



THE FINNISH POLICE

THE POLICE SERVICE IN FINLAND

■ In Finland the police have a duty to secure judicial and social order, maintain public order and security, prevent and investigate crimes and forward cases to a prosecutor for consideration of charges. The police also operate various security-related licence services.

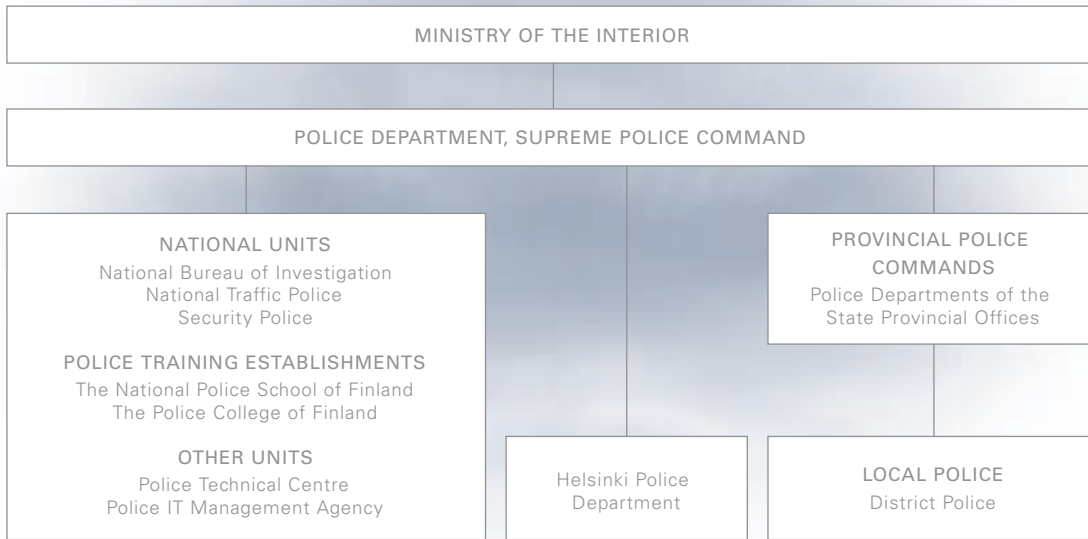
■ In 2004, the Government approved an **extensive** Internal Security Programme for developing Finland's national security over the next ten years. The programme aims to ensure stronger links between the different bodies operating in the national security field and to provide common goals for them. The intention is that Finland should be the safest country in Europe. The Finnish police service has a key role to play in the programme's implementation.

■ The Finnish police are trusted by the general public. This was confirmed in the Finnish Science Barometer 2004, an independent survey of Finnish people's attitudes to a range of matters, which revealed that more than 80 per cent of Finns were either very or fairly confident in the police.

■ The police service employs a total of about 11,000 people, of whom 7,700 are police officers. This is equivalent to one police officer per 675 citizens.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



■ In Finland, the police service operates under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior.

■ The Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior functions as the Supreme Police Command. Within its purview are the Provincial Police Commands, the national units, the police training establishments, the Police Technical Centre, the Police IT Management Agency and the Helsinki Police Department.

■ Local policing is placed administratively under the State Local Districts and therefore referred to

as the District Police. The District Police are subordinate to the Provincial Police Commands. Finland has a total of 90 State Local Districts, each with its own police department. The total number of customer service points operated by the police throughout the country is about 280.

■ The national units of the Finnish police comprise the National Bureau of Investigation, the National Traffic Police and the Security Police. The National Bureau of Investigation specializes in combating organized and professional crime, the Security Police in combating crime and other activity that

endangers internal and external security, and the National Traffic Police in surveillance of traffic.

■ The National Police School of Finland and the Police College of Finland are responsible for police training and are in the process of merging, to become a single training establishment by 2008 at the latest.

■ The Police Technical Centre specializes in acquiring equipment for the police, while the Police IT Management Agency specializes in police information systems.

■ The Helsinki Police Department differs from other local police units in that it is directly answerable to the Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior. In addition to the normal duties of local police, the Helsinki Police Department has a number of special national responsibilities. The Karhu unit, which specializes in very demanding police operations, also functions under the auspices of the Helsinki Police Department.

