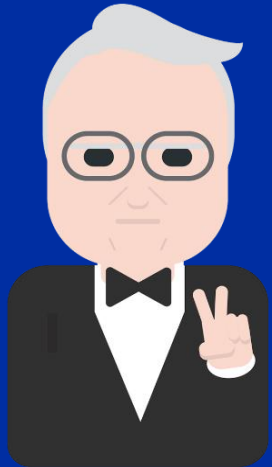




SUOMI  
FINLAND

# Finland in the World Media

Ministry for Foreign Affairs review of 2017



” Finland continued with its great reputation in the media. Finland 100 gave journalists an opportunity to cover Finland in a broader way than they might have done otherwise.

– ISRAEL

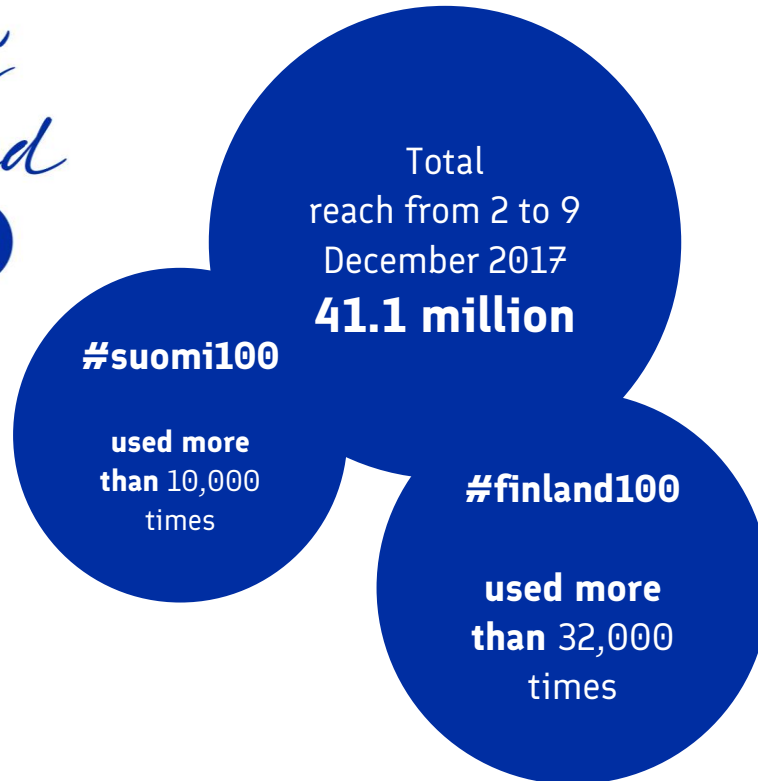
# Finland's overall rating

In 2017, Finland's reputation in the world media **continued to improve** on a scale from 1 to 5.



# Finland was strongly visible throughout the world thanks to Finland's 100th independence anniversary

*Suomi*  
*Finland*  
**100**



## Number of articles in international online media

During the anniversary week 2–9 Dec 2017

**2,615**

On Independence Day  
6 Dec 2017

**1,352**

## The greatest visibility:

Sweden  
The United States  
Germany  
Japan  
Denmark  
Great Britain  
Russia  
Estonia

# Finland's 100th anniversary year and independence were the most talked topics in the world media in 2017

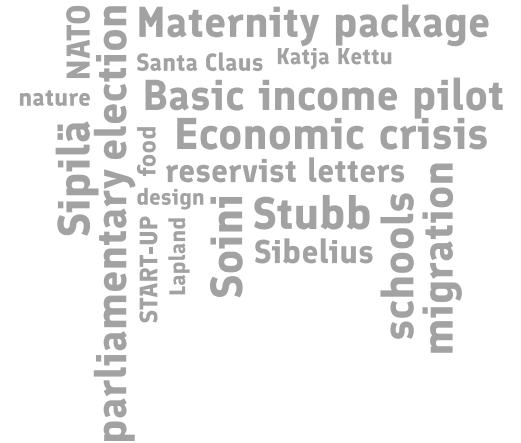
2017



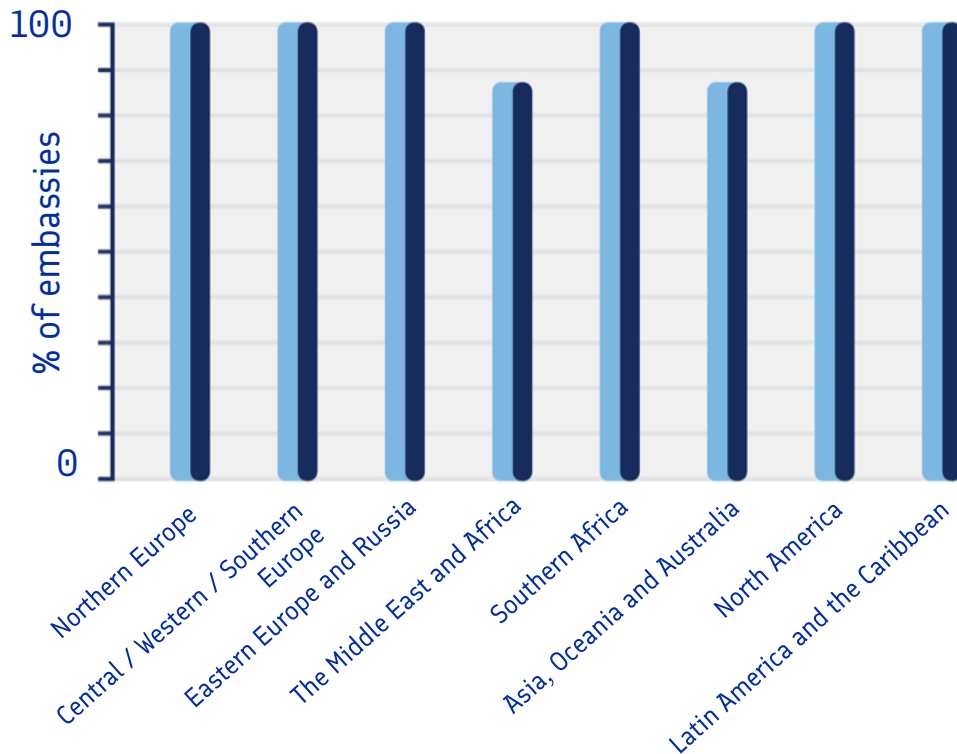
2016



2015



# Finland's 100th anniversary was covered almost everywhere which supported Finland's reputation in a positive way



**Did Finland 100 feature in the host country media?**  
(yes replies by region)

” Finland’s historical 100th anniversary was celebrated in Sweden with huge media coverage. As far as is known, Finland has not enjoyed such publicity there since WWII. We can presume that every Swede now knows that Finland is 100 years old. – **SWEDEN**

” In light of the celebration of its 100th anniversary of Independence, Finland was quite often mentioned in the mass media, with a special focus on the achievements the country has made during its 100 years of independence, turning from a poor agrarian country into a successful one known for its innovations, high tech and clean technologies. – **UKRAINE**

# In many countries, the greatest media attention focused on Finland's 100th Independence Day

” The publicity was versatile throughout the year, but the media visibility was by far the best just before and around the time of the 100th anniversary in December [...] The most spectacular and talked about single media event on 6 December was when Sweden's largest newspaper Dagens Nyheter changed its name to Päivän Uutiset for the day. – **SWEDEN**

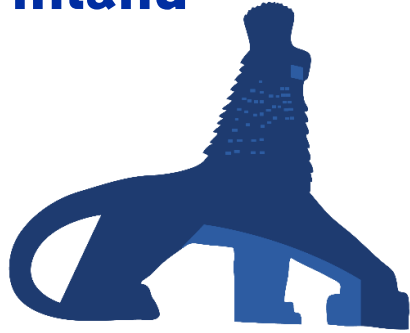
” The actual celebration on 6 December was the real 'fireworks', it was like Estonia's own day of celebration. The Estonian public broadcaster ERR broadcast the entire morning programme from the Embassy, the radio played Finnish music all day, [...] the Independence Day reception in Tallinn was attended by all the main media houses, as was the laying of wreaths by veterans, the Postimees newspaper changed its name to 'Postimies', and the Eesti Päevaleht newspaper dedicated most of the paper to Finnish themes. – **ESTONIA**



” In addition to the official Finland 100 projects, the CodeBus and the Independence Day reception, the 100th anniversary of Finland was remembered in many other occasions. The stories published during the Team Finland trip in November covered Finland's hundred years of independence. There were also individual articles in the newspapers about the story of the hundred-year-old Finland. – **ETHIOPIA**

” Finland's 100th anniversary was most visible through its historical context. It has also been one hundred years since the October Revolution in Russia, and the two anniversaries resulted in general interest in Finland. [...] Themes such as Finland's journey to independence, its separation from Russia, and the development of the country's relationship with the Soviet Union during the post-independence decades attracted particular attention. – **RUSSIA**

