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The Faculty of foreign languages

The English Department

PROJECT

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**PLAN**

1. **History**
2. **Geography and environment**
3. **Climate**

**4. Political system**

**5. Industry, economy and globalization**

**6. Culture**

**Geography and environment**

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Finland\_1996\_CIA\_map.jpg

Detailed map of Finland.

Finland is a country of thousands of lakes and islands; 187,888 lakes (larger than 500 m²) and 179,584 islands to be precise. One of these lakes, Saimaa, is the fifth largest in Europe. The Finnish landscape is mostly flat with few hills and its highest point, the Halti at 1,324 metres, is found in the extreme north of Lapland at the border between Finland and Norway.

The landscape is covered mostly (seventy-five percent of land area) by coniferous taiga forests and fens, with little arable land. The most common type of rock is granite. It is a ubiquitous part of the scenery, visible wherever there is no soil cover. Moraine or till is the most common type of soil, covered by a thin layer of humus of biological origin. The greater part of the islands are found in southwest in the Archipelago Sea, part of the archipelago of the Åland Islands, and along the southern coast in the Gulf of Finland.

Finland is one of the few countries in the world whose surface area is still growing. Owing to the post-glacial rebound that has been taking place since the last ice age, the surface area of the country is growing by about 7 square kilometres (2.7 square miles) a year.

The distance from the most Southern point – Hanko – to the most northern point of Finland – Nuorgam – is 1,445 kilometres (898 miles) (driving distance), which would take approximately 18.5 hours to drive. This is very similar to Great Britain (Land's End to John o' Groats – 1,404 kilometres (872 miles) and 16.5 h).

### Flora and fauna

All terrestrial life in Finland was completely wiped out during the last ice age that ended some 10,000 years ago, following the retreat of the glaciers and the appearance of vegetation.

Today, there are over 1,200 species of vascular plant, 800 bryophytes and 1,000 lichen species in Finland, with flora being richest in the southern parts of the country. Plant life, like most of the Finnish ecology, is well adapted to tolerate the contrasting seasons and extreme weather. Many plant species, such as the Scots Pine, spruce, birch spread throughout Finland from Norway and only reached the western coast less than three millennia ago. Oak and maple grows in nature only in the southern part of Finland.

The Archipelago Sea, between the Gulf of Bothnia and the Gulf of Finland, is the largest archipelago in the world by number of islands; estimates vary between 20,000 and 50,000.

Similarly, Finland has a diverse and extensive range of fauna. There are at least sixty native mammalian species, 248 breeding bird species, over seventy fish species and eleven reptile and frog species present today, many migrating from neighbouring countries thousands of years ago.

Large and widely recognised wildlife mammals found in Finland are the Brown Bear (the national animal), Gray Wolf, elk and reindeer. Other common mammals include the Red Fox, Red Squirrel, and Mountain Hare. Some rare and exotic species include the flying squirrel, Golden Eagle, Saimaa Ringed Seal and the Arctic fox, which is considered the most endangered. The Whooper Swan, the national bird of Finland, is a large Northern Hemisphere swan. The most common breeding birds are the Willow Warbler, Chaffinch and Redwing. Of some seventy species of freshwater fish, the northern pike, perch and others are plentiful. Salmon remains the favorite of fly rod enthusiasts.

The endangered Saimaa Ringed Seal, one of only three lake seal species in the world, exists only in the Saimaa lake system of southeastern Finland, down to only 300 seals today. It has become the emblem of the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation.

Due to hunting and persecution in history, many animals such as the Golden Eagle, Brown Bear and Eurasian Lynx all experienced significant declines in population. However, their numbers have increased again in the 2000s, mainly as a result of careful conservation and the establishment of vast national parks.

**Climate**

The climate in Southern Finland is a northern temperate climate. In Northern Finland, particularly in the Province of Lapland, a subarctic climate dominates, characterised by cold, occasionally severe, winters and relatively warm summers. The main factor influencing Finland's climate is the country's geographical position between the 60th and 70th northern parallels in the Eurasian continent's coastal zone, which shows characteristics of both a maritime and a continental climate, depending on the direction of air flow. Finland is near enough to the Atlantic Ocean to be continuously warmed by the Gulf Stream, which explains the unusually warm climate considering the absolute latitude.

