

Appendix: Finland among the best in the world

Statistics Finland produces a handy annual list of areas in which Finland is deemed to excel. It was last fully updated on 5 December 2018, although a few more items were added on 6 December 2019. The source for all the claims found below can be found in the update: http://www.stat.fi/tup/tilastokirjasto/itsenaisyyspaiva-2019_en.html, and in the original list: http://www.stat.fi/tup/satavuotias-suomi/suomi-maailman-karjessa_en.html.

Finland is a small country on a global scale. It accounts for just 0.07 per cent of both the world's total population and exactly the same global share of its total land area. But even a small country can jump to the top of the world, and this is what Finland has done: in international country comparisons of positive things, Finland is often among the top countries next to other Nordic countries.

In honour of Finland's centenary celebrations, Statistics Finland collected a list of comparisons in which Finland is one of the best in the world. The list was last updated on 5 December 2018, when Finland was for the last day one hundred years old.

Society

- Finland is the most stable country in the world.
- Finland is the safest country in the world.
- Finland is the fourth "best" country in the world. (The Good Country Index).

- Finland had the best governance in the world in 2018 (and ranked second best in 2019).
- Finland's police and internal security as a whole are the second best in the world.
- Finland has the lowest level of organized crime in the world.
- Next to Norwegians and Icelanders, Finns are the second least insecure-feeling people in the world.
- Finland's judicial system is the most independent in the world.
- After the Danes, Finns' elections are the freest and most reliable in the world.
- Finland has the third lowest level of corruption in the world.
- Finland is the third most prosperous country in the world.
- Protection of property rights in Finland is the best in the world.
- Access to official information in Finland is the best in the EU.
- Finnish banks are the soundest in the world.
- Finland's pension system is the third-best in the world (in a field of 34 countries).
- Finland has the third highest levels of personal freedom and choice in the world.
- Finland had the fourth greatest press freedom in the world in 2018 (rising to second best in 2019).
- After Denmark and Sweden, Finland is the most socially just EU country.
- Of the world's richest countries, Finland ranks third highest in its dedication to policies that benefit people living in poorer nations.
- Finland is the best country in the world in a comparison of human well-being.
- Finland is the third best country in the world in adhering to the rule of law.
- Finland is the world's highest-ranked country for the protection of fundamental human rights.

Satisfaction and trust

- Finland is the happiest country in the world.
- In 2018, Finns were the second most satisfied with their life among Europeans (and the most satisfied in 2019).

- Of all EU citizens, Finns are the most satisfied with their accommodation.
- Among EU citizens, Finns are the second most likely to have someone to rely on in case of need.
- Finns' trust in the police is the highest in Europe, and second-highest in Europe in their trust in their political and legal systems (in 2018, then rising to the top in 2019).
- Worldwide, Finns have the highest level of trust in the news media.
- Finns' trust in other people is the highest in Europe.
- In Finland, consumers' confidence in the economy is the second strongest in Europe.

Equality

- Finland is the third most gender equal country in the world (dropping to fourth in 2019).
- Participation of different genders in working life in Finland is the second most equitable in the EU.
- Finnish women's gender equality in working life is the fourth best in the world.
- In Finland, power is divided between genders the third most equally in the EU.
- Finland had Europe's third largest number of female MPs in 2018 (and the second largest by 2019).
- Finland has the second lowest poverty rate amongst OECD countries.
- Finland has the fifth lowest income differences amongst OECD countries.

Environment and energy

- The air in Finland is the cleanest in the world.
- Finland is the most water-rich country in the world.
- The risk of exposure to natural disasters is lowest in the world in Finland, together with Bahrain, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Singapore.
- Finland has the most forests in Europe.
- Finland has the third largest area of wetlands in Europe.

- The share of total energy consumption accounted for by renewable energy in Finland is the second greatest of all EU countries.

Education and human capital

- Finland has the most human capital in the world.
- Finland in 2019 ranked first of all OECD countries in education.
- Education in Finland in 2018 when measured by its ability to answer to future needs, ranked the third best in the world (and it was in first place by that score in 2019).
- Finland was third in a qualitative comparison of lifelong learning in EU countries in 2018 (and rose to the number one spot in 2019).
- Finnish adults have the third highest levels of numeracy of all OECD countries.
- Finland is the most literate country in the world.
- Finns are the second biggest library users in Europe.

