

USEFUL INFORMATION

Here we collected some practical information that maybe useful during your visit.

Finland

Finland is a country of forests and lakes. Inland lakes and rivers make up 10% of the country. The large areas of forest cover almost two thirds of the land mass. Only 6% of Finland is arable. It is one of the Nordic countries and bordering Sweden, Norway and Russia. Area wise the country is the fifth largest in Europe (338,424 km²) with only 5.5 million inhabitants. It is the most sparsely populated country in the European Union, with only 16 inhabitants per km². There are four seasons in Finland winters being cold and summers warm.

Finland is a republic and is an independent country since 1917. It became a member of the European Union in 1995 and part of the European Monetary Union in 2002 and the only Nordic country using the Euro as currency. Finland was the third country in the world and the first one in Europe allowing women to vote. This happened as early as 1906. The electronics, machinery, forestry, high-tech and design industries are Finland's most important revenue sources. Finland is the world's biggest producer of mobile phones.



Finnish language is a non-Indo-European language belonging to the Uralic family, along with Estonian and Hungarian. However, language is not a problem. As most Finns take it for granted that you do not speak their language, they are glad to make use of their English or

other European languages they master. Finland is in fact a bilingual country, the second official language being Swedish.

Helsinki



Sitting on the edge of the Baltic, the modern, cosmopolitan city of Helsinki was the World Design Capital for 2012. The beauty of the surrounding nature blends seamlessly with high-tech achievements and contemporary trends. Walking tours of the city center show layers of history, while modern architecture and cutting-edge style stake the city's claim to the future. Helsinki during its endless summer days is a refreshing experience.

Climate and weather

- Helsinki's climate combines characteristics of both a maritime and a continental climate. The proximity of the Arctic Ocean and the North Atlantic creates cold weather, while the Gulf Stream brings in warmer air.
- Spring arrives in Helsinki usually sometime in April. The days grow rapidly longer and warmer, attracting people to the city while the nature blossoms all around.
- Summer in Helsinki is bright. Days are at their longest in the second half of June, when the sun stays above the horizon for 19 hours.
- Average temperatures in Helsinki
 - Entire year: +5.9°C
 - Warmest month: July +17,8°C
 - Coldest month: February -4,7°C
 - For the latest weather forecast, see website en.ilmatieteenlaitos.fi by the Finnish Meteorological Institute.



City bikes

- The City of Helsinki is attempting to increase levels of cycling in city traffic. The city bike system supports this goal. During 2018 city bike season there will be 1,500 bikes and 150 bike stations in Helsinki.

Currency and payments

- The local currency in Finland is Euro (EUR). All major credit cards are widely accepted in Finland. For an ATM machine, look for the sign "OTTO". These 24-hour cashpoint machines are widely available and accept the following international ATM and credit cards: Visa, Visa Electron, EuroCard, MasterCard, Maestro, Cirrus and EC.
- Banks are usually open on weekdays 10am–4:30pm.
- In addition to banks, there are several foreign currency exchange points available around the city center. See for example:
 - [Forex](#): Stockmann Department Store or Central Railway Station
 - [Tavex](#): Fabianinkatu 12

Electricity

- Voltage: 220–240 Volts. Electrical sockets (outlets) in Finland are one of the two European standard electrical socket types: "Type C" Europlug and "Type E/F" Schuko.

Emergency number

- General Emergency number for police, ambulance and fire department is 112.

Postal services

- Post offices are open 9am–6pm (some offices even until 8pm) from Monday to Friday. Yellow mailboxes are available for collections on weekdays.
- Stamps can be purchased at post offices, bookstores, newsagents, kiosks and hotels.
- [Helsinki General Post Office](#) is located at the center of Helsinki, Elielinaukio 2 F.

Tax free shopping

- Citizens of non-European countries are eligible for tax-free returns upon leaving EU territory. Purchases must be made in shops displaying the Tax Free Shopping sign. The minimum total sum of purchased goods must be €40.

Time zone

- The time zone in Helsinki is Eastern European Time (EET), 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT+2).

Tourist information

- Helsinki Tourist Information offers free information about the city, sights, events and services including a wide range of brochures and maps all year round. www.myhelsinki.fi

WiFi

- You can connect your laptop or mobile phone to a wireless network in many places throughout the city center e.g. in several cafes, restaurants and libraries.
- For free WiFi, connect to “Helsinki City Open Wlan”. There are plenty of [hotspots](#) available in the city center and at harbors. In addition, most hotels offer their guests a free internet connection. For the international research and education community, it is also possible to use Eduroam service while in Helsinki.

