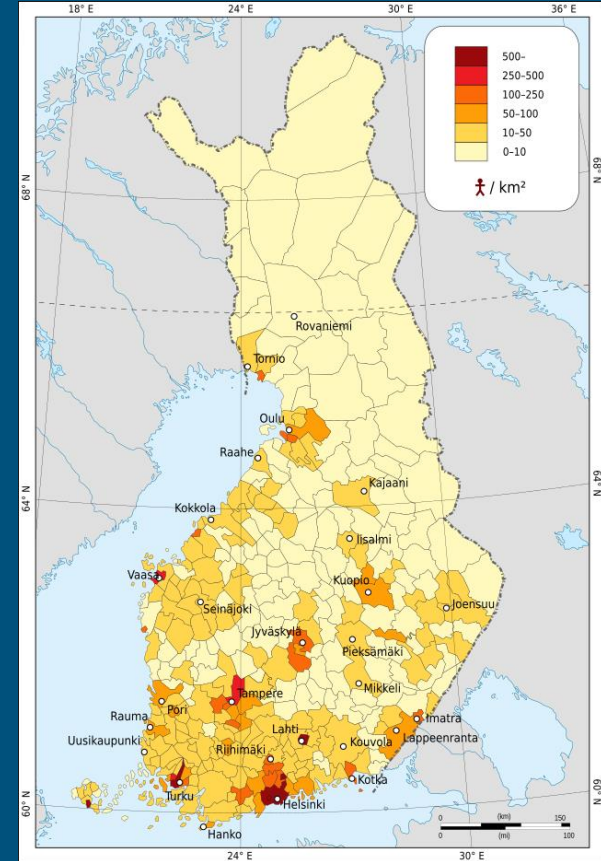

The European policies of Finland



I. Factors explaining the European policies in Finland

a) geography

- > borders with Sweden, Norway and Russia
- > 5th largest country in the EU
- > one of the smallest in term of population

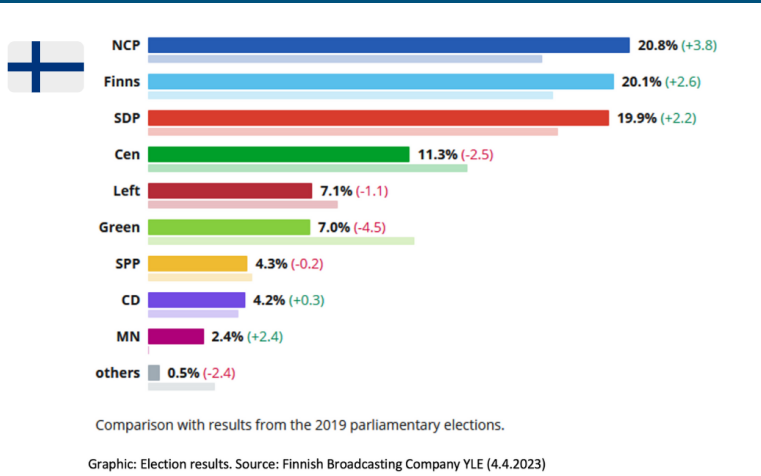


b) political life

> parliamentary republic

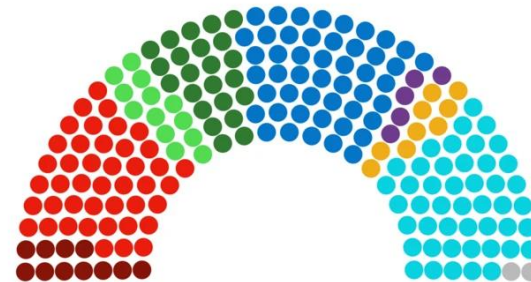
> unicameral parliament (Eduskunta) with 200 members

> National Coalition party is the leading one



Finland elections 2023

Breakdown of seats in parliament



Party	Seats won 2023	2019	Change
● Left Alliance	11	16	-5
● Social Democrat Party	43	40	+3
● Green League	13	20	-7
● Centre Party	23	31	-8
● National Coalition Party	48	37	+11
● Christian Democrats	5	5	0
● Swedish People's Party	9	9	0
● The Finns	46	39	+7
● Others	2	3	-1

