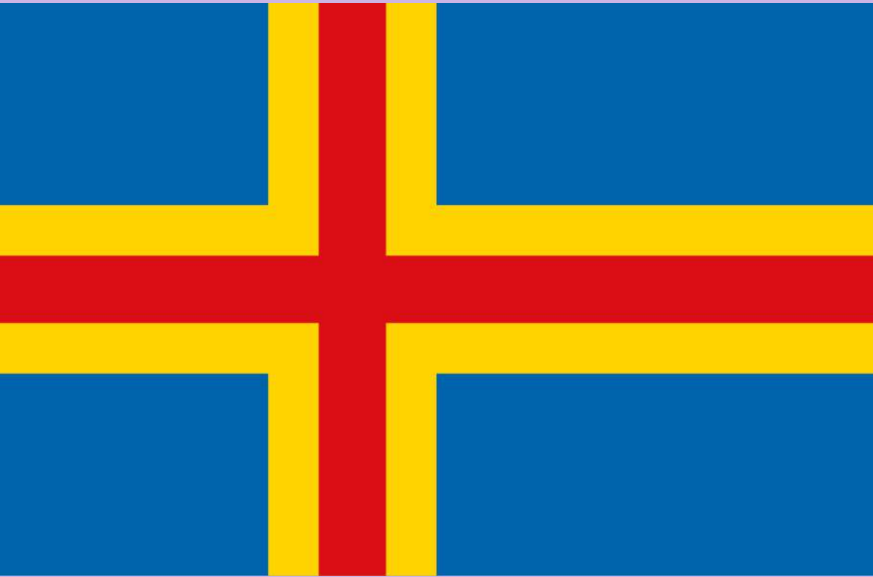




Ulf Wikström
Åland University of Applied sciences



Åland autonomous and demilitarised region of south-west Finland

6700 islands in the Baltic Sea between Stockholm, Sweden and Turku, Finland

1500 Square kilometer, main Åland 70 %, islands 30 % (~Faroe)

Part of Finland, partly independent

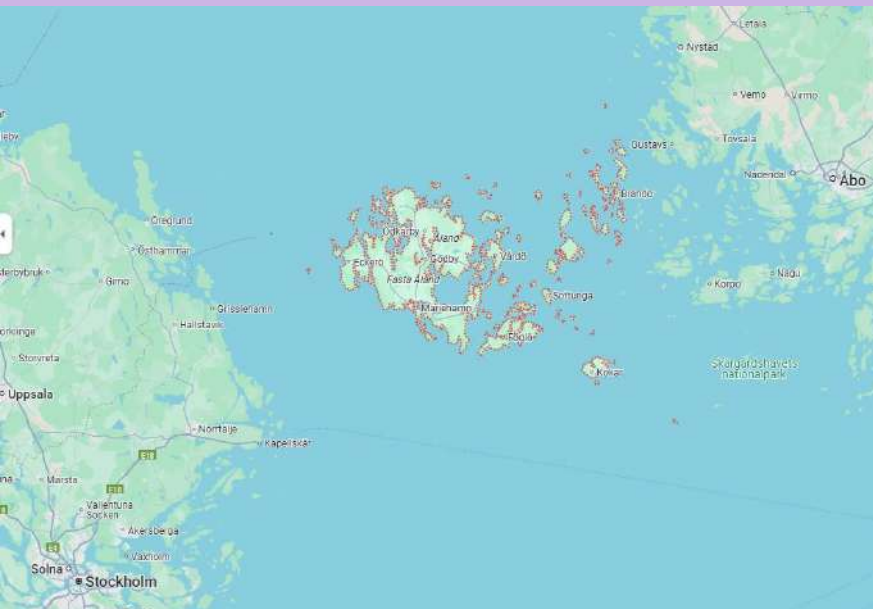
30710 inhabitants, 11898 in the Capital called Mariehamn

90 % of the population lives on mainland Åland

16 municipalities

Rocky terrain with a soil shaped of the last ice age (red granite)

Paradise for birds and insects especially butterflies (and tourism)



