



# ANNUAL REPORT

Rajavartiolaitos | Finnish Border Guard

2022





The Finnish Border Guard is a cooperative, internationally renowned expert in border management and maritime safety and security that increases the safety and security of people, the environment and the State in an efficient manner.

This is guaranteed by reliable and professional personnel, a military organizational structure and reliable and advanced technology.

The aim of our work is for Finland to have the most secure border and sea areas in Europe.

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# A word from the Chief

In 2022, full-scale war returned to Europe and Finland's vicinity. The Russian attack on Ukraine changed our security environment fundamentally and for the long term. The turn of events affected the Finnish Border Guard's activities across the board from border management and maritime security to military national defence. Our ability to encounter this profound change was facilitated by the fact that we had prepared for such scenarios in a determined and systematic manner since Russia invaded Crimea.

## Operational developments

The eventful year 2022 started with the coronavirus pandemic still prevailing. To reinforce health security, we continued internal border control and the provision of mutual assistance to the health authorities in early 2022. The external border traffic restrictions also remained valid until July. An entirely new situation emerged when Russia attacked Ukraine in February.

Without delay, we initiated a review of our day-to-day preparedness and of our development policies to ensure that they are in line with the profoundly changed security situation. The review showed that our principal policies had a solid foundation, but the new situation called for stronger and accelerated actions. Accordingly, measures were taken to improve the Finnish Border Guard's preparedness and performance in abnormal situations along the eastern border and at sea.

Throughout this exceptional year, we carried out all our tasks in an uncompromised manner to the highest standards. Border surveillance was intensified both on land and at sea, while also ensuring the safe and smooth progress of border-crossing traffic at the eastern border, airports and ports. The Government's resolution restricting the entry of Russian nationals to safeguard Finland's international relations had a major impact on border checks at the eastern border.

At sea, we protected the safety and security of both people and the environment. In the sparsely populated regions along the eastern border and in coastal areas, the Finnish Border Guard was often the first on site to assist anyone in distress. Crimes falling within our jurisdiction were investigated appropriately. Surveillance and safeguarding of Finland's territorial integrity was an inherent part of all our duties along our national borders.

The number of illegal border crossings and forgeries increased at the eastern border but, given the circumstances, the situation remained calm and stable. It is worth pointing out that the Russian authorities continued operating effectively on their side of the border, thus preventing hundreds of illegal border crossings to Finland. Asylