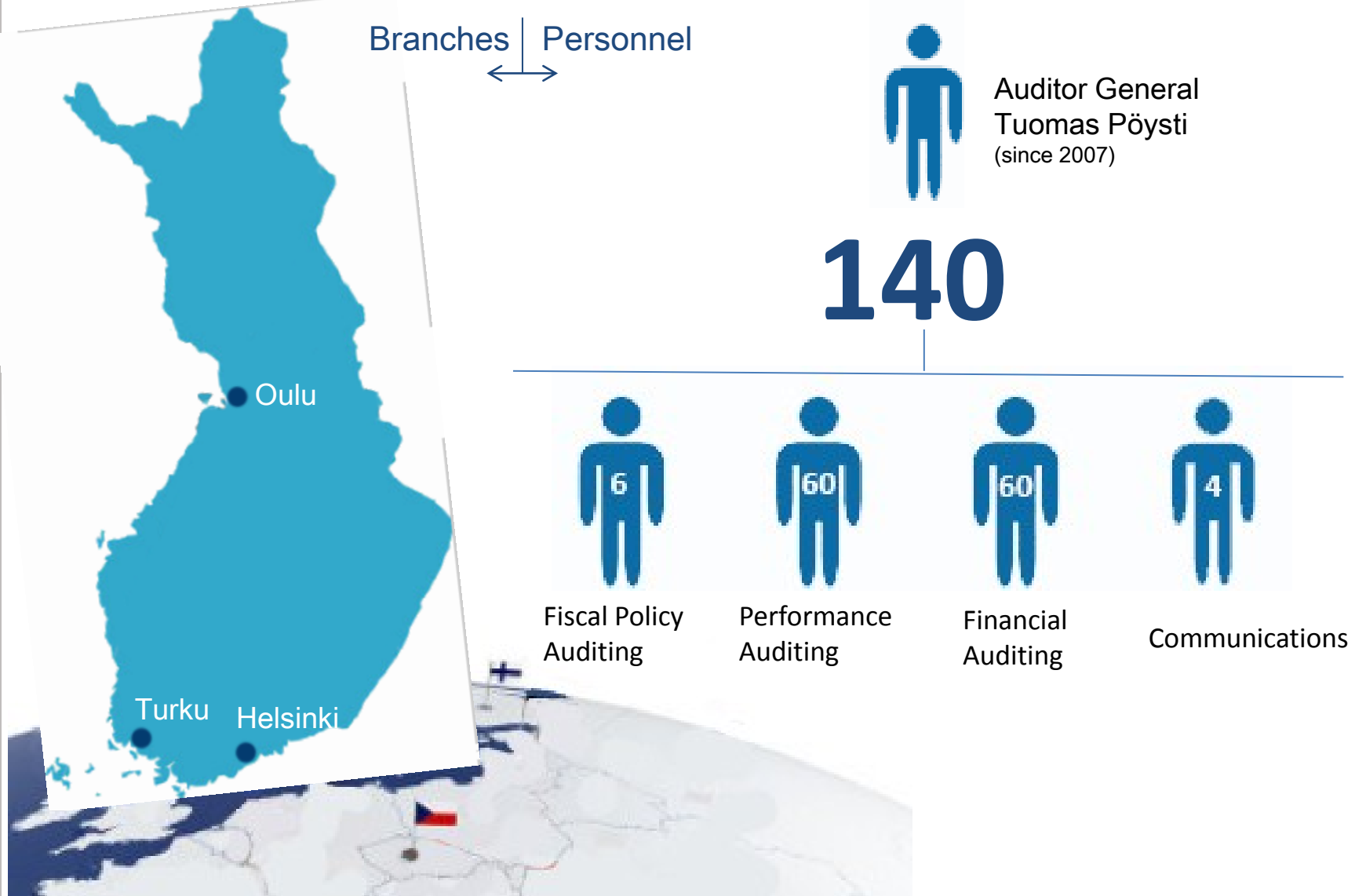


# Functions





# Resources





# Media relations

- ▶ Press releases from almost all audit reports except financial audits
- ▶ Press conferences from 2 to 5 audits in a year
- ▶ Objective: to stay neutral, objective and reliable, yet easy to understand
- ▶ Impartial and objective information; reports to all media at the same time, giving the same embargo (when embargo is used) to everyone and no-one ever gives exclusive interviews about unpublished audits to anyone

