FINLAND —
THE COUNTRY OF HAPPINESS
Get to know Finland
5.5 million population

18.2 inhabitants per km²

PEOPLE

• **Life expectancy**: Men 79 years, women 84 years.

• **Official languages**: Finnish (spoken by 87.3%) and Swedish (5.2%). Sámi is the mother tongue of about 2,000 indigenous Sámi people.

• **Official religion**: Christianity; 68.7% Lutheran and 1.1% Orthodox. Society is fairly secularized.
**STATE & GOVERNMENT**

**Independence**: Declared on December 6, 1917. Previously a grand duchy in the Russian empire for 108 years, and a part of Sweden for 600 years.

**Form of government**: Republic, parliamentary democracy.

**International cooperation**: Member of United Nations since 1955 and European Union since 1995.

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**December 6, 1917**

independent

**1995**

member of European Union
STATE & GOVERNMENT

**Sauli Niinistö**
President of the Republic

**Sanna Marin**
Prime Minister

- **Parliament**: 200 members in one chamber, elected every 4 years in a direct vote (next election in 2023)

- **Government**: Multiparty coalition cabinet. Currently lead by PM Sanna Marin

- **Head of State**: President of the Republic, elected every 6 years, two-term maximum. Currently Mr Sauli Niinistö, elected in 2012 and re-elected in 2018
**SOCIETY & ECONOMY**

**Euro**
Currency unit

43,485 euros
GDP per capita (2019)

- **Key features**: Highly equal society with high standard of education, social security and healthcare, financed by state taxes

- **Main exports**: Electrotechnical goods, metal products, machinery, transport equipment, wood and paper products, information services, chemicals

- **Main imports**: Raw materials, investment goods, energy, consumer goods
Greatest length from north to south: 1,157 km (717 miles)

Greatest width from east to west: 542 km (336 miles)

Climate: Great contrasts – cold winters and fairly warm summers (2019 extremes: coldest day in Utsjoki -39.1 C/-38.4 F, warmest day in Porvoo 33.7 C/92.7 F)

Helsinki
Capital of Finland

338,440 km²
area (131,991 square miles)
HISTORY

- 1906 Equal rights to vote and to run for election regardless of gender or class
- 1917 Finland becomes independent
- 1918 Civil War between the Reds and Whites
- 1921 School attendance becomes mandatory for everyone
- 1922 First “neuvola” child health clinic is established
- 1939–1940 Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union (WW II)
- 1941–1944 Continuation War between Finland and the Soviet Union (WW II)
- 1952 Summer Olympic Games in Helsinki
- 1972 Comprehensive school system offers equal access to education
- 1995 Finland joins the European Union
The network of Finnish missions

Missions in Europe

- Embassies
- Permanent Representations and Special Missions
- Consulates General and Consulates
- Other offices with staff sent from Finland
HAPPINESS AND EQUALITY
Finland ranks as the happiest country in the world in the UN World Happiness Report (2020, 2019, 2018)

Finns are satisfied with everyday life. The environment is one of the reasons: Finland has the cleanest air and freshest water. A stable society helps too: Finland has one of the freest election systems and is perceived to be one of the least corrupt countries in the world. Finland is ranked first in protection of property rights, second in press freedom, and third in personal freedom and choice.
EDUCATION

All education from preschool to vocational colleges and universities is **free of charge** for both Finnish and EU citizens to ensure equal opportunities.

In basic education, the average class size is 20 students, and a student-centred approach lies at the heart of learning.

An important result of this egalitarian approach to education is that regional and socioeconomic differences in learning outcomes are very modest.
FREE SCHOOL MEALS

In Finland, free-of-charge school meals have been provided since the 1940s, with the aim of supporting children’s learning, nutrition and health.
Finland is considered one of the world’s most socially innovative countries: it's the most stable country in the world and boasts the best governance. We also have the third-best quality of life in the world.