19 May 2025

The Åland case historical steps

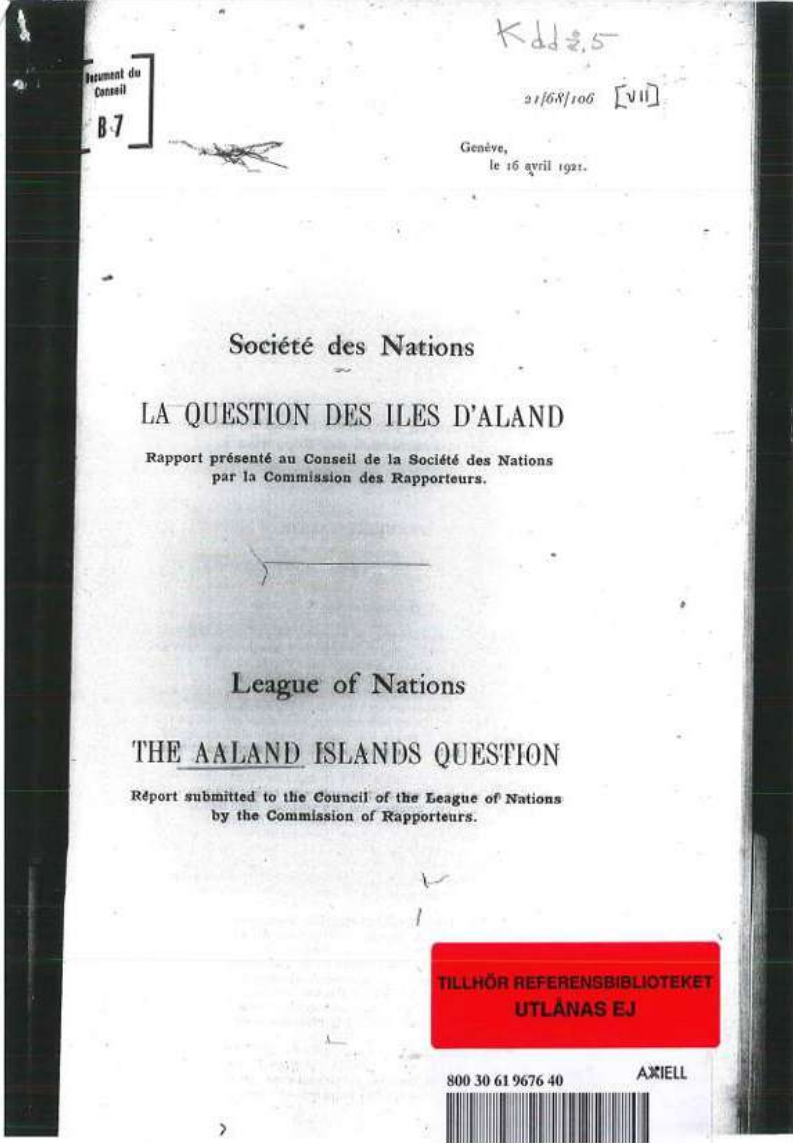
Finland was a part off Swdeden until the war with Russia in 1808-09, after which Finland became a part of Russia, however officially as an autonomous unit which perhaps partly was lucky for Åland as the mainland, Finland, had experienced that position as well during the Russian period.

The good outcome from three major wars in Europe; Napoleonic wars (1803-15), War of Crimea 1853-56 and the first World War I (1914-18).

The demilitarisation of Åland started as result of Russian defeat in the Crimea war, also giving more power to Finland in general as the Grand Duchy of Finland. The reform of the Grand duchy took off and actually was successful. The working means were still closely linked to the Swedish and Nordic governance system.

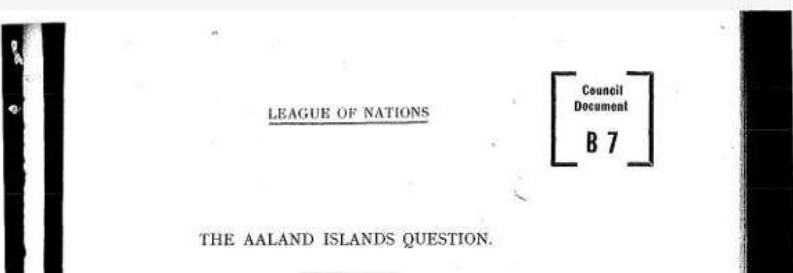
The Finnish current Mark and penni from 1860, the Finnish national anthem Vårt land (our country) first performed already on 13 maj 1848, in Swedish and translated to Finnish only in 1867.

During the Swedish and beginning of the Russian period the Finnish Capital was Turku (the oldest city in Finland (soon 800 years). The Russian Tsar Alexander I wanted the capital to be closer to S:t Petersburg so 1812 Helsinki (Helsingfors) became the capital despite of having only 4000 inhabitants at that time.