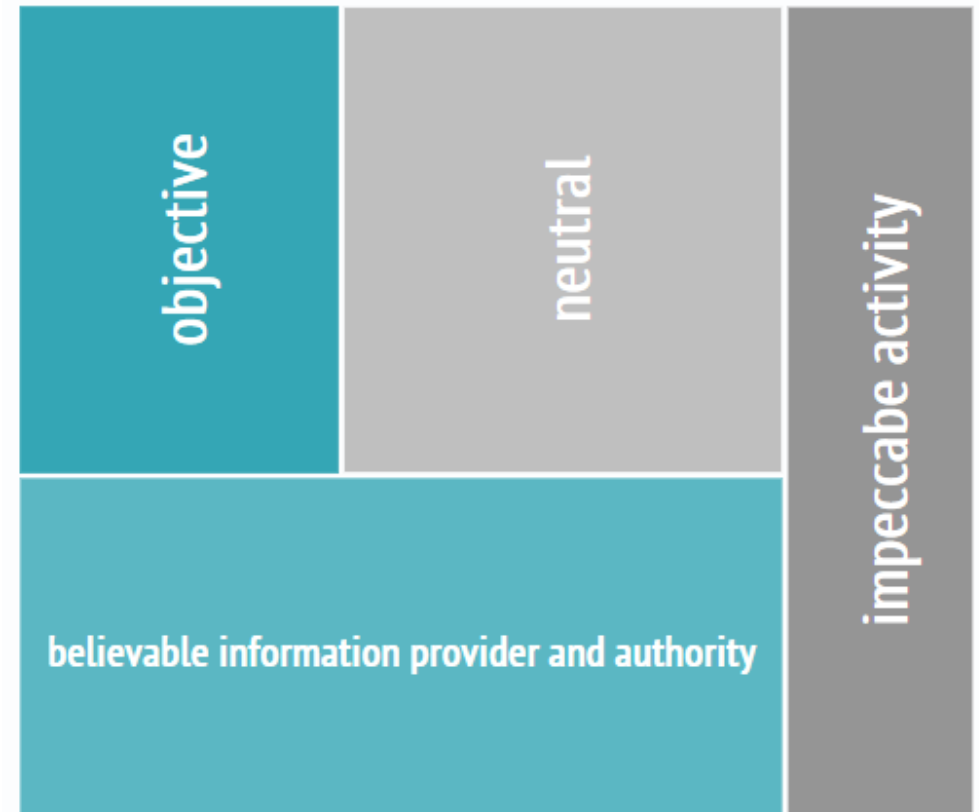
”Our job is to shed light, but not always to shine”

*General Auditor Tuomas Pöysti*



# Reputation goals

- ▶ We consider good reputation as the basis to our effectiveness
- ▶ We launched our reputation goals in a workshop day to the whole staff





# Reputation as it is

- ▶ **Reputation surveys** in 2008 and 2013: solid reputation among stakeholders (Parliament and government), general public still often don't know who we are
- ▶ **Media monitoring service** that provides daily newsfeed in the intranet; yearly media analysis based on this
- ▶ The Danish Audit Office (Rigsrevision) commissioned a **survey by a consultant** in 2014, which in comparison included results from other Nordic SAOs as well: Finland did well. Journalists were most pleased with the Finnish experts' ability to express themselves as well as the Finnish NAO's ability to produce interesting stories



# Reputation as it is

- ▶ According to our reputation survey our statements in the media are highly appreciated and have strong impact on reputation
- ▶ In media, we get our messages through well and are usually portrayed as a believable and trustworthy expert
- ▶ We have been a kind of media favourite for some time, but are prepared for bad publicity as well
- ▶ Media expectations towards us have increased over the years: sometimes it seems they think we know everything about everything...

