

October 2015

How's Life in Finland?



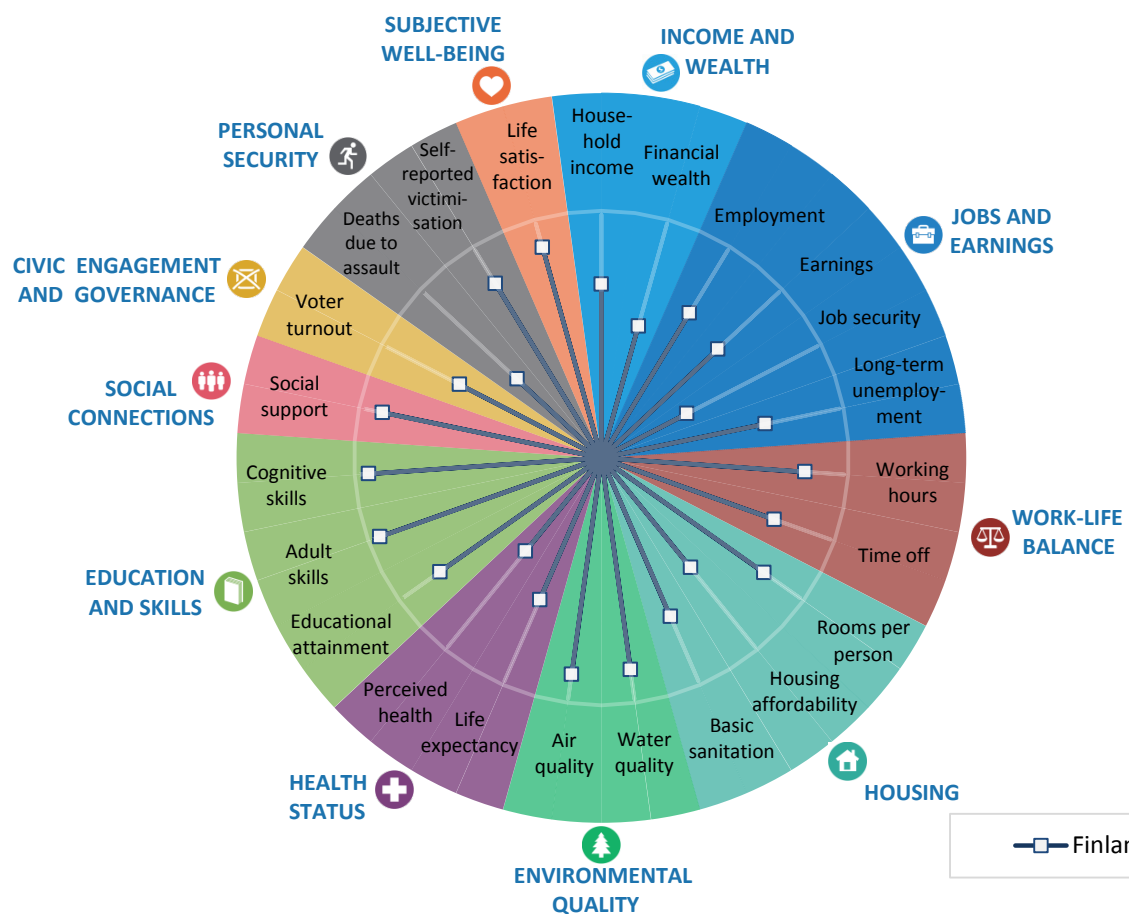
Additional information, including the data used in this country note, can be found at:
www.oecd.org/statistics/Hows-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx

HOW'S LIFE IN FINLAND IN 2015?

In general, Finland performs well across the different well-being indicators. Only 3.6% of Finnish employees regularly **work very long hours** compared to the OECD average of 12.5%. Finland has a high level of **educational attainment**: 85.9% of the adult working-age population have completed at least an upper secondary education compared to the OECD average of 77.2%. This is also reflected in the good literacy and numeracy **skills of Finnish adults**. **Social network support** is also high: 94.8% of the Finnish report having friends or relatives that they can count on in times of trouble compared to the OECD average of 88%.

