



Finland

National developments in 2024



Faced with increased pressure at the eastern border due to instrumentalised migration, in 2024 Finland introduced a number of institutional and legislative changes to effectively manage the situation and migratory patterns. Measures were taken to enhance situational awareness and safeguard borders by preventing illegal crossings.

The organisational structure of the Finnish Immigration Service was reformed in June 2024 based on process management through four departments: Permit and Citizenship Department; Department for International Protection; Reception Services Department; and Control and Monitoring Department. The reformed structure aims to ensure the seamless processing of applications for different types of permits without any delay, while preventing abuse of the permit system and providing for more streamlined and controlled immigration processes. In addition, the new organisation supports contingency planning and preparedness in a changed operating environment.

The President approved the Act on Temporary Measures to Combat Instrumentalised Migration in July 2024 to improve border security and ensure that Finland can effectively combat instrumentalised migration.¹ The act lays down the conditions under which a government plenary session can decide to restrict the reception of applications for international protection in a limited area on Finland's national border and in its immediate vicinity. If the act is applied, applications for international protection would not, apart from certain exceptions, be received in the area under the restriction and instrumentalised migrants would be prevented from entering the country. The new act takes into account the situation of people in a particularly vulnerable position.

Amendments to the Aliens Act in September 2024 introduced a new border procedure to expedite the examination of applications that are likely to be unfounded and the return of applicants who receive a negative decision. New grounds were also included to use the accelerated procedure to process asylum applications at the Finnish Immigration Service. UNHCR provided its observations when these acts were at the stage of proposals.²

The government introduced several legislative measures to address situations of evading entry requirements and the misuse of the asylum system. Applicants or former applicants who receive a negative decision can no longer acquire a residence permit based on employment, self-employment or studies. As of January 2025, the length of a residence permit on grounds of international protection was shortened to the minimum duration foreseen by EU law, while new provisions were added on ending of international protection.³ Certain restrictions and conditions were also introduced on the right to work for persons who have received a negative asylum decision.⁴ Other amendments in the Aliens Act focused on detention,⁵ stricter rules for family reunification⁶ and the duration and content of protection for beneficiaries of temporary protection.⁷ In addition, applicants' reception and spending allowances were reduced in September 2024.

Several initiatives focused on facilitating the integration of foreigners and the new Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration entered into force in January 2025.⁸ Reforms aimed to increase efficiency in the allocation of government finances and to foster migrants' responsibility in using available resources.⁹ Multilingual social orientation courses were opened to beneficiaries on the values and norms of Finnish society, on individual rights and obligations, and on employment.¹⁰ To highlight the importance of successful integration, a legislative amendment tightened the conditions and increased the period of residence required to acquire Finnish citizenship to 8 years, except when applicants meet the language requirement, in which cases the period is reduced to 5 years.¹¹

From the second half of 2024, the necessary reforms for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum were being planned in parallel with the implementation of the government's objectives to reform immigration and asylum legislation. Finland submitted its National Implementation Plan in December 2024, outlining the legislative and operational changes needed to implement the Pact. The implementation requires changes to the initial stages of the asylum procedure, such as the making/registering/lodging of an application and the provision of free legal counselling, and for the end of the procedure, such as the notification of negative decisions. Finnish authorities are reviewing national legislation and identifying the amendments required to align with the provisions of the Pact, aiming to establish the foundation for a more effective asylum procedure while safeguarding applicants' legal rights.

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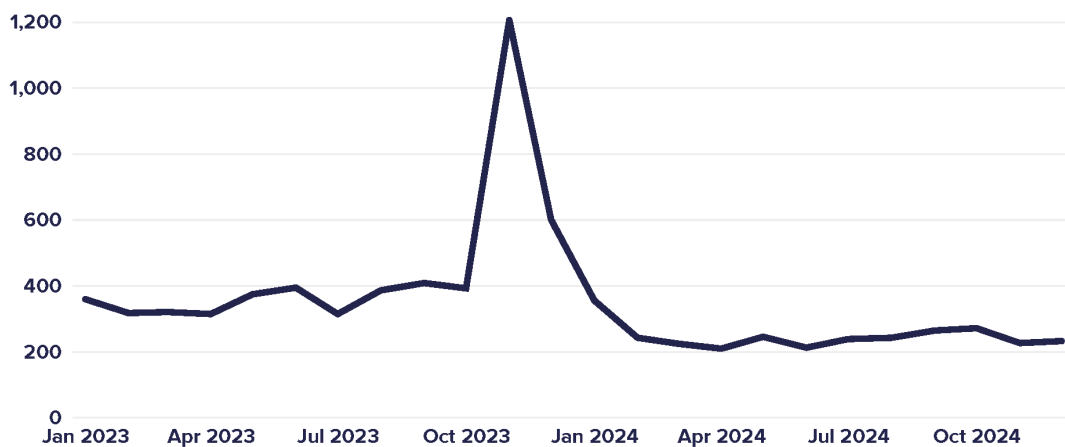
Key indicators for 2024



Rank by number of asylum applications 17	Rank per capita (applications per 1M inhabitants) 20	Share of applications in EU+ 0.3%	Recognition rate 57%
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Indicator	2024	2023	% change	Top 3 countries of origin
Asylum applications	2,948	5,372 ↓	-45%	Somalia (13%), Iraq (10%), Afghanistan (9%)
Pending cases (Dec '24)	4,228	7,421 ↓	-43%	Somalia (15%), Russia (15%), Syria (9%)
First instance decisions	1,763	1,995 ↓	-12%	Somalia (16%), Syria (11%), Afghanistan (11%)
Refugee status	936	1,084 ↓	-14%	Somalia (20%), Syria (18%), Afghanistan (17%)
Subsidiary protection	74	70 ↑	6%	Syria (31%), Somalia (19%), Yemen (19%)
Negative	753	841 ↓	-10%	Iraq (16%), Somalia (11%), Russia (10%)

Evolution of asylum applications, 2023-2024



For more developments, please consult the [Asylum Report 2025](#) and the [National Asylum Developments Database](#).





Sources

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- ⁹ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment | Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö. (2024, June 13). [Government's changes to the Integration Act reform to increase immigrants' own responsibility](#).
- ¹⁰ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment | Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö. (2024, October 25). [Asetus tarkentaa monikielisen yhteiskuntaorientaation sisältöä ja toteutusta](#) [The decree specifies the content and implementation of multilingual social orientation]. Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment | Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö. (2024, October 21). [Uuden raportin mukaan yhteiskuntaorientaatiolla on tärkeä rooli kotoutumisessa](#) [New report finds that social orientation plays an important role in integration]. Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment | Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö. (2025, January 25). [Civic orientation to be offered to immigrants in many languages – Report offers recommendations for implementation](#).
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