



2020-21

Legislative International Education Study Group

TIMELINE OF KEY DATES IN FINLAND'S HISTORY

Adapted from "Finland History Timeline," WorldAtlas, April 7, 2017, and "Finland profile – Timeline," BBC News, September 2, 2019

1100s:

Swedish lead crusades to Finland and convert Finns to Christianity.

1155-1809:

Finland is incorporated into Kingdom of Sweden.

1809:

Finland is ceded to Russia by Sweden. The Finns retain a considerable amount of autonomy, including their own legal system and religion, and are exempt from Russian military service.

1899:

Russian Tsar Nicholas II introduces policy of "Russification" of Finland, including censorship, imposition of Russian as the official language, and conscription of Finnish men into the Russian military. Protests and a campaign of civil disobedience begin.

1917:

The Russian Revolution allows Finland to declare its independence.

1918:

Civil war in Finland between Finnish forces and Russian troops leads to approximately 30,000 deaths.

1919:

Finland becomes a republic. Kaarlo Stahlberg is the first president.

1920:

Peace of Tartu officially declares Finland's independence. Finland becomes member of the League of Nations.

1939:

At the outbreak of World War II, Finland declares its neutrality. The Soviet Union invades Finland, launching the Winter War.

1940:

Finland is forced to concede to the Soviet Union. Treaty of Moscow gives about 10 percent of Finnish territory to the Soviet Union.

1941:

Germany attacks the Soviet Union; Finland launches a military campaign (“Continuation War”) to regain lost territory from the Soviet Union.

1944:

The Soviet army invades Finland. An armistice is signed, and Finland concedes more land to the Soviet Union and agrees to pay hundreds of millions of dollars in war reparations.

1950:

Urho Kekkonen becomes prime minister and is subsequently elected as president in 1956. He pursues a policy of friendly neutrality with the Soviet Union.

1955:

Finland joins United Nations and Nordic Council.

1973:

Finland signs free trade agreement with European Economic Community.

Early 1990s:

Finland faces economic difficulties as former Soviet Union and Eastern European markets collapse.

1995:

Finland joins the European Union.

2002:

Finland adopts the Euro.

2010:

Finland becomes the world’s first country to give its citizens a legal right to broadband Internet.

2016:

Finland signs an agreement on closer defense collaboration with the United States in response to growing concern over Russian military activities in the Baltic Sea region. Finland also emerges from an economic downturn lasting nearly a decade, according to central bank growth forecasts.

December 2019:

Prime Minister Antti Rinne resigns after only six months in office due to alleged mishandling of a postal workers’ strike. He is succeeded by Sanna Marin, the world’s youngest prime minister.