On average Finnish employees receive similar **earnings** to the average OECD employee, but they have a higher risk of becoming unemployed (the indicator used to assess **job security**). The share of individuals **perceiving their health** as good or better than good is 64.7%, which lies below the OECD average of 68.8%. At 81.1 years, life expectancy in Finland is just above the OECD average level (79.9 years).

Current well-being in Finland



This chart shows areas of well-being strengths and weaknesses in Finland, based on a ranking of all OECD countries. Longer lines show areas of relative strength, while shorter lines show areas of relative weakness. For more details, see www.oecd.org/statistics/How's-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx.

Resources for future well-being in Finland

Beyond measuring well-being today, *How's Life? 2015* looks at some of the resources (or “capital stocks”) that will shape people’s well-being in the future. These include aspects of **natural capital**, **human capital**, **social capital** and **economic capital**.

For example, **trust in other people** is an important component of **social capital**. In Finland trust in others is among the highest among European OECD countries: on a scale from 0 (“you do not trust any other person”) to 10 (“most people can be trusted”), the average score given by the Finnish is 7.4, while the European OECD average stands at 5.8.

HOW'S LIFE FOR CHILDREN IN FINLAND?

Giving children a good start in life is important both for well-being today, and in the future.

Finnish children tend to live in families with **good material well-being conditions**. Finland is one of only four countries in the OECD where child poverty rates are lower than overall poverty rates.

Child **health outcomes** are mixed: the rate of infant mortality and the rate of low birth weights are both among the lowest in the OECD. However, Finland's adolescent suicide rate (at age 15-19) is the third highest in the OECD area.

Finnish students have very good **reading and creative problem solving skills**. At the same time **civic participation** of students is low: only 21.7% of Finnish 14-year olds report having participated in organisations, groups or clubs in the last 12 months, the lowest share in the OECD. Finnish students also have a relatively low **sense of belonging in school**.

The **life satisfaction** of Finnish children is among the highest in the OECD.

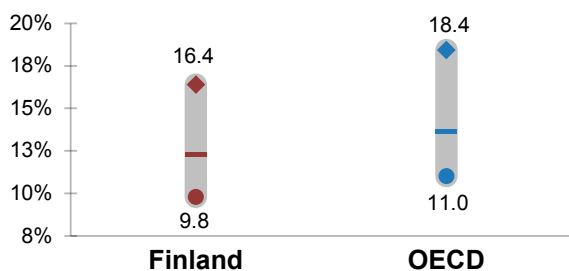
Child well-being in Finland		
Ranking of Finland compared to other OECD countries		
● top third ● middle third ● bottom third		
Income and Wealth	Disposable income of households with children	●
	Child income poverty	●
Jobs and Earnings	Children in workless households	●
	Children with a long-term unemployed parent	●
Housing conditions	Average rooms per child	●
	Children in homes that lack basic facilities	●
Environmental quality	Children in homes with poor environmental conditions	●
Health status	Infant mortality	●
	Low birth weight	●
	Self-reported health status	●
	Obesity	●
	Adolescent suicide rate	●
	Teenage birth rate	●
Education and Skills	Reading skills among 15 year olds (PISA)	●
	Creative problem solving among 15 year olds (PISA)	●
	Youth neither in employment nor education/training	●
	Educational deprivation	●
Civic engagement	Intention to vote	●
	Civic participation	●
Social and family environment	Children who find it easy to talk to their parents	●
	Students reporting having kind classmates	●
	Students feeling a lot of pressure from schoolwork	●
	Students liking school	●
	Sense of belonging in school at 15 years old (PISA)	●
	Time children spend with parents	●
Personal security	Child homicide rate	●
	Bullying	●
Subjective well-being	Life satisfaction	●

Inequalities in child well-being

Across all OECD countries there are **large inequalities in child well-being**. Children from wealthier households enjoy both better material living conditions, and a higher **quality of life**, on average. In Finland, children from low socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to rate their health as fair or poor than children from high socio-economic backgrounds. Furthermore, children from high socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to find it easy to talk to their parents.

