

AALLOTAR

Teacher's Resource Guide



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FINLAND

Suomen tasavalta/Republiken Finland

Location

Finland, officially known as The Republic of Finland, is located in Northern Europe and is bordered by Sweden to its west, Norway to its north, and Russia to its east; Estonia lies to the south across the Gulf of Finland. Finland and Iceland are the only countries located almost completely north of the 60th latitude.

Finland, despite its relatively small size, is characterized by an incredibly diverse climate - featuring warm summers and freezing winters. The climate near the southern coastal regions is considerably warmer than other areas further north, which are similar to Siberia, Alaska, and Greenland, due to the strong cooling effects of the Gulf Stream. Areas of northern Finland experience a lot more variation in their weather, as is typical of most continental climate regions.

Winter can be especially brutal in Finland, where temperatures in the southern regions remain below 32°F for over 100 days, and temperatures in the northern (Lapland) region can fall below -49°F. Winter may last for nearly 200 days in the northern region with snow present between mid-October to early May, while snow



Finland is pictured in dark green



packs are present just between November and April in the southern inland areas, and December to late March in the coastal areas. Overall temperatures can range from -22°F, or colder further north, on winter nights to nearly 95°F on summer afternoons.

Winters may feel even longer in the regions of the country that lie north of the Arctic Circle. At Finland's furthest most northern point, the sun does not rise at all for 51 days during winter and does not set for 73 consecutive days during summer.

Variations in climate make food production a distinctly regional enterprise. Grain agriculture is only feasible in the southern part of the country, while the northern part is best suited for animal husbandry.

Approximately 5.5 million people live in Finland. By contrast, over 24 million people live in Shanghai China and New York City's population is nearly 8.5 million.

Finnish and Swedish are the two official languages of Finland, though additional languages such as Sami, Finnish Romani, and Finnish Sign Language are also recognized by the country's constitution.

Nearly 90% of the population's native language is Finnish, while only 5% of the population's primary language is Swedish. The remaining 5% includes Sami, Finnish Romani, Finnish Sign Language, Tatar, Russian, Estonian, Somali, English, and Arabic. English is by far the best-known foreign language, followed by German and French.

History

The area we now know today as Finland was first inhabited by humans, at the latest, by 8500 BCE (during the Stone Age), as the ice sheets of the most recent ice age continued to recede. Archaeological evidence suggests that the earliest people were hunter-gatherers who used stone tools. Ceramic pottery would not first be introduced to the region until 5200 BCE, and the development of agriculture began between 3000 and 2500 BCE - though hunting and fishing continued to be an important aspect of the economy, despite advances in technology.



Early inhabitants began experiencing contact with other cultures between 1500 BCE and 1200 CE. Sometime during the first millennium AD, the early Finnish language began to form in southern Finland, though Sami-speaking populations still occupied much of the country. The Sami and Finnish people, though distantly related, are quite different.

The Sami retained the hunter-gatherer lifestyle much longer than their Finnish cousins, and settled in the far northern Lapland region of Finland. Though still recognized today as a distinct culture and language, the Sami people have either been displaced or assimilated elsewhere.

Finland was heavily influenced by foreign rulers throughout much of its early history. Swedish kings ruled the region between 1100 and 1249 AD, and Finland became a fully consolidated part of the Swedish kingdom. The Swedish language was adopted as the primary language of the nobility, government administration and educated class while Finnish was spoken primarily by peasants, clergy, and local courts.

Invading Russian forces during the 1700s would later give way to Russian rule in 1809, culminating with the incorporation of Finland as an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire. Finland would remain a part of the Russian Empire until the end of 1917. During this time, a strong Finnish nationalist movement, known as the Fennoman Movement, grew. Major milestones of this movement include the publication of Finland's national epic - the *Kalevala* - in 1835, and the Finnish language's equal recognition with Swedish in 1892.

The Russian revolution of 1917 led to a declaration of independence, for Finland from Russia on December 6, 1917, with war breaking out on January 27, 1918.

After a brief experiment with monarchy, a presidential republic was formed in 1919, with the election of Finland's first president, Kaarlo Juho Ståhlberg.