A quarter of Finland's territory lies above the Arctic Circle, and as a consequence the midnight sun can be experienced – for more days, the farther north one travels. At Finland's northernmost point, the sun does not set for 73 consecutive days during summer, and does not rise at all for 51 days during winter.

**Political system**

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Eduskuntatalo\_%28Finnish\_Parliament\_building%29.JPGEduskuntatalo, the main building of the Parliament of Finland (Eduskunta) in Helsinki.

Finland has a semi-presidential system with parliamentarism. The president is responsible for foreign policy outside of the European Union in cooperation with the cabinet (the Finnish Council of State) where most executive power lies, headed by the Prime Minister. Responsibility for forming the cabinet is granted to a person nominated by the President and approved of by the Parliament. This person also becomes Prime Minister after formal appointment by the President. Any minister and the cabinet as a whole, however, must have continuing trust of the parliament and may be voted out, resign or be replaced. The Council of State is made up of the Prime Minister and the ministers for the various departments of the central government as well as an ex-officio member, the Chancellor of Justice.

The 200-member unicameral parliament is called the *Eduskunta* (Finnish) or *Riksdag* (Swedish). It is the supreme legislative authority in Finland. The parliament may alter the Constitution of Finland, bring about the resignation of the Council of State, and override presidential vetoes. Its acts are not subject to judicial review. Legislation may be initiated by the Council of State, or one of the Eduskunta members, who are elected for a four-year term on the basis of proportional representation through open list multi-member districts.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Flag\_of\_Finland\_%28state%29.svgThe judicial system of Finland is divided between courts with regular civil and criminal jurisdiction and administrative courts with responsibility for litigation between the individuals and the administrative organs of the state and the communities. Finnish law is codified and based on Swedish law and in a wider sense, civil law or Roman law. Its court system consists of local courts, regional appellate courts, and the Supreme Court. The administrative branch of justice consists of administrative courts and the Supreme Administrative Court. In addition to the regular courts, there are a few special courts in certain branches of administration. There is also a High Court of Impeachment for criminal charges (for an offence in office) against the President of the Republic, the justices of the supreme courts, members of the Council of State, the Chancellor of Justice and the Ombudsman of Parliament.

The parliament has, since equal and common suffrage was introduced in 1906, been dominated by secular Conservatives, the Centre Party (former Agrarian Union), and Social Democrats, which have approximately equal support, and represent 65–80 percent of voters. After 1944 Communists were a factor to consider for a few decades. The relative strengths of the parties vary only slightly in the elections due to the proportional election from multi-member districts but there are some visible long-term trends.

Like the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, Finland has no constitutional court, and courts may not strike down laws or pronounce on their constitutionality. In principle, the constitutionality of laws in Finland is verified by a simple vote in the parliament. However, the constitutional committee in the parliament reviews legistlation during the lawmaking process, and thus performs a similar role.

According to Transparency International, Finland has had the lowest level of corruption in all the countries studied in its survey for the last several years. Also according to the World Audit study, Finland is the least corrupt and most democratic country in the world as of 2006.

In its 2007 Worldwide Press Freedom Index, Reporters Without Borders ranked Finland (along with Belgium and Sweden) 5th out of 169 countries.

**Industry, economy and globalization**

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Nokia\_HQ.jpg

Headquarters of Nokia, Finland's largest company.

### Overview

Finland has a highly industrialised, free-market economy with a per capita output equal to that of other western economies such as Sweden, the UK, France and Germany. The largest sector of the economy is services at 65.7 percent, followed by manufacturing and refining at 31.4 percent. Primary production is low at 2.9 percent, reflecting the fact that Finland is a resource-poor country. With respect to foreign trade, the key economic sector is manufacturing. The largest industries are electronics (21.6 percent), machinery, vehicles and other engineered metal products (21.1 percent), forest industry (13.1 percent), and chemicals (10.9 percent). International trade is important, with exports equalling almost one-third of GDP. Except for timber and several minerals, Finland depends on imports of raw materials, energy and some components for manufactured goods.

Because of the northern climate, agricultural development is limited to maintaining self-sufficiency. Forestry, an important export earner, provides a secondary occupation for the rural population.