# One of the highlights of Finland's 100th anniversary were the lighting of well-known landmarks in the colours of Finland



Lion of Judah, Addis Ababa

” The monument to the Lion of Judah, located in central Addis in front of the National Theatre, was lit for the first time, which attracted a lot of attention at the busy crossroads and inspired passers-by to take selfies. The lighting of the statue was also reported in the newspapers. - ETHIOPIA



Holmenkollen, Oslo



Colosseum, Rome



Belém Tower, Lisbon



Christ the Redeemer,  
Rio de Janeiro

# The CodeBus project brought about exceptionally high visibility for Finland in African countries



” Another visible event was the Ethiopian leg of the CodeBus project, which was particularly widely featured in the print media... As workshops were also held outside of Addis, Finland and the Embassy received positive media coverage in regions where resources usually restrict the scope of coverage. – **ETHIOPIA**

” The most prominent event of the celebrations was the CodeBus project, which included four workshops, a launch event and a concert in Namibia. The project sought to improve opportunities for girls and young women in particular to become acquainted with the world of technology and the possibilities it offers. – **NAMIBIA**



# The Finnish Crazy Games broadened the image of Finns in Australia

” The biggest event by far was the Finland Centenary Crazy Games and Embassy Open Weekend. This was featured many times in Australia’s media, and resulted in 2–3 articles being written solely about this event. [...] The event [...] was advertised predominantly through radio segments detailing different aspects of Finnish life that would be showcased at the Finnish Crazy Games, such as sauna, wife carrying, air guitar, and hobbyhorse riding. – AUSTRALIA

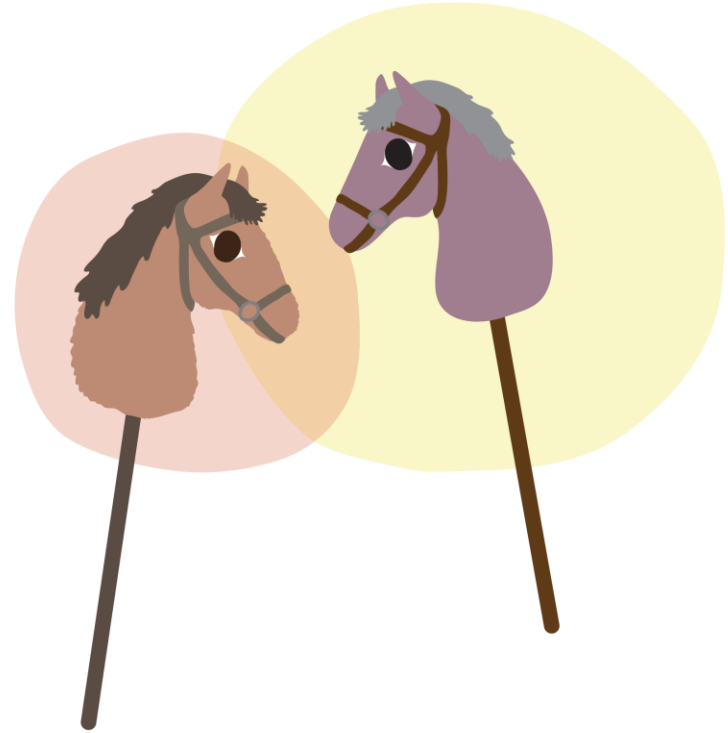


# Hobbyhorse riding became a media phenomenon

” There were three major spikes in hobbyhorse coverage in the world’s online media and social media in 2017:

- In April, the film *Hobbyhorse Revolution* was released
  - In May, the international media took a real fancy to hobbyhorse racing, especially in terms of the video footage of the Finnish Championships
  - In July, CNN broadcast a story on the subject
- ThisisFinland also launched the #braveenoughtoride campaign in December by giving hobbyhorses to Prince William’s two children and publishing the Hobbyhorse Toolbox in 13 languages. – MELTWATER

” In 2017, nearly 1,700 news articles and stories about hobbyhorses were published in online media, with an estimated reach of just over 36 million people (potential reach for these media is almost 1.5 billion people). – MELTWATER



Countries where hobbyhorses were the most visible: Sweden, Japan, Brazil, the Netherlands, the UK, the USA, Russia, France, Germany, Canada and Australia

# Design and Finland are inextricably linked to each other

” In terms of fashion, Marimekko is definitely the most prominent Finnish company, and it featured e.g. in The Seattle Times and Vogue. – THE UNITED STATES

” A lot of interest of the media resulted in various articles concerning Finnish lifestyle, in particular design, in a few well-known newspapers, a radio channel and a cultural TV channel. The one-day visit of Prime Minister Sipilä combined with the opening of the exhibition created broad media coverage. – POLAND

” The Finnish Design Exhibition was touring around Japan at 5 different venues, gathering 169,841 visitors. Since this was a commemorative event to celebrate Finland’s 100th Anniversary of Independence, many local newspapers across Japan mentioned it. The exhibition itself had a good reputation, articles saying that visitors can feel the simple, sophisticated warmth, the powerful and modern sensibility of Finns through the design items. – JAPAN

# There was an exceptional amount of hype around Finnish culture – both the customary type as well as the more unconventional one – in 2017

” The second most important topic in the media was the Gallen-Kallela exhibition at the Nairobi National Museum, which was featured in a spectacular way in The East African newspaper. This is the most significant cultural news related to Finland in several years, and the page-long story covered Gallen-Kallela’s life in Finland and Kenya. – KENYA

” The manifestations and unique features of Finnish culture were more present in Denmark in 2017 than in previous years. The featured phenomena included **Polar Bear Pitching**, ‘weird’ Finnish competitions, such as wife-carrying, kalsarikännit (getting drunk home alone in your underwear), hobbyhorse riding, Tom of Finland, Finnish design, Alvar Aalto, the sauna culture, Sibelius and Finland’s historical development after gaining independence. – DENMARK

” The cultural sector was by far the most visible feature in the media, with other issues attracting less attention. – GREAT BRITAIN





## As a tourist destination, the trend for Finland seems to be on the up

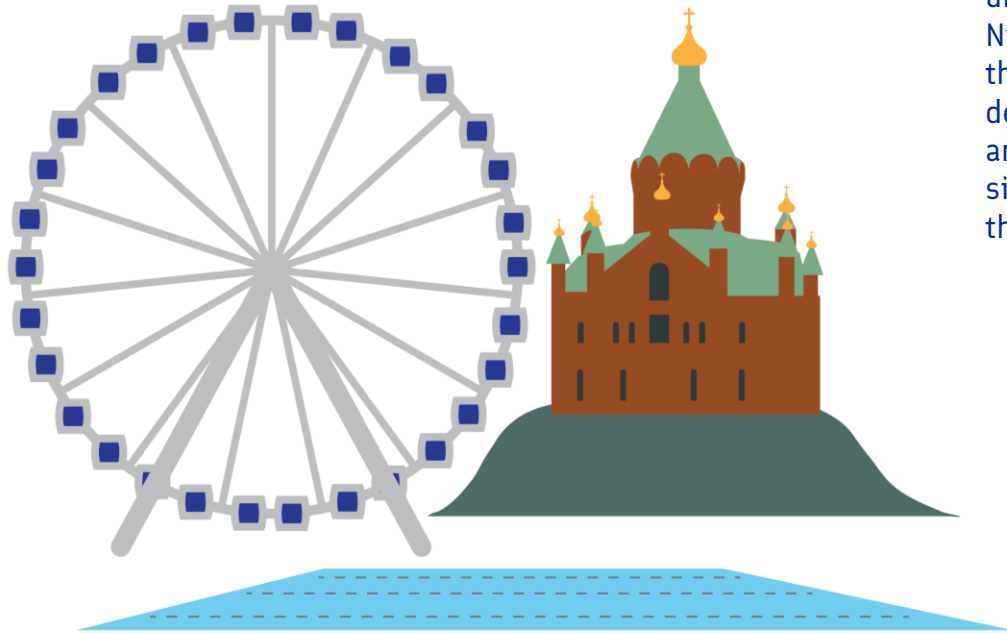
” Finland achieved media coverage as a tourist destination throughout the year. Lapland, Northern lights, ‘authentic winter’, Santa Claus, nature and the midnight sun were especially prominent. Gardens by the Bay, an important nature park in Singapore, featured elements of Finnish Christmas and winter, such as Santa Claus, for the first time in its Winter Wonderland. – **SINGAPORE**

” In the German media, Finland had a lot of visibility as an interesting, somewhat exotic yet safe tourist destination. In Finland’s jubilee year, travel media and the media in general described Finland as one of the best countries to visit. Lapland (in winter) in particular is constantly becoming more attractive as a destination. Nature, the woods, the sauna as well as peace and quiet were the main travel-related themes. New direct flight routes were also launched from various locations in Germany to Finland. – **GERMANY**