Finland got its independence 1917

Åland's status was confirmed by League of Nations in 16 April 1921 in Geneva. A copy of the document on the left hand side



Problems to solve from 1917-21



Separatist movement
on Åland to bring
Åland to be a part of
Sweden



Equal treatment in
Finland between
regions and people



Language issues, Swedish
became the only official
language on Åland islands



Independence in
certain areas of the
legislation

The logic from the Crimea wars continued and is still the backbone => The Åland example ...

Winners from WWI
signed the document

Strong support from
Baltic Sea countries

Renewed agreement
with the Sovietunion 1940

Part of the peace
treatment in Paris 1947

Note that League of Nations also decided that the previous German cities Danzig (Gdansk) and Memel (Klaipeda) as well as Charpatia and Ruthenia in Chechoslovakia got the same treatment from the League about regional autonomies, but they did not survive the WWII

The autonomy act for Åland

1920

1951

1991

2027?



Foreign affairs, Defence, Civil and Criminal Law, Courts, Customs,
State taxation



Åland Parliament Lagtinget
(30 members)



Government of Åland (7 ministers
lead by Lantråd)

Education, Culture

Health and social
care, Environment

Business,
Municipality affairs

Transport, Post

Police, Radio/TV

Economical governance

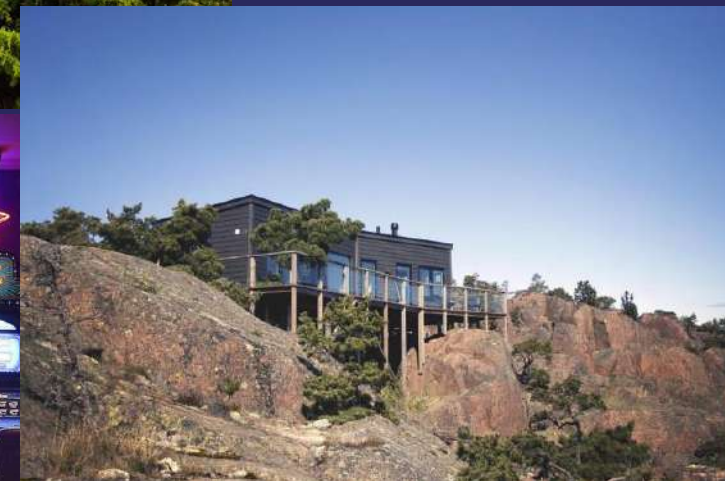
The government decides the budget like in any other country

Finland is first collecting the taxes from Åland and then according to a formula send back the money to Åland, today the figure is 0,47% of the net-state budget in Finland.

The budget frame for this year 2025 is 374,7 million Euros (€)



Most important "industries"



Dates of importance

1856: Convention on demilitarisation of Åland Islands

1921: The Åland decision

1940: Non-fortification and neutralisation of Åland

1947: Excerpts concerning Åland from the Paris treaty

1948: Letter from Sovietunion on trities after the war

1992: Protocol between Russian Federation and Finland for bilateral agreements between the two countries

1994: Ålands and Finland's accession to the EU, special åland protocol

2009: EU Lisbon Treaty, Continues application of the Åland protocol

Åland special status

- Special provisions for purchasing of real estate and the right to conduct business in Åland (**Right of domicile**, 5 years to buy, own, conduct business, vote)
- Åland shall be regarded as a third territory with respect to indirect **taxation**, which enables the sale of tax-free goods to passengers travelling between the Åland Islands and other EU Member States (also from Finland), even though the tax exemption in the traffic between EU Member States ended as of 1 July 1999.
- The official **language is Swedish** (only)



The Nordic Council

The Nordic Council is the official body for Nordic inter-parliamentary co-operation. Formed in 1952, it has 87 members from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland.

