



In Finland
LIBRARIES are a free-of-charge
basic service for everyone



Finland

values education



Finland's official languages are Finnish and Swedish, and services must also be provided in Sámi in the municipalities within the Sámi home region.



The population of Finland is 5.5 million.



There are nine cities with a population of over 100,000.

Finland has 310 municipalities.

The smallest municipality, Luhanka, is home to 690 people.



The average population density in Finland is 18 people/km².



There are 1.2 million residents in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.

Free-of-charge basic education is available to all, further education up to university level is also mostly free of charge.

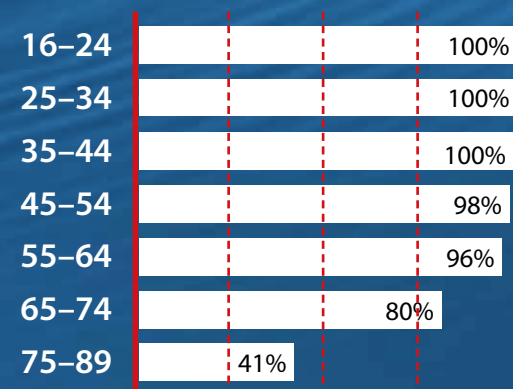
73% of people over the age of 15 have a secondary education qualification or degree.

Public services are largely provided as digital services in Finland.

Support is provided for the digitally illiterate, with libraries participating in these efforts.

The Finnish matriculation examination will be implemented digitally in 2019.

Use of the Internet in Finland by age group



Libraries are open and free of charge to everyone

The average user

visited a library 9.8 times



There were a total of 53.7 million visits to libraries.

A total of 1.5 million people participated in events and courses organised by libraries.

Libraries are open to everyone.



282 main libraries



436 branch libraries



135 mobile libraries

public libraries

853



borrowed 15.7 items



2 million people borrowed items from a public library in Finland in 2019.

Anyone residing in Finland can get a library card.

All libraries provide e-books and most of them also provide magazines, newspapers, music and various courses that can be accessed from home via the Internet.

60 €/person

The spending on public library activities was €60/resident.

Libraries are the responsibility of municipalities, with the state contributing to their funding.

The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for national library policy and guides the organisation of library activities in municipalities.

Libraries are a free-of-charge basic service provided for by legislation

In Finland, public libraries are the responsibility of municipalities. The services are free of charge to users. Libraries are funded from the state and municipal budgets.

The first Public Libraries Act came into effect in 1928, with the newest version effected in 2017.



The objective of the Public Libraries Act is to promote:

- 1) *equal opportunities for everyone to access education and culture;*
- 2) *availability and use of information;*
- 3) *reading culture and versatile literacy skills;*
- 4) *opportunities for lifelong learning and competence development;*
- 5) *active citizenship, democracy and freedom of expression.*

The implementation of these objectives is based on a sense of community, pluralism and cultural diversity.

Public library activities in Finland also include active promotion of literacy in all age groups. The digital literacy of citizens is supported in many ways, and library premises can be used as venues for cultural events, meetings, work and learning.

Libraries of higher educational institutions,
the National Library of Finland, the Library of Parliament

Libraries in other municipalities, special libraries

Library collections and services shared between municipalities

Others libraries in the same municipality



Local library

In Finland, you can get a library card to any public library, with your local library serving as a pick-up point for materials available across the library network. Almost all library materials in Finland can be checked out. The Library of Parliament, the National Library of Finland and libraries located of higher educational institutions are also open to everyone.

Public libraries also provide users with access to the collections of the Celia library, which provides audiobooks for people with a reading disability via the Internet.

The materials of the nationally operating Multilingual Library, Russian Library and Sámi Library can be ordered to your local library. The collections include works in almost one hundred languages.



Duties of public libraries

§ Libraries must provide access to materials, information and cultural content.