” Finland’s popularity as a tourist destination has substantially increased in China over the last few years, which is also reflected in the tremendous increase in the number of visa applications. Lapland, Santa Claus and the Northern lights have been particularly prominent, and Alibaba Group’s Alitrip’s extensive advertising campaign and package tours have brought a lot of visibility to Finland as a travel destination. – **CHINA**

# Helsinki is becoming an increasingly trendy tourist destination

” Helsinki and the city’s sauna culture featured more prominently in travel news than in the previous year. – GREAT BRITAIN



” [...] there is something new and exciting in the air, especially in Helsinki. Several articles praising Helsinki were published in the autumn, highlighting that the city is undergoing a positive change. For example, Dagens Nyheter’s travel supplement in December chose Helsinki as the number 1 weekend destination in Europe. The city was described as developing and dynamic, and its new saunas and spas were covered. Expressen also listed the must-see sites in the trendy and hipstery Helsinki, where a lot of things are happening. – SWEDEN

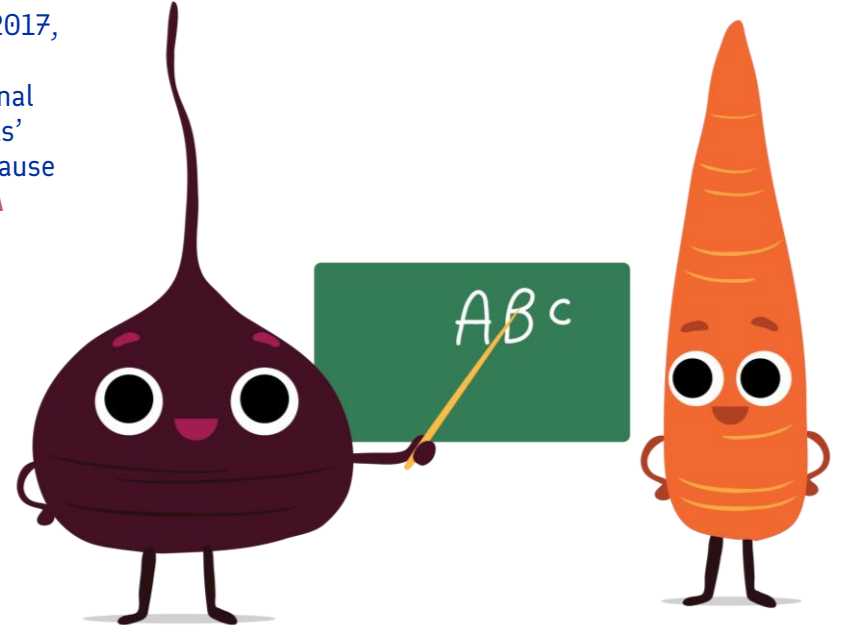
” Juliette & Victor magazine published a 9-page reportage on Helsinki, Turku and the archipelago. The Weekend Knack magazine features a multi-page story with a number of photos of the Punavuori area under the heading New Kids on the Docks. – BELGIUM

# Finland's education system sets an example that other countries want to learn from

” Finland's education system has established itself in the media as a model that other countries should follow. It is a **modern, forward-looking and relaxed system that improves pupils' skills and talents in multiple ways** and offers a solution to localised lower than average learning results [...]. In 2017, **the high-quality teacher training** in Finland was also discussed, as a consequence of the fact that Argentina has started to reform its educational system and the topic has been debated in terms of various aspects (pupils' grades, teachers' salaries, teacher monitoring and ranking, etc.), and because the country has bought teacher training services from Finland. – **ARGENTINA**

” In Iceland, the quality of education has been the hot topic. The Icelandic press discussed the quality of education, the level of teachers' education and status as well as other topics such as bullying (the KiVa project) on several occasions. Finland is often used as the point of reference. [...] Finland's education system was praised and Finland's success was discussed under the heading **'Finland has a functional education system because schools are not treated as food and teachers not as vegetables'**. – **ICELAND**

” The high quality of the educational system [...] was widely reported. – **LITHUANIA**



# The basic income pilot continued to raise a lot of questions, especially in the media in European countries

” Positive outcomes of the basic income pilot mentioned in the German media included the fact that if someone receiving the basic income finds a job, they can accept it without losing the basic income. Another positive feature mentioned was the reduction of red tape. [...] There were questions about what quantity of resources it would take to have everyone on the basic income. – GERMANY



” There was particular interest in understanding if the basic income could encourage the unemployed to seek and accept jobs and employers to offer jobs, even for a shorter term. [...] It was considered noteworthy that the pilot was being conducted in a European country and that it was supported by both the left and the right as well as the citizens. – BELGIUM

” Finland’s basic income pilot drew a lot of attention in the media. There were numerous articles on the subject, and it seems that the interest in the pilot results will continue in 2018. – SOUTH KOREA

” [...] It was asked, for example, if the basic income is a response to automation and if it will result in lower salaries. It was noted that there is a widespread consensus in Finnish society on the pilot, but it was also pointed out that the allowance is quite small and suspicions were voiced that free money would encourage inactivity. – LUXEMBOURG



# Finland's defence capabilities and expertise were particularly talked about in Sweden

” Sweden's Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist wrote in various media, e.g. Dagens Nyheter on 6 December under the headline Finland är värt att försvara – Finland is worth defending. The article discussed and justified extensive cooperation between Sweden and Finland on land, sea and air as well as at civil servant and ministerial levels. He emphasised facts such as the two countries' shared security policy backgrounds as non-aligned states, the common geostrategic interests and the common security policy-related challenges in the Baltic region. Finland's defence capability and expertise is widely admired in the Swedish media, and Finnish military expertise is considered to be excellent, for reasons such as Finland's war experiences. – **SWEDEN**



” The Government's Defence Policy Report to Parliament hit the headlines as did the news that the Finnish government decided to increase its reserve force by 50,000 soldiers. The headlines were coloured by the threat from Russia. – **CROATIA**

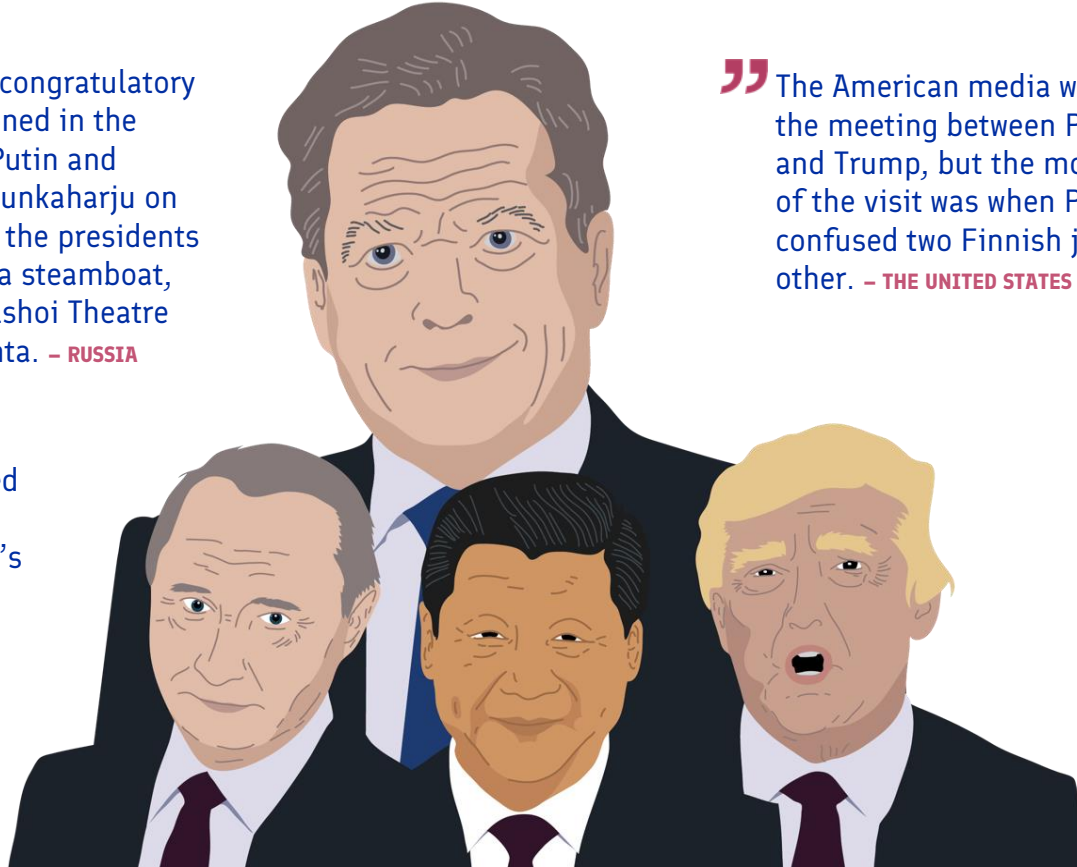
” Finland prepares for manifold warfare through establishment of an international hybrid warfare centre. – **AUSTRALIA**