Finland was one of the eleven countries joining the euro monetary system (EMU) on January 1, 1999. The national currency markka (FIM), in use since 1860, was withdrawn and replaced by the euro (EUR) at the beginning of 2002 (see Finnish euro coins).

The World Economic Forum has declared Finland to be the most competitive country in the world for three consecutive years (2003–2005) and four times since 2002. In recent years there has been national focus on innovation and research and development, with special emphasis on information technology. Nokia, the telecommunications company, is generally regarded as the single most significant cause of Finland's success.

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### Economic history

Finnish trade relationships and politics were by large determined by avoidance of provoking first the feudally ruled Imperial Russia and then the totalitarian Soviet Union. However, the peaceful relationship with both the Soviet Union and Western powers was turned into an economic advantage. The Soviet Union conducted bilateral trade with Finland, but Western countries remained Finland's main trading partners. After the Second World War, the growth rate of the GDP was high compared to other Europe, and Finland was often called "Japan of the North". In the beginning of the 1970s, Finland's GDP per capita reached the level of Japan and the UK.

In 1991, Finland fell into a severe depression caused by economic overheating, depressed foreign markets and the dismantling of the barter system between Finland and the former Soviet Union. More than twenty percent of Finnish trade was with the Soviet Union before 1991, and in the following two years the trade practically ceased. The growth in the 1980s was based on debt, and when the defaults began rolling in, an avalanche effect increased the unemployment from a virtual full employment to one fifth of the workforce. However, civil order remained and the state alleviated the problem of funding the welfare state by taking massive debts. 1991 and again in 1992, Finland devalued the markka to promote export competitiveness. This helped stabilise the economy; the depression bottomed out in 1993, with continued growth through 1995. Since then the growth rate has been one of the highest of OECD countries, and national debt has been reduced to 41.1 percent of GDP (fulfilling the EU's Stability and Growth Pact requirement). Unfortunately, the unemployment has been persistent, and is currently at about 7 percent.

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### Notable corporations

The 339 metres long M/S *Freedom of the Seas* and her sister ship M/S *Liberty of the Seas*, built at Aker Yards in Perno, Turku, are the largest cruise ships and passenger vessels in the world.

Notable Finnish companies include Nokia, the market leader in mobile telephony; Stora Enso, the largest paper manufacturer in the world; Neste Oil, an oil refining and marketing company; UPM-Kymmene, the third largest paper manufacturer in the world; Aker Finnyards, the manufacturer of the world's largest cruise ships (such as Royal Caribbean's *Freedom of the Seas*); KONE, a manufacturer of elevators and escalators; Wärtsilä, a producer of power plants and ship engines; and Finnair, the country's international airline.

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### Public transport

Helsinki-Vantaa Airport, the main airport of the Helsinki Metropolitan Region and the whole of Finland.

Finland's transport network is developed. As of 2005, the country's network of main roads has a total length of 13,258 km, and is mainly centred on the capital city of Helsinki. The total length of all public roads is 78,186 km, of which 50,616 km are paved. The motorway network is still to a great extent under development, and currently totals 653 km. There are 5,865 km of railways in the country. Helsinki has an urban rail network, and light rail systems are currently being planned in Turku and Tampere. Finland also has a considerable number of airports and large ports.

The national railway company is VR (Valtion Rautatiet, or State Railways). It offers InterCity and express trains throughout the country and the faster Pendolino trains connecting the major cities. There are large discounts (usually fifty percent) available for children (7–16 yr), students, senior citizens and conscripts. There are international trains to St. Petersburg (Finnish and Russian day-time trains) and Moscow (Russian over-night train), Russia. Connections to Sweden are by bus due to rail gauge differences. It's possible to take the

* Silja Line and Viking Line ferries from Helsinki and Turku to Mariehamn and Lagans, Stockholm (Sweden) and Tallinn (Estonia),
* Tallink ferries from Helsinki to Tallinn (Estonia) and Rostock (Germany)
* Eckerö Line ferries from Helsinki to Tallinn (Estonia) and from Eckerö to Grisslehamn (Sweden).