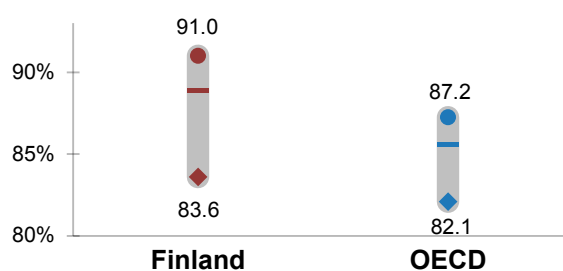
Inequalities in health status

Percentage of children aged 11, 13 and 15 with self-perceived fair or poor health



Inequalities in social and family environment

Percentage of children aged 11, 13 and 15 who report that they find it easy to talk to their parents



● High socio-economic status ◆ Low socio-economic status — National average

* For more information (including definitions), see: www.oecd.org/statistics/Hows-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx.

THE VALUE OF GIVING: VOLUNTEERING AND WELL-BEING

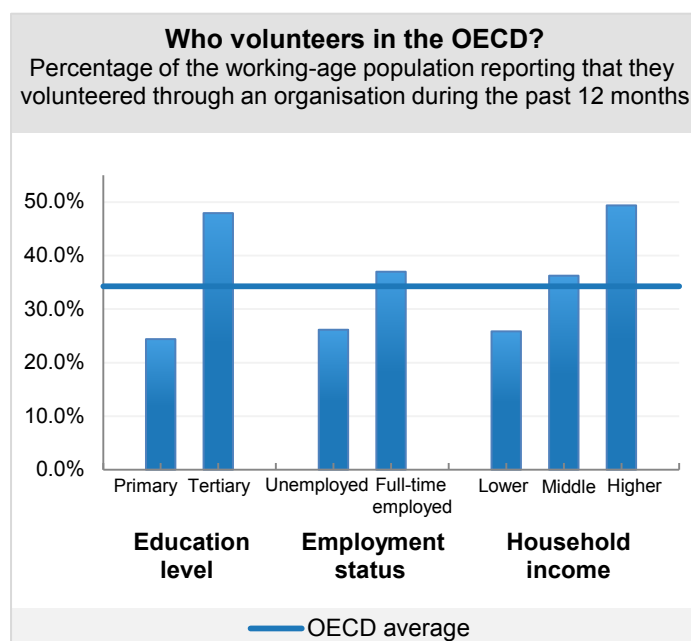
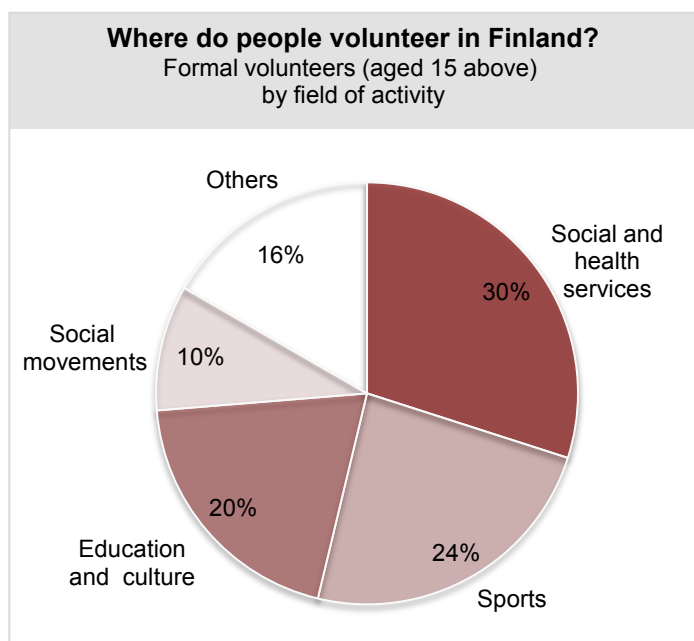
Volunteering makes an important “hidden contribution” to well-being, producing goods and services that are not captured by conventional economic statistics. When you add up the value of the time people spend on volunteering in OECD countries, it amounts to roughly 2% of GDP per year.

