

# FACTS

ABOUT

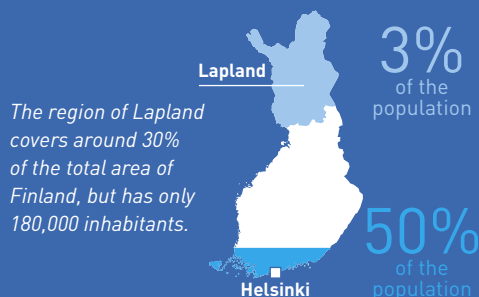
# FINLAND

# FINLAND AND THE FINNS

The population of Finland is around 5.5 million. Women slightly outnumber men.  
The largest age groups are 50 and over.  
The average age of Finns is around 42 years.

# 5,500,000

inhabitants



1.4  
million  
single-family houses

1.1  
million  
flats



2,500,000 homes

## LIVING AND CITIES

The population is strongly concentrated in southern Finland, where the largest cities are located. In terms of population, the central point of Finland is located around 100 kilometres north of Helsinki. The total length of the country is more than 1,000 kilometres.

Around 60% of Finns own their homes. Around 70% of Finns live in or near cities or towns. Only 6% of Finns live in the countryside, which constitutes 70% of the total area of Finland.

## LARGEST CITIES

The Capital Region consists of four independent cities. A large number of smaller towns and municipalities are located adjacent to the Capital Region.

**Capital Region 1,400,000**

**Urban areas 1,110,000**

Helsinki 624,000

Espoo 266,000

Vantaa 211,000

Kauniainen 9,000

**Commuter towns 290,000**



## Other major cities and towns

Tampere 223,000

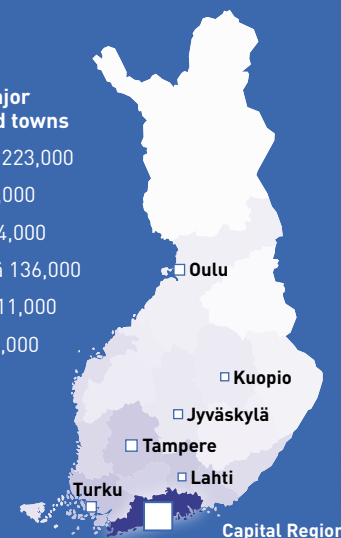
Oulu 197,000

Turku 184,000

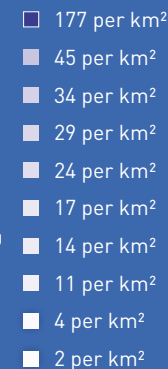
Jyväskylä 136,000

Kuopio 111,000

Lahti 104,000

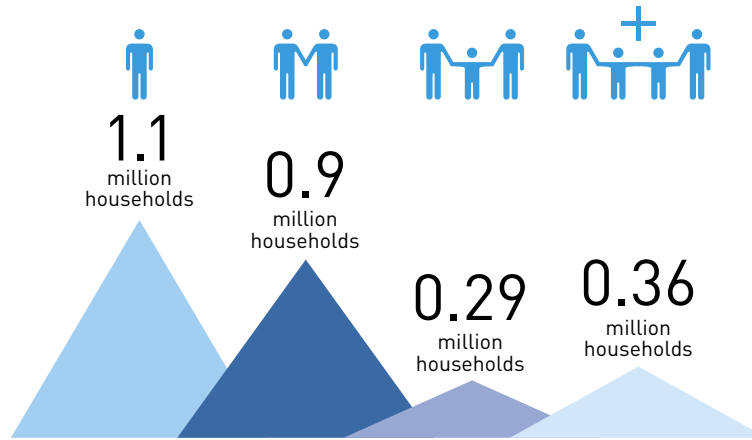


## Population density



## FAMILIES

Just over 1 million Finns live alone. Around 1.8 million Finns live in two-person households, and 0.8 million live in three-person households. Nearly 1.8 million Finns live in households of four or more people.



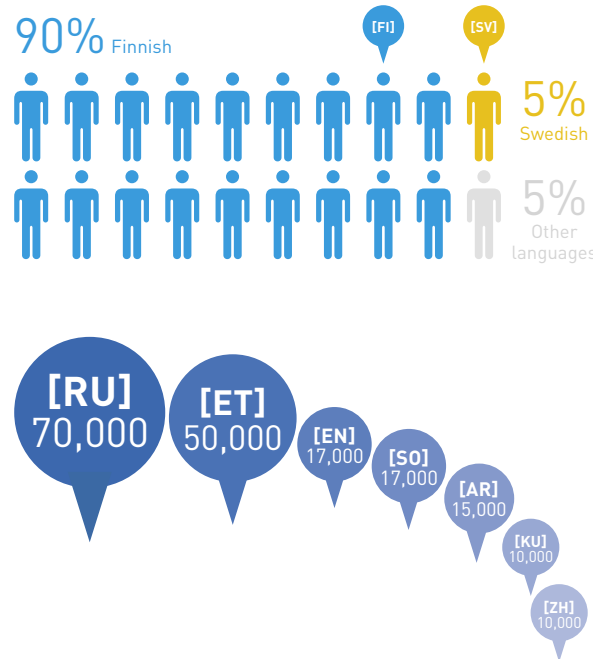
## LANGUAGES

Nearly 90% of Finns speak Finnish as their first language, and more than 5% speak Swedish. More than 2,000 Finns speak Sámi as their first language.

### OTHER LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN FINLAND

Around 70,000 people speak Russian, nearly 50,000 speak Estonian, around 17,000 speak English, around 17,000 speak Somali, around 15,000 speak Arabic, around 10,000 speak Kurdish and around 10,000 speak Chinese as their first language.

Most of the people who speak Russian as their first language moved to Finland after 1990, but the country also has a small Russian-speaking population that originates from the era of Russian rule in Finland (1809–1917). Most of the Estonians living in Finland moved to the country after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

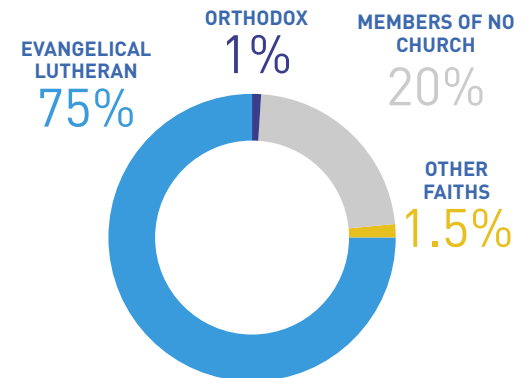


*The Kamppi Chapel in the centre of Helsinki is intended for silent reflection. A social worker or a parish employee is available for consultation in the lobby.  
Architect: Mikko Summanen, K2S*

## RELIGION

Nearly 75% of Finns are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, and around 1% belong to the Orthodox Church of Finland. Around 1.5% of Finns are members of other faiths, and more than 20% do not belong to any church. A small proportion of those who are not members of any church belong to independent religious communities.