There are about 25 airports in Finland with scheduled passenger services. Finnair, Blue1 and Finncomm Airlines provide air services both domestically and internationally. Helsinki-Vantaa Airport is Finland's global gateway with scheduled non-stop flights to such places as Bangkok, Beijing, Delhi, Guangzhou, Mumbai, Nagoya, New York, Osaka, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Tokyo. Helsinki has an optimal location for great circle airline traffic routes between Western Europe and the Far East. Hence, many foreign tourists visit Helsinki on a stop-over while flying from Asia to Europe or vice versa.

**Culture**

Chimneyless sauna building in Enonkoski. Strong Finnish sauna culture is one of the remains of the aboriginal Finnish culture.

Like the people, Finnish culture is indigenous and most prominently represented by the Finnish language. Throughout the area's prehistory and history, cultural contacts and influences have concurrently, or at varying times, come from all directions. As a result of 600 years of Swedish rule, Swedish cultural influences are still notable. Today, cultural influences from North America are prominent. Into the twenty-first century, many Finns have contacted cultures from distantly abroad, such as with those in Asia and Africa. Beyond tourism, Finnish youth in particular have been increasing their contact with peoples from outside Finland by travelling abroad to both work and study.

There are still differences between regions, especially minor differences in accents and vocabulary. Minorities, such as the Sami, Finland Swedes, Romani, and Tatar, maintain their own cultural characteristics. Many Finns are emotionally connected to the countryside and nature, as urbanisation is a relatively recent phenomenon.

Finland comfortably won the first Eurovision Dance Contest in September 2007.

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### Literature

Though Finnish written language could be said to exist since Mikael Agricola translated the New Testament into Finnish in the sixteenth century as a result of the Protestant Reformation, few notable works of literature were written until the nineteenth century, which saw the beginning of a Finnish national Romantic Movement. This prompted Elias Lönnrot to collect Finnish and Karelian folk poetry and arrange and publish them as *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic. The era saw a rise of poets and novelists who wrote in Finnish, notably Aleksis Kivi and Eino Leino.

After Finland became independent there was a rise of modernist writers, most famously Mika Waltari. Frans Eemil Sillanpää was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1939 – so far the only one for a Finnish author. The second World War prompted a return to more national interests in comparison to a more international line of thought, characterized by Väinö Linna. Literature in modern Finland is in a healthy state, with detective stories enjoying a particular boom of popularity. Ilkka Remes, a Finnish author of thrillers, is very popular.

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### Visual arts

The architect couple Aino and Alvar Aalto.

Finns have made major contributions to handicrafts and industrial design. Finland's best-known sculptor of the twentieth century was Wäinö Aaltonen, remembered for his monumental busts and sculptures. Finnish architecture is famous around the world. Among the top of the twentieth century Finnish architects to win international recognition are Eliel Saarinen (designer of the widely recognised Helsinki Central railway station and many other public works) and his son Eero Saarinen. Alvar Aalto, who helped bring the functionalist architecture to Finland, is also famous for his work in furniture and glassware.

**Folk music**

Much of the music of Finland is influenced by traditional Karelian melodies and lyrics, as comprised in the *Kalevala.* Karelian culture is perceived as the purest expression of the Finnic myths and beliefs, less influenced by Germanic influence, in contrast to Finland's position between the East and the West. Finnish folk music has undergone a roots revival in recent decades, and has become a part of popular music.

**Sami music**

The people of northern Finland, Sweden and Norway, the Sami, are known primarily for highly spiritual songs called Joik. The same word sometimes refers to lavlu or vuelie songs, though this is technically incorrect.

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#### Classical and opera

The Finnish composer Jean Sibelius (1865–1957), a significant figure in the history of classical music.

The first Finnish opera was written by the German composer Fredrik Pacius in 1852. Pacius also wrote *Maamme/Vårt land* (Our Land), Finland's national anthem. In the 1890s Finnish nationalism based on the *Kalevala* spread, and Jean Sibelius became famous for his vocal symphony *Kullervo*. He soon received a grant to study *runo singers* in Karelia and continued his rise as the first prominent Finnish musician. In 1899 he composed Finlandia, which played its important role in Finland gaining independence. He remains one of Finland's most popular national figures and is a symbol of the nation.

