

Helsinki

Finland ranks as the world's happiest country for the eighth year in a row – Helsinki shows why, and the reason is more relevant than ever



Happiness is a feeling, not a facial expression. Photo: Akseli Valmunen, Helsinki Partners

Finland leads the world in happiness for the eighth year running, with an average score of 7.7 out of 10. As the capital of happiness, Helsinki shows that the core of happiness hasn't changed – it's simply found new ways to thrive and welcomed new people along the way.

Finland has been ranked the happiest country in the world in the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network's *World Happiness Report 2025*. This marks the eighth consecutive year the country has claimed the top spot. As the capital of the world's happiest country, Helsinki demonstrates what lasting happiness is built on: community, everyday kindness, trust in society, and easy access to nature – stronger predictors of happiness than wealth or health alone.

This year, the *World Happiness Report* placed a special focus on the theme *Caring & Sharing*, highlighting the importance of social support, trust, and community in fostering long-term wellbeing. And in a world that feels increasingly divided and uncertain, the focus has never been more timely.

That's something Helsinki doesn't take for granted. From generations gathering around the same dinner table, to neighbours coming together for 'talkoot' where community spaces are cleaned up, there's a deep sense of community that runs through Finnish culture. You'll find it in local village festivals like Käpylä Kyläjuhla and the Kallio Block Party, where entire neighbourhoods come together. It's there in the Roihuvuori Hanami Festival, celebrating spring under the cherry blossoms, and in pop-up flea markets like Siivouspäivä, a Helsinki-born concept where anyone can set up a market stall on the street corner.



People taking the streets at Kallio Block Party. Photo: Jussi Hellsten / Helsinki Partners

For centuries, these values have shaped life in Helsinki. Today, that same sense of community brings together people from different backgrounds and places around the world. The capital is more international than ever, and works to ensure everyone feels they belong. Almost all schools are publicly funded and follow the neighbourhood school principle

– meaning children attend their closest local school, regardless of their family background or income level. Urban planning focuses on avoiding segregation, with mixed housing, inclusive public services, and spaces like libraries, community centres, and sports clubs designed for everyone to take part.

“One way Helsinki strengthens its sense of community is through OmaStadi, the city’s participatory budgeting initiative. It gives residents the opportunity to directly influence how public funds are spent – by proposing ideas and voting on projects that improve their own neighbourhoods”, says **Juhana Vartiainen**, the mayor of Helsinki.

Sauna remains a perfect example: a place, whether private or public, where strangers become neighbours, conversations often require no words, and today, it’s just as common to sit beside a visitor as a lifelong local.



People enjoying sauna at Lonna Island. Photo: Julia Kivelä, Helsinki Partners.

Happiness you can count on

Happiness in Helsinki has never been about big declarations or making a lot of noise. It’s about a quiet certainty that life works, and that you can count on others – whether it’s your neighbour, your community, or the city itself.

“Here, happiness is quietly built into everyday life. And while it may not always show on our faces, it’s there in the way life works, in the way people come together, and in the spaces we share. A good example of this is the Oodi Central Library – a public space where people of all ages and backgrounds gather to read, work, play, or simply spend time. In 2022, the Oodi library had nearly 1.82 million visits, **Vartiainen** continues.

Whether you're up for a visit, a new opportunity, or a fresh start, in Helsinki you'll find a city where people look out for one another. Come and experience it for yourself, in the world's happiest capital.

At the heart of Helsinki's happiness are the everyday things that make life work. Here's some of them – go and find more at myhelsinki.fi.

Helsinki happiness facts

Helsinki offers 34 public beaches, 21 winter swimming locations, 13 ice rinks, 16 indoor swimming pools and outdoor pools, 812 indoor sports facilities, and 92 dog parks. The city also has an extensive 1,300 km network of cycling paths, making it easy to stay active year-round.

Helsinki is home to 92 dog parks, proving the city cares about all its residents.

93% of children aged 3–6 take part in early childhood education, laying the foundation for lifelong learning and equality.

76% of residents feel safe in their neighbourhoods, even on weekend evenings (2021). Trust and safety are part of daily life here.

Nearly 71% of Helsinkians report feeling at least fairly healthy, and 46% feel happy at least fairly often.

Public services run smoothly: 80% of Helsinki's city expenses are covered by municipal tax revenues, ensuring that public infrastructure and services remain reliable and accessible.

Source: City of Helsinki, Helsinki Facts and Figures 2024.

https://www.hel.fi/static/kanslia/Kaupunkitieto/24_06_17_Helsinki_facts_and_figures_2024.pdf

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