★ 10-50  
hits in media

## Qualities appreciated







# Media culture in Finland

- ▶ According to Finnish publicity law officials must answer all questions within their responsibilities unless the matter is confidential or personal
- ▶ Finnish media culture is all about openness, independence and "searching for the truth"
- ▶ Finland was ranked #1 in 2013 World Press Freedom Index (for third year in row) and reporters know their rights
- ▶ Finnish journalists love experts and don't like publicists: they want to hear it from the horses mouth (many won't even have the PR person in the room while the interview goes on)
- ▶ With the new intense media tempo, answers are expected faster and faster

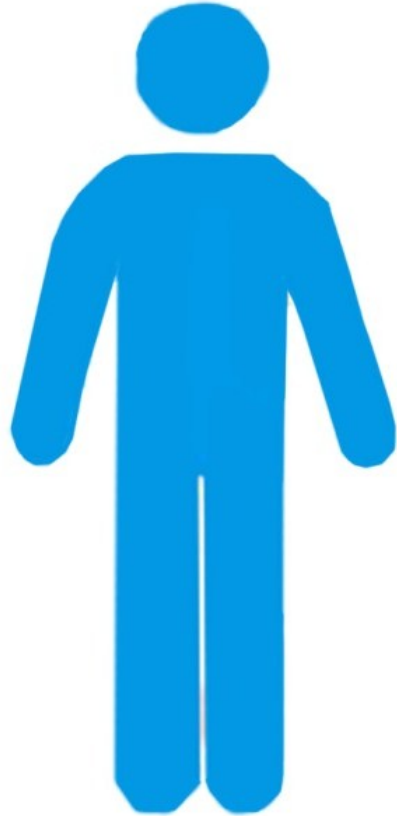


# Our media policy

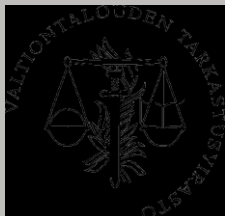
- Was launched in a workshop day to all staff in 2011
- Defines our media objectives
- Defines the responsibilities of our auditors regarding the media
- Guides how to interact with journalists and how to function in interviews
- Auditors are advised to:
  - ▶ give interviews to reporters about their audit or guide the reporter to someone who knows more
  - ▶ give out information only about their audits and only on subjects the NAO has formed an opinion on
  - ▶ inform and discuss interviews with the head of their unit and communications officers beforehand
  - ▶ find out who the reporter is, what the subject and context of the interview is, are there other interviewees and when the article is being published
  - ▶ ask the reporter to let them see and check the article beforehand, if possible (it usually is)



# Media profiles



- ▶ We verified our **Media profiles** paper in the beginning of 2014 to help the management define their responsibilities and exemptions regarding the media
- ▶ Includes detailed media profiles to the management, defining the areas in which each person is expected to give out interviews
- ▶ The management can give statements and outlooks by the NAO based on all audit reports, as well as their other competence areas



## Media profiles (an example)

The media profile of the **Auditor General** includes:

- Strategic alignments of the NAO
- Combined analysis on the state of the society or finances based on audit results
- Key messages of reports to Parliament
- Preconditions of the Audit Office and analysis on its operational environment
- Other relevant or critical factors regarding the NAO
- Crisis communications



# Resent media training

Media workshops in 2013 in small groups to all staff

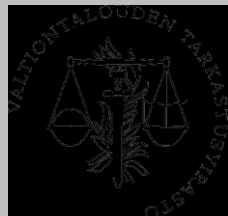
- Led by a journalist
- "How to cope with a journalist?"
- Video interviews > feedback > new video interviews
  
- 2 media workshops to management in 2013 and 2014
- More video interviews and more feedback... (3 minute interview, 1 minute interview and 20 second interview)



# Media training

Helpful advice from our current media trainer:

- What do you want to say? Say it in one sentence
- Preparation is the key: always prepare yourself well
- You can say it again (no shame in repeating yourself)
- Be yourself, don't overdo it, use your own language
- Use lipstick if it makes you confident (men as well)
- Stories and examples are always interesting
- Look the interviewer in the eye
- Read stories to your kids: this will help you train your tone of voice!



## Further information



<http://www.vtv.fi>



<http://www.vaalirahoitusvalvonta.fi>