# President Niinistö met the leaders of the superpowers

” President Vladimir Putin’s congratulatory visit to Finland was mentioned in the Russian media. President Putin and President Niinistö met in Punkaharju on 27 July. After the meeting, the presidents travelled to Savonlinna on a steamboat, where they watched the Bolshoi Theatre performing the opera Iolanta. – **RUSSIA**

” President Niinistö achieved a lot of positive coverage in China during Xi Jinping’s visit to Finland. – **CHINA**

” The American media wrote quite a lot about the meeting between Presidents Niinistö and Trump, but the most prominent news of the visit was when President Trump confused two Finnish journalists for each other. – **THE UNITED STATES**



# The struggle within the True Finns party and the ensuing government crisis prompted a debate about the role of populism

” The anti-immigrant party nominates ‘a hardliner’ as its leader. The news covered Jussi Halla-aho’s background, and he was described as a ‘hardline’ populist. – BELGIUM

” Jussi Halla-aho’s rise to the leadership of the True Finns and the ensuing government crisis also attracted attention in the UK. The news emphasised the anti-immigration aspect and populism, which raised a debate about the foothold of populism in Europe in general. – GREAT BRITAIN

” The rise of Halla-aho to the leadership of the True Finns, the government crisis that ensued and the breakup of the party were reported in almost all daily newspapers and on TV. [...] The True Finns were said to have elected a hardliner as their party leader, one who suffers from Islamophobia and has suggested, among other things, that aid organisations helping refugees in the Mediterranean should be punished. Finland is often mentioned as an example of an EU country where right-wing populists have managed to rise to the government. – AUSTRIA



# Prime Minister Sipilä's visits made headlines in many countries

” -- In Berlin, the great Finnish Midsummer party (Finnisches Mittsommerfest) was covered in papers such as the city's biggest daily newspaper, Tagesspiegel, which published the programme of the celebrations, featured the German Foreign Minister, Vice-Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel and Prime Minister Juha Sipilä at the festivities, and described the cultural programme and food that were offered at the party. Numerous Berlin-based media (online, radio, blogs) recommended the Midsummer party as the place to be. – GERMANY



” The brief but meaningful visit of PM Juha Sipilä, at the end of October, grabbed the attention of the media on the possibilities of new forms of commercial and business cooperation between Finland and Peru. – PERU

# The stabbing in Turku was widely reported as a terrorist attack

” The stabbing that took place in Turku in August was the only widely reported news item in the Irish media. The topic featured in the main media [...] and in smaller online media in Ireland. – IRELAND

” The Turku stabbing was reported in the Slovak media. The case appeared in news reports that described Slovakia as having announced a heightened threat of terrorist attack. The news cited the attacks in Turku and Barcelona as potential reasons for the change in threat level. – SLOVAKIA

” Finland’s high ranking in various statistics on the functionality of the welfare state is repeatedly covered in the Italian media. However, the terrorist attack in Turku may have undermined the public view of Finland’s security level in the host countries. – ITALY



# Sibelius, sauna and sisu have not lost their power

” The anniversary year’s Sibelius Inspirations multimedia concert was very well received in the capital’s main media, and it was also covered on the cultural TV channel. – MEXICO

” Finns are considered to be well-educated, trustworthy, gutsy and a little eccentric. Finns’ image has not changed much. – GREAT BRITAIN



” The Traveling Sauna tour was definitely the jubilee year’s most prominent project in the United States. There was a story about the sauna in the New Yorker magazine, numerous local media published articles about the sauna, and Jouko Sipilä and Risto Sivula, who organised the project, were interviewed on morning TV. The most prominent single story was the sauna video by Jukka Hilden and Jake Paul, which has been seen by more than two million people on YouTube. – THE UNITED STATES

# The Nokia brand became trendy again after the relaunch of its mobile phones and Slush strengthened Finland's startup-friendly reputation

” In people's minds, Nokia is still connected to Finland, and the relaunched 3310 achieved a lot of visibility. – GREAT BRITAIN

” The inspirational atmosphere of Slush was noted, and it attracted a general interest in Finland as the home of technology and the game industry. – ARGENTINA

” Nokia's new strategy and new phone models made headlines in Germany, e.g. 'The Finns and Nokia are back' and 'What became of Nokia?'. The stories described Nokia's success story, its decline [...] and its revival: how the Finnish company has succeeded in changing from a mobile phone manufacturer to a leading communications network operator. The articles also mentioned what Nokia and people who used to work for Nokia have achieved since then in areas such as startup companies. – GERMANY



# The figurehead of Finnish culture was Aki Kaurismäki, who released a new film

” Aki Kaurismäki’s film ‘The Other Side of Hope’, which was introduced at the Finland Film Festival and Refugee Film Festival and has been shown around Japan since last December, received great reviews. – JAPAN

” One to have attracted visibility was film director Aki Kaurismäki, who is well-liked in France, and his latest film The Other Side of Hope, which won a prize at the Berlin Film Festival. – FRANCE

” Aki Kaurismäki’s new film, The Other Side of Hope, received several glowing reviews and articles in the print media in Italy (e.g. Corriere della Sera, L’Espresso, Il Fatto Quotidiano, L’Internazionale). The world of Kaurismäki is appreciated in Italy because it is humane and weird in a good way. – ITALY





# Our well-known artists were once again prominently featured all over the world

” The French media paid special attention to Finnish culture and artists in 2017. One of them was the composer Kaija Saariaho, who was an honorary guest of the Festival Présences music festival in January and whose works performed in France (e.g. L'Amour du loïn) received a lot of positive reviews. – FRANCE

## Most often mentioned artists:

Aki Kaurismäki  
Kaija Saariaho  
Esa-Pekka Salonen  
Susanna Mälkki  
Tove Jansson  
Dome Karukoski  
Sofi Oksanen  
Kjell Westö  
Alma

” Finnish culture was very prominent in the American media this year. Music, cinema and sports were the most covered topics.  
-- In music, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Susanna Mälkki, Kaija Saariaho and Sakari Oramo received the most publicity. – THE UNITED STATES



# The film Tom of Finland brought the gay culture icon back into the limelight all over the world.

” Tom of Finland became a phenomenon on television, in social media, newspapers and magazines. The stories were related to the film, Touko Laaksonen’s work and the importance of the Tom of Finland phenomenon in the lives of sexual minorities. The tone of the reporting was very positive. – DENMARK

” In Spain, the premiere of Tom of Finland received significant publicity on the cover of Madrid’s main what’s on guide Guía del Ocio as well as in the film reviews in the main newspapers. – SPAIN



# Basketball player Lauri Markkanen made more headlines than any ice hockey players, but F1 drivers remain the most visible Finnish sports personalities

” The second most prominent media story in 2017 related to Finland was Lauri Markkanen’s transition to the NBA. Markkanen already received coverage when he played in Arizona, but the number of stories increased during the NBA draft. The Chicago Tribune published an extensive profile of Markkanen after his transfer to the Chicago Bulls was confirmed. There were stories about Markkanen in The Star Tribune, The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal, and USA Today published several articles about him. In addition to these publications, Markkanen has been prominently featured on the ESPN channel. All the stories have been really positive. – THE UNITED STATES

## Most often mentioned sportsmen:

Valtteri Bottas, Kimi Räikkönen, Lauri Markkanen



# More people now believe that Santa Claus really lives in Finland

” Danish people think that Santa Claus lives in Greenland, while in many other countries Santa Claus is associated with Finland. ‘We cannot compete with Finland on this issue’. – DENMARK

” Santa Claus has managed to establish himself as a Finn. – GREAT BRITAIN

” Lionel Messi’s visit to Finnish Lapland to meet with Santa Claus raised interest and made headlines. – ARGENTINA



# The beloved Moomins are now also known to come from Finland

” The most significant Finland-related media topic in the UK in 2017 was definitely the Moomins and Tove Jansson. The art exhibitions at the Southbank Centre and Dulwich Picture Gallery [...] as well as the new TV series about the Moomins, starring Kate Winslet, gained steady visibility in the British media throughout the year. [...] Tove Jansson also featured in numerous in-depth profiles. The Bohemian artist and her adorable illustrated figures brought a lot of positive attention to Finland. – GREAT BRITAIN



© Moomin Characters™

” A Moomin character encouraged children to gather and listen to Finnish stories. We had an intern who said of the book fair that it managed to make Marimekko and the Moomins Finnish again. The brands are popular in Thailand, but many thought they were Japanese. This belief has now been corrected. – THAILAND

