



Travelling in Finland

General Info

Population: 5.2m

Area: 338,145 sq. km

Currency: Euro (100 cents) - EUR (€)

Top 10 popular attractions: The Fortress of Suomenlinna
Old Rauma
St. Olafs Castle, Savonlinna
Petajavesi Old Church
Seurasaari Island
The Market Square, Helsinki
Helsinki Cathedral
Koli National Park
Temppeliaukio Church, Helsinki
Turku Castle

Are you covered?

Don't forget to buy your RAC European Breakdown cover on: 0800 015 6000.

Useful Numbers:

Emergency Services: 112 (SMS 114)

RAC Breakdown Europe: 00 33 472 43 52 44

Useful Links:

- <http://www.rac.co.uk/breakdown-cover/european-breakdown-cover/>
- <http://www.racshop.co.uk/driving-in-europe.html>

Essentials

Driving licence:

Visitors may drive a motor vehicle in Finland if they have reached the minimum age required by Finnish law.

A foreign driving licence does not entitle the holder to drive/ride a motor vehicle in Finland until the age of 18yrs old.

Valid licences issued in European countries are valid in Finland for the period of their validity.

International driving permits (1949, 1968) are recognised but not required.

Important documents:

When driving in Finland the following documents should be carried:

- Full, valid driving licence* (with paper counterpart)
- Proof of insurance/green card (third party or above)
- Proof of ID (passport)
- Proof of ownership (V5C certificate)

While driving in Finland you are required by law to carry the following items. Hefty on-the-spot fines can be issued for failing to carry specific items:

- Headlamp beam deflectors: depending on your car, you will either need deflector stickers or have to adjust the beam manually
- Lights: all motor vehicles must use their headlights in and outside built-up areas at all times, throughout the year
- Warning triangle: compulsory in all vehicles (except motorcycles).
- Reflective jackets: in Finland, the legislation concerns pedestrians, who must wear safety reflectors in the hours of darkness (any type of reflector is accepted). Thus, a car driver who steps out of their car in the event of a breakdown becomes a pedestrian, therefore, they must wear a reflector
- Motorcyclists: drivers and passengers of mopeds or motorcycles over 50 cc, who must be aged 15 or over, must wear a crash helmet
- Rear-view mirrors: cars towing a caravan or a trailer must be equipped with 2 side rear-view mirrors

Rules of the road & regulations

Rules of the road:

- **Overtaking & passing**

Drive on the right, overtake on the left.

Vehicles should be overtaken on the left, unless the driver of the vehicle to be overtaken has indicated his intention to turn left; in parallel lanes of traffic vehicles may be overtaken on the right. Vehicles being overtaken should not move to the right across the white line which indicates the lane for cycles and pedestrians.

Trams should be overtaken on the right only, except in a one-way street or if the tram-lines are on the right hand side of the road. Vehicles must stop and give way to pedestrians boarding or alighting from a tram at a stop without a shelter. Vehicles are not allowed on the tram lines between two shelters at a tram stop.

- **Priority**

At intersections, vehicles coming from the right have priority, unless otherwise indicated. The "Give Way" sign can be used as an advance warning sign, in which case it is supplemented by an additional panel bearing the word 'stop' and indicating the distance to the obligatory stop.

Vehicles on rails and emergency vehicles always have priority over other vehicles, even when coming from the left. Emergency vehicles have a strident alarm signal and a flashing red or yellow light.

- **Warning of approach**

It is prohibited to sound a horn in towns and villages except in cases of immediate danger.

In the country, horns and headlights should be used if necessary at bends, intersections, slopes and wherever visibility is not perfect.

Towing:

An inventory of normal equipment is not required. However, visitors are recommended to draw up an inventory in duplicate of any unusual or valuable fittings. A deposit may be required.

The following dimensions for vehicles with trailers must not be exceeded

Height: 4.20m

Width: 2.60m (private car 2.50m)

Length:

Private car: 12m

Car & caravan: 18.75m (private car: 12m)

Car & caravan: 18.75m

Maximum authorised weight for trailers

Without brakes:

Half the weight of the unladen towing vehicle, but 750kg maximum.

