



Helsinki Basic Facts

- Founded in 1550; became capital of the Grand Duchy of Finland in 1812
- Capital of the independent Republic of Finland in 1917
- Population: City of Helsinki 590,000, Helsinki Region 1.3 million
- Total area 715 sq km, of which sea accounts for 500 sq km. Coastline 123 km, including 315 islands
- Finnish-speakers 84 %, Swedish-speakers 6 %, others 10 %
- Home to six universities with 60,000 students and several universities of applied sciences with 36,000 students
- Main port for international trade: the value of the cargo traffic at the Port of Helsinki represents approximately one-third of the total value of Finnish foreign trade
- The public transportation system serves more than 1 million travellers a day
- Circa 2.9 million overnight stays in accommodation outlets (2009)
- Cultural destinations include Suomenlinna Fortress, a UNESCO World Heritage Site (713,000 visitors in 2009), Temppeliaukio Church (520,000 visitors), Uspenski Cathedral (418,000 visitors) and Helsinki Cathedral (350,000 visitors).
- Under City policy, 1 % of the budget of new construction projects is allocated to public art.