” The Moomins have only become really popular in South Korea in the last couple of years, and now we can almost say that the Moomins are booming. The Moomin Original Artwork Exhibition, which was opened in Seoul in the autumn to celebrate Finland’s 100th anniversary of independence, was widely covered in the media (television, papers, social media). – SOUTH KOREA

# What image of Finland is portrayed in the media?

” Finns are known as the developers of the maternity package and a good education system, as skilled athletes and gifted artists. The image of Finns has become more varied this year, and, thanks to Lauri Markkanen, for example, many young people and new target groups have become interested in Finland. – **THE UNITED STATES**

” The perception of Finns is unchangeable. Finnish people are regarded as calm, honest and tolerant, very much law-abiding, respecting other people, not talkative, but having a special sense of humour. – **JAPAN**

” In India, Finns are generally perceived as straightforward, punctual, honest and friendly. – **INDIA**

” The image of Finnish tourists has changed slowly but surely. One might say it is positive rather than just neutral. – **ESTONIA**



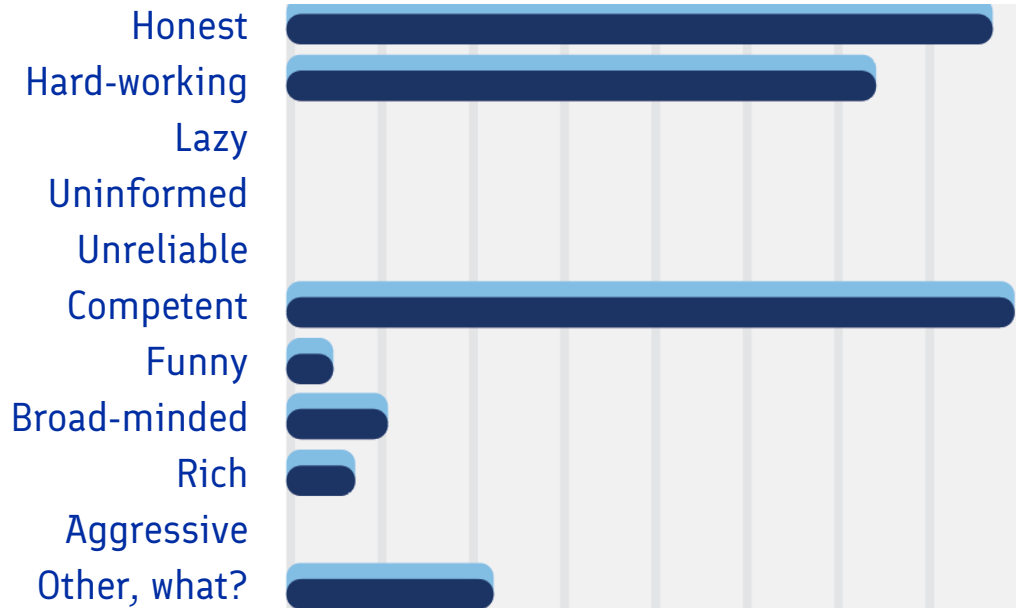
” Finns are considered trustworthy and honest as well as straightforward and great to work with. A certain type of Finnish madness is also known, in a positive sense. – **GERMANY**

” Finland’s reputation as a bit of an odd and ‘different’ Nordic country and the image of the Finnish people strengthened during the jubilee year [...] Examples include hobbyhorse racing, which Finnish teenagers do, ‘mad’ Finnish sports (e.g. swamp football) and Tom of Finland.

– **DENMARK**

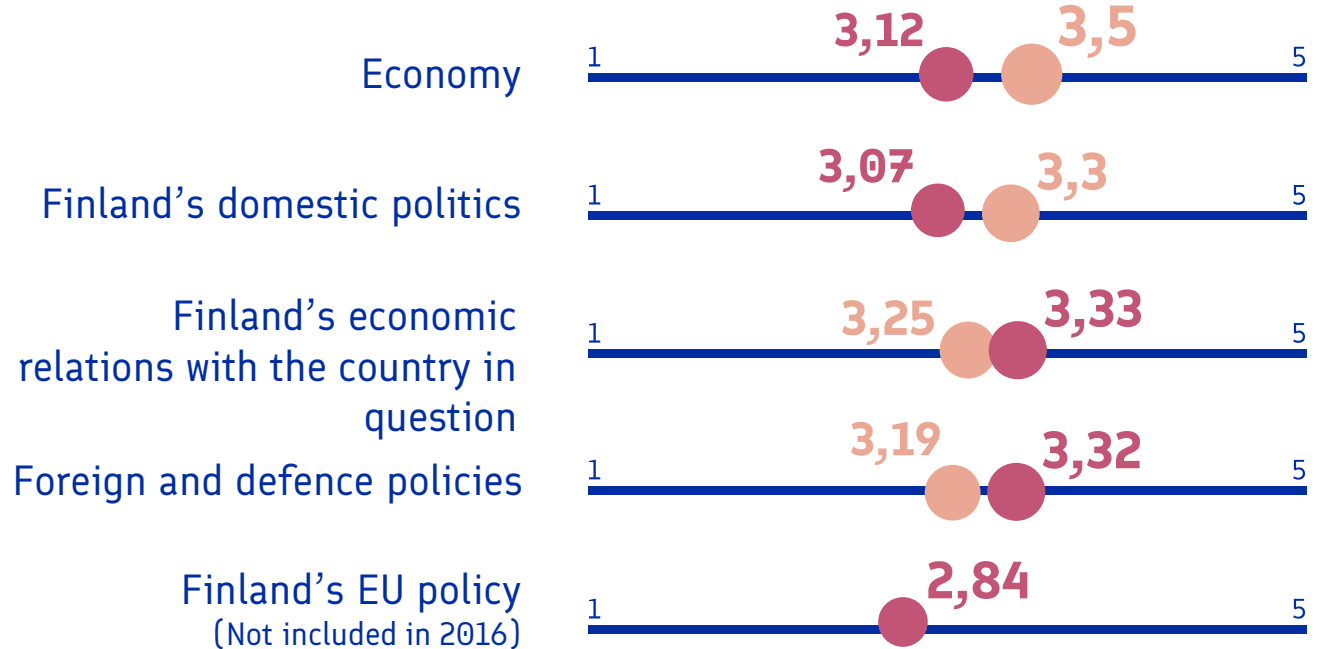


# In the opinion of foreign media, we are, above all, competent, honest and hard-working



# Topics in politics and economy followed by the Ministry

Assess the visibility of the following content in the host country's media on a scale of: 1 not at all visible – 5 very visible.



” Finland is the Scandinavian tiger – it's growing faster than the rest of the eurozone. – GREECE

● 2017 ● 2016



# Embassy staff and media visits to Finland

## EMBASSY STAFF

“The ambassador’s visits to the provinces during the jubilee year have greatly increased the visibility of Finland and Finnish know-how across the country. During the visits, the ambassador was interviewed by local radio, TV and newspapers in cities such as Arica, Antofasta, Iquique, Coquimpo and Concepcion.” – **CHILE**

“The missions in China enjoyed active Finland 100 operations, and there were a lot of events, considering the resources and circumstances [...] We attracted a lot of viewers via video streaming; for example, the equality event at the ambassador’s residence, which featured Foreign Minister Soini and China’s first female astronaut, attracted almost 250,000 online viewers.” – **CHINA**

“The three-day STHLM/SUOMI city festival in Kungsträdgården exceeded our audience targets. More than 100,000 visitors attended, and there was a lot of media coverage before and during the festival. [...] Swedish-Finnish media wrote several articles about the event well in advance, as did the media in Finland (e.g. HS), but the Swedish media only caught up with the event when it was starting [...] SVT’s main news mentioned the festival on the opening day. Even Lilla Aktuellt, the news for children, broadcast a story from the event.” – **SWEDEN**

“**Petri Kalliola, a member of the embassy staff, and his three friends appeared as tourists in the popular Korean TV series, Welcome, for the first time in Korea, which gave Finland visibility in South Korea.**” – **SOUTH KOREA**

## MEDIA VISITS

“Media visits are very useful in building the country’s image. So far, journalists who have participated in media visits have written at least two, sometimes even more, articles for Lithuanian publications. The tone of the articles has been either neutral or positive.” – **LITHUANIA**

“The Embassy in Ankara has participated in the media visits organised in previous years. The outcome has always been positive, with detailed and professional articles and analyses pinpointing the target audience for country branding having been written. These visits also lead to longer cooperation between the Embassy and the journalist, resulting in further projects and works for country branding.” – **TURKEY**

“Influencer visits are a very important tool in building the country’s image ... The visits significantly increased the visibility of Finland’s strengths and Finland’s jubilee year in the country in the press, on television and in social media. The visits may result in Finland being able to voice its views in a long-lasting and credible manner in different media, and they always result at least in a few articles in papers after the visit.” – **MEXICO**



