



Data description (SIMS 3.1)

Statistics on population structure describe persons permanently resident in Finland at the turn of the year. The permanent population consists of persons who have a personal identity code and a permanent municipality of residence in Finland. Population data are available with different regional classifications, such as by municipality, region and wellbeing services county. Data recorded on persons include, for example,

- place of residence
- sex
- age
- marital status
- language
- nationality
- country of birth.

Data are obtained from the Population Information System and published once a year.

Sector coverage (SIMS 3.3)

The data of the statistics on population structure are total data. They contain data drawn from the Digital and Population Data Services Agency's Population Information System on all living persons with a personal identity code in the reference period. In general, the Population Information System of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency can be considered very exhaustive as regards persons. The statistics do not include persons who live in Finland temporarily or whose application process for a residence permit is ongoing (e.g. asylum seekers).

Statistical unit (SIMS 3.5)

The statistical unit is a person.

Statistical population (SIMS 3.6)

Population permanently resident in Finland in the reference period. Persons with a personal identity code and a municipality of residence in Finland. The present Municipality of Residence Act gives people freedom of choice over the locality where they wish to be registered as permanently resident. Homeless people are also included in the permanently resident population.

As well as a permanent place of residence, a person may have a temporary place of residence in a dwelling that this person says he or she occupies temporarily for at least three months. The statistics on population structure are compiled only according to the permanent place of residence.

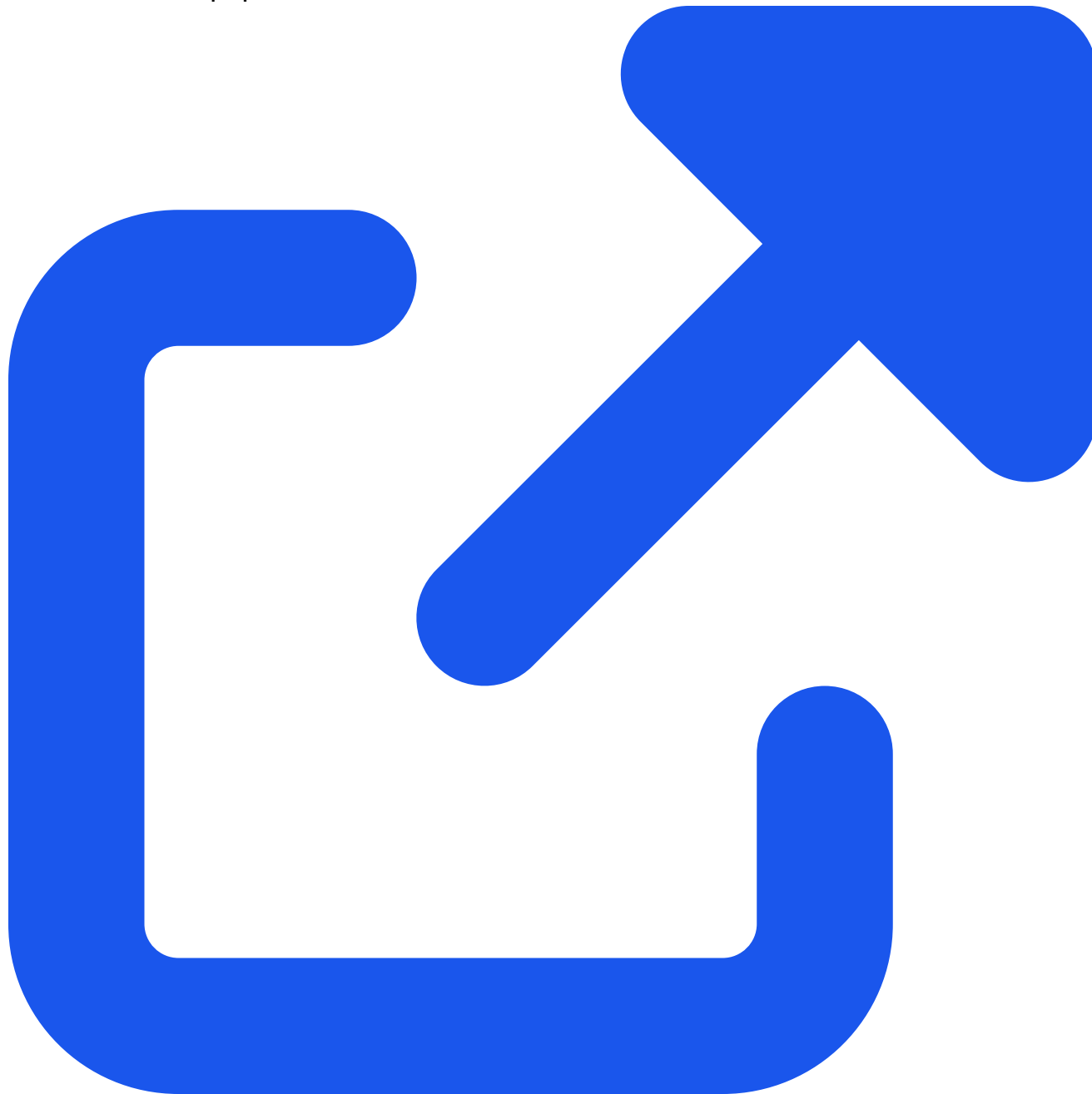
Reference area (SIMS 3.7)

