

We sincerely hope that this general information about Tampere and Finland will help you with your travel plans and make your stay in our country more enjoyable.

GENERAL FACTS

Travelling information and airport transfer

Finland is easily accessible from any part of the world. Finnair, the national airline, has scheduled flights to Helsinki from most major cities in Europe. There are also direct flights to Helsinki from major cities outside Europe e.g. Bangkok, Beijing, Tokyo and New York. In addition to Finnair, 22 other international airlines offer regular flights to Helsinki. SAS has daily flights from Stockholm and Copenhagen to Tampere. For schedules and ticketing please contact your travel agency or airline office. Helsinki is also easily accessible by boat from Sweden, Germany or Estonia and by train from Russia.

Tampere within easy reach

Getting to Tampere is really quite easy. There are frequent airline services via Helsinki, Stockholm and Copenhagen to Tampere-Pirkkala International Airport daily. And the trip from Tampere-Pirkkala Airport to Tampere's city centre can be covered in less than half an hour. Regular trains and buses bring you smoothly to Tampere from Helsinki and Turku in less than two hours. From Helsinki, services run approximately every hour. In general, transport connections within Finland are often excellent standard. The easiest way to travel to Tampere are frequent and comfortable coach connections between Helsinki Airport and the Tampere city centre. Main roads are good, and public transport is punctual, efficient, and comfortable.

From Helsinki airport use the Paunu express bus service which operates directly from Helsinki-Vantaa airport (platform no. 1); the journey takes about 2,5 hours. There is a bus almost at every hour. A one-way ticket costs EUR 18. For details, timetables and reservations, please see www.paunu.fi or contact by e-mail merja.nurminen@paunu.fi.

From Tampere airport the best way to reach the city centre is to take an Airport taxi, which will take travellers to all city hotels in Tampere (not to Hotel Hermica). The fare is € 10. A normal taxi costs about € 20-30.

For the Conference guest, getting around in Tampere is easy, too. Most hotels, Conference venues and other interesting attractions are located within walking distance of each other, so extra time and money need not be spent on going from one place to another. When transportation is needed, taxis and buses can take you there comfortably.

Please check the timetables for trains www.vr.fi and for coaches www.expressbus.com.

Public transportation in Tampere

The public transportation system of Tampere includes bus and taxi services. The blue and white buses of Tampere City Transport offer an extensive service network of 26 routes covering almost the entire city. A single ticket of EUR 2 is valid for one hour inside the Tampere city limits. A tourist card provides a simple and convenient way of paying the fare. This smart card is valid for day or two, as required. Taxis have meters indicating the fare and tips are unnecessary.

[Tampere City Transport](http://www.tampere.fi/en/tampere-city-transport)

Passport and Visa

Finland is a member of the European Union and visas are not required for citizens of EU-countries. A valid passport is required. Citizens of other countries should contact the nearest Finnish embassy for further information. Participants requiring a visa for entry to Finland are strongly advised to make an application in their home country at least three months before the intended date of travel. Participants who need a Finnish visa and who plan to fly back home via Helsinki after visiting St Petersburg should have a double entry Finnish visa.

Schengen visa application form and details can be found at:
<http://formin.finland.fi/doc/eng/services/visa/visafinl.html>

Letter of invitation

The organising committee will be pleased to send a letter of invitation to any individual requesting one. It should be understood that an invitation is intended to help potential participants raise travel funds or obtain a visa. It is not a commitment on the part of the congress to provide any financial support.

Currency

The currency in Finland is the EURO (since 1.1.2002), which is divided to 100 cents. It is the same currency as in 12 other Euro countries. In Finland europrices are rounded up to the nearest 5 cents. Foreign currencies are easily exchanged to Euros at exchange agencies and banks in the airport, at the railway station, and in many places in the city centre.

For exchange rates and list of other euro countries, please see

www.bof.fi/env/eng/new/muuntok.stm

For exchange rates of other countries, please see www.bof.fi/env/eng/new/fixlist.stm

Note: At Tampere Airport there is no bank nor possibility to change currency. There are no currency restrictions in Finland.

Bank and money exchange

Facilities for cashing traveller's cheques in Finland are available at banks (opening hours 9.30-16.00), exchange agencies and at most hotels. Banks are closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

Tipping

Tipping is not expected in Finland.

Electrical current

The electrical current in Finland is 230V (50 Hz). Plugs and sockets are the same as in the continental countries of the European Union. In case your equipment requires different voltage, an electrical transformer will be needed.

Weather

Nature's gift to Finland is its four seasons, each providing unforgettable experiences. Despite cold winters, or rather because of them, Finnish houses are well heated. Flats, hotels, offices, and public facilities are built to keep one warm when temperature outside drops sometimes to -30°C between December-February. The air is fresh and

clean and, due to the low humidity, the climate feels less cold than the actual temperatures indicate.

In the Internet www.fmi.fi/ENG/weather.html you can check the weather forecast for Tampere and Finland for the time of our conference.

Time difference

The time in Finland is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). World times at www.worldtimeserver.com/, www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/city.html?n=101

Telephone area code

The telephone area code for Tampere is 03. If you dial from abroad, first dial the code for Finland, 358, and then the area code without 0, then dial the subscriber number (for example: +358-3-3664400).