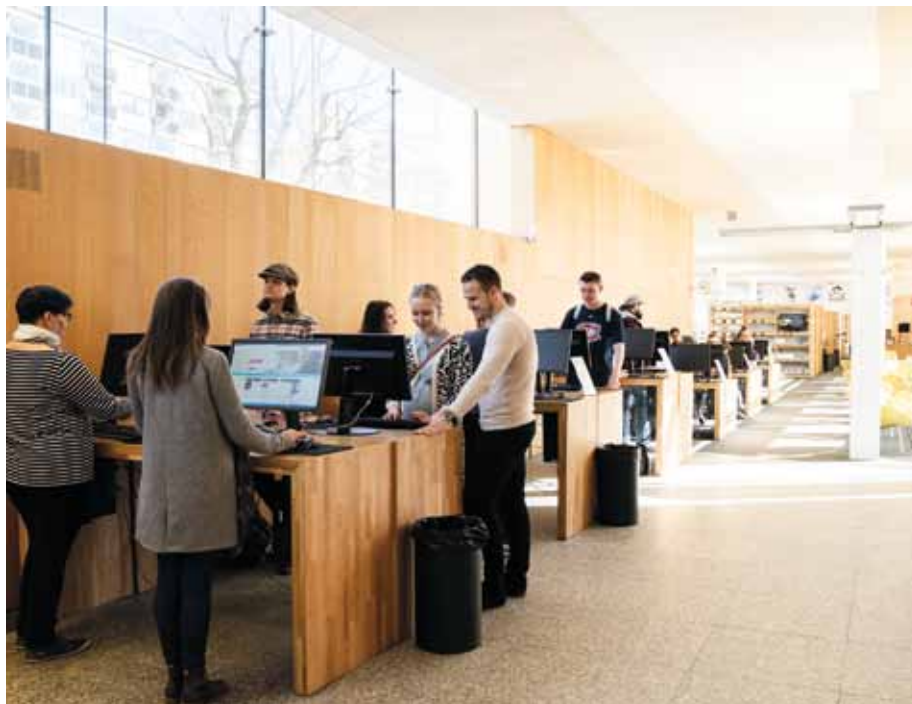
§ Libraries must maintain versatile and up-to-date collections.

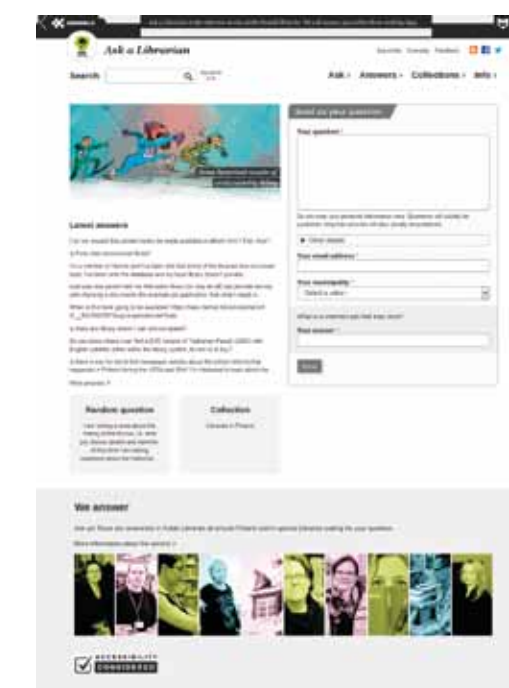
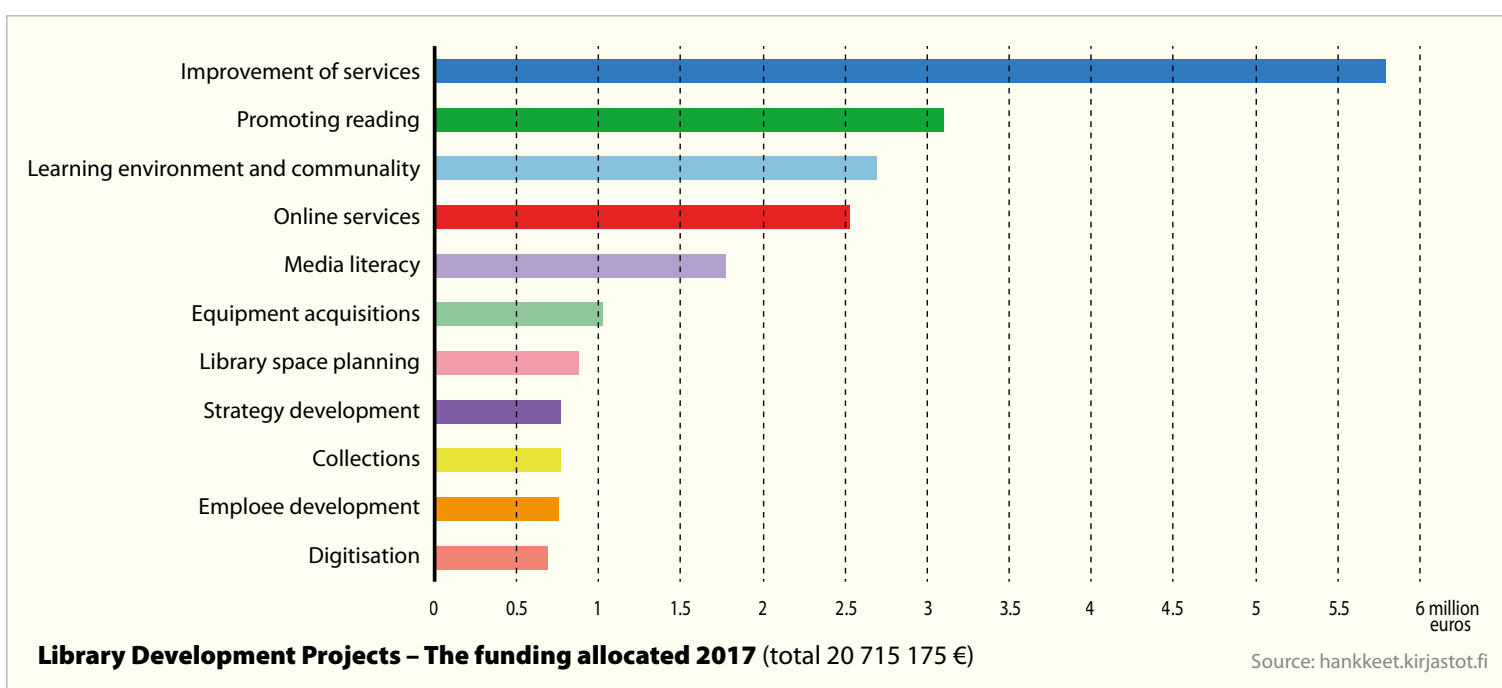
§ Library activities promote reading and literature.