Finland’s standing as a socially innovative country is based on a history of correcting social ills. Take the maternity package, for example: introduced in 1938, it brought all mothers into the social security system.
The maternity package – or “baby box” – was introduced in 1938. It provides mothers with items to make it easier to look after their baby. More than 95% of mothers choose the baby box instead of an equivalent cash grant.
Finland consistently ranks at or near the top in international surveys comparing levels of trust in different societies: trust in such public institutions as the police and the legal system, trust in media, trust in politicians, trust in taxation and trust in one’s fellow citizens.

In **1906**, Finland became the first country in the world to give all their citizens equal rights to vote and to run for parliamentary election regardless of gender or class.

Since **2012**, Finns have also had a chance to directly participate in proposing legislation by submitting a citizens’ initiative in an online service, and have that initiative considered by Parliament if it collects enough support.
**TRUST IN SOCIETY**

**Finns can trust the system and each other.** Finland is one of the least corrupt countries in the world, and 85% of Finns agree or strongly agree that they can trust most of their fellow citizens.

Trust in politics and public officials is possible due to a free market economy, an independent judicial system and a system of checks and balances that ensure a low level of corruption.

*Source: Transparency International 2018, Eurobarometer 471, 2018*
Finns truly have the freedom to make decisions.

Finland ranks first among countries with the most political and civil freedom. Finns are also in the global top three when it comes to opportunities available to a nation’s citizens.

Finland also has the second-freest press in the world (2020). With a 100% literacy rate, Finns are also among the world’s most active news media readers.

Source: Freedom House 2018, The Legatum Prosperity Index 2018
In addition to the quality of governance and stability, Finland also ranks high in transparency of government practices, and has well-distributed political power.

Finland is the 3rd most transparent country in the world, with open business and government practices and well-distributed political power.

Helsinki, Finland is the best place for work–life balance when comparing data on work intensity, institutional support, legislation and livability.

The 8-hour work day leaves plenty of time for family, friends and hobbies. Finnish working hours are the most employee-friendly.

Source: Kisi Work–Life Balance Index 2019 and European Company Survey
Healthcare and income security are guaranteed for everyone in Finland.

Finland ranks as the 3rd most socially just country in the EU, measured according to poverty prevention, equitable education, labour market access, health and other factors.

This means a better chance at happiness for all. It is no coincidence that Finland ranks as one of the most socially just countries in the world.

Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung 2017
SANTA CLAUS LIVES IN LAPLAND, FINLAND

The real Santa comes from Finland. He has always lived in Korvatunturi, Lapland. Not the North Pole!
NATURE
FINNISH NATURE

With more than 75% of its area covered by trees, Finland is Europe’s most forested country.

Finland is also a country of water. To the south and west Finland is bordered by the Baltic Sea while much of Central Finland is covered by lakes.

All in all, there are 188,000 lakes in Finland, earning us the name “Land of a Thousand Lakes”.
Every Finn truly has an individual connection to forests; **more than 80% of Finnish people say the forest is important to them.**

**Finns feel safe in the forest.** They go there to relax and to feel a connection with nature. A desire to preserve nature also figures strongly in Finnish people’s relationship to the forest. They associate the woods with serenity, energy, joy, security, closeness and togetherness.
THERE ARE MORE SAUNAS THAN CARS IN FINLAND

This is a country with 3.2 million saunas and 5.5 million people. Finns go to the sauna naked – and often together with family or friends. Every Finn has their own sauna traditions but one’s mind and body will always be cleaned. It’s a sauna state of mind.
We believe that **technological** and **social innovations** are the keys to find solutions that work everywhere. We want to do our part and share our solutions.

Finns want to participate in **protecting the environment together**. Four in five Finnish people think urgent action is needed to mitigate climate change. **Climate education** is part of the Finnish curriculum from kindergarten to university.

**Roadmaps** have been prepared for many industries and sectors aiming at significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by **2035**. These roadmaps are a cornerstone of the government’s climate policy.
EVERY PERSON’S RIGHT

What really democratizes access to nature is the unique Finnish concept of Every Person’s Right. It states that everyone may hike, camp and gather mushrooms and berries in any forest or uninhabited area, regardless of who owns it.

