

## Q&A on Russian invasion of Ukraine

*Russia's invasion of Ukraine affects many Finnish companies as well as Business Finland's operations. Russia is one of our largest trading partners. Economic sanctions imposed onto Russia and the humanitarian emergency caused by the war also affect Finland.*

### **What is the official position of Finland on the matter?**

Finland strongly condemns Russia's military actions in Ukraine. Finland firmly supports Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, self-determination and territorial integrity. Finland's foreign policy leadership is closely monitoring Russia's actions and the security situation in Europe. Finland will respond to Russia's actions as part of the European Union.

### **I was asked if Finland is still a safe country?**

Finland is a stable Nordic society and well prepared for various type of security threats. Travelling to and in Finland is safe – everyday life runs normally, and we warmly welcome travellers to Finland.

### **Has the war in Ukraine and Finland's proximity to Russia harmed Finland's country image as a travel destination?**

At present, there are no signs that Finland's country image has deteriorated or that it is perceived as an unsafe country. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is not at this stage having a significant impact on attracting travellers and we are not currently seeing large numbers of cancellations. News about international travel from the US seems to reflect a "wait and see" attitude among Americans who would like to know what is happening in the Russia-Ukraine situation before booking a trip to Europe. Finland is not mentioned separately in this context, but as part of Europe. Travellers have been looking for additional flexibility in their bookings throughout the pandemic and this will continue to be an essential part of the booking process in the coming months. We will continue to keep a close eye on the situation.

### **How has the war in Ukraine affected Finnish travel industry so far?**

The Finnish Tourism Forum ([Matkailufoorumi](#)) in its [statement on 15 March](#) noted that Russia's invasion of Ukraine has so far had less of an impact on the sector than feared. The current winter season in Lapland has been very successful and there are no major cancellations on the horizon for the coming months, at least not yet. The situation in Helsinki is also good. Some slightly larger congress cancellations have been received in the last few days and booking times have been reduced. The most worrying situation is towards the eastern border, as Russian holiday trips to Finland have probably come to an end for a very long time. The most pressing concern about labor shortages in the.

### **Will the number of daily flights to Finland be impacted?**

Finland's national airline Finnair announced the suspension of flights over Ukrainian airspace after a warning issued by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). Finland as part of the European Union has closed its airspace to Russian traffic. Russia has closed its airspace to airlines from the European Union and Canada following sanctions issued targeting Russia's aviation section following the invasion of Ukraine. Avoiding the Russian airspace on flights between Europe and Asia has considerable impacts on Finnair's traffic, including flight times. Finnair has announced it will continue to fly to Tokyo, going around the Russian airspace. Finnair also continues to fly to Bangkok, Delhi, Phuket, and Singapore, with routes avoiding the Russian airspace. Finnair continues serving Shanghai and Seoul with strong cargo support, cancels flights to Osaka and Hong Kong until end of April. [For updated information, please follow Finnair news.](#)

### **What is the significance of Russian travellers to Finland?**

Finland has always been a popular choice amongst Russian travellers. Russians were the largest group of international travelers to Finland before the pandemic. In 2019, a total of 820,888 overnight stays by Russians were recorded in Finland. The official statistics exclude overnight stays with relatives and friends, as well as airbnb users and day-trippers. Since the pandemic we've seen reduced visitors in this market. The statistics for 2021 speak a harsh language: only 40 646 overnight stays by Russians were registered in Finland, and these were mainly business travellers. We have however been seeing strong demand from our other key markets such as the UK and Germany.

### **Will Finland change its visa policy for Russian travelers?**

Travel from Russia to Finland is only allowed for exceptional groups due to pandemic restrictions. Travelers arriving from Russia are allowed to enter Finland but are subject to the normal entry requirements for foreigners and the special requirements regarding the corona virus. [Visas](#) are the responsibility of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

### **Will Visit Finland continue promoting travelling to Finland in Russia?**

Visit Finland has suspended all marketing activities (social media posts, campaigns, SEM) and sales promotion activities (sales events, fairs) in Russia for the time being.

### **How is Visit Finland planning to carry on with marketing and sales promotion activities?**

Visit Finland will continue and strengthen marketing and sales promotion activities in other Visit Finland's target markets. Finland is a stable, Nordic society and everyday life is going on normally. The most effective travel promotion is to continue our long-term efforts to highlight Finland's strengths. Finland's known strengths remain unchanged and the current interest in Finland also allows us to get Finland's messages across in a way that benefits the country image. For example, "Happiest country in the world" is a strong message for an international audience.

**For more information**

The [Government of Finland](#) has opened a dedicated website on the Russian invasion of Ukraine. You may visit the site to learn more about the crisis as well as Finland's position regarding it.

The [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) is closely following Russia's activities and the security situation in Europe. Finland strongly condemns Russia's military action in Ukraine and responds to it as part of the European Union.

Business Finland has published [information on the situation in Ukraine and Russia for Finnish companies](#).

For the latest announcements and notifications concerning Finnair flights and travelling, please read [Finnair's travel updates](#).