Source: YLE

BBC

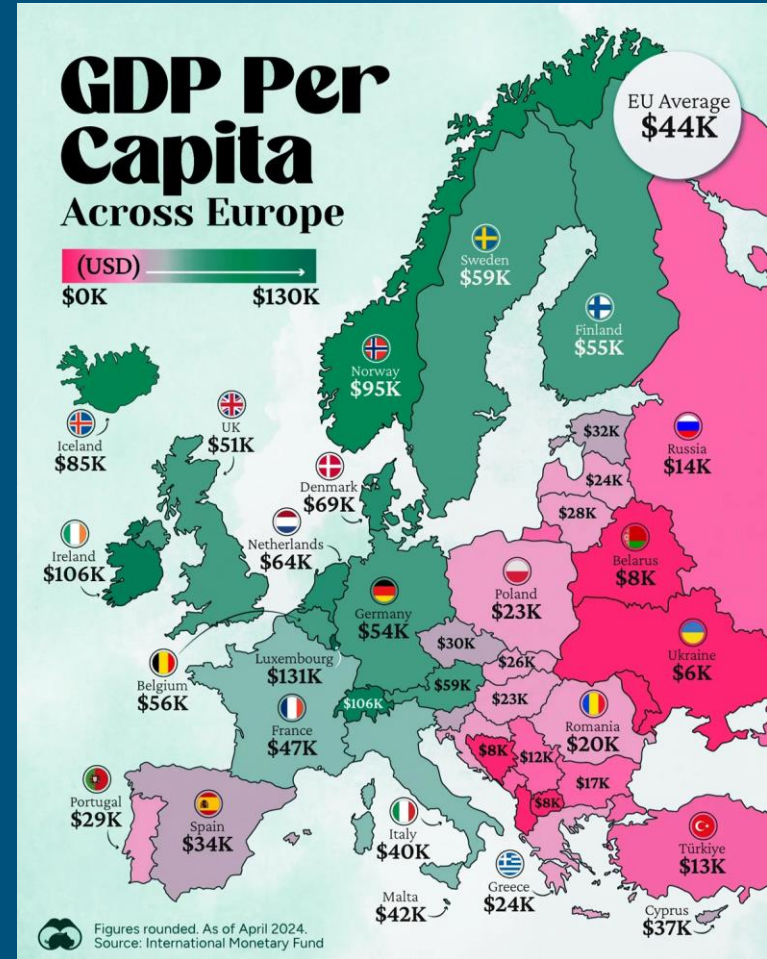
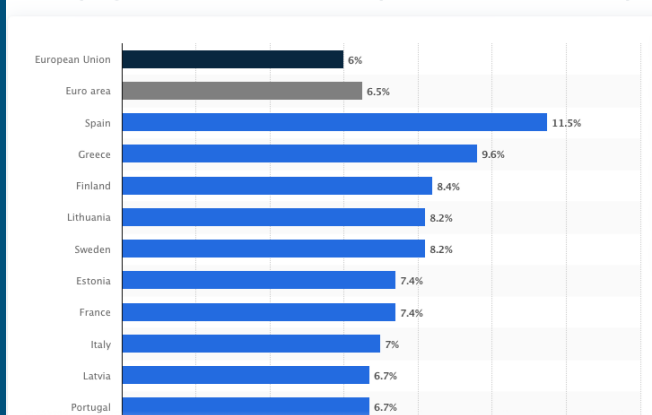


Petteri Orpo, current Prime Minister

c) economy

- > example for gender equality
- > 9th European country in term of GDP per capita
- > falling economic growth
- unemployment rate of 8,2%, country with the 3rd highest rate in the EU

Unemployment rate in the European Union and Europe



d) history

- > under the Russian influence
- > but a neutral status (Finlandization)
- > 1948 : agreement of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance between Finland and the Soviet Union
- > 1961 : became an associate member of EFTA (full member in 1986)
- > 1975 : Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe



EFTA's members

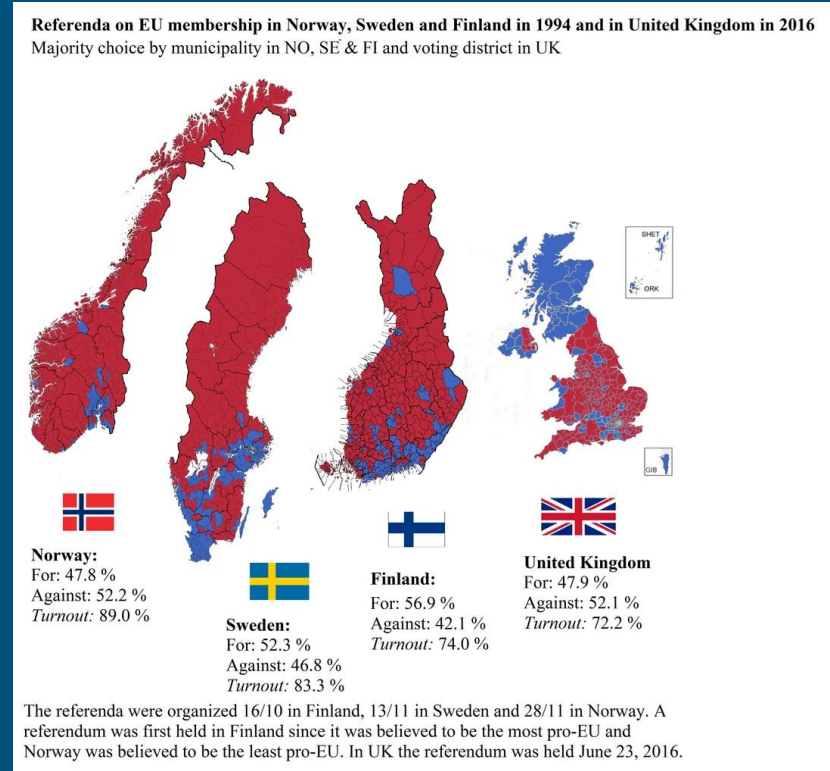


Helsinki conference

II. The European policies of Finland

a) why did Finland join the EU at that time ?

