

## National report for Finland – June 2011

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Country Finland  
Organisation Suomen Rautatiematkustajat ry  
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### Positive points for public transport in our country:

1. According to press reports, VR is applying brakes on its rolling stock scrapping policy. Some stand-up reserve train units and personnel will also be placed in certain key positions in order to alleviate eventual problems next winter.
2. VR is constructing a train unit servicing and de-icing complex in Oulu, some 700 kilometres north from Helsinki. This means that everything must not be done in the main servicing station of Ilmala, about four kilometres from Helsinki Central Station.

### Negative points for public transport in our country:

1. VR promised a ticket reform (flexible prices) for the first time in 2007, then 2009 and also 2010. Now different sources tell that something will perhaps happen in late 2011 or early 2012.
2. On the other hand, ticket prices have risen so that cheap domestic flights are aggressively wooing passengers from rail.
3. VR passenger numbers decreased seven per cent in the first quarter of this year.
4. Train punctuality is still far from the objectives: 90 per cent of the long distance trains should arrive in their destination within five minutes of the scheduled time while the required percentage is 97,5 in Helsinki commuter traffic with a three minute tolerance. In the first quarter the worst month in long distance traffic was 55,7 per cent and the best month 67,1. In Helsinki commuter traffic the numbers were 79,0 per cent and 93,3 per cent. The problems are caused by rolling stock failures and defects in the permanent way.
5. A foresighted MP introduced a Bill that would have compelled any railway rolling stock owner to put up surplus rolling stock for sale instead of scrapping it. Unfortunately, the parliamentary system was slow enough, so the Bill came to nothing before the elections in April. The unlucky MP was not re-elected, either.