■ The Police Authority of the Åland Islands is an independent unit answerable to the Åland administrative authorities. National police work in the Åland Islands is managed by the Åland unit of the National Bureau of Investigation.

SUPREME POLICE COMMAND



■ The Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior functions as the Supreme Police Command, which is responsible for directing and monitoring the entire police service. The Supreme Police Command has a duty to plan, develop and direct police work, decide on national operating guidelines, ensure that the police are able to operate effectively, develop the legislation concerning the police, extend police-related research and training, and function as an expert authority on internal security.

■ Police costs are covered by government funding. The Supreme Police Command agrees performance targets annually with the Provincial Police Commands and national units and distributes appropriations to them for use in their work.

■ The Supreme Police Command is also responsible for the collaborative work of the Finnish police in the international arena. Finland's national input to police cooperation within the European Union and elsewhere is prepared by the Supreme Police Command.

PROVINCIAL POLICE COMMANDS



■ The Provincial Police Commands direct and monitor the activities of the local police within their areas of jurisdiction. They draw up agreements annually with the local police departments concerning performance targets and decide on the resources available.

■ The Provincial Police Commands aim to secure the best possible operating conditions for the local police departments by developing the level of cooperation between the departments in each province. One example of this is the recent creation of regional service units for crime scene investigation, financial crime investigation and other demanding criminal investigation. The aim of this is to improve efficiency and to release personnel resources for basic policing.

■ The Provincial Police Commands are also responsible for ensuring smooth cooperation between the local police and the national units within their own province.

LOCAL POLICE SERVICE

■ Local policing is organized at the level of State Local Districts. Each of these has a police department directed by a District Police Chief.

■ The duties of the local police are to maintain public order and security, prevent crime, and investigate crimes and other activities endangering public order or security. In addition, the local police direct and control traffic, promote traffic safety and manage any other duties prescribed for them by law.

■ The local police in each State Local District are also responsible for the provision of licence services to the local inhabitants. Licence services administered by the police are also available at many Citizen's Offices.



■ Community policing forms a key part of the preventive work of the local police. The aim is to collaborate with authorities, businesses, residents and communities to prevent property offences and public disturbances, among other things. Early intervention in juvenile crime and prevention of domestic violence are both important themes of community policing.

■ In Finland, emergency calls are forwarded to the emergency response centres, which deal with calls for the police, rescue services and social and health authorities. These centres receive all emergency requests for assistance and also despatch the necessary emergency services. The emergency response centres operate under the Ministry of the Interior. Finland is divided into 15 emergency response centre areas.



NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

■ The duties of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) fall into two areas: combating organized and other serious crime, and providing expert services in the fight against crime.

■ In combating crime, the NBI's principal area of responsibility is the exposure of organized crime groups and investigation of their crimes. In addition, the NBI investigates individual cases of serious crime where there are international connections, as well as new types of crime, crimes for which no precedent exists and homicides that are difficult to solve.

■ Extensive cooperation between authorities both nationally and internationally is essential in combating organized crime. The NBI coordinates the collaborative work between the police, the Customs and the Border Guard, and serves as the centre for international criminal police work in Finland.

■ The NBI provides specialist services for the entire Finnish police service and for other law enforcement authorities.



NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

■ The NBI's Crime Laboratory investigates samples from crime scenes and issues opinions on them for the purpose of pre-trial investigation and court proceedings. The NBI also transmits international requests to and from Finland for executive and legal assistance and manages the international communications of the Finnish police.

■ The NBI is also responsible for arranging demanding technical surveillance, coercive measures relating to telecommunications (e.g. telecommunications interception), undercover activities and pseudo purchases necessary in crime investigation. It also assists all police units in collecting electronic evidence.

■ The NBI's Money Laundering Clearing House is responsible for the receipt and investigation of reports concerning money laundering and the financing of terrorism. The NBI is also responsible nationally for developing the crime-combating methods used in its work and for the provision of training in these methods.