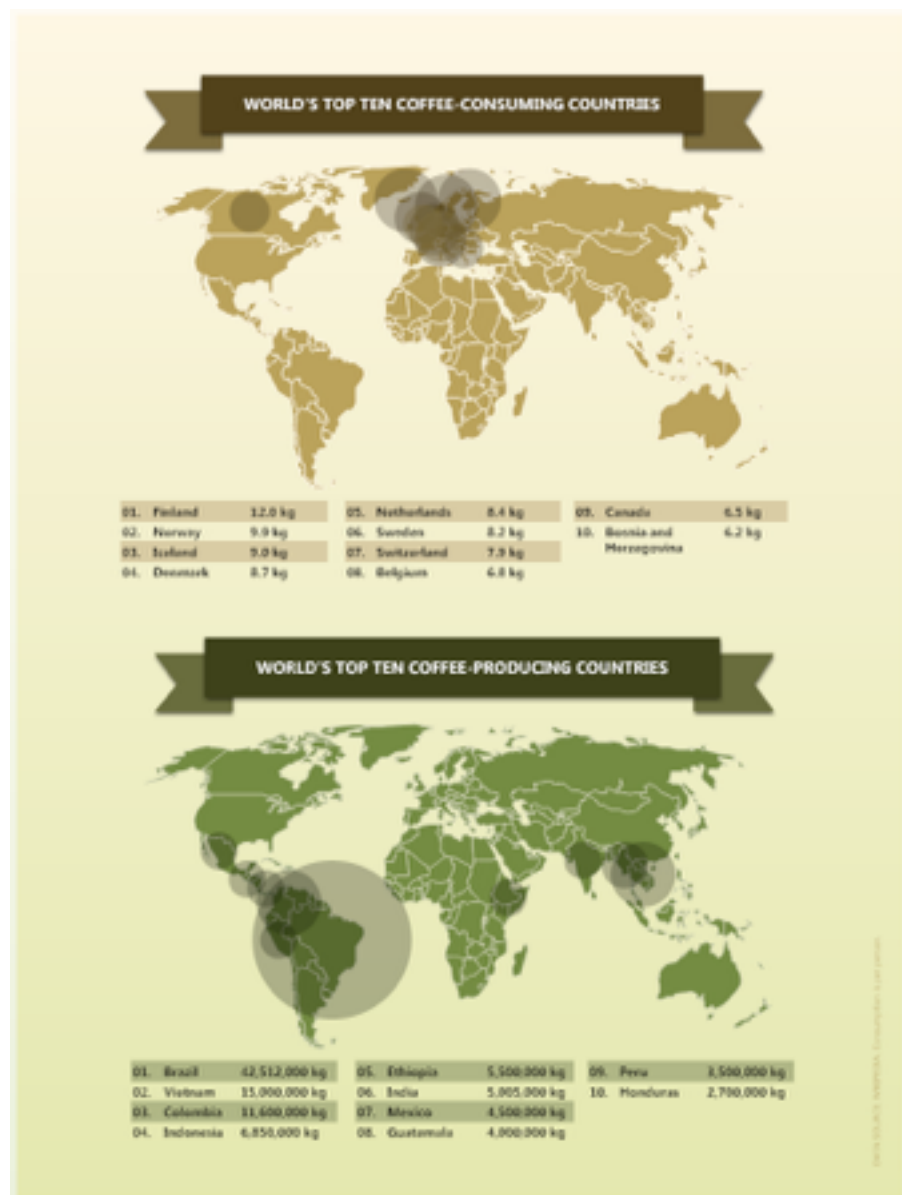




Food, Culture, and Recreation

Finnish cuisine is distinctly different between the eastern and western regions of the country. Fish and meat are dietary staples in the western regions, while food in the eastern regions include various vegetables and mushrooms.

Finnish foods often use whole-grains, such as barley, oats, or rye, and a variety of berries (i.e. bilberries, lingonberries, cloudberries, and sea buckthorn). Milk and buttermilk also figure prominently in their cuisine as either beverages or ingredients in traditional recipes.