A significant proportion of the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church are cultural Christians, meaning that they do not actively participate in religious practice.





TEEMU TRETJAKOV / VASTAVALO



NIKLAS SJÖBLÖM

## THE LOOK OF FINLAND

In terms of area, Finland is among the largest countries in Europe. With its 5.5 million people, however, it is the most sparsely populated country in the European Union. Its population is concentrated in the southern parts of the country and in a few cities. In the wilderness in northern Finland, you can wander for days without seeing anyone, if you so wish. The cities, however, are modern and continental.

From top to bottom, Finland is more than 1,000 kilometres long. It is a multifaceted country: in early summer, when people are enjoying a swim in the sea in the south, you can still go skiing in the north. In the west, you can feel the nearness of the Baltic Sea and the Atlantic

Ocean. The Gulf Stream makes the climate in Finland more temperate than the northern location might suggest — different from that of Canada and Russia, which are located along the same latitude. Nearly a third of all people living north of the 60th parallel are Finns. In eastern Finland, the climate is continental in many respects as a result of the Eurasian landmass.

Throughout the country, Finland has four seasons. Summer is lush, a season of light, with relatively little rain. Autumn is often rainy, and winter is cold, with heavy snowfall. In the south, snow typically covers the ground in December. In the north, this happens a month or even two months earlier. In the south, snow melts by April,

while cross-country skiing competitions are sometimes held as late as Midsummer in the northernmost parts of the country.

In some years, southern Finland has only a little snow, while it may snow in late spring in other years.

The northern location also affects the amount of light. In summer, the sun stays above the horizon for around two months in the northernmost parts of the country. In winter, the sun stays below the horizon for an equal period of time around Christmas. During this time, the winter scenery reflects a magical blue light for a few hours a day.





VISIT FINLAND



THOMAS KAST / VISIT FINLAND

In the south, the sun stays above the horizon for up to 19 hours a day in summer. Around Christmas, the period of daylight lasts for only about six hours a day.

## THE FINNISH LANDSCAPE

Seen from a plane, Finland is surprising. Around 75% of its area is covered by forests, and nearly 10% is covered by lakes and rivers. Naturally, Finland also has cities, towns, suburbs, fields, villages, airports, industrial areas, motorways, railways and sea areas — but most of its area is covered by forests.

The terrain of Finland is low-lying, with a few mountains in the north. With hills and valleys alternating with one another, however, the Finnish terrain is not flat.

The forests surround a large number of lakes, particularly in eastern Finland. The Saimaa area consists of hundreds of interconnected lakes. *The Wall Street Journal* listed Saimaa among the five most beautiful lakes in the world in 2014. In terms of inland waters, Finland is second to none: it has hundreds of kilometres of varied waterways, with plenty of space, privacy and uninhabited coves. Finland has around 188,000 lakes.

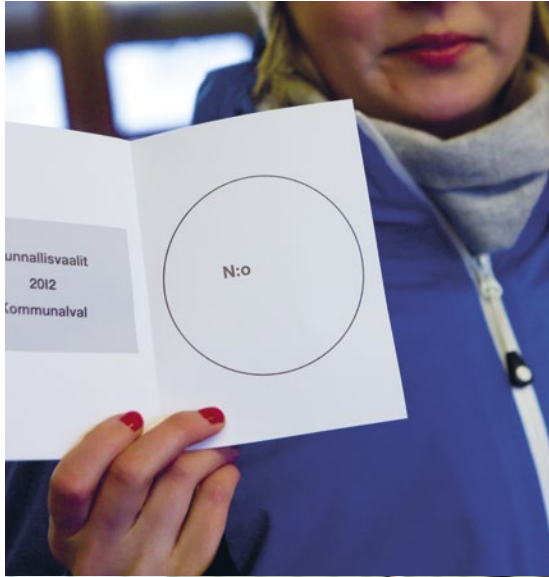
Its extensive archipelago in the south-west is a unique combination of islands, islets and rocks — of bedrock and the sea. The rising of land compressed by the Ice Age is up to one centimetre per year, meaning that the total area of Finland increases by around seven square kilometres every year.

Mires are typical of Finland as well, ranging from swamps to wetlands. Peat from mires generates around 5% of the energy used in Finland.

Forests, lakes and the archipelago constitute unique natural environments with their flora and fauna. Finland has as many as 700,000 recreational fishers and 300,000 hunters.

Lapland is one of the few wildernesses in Europe. It is also a paradise for hikers and fishers — and for skiers during the sunny spring months. Kolari, a small municipality in Lapland, has fewer than 4,000 inhabitants, but the capacity to accommodate 35,000 tourists.

Nature is accessible as well, and everyone is entitled to wander in the forests and pick berries and mushrooms.



■ Voting ■ Nurses  
■ Fire-fighter ■ Schoolchild

## FINNISH SOCIETY

Finland's 200-seat parliament is elected every four years. The next parliamentary election will be held in 2019. All Finnish citizens aged 18 and over are entitled to vote. Eight parties are currently represented in the parliament — the number of parties is high because of the electoral system. Finland has a coalition government, meaning that political parties must be able to cooperate regardless of their ideological differences.

The president of Finland is elected in a direct popular vote for a period of six years at a time and a maximum of two successive periods. **Sauli Niinistö**, the current president, was elected in 2012. In addition to his other powers, Niinistö is in charge of foreign policy in cooperation with the Government of Finland.

Finland has around 300 municipalities. They have extensive autonomy, which serves to ensure that decisions are made locally, close to people. The municipalities have power of decision over land use and the organisation of basic education and health care, among other issues. Municipal councils are elected every four years. All political parties participate in decision-making in municipal boards.

Finnish voters elect 13 members to the European Parliament.