NATIONAL TRAFFIC POLICE

■ The National Traffic Police are a national police unit specializing in traffic surveillance. It promotes traffic safety through traffic surveillance especially on main roads and by meeting the surveillance obligations set by the European Union.

■ The National Traffic Police are also involved in dealing with emergency duties and provide support for the local police in maintaining order and in combating crime. Surveillance of heavy vehicles and off-road and waterborne traffic is also part of the unit's special expertise. Other duties of the National Traffic Police include development of traffic surveillance equipment and methods, and improving the quality of surveillance.

■ The National Traffic Police also have an Airport Unit, which is responsible for policing at Helsinki-Vantaa Airport, and a Security Unit for security of the President of the Republic of Finland. In addition, the National Traffic Police have an important role in providing police driver training throughout the country. Participation in security duties for state visits and major public events is also among the duties of the National Traffic Police.



■ The Security Police are responsible for combating crime and other activity that endangers the governmental system, social order or the internal or external security of the state, and for investigating such crimes.

■ The main duties of the Security Police are the fight against terrorism, the exposure and prevention of unlawful intelligence gathering in Finland by foreign powers, combating internal security threats, conducting preventive security and dignitary protection. In addition, the Security Police play an important role in combating international organized crime.

■ The Security Police monitor and prevent threats related to international terrorism and also provide security information and carry out security clearance and technical security inspections. They are also responsible for protection of foreign dignitaries on state visits and assist in the provision of security for Finnish leaders abroad, as well as investigating any threats targeted at the highest levels of leadership.



POLICE TECHNICAL CENTRE

■ The Police Technical Centre is a support services unit that acquires, maintains and develops the equipment and supplies of the Finnish police.

■ The Police Technical Centre's responsibilities include the supply of police vehicles and uniforms, care of service weapons, and the acquisition, storage and sale of materials needed by the police. Through development projects, efforts are made to ensure that the equipment used by the police is properly researched and suitable for Nordic conditions.

■ The Police Technical Centre's customers include not only the police service but also the emergency response centres.

■ In contrast to the other police units, the Police Technical Centre is self-financing. It finances its operations through the sale of its products and services.



POLICE IT MANAGEMENT AGENCY

■ The Police IT Management Agency produces the IT services needed by the police and is responsible for the operation of the police information systems and registers.

■ The Police IT Management Agency produces information and communications technology services not only for the police and the Ministry of the Interior but also for other authorities, such as the Border Guard and the Customs. It is also responsible for developing information systems that support the practical work of different authorities and for telecommunications between the police and other authorities.



POLICE TRAINING

■ In Finland there are two police training establishments. The National Police School of Finland provides basic, advanced and in-service training, while the Police College of Finland provides commanding officer and leadership training and conducts police-related research and development. The Police Dog Training Centre, which is part of the National Police School of Finland, is responsible for acquiring police dogs and for training police dog handlers. The National Police Museum is also under the auspices of the National Police School of Finland.

■ The police training establishments will be combined into a single unit by early 2008. All police training in Finland will then be concentrated in one establishment based in Tampere. The new training establishment will be responsible for the police recruitment process, the selection of students for training, the content of the training qualification programmes, leadership training and in-service training, and research activities.



■ The popularity of the Finnish police service as a career choice is evident in the number of applicants, only a proportion of whom are accepted for training. Students are selected on the basis of aptitude and an entrance exam. The annual intake for the basic training, i.e. the Diploma in Police Studies, is approximately 400 students.

■ The Diploma in Police Studies programme takes two and a half years to complete. Part of the studies are taken in local police departments or other police units. The supervised work practice and the fieldwork period account for a total of about one year. Training, accommodation, meals and health care are free of charge during the classroom teaching period. Students are paid a daily allowance for the first year of study and receive a salary for the remaining period of the studies.

■ The Police Sergeant's Examination and the Senior Police Officer's Degree are both taken in part alongside normal police work. Both qualifications take 2–3 years to complete. Following the Senior Police Officer's Degree, studies can be continued at university level: police-related Master's degree studies are offered by the University of Tampere and the University of Turku. Apart from obtaining a Master's degree, police officers can also continue their studies right up to doctoral level.





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