

**OFFICIAL NAME:** Republic of Finland

**CAPITAL:** Helsinki

**SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT:** Multiparty Republic

**AREA:** 338,142 Sq Km (130,557 Sq Mi)

**ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION** 5,156,000

---



**LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY:** Finland is located in North Europe. It is bound by Russia to the east, the Gulf of Finland to the south, the Gulf of Bothnia and Sweden to the west and Norway to the north. Finland is a low lying plateau formed by glaciers, which have scoured the land leaving deposits of gravel, sand and clay. Most of the mountains have rounded ridge tops and more than 50% of eastern Finland is hilly. There are over 55,000 lakes, which are dominated by long sinuous esker ridges such as the Punkaharju, Pyynikki and Pulkkila. Forests cover 65% of the land area with pine, spruce and birch trees in the northern coniferous zone while the southwest coast and the archipelago are in the continental European oak zone and Lapland is in the Arctic-Alpine zone. Off the southwest coast lies Saaristomeri which is the country's largest archipelago with over 17,000 islands and skerries. The principal rivers are the Tornionjoki and Kemi which flow south to the Gulf of Bothnia as well as the Oulu River which also flows to the Gulf of Bothnia through the center of the country. Major Cities (pop. est.); Helsinki 515,800, Espoo 186,500, Tampere 179,300, Vantaa 164,400, Turku 162,400 (1994). Land Use; forested 76%, pastures 0.5%, agricultural-cultivated 8%, other 15.5% (1993).

---

**CLIMATE:** Finland has a temperate climate with continental winds bringing cold spells in winter and heat waves in summer. However, the westerly winds in summer also bring warm air currents from the Atlantic Ocean. Rainfall occurs all year round and the average annual precipitation in the north varies from 500 mm (20 inches) to 600 mm (24 inches) where most of it falls as snow, while in the south it varies from 600 mm (24 inches) to 700 mm (28 inches). Average temperature ranges in Helsinki are from -9 to -4 degrees Celsius (16 to 25 degrees Fahrenheit) in February to 12 to 23 degrees Celsius (54 to 72 degrees Fahrenheit) in July.

---

**PEOPLE:** The principal ethnic majority are the Finnish who are of Scandinavian-Baltic origins. The Finnish account for 94% of the population and other ethnic minorities include Swedish Finns, who account for 6% of the population, followed by the Lapps while scattered groups of Russians, Germans and Gypsies are also found.

---

**DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS:** Density; 16 persons per sq km (43 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 61.6% urban, 38.4% rural (1991). Sex Distribution; 48.6% male, 51.4% female (1992). Life Expectancy at Birth; 70.8 years male, 78.9 years female (1989). Age

Breakdown; 19% under 15, 21% 15 to 29, 25% 30 to 44, 17% 45 to 59, 13% 60 to 74, 5% 75 and over (1990). Birth Rate; 13.2 per 1,000 (1990). Death Rate; 10.1 per 1,000 (1990). Increase Rate; 3.1 per 1,000 (1990). Infant Mortality Rate; 5.8 per 1,000 live births (1989).

---

**RELIGIONS:** Mostly Christians with around 88% of the population Lutheran while 1% are Orthodox.

---

**LANGUAGES:** The official languages are Finnish and Swedish with 94% of the population speaking Finnish and 6% Swedish. Other languages spoken by minorities include Russian and Lappish.

---

**EDUCATION:** Aged 25 or over and having attained: incomplete upper secondary 51.8%, upper secondary or vocational 37.6%, higher 10.2% (1989). Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over virtually 100% (1989).

