

# Finland - OVERVIEW

Updated: March 21, 2014



**Country Name Long Form:** Republic of Finland

**Government Type:** Republic

**Languages Spoken:** Finnish, Swedish, English

**National Flag**



**Finland is a Tier III Country. Significant security measures are necessary.**

	Overall Assessment	Political Violence	Crime	Terrorism	Travel Safety
Finland					
Key: (L) Low – (M) Medium – (H) High – (C)Critical					

## POLITICAL CONDITIONS

**Political Violence is rated at LOW in Athens**

The U.S. Embassy is rarely targeted by demonstrators, and anti- U.S. demonstrations have been peaceful. Anarchist rallies occasionally occur in downtown Helsinki, but few are violent.

## TERRORISM

**Terrorism is assessed as LOW**

Finland has not experienced any significant terrorist incidents or threats. Recent terrorist events in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark have elevated Finnish police awareness. However, leading terrorist experts in Finland believe that the threat of terrorism in Finland remains low.

## RULE OF LAW / CORRUPTION

# Finland - OVERVIEW

---

The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2013 gave Finland a score of 89, indicating that the country has low levels of corruption. The CPI rates countries by the perceived levels of corruption in the public sector, with the least corrupt receiving a maximum score of 100.

## CRIME

### Crime is assessed as **LOW**

Americans are seldom the victims of violent criminal acts, and most violent crimes committed in Finland go almost unnoticed by ordinary Finnish citizens, who more typically fall victim to crimes like burglaries and thefts. Non-violent crimes, such as petty theft and pick-pocketing, increase twofold during the warmer months. Personal robberies occur but are most often during late hours.

Violent crime fell six percent in 2013 from 2012, and the number of recorded robberies dropped seven percent. However cases of fraud have grown considerably over the past year, by approximately nine percent.

Alcohol is the major social ill that contributes to criminal activity. Violent crime is relatively rare but assaults do occur, particularly in clubs frequented by young people. Especially in greater Helsinki, it is not uncommon to encounter individuals who are visibly intoxicated, and these individuals are often encountered on public transportation and in the same areas frequented by visitors and tourists. Crimes associated with the use of alcohol remain the largest challenge for local law enforcement and present the greatest risk to visitors. Of the incidents, involving street violence, 80 percent of perpetrators have been under the influence of alcohol.

## KIDNAPPING

Kidnappings are rare in Finland.

## SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assaults do occur but are much lower reported than in other European countries.

## NATURAL DISASTERS

Winter temperatures in Finland can drop extremely low, below 40 degrees Celsius, with northern parts of the country covered by snow for about seven months of the year. Exposure to the cold temperatures could result in frostbite or hypothermia. Moreover, landslides, floods and strong winds can pose a threat, particularly at the end of the winter and in early spring.

## STANDING TRAVEL ADVICE

- Be prepared and dress accordingly if traveling during Finland's winter season.
- Stay in groups, travel in a caravan consisting of two or more vehicles, and stay on the main roads.

## Finland - OVERVIEW

---

- Ensure that someone not traveling with you is aware of your itinerary.
- Avoid hotels that do not have adequate security.
- It is preferable to stay in the main tourist destinations.
- Pay close attention to your surroundings, especially when walking.
- Official taxis are a suitable means of travel in daylight hours in urban areas. It is highly recommended that taxis be arranged through your hotel, or program office. Negotiate the price in advance.
- Women should be especially careful when traveling alone and avoid staying out late without a trusted male escort.
- Make sensible security precautions to mitigate the risk of petty crime, particularly pick pocketing and bag snatching.
- Carry a photocopy of your passport when traveling to avoid losing it in a robbery.
- Do not resist if you are being robbed and avoid eye contact and do not make any sudden movements. Victims have been killed when they resisted attack or refused to give up their money or other valuables.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times and keep a low profile.
- Never leave your belongings unattended.
- Carry bags close to your body and make sure the fasteners are secure.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash or wearing expensive jewelry or valuables.
- Leave all important documents in a safe or safe deposit box at your hotel and only carry certified copies.
- Trust your instincts. If someone or something makes you uneasy, avoid the situation.

### **Important Contact Details:**

**International Dialing Code:** +358

**International Dialing Prefix:** 00

### **Victims of crime in Finland should contact the following phone numbers for assistance:**

**POLICE:** The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Finland is 112

**FIRE DEPARTMENT:** 112

**AMBULANCE:** 112

**Note:** Police, ambulance or fire department response may be unreliable in some parts of the country.

## TRAVEL & ROAD SAFETY

# Finland - OVERVIEW

---

- Finland's infrastructure is modern and reliable, and the country has a well-maintained road network.
- Roads, especially in the north, may become impassable during Finland's winter months (from November to February).
- Electricity, water and fuel provision is reliable across the country; petrol stations are few and far between in the north and east.
- The provision of electricity, water and fuel is reliable across the country, and shortages are rarely reported.
- Telecommunication services, including mobile phones and internet coverage, are available in all but the most remote locations in Finland.

## RECOMMENDED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

- No rural travel after dark.
- No deviation from approved travel routes.
- No use of ATMs after dark.

## HEALTH

Medical facilities are generally excellent, although it should be noted that access to advanced treatment may take time in remote parts of the country. Most of the medical staff speaks English. Pharmacies are available in all main cities and towns and are well stocked with basic medical supplies.

- Tap water in Finland is safe to drink but we still recommend that travelers drink bottle water as a precaution.
- Unpasteurized milk should be boiled before consumption, or powdered or tinned milk should be used as an alternative.

The following vaccinations are recommended or required if travelling to Finland:

- Hepatitis A (recommended for travelers going to rural areas)
- Hepatitis B (recommended)
- Tick-borne encephalitis (recommended for travelers visiting forested areas)

## SIGNIFICANT DISEASES

- **Tick-borne encephalitis** – A viral infection of the central nervous system that is spread by Ixodes ticks. This is a risk between March and November each year in many rural or forested areas.

It is also important to ensure that routine vaccinations are up to date for diseases including influenza, chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus.

# Finland - OVERVIEW

---

## **HOSPITALS – Finland**

Meilahti Hospital  
Haartmaninkatu 4  
Tel: 09-4711

Töölö Hospital  
Topeliuksenkatu 5  
Tel: 09-4711

## **US EMBASSY – CONSULATE LOCATIONS**

### **The US Embassy in Finland**

Itäinen Puistotie 1 4 B  
Helsinki  
Tel: +358 (0)9 6162 5701  
Fax: +358 (0)9 6162 5800  
Emergency Tel: +358 (0)9 6162 5475  
Email: [HelsinkiACS@state.gov](mailto:HelsinkiACS@state.gov)  
Website: <http://finland.usembassy.gov/>

## **USF INTERNATIONAL HOTLINE**

USF 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 813-317-5815

AXA Assistance 24/7 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE LINE: 1-877-577-9504 / +1-203-399-5130 (Call collect from abroad)

ASSIST ID #: GLMN 04983932. <http://www.culturalinsurance.com/resources/>

\* Information derived from CIA World Fact Book, US Department of State, OSAC, and Travel Guard. This travel overview summarizes some of the most important concerns; however, it does not negate the need for detailed trip planning.