



# OSAC Country Security Report

## Finland

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*This report is intended to supplement the U.S. Department of State Finland Travel Advisory and [Finland Country Information Page](#).*

### Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

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### OSAC Country Chapter

The Finland Country Chapter is active, meeting twice per year. For more information on the times and locations of OSAC Country Council meetings, call +358-9-6162-50.

Contact [OSAC's Europe team](#) with any questions.

### Finland Travel Advisory

The current U.S. Department of State [Travel Advisory](#) at the date of this report's publication assesses that travelers should exercise normal precautions in Finland.

### Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Helsinki as being a **LOW**-threat location for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Crime "C" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Finland.

Finland is one of the safest countries in the world and has one of the world's most effective and trusted police forces. However, petty crimes such as pickpocketing does occur in crowded areas and during the summer tourist season.

According to data from 2024 (most recent), recorded crimes decreased by 1.8% from 2023. In total, 2,587 robberies and 42,203 assaults were reported, a decrease of 5.1% and 2.6% respectively. The number of reported sexual offenses has increased since new laws enacted in 2023 changed the definition of such crimes from coercion-based to consent-based.

In 2024, Finland reported 90 homicides, which is 33 more than in 2023, but still well below the national averages of the 1990s and the early 2000s. However, homicides in Finland have been incrementally increasing, ending an almost continuous decline in the number of homicides over the last 20 years. Homicides in Finland are most likely to occur during disputes between socially excluded males, and usually involve alcohol use. National Police Board figures for 2024 also revealed that nearly half of serious violent crimes took place in public places, usually in city centers at night or on weekends. The homicide rate is lower in Finland than in other Baltic states, but higher than that its western neighbors.

Burglaries are common and are committed all year round. Police investigate burglaries as aggravated theft. Professional burglaries conducted by foreign criminal groups have become increasingly common over the last few years.

According to police statistics, the risk and likelihood of burglary is at its greatest on Fridays between 1200 and 1500. Even though most burglaries happen in the daytime, a quarter of burglaries occur overnight, even when the residents are at home. Burglars often watch houses to determine when the residents are away getting groceries, at work or on holiday.

The number of organized crime groups in Finland has increased over the last ten years. The National Bureau of Investigation estimates that there are 90 organized crime groups in Finland, with 900-1,000 members. In Finland, these groups are mainly of domestic origin, although most organized crime groups collaborate with groups based in Russia and the Baltic states. Russian organized crime is also a topic of concern for authorities.

Organized criminal groups make increasingly significant use of information networks in their criminal activities, particularly internationally. These activities take the form of various frauds or scams aimed at coercing private individuals or people within companies to pay sums of money. Even smaller sums can add up to large criminal proceeds due to the volume made possible by networks.

In addition to traditional crime prevention, the police also combat organized crime by means of administrative crime prevention. The goal of administrative crime prevention is to mitigate the damage done by crime preemptively through close cooperation with other authorities and public-sector actors.

Motorcycle gangs and Russian organized crime have a limited presence in Finland, but expatriates and tourists are unlikely to encounter them. Courts permanently banned the United Brotherhood (UB) and Bad Union (BU) motorcycle gangs in 2021, the first of its kind concerning an organized criminal group in Finland. Cannonball MC and its sub-organization, Squad 32, were also abolished in 2022.

Bicycle theft is the most common type of theft. The number of car burglaries has trended downwards since the early 2000s, and there has been a significant decrease in business

burglaries. Theft offenses are more common in urban environments. In Uusimaa, the prevalence of theft offenses is many times higher than in the rest of Finland. The police department in Western Uusimaa, where bicycle theft has increased almost 50%, has instituted protocols with the goal of catching bike thieves.

## Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Kidnapping “K” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Finland. Incidents of kidnapping in Finland are extremely rare.

## Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Helsinki as being a **LOW**-threat location for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Terrorism “T” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Finland.

European governments are taking action to guard against terrorist attacks; however, all European countries remain potentially vulnerable to attacks from transnational terrorist organizations. Terrorists worldwide are increasingly using less sophisticated methods of attack – including knives, firearms, and vehicles – to more effectively target crowds. They may target high-profile public events (sporting contests, political rallies, demonstrations, holiday events, celebratory gatherings, etc.); hotels, clubs, and restaurants frequented by tourists; places of worship; schools; parks; tourism infrastructure; shopping malls and markets; and public transportation systems (including subways, buses, trains, and scheduled commercial flights).

The Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (SUPO) assesses that no significant changes have occurred in the threat of terrorism faced by Finland. The threat of terrorism in Finland remains at level 2, ‘Elevated’, on the four-tier scale. SUPO assesses the most likely threat comes from lone operators or small groups advocating far-right or radical Islamist ideology. Most terrorist activities in Finland are support measures, such as fundraising and online dissemination of ideology.

Significant terrorism support operations found in Finland include financing and dissemination of ideology. CT targets have significant links to foreign terrorist operators and networks. Some people have moved to Finland from conflict zones after participating in the operations of armed groups and otherwise promoting such activities in those zones.

The threat of far-right terrorism has grown, with an increase in terrorist attack plans seeking to maximize casualties. Supporters and sympathizers of far-right terrorist activity have also been identified in Finland. International far-right group communications over social-media platforms reinforce the transnational character of the extreme right.

## Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Helsinki as being a **LOW**-threat location for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Civil Unrest “U” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Finland. Civil unrest can develop quickly without prior notice, often interrupting logistics and services. Avoid demonstration activity, as even those planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

## Elections/Political Stability

The Finnish system has produced a level of political stability and economic continuity not seen in most countries. Finland is one of the most politically stable countries. The main reasoning is Finland's well established and functioning state bureaucracy, an effective rule of law, and various personal freedoms and civil liberties.

Finland's electoral laws are robust and generally well implemented by the relevant authorities. In 2024, The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) expressed a high level of confidence in all aspects of Finland's electoral process and did not see the need for election monitoring for Finland's 2024 presidential election.

The president, whose role is mainly ceremonial, is directly elected for up to two six-year terms. In 2024, former Prime Minister Alexander Stubb, of the center-right National Coalition Party (KOK), won the presidential term, defeating several challengers. Stubb is pro-EU, a strong supporter of Ukraine, and has taken a tough stance towards Russia. The election was broadly considered free and fair.

Representatives in the 200-seat, unicameral parliament, the Eduskunta, are elected to serve four-year terms. After a preliminary needs-assessment mission to Finland before the April 2023 parliamentary elections, the OSCE expressed “a high level of confidence in all the aspects of the electoral process” and concluded that it was not necessary to send an election observation mission.

## Protests & Demonstrations

The biggest groups organizing demonstrations are far-left and far-right groups, climate activist groups. Protestors in Finland must notify the police at least six hours ahead of any planned demonstration. There are approximately 300 protests a year in Helsinki; most protests are small, peaceful, and unrelated to U.S. interests.

## Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

Anti-U.S. sentiment remains very low. Certain small segments of the population tend to hold marginally less favorable views of the United States.

## Law Enforcement

Finland has ten regional police forces and one metropolitan police force (Helsinki) under the command of the National Police Board; together, they maintain internal security. Finnish Customs and the Border Guard have law enforcement responsibilities related to their fields of responsibility. The Border Guard has additional law enforcement powers to maintain public order when it operates in joint patrols and under police command.

The national police and Border Guard report to the Interior Ministry, which is responsible for police oversight, law enforcement, and maintenance of order. The National Bureau of Investigation serves as Finland's sole investigative agency for major crimes and organized crime. SUPO and its police officer staff serves as Finland's sole civilian intelligence and national security agency.

The Police University College (POLAMK) is Finland's only police educational institute – a center of expertise in police education, research, and development. POLAMK has a special position in the field of higher education as a university of applied sciences and a police unit, and operates under the Interior Ministry.

All new police officers graduate from the Police University College in Tampere. POLAMK is also responsible for further and continuing education for the police. Additionally, POLAMK also offers education to other groups, such as stakeholders and the private security sector.

The defense forces are responsible for safeguarding the country's territorial integrity and providing military training. The defense forces also have some domestic security responsibilities, such as assisting the national police in maintaining law and order in crises. The Defense Ministry oversees the defense forces.

## Police Response

Finland has one of the most professional police forces in the world. Most Finnish police speak English. Due to the high effectiveness level of individual officers, Finland maintains the lowest police-per-capita ratio in the industrialized world. Finnish law allows the police to demand identification on the spot.

In Finland, emergency service dispatching has been centralized to the joint Emergency Response Centers of the police, rescue services, and social and health care services. The Emergency Response Centre receives all calls for assistance in case of emergencies and dispatches the necessary authorities.

## Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Finland, review the local laws and circumstances on the Department of State's Country Information Page.

- [Women Travelers](#)
- [LGB Travelers](#)
- [Travelers with Disabilities](#)
- [Student Travelers](#)
- [Faith-Based Travelers](#)

## Rule of Law, Arbitrary Detention, Official Harassment, Corruption, & Transparency

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Risk of Wrongful Detention “D” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Finland. If you are arrested or detained, ask police or prison officials to notify the U.S. Embassy immediately.