Volunteering in Finland and the OECD

The **main sectors of volunteering activity** in Finland are social and health services, followed by sports. Volunteering through an organisation (termed “**formal volunteering**”) is very common in Finland. 43.8% of the Finnish working-age population report that they engaged in formal volunteering during the past 12 months, substantially higher than the OECD average of 34.2%.

How often do people volunteer? 52.9% of people in Finland who volunteer formally do so less than once a month. The share of formal volunteers who volunteer every day is 3.4% and lies below the OECD average of 4.7%. So while a large share of people in Finland volunteer, they do so on a less frequent basis than the average OECD volunteer.

Who volunteers? Across the OECD area, people with a university degree are more likely to participate in formal volunteering than those with lower levels of education. Similarly, people who are in employment are more likely to volunteer than those who are unemployed. Participation in formal volunteering also increases with people’s level of household income.

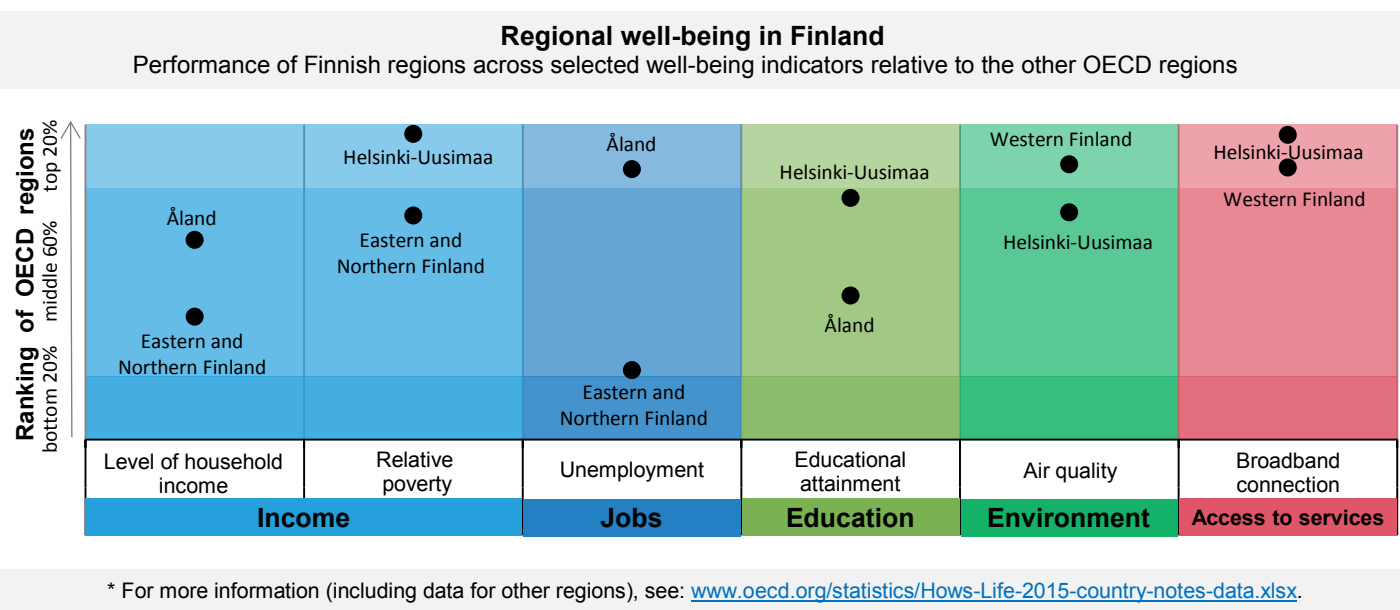


Volunteering brings benefits for volunteers themselves, as well as for the people and communities they help. For example, people who engage in volunteering are more likely to have higher literacy, numeracy and problem-solving **skills** and receive **higher wages**, on average, relative to non-volunteers.

In OECD countries, older people who volunteer formally are more likely to report a **better health status** than non-volunteers. Furthermore, formal volunteers in the OECD, on average, also report higher **life satisfaction** than non-volunteers.