1

**Best Human Capital  
in the World**Human Capital Report 2015  
World Economic Forum

2

**2<sup>nd</sup> Best Gender  
Equality in the World**Global Gender Gap Report 2014  
World Economic Forum

3

**3<sup>rd</sup> Least Corrupt  
Country in the World**Corruption Perceptions Index 2014  
Transparency International**EXPERTISE IS POWER**

In Finland, compulsory education starts at the age of seven and lasts for nine years. After comprehensive school, some students continue their education at vocational institutions and some at upper secondary schools and subsequently at universities, while others transfer directly to working life and study alongside work. Everyone can continue their education for as long as they want. Education in Finland is free for all, including postgraduate researchers. Comprehensive schools, upper secondary schools and vocational institutions serve a free daily meal. Finland has 14 universities, which are located in different parts of the country, including Lapland.

The Finnish education system produces excellent results. In 2015, the World Economic Forum estimated that Finland has the best human capital in the world in terms of education, well-being and employment. According to Universitas 21, Finland has the sixth best higher education system in the world. In addition, Finland repeatedly ranks among the best nations in the world in PISA surveys, which measure young people's knowledge and skills in mathematics, reading and science. Education is not wasted: according to a recent PIAAC survey by the OECD,

Finnish adults rank second in the world in problem-solving skills, mathematics and reading.

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

A genuinely equal education system brings equality to society as a whole. Equality between genders is self-evident. In fact, girls and women are often better educated than boys and men.

Finland has had a woman as the President of the Republic and the President of the Supreme Court. A woman as a professor or an executive is nothing exceptional. For a long time, nearly or more than half of the ministers of the Government of Finland have been women.

A high level of health care and day care for children has also facilitated equality. In listings compiled by Save the Children, Finland repeatedly ranks among the world's best countries for mothers to raise children. Mothers in Finland receive maternity allowance for 105 days. After that time, the family receives parental allowance, and either parent can stay at home with the child. Well-being for families means well-being for children. According to UNICEF, Finland ranks among the five leading nations in the world in terms of child well-being.

For people used to class systems, Finland may be an extraordinary experience. In many companies, people are on a first-name basis, regardless of their position. The informality is not just a manner of speaking. Hierarchies in Finland are genuinely low, and people do not emphasise their status, except in some official contexts. One of the reasons behind equality in Finland is that the country never had feudal structures and Finns have always interacted directly with one another.

For this reason, Finland has very little corruption. In the Corruption Perceptions Index compiled by Transparency International, Finland repeatedly ranks among the least corrupt countries in the world. It was placed third in the most recent index — which was close to being a disappointment.

The media operates freely in Finland, with no censorship. The confidentiality of sources is strong and can be broken only in legal proceedings concerning serious crimes. In 1766, Sweden–Finland became the first nation in the world to implement an act on the openness of administration. In line with this strong tradition, administrative documents are accessible to everyone free of charge. In addition, the authorities must actively provide information about developments in their field of administration.



TOVE JANSSON / © MOOMIN CHARACTERS



HUSSEINI MEHMETI / FLOW FESTIVAL

Created by **Tove Jansson**, the Moomin family — probably the happiest and wisest family in the world — comes from Finland. According to many studies, Finns are happy as well, perhaps because of their cultural hobbies. Literature is extremely popular. Finns read a lot, and every municipality and village has a library, with mobile libraries visiting remote, sparsely populated areas.

Theatre is also popular. Nearly all cities and towns have a theatre, and the largest ones have several, performing plays in Finnish and Swedish, the two official languages. Special Finnish features include local summer theatres performing plays by a diverse range of writers, from local teachers to **Aleksis Kivi**, the national author of Finland.

Films produced in Finland cover all genres, from comedy to horror and from detective stories to animation. Domestic films typically represent around 25% of the most watched films in Finland. Film enthusiasts meet at the Sodankylä Film Festival and Love & Anarchy, also known as the Helsinki International Film Festival.

Finland is heaven for music buffs. The major concert stages are located in cities, but music reaches all parts of the country in summer. The selection of festivals ranges from classical to popular music — from the Savonlinna Opera Festival to Pori Jazz and from the Helsinki Festival to Ruisrock.

Finland has an extensive network of music institutes, which produces a large group of skilful enthusiasts in ad-

dition to professional musicians.

Finland has excellent art museums not only in Helsinki, but also in other parts of the country. Many of these museums were originally founded by private individuals or organisations. Such museums are located in Tampere and Mänttä, among other places.

Beauty is present everywhere. Architecture and practical design are important in Finland. In addition to beautiful objects, design concerns industrial and service design.

## ALL FOR SPORT

Finns are passionate about sport, both professional and recreational. A large number of major sports events have been organised in Finland since the Summer Olympics in 1952.

Ice hockey is the most popular sport in Finland. Many team sports — such as football, basketball, volleyball, floorball and synchronised skating — are immensely popular as hobbies. In traditional individual events, Finns are internationally known for their success in cross-country skiing and javelin throw.

Finns are also fond of motorsports, partly because of their significant success. Finland — a nation of just five million people — has produced three Formula One World Champions. Rally racing is important as well, with new drivers expected to follow in the footsteps of the high number of champions.



## ANNUAL FOOD CONSUMPTION PER CAPITA



Exercise is a popular hobby among Finns of all ages. Children exercise at schools, and public running and cross-country skiing events attract hundreds of thousands of participants. In Finland, the conditions are ideal for exercising outdoors: walking, running, cycling, skiing, skating, rowing and sailing.

Sports clubs play an important role. Most Finns participate in their activities at some point in their lives, either as athletes or volunteers. Sports club activities range from working with children and young people to organising events, even major ones.

## THE TABLE IS SET!

Raw pickled fish, practically fresh from the sea. Wild berries picked from the forest. Mushrooms, fruit, cheeses and coffee — several servings of coffee.

Finns eat a great deal of fish, as both freshwater fish and fish from the sea constitute an important part of the Finnish diet. Baltic herring is prepared in dozens of ways. Reindeer — braised or roasted — is a typical Finnish delicacy and an important part of the Lappish diet. In Finland, food usually travels only a short distance from nature or farms to plates. This distance is at its shortest when Finns pick their mushrooms or berries from the forest and catch their fish themselves — which is allowed everywhere in Finland.