In fact, Finland consumes the most milk per capita in the world, with 1 liter (.26 gallons) per person per day, narrowly outranking Sweden. The country ranks first in coffee consumption in addition to milk consumption. Citizens drink nearly 12 times as much coffee per person per year as the average global citizen, consuming 12 kg of coffee compared to 1.3 kg of coffee.



Food Name	Picture	Description
Leipäjuusto (bread cheese)		Oven cooked cheese, best served with cloudberry jam
Lohikeitto (salmon soup)		Salmon, leek (like onion), and potato soup - usually served with dill
Piparkakku (gingerbread cookies)		Gingerbread cookies made with cinnamon and cardamon, usually eaten around Christmas
Karjalanpiirakka (rice pies)		This is a rice pie, consisting of a rice porridge baked into a rye crust and is best served with munavoi. Munavoi is mixture of hard boiled eggs and butter.

Finland has made notable contributions to the fields of education, literature, visual art and music. Finland is often ranked first in global education indices, and is often used as a model by other nations looking to improve their education programs.

Kalevala is perhaps the best known piece of Finnish literature. A collection of Finnish and Karelian folk poetry, arranged and



Aaltonen finishing his bust of
Finnish composer Jean Sibelius

published by Elias Lönnrot, it is widely considered to be the national epic of Finland. Franz Emil Sillanpää, another notable Finnish author, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1939 for his contributions to the field of literature for “his deep understanding of his country’s peasantry and the exquisite art with which he has portrayed their way of life and their relationship with Nature.”

Finland’s best-known visual artist of the twentieth century was Wäinö Aaltonen, who was renowned for his contributions of monumental busts and sculptures. In addition to Aaltonen, Finnish architecture is world famous. Eliel Saarinen, the designer of the Helsinki Central railway station, is one of several architects who have won international recognition.

Sports, like in many countries, is one of the primary recreational activities of the Finnish people. *Pesäpallo*, a sport most closely related to baseball, is the national sport of Finland, though other sports such as ice hockey, athletics, cross-country skiing, ski jumping, and Formula One racing are the most popular spectator sports.



The interior of the Helsinki Central
railway station – designed by Eliel
Saarinen





Finland is a country with a proud athletic heritage. It boasts the most numbers of medals and gold medals per capita in Olympic history. Finland first participated in the Olympics in 1908, while still under Russian rule and the 1952 Summer Olympics were held in Helsinki.

Music

Finnish music is perhaps best divided into three categories: Folk Music, Classical and Contemporary Art Music, and Contemporary Popular Music.

Finnish folk music is heavily influenced by Karelian folk melodies and lyrics, as borrowed from the *Kalevala*. Karelian culture is perceived as the purest expression of Finnish mythology, and less impacted by German influences than the Nordic dance music that replaced kalevaic culture. Western Finland, however, tends to honor and celebrate more traditional Nordic folk music. Finnish folk music is experiencing a revival and has more increasingly been incorporated into popular music.

Finnish music stemming from Karelian traditions is perceived to be considerably older and more authentically Finnish. *Runonlaulonta*, or poem or chant singing, is the most important musical form of this tradition. This type of singing uses only the first five notes of a scale and is traditionally performed in trochaic tetrameter.

Trochaic tetrameter refers to a line of four trochaic feet. Subsequently, tetrameter refers to the presence of four “trochees,” which are long or stressed syllables, followed by a short or unstressed syllable. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s *The Song of Hiawatha* is one well-known example of trochaic tetrameter’s use in the English language. The text of an excerpt from *Hiawatha’s Childhood* is printed below with the accented syllables of each trochee in bold.



By the shores of Gitchee Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.
Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them;
Bright before it beat the water,
Beat the clear and sunny water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.

Runonlaulanta is highly alliterative and was often used to tell tales of Finnish or Nordic folk heroes. These songs were passed down via oral tradition, not written down, and were usually performed by a soloist.