Data are available on Finland and by various regional divisions based on the division of municipalities in Finland. Statistics based on municipal sub-areas or postal code areas can be produced as charged services. It is also possible to produce coordinate-based grid data.

Time coverage (SIMS 3.8)

Population data are available from 1749 onwards. Population numbers have been published by parish since 1865 and by municipality since 1920. The ten-year tables of the clergy provide information about the population's age, marital status, and language by parish until 1940. From 1950 onwards these data by municipality are available at ten-year intervals on the basis of population censuses. Annual population data by municipality on age, marital status and language are available starting from 1970.

Annual population data by municipality are available in the StatFin statistical database service from 1972 onwards. Population statistics from 1750 onwards have been digitised into PDF format in the National Library's Doria service:



Base period (SIMS 3.9)

Unit of measure (SIMS 4)

The measurement unit of the statistics is the number of persons.

Reference period (SIMS 5)

The reference period of the statistics is the last day of the year (31 December).

Classifications (SIMS 3.2)

Concepts and definitions (SIMS 3.4)

Age

Age refers to a person's age in whole years as at 31 December. The data are obtained from the Population Information System.

Age is also used as an auxiliary variable. For example, only people between 15 and 74 can be in the labour force.

Background country

During 2012, Statistics Finland has adopted a new origin classification. A similar classification is already used in the other Nordic countries. The origin and background country are determined based on the country of birth data of the person's parents. Using the origin classification it is easy to distinguish between persons born abroad and born in Finland with a foreign background.

Data on persons that died before 1964 have not been entered into the Population Information System of the Digital and Population Data Services Agency. There are nearly 900,000 persons among the Finnish population who have been born in Finland and both parent's country of birth is unknown because the parents of these persons have died before the Population Information System was established. People born in Finland before 1970, whose parents' background is not known, have been concluded to be persons with Finnish background if their native language is a national language (Finnish, Swedish, Sami). All such persons who have at least one parent who was born in Finland are also considered to be persons with Finnish background. The background country for all persons with Finnish background is Finland.

Persons whose both parents or the only known parent have been born abroad are considered to be persons with foreign background. Persons who have been born abroad and whose parents' data are not included in the Population Information System are also considered to be persons with foreign background. Persons born in Finland before 1970, whose native language is a foreign language have been considered to be persons with foreign background, as have persons born in Finland in 1970 or after this, whose parents' data are not included in the Population Information System.

If both parents of a person have been born abroad, the background country is primarily the country of birth of the biological mother. If a person only has knowledge of a father that was born abroad, the background country is the country of birth of the father. If either parent's country of birth is unknown, the background country for persons born abroad is their own country of birth. For persons born in Finland, whose

parents' data are unknown and who have been deducted to be with foreign background, the background country is unknown.

For children adopted from abroad, the adoptive parents are regarded as the biological parents. Thus a child adopted from abroad by persons born in Finland is a person with Finnish background and their background country is Finland.

Change of population

Change of population is defined as increase of population added up with register corrections.

Country of birth

All persons entered in the Population Register are indicated a country of birth, which is determined on the basis of the mother's permanent home country at the time of birth. This means, for example, that the country of birth of Estonian immigrants born before Estonian independence is the Soviet Union. Similarly, the country of birth of people who were born in areas that Finland has subsequently ceded is Finland even though the area no longer is Finnish territory. Country of birth is indicated according to the form of government at the time of birth.

Demographic dependency ratio

The demographic dependency ratio is the ratio of persons aged under 15 and over 65 to the number of persons aged 15 to 64. The figure obtained is multiplied by one hundred.