Restaurants prefer Finnish ingredients, even though there are only a few restaurants specialising in Finnish cuisine. Finnish cities have a lively restaurant culture. High-quality gourmet food is increasingly popular, with Finnish chefs succeeding in international competitions.

Restaurant Day, a food carnival invented in Finland, is gaining popularity in other countries as well. On four days in a year, anyone can establish a temporary restaurant in their yard or by the street and sell their specialities to people passing by.

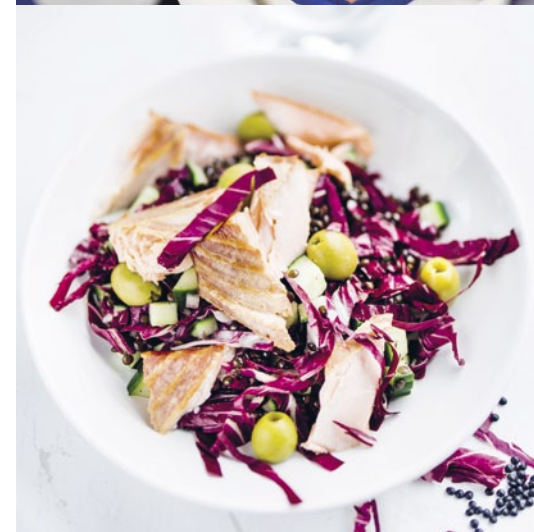
Finns are also known for their fondness for coffee. One in every hundred coffee beans in the world ends up in Finland, even though Finns represent just 0.7% of the world's population. Finns consume 12 kilos of coffee per capita per year — twice as much as Italians, for example.

Finnish lakes and rivers are rich in crayfish. The crayfish fishing season runs from late July to the end of October and is one of the most important seasons for many Finns. Crayfish are not allowed to be caught for the rest of the year.

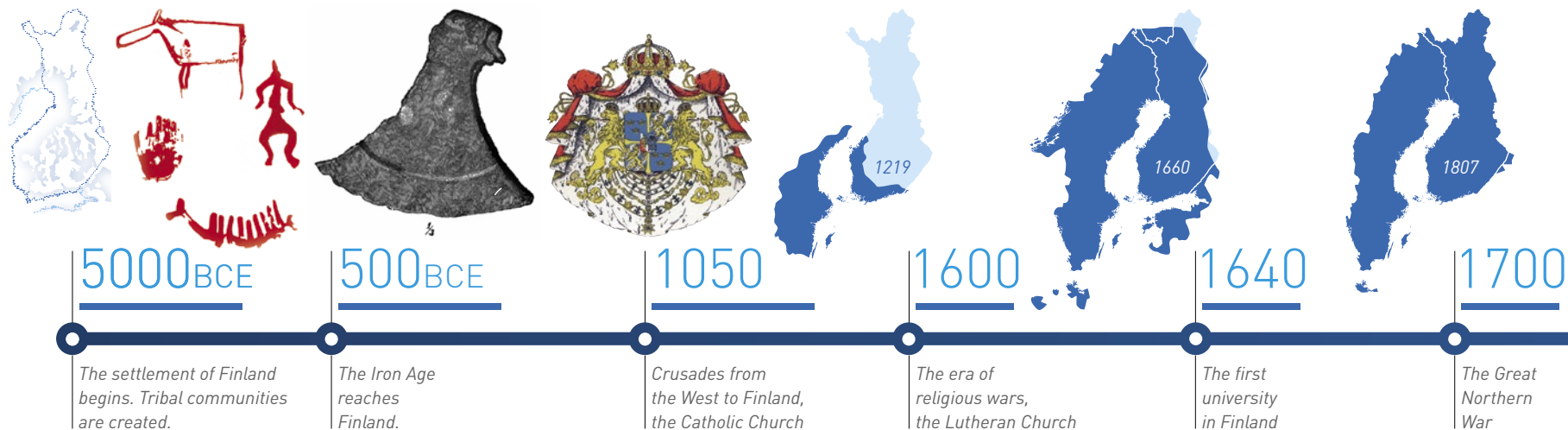
Finnish beer, from traditional home-brewed beer to modern handmade beer, is famous for its good flavour. In addition to a few large, industrial-scale breweries, Finland has dozens of small breweries, which often sell their products only in nearby areas.

| Finnish ice hockey fan

PETR SZNAPKA / CTK / LEHTIKUVA



ARI HEINONEN / OTAVAMEDIA / LEHTIKUVA



# HOW FINLAND BECAME FINLAND

## ANCIENT PAST

More than 10,000 years ago, northern Europe was covered by ice that was believed to have formed 110,000 years earlier.

When the ice finally retreated, people begin to arrive in the area that now is Finland, particularly from the south. At the time, most of the area was covered by water, as the ice had dented the ground. The land has risen ever since the ice retreated and continues to rise.

The image of ancient Finland is based on archaeological sources. Only a few written mentions of ancient Finland have been preserved until our day — in Icelandic sagas, for example.

Ancient Finland developed in line with other European areas outside Ancient Rome. Regional rulers and administrative organisations were typical of the era. Key sources of livelihood included hunting and fishing, as well as international trade, even with faraway countries.

Christianity reached Finland from the east and the west. Perhaps as early as in 900, Christianity prevailed in a significant portion of southern Finland, influenced not by Rome, but by Constantinople.

Beginning in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, crusades from Sweden sealed the faith of Finns. The force of the cross and the sword integrated Finland into western, Catholic Europe. It became part of Sweden and Western Europe for

more than 600 years. The boundaries between western and eastern Finland, as well as those between churches, were unclear and kept changing for centuries, along with the Russian border.

## FINLAND AS PART OF MAJOR POWERS

For political and religious reasons, the Reformation began in Sweden and Finland in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. It was followed by religious wars in the 17<sup>th</sup> century that involved Sweden, including Finns. Sweden and Russia had battled over the location of their border for centuries. The wars with Russia did not end until Sweden lost the Finnish War in 1808–1809. Finland became a Grand Duchy under Russian rule, but retained its earlier legislation and administration.

Finland was part of the Russian Empire for more than 100 years. This marked an era of progress, particularly during the last decades. Finland developed from the



*The new, monumental Helsinki was built according to designs created by C.L. Engel.*



1809

*Finland becomes part of Russia.*

1820

*Great Fire of Turku, Helsinki becomes the capital.*

1848

*Our Land, the national anthem*

1849

*The Kalevala is published.*

1860

*Finland adopts the markka, its own currency.*

1866

*The first elementary schools*

1906

*A unicameral parliament, Finland becomes the first country in the world to grant full political rights to women.*

eastern periphery of Sweden into an autonomous and the most highly developed part of Russia.