§ Libraries must provide information services, guidance and support in the acquisition and use of information and in versatile literacy skills.

§ Libraries must provide premises for learning, recreational activities, working, and civic activities.

§ Libraries must promote social and cultural dialogue.





Finnish libraries are developed with interlibrary cooperation

Public libraries must provide equal services to residents everywhere in Finland. To help libraries develop their activities, the legislation provides for the national and regional development of these activities. A library tasked with the national development responsibility is responsible for the development and maintenance of shared online services as well as communications and promotion of the joint activities of libraries.

The nine libraries tasked with the regional development responsibility are in charge of joint activities and developing the skills of the library personnel within their region.

This national and regional development is funded from the budget of the Ministry of

Education and Culture. Libraries can also apply for a project grant for development, projects and new service trials. The granting and use of these project grants is guided by the library authorities of regional administrations, which also train library employees in judicial and administrative matters.

In recent years, development efforts have particularly focused on promoting reading, learning environments, online services and media education. From the beginning of 2020, Seinäjoki Public Library will be assigned the special task of promoting children and young people's reading and literacy in Finland.

Voluntary joint activities of public libraries

Almost all public libraries participate in cooperation networks formed by several municipalities, which allows their users to use the services of several municipalities with one library card. These library networks have joint websites, library systems and reservation queues.