Information society and competitiveness

- Finland is the second best in the world in using information and communication technologies to boost competitiveness and well-being.
- Finland has the EU's best digital public services.
- Finland has the strongest human capital in digital knowledge in Europe.
- Finland has the second largest number of wireless mobile broadband subscriptions per inhabitant in OECD countries.
- Finns use most mobile data per subscription of all users in all OECD countries.
- Finnish enterprises are more likely than in any other OECD country to have their own website.
- Finland was the third best country for business in Europe in 2018 (and the best in the world in 2019).
- Finland has the third best economic environment for business growth.
- Corporate ethics in Finland are the second best in the world.
- Finland is the second-best country in the field of clean technology.

- Finland's sustainable competitiveness is the fourth best in the world.

Children's well-being and school attendance

- Finland has the second lowest inequality among children in the world.
- Finland is the second-best country in the world to be a girl.
- Finnish children had the fifth most secure childhood in the world in 2018 (up to third spot in 2019).
- Young people (aged 11 to 15) in Finland in 2018 were the fourth most satisfied with their life (rising to third in 2019).
- Finns aged 15 are the third most satisfied with their lives among young people of the same age in OECD countries.
- Finnish fourth graders' knowledge of science is the second best in OECD countries.
- Finns aged 15 are the second best in literacy and the third best in science among OECD countries.

Health

- Finland is among the world's top 25 countries in life expectancy at birth. The differences among the countries at the top of this table are small.
- Finland has the fewest underweight (under 2,500 g) newborns of all OECD countries.
- Mothers' and children's well-being in Finland are the second best in the world.
- Finland in 2018 had the world's third lowest infant mortality rate, which records deaths at the age of under one year, and by 2019 it had the lowest.
- Maternal mortality is the lowest in the world in Finland, together with Greece, Iceland and Poland.
- Finland has the second lowest total mortality from cancer in EU countries.
- Finnish adults are the second least likely to smoke of EU countries.
- The proportion of inhabitants of Finland who actively exercise is greater than in any other EU country.

Capital city

- Helsinki is the third best city to live in (of many compared in one global survey).
- People living in Helsinki have the world's highest satisfaction with the place where they live, along with residents of Stockholm.
- Helsinki is the second most appealing city in the world for start-ups.
- Helsinki is the most equal city in Europe.
- Helsinki is the fifth best city worldwide in terms of the availability of a talented workforce.
- Helsinki is the third best city in Europe in terms of technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Among European cities, Helsinki is the fourth best in supporting digital enterprises and entrepreneurs.
- Of European big cities, Helsinki is the easiest and most pleasant to get around in.
- People living in Helsinki are the second most satisfied with cultural facilities, of all EU capital cities' inhabitants.
- Helsinki is the most honest city in the world.
- The Helsinki-Vantaa airport is the best in the world (according to Lonely Planet).

And in these Finland is also at the top of the world

- Finland has the third most space per person in Europe.
- Finns drink most coffee per person in the world (although the Dutch contest this claim).
- Finns drink the most milk per capita in the world.
- Finland has the most Summer Olympics medals per capita.
- Finnish adults' English skills are the sixth best in a comparison of 80 countries.
- In 2018, the Finnish passport had the third greatest influence in the world (rising to second in 2019).
- Finland has the second largest number of islands in the world.
- Finland has the greatest number of heavy metal bands per inhabitant in the world.

*And, as updated in December 2019
in addition to the above:*

- Finland is the second most just country for children among the world's developed countries.
- Finland has the second most skilled workforce in the world.
- Finland is the third best country in the world for women.
- Finland is the most advanced country in the EU in the use of digitalisation.
- Finland is the third most innovative country in the world.
- Among EU citizens, Finns have the greatest trust in their defence forces.
- Finland is third best in the world at achieving progress on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- Compared to its size, Finland generates the most good for humanity.
- Finland is the country in the world where people are the most free* (tying, in 2018, with Sweden and Norway for first place).

* And, we might add, free to do what they want, any old time, as The Soup Dragons sang in their 1990 cover of the 1965 Rolling Stones song "I'm free". Or, as it was a little more prosaically put by the 2018 and 2019 Freedom in the World reports – when measuring the degree of civil liberties and political rights that people enjoy – Finns are free to think what they want, and say what they want, and achieve what they want to achieve. Equality is freedom, freedom is equality, and today of any country in the world, it is in Finland that people are the freest.