Today, Finland has a very lively classical music scene. Finnish classical music has only existed for about a hundred years, and many of the important composers are still alive, such as Magnus Lindberg, Kaija Saariaho, Aulis Sallinen and Einojuhani Rautavaara. The composers are accompanied with a large number of great conductors such as Sakari Oramo, Mikko Franck, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Osmo Vänskä, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Susanna Mälkki and Leif Segerstam. Some of the internationally acclaimed Finnish classical musicians are Karita Mattila, Soile Isokoski, Kari Kriikku, Pekka Kuusisto, Réka Szilvay and Linda Brava.

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#### Popular music

Modern Finnish popular music includes a renowned heavy metal scene, in common with other Nordic countries, as well as a number of prominent rock bands, jazz musicians, hip hop performers, and dance music acts such as Bomfunk MCs and Darude. Finnish electronic music such as the Sähkö Recordings record label enjoys underground acclaim. *Iskelmä* (coined directly from the German word *Schlager*, meaning *hit*) is a traditional Finnish word for a light popular song. Finnish popular music also includes various kinds of dance music; tango, a style of Argentinean music, is also popular. One of the most productive composers of popular music was Toivo Kärki, and the most famous singer Olavi Virta (1915–1972). Among the lyricists, Sauvo Puhtila (born 1928), Reino Helismaa (died 1965) and Veikko "Vexi" Salmi are the most remarkable authors. The composer and bandleader Jimi Tenor is well known for his brand of retro-funk music.

#### Dance Music

Notable Finnish dance music artists include Bomfunc MCs, Darude, JS16, and DJ Orkidea.

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#### Rock, hard rock and heavy metal music

Tarja Turunen, Amorphis, Children of Bodom, HIM, Lordi, Nightwish, Sentenced, Sonata Arctica, Stratovarius, The 69 Eyes, and Negative, ("Best Finnish Act" MTV Europe Music Awards 2007) , have had success in European and Japanese heavy metal and hard rock scenes since the 1990s, and have been gaining popularity rapidly in the United States since the late 1990s. In the later 1990s the cello metal group Apocalyptica played Metallica cover versions as cello quartettos and sold half a million records worldwide. The recently retired Timo Rautiainen & Trio Niskalaukaus were one of Finland's most popular metal acts in the early 2000s.

Arguably one of Finland's most domestically popular rock groups is CMX. Although this group is not widely known outside of the country, bassist Billy Gould of popular U.S. rock group Faith No More produced CMX's 1998 album *Vainajala*.

One of the most influential musical contribution to international rock music is the band Hanoi Rocks, led by guitarist Andy McCoy, aka Antti Hulkko. Another rock band to enjoy commercial success is The Rasmus. After eleven years together and several domestic releases, the band finally captured Europe (and other places, like South America). Their 2003 album *Dead Letters* sold 1.5 million units worldwide and garnered them eight gold and five platinum album designations. The single "In the Shadows" placed on Top 10 charts in eleven countries and was the most played video on MTV Europe for 2005. Most recently, the Finnish hard rock/heavy metal band Lordi won the 2006 Eurovision Song Contest with a record 292 points, giving Finland its first ever victory. So far the most successful Finnish band in the United States is HIM.

Tuska Open Air Metal Festival, one of the largest open-air heavy metal festivals in the world, is held annually in Kaisaniemi, Helsinki.

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### Cinema

Erkki Karu, one of the pioneers of the Finnish cinema, with cinematographer Eino Kari in 1927.

Finland has a growing film industry with a number of famous directors such as Aki Kaurismäki, Timo Koivusalo, Aleksi Mäkelä and Klaus Härö. Hollywood film director/producer Renny Harlin (born Lauri Mauritz Harjola) was born in Finland.

**Media and communications**

Linus Torvalds, a famous Finnish software engineer, known for his contribution to the Linux operating system.

Finland is one of the most advanced information societies in the world. There are 200 newspapers; 320 popular magazines, 2,100 professional magazines and 67 commercial radio stations, with one nationwide, five national public service radio channels (three in Finnish, two in Swedish, one in Sami); digital radio has three channels. Four national analog television channels (two public service and two commercial) were fully replaced by five public service and three commercial digital television channels in September 1, 2007.