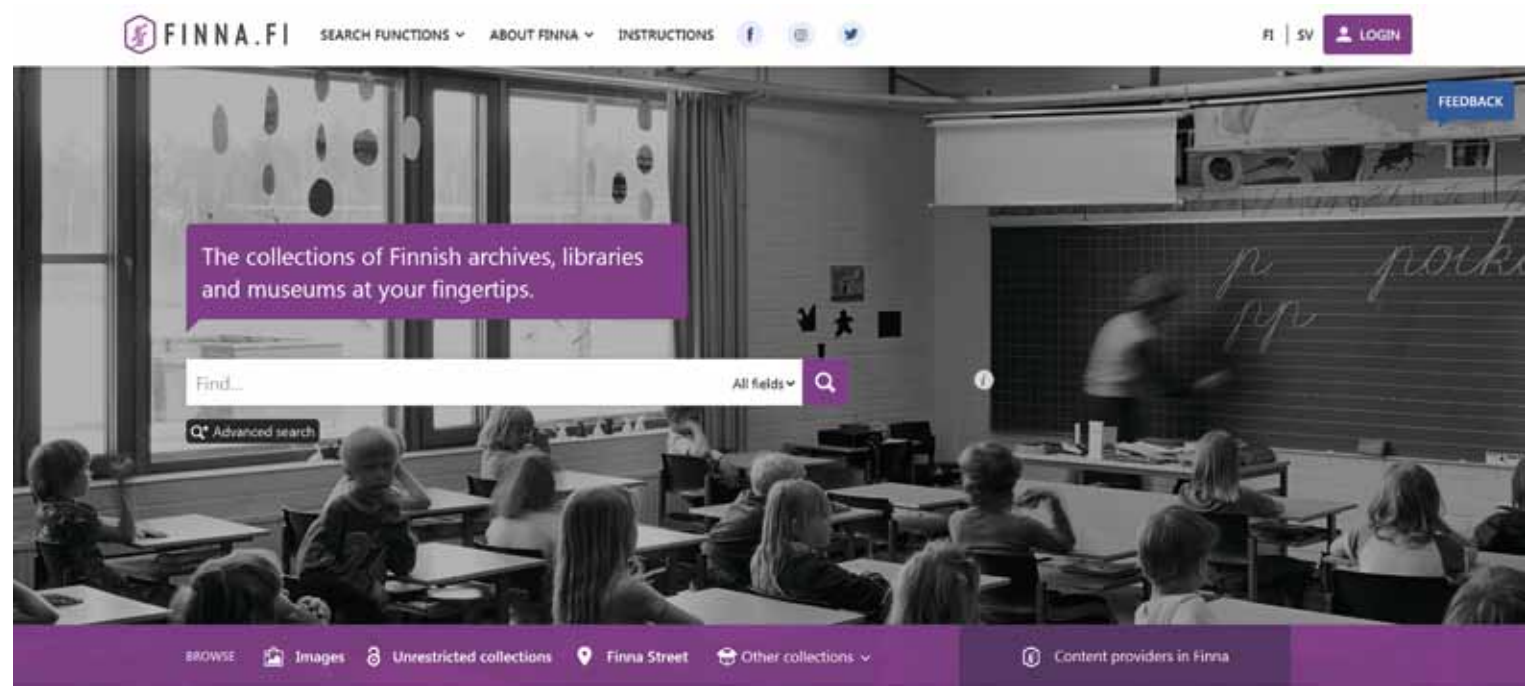
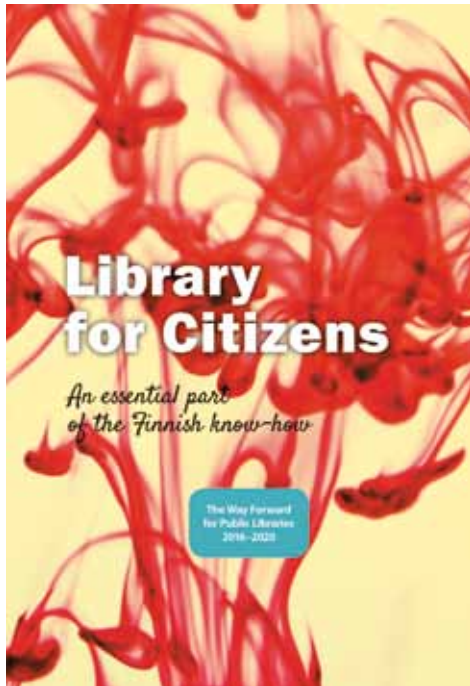
Public libraries obtain rights to e-materials through their joint procurement organisation, the Consortium of Public Libraries. The consortium negotiates agreements that municipalities can join. Some materials are procured directly from service providers.

Some municipalities cooperate in the development and maintenance of Koha, the open-source Integrated Library System.

Many library development projects are carried out as collaborations between several

municipalities due to the fact that voluntary library consortiums, or library networks, operate similarly to regional libraries. In addition to cooperating with regard to their collections, they also have joint operating models. Libraries are active operators in their own regions. They actively cooperate with associations, companies and other operators in the municipality.

Libraries also participate in national campaigns and theme weeks. Libraries also help efforts to promote reading, support the digital literacy of citizens, provide media education to people of all ages and implement various national cultural campaigns to reach residents.



Council for Public Libraries

The Council for Public Libraries is a joint organ of libraries that prepares recommendations, position statements and shared practices, in addition to choosing representatives from public libraries for various national working groups. The council also comments on various

administrative projects, legislative provisions or plans on behalf of libraries. The council representatives are chosen by region from among library personnel.

Library associations

The Finnish Library Association is a non-governmental organisation that seeks to improve the operating conditions of public libraries. Its members are mostly private individuals, library professionals and supporters of libraries.

Finlands svenska biblioteksörening is an association that seeks to promote Swedish-speaking library professionals

and Swedish-language library operations in Finland. Its activities include projects, training and research as well as events and communication.

Library associations and their members actively participate in the international library organisations IFLA and EBLIDA.

National cooperation between library sectors

Finnish libraries work in close cooperation with each other in the development of a shared national infrastructure. Terminology and ontology work, cataloguing and standards are negotiated together.

The Finna.fi service maintained by the National Library of Finland combines the databases of libraries, museums and archives into a single search interface that can be used to find not only metadata but also materials available online, ranging from movies and

photographs to books. Many public libraries use a customised version of the Finna user interface as their online library.

The cooperation between libraries, archives and museums is close at national level. Joint solutions in long-term storage, information architecture and systems development have enabled the interoperability of the memory sector, which is rare internationally.



Ministry of Education and Culture

libraries.fi
minedu.fi/en/libraries