Finland established a parliament and adopted its own currency under Russian rule. Its business and industry developed, particularly the wood processing industry.

The publication of *The Kalevala* in 1849 was probably the most important event in terms of national identity. The *Kalevala* is an extensive heroic epic based on folklore. It gave Finland a history. The powers of Väinämöinen, one of the main characters, are based on knowledge and rune singing.

The *Kalevala* was a source of inspiration for artists, composers and authors. Composer **Jean Sibelius**, poet **Eino Leino** and painters **Akseli Gallen-Kallela** and **Albert Edelfelt**, among many others, created the



Golden Age of Finnish Art — the cultural core of Finland — in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The *Kalevala* also inspired the idea of independence. Finns put up resistance when Russia arbitrarily began to change the laws of Finland and otherwise subdue the country in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

During the World War I, the opposition became armed resistance when young men, who were mostly from the middle and upper classes, joined the Jäger Movement and travelled to Germany for military training. In northern Europe, the World War I ended with the collapse of the Russian Empire and the independence of Finland in 1917.

*The two-headed Imperial Russian eagle attacks the Finnish Maiden. By Eetu Isto, 1899*

## INDEPENDENT FINLAND

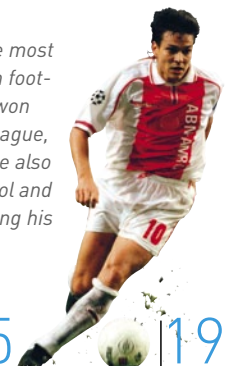
The Finnish Civil War broke out in early 1918. The Reds wanted to maintain close ties with Soviet Russia. The Whites supported Finnish independence for nationalistic and political reasons. **Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim**, a Finnish general who had served in the Russian army, be-



*Väinämöinen in The Defence of the Sampo. By Akseli Gallen-Kallela, 1895*



*Jari Litmanen, the most successful Finnish footballer of all time, won the Champions League, playing for Ajax. He also played for Liverpool and FC Barcelona during his career.*



DAVE BANCROFT / PA IMAGES / LEHTIKUVA

1917

*Finland gains independence.*

1918

*The Finnish Civil War*

1920

*The first childcare clinics are established.*

1938

*Maternity package*

1939

*The Winter War breaks out.*

1952

*Helsinki Summer Olympics*

1955

*Nordic Passport Union, Finland joins the UN.*

1971

*Footballer Jari Litmanen is born.*

came the hero of the war. He led an army that had been rapidly raised. The young men who had joined the Jäger Movement also played an important role. The war divided Finland into two camps for decades.

The first years of Finnish independence mainly marked a period of development and growth. Significant reforms included the establishment of childcare clinics in the 1920s. Expecting and young mothers were included in public health care services, and the infant mortality rate declined steeply in Finland. Around the same time, the elementary school system reached even the remotest parts of the country, and school attendance became compulsory. During the great land reform, the landless population in the countryside was provided with arable land to dismantle class structures.

The two wars in 1939–1944 disrupted the favourable development. The Winter War (1939–1940) broke out af-

ter the Soviet Union attacked Finland. Despite its superior enemy, Finland remained independent. The Continuation War broke out in 1941 after Germany attacked the Soviet Union. Finland made peace with the Soviet Union in autumn 1944 and repelled the German troops from its territory.

As a result of the two wars, Finland lost a significant portion of its total area, including Vyborg, its second largest city. The population of the areas ceded to the Soviet Union was moved to Finland, meaning that the country needed to resettle more than 400,000 people. It was an extensive undertaking.

## MODERN FINLAND

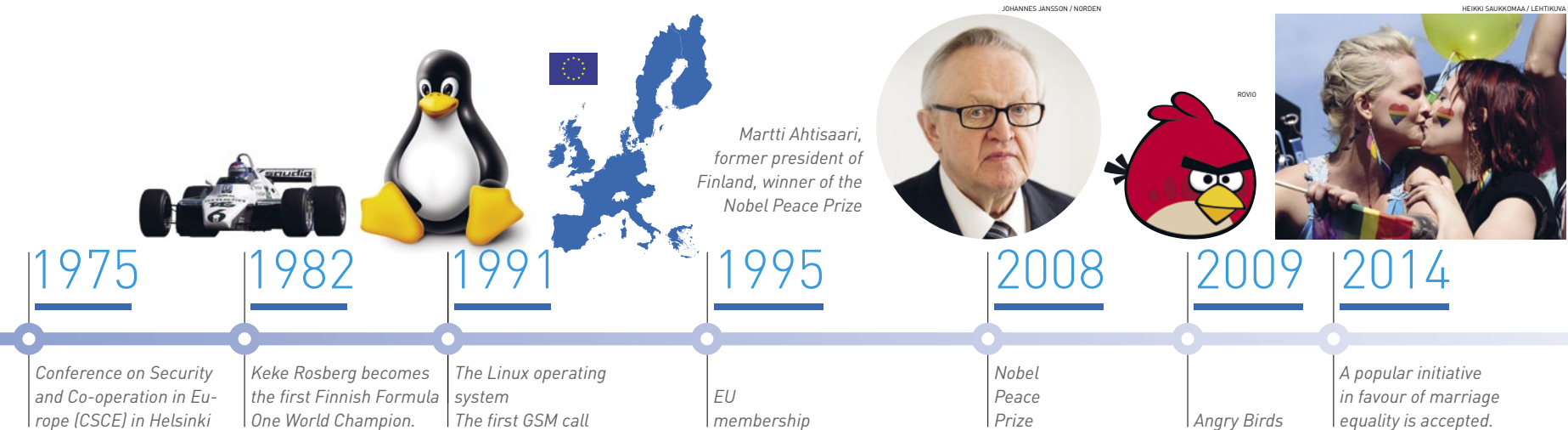
After the war, Finland began to develop into an industrial nation. The country remained a democracy. Its heavy war reparations turned out to be a blessing in disguise: Fin-

land had to create many industries, particularly the metal industry, practically from scratch.