Each year around twelve feature films are made, 12,000 book titles published and 12 million records sold. 67 percent of the population use the Internet.

Finns, along with other Nordic people and the Japanese, spend the most time in the world reading newspapers. The most read newspaper in Finland is *Helsingin Sanomat*, with a circulation of 434,000. The media group SanomaWSOY behind *Helsingin Sanomat* also publishes the tabloid *Ilta-Sanomat* and commerce-oriented *Taloussanomat*. It also owns the Nelonen television channel. SanomaWSOY's largest shareholder is Aatos Erkko and his family. The other major publisher Alma Media publishes over thirty magazines, including newspaper *Amulets*, tabloid *Iltalehti* and commerce-oriented *Kauppalehti*. Finland has been at the top of the worldwide Press Freedom Ranking list every year since the publication of the first index by Reporters Without Borders in 2002.

Finland's National Broadcasting Company YLE is an independent state-owned company. It has five television channels and 13 radio channels in two national languages. YLE is funded through a television license and private television broadcasting license fees. Ongoing transformation to digital TV broadcasting is in progress — analog broadcasts ceased on the terrestrial network 31 August, 2007 and will cease on cable at the end of 2007. The most popular television channel MTV3 and the most popular radio channel Radio Nova are owned by Nordic Broadcasting (Bonnier and Prevents Industries).

The people of Finland are accustomed to technology and information services. The number of cellular phone subscribers as well as the number of Internet connections per capita in Finland are among the highest in the world. According to the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finnish mobile phone penetration exceeded fifty percent of the population as far back as August 1998 – first in the world – and by December 1998 the number of cell phone subscriptions outnumbered fixed-line phone connections. By the end of June 2007 there were 5.78 million cellular phone subscriptions, or 109 percent of the population.

Another fast-growing sector is the use of the Internet. Finland had more than 1.52 million broadband Internet connections by the end of June 2007, i.e., about 287 per 1,000 inhabitants. The Finns are not only connected; they are heavy users of Internet services. All Finnish schools and public libraries have for years been connected to the Internet.

### Cuisine

Karjalanpiirakka, a traditional Finnish pastry.

Traditional Finnish cuisine is a combination of European, Fennoscandian and Western Russian elements; table manners are European. The food is generally simple, fresh and healthy. Fish, meat, berries and ground vegetables are typical ingredients whereas spices are not common due to their historical unavailability. In years past, Finnish food often varied from region to region, most notably between the west and east. In coastal and lakeside villages, fish was a main feature of cooking, whereas in the eastern and also northern regions, vegetables and reindeer were more common. The prototypical breakfast is oatmeal or other continental-style foods such as bread. Lunch is usually a full warm meal, served by a canteen at workplaces. Dinner is eaten at around 17.00 to 18.00 at home.

Modern Finnish cuisine combines country fare and haute cuisine with contemporary continental cooking style. Today, spices are a prominent ingredient in many modern Finnish recipes, having been adopted from the east and west in recent decades.

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### Public holidays

All official holidays in Finland are established by acts of Parliament. The official holidays can be divided into Christian and secular holidays, although some of the Christian holidays have replaced holidays of pagan origin. The main Christian holidays are Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost, and All Saints Day. The secular holidays are New Year's Day, May Day, Midsummer Day, and the Independence Day. Christmas is the most extensively celebrated holiday: usually at least 23rd to 26th of December are holidays.

In addition to this, all Sundays are official holidays, but they are not as important as the special holidays. The names of the Sundays follow the liturgical calendar and they can be categorised as Christian holidays. When the standard working week in Finland was reduced to 40 hours by an act of Parliament, it also meant that all Saturdays became a sort of de facto public holidays, though not official ones. Easter Sunday and Pentecost are Sundays that form part of a main holiday and they are preceded by a kind of special Saturdays. Retail stores are prohibited by law from doing business on Sundays, except during the summer months (May through August) and in the pre-Christmas season (November and December). Business locations that have less than 400 square metres of floor space are allowed Sunday business throughout the year, with the exception of official holidays and certain Sundays, such as Mother's Day and Father's Day.  
**The List of Literature used:**

Encyclopedia countries of the world

The internet Resources