Pelimanni is the Finnish version of traditional Nordic folk music and dances. It arrived in Finland from Central Europe and Scandinavia during the 17th century, ultimately replacing the kalevaic traditions during the 19th century. The fiddle and clarinet, in addition to the harmonium and accordion, were popular instruments used in *pelimanni*. The *pelimanni* tradition includes many familiar dances, including the waltz, minuet, and polka and several less familiar dances including the polska, mazurka, schottische, and quadrille.



In addition to *pelimanni* and *runonlaulanta*, *rekilaulu* is a popular form of Finnish folk music. *Rekilaulu*, or "sleigh singing", is a type of rhymed stanzaic song, and is believed to have been influenced by the western European traditions of ballads or broadsides, songs that typically shared the stories of the common people. *Rekilaulu* has seen its popularity grow and, since the 1920s, has often been incorporated into contemporary popular music.



The Sami, people of northern Finland, Sweden and Norway, are known for their highly spiritual songs known as *joik* (also spelled *yoik*). *Joik* is one of the oldest folk music traditions of Europe. Its sound is comparable to traditional Native American



chants. It was traditionally chanted *a cappella* (or unaccompanied), but modern *joiks* are often accompanied by a drum or other musical instruments. Sofia Jannok is perhaps one of Finland's most popular Sami *joik* artists, and many of her recordings and a TedTalk can be found on YouTube.

Perhaps the most notable classical composer from Finland is Jean Sibelius. His best known work, *Finlandia*, is a symphonic tone poem dedicated to his father land and was instrumental in helping Finland gain its independence.

English - Finnish - Swedish	Picture	About
Violin - viulu - fiol		The violin is a member of the string family. Sound is created when one of the four strings is either plucked (typically with the index finger) or a bow is drawn across it. The bow is a long piece of flexible wood with many strands of horse hair attached to it. When the hair of the bow is drawn across the string(s), friction produces vibration which we hear as sound.
Accordion - hanuri/ harmonikka/haitari - dragspel		The accordion is a member of the free-reed aerophone family. Sound is created when air is forced through the instrument by expressing or compressing the bellows, while holding buttons or keys that control valves within the instrument. These valves open or close allowing air to flow over brass or steel strips known as reeds. The reeds vibrate as air passes over them.

English - Finnish - Swedish	Picture	About
N/A - kantele - harppu (Sami)		<p>The kantele is a traditional plucked string instrument, similar to a zither or dulcimer, and is native to Finland. The number of strings can range from 5 or 6, on a small kantele, to over 40 on a large concert kantele. Strings were traditionally made of horsehair, not uncommon from the hair used for string instrument bows, however many modern instruments use metal strings. The sound is often described as distinctly bell-like.</p>
N/A - jouhikko/jouhikannel/jouhikantele		<p>The jouhikko is a traditional 3 or 4 string lyre, native to Finland and Karelia. The strings are typically made of horsehair, similar to the kantele. Usage of this instrument died out in the early 20th century, but it has seen a recent resurgence. Though the modern translation is "bowed lyre", the preferred term was "bowed harp". The earliest record of the jouhikko's usage is the 14th century, found in a stone carving from the Trondheim Cathedral in Norway. This instrument is different from a lyre or violin because there is no fingerboard to press the strings against.</p>

Learn to Speak Finnish and Swedish

English	Finnish	Swedish
Thank You	kiitos (KEY - toes)	tack (tahk)
Violin	viulu (VEE - oo - loo)	fiol (FEE - ohl)
Accordion	harmonikka (hahr - MOH - nee - kah)	dragspels (DRAHG - spehls)
Finland	Suomi (SUE - oh - mee)	Finland

Meet the Artists

AALLOTAR (“exquisite, sophisticated chamber folk music”) is a transatlantic collaboration between Finnish-American violinist Sara Pajunen (Minneapolis, MN) and Finnish accordionist Teija Niku (Haapavesi/Helsinki, Finland), whose families once lived within hours of each other in the western regions of Finland. Using instruments traditional to Finnish and Finnish-American folk music and singing in both English and Finnish, the music of Aallotar pays tribute to Pajunen and Niku's respective cultures, which – although they pulsate with many of the same values and energy of 100 years ago – have grown apart. While Aallotar explores these differences, the music ultimately intends to create new harmonies that reflect the rejoining of sounds at once familiar and foreign.