Photo: Mikko Nikkinen / Visit Finland
FORESTRY

Two-thirds of Finnish forests are owned by ordinary families. This means one in five Finnish citizens owns forest land, accounting for over 80% of the wood used by the forest industry.

Finland is a world leader in sustainable forest management. Commercial forestry must take into account forest biodiversity and carbon sinks.

Around 12% (2.7 million hectares) of Finnish forest is protected.
ECONOMY
FINNISH ECONOMY

Measured by many significant economic and wellbeing indicators, Finland is among the leading countries of the world.

Finland’s gross national product (GNP) is EUR 240 billion (2019), which equals EUR 43,500 per inhabitant.

In international comparisons, Finland ranks among the richest countries in the world. The income gap is narrow in international terms.
FOREIGN TRADE

Finland leans heavily on foreign trade. The ratio of exports to GNP is approximately 39% (2019). The value of export goods is approximately EUR 65 billion, while the value of service exports is EUR 28 billion.

Around 76% of Finnish exports are intermediate products, such as parts of machinery and equipment, and chemical industry products that are processed into end products elsewhere.

Exports of Finnish intermediate products are mainly targeted at China and the United States.
TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIES

Technology industries are the biggest export sector in Finland, accounting for approximately 50% of Finnish goods and service exports (2020).

Many leading smart technology companies in the world have Finnish roots, including network equipment manufacturer Nokia, elevator and escalator manufacturer KONE, marine engine and power plant developer Wärtsilä, and several forestry-related technology companies.
STARTUPS

Finland offers startups an open and easy business environment with creative entrepreneurs who support each other. Helsinki has been viewed as the startup centre of Northern Europe. A startup and investor conference, Slush, is organised in Helsinki every November.

Photo: Mikael Ahlfors/Keksi
Finland also boasts state-of-the-art expertise in the maritime sector. Almost 80% of the world’s ice-breakers are designed in Finland, and of those approximately 60% are manufactured here.

One of the largest shipbuilding subcontractors in the world, with over 1,000 suppliers, supports Finland’s strong footing in the maritime sector.

Our internationally known maritime network’s expertise ranges from the likes of cruise ships to icebreakers and offshore solutions as well as port technology.
Approximately **20%** (2019) of Finnish goods exports are products manufactured for the chemical and forest industries.

**Neste** is the biggest producer of high-quality renewable diesel and an important operator in the international oil refinery sector.

Approximately **75%** (2019) of Finland’s surface area is forest, and the country has long been a key global player in the forestry sector.
For decades, Finland has invested hundreds of millions of euros per year in health-related education, research and research infrastructure. This has created cutting-edge Finnish research and treatment in cancer, brain disease, cardiovascular disease and genetics.
More than **10%** of all European paper and cardboard is produced in Finland.

A total of **67%** of Finnish paper and cardboard exports are targeted at Europe, approximately **10%** go to Asia and North America.

Approximately half of Finnish pulp exports go to Asia, while a slightly smaller amount is targeted at Europe.
Mining is another significant industry in Finland. The sector is engaged in intensive research activities and has top-level industrial expertise, with Finnish equipment and technology companies operating on the global markets.

Finland is the biggest producer of gold, platinum and palladium among the EU member states. When it comes to steel production, Finland is one of the countries at the forefront in reducing the industry’s carbon footprint.
GAME INDUSTRY & ESPORTS

Finland has decades of experience developing both globally successful and groundbreaking games. Public innovation and funding groups support gaming, as do universities, trade groups and industry associations.
Finland is one of the world’s leading experts in Arctic shipbuilding, shipping, winter navigation and maritime and offshore technology. Finland manufactures advanced state-of-the-art Arctic icebreakers and specialised offshore vessels.

Special expertise is also available in winter navigation and logistics, ice-breaking, monitoring and controlling sea transport, as well as weather and ice information services.
Finland created the world’s first National Road Map to a Circular Economy (2016–2025).