Finnish background

All persons who have at least one parent who was born in Finland are considered to be persons with Finnish background. People born in Finland before 1970, whose parents' background is not known, have been concluded to be persons with Finnish background if their native language is a national language (Finnish, Swedish, Sami). The background country for all persons with Finnish background is Finland.

For children adopted from abroad, the adoptive parents are regarded as the biological parents. Thus a child adopted from abroad by persons born in Finland is a person with Finnish background and their background country is Finland.

Foreign background

Persons whose both parents or the only known parent have been born abroad are considered to be persons with foreign background. Persons who have been born abroad and whose parents' data are not included in the Population Information

System are also considered to be persons with foreign background. Persons born in Finland before 1970, whose native language is a foreign language have been considered to be persons with foreign background, as have persons born in Finland in 1970 or after this, whose parents' data are not included in the Population Information System. Persons, whose mother tongue is not Finnish, Swedish or Sami are regarded as foreign-language speakers.

Infant mortality

Infant mortality is calculated by dividing the number of deaths of infants under one year of age by the number of live births during the statistical year. Multiplying the result by 1,000 gives the figure in per mille.

Locality

An urban settlement is a cluster of buildings with at least 200 inhabitants. The delimitation is based on the population information of the previous year. Urban settlements are defined and delimited by the Finnish Environment Institute using geographic information methods that utilise the building and population data of Statistics Finland's 250 m x 250 m grid data. The population size of grids containing buildings and their neighbouring grids, as well as the number of buildings and their floor area, are reviewed in the definition. From the uniform clusters of dwellings generated in the definition, the ones with at least 200 inhabitants are selected. All new urban settlements generated in the definition are named and numbered at Statistics Finland. In some years certain urban settlements may cease to meet the definition of urban settlement and thus disappear from the classification of urban settlements, merge into other urban settlements or withdraw from them. Administrative regional divisions do not affect the formation of urban settlements, and urban settlements do not follow municipal boundaries.

Mean population

The notion of mean population (or average population) refers to the average of the populations of two consecutive years. When a ratio describing some phenomenon is calculated for the statistical year, the number of events in the phenomenon in question is usually expressed as a proportion of the mean population of the people or the groups subject to the event. The figures relating to population events are generally given as per 1,000, that is, the result of the division is multiplied by one thousand.

Origin and background country

During 2012, Statistics Finland has adopted a new origin classification. A similar classification is already used in the other Nordic countries. The origin and background

country are determined based on the country of birth data of the person's parents. Using the origin classification it is easy to distinguish between persons born abroad and born in Finland with a foreign background.

Data on persons that died before 1964 have not been entered into the Population Information System of the Population Register Centre. There are nearly 900,000 persons among the Finnish population who have been born in Finland and both parent's country of birth is unknown because the parents of these persons have died before the Population Information System was established. People born in Finland before 1970, whose parents' background is not known, have been concluded to be persons with Finnish background if their native language is a national language (Finnish, Swedish, Sami). All such persons who have at least one parent who was born in Finland are also considered to be persons with Finnish background. The background country for all persons with Finnish background is Finland.

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For children adopted from abroad, the adoptive parents are regarded as the biological parents. Thus a child adopted from abroad by persons born in Finland is a person with Finnish background and their background country is Finland.

Population

Population

The resident population of Finland on 31 December is derived from the Population Information System maintained by the Population Register Centre. Since the data for

1993, Statistics Finland and the Population Register Centre have had the same reference period, the turn of the year at midnight, which means that the number of population has been the same.

Population

The population refers to the permanent resident population of an area (e.g. entire country, province, municipality). Those persons who according to the Population Information System had a legal domicile in Finland on 31 December belong to the permanent resident population in the country regardless of their nationality, as do Finnish nationals residing temporarily abroad.

Foreign nationals are domiciled in Finland if their stay is intended to last or has lasted at least one year. An asylum-seeker is not granted a legal domicile until his/her application has been approved.

The staff of foreign embassies, trade missions and consulates, their family members and personal employees included, are not counted among the resident population unless they are Finnish citizens. On the other hand, the Finnish staff of Finland's embassies and trade missions abroad and persons serving in the UN peacekeeping forces are counted among the resident population.

Registered partnership

Registered partnership of two persons of the same sex aged 18 or over (Act on Registered Partnerships of 9 Nov. 2001/950). Partnership is registered by an authority entitled to perform civil marriage ceremonies. Registered partnership is dissolved when one partner dies or is declared dead, or when it is dissolved by court order.