Geography

The town of Haapavesi is located in the Northern Ostrobothnia region of Finland, in the province of Oulu - located in the West central part of the country. With a population of 7,185 people, it has a population density of 17.7 per square mile. Haapvesi is known for the Haapavesi Folk Music Festival.





Potential Teaching Questions/Activities

1.) Have students listen to a recording of Native American chant music and a recording (the Tedx Talk link below is a perfect example) of Sami yoik. **They should be directed to compare and contrast the singing styles and general content/concepts of these musical traditions.** Students may even prepare a venn diagram to illustrate their findings.

2.) Have students print and color the Finnish flag (template provided). They may additionally research why the colors of blue and white were selected, as well as the importance of the Nordic cross.

3.) Direct students to identify Western and Eastern European countries on the blank map provided. Additionally, have them research one of Finland's neighboring country and prepare a brief report to share with the class. They may focus on a specific component of Finnish culture to compare and contrast to their selected neighboring country (i.e. how does Finnish food compare with Swedish food?)

4.) The Kalevala is Finland's national epic and was compiled by Elias Lönnrot in the late 19th century. It is mostly compiled from traditional songs and stories as told by rural storytellers. **Students may explore one of the sections of the Kalevala, drawing connections to the historic/sacred texts of other cultures (i.e. Rune I: Birth of Wainamoinen is a tale of the beginning of the world).** They may be particularly interested to hear that many believe that Wainamoinen (Väinämöinen in Finnish) was the inspiration for J. R. R. Tolkien's Gandalf in The Lord of the Rings trilogy and The Hobbit.

5.) Pesäpallo is the national sport of Finland, and is very similar to baseball. **Have students compare and contrast the rules of the two sports.**



Helpful Links

Embassy of Finland "About Finland" Webpage: <http://www.finland.org/public/default.aspx?nodeid=46116&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

Sofia Jannok TedX Talk "Singer of the people of wind & sun talks about rights to earth and freedom": <http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/TEDxGatewaySofia-JannokSinger-o;search%3ASofia%20Jannok>

Finnish to English translation of the *Kalevala*: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/kveng/>