Insurance

The congress organisers cannot accept liability for personal injuries sustained, for loss of, or damage to, property belonging to conference participants (or accompanying persons), either during or as a result of the Conference and/or tours. Please check the validity of your own insurance.

Medical services

Medicines are sold at pharmacist ("Apteekki"). If you need medical consulting, dial 10023 (public health care) or any private clinic ("Lääkäriasema").

Shopping

There are numerous department stores, shops and boutiques in Tampere. The town is known for its factory outlets. For example, Finlayson textiles and Palmroth shoes and leather. Most shops are open Mon-Fri at 9 am-6 pm, department stores close at 9 pm. On Saturdays the shopping hours are from 9 am to 2-6 pm. In the summer department stores are open also on Sundays.

Food and beverages

In general Finns have their breakfast 7 am-10 am, lunch 11 am-2 pm and dinner 5 pm-8 pm. Breakfast contains usually porridge, bread with cheese and ham, boiled eggs, coffee or tea and juice. The finest Finnish cuisine consists of fish and vegetables. Salmon, whitefish and Baltic herring as well as mushrooms are popular. Wild berries are often served for dessert. Restaurant menus reflect a strong international influence, French and Italian in particular. In Finland tap water is safe to drink. Wines and spirits are sold by state-owned ALKO shops. Grocery stores sell beer and other drinks with no more than 4.7% alcohol.

Wood, water, stone and fire

The ultimate experience: the four elements of Finland are all together in the sauna. However, as "crazy" as Finns are about sauna, they will understand if you politely decline. Then again, many foreigners have tried it, survived it and loved it! For more information: <http://www.hut.fi/~icankar/sauna/bigindex.html>

Liability

The Conference Organisation and the Congress Agency act as agents only in securing

hotels, transport and travel services and shall in no event be liable for acts or omissions in the event of injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity of any kind whatsoever during arrangements organised through contractors or the employees of such contractors in carrying out services. Hotel and transportation services are subject to the terms and conditions under which they are offered to the public in general. The Conference Organisation and the Congress Agency reserve the right to make changes where deemed necessary, without prior notice to parties concerned. All disputes are subject to Finnish Law.

FACTS ABOUT TAMPERE, HELSINKI AND FINLAND

Finland

Finland is a modern western country located in the north of Europe with a total land area of 338,000 square kilometers. It is a land of forests and lakes with clean cities, a prosperous countryside and lots of open space and natural settings. Finland is a modern country with high standards of living, advanced technology and stable democracy. The form of government is republic and the Parliament consists of one chamber of 200 elected members. Finland lies between Sweden and Russia and is the link between East and West with cultural influences from both areas, and Finland is a member of the European Union (since 1995).

Finland information at virtual.finland.fi

Statistics about Finland at www.tilastokeskus.fi/index_en.html

Population

The population is 5,2 million. There are two official languages in Finland: Finnish is spoken by 93% of the population and Swedish is the mother tongue for 5,8% of the population. Finland is a very accessible country for foreign visitors since fluency in English is quite high.

Tampere, Conference city

The Conference will be held in the city of Tampere, the centre of the second largest urban region in Finland and a dynamic centre of industry, culture, research and education. Tampere is a prime example of a clean, modern and safe Nordic city. The city has two major universities, a university hospital, numerous research centres and institutes of higher education, making the city an important centre for research and high-tech industries. The city itself has 200.000 inhabitants. Tampere is located 180 kilometres (110 miles) north of Helsinki, the capital of Finland. The city, situated between two beautiful lakes, has a distinct air of natural peace. Tampere is large enough to provide all the services that a major Conference may require, yet small enough to make the delegates and their families feel at home during their stay.

More information about Tampere is available on [the Tampere City Tourist Office](#) and about the real time weather get a closer look at www.tampere.fi/live.

Helsinki, the capital

Helsinki, the capital of Finland since 1812, is a modern, vigorous city and the centre of Finland's administrative, cultural and economic life. Many big national and international companies have offices and headquarters here. Helsinki is a spacious city where nature is close wherever you are. Clean air and water, the archipelago and over 6000 hectares of green areas provide excellent opportunities for recreation. Helsinki has become a more popular tourist city year by year. Most tourists come from Sweden, United States and Russia, followed by other parts of Europe and Japan. Helsinki is

above all a meeting place. Due to its geographical location, Helsinki has been influenced throughout its history by both east and west. Unparalleled in Europe, it is an ideal logistics centre for trade and business. Moreover, in Helsinki old blends with new, small with big, natural with man-made, all in a most charming way. The unique spirit of Helsinki is due to the fruitful interaction between diverse influences. Several summit meetings, numerous conferences and congresses show that Helsinki is considered a safe and pleasant place to meet. And no wonder: Helsinki is a metropolis on a human scale. Connections by air, sea and rail are excellent.

More information on Helsinki is available on the Internet at www.hel.fi

INFORMATION ABOUT FINLAND IN THE INTERNET

<http://virtual.finland.fi/>

<http://www.mek.fi/>

<http://www.webtravel.fi/>

<http://www.stn.fi/english/>

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/dest/eur/fin.htm>

TAMPERE CITY TOURIST OFFICE

tel. +358-(0)3-3146 6800

<http://www.tampere.fi>

fax +358-(0)3-3146 6463

e-mail: touristbureau@tampere.fi