# Finland in the world media

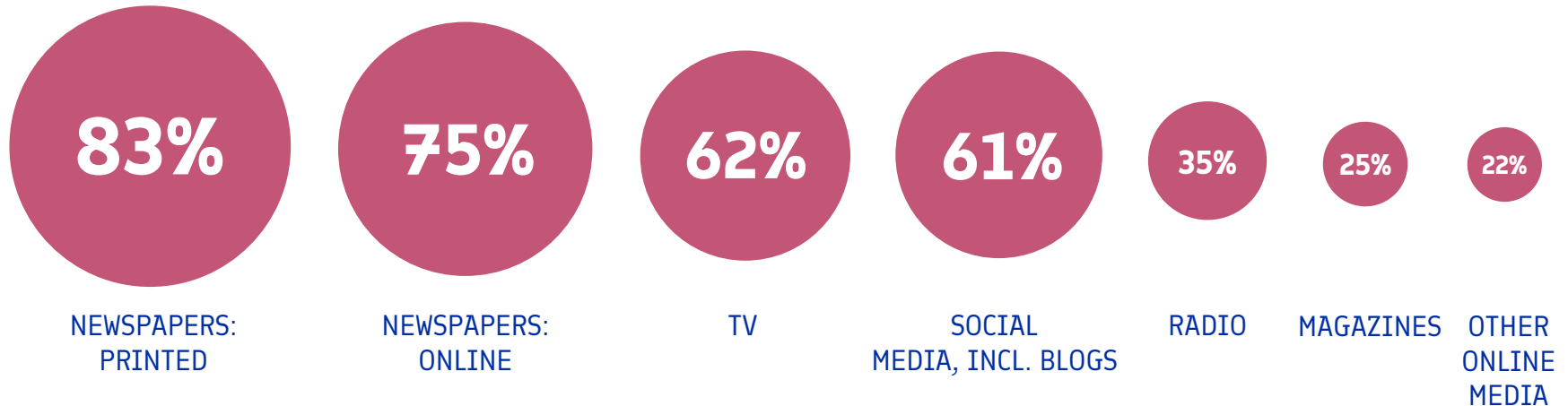
This survey was designed to examine the topics associated with Finland in international media coverage. It comprised all media, with a particular focus on newspapers.

The data are based on assessments submitted by the Finnish missions and, in the case of some countries, on externally sourced media monitoring reports. In two-thirds of the missions, media-related activities are conducted alongside other work.

The Webropol survey was conducted between December 2017 and January 2018

A total of 74 out of 89 missions submitted a response, which is the largest proportion in the history of the survey. 16 answered in English.

**According to the missions, the most important media events were divided in the media as follows:**

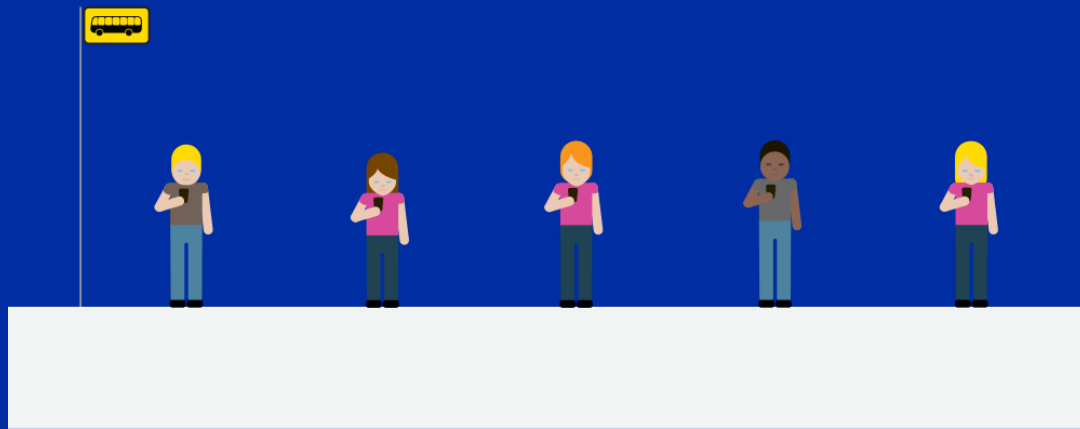


**“Finns ain’t what they used to be!”**

**– AUSTRALIA**



# Further information by region



# Sweden

“Finland has been exceptionally popular in the media during the jubilee year. Most of the publicity has been very positive. [...] The most common narrative: Finland’s heroic struggle to victory, i.e. its journey from the beginning of its independence in poverty and misery to a modern Nordic country, with political and economic freedom.” – **SWEDEN**

“[...] The close relationship between Finland and Sweden, shared values and diverse cooperation have featured widely – especially in several editorials with focus on Finland. There were delightfully many editorials. Key narratives:

- Finland has gone from struggle to victory. The small nation fought unyieldingly for its freedom against the giant behind the eastern border. Now the country is part of Europe and the Nordic family.
- Economic success story: From rags to Slush.
- Finland’s history is bloody (a lot of coverage about the three wars), but as a consequence of its war experiences, Finland is an expert in defence policies. -> Defence cooperation with Finland is important -> Sweden should learn from Finland.
- Finland is also a close and reliable partner for Sweden on many other levels. The relationship is excellent. In addition to the defence expertise mentioned above, education and design are highlighted as special areas of Finnish expertise, which are highly valued in Sweden.
- Swedes’ self-criticism is repeated in many stories: They should know more about Finland, know the country better.
- Finland is also funny and so familiar that we can engage in sisterly banter.” – **SWEDEN**

“Close defence cooperation between Finland and Sweden. Finland was mentioned, either in passing or in more detail, in almost every article and public debate about Sweden’s defences and security policy.

This theme was repeated throughout the year, as in the previous year. Other topics that were covered in the media included the joint decision by Finland and Sweden to participate in the JEF cooperation with Great Britain and Finland’s participation in the exercise Aurora.” – **SWEDEN**

“Two news items that were particularly prominent were the transfer of Nordea’s head office to Finland and the stabbings in Turku. The story about Nordea’s head office was naturally thoroughly reported from the Swedish point of view, and the move away from Sweden was seen as a national loss. Finland played a minor part in the media coverage, and the tone was neutral. The news of the Turku stabbing was covered widely, partly because of the fact that some eyewitnesses and people involved in the incident by helping others were Swedish tourists, who were interviewed in several media.” – **SWEDEN**

## Other Nordic countries

“In terms of sport, Finland 100 gained visibility when the Eurobasket 2017 tournament, jointly organised by Iceland and Finland, took place in Finland, and the Finland-Iceland World Cup qualifying match was played at the same time. A few thousand Iceland fans travelled to Finland to watch the games, and the papers back home wrote about the “Icelandic train” that travelled between Tampere and Helsinki. Later in the year, the Icelandic people enthused over Pyry Soiri and the goal he scored as it made Iceland’s journey to the World Cup easier. There are still more than 7,000 members in the Pyry Soiri fan club on Facebook.” – **ICELAND**

“Political themes were the most important topics related to Finland in the Danish media in 2017. The security situation in the Baltic Sea and Finland’s role in this context made many headlines. Topics included the news of Russia’s suspected breach of Finnish airspace just before the Independence Day. This article by the Ritzau news agency was published in many of the major media. The article concluded that the suspected airspace breach took place at a time characterised by increased tensions between Russia and the West. The history of Finland before and after its independence was briefly summarised in the article.” – **DENMARK**

“The Nordic World Ski Championships in Lahti galvanised the Norwegian media. The championships were broadcast live, and the Norwegian studio commentators sent coverage for the sports programmes on the main channels, NRK and TV2. Finland and Lahti received a lot of positive publicity for the successful World Championships and for being an efficient organiser. The lighter content in the programmes often dealt with the familiar stereotypes of Finns. They were gathered by interviewing Finns sitting in pubs.” – **NORWAY**

## The Baltic countries

“Finnish films in late November and early December. The premieres of two significant films – The Eternal Road and The Unknown Soldier – took place at the Pöff film festival just before the Independence Day. Jörn Donner received a lifetime achievement award, which received a lot of coverage. A little earlier, Tom of Finland was premiered; it also featured in the media, but not as extensively as the later films. The film festival also ran a 48-hour marathon screening of Finnish films, which was mainly noticed through the association with Donner. Related to The Eternal Road storyline, there was also a feature about an eyewitness on Estonian television.” – **ESTONIA**

“Finland and Finnish export products are generally highly valued in Latvia. Other export / trade related issues in the media were Rail Baltica, Finnish banks, Lindström work clothing plant, Fazer plant, the school system. [...] A wide variety of Finnish exhibitions, literature events, opera, music and films took place in Latvia and were well covered by the media, and the Latvian media also visited some culture events in Finland.” – **LATVIA**