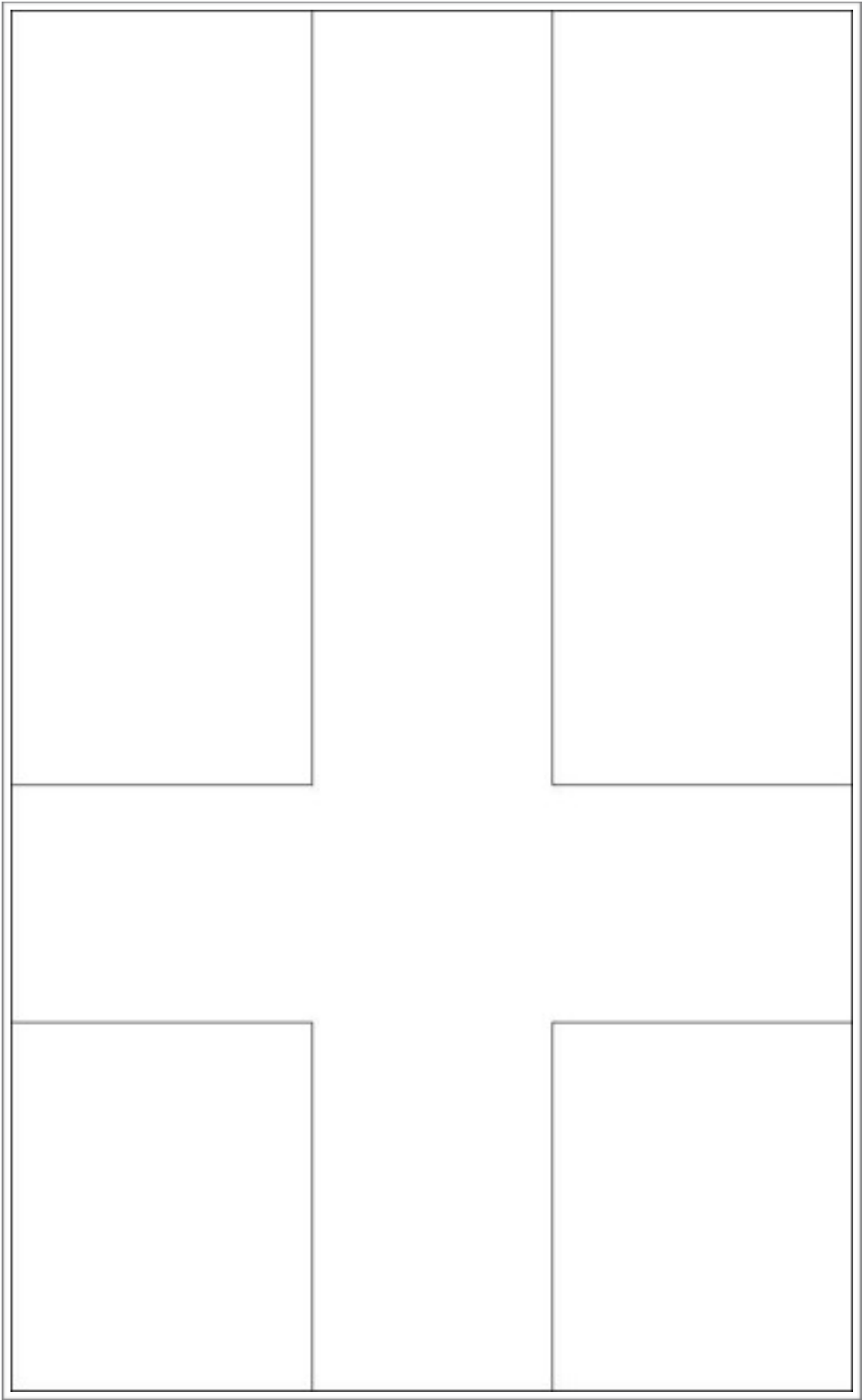
The Official Travel Site of Finland: <http://www.visitfinland.com/>

Lonely Planet's Guide to Finland: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/finland>

Aallotar's Website: <http://www.aallotarmusic.com>



Directions: Cut out and color the Finnish flag. Write a brief report on the importance of the flag's colors and design/symbol.



Identify the European countries on the blank map using the country bank below the map.



<input type="checkbox"/> Albania	<input type="checkbox"/> Greece	<input type="checkbox"/> Norway
<input type="checkbox"/> Austria	<input type="checkbox"/> Hungary	<input type="checkbox"/> Poland
<input type="checkbox"/> Belarus	<input type="checkbox"/> Iceland	<input type="checkbox"/> Portugal
<input type="checkbox"/> Belgium	<input type="checkbox"/> Ireland	<input type="checkbox"/> Romania
<input type="checkbox"/> Bosnia & Herz.	<input type="checkbox"/> Italy	<input type="checkbox"/> Scotland
<input type="checkbox"/> Bulgaria	<input type="checkbox"/> Latvia	<input type="checkbox"/> Serbia
<input type="checkbox"/> Croatia	<input type="checkbox"/> Lithuania	<input type="checkbox"/> Slovakia
<input type="checkbox"/> Cyprus	<input type="checkbox"/> Luxembourg	<input type="checkbox"/> Slovenia
<input type="checkbox"/> Czech Rep.	<input type="checkbox"/> Macedonia	<input type="checkbox"/> Spain
<input type="checkbox"/> Denmark	<input type="checkbox"/> Malta	<input type="checkbox"/> Sweden
<input type="checkbox"/> Estonia	<input type="checkbox"/> Moldova	<input type="checkbox"/> Switzerland
<input type="checkbox"/> Finland	<input type="checkbox"/> Monaco	<input type="checkbox"/> Ukraine
<input type="checkbox"/> France	<input type="checkbox"/> Montenegro	<input type="checkbox"/> United Kingdom
<input type="checkbox"/> Germany	<input type="checkbox"/> Netherlands	