The possibility to register partnerships started in Finland on 1 March 2002 and ended on the last day of February 2017 (Act to amend the Act of Registered Partnerships 250/2016). Starting from the beginning of March 2017, same-sex couples have been able to enter into marriage (156/2015).

As a result of the amendment to the Marriage Act, parties to a partnership registered in Finland can convert their partnership into a marriage by making a joint notification of this to the Digital and Data Services Office. A registered partnership continues as a marriage from the day on which the Digital and Data Services Office has received the notification.

In the statistics, registered partnerships that have been converted into marriages based on such notification are not included as contracted marriages in the annual statistics.

Sex/gender

Data on sex are obtained from the gender entry in the Population Information System maintained by the Digital and Population Data Services Agency.

According to the Act that entered into force on 3 April 2023, the gender entry in the Population Information System can be changed upon application including an explanation that a person permanently identifies as the gender they seek recognition for (Act on Legal Recognition of Gender 295/2023).

In Finland, only male or female can be entered as gender in the Population Information System. If a person who moves to Finland from abroad has a third or unspecified gender, the person is recorded as female in the Population Information System.

Sub-area (of municipality)

Municipal sub-areas are formed of operationally functional wholes defined by the municipality itself, which are the basis of the municipality's regional planning and monitoring. Statistics Finland is responsible for digitising new sub-area boundaries and for maintaining name files. Municipalities have the opportunity to check their sub-area division once a year.

The division into sub-areas is a hierarchical three-level classification which has a 1-digit major area level, a 2-digit statistical area level and a 3-digit small area level. Sub-areas are numbered consecutively using these three hierarchical levels. The 6-digit sub-area code is bound to the 3-digit municipality code, so the sub-area code consists of a total of nine characters.

Tertiary level degree

Lowest level tertiary or university degree completed after upper secondary qualification.

Total change

Total change is increase of population added up with register corrections of population. Increase of population is the sum of excess of births and total net migration.

Urban-rural

Geographical information systems (GIS) with extensively detailed, register-based datasets introduce new insights into the process of classifying urban and rural areas. The independence of administrative borders makes it

possible to recognise and classify areas in greater detail than before. The new classification system replaces the previously used urban-rural regional classification system and the trisection of rural areas, which were based on municipal boundaries. The geographical information-based area classification system has been created by the Finnish Environment Institute and the Department of Geography of the University of Oulu.

The classification system is implemented using a nationwide 250 x 250 m grid of cells. Each cell is categorized into one of seven classes according to the defined criteria.

Urban areas:

The population centres of urban areas are agglomerations with more than 15 000 residents. Each of these agglomerations consists of a core urban area, which is then divided into an inner and outer urban area. Surrounding the core urban area is a peri-urban area.

1. Inner urban area

A compact and densely built area with continuous development.

2. Outer urban area

A dense urban area extending from the boundary of the inner urban area to the outer edge of the continuous built area.

3. Peri-urban area

A part of the intermediate zone between urban and rural, which is directly linked to an urban area.

Rural areas:

Different rural types are delineated for the areas that have not been identified as urban. The boundary between urban and rural areas is not unambiguous. The classification framework has been designed to be flexible, which makes it possible to identify an intermediate zone between urban and rural that can be examined as its own whole. This can be done, for instance, by combining two classes, the peri-urban area and rural areas close to urban areas.

4. Local centres in rural areas

Population centres located outside urban areas.

5. Rural areas close to urban areas

Areas with a rural character that are functionally connected and close to urban areas.

6. Rural heartland areas

Rural areas with intensive land use, with a relatively dense population and a diverse economic structure at the local level.

7. Sparsely populated rural areas

Sparsely populated areas with dispersed small settlements that are located at a distance from each other. Most of the land areas are forested.

Working-age population

When calculating the demographic dependency ratio, the working-age population is considered to consist of all persons aged between 15 and 64.

Institutional mandate (SIMS 6)

The compilation of statistics is guided by the [Statistics Act](#). The Statistics Act contains provisions on collection of data, processing of data and the obligation to provide data. Besides the Statistics Act, the General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act and the Act on the Openness of Government Activities are applied to processing of data when producing statistics.

Statistics Finland compiles statistics in line with the EU's regulations applicable to statistics, which steer the statistical agencies of all EU Member States.

Further information: [Statistical legislation](#)

Legal acts and other agreements (SIMS 6.1)

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