At the same time, a significant proportion of the population gradually moved from the countryside to towns, to work in industry instead of agriculture, with better pay. Population growth gained pace after the war, and Finns born in 1947 continue to be the largest age group in the country. With population growth and urbanisation came migration. Around 200,000 people left Finland in the 1960s, particularly for Sweden, where industrial growth called for new labour.

Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland founded the Nordic Council in 1952 to facilitate cooperation. Finland joined the Nordic Council in 1955, after international tension had eased. The countries agreed on the Nordic Passport Union and a joint labour market. Citizens of the Nordic countries can travel and reside in another Nor-





dic country without a passport, and they are also allowed to work.

## FROM RECONSTRUCTION TO WELL-BEING

The year 1952 was a time of great changes — a new beginning. Finland had paid its heavy war reparations, the Helsinki Summer Olympics attracted visitors from all over the world and **Armi Kuusela** was crowned Miss Universe.

The Soviet Union occasionally tried to affect Finland's internal affairs and international position. Apart from that, the post-war decades did not present political problems for Finland.

Trade with the Soviet Union provided significant financial benefits. Finland imported raw materials, oil in particular, and exported industrial products.

It systematically strengthened its ties with the West.

Finland joined the United Nations in 1955 and became an associate member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1961 and a full member in 1986. Finland entered into a free trade agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973. This trend culminated in Finland joining the European Union at the beginning of 1995.

Finland developed into a Nordic welfare state characterised by equality, equal opportunities for all, social safety networks and a private economy. Today, more people immigrate to Finland than emigrate from Finland.

In many respects, Finland has become a European model country. Cooperation between private enterprises and the public sector is highly typical of Finland, as is a strong third-sector input. Organisations play an important role, particularly in health care and recreation, and many significant foundations operate in the fields of sci-

ence and culture. Finland's economy has benefitted from industrial peace: employee and employer organisations have been able to agree on difficult issues.

## FINLAND IN THE WORLD

Finland is a Nordic country with strong political and cultural ties with the other Nordic countries. Finland is a European democracy, a member of the European Union and an active member of the United Nations. For decades, Finns have participated in peacekeeping operations and conflict resolution all over the world. **Martti Ahtisaari**, a former president of Finland, won the Nobel Peace Prize for his conflict resolution work. In 1988, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces, including around 20,000 Finns.

# ECONOMY

Finland is a wealthy Nordic country and member of the European Union. Its gross domestic product per capita is around EUR 37,500 (2014). Only three members of the EU are wealthier than Finland: Sweden, Denmark and Luxembourg. In the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Austria and Germany, the level of wealth is similar to Finland. Prices in Finland are relatively high, in part because of long transportation distances. Adjusted by purchasing power parity, the gross domestic product of Finland is approximately the same as that of France or the United Kingdom. Finland has an even distribution of income, much like the other Nordic countries. Finland adopted the euro in 2002.

The service industry is the largest employer by a clear margin. Services — such as the installation and maintenance of paper machines, lifts and other capital goods

manufactured in Finland — are exported to a significant degree.

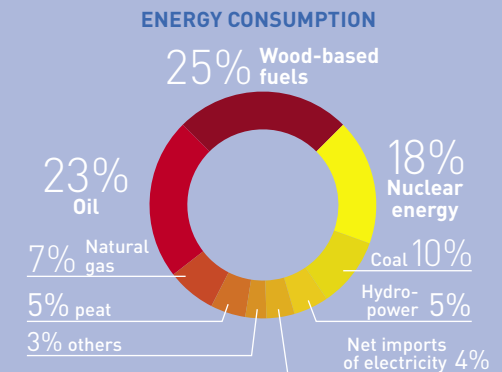
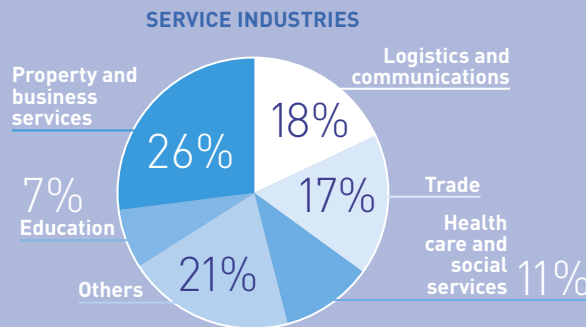
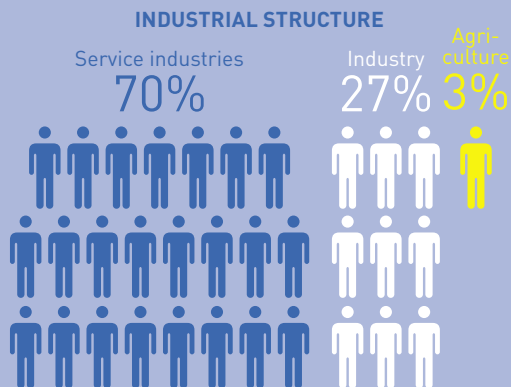
Finland is a rather open economy where exports play a major role. The forest industry, which uses renewable raw materials, continues to be the most important sector in Finland, but this is changing. In addition to paper, the forest industry produces new types of products, such as wood-based fuels to replace fossil fuels.

Other industries, including the mechanical engineering industry, have emerged alongside the forest industry over the decades. Finland is a leading country in shipbuilding and the manufacture of large diesel engines, lifts and paper machines. Finns also excel in the chemical industry, particularly in the treatment of clean water, and in electronics and software. The Linux operating system was created by **Linus Torvalds** of Finland, and the world's

first GSM call was made in a Finnish mobile phone network. The most significant success stories in the Finnish game industry include Angry Birds by Rovio and Clash of Clans by Supercell.

Innovation thrives in Finland. New businesses are continuously emerging in the game industry, electronics and software production, as well as in cleantech, where Finland represents 1% of the global market. The annual Slush start-up event in Helsinki is among the largest in the world.

Energy consumption is high in Finland, as the winters are cold and industry abounds. Using wood for energy is important in addition to imported energy, such as oil and gas. Nuclear energy and hydropower are the main sources of electricity. Wood is the most significant source of renewable energy. Wind and solar power play a minor role, but are growing.



BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Finland is one of the least corrupt countries in the world, which is reflected in its business life. Finland consistently ranks among the least corrupt nations in surveys and studies conducted by Transparency International. Agreements are respected, and Finns are known to keep their word. The judicial system is independent and impartial: in Finland, you can expect your case to be processed fairly, in accordance with the law. *The Economist* ranks Finland among the ten best business environments in the world.