“Fortum is a major player in the energy business in Lithuania, and it draws a lot of attention, sometimes very negative, in the media, especially in local newspapers. In other respects, the image of Finland and Finnish products is good in Lithuania.” – **LITHUANIA**

## Russia

“The Consulate General in St. Petersburg was targeted by a new kind of information campaign in July 2017. It was a media trap, in which two Consulate General employees were filmed and an attempt was made to interview them without warning in the street. In brief, this is how the event was described in the media: The Izvestia newspaper published a story on its website at 17:02, saying that Finnish diplomats were involved in arms trafficking. The material used was the attempted interviews in the street. The article said that the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had officially disapproved of the behaviour of the Consulate General’s consul during the arms trafficking court case. The same evening, Ren TV broadcast a story made with the same material at 20:21. The point of the story was that the Finnish Consulate General had been involved in two scandals: arms trafficking and a fight. The story also said that the Russian Foreign Ministry had sent a note verbale to Finland about the consul’s behaviour and the note was also shown.” – **RUSSIA**

“Finland’s position in international politics has been seen as belonging to the West, on the one hand, when Finland is positioned as part of the juxtaposition between Russia and the West. On the other hand, Finland has also been described as a long-term and close partner of Russia, which has maintained and developed dialogue with Russia in spite of the tense international political climate. One example of this was the meeting of Presidents Niinistö and Putin in summer 2017.” – **RUSSIA**

“Finland-related topics that were covered included:

- Discussion in Finland on dual citizenship (several media, neutral to negative)
- Finnish school – just play? (several media, all tones)
- The intelligence story in Helsingin Sanomat (several media, neutral to negative)
- The terrorist attack in Turku (several media, mainly neutral)
- The KISS masks on the statues at Helsinki railway station (several media, positive)
- Bread made from flour mixed with powdered insects (several media, neutral to positive)
- The government crisis in Finland (several media, mainly neutral)
- Increasing number of Russian tourists travelling to Finland (several media, positive)
- Backlog of Finnish visa applications and extended handling times (multiple, negative)” – **RUSSIA**



## Europe, excluding the Nordic and Baltic countries

“Education and the maternity package are still of interest, but in addition to these (and perhaps even more so), coverage was given to other social policy solutions and experiments, such as the basic income pilot, solutions to homelessness and the prison system. [...]. Interest in the Nordic countries remains high, and Finland is getting more and more attention, especially in terms of culture and tourism. Since hygge became popular, there’s been a new trend, kalsarikännit, a word now recognised by the Brits.” – **GREAT BRITAIN**

“Finland’s reputation has continued its positive development in Portugal after a slight fall caused by the debt crisis. Although Finland still has a hardline reputation, the media rarely refer to the images from the time of the aid package to Portugal and the adjustment programme. Finland’s strengths, such as education and equal society, are appreciated in Portugal.” – **PORTUGAL**

“The number of individual stories increased by more than 60%, from about 800 articles in the previous year to almost 1,300 articles in 2017. Finland’s reputation in Croatia is good, and the image of Finland conveyed in the media is realistic.” – **CROATIA**

“In 2017, the main topics involving negative elements from the French perspective were the construction of the Olkiluoto nuclear power plant by the French company Areva and the difficulties associated with the project, as well as Nokia’s decision to make workers redundant in France. Prime Minister Juha Sipilä visited Paris in September 2017 and discussed a variety of topics with President Macron. From this visit, the French media only covered the Nokia case, which has received a lot of negative attention in France.” – **FRANCE**

“In Germany, Finland’s pioneering status in digitalisation, especially concerning cyber security, made the news: Finland has invested in cyber security at an early stage. The Finnish wood and pulp industry is said to continue to be successful due to digitalisation. Digitalisation in schools also made the occasional story in the German media.” – **GERMANY**

“Finland 100 created opportunities to mention many Finnish aspects and one of them was presenting various rankings, where Finland was on the top. Polish readers could learn that Finland is third in the world when it comes to the rule of law, lack of corruption and the freedom of the press.” – **POLAND**

“At the end of the year, stories started to appear in several Swiss media about the recovery of the Finnish economy. There were also several newspaper articles about Nokia’s improving situation.” – **SWITZERLAND**

## Japan

“The overall image of Finland hasn’t changed; Finland is still seen as an advanced country of the Moomins, design, Santa and the Aurora, where the Japanese people would like to visit and live. The Embassy kept promoting the mother-child clinic system and the maternity package which resulted in the continuing number of articles, presenting Finland as an advanced nation of childcare.” – JAPAN

“The Embassy organised the Finland 100 kick-off press conference gathering about 100 people, which resulted in over 50 articles and TV broadcasts. To make sure we would get media coverage, we prepared two big surprises – one was Embassy mascot Fintan’s very first animation, and the other was Moomin Ballet where Snorkmaiden dances on her tiptoes in front of the guests.” – JAPAN

“Basic income is a hot topic in Japan, the media has been keen to know more about it ever since there were talks of Finland starting the pilot project. The word “basic income” had 531 hits in Nikkei Telecon last year, and 41 if combined with the word “Finland.” The Press Section received many media inquiries on this topic, and when Ambassador Siukosaari talked about this at the Japan National Press Club in December, many questions followed.” – JAPAN

“Finland suffering from a high rate of unemployment is mentioned in stories concerning basic income. Slush is beginning to be known in Japanese media as well.” – JAPAN

## China

“China’s President Xi Jinping’s state visit to Finland in April brought Finland to the headlines in almost every state medium as well as many of the private media for several weeks. This hype continued for the rest of the year, and it will still be useful in 2018. Finland is now much better known in China than in the past, and this development was enhanced by Finland 100.” – **CHINA**

“[...] Xi Jinping’s visit to Finland in April attracted widespread interest in Chinese media and social media channels. Finland was mentioned daily in the main news on the biggest TV channels and on the front pages of the newspapers in China. News, interviews, reports and commentaries attracted a total of at least tens, if not hundreds, of millions of viewers and readers across China over the week. News reporting was almost invariably positive, and the good relations between the countries and Finland’s wide-ranging expertise were widely praised. The topics that were especially prominent were the 100th anniversary of Finland’s independence, the promotion of free trade and the new type of partnership between the two countries, as well as the areas of cooperation, particularly high technology and cleantech, Arctic operations, innovation, winter sports and tourism.” – **CHINA**

“Finland has been presented in a very positive light and more prominently than before in the Chinese media. The friendly relationship between the two countries has been emphasised by several parties, as well as Finland’s strengths, such as winter sports, green technology and education.” – **CHINA**

“Finland’s education system and expertise have been steadily and widely featured in Chinese media. The greatest visibility came when the esteemed and top-selling Life Weekly magazine published a collection of articles on more than 30 pages on education in Finland.” – **CHINA**

“Finland 100’s visibility strengthened the already strong Finland-related themes: tourism and education. Finland is already known for its exotic winter with its Northern lights and Santa Claus, and for the education system. It should be remembered that the increased visibility is relative; Finland is still not a topic in the mainstream news.” – **HONG KONG**

## Asia, Oceania, excluding Japan and China

“The most prominent jubilee year event was the planting of fir trees at Taman Menteng park in Jakarta in May. Dozens of news articles were published from the event, it was on the front page of the largest English-language newspaper, it was visible on all major television channels and received more than 200,000 likes on the governor’s Instagram account (3 million followers). The great media attention was guaranteed by the attendance of the then Governor of Jakarta, who participated in the event and, together with the ambassador and other diplomats, planted the trees. He [...] is still one of the most reported people in Indonesia’s media. The event helped Finland to be seen as an environmentally friendly country with good relations with Indonesians.” – **INDONESIA**

“The biggest single event of the jubilee year was the participation of Finland as an honorary guest at the International Book Fair in Bangkok from 28 March to 9 April 2017. As an honorary guest, Finland was given a pavilion of 100 square metres, and the Embassy was partnered with Marimekko, the Moomins and Finnair to create the pavilion. [...] In addition to Finnish literature and teaching materials, the pavilion presented Finland as a country of great design and an attractive tourist destination.” – **THAILAND**

“Finnish education is the most frequently mentioned topic in Australian media. As Australians become more anxious about schooling and the falling results of Australian students, comparisons are often made with Finland. This covers all aspects of the Finnish education system, including training, pay, autonomy, cultural facets, hours of schooling, elimination of standardised testing and Pasi Sahlberg’s recent move to the University of New South Wales in Sydney.” – **AUSTRALIA**

“The most significant Finland-related media story in South Korea came when the highly-popular Korean reality/travel series (First Time in Korea) featured Petri Kalliola (the Olympic coordinator at the Seoul Embassy) and his three Finnish friends Sami, Vilppu and Ville, who stole the hearts of the Korean viewers with their sincerity. The four-episode TV series attracted a huge number of viewers, and Petri and his friends received a lot of very positive attention in the media. As Petri also worked for the Embassy, he helped us to gain visibility for our activities.” – **SOUTH KOREA**