For Finland, a circular bioeconomy is a tool for achieving sustainable development, combatting climate change, saving natural resources, and improving the state of the environment, all while generating economic growth and jobs.
Finland has contributed to the development of AI from the very beginning of the industry. Finland has progressive legislation when it comes to promoting data access and sharing, so the necessary data access for AI is available.
CULTURE
Finland is one of the world’s leading countries in design. Finnish design combines practicality and functionality, a solution-focused approach and equality.

Furniture, glass and ceramics have been traditionally strong areas of Finnish design. Finland was one of the forerunners of industrial design as it grew in the 70s.

In 2012, Helsinki was the World Design Capital, and in 2014 it was named UNESCO’s City of Design.
Finland’s contemporary art scene embraces everything from experimental artist-run initiatives and commercial galleries to flagship art institutions.

There are over 3,000 professional visual artists, more than 60 art museums and numerous galleries in Finland.

Internationally, media art and photography are the most prominent fields of Finnish contemporary art.

Well-known Finnish artists include, for example, Helene Schjerfbeck, Eija-Liisa Ahtila and Elina Brotherus.
Every year, **300–400** translations of Finnish literature are published abroad in about **40** different languages.

Finland is also known for its **comprehensive library network**, high user and lending rates and effective use of technology and information networks in libraries.

Some well-known Finnish authors: Mika Waltari, Sofi Oksanen and Tove Jansson.
Swedish-speaking Finn Tove Jansson is known as the creator of the Moomin books and the lovable, round characters of the same name. Moomin stories have been translated into about 50 different languages.
Musical traditions are woven into the very fabric of Finland’s society. Finnish classical music first achieved international acclaim with Jean Sibelius.

Investment in a world-class music education, from kindergarten to university, ensures that quality music is produced, listened to and appreciated, regardless of genre.
With 52.3 bands per 100,000 people, Finland has the highest number of metal bands per capita.
FASHION

Modern Finnish fashion was born during the heyday of Finnish design and architecture in the 1950s.

Finnish brands are **designer driven** – quality, sustainability and strong artistic vision are at the core of Finnish fashion.

Today Finland is looking to the future with the fast development of **new material innovations**, **award winning young designers** and **successful sustainable brands**.
FOOD CULTURE

Finnish food culture springs from northern nature but east and west have also had their influence on it.

Thanks to extreme variations in light and temperature, Finnish flavors are clear, strong and sufficient in themselves.

Enjoying Finnish food forms part of a rounded experience which is good for your health and pampers your taste buds.
FINNS ARE THE WORLD’S BIGGEST COFFEE DRINKERS

Finns drink an average of 2.6 cups per day. Coffee is consumed all day, every day, and coffee breaks are required by most unions.
Photo: Vastavalo/Soili Jussila/Visit Finland
FINNS LOVE BLACK LIQUORICE (SALMIAKKI)

Finnish salty ‘salmiakki’ is liquorice spiced up with ammonium chloride. It is something Finns can’t live without. It is also available in pharmacies as salmiakki was originally sold for its (supposed) health benefits.
Almost two-thirds of all children and young people have a sport as a hobby. The most popular sports are football, floorball and ice hockey.

About 75,000 ice hockey players are registered to compete, but there are almost 200,000 young people who have ice hockey as a hobby. Ice hockey is also the most attended spectator sport in Finland.

Well-known Finnish athletes include, for example, Kimi Räikkönen, Lauri Markkanen and Eva Wahlström.
WHAT FINLAND OFFERS!
FOR STUDENTS
Finland’s universities are among the highest performing in the world when countries’ levels of economic development are taken into account, according to Universitas 21’s Ranking of National Higher Education Systems.

Source: Universitas 21, 2020
FINLAND FOR STUDENTS

A STRONG FOCUS ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION:
Solution-based learning is at the core of the tuition offered by most of the Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences. Learning is based on discussion, student participation and working together.

STUDENT SATISFACTION:
Finland stands out in student satisfaction surveys as one of Europe’s best places for international students. Finland has an average satisfaction rating of 9.1 out of 10.