Finland also produces innovations and high-quality products. According to a recent EU study, Finland pro-

duces the highest-quality export products in the European Union. The Global Innovation Index ranks Finland as the fourth most innovative country in the world and the second most innovative in cleantech and eco-innovations. *Wired* listed Finland among the best countries in the world for start-ups.

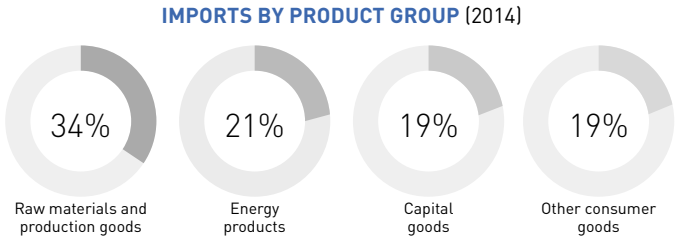
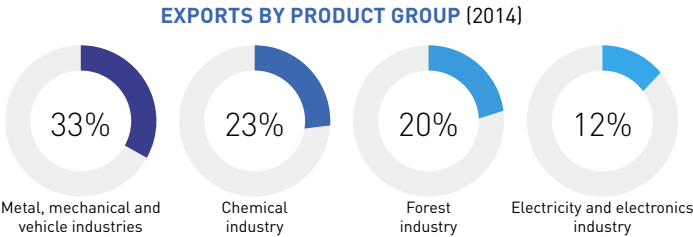
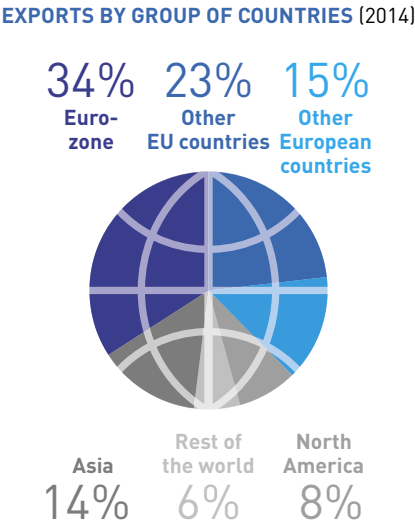
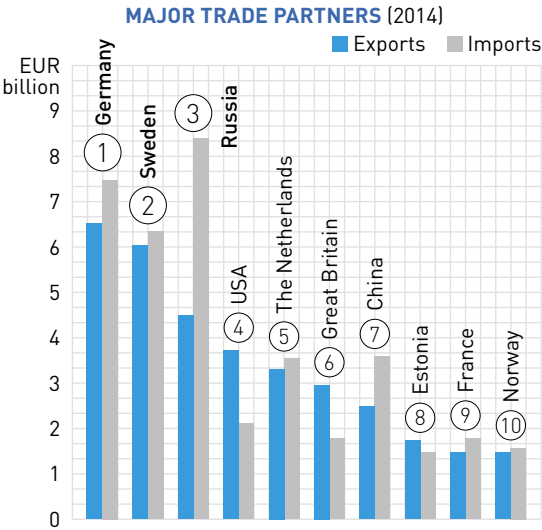
Finland has a well-functioning infrastructure, including data and telephone networks. According to an OECD report, Finland has the best wireless broadband connections in the world.

The standard of education is high. Finland ranks

among the ten best OECD countries in terms of people who have completed tertiary education. According to an OECD report, Finnish adults are among the best of the world in terms of reading, mathematics and problem-solving skills.

Finland also has a high level of safety, with little crime compared to other countries. It is no wonder that Helsinki ranks among the ten best cities in the world.

All this leads to yet another achievement: according to the World Economic Forum, Finland is the fourth most competitive country in the world (2014).



# NATIONAL SYMBOLS

*Teemu Selänne, nicknamed "The Finnish Flash", played 21 seasons in the NHL for the Winnipeg Jets, Anaheim Ducks, San Jose Sharks and Colorado Avalanche. Selänne is the highest-scoring Finn in NHL history with 684 goals.*

## FLAG OF FINLAND



*Officially confirmed in 1918.*

## COAT OF ARMS OF FINLAND



The lion is a very old symbol that appears in the coats of arms of two Swedish regions, for example. The first version of the coat of arms of Finland can be seen on the tomb of **Gustaf I of Sweden** (1496–1560). The coat of arms became a symbol of the eastern parts of Sweden. It became the coat of arms of Finland when the country became an autonomous part of the Russian Empire. It was officially adopted in 1917.

The heraldic roses on the coat of arms represent the nine historical provinces of Finland. The coat of arms is used extensively in various contexts, including commercial ones. The national ice hockey team of Finland has been nicknamed "The Lions" after the lion on their jerseys.



## NATIONAL BIRD

*Whooper swan  
(Cygnus cygnus)*



## NATIONAL ANIMAL

*Eurasian brown bear  
(Ursus arctos arctos)*



## NATIONAL INSECT

*Seven-spot ladybird  
(Coccinella septempunctata)*



## NATIONAL FISH Perch (Perca fluviatilis)



## NATIONAL TREE

*Silver birch  
(Betula pendula)*



## NATIONAL FLOWER

*Lily of the valley  
(Convallaria majalis)*





## NATIONAL ANTHEM

**"Our Land"**, the national anthem of Finland, was composed by **Fredrik Pacius** in 1848. The lyrics were written by **Johan Ludvig Runeberg**, originally for *The Tales of Ensign Stål*, an epic poem about the Finnish War in 1808–1809.

**March of the Pori Regiment** is the honorary march of the president of the Republic and the Finnish Defence Forces. Its composer is unknown, but the march is believed to have been composed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is also used to celebrate special occasions, such as Finnish Olympic victories.

**Finlandia** is the final part of *Historical Scenes*, a symphonic poem composed by **Jean Sibelius** in 1899. It was not originally intended to be sung. However, arranged for a male choir, it became an informal national anthem that is performed to celebrate festive occasions.



"Our Land" was first performed in 1848.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY

Finland celebrates Independence Day on December 6, which is a public holiday. The parliament of Finland approved the official declaration of independence on December 6, 1917. The day is celebrated in many ways. People place two lit candles on the windowsill after dark.