“Nokia’s relaunch in India and partnering with HDM Global was widely covered in the media.” – **INDIA**

“The first ever Finnish-Tajik business seminar attracted more than a hundred Tajikistan entrepreneurs from various sectors, including the media. [...] The export promotion trip led by Finland’s Roving Ambassador to Central Asia in April 2017 increased positive media coverage of Finland. Interest in trade with Finland increased significantly.” – **EAST TIMOR**

“In Malaysia, Finland is often known for its successful school system, and this point could be further strengthened last year when we organised a demonstration of a Finnish school day and O-P Heinonen’s visit (Director General at the Finnish National Agency for Education) [...] The events gained wide visibility both in the print media and on the television and radio.” – **MALESIA**

## North Africa and the Middle East

“One of the largest newspapers in the UAE, Gulf News, published a 16-page Finland-themed supplement with its daily newspaper on 6 December 2017. It had been edited in Finland by a journalist who had taken part in the visit by the Gulf region journalists organised by VIE and Finpro in September 2017.” – **THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

“Different media published stories about Finland’s independence from Russia and different programmes were aired about the country’s celebrations during the year. A brief history of Finland and its development over the last 100 years were mentioned. The creative gift of Mount Halti from Norway to Finland was reflected positively in the news.” – **IRAN**

“Finland is perceived positively in local media, although it is still not very well known – in general when there is news about Finland, it is positive. Its excellent education system is particularly well known here. This fact has not changed much, although the 100 year anniversary has provided some additional visibility.” – **SAUDI ARABIA**

“The country’s president sent a congratulatory video to Finland, which was the first time in Tunisian history that the president had paid tribute to another country in this manner. The local press, radio and social media took note of this greeting.” – **TUNISIA**

“TV and the written media gave a broad and very positive picture of Finland, its history and accomplishments. [...] The reporting was at times almost embarrassingly positive, but had the desired result of making Finland’s strength more visible, and added attraction to Finland as a tourist destination.” – **ISRAEL**

“Education and health are the most attractive sectors covered in media in Egypt. Also the joint Egyptian-Finnish musical bridge cooperation project held in March 2017.” – **EGYPT**

“The Finland 100 activities were an occasion to present Finland in all her diversity to the local public. A lot of people did not have any idea about Finland before.” – **MOROCCO**

## Sub-Saharan Africa

“Minister Mykkänen’s export promotion trip was given significant attention in the local media. Articles based on the press release by the Embassy were published in several newspapers. A story was also published about the Minister’s meeting with Nigeria’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, Onyeama. The stories that were not based on the press releases focused on investments by Finnish companies and Nigerian ministers’ statements during the visit.” – **NIGERIA**

“The exceptionally good relations between Finland and Namibia offered the opportunity to organise a number of events during the jubilee year. The special relationship between our countries was featured in all Finland 100 events. The events were attended by large numbers of people, and they were very well received. Most of the events were also covered widely in the media. It was the CodeBus project that attracted the most publicity of the jubilee year events.” – **NAMIBIA**

“Finland was prominently covered before and during Nairobi Innovation Week in early March by the press, television and radio. Finland was described as a pioneer in innovation and a strong supporter of the innovation and startup culture in Kenya and across East Africa.” – **KENYA**

“The jubilee year was covered in the Mozambique media usually in connection with the various events. The Embassy organised monthly seminars, events and visits on different themes, and Finland 100 was covered in these contexts. High-level guests from Finland (MPs, a minister, experts from different fields) also discussed the anniversary in their interviews. The Mozambican stakeholders noted this, as did the media.” – **MOZAMBIQUE**

“Finland, together with the International Labour Organization (ILO), arranged a forum on employment issues in Africa in September, which attracted attention in various media. The Minister of Labour, Jari Lindström, was one of the forum’s main speakers.” – **ZAMBIA**

“The first Nordic Energy Days event, which was organised jointly by the Nordic countries, and the visit by Under-Secretary of State Petri Peltonen received positive visibility in the press.” – **SOUTH AFRICA**

## The United States and Canada

“The most prominent story of the year was the Finnish maternity package and its launch in the United States. Several states have created their own maternity package system, and the packs are distributed through hospitals, for example. In the United States, the focus has been on the cardboard box being a safe place for a child to sleep and being, consequently, able to reduce child mortality. Media such as CNN, The New York Times, The Washington Post, NPR and The Denver Post have reported on the subject. The tone of the stories is mainly positive, but a few stories have pointed out that the cardboard box itself does not reduce child mortality and that in Finland, for example, the maternity package is strongly linked to the mother-child clinic system. In some of the articles, experts commented that the safety of the cardboard boxes has not been studied enough and there is a lot of misleading information about them. One of the most visible stories about the maternity package was The Washington Post’s article ‘Put your baby in a . . . box?’, which was published on the Style supplement’s front page at the end of July.” – **THE UNITED STATES**

“The Embassy’s Matt Damon campaign was mentioned on several TV channels.” – **THE UNITED STATES**

“Finland as a holiday destination received much more attention in the American media than in previous years. Most of the travel stories were really positive. For example, Harpers Bazaar and The Los Angeles Times named Finland as one of the year’s best tourist destinations, The Huffington Post called Finland the last real wilderness in Europe, Travel + Leisure wrote an extensive article on Fiskars, and Vogue and National Geographic also published city guides for Helsinki. The most prominent travel themes were Helsinki and Finland’s nature, including the Hossa National Park, the Northern lights and the Saimaa ringed seal.” – **THE UNITED STATES**

“Finland’s basic income pilot project has been featured in Canadian media throughout the year. Early in the year, the news of the launch of the pilot was reported in both English- and French-language media. The basic income pilot has been reported in a fairly neutral tone. The topic is also very prominent in Canada, with Ontario launching its own pilot in autumn 2017. Some other provinces are also considering launching the basic income pilot, but no decisions have been made yet. The Finnish pilot was used as an example almost without exception in stories related to basic income, sometimes by itself, sometimes with those carried out in other countries.” – **CANADA**

“Local organisations of the Soldiers of Odin have been set up in various parts of Canada, especially in Western Canada. The topic was reported on steadily during the year. Finland was mentioned as the home of the Soldiers of Odin movement, but the stories focused on local activities. Some of the Canadian groups announced that they would dissociate themselves from the racism of the Finnish movement and described themselves as keepers of order.” – **CANADA**

## South America

“The large photo exhibition “Finlandia 100 años - Sociedad en armonía con el medioambiente”, held in the outdoor gallery on Mexico’s main street, was the Finland 100 event that received the widest media coverage.

The exhibition reached millions of viewers, and the media conveyed the exhibition’s message of Finland as a welfare state where technological development goes hand in hand with environmental protection and respect for nature.” – **MEXICO**

“The Mexican TV channel Canal 22 visited Finland, and, as a result, the channel broadcast a series of programmes over several months, offering a wide picture of present-day Finland. The series was filmed in Helsinki and Tampere, and its themes included Finland’s 100th anniversary, education, equality, environment, ICT, architecture, literature, cinema, sports and social development. The interviewees included Tarja Halonen, Pekka Timonen, Sofi Oksanen and Joonas Berghäll. The tone of the programme was praising.” – **MEXICO**

“Finland was the focus of the São Paulo Nordic market, and the opportunity was used to tell the story of Finland 100. Finland received a lot of publicity, especially on social media. Several travel and lifestyle bloggers and websites spread the picture of Finland as a functional society and an interesting holiday destination.” – **BRAZIL**

“Chilean top chef Carlo von Mühlenbrock was given the honorary title of Special Envoy for Finland 100. The ViveNórdico food culture project, an 8-part TV series with four episodes focusing on Finland, featured his visit to Finland and achieved a record reach. The programmes about Finnish food culture reached 5.9 million viewers.” – **CHILE**

“The expanded range of activities we have realised to celebrate the centennial year have allowed us to put the lights on some matters other than those that usually dominate the attention of our host country’s people regarding Finland (such as education and technology). For instance, for the very first time we participated in the most important local Book Fair, to get a surprisingly enthusiastic reception for our literature among the public.” – **PERU**

“The Embassy’s tree planting campaign to mark the jubilee year achieved a lot of coverage, especially in the provincial media. In the capital, the campaign launch and joint tree planting with representatives from the national and the capital’s ministries of education was the editorial story in the country’s largest newspaper. [...] In Uruguay, the event that really hit the headlines, apart from the tree planting campaign, was the culmination of the jubilee year, the sold-out Finland 100 concert at Teatro Solís. The concert starred Tarja Turunen and was organised by the Embassy. The tree planting campaign with related themes was also covered in the media in Paraguay.” – **ARGENTINA, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY**





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