---

**MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993:** In 1948 Finland signed a Friendship Treaty with the Soviet Union (USSR) which was subsequently renewed in 1955, 1970 and 1983. In 1950 Pres. Juho Paasikivi set a policy of Finnish neutrality in international politics. Under Paasikivi, Finland also developed close economic and cultural ties with the USSR and other Scandinavian countries including Denmark, Norway and Sweden. In 1955 the USSR returned Porkkala Naval Base to Finland and in the same year Finland joined both the UN and the Nordic Council. In 1956 Urho Kekkonen was elected President and he continued to emphasize neutrality in international affairs. In late 1973 Finland and the other members of European Free Trade Association (EFTA) entered into industrial free trade agreement with the European Union (EU). During the late 1970's to early 1980's Finland completed the construction of four nuclear power plants which supplies more than a third of the nations energy needs. In 1982 Mauno Kivisto was elected President and reelected in 1988. In 1990 US Pres. George Bush and the former USSR Pres. Mikhail Gorbachev met in Helsinki to finalize the consensus to reverse Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. In Mar. 1991 a record 17 parties contested the parliamentary elections and the agrarian-based Center Party emerged as the largest parliamentary party replacing the Social Democrats who had held that position for 25 years. The newly formed coalition led by the Center Party replaced the former Social Democrat's "Red and Blue" coalition. On Aug. 29, 1991 Finland became the last Nordic country to recognize the independence and reestablish diplomatic relations with the ex-Soviet Baltic states. In Oct. 1991 Finland and other EFTA member countries agreed to form a European Economic Area (EEA) with the EU from 1993, although the European Court of Justice put the agreement on hold in Dec. 1991 claiming that the establishment of the EEA contravened EU law. In Nov. 1991 after talks with the Russian Republic representatives in Helsinki, Finland agreed to a new pact of friendship and mutual cooperation. In 1992 Finland ratified the EEA treaty with the EU and announced it would be seeking accession to the EU

by 1995, although the Union announced that Finland would have to adjust their heavy agricultural subsidies in line with the union and that they would have to adopt the EU's envisaged defense system. In response the Finnish government insisted they would maintain their non-aligned and independent defense policy. Also during 1992 major banks required support from the government while in Sept. 1992 it was forced to float the Markka which lost around 12% against other currencies. Accusations were also leveled against a former Finnish president, Urho Kekkonen, who died in 1986 that he received campaign financing and political support from Moscow to secure his presidency from 1956 to 1981. In Mar. 1993 Pres. Koivisto announced his planned retirement in Mar. 1994. In Sept. 1993 Finland was quick to announce its support for Russian President Boris Yeltsin during his leadership struggle. In 1993 the economy continued to be in recession, although the Markka had stabilized by late 1993 from its float in Sept. 1992. The government also continued to reduce public services to offset the rising unemployment and lend financial support to recession hit banks. Also during 1993 Finland announced it would accept the terms of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, although its admission would also depend on special provisions for its subsidized agriculture.

---

**CURRENCY:** The official currency is the Euro divided into 100 cents.

---

**ECONOMY:** Gross National Product; USD \$96,220,000,000 (1993). National Debt; Fmk 171,920,000,000 (1992). Imports; Fmk 120,200,000,000 (1994). Exports; Fmk 153,859,000,000 (1994). Tourism Receipts; USD \$1,239,000,000 (1993). Balance of Trade; Fmk 33,659,000,000 (1994). Economically Active Population; 2,508,000 or 49.5% of total population (1993). Unemployed; 17.8% (1995).

---

**MAIN TRADING PARTNERS:** Its main trading partners are the former USSR, Sweden, Germany, the UK and the USA.

**MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS:** Cereals, Chromium, Copper, Dairy Products, Fish, Iron Ore, Lead, Livestock, Potatoes, Timber, Zinc.

**MAJOR INDUSTRIES:** Chemicals, Clothing, Fertilizers, Foodstuffs, Forestry, Iron and Steel, Machinery, Ship Building, Textiles, Timber Products including Wood Pulp and Paper.

**MAIN EXPORTS:** Chemicals, Clothing, Machinery, Paper, Petroleum Products, Ships, Timber, Wood Pulp.

---

**TRANSPORT:** Railroads; route length 5,884 km (3,656 mi) (1990), passenger-km 3,331,000,000 (2,070,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 8,357,000,000 (5,724,000,000 short ton-mi) (1990). Roads; length 76,717 km (47,670 mi) (1989). Vehicles;

cars 1,896,895 (1989), trucks and buses 250,913 (1989). Merchant Marine; vessels 269 (1990), deadweight tonnage 983,928 (1990). Air Transport; passenger-km 4,859,000,000 (3,019,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 143,237,000 (98,103,000 short ton-mi) (1990).

---

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Daily Newspapers; total of 60 with a total circulation of 2,640,381 (1992). Radio; receivers 4,950,000 (1993). Television; receivers 1,900,000 (1993). Telephones; units 2,760,700 (1993).

---

**MILITARY:** 31,200 (1994) total active duty personnel with 82.4% army, 8.0% navy and 9.6% air force while military expenditure accounts for 2.2% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).