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Finland – Nature, Society, and Regions

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Preface

PAULIINA RAENTO AND JOHN WESTERHOLM

The volume you are about to read is yet another step in a process that has continued for over one hundred years. In 1999, a hundred years had passed since the first edition of the *National Atlas of Finland*, the world's first national atlas. At the time of its publication, Finland was an aspiring nation within the jurisdiction of the Russian Empire. There was a strong need to demonstrate to the outside world that Finland was a capable member of the society of nations and to inform people at home and abroad about this nation's character and achievements.

The current volume expands and updates selected themes of the Sixth Edition of the *National Atlas of Finland*. That edition was published in Finnish in 1999 to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the National Atlas. In the Finnish-language volume, the goal was twofold: first, to introduce the achievements and trends of academic geography to the public and, second, to portray Finland as part of complex networks of interaction that range from local environments to global contexts. The Anniversary Edition's strong temporal approach underscored processes and the evolution of Finland toward its current form and status. The emphasis was now on cultural and regional diversity instead of demographic and regional uniformity, as in the earlier editions. This change of emphasis demonstrates the influence of each era and political, economic, and cultural context on what geographers do and how they do it. In this sense, each edition of the National Atlas is a reflection of its time and a statement of what its authors deem important and interesting. During the one hundred years, Finland has become an equal member of the society of nations, but Finnish geographers still wish to share information about their research and their country. Thus emerged the idea to select some of the topics for an expanded, updated, and more academic English-language version of the Anniversary Edition.

The history of the *National Atlas of Finland* illustrates the development of academic geography, in particular, and scientific knowledge, in general. The previous editions of the Atlas emphasized basic research. The First Edition, published in

1899, underscored the role of academic contributions in the making of a nation. This emphasis was still clear in the Third Edition, published in 1925 as the first National Atlas of independent Finland (since 1917). At the time of these early editions, many details and processes regarding the physical geography and regional structures of Finland remained unexamined and vaguely known, and the Atlas had a strong educational purpose. By the Fourth Edition, published in 1960, the basics of Finland's geography had been covered and academic foci gained weight over the political ones. In that edition, themes such as relief and settlement patterns were examined thematically. Waterways, vegetation, population, and economic activities, among other themes, were portrayed through cartographic syntheses. Since the 1960s it has been necessary to add only details and update these basic data. The Fifth Edition of the Atlas, published in folio format between 1972 and 1994, reflects the exponential growth of statistical data and the development of analytical tools and technology. Many of the folios contain detailed representations of data in cartographic format.

Of course, the current volume is by no means comprehensive – Finland has many more faces than has been possible to portray in one volume, and very valuable geographical research is being conducted on other topics as well. These faces and research interests will continue to change, because Finland is undergoing a tremendous change in the dawn of the new millennium – just like the rest of the world. One key element in this change is the rapid evolution of information technology and the growth of the amount of information. Political-administrative and cultural boundaries are losing their previous significance as the interdependency of local, regional, national, and global spheres of human and natural activity intensifies. These processes will shape both the international exchanges and position of Finland and its internal structures. This means that new characteristics will be added to the geography of Finland. The fascinating, long history of the *National Atlas of Finland* is therefore likely to continue with future generations of Finnish geographers.

This part of the project would not have been possible without the talent and patience of the authors of this volume. To them we are forever grateful. We wish to express our warmest gratitude also to Kirsti Lehto, Pirkko Numminen, and Arttu Paarlahti of the University of Helsinki De-

partment of Geography for their invaluable help with the illustrations. The technical execution of the attached CD-ROM would not have been possible without our colleague Timo Korhonen of Mediakeel Ltd. And finally, we wish to thank the Geographical Society of Finland for its support.

Facts about Finland

Area	338,145 km ²
Land area	304,473 km ²
Maximum length	1,157 km
Maximum width	542 km
Highest elevation	1,328 m
Population (end of 2001)	5,194,901
Men	2,537,597
Women	2,657,304
Population density	17.1 persons/km ²
Life expectancy (2001)	77.6 years
Men	73.9 years
Women	81.4 years
GDP per capita (2000)	22,156 US dollars
Independence	6 December 1917
Capital city	Helsinki–Helsingfors
Population (end of 2001)	559,718
Municipalities (2002)	448
Regions	19 + 1 autonomous region
Provinces	5
Official languages	Finnish and Swedish
Currency	1 euro = 100 cents

For more facts about Finland, see <www.stat.fi>



Instructions for the user

There are two kinds of figures in this volume:

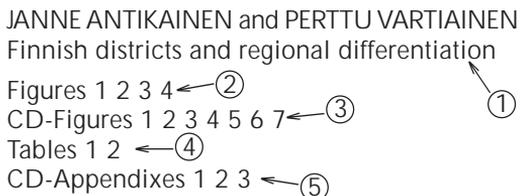
- 1) Those named **Figures** are printed in black-and-white in the journal and reproduced in black-and-white *or* in color on the attached CD-ROM.
- 2) Those named **CD-Figures** are included in the CD-ROM *only*. Please consult the CD-ROM to see these color images.

If you are using a Windows operating system, the CD-ROM's Index Page should appear automatically, when the CD-ROM is inserted in the computer and the computer's auto run option is active. In other systems, open the Index Page by doing the following:

- 1) Open Internet Browser program.
- 2) Go to the Browser's *File* menu and choose the *Open* option.
- 3) Find *Index* from the CD-ROM station.
- 4) Click OK.

The contents page of the CD-ROM provides the user with direct links to the full text of each article and its illustrations. For example:

JANNE ANTIKAINEN and PERTTU VARTIAINEN
Finnish districts and regional differentiation
Figures 1 2 3 4 ← ②
CD-Figures 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ← ③
Tables 1 2 ← ④
CD-Appendixes 1 2 3 ← ⑤

A diagram showing a list of contents with numbered arrows pointing to specific items. The list is: "JANNE ANTIKAINEN and PERTTU VARTIAINEN", "Finnish districts and regional differentiation", "Figures 1 2 3 4", "CD-Figures 1 2 3 4 5 6 7", "Tables 1 2", and "CD-Appendixes 1 2 3". Arrows point from circled numbers to the following items: ① points to "Finnish districts and regional differentiation", ② points to "Figures 1 2 3 4", ③ points to "CD-Figures 1 2 3 4 5 6 7", ④ points to "Tables 1 2", and ⑤ points to "CD-Appendixes 1 2 3".

- (1) To open the text and illustrations file, click your mouse on the title of the article.
- (2) To examine a (color) version of the image included in the journal, click the number of the image.
- (3) To examine a color image included in the CD-ROM only, click the number of the image.
- (4) To examine a table included in the article, click the number of the table.
- (5) To examine an appendix included in the article, click the number of the appendix.

All color images are available as Acrobat versions, allowing their high-quality reproduction for classroom use. **To print a color image**, it is easiest to

- (1) Proceed to the contents page of the CD-ROM.
- (2) Click the link to the desired Figure or CD-Figure.
- (3) Choose the link titled "Printable Acrobat version" below the image.
- (4) Print.

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- (2) Click the link to the desired Figure, Table, or Appendix.
- (3) Print.