Nordic cooperation (above)

Local Media, 2 daily newspapers
and one local => Radio and TV
station

19 May 2025

Åland islands

NyÅ Åland
FREDAG 16 MAJ 2025
LÖSNUMMER 2.50€ | TELEFON 018-21 444 | NYHETSTIPS 0457-313 4444 | WWW.NYANLAX

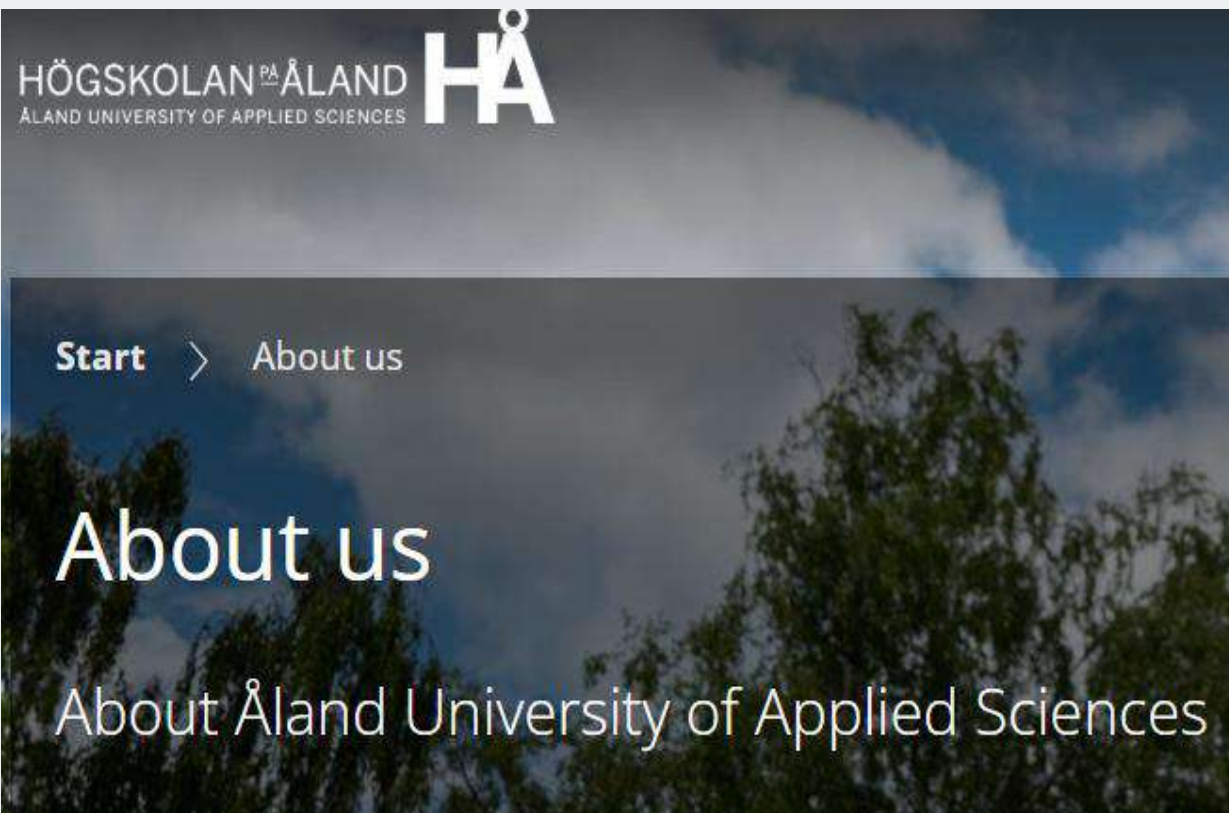
Fifax-fisken är ännu utan mat
ÅMHM och fiskodlingen i tät dialog om lösning

Lantbrukare handlar alltmer från fastlandet
AB Lantbruk svarar med ny finsk filial

ÅLAND
Ålandstidningen – En del av vardagen sedan 1891

Nyheter

- ÅMHM-veterinären om Fifax: "Åtgärder är på gång" 16 maj 2025
- Inför Eurovision: Ålands Radios Albert Söderback är på plats i Basel 16 maj 2025 5 min 53 sek
- Andra fiskodlare vill ge ett hjälp i Fifaxsituationen 16 maj 2025
- Zacharias Hågerstrand vinner Konstsamfundets sångtexttävling 16 maj 2025
- 16 maj 13:55 16 maj 2025 4 min 50 sek



Thank you



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Useful links about Åland

[Guide to Åland](#)

[Visit Åland](#)

[Åland Parliament](#)

[The Åland Peace Institute](#)

[Finnish foreign ministry on Åland islands status](#)

[The legal basis of Ålands Demilitarization and Neutralization](#)

[The Åland Islands Solution: A precedent for succesful international disputes settlement \(Youtube film\)](#)