## NATIONAL IDENTIFIERS

Country calling code +358

Internet country code .fi

Cars and boats FIN

Aeroplanes OH



### FLAG OF ÅLAND

The autonomous region of Åland has been entitled to use its own flag since 1954.



Åland is a Finnish region consisting of thousands of islands. It has extensive autonomy. The population of Åland is nearly 30,000. Åland is primarily known for its seafaring traditions — less than a hundred years ago, a significant proportion of the large sailing ships that brought grain from Australia to Europe were from Åland. Seafaring continues to play a key role: it employs around 10% of the population of Åland, and 40% of Finnish ships sailing abroad are from Åland.



### SÁMI FLAG

The Sámi flag is the common flag of the Sámi area. In addition to northern Finland, it is used in Sweden, Norway and north-west Russia.

The Sámi have greatly expanded their cooperation over the past few decades. This cooperation is mainly related to culture, to fostering the Sámi language and traditions. Finland has a Sámi population of 10,000. Most of the Sámi people in Finland live outside the Sámi region — that is, northern Lapland. Nearly 2,000 people speak Sámi as their first language. The Sámi are the only indigenous people in Europe. They live in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia.

## TRADITIONAL SÁMI AREAS



## HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION

Education is free in Finland, from comprehensive school through higher education. Young Finns regularly rank among the world's best in PISA surveys of educational achievements, while independent auditors rate Finland as having one of the world's best university systems.



SOLLI JUSSILA / LEHTIKUVA

## AN OPEN SOCIETY

Year after year, Finland is ranked among the least corrupt countries in the world. Finnish society is open, and civil servants are honest and loyal. Finns can trust that their issues are handled fairly in administration and courts of law.



RONI REKOMAA / LEHTIKUVA

## TECHNOLOGICAL EXPERTISE

Technology is the backbone of the Finnish economy: clean diesel engines, lifts travelling up to 1,000 metres, operating systems for computers, clean water, luxury cruise ships, Angry Birds and much more.



KAAPU KAMU / HARRISONPARROTT



JUSSI TAINEN

## THE HOMELAND OF CONDUCTORS

Finland believes in education in all fields, including culture. Music institutes lay the foundation for strong skills in all parts of the country. Finland has produced some of the best conductors, singers and musicians in the world, from opera to baroque music.



## CELEBRATING ARCHITECTURE

Finns love architecture that is inspired by nature. This extends to not only to the works of famous architects, such as **Eliel Saarinen**, **Alvar Aalto** and **Reima Pietilä**, but also the beauty and functionality of the built environment in general.



## A LAND OF LAKES

Finland has around 188,000 lakes, from charming forest ponds to large bodies of water. You can safely swim or fish anywhere. Lakes also ensure a reliable water supply for cities, towns and population centres. Finns take good care of their lakes so that future generations can enjoy them as well.

LAUREN BATH / VISIT FINLAND

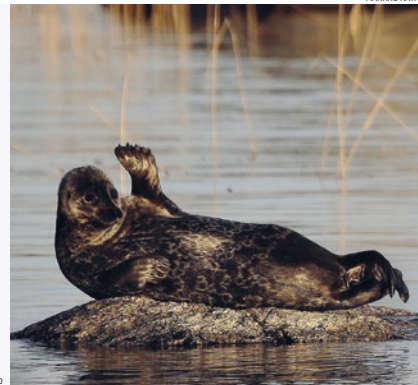
JUHA MÄÄTTÄ / VASTAVALO / VISIT FINLAND



## UNIQUE NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

Finland's territory extends over 1,000 kilometres from the archipelago in the south to the wilderness and fells in the north. Four distinct seasons add to the diversity of nature in Finland. Around 75% of the total area of Finland is covered by forests — home to thousands of animal species.

VISIT FINLAND



MARIKU KÄYHÖ

## NATURE IS FOR EVERYONE

Finnish natural environments are accessible to all. Everyone has the freedom to roam and pick berries, mushrooms and other gifts of the forest, but not from private gardens or cultivated areas.

JUHA MÄÄTTÄ / VASTAVALO / VISIT FINLAND



## DISTINCT SEASON

Summer is vibrant, while autumn prepares you for winter. After a season of white fairy-tale scenery, nature wakes up again in spring. If you ask Finns what their favourite season is, you will get four types of answers.

ANTTI AIMO-KOIVISTO / LEHTIKUVA

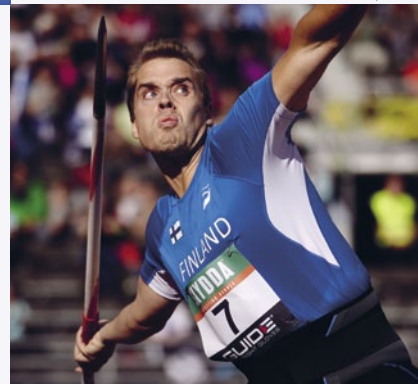
## ROOM FOR EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING

Finland is the most sparsely populated country in the European Union. It offers plenty of room to wander, ski, cycle, fish, travel the lakes — or just to enjoy. Even in the largest cities, the peace and quiet of nature is within cycling distance.



## PASSIONATE ABOUT SPORTS

Finns love sports, both professional and recreational. They expect their heroes to succeed in ice hockey, javelin throw, motorsports and many other athletic competitions.



## FACTS ABOUT FINLAND

# TOP RANKINGS FOR FINLAND

### The most stable country in the world

The Fragile States Index 2014, Fund for Peace

Finland is the most stable and least vulnerable to collapse of the 178 nations listed on this index.

### Finland makes the best use of its human capital

Human Capital Report 2015, World Economic Forum

Finland ranks as number one in human capital based on indicators such as education, well-being and employment.

### Finland — doing good for the world

The Good Country Index

The Good Country Index measures what each country on earth contributes to the common good of humanity, and what it takes away. Finland ranked second after Ireland.

### The cleanest air in Europe

Environmental Performance Index 2014

Finland has the cleanest air in Europe together with Ireland and Iceland, and it is also rated among the top countries worldwide for clean air.

### Second in gender equality

Global Gender Gap Report 2014, World Economic Forum

Finland ranked second in the World Economic Forum's annual Global Gender Gap report.

### Best quality of life in the EU

Eurostat 2015

According to Eurostat, Finland ranks as number one in quality of life in the EU.

### A good place for mothers

State of the World's Mothers 2015, Save the Children

Finland ranks second in the annual State of the World's Mothers report.



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