Finland's electoral laws are robust and generally well implemented by the relevant authorities. Targeting of Finnish government ministers with abusive language on Twitter is a common occurrence.

Laws permitting access to public information are generally well enforced, though there are some limits on the disclosure of information related to national security, foreign affairs, trade secrets, and criminal investigations. All citizens, including government officials, are required by law to make public asset declarations, though there are no penalties for noncompliance. While companies perceive corruption risks and favoritism within public procurement as low, informal networks and personal associations, notably at the local level, are still believed to hold influence over procurement decisions.

Corruption is not a significant problem in Finland and is generally punished under relevant laws when discovered.

## Cybersecurity

While the number of cybersecurity incidents remains relatively low by global standards, Finnish statistics show high yearly growth rates, especially in information systems interference, hacking, and data protection crimes. Problems have increased particularly in the construction, transportation, and logistics sectors.

Authorities continue to express concern over the threat posed by economic espionage facilitated by cyberattacks. In 2017, Helsinki opened The European Center of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid CoE) to coordinate a response against political, diplomatic, economic, cyber, and disinformation measures. Finland also operates a National Cyber Security Center (NCSC-FI), which operates under the Finnish Transport and Communications Agency.

Finnish and EU privacy laws are strict, although a great deal of personal information remains available via government sources, including address, telephone, and vehicle information. In 2018, the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) went into effect; an updated Finnish Data Protection Act went into effect in 2019.

Finland is a target of systematic cyber espionage operations by the same countries that show intelligence-related interest towards Finland in general—Russia and the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Cyber espionage is currently more active than usual and identifying security anomalies is now more challenging than in normal circumstances. SUPO has warned of the growing risk from the intersection between the private sector and foreign powers and has acknowledged that Finland’s NATO membership has raised the threshold for hostile operations.

As a result of the Vastaamo hacking and blackmail incident in 2020, sensitive customer information ended up on the internet, and some customers have received ransom messages. The offenses investigated by the NBI in the matter comprise an aggravated computer break-in, aggravated extortion, and aggravated dissemination of information violating personal privacy.

Finns have lost millions of Euros in banking frauds. Distinguishing fake websites from genuine ones may be difficult. It is typical of these offenses that criminals gain access to victims' online banking details and then unlawfully transfer money from their accounts. Criminals have targeted several banks and their customers in Finland. The police have filed approximately 700 reports of fraud and means-of-payment fraud in 2021. The first victims of phishing and subsequent fraud were senior citizens, but now people of all ages have become victims. Criminal damages total close to 7m€.

## Import/Export Restrictions

The export of some goods is restricted, or it has been fully prohibited by either Community or national regulations. Restrictions apply for example to exports of weapons, weapon supplies, dual use products, defense materiel, cultural objects, and ozone-depleting materials.

In Finland, Customs is the supervising authority in matters concerning export restrictions. However, other authorities administer restrictions and grant export permits. For example, the Police Board is responsible for weapons and weapon supplies, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs sees to dual use products, and the National Board of Antiquities handles cultural objects.

The Customs restrictions manual will give you more information on valid export restrictions. The Customs restriction manual features all the statutory import, export and transit restrictions in which Customs is designated as the supervising authority. The restriction manual consists of separate sections that are grouped according to goods that are subject to restrictions. In each section, the restrictions involved with goods are clarified regarding different customs procedures.

Some goods are subject to import restrictions and import prohibitions, and the import of restricted goods often requires a license, even when importing from within the EU. These goods

include: Medicines; Live animals; Plants; and animal-based foodstuffs; Pleasure craft, personal watercraft and outboard engines; Endangered animals and plants and goods made out of them; and Firearms and ammunition.

A license must be acquired prior to the goods arriving in Finland. Restrictions can be found in the Customs restrictions manual.

You may bring a 90-day supply of most personal prescription drugs with a formal doctor's note. Prescribed narcotics may only be brought into Finland for your personal use for a maximum of 14 days and must be accompanied by a medical certificate stating why you need them. Finnish customs regulations prohibit you from receiving medication shipments from abroad. Local physicians may be reluctant to prescribe equivalent quantities or dosages.

There are no restrictions on the import and use of satellite phones or similar devices.

A country-specific listing of items/goods prohibited from being exported to the country or that are otherwise restricted is available from the U.S. International Trade Agency [website](#).

*Additional resources and reports can be found in the [OSAC Traveler Toolkit](#).*