GOING LOCAL: MEASURING WELL-BEING IN REGIONS

Where people live has an important impact on their opportunities to live well. There can be large differences in average levels of well-being in different regions within the same country. **How's Life in your Region?** and the **OECD regional well-being web-tool** assess performance across 9 dimensions of well-being in the 362 OECD large regions – 5 of which are in Finland. Drawing on this work, *How's Life? 2015* includes a special focus on measuring well-being in regions.



Regional gaps in material living conditions

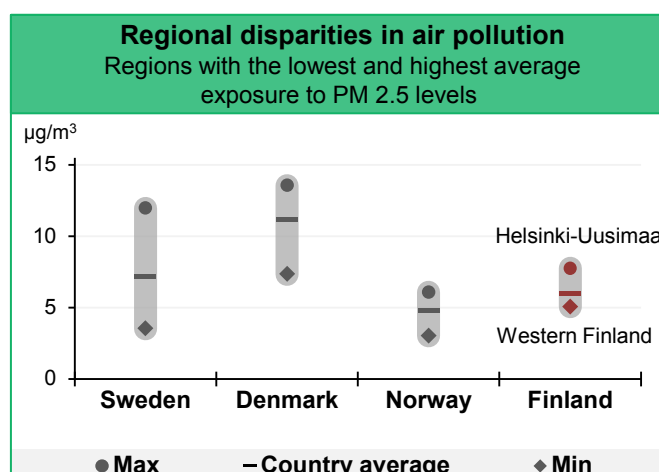
Regional inequalities in income are smaller in Finland than in many other OECD countries: the **average household adjusted disposable income** is 26% higher in Åland than in Eastern and Northern Finland. Regarding **relative income poverty**, while 4.4% of people in Helsinki-Uusimaa have an income of less than half of the Finnish median income, the share is 9% in Eastern and Northern Finland. **Unemployment rates** range from 4% in Åland to 10% in Eastern and Northern Finland. This gap (6 percentage points) is larger than the regional differences observed in Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

Regional differences in people's quality of life

Regarding **educational attainment**, 86.5% of the labour force has at least a secondary education in Helsinki-Uusimaa, while this share is 78.4% in Åland. This gap (8.1 percentage points) is smaller than regional differences in Norway, but larger than in Sweden.

The regional variation in **air quality** is relatively small in Finland.

The share of households with a **broadband connection** ranges from 92% in Helsinki-Uusimaa to 85% in Western Finland.



BETTER LIFE INDEX

The **Better Life Index** is an interactive web application that invites citizens to compare well-being across OECD countries and beyond on the basis of the set of well-being indicators explored in *How's Life?*. Users chose what weight to give to each of the eleven dimensions shown below and then see how countries' perform, based on their own personal priorities in life.

11 topics to define well-being

- Housing
- Income
- Jobs
- Community
- Education
- Environment
- Civic Engagement
- Health
- Life Satisfaction
- Safety
- Work-Life Balance

Each flower represents a country and each petal represents a topic

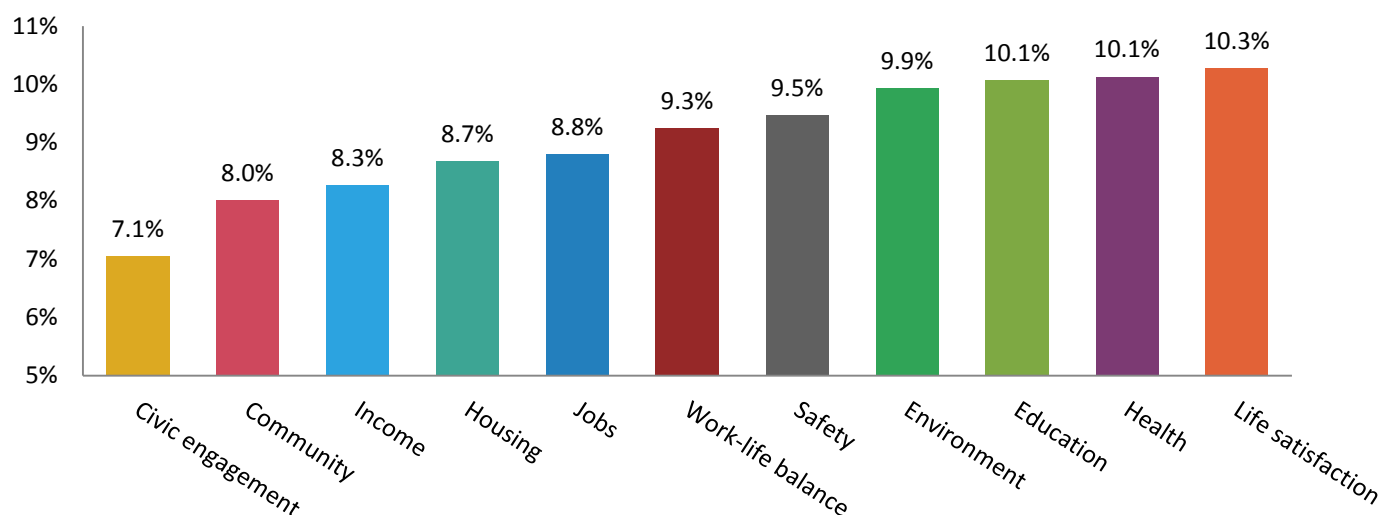
Rate the topics according to their importance to you