- > became a member in 1995 during the 4th Enlargement
- > in 1990 Sweden applied for membership
- > in 1991 the Soviet Union was dissolved
- > decline of the Finnish economy
- > referendum in 1992 with 57% yes



b) what kind of EU did Finland join?

- > 4th Enlargement wasn't a cultural change in the EU
- > but shifted the EU's centre of gravity (created a Nordic bloc with Finland, Sweden and Denmark)
- > Finland in favor of deep integration
- > in 1999 became a member of the Eurozone (only Nordic country to have done so)
- > in 2001 became a member of the Schengen zone
- > support the enlargement towards Baltic and Central European countries

III. Current crises and rise of Euroscepticism

a) Russian-Ukraine war

> Finland feared for its safety after the Russian attack in 2022

> became a member of NATO in april 2022

> but relations with NATO since 1994

> was part of the “Partnership for Peace” Programme

> in January 2022, only 28% were in favor of joining NATO

> in May 2022, 76% were in favor of it



b) Enlargement to Ukraine

- > Finland support Ukraine in the conflict and in its adhesion to the EU
- > military help of 118 million €
- > 68% of Finnish are in favor of the Enlargement (in the EU, only 45%)
- > Nordic strategists believe that this integration can weaken Russia



c) the migrant crisis

- > impacts of the war in Ukraine
- > the November crisis led to the closing of all eastern border crossing points
- > instrumentalization of migration by Russia
- > Finnish parliament restrict the rights of asylum seekers
- > breach of European and international norms
- > but the European Commission remain silent



d) Euroscepticism

- > large majority in favour of the EU at the start
- > in 2011 the Finns Party entered the parliament
- > became the 2nd party in 2015, and will remain so in 2023 with 46 seats
- > but the European elections in 2024 were a surprise
- > euroscepticism has its limits in Finland, and security remains more important than ever

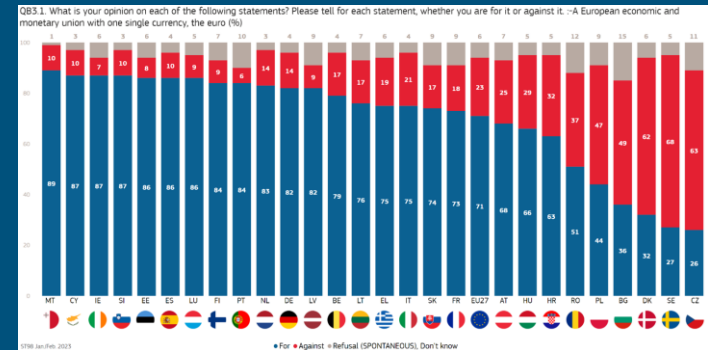
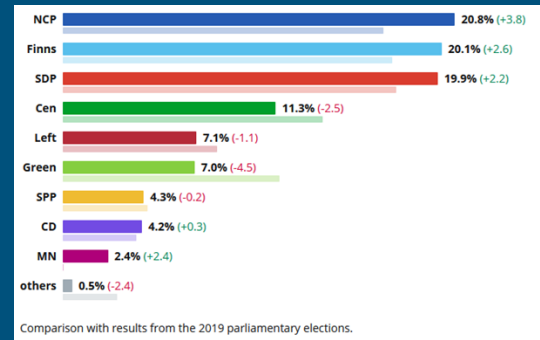
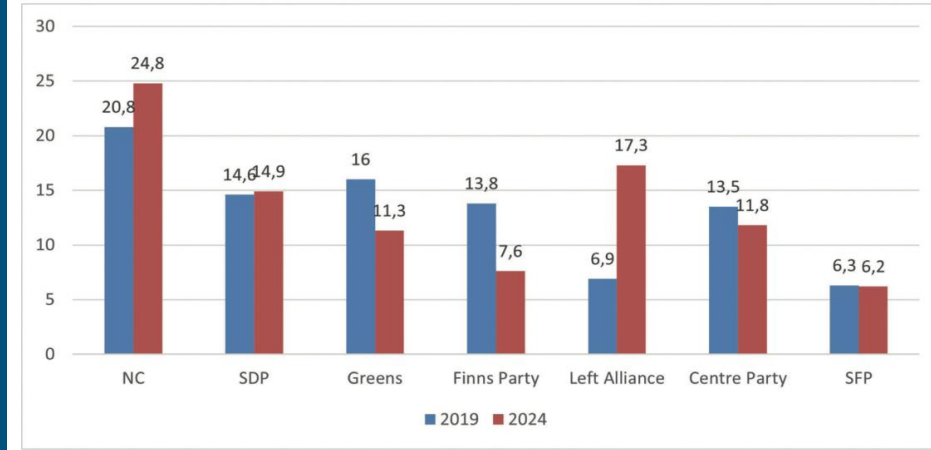


Figure 3. Electoral support in the 2019 and 2024 EP elections in Finland by political party (% vote share)



Source: Election Statistics (2024b)

QA13. Would you say that you are very optimistic, fairly optimistic, fairly pessimistic or very pessimistic about the future of the EU? (%)