With brakes:

If the maximum authorised weight of the towing vehicle is more than 3.5t, then the trailer may be up to 1.5 times the maximum permitted and registered weight of the towing vehicle. If the weight of the towing vehicle is less than 3.5t then the trailer cannot exceed that weight.

Seat belts:

It is compulsory for the driver and passengers on the front and rear seats of cars to wear seat belts where fitted.

It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that all children under 15 are safely restrained, the penalty is €35.

The number of passengers in a car or van is limited to the number indicated in the registration document, whatever the size of the person.

Travelling with children:

A child less than 1.35m travelling in a car, van or lorry, must be seated in a child seat or child restraint. Where a child restraint/seat is not available, a child 3yrs and over must travel in the rear seat of the vehicle using a seat belt or other safety device attached to the seat. A child under 3yrs old may not be transported in a vehicle without child restraint/seat.

Speed limits:

In residential zones the speed limit 20km/h.

	Roads km/h	Motorways km/h	In built-up areas
Moped	45 km/h		45 km/h
Motorcycle (without trailer)	100 km/h*	120 km/h	50 km/h
Motorcycle (towing a trailer) (if trailer does not have shock absorbers 60 km/h)	80 km/h	80 km/h	50 km/h
Private car (without trailer)	100 km/h*	120 km/h	50 km/h
Private car (towing a trailer or caravan)	80 km/h	80 km/h	50 km/h
Private car (towing a trailer without brakes)	60 km/h	60 km/h	50 km/h
Camper van, mobile home (generally)	80 km/h	80 km/h	50 km/h

* Variable speed limits apply in Finland: The limit is 80 or 100km/h, according to the road and the traffic density.

Penalties:

- **On-the-spot fines**
The police are empowered to impose but not to collect on-the-spot fines.
- **Confiscation of vehicles**
A car can be confiscated if it not safe to be driven, if the annual taxes have not been paid or if it was involved in a serious crime.

Parking:

- **Parking regulations**
Stopping and parking prohibitions follow international practice.

Parking lights must be switched on at night if the area is not sufficiently illuminated.
- **Enforcement of parking regulations**
Wheel clamps may be used when the period of illegal parking exceeds 2 days. They may also be used when a maximum of 5 notices of 'fees for illegal parking' have remained unpaid. Vehicles may also be towed away.
- **Disabled parking access**
Corresponding permits issued by a foreign authority bearing the international sign for disabled persons are authorised.

Traffic lights:

- **Traffic lights**
The international 3-colour traffic light system is used.

Drink/drug driving

- **Legal limit**
The maximum level of alcohol in the blood permitted is 0.05%.
- **Test**
Both breath tests and blood tests can be carried out at random.

If the breathalyser reading carried out by the police indicates drunken driving, the driver is either taken to a police station where a precision breathalyser is used or to a health centre for a blood test. If the breathalyser

test is negative and the driver's behaviour indicates impairment through the use of psychoactive substances, a medical examination is required.

Roads & fuel

Availability of fuel

There are about 2000 petrol stations in Finland - petrol and oil are readily available throughout Finland, even in small towns and villages. However, there may be up to 100 km distance from one petrol station to another in rural areas, particularly in Lapland, in the north of the country.

Petrol stations are usually open from 0700 to 2100 hours on weekdays and for shorter hours at weekends. Some petrol stations open 24 hours a day.

- **Price of fuel (April 2014)**

Unleaded petrol (95 octane) *	1.608 EUR per litre
Unleaded petrol (98 octane) **	1.660 EUR per litre
Diesel	1.504 EUR per litre

* Unleaded petrol (95 octane) is labelled as follows: **95 E10**

** Unleaded petrol (98 octane) is labelled as follows: **98 E5**

- **Means of payment**

Credit cards are accepted at most petrol stations.

What RAC can do for you

RAC offers great value, flexible RAC European breakdown (<http://www.rac.co.uk/breakdown-cover/european-breakdown-cover/>) cover tailored to meet your needs. Whilst away, use our Route Planner (<http://www.rac.co.uk/route-planner>) for all your driving directions.

RAC can cover you against vehicle break down in Europe, with options available to suit your travelling requirements.

RAC European breakdown cover Basic and Comprehensive cover provides you with a wide range of benefits