Users can also share their index with other people in their networks, as well as with the OECD. This allows the OECD to gather valuable information on the importance that users attach to various life dimensions, on how these preferences differ across countries, and on the demographic characteristics of users.

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO PEOPLE IN FINLAND?

Since its launch in May 2011, the Better Life Index has attracted **over seven million visits from just about every country on the planet** and has received over **15 million page views**. To date, over 43,000 people in Finland have visited the website making Finland the 34th country overall in traffic to the website. The top cities are Helsinki (48% of visits), Espoo, Tampere, Turku and Oulu.

The following country findings reflect the ratings voluntarily shared by 530 website visitors in Finland. Findings are only indicative and are not representative of the population at large. **For Finish users of the Better Life Index, life satisfaction, health and education are the three most important topics (shown below).**¹ Up to date information, including a breakdown of participants in each country by gender and age can be found here: www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/responses/#FIN.



¹ User information for Finland is based on shared indexes submitted between May 2011 and April 2015.



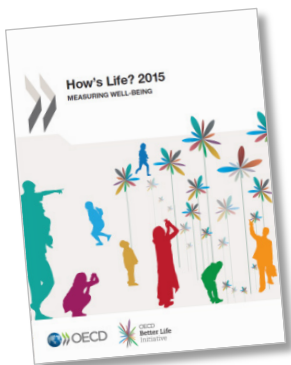
The **OECD Better Life Initiative**, launched in 2011, focuses on the aspects of life that matter to people and that shape the quality of their lives. The Initiative comprises a set of regularly updated well-being indicators and an in-depth analysis of specific topics, published in the *How's Life?* report. It also includes an interactive web application, the *Better Life Index*, and a number of methodological and research projects to improve the information base towards a better understanding of well-being trends and their drivers.

The OECD Better Life Initiative:

- Helps to inform policy making to improve quality of life.
- Connects policies to people's lives.
- Generates support for needed policy measures.
- Improves civic engagement by encouraging the public to create their own *Better Life Index* and share their preferences about what matters most for well-being
- Empowers the public by improving their understanding of policy-making.

This brochure presents **selected findings for Finland from the *How's Life?* report** (pages 2-5) and shows what **Finnish users of the Better Life Index** are telling us about their **well-being priorities** (page 6). A supporting Excel file with the data underlying the graphs shown in this note and further information is available here: www.oecd.org/statistics/Hows-Life-2015-country-notes-data.xlsx.

HOW'S LIFE?



How's Life?, published every two years, provides a comprehensive picture of well-being in OECD countries and other major economies by bringing together an internationally comparable set of well-being indicators that the OECD considers as essential to a good life. It looks at people's material conditions and quality of life across the population in eleven dimensions including: income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing; health status; work-life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security; and subjective well-being.

The *How's Life? 2015* report includes for the first time a set of indicators to measure the stocks of resources that help to support **well-being over time**. The report also contains three special chapters focusing on **child well-being**, **volunteering** and **regional well-being**.



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