(StudyPortals 2016)
HIGHLY EDUCATED WORKFORCE

Almost 90% of Finnish people between the ages of 25 and 64 hold at least an upper secondary education certificate, while more than 40% hold higher education degrees.
FINLAND FOR STUDENTS

A GOOD SELECTION OF WORLD-CLASS UNIVERSITIES:

Finland’s universities are among the highest performing in the world when countries’ levels of economic development are taken into account. (Universitas 21, 2020)

EXCELLENT FACILITIES FOR WORK AND FUN:

Finland has well-equipped facilities with libraries and study spaces, IT services and support services. Students are guided through their studies by professional student services and offered student health care.

Over 450 degree and non-degree programmes are available in English.
FOR FAMILIES
BEST FAMILY-LIFE FOR EXPATS

Finland is the best country in the world for immigrants’ family life. Finland ranks at the top in family wellbeing as well as options, childcare and education options, quality and affordability. 93% of expats are satisfied with their family-life in Finland.

Source: InterNations Expat Insider, 2019
FINLAND FOR FAMILIES

SOCIAL INNOVATIONS:
Finland has long embraced social innovations. Perhaps the best-known examples are the innovative ways Finland has worked to improve mothers’ and children’s health with child health clinics and the baby box.

WORLD CLASS EDUCATION:
Today, Finland’s education system is world famous, and Finland consistently ranks at or near the top in international comparisons of students’ scholastic results.

93%
93% of expats are satisfied with their family life in Finland compared to the global average of 79%.

(InterNations Expat Insider, 2019)
CHILDREN’S RIGHTS

In Finland no one is left behind. Finland ranks third worldwide on how children's rights are respected and to what extent countries are committed to improving the rights of children.

Source: The KidsRights Index 2020
FINLAND FOR FAMILIES

WORK-LIFE BALANCE:
Helsinki, Finland, is the best place for work–life balance. The 8-hour work day leaves plenty of time for family, friends and hobbies. (Kisi Work–Life Balance Index 2019).

STABLE COUNTRY:
For the eighth year in a row, Finland ranks as the least fragile – in other words the most stable – country out of all 178 nations listed in the 2020 Fragile States Index.

According to the European Working Conditions Survey, Finns have the best opportunities in Europe to develop their skills at work. (Source: European Working Conditions 2018)
PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

In Finland, paid maternity, paternity and parental leave are guaranteed by law. 80% of dads go on paternity leave. Finland is the only country where fathers spend more time with kids than mothers.

Source: Kela and OECD
FOR COMPANIES
FINLAND FOR COMPANIES

THE BEST BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT:
The Finnish economy is stable and predictable, with a low corporate tax rate and strong government credit ratings. International companies enjoy the same benefits as Finnish companies. (Global Innovation Index 2016)

COMPETENT PROFESSIONALS:
Finland has a highly educated workforce and efficient knowledge transfer between businesses and universities. Finland’s adult population is the most literate in the world. (European Working Conditions Survey; Social Progress Index, 2019)

#1
Best financial system in Europe
(Source: The Global Competitiveness Report 2018)
FINLAND FOR COMPANIES

SOCIETY SUPPORTS INNOVATION:
High-quality products that attract global attention in the international marketplace do not emerge without investments in innovation. Finland is the seventh most innovative country in the world. Finland leads the game in plenty of exciting fields including ICT & digitalization, cleantech and bioeconomy, to name a few. (Bloomberg Innovation Index, 2020)

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AT WORK:
In Finland, employees have the best chances in the world to improve their skills via employer-provided training. This leads to increased job satisfaction and contributes to self-development. (European Working Conditions Survey)
FINLAND AS A STARTUP HUB

Finland offers startups an open and easy business environment with networked and creative entrepreneurs who support each other. The Finnish government funds and supports services for startups and there are plenty of incubators and accelerators to cater to startups from different sectors.

Photo: Petri Artturi Asikainen / Team Finland / Finland Promotion Board
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- Expat Finland
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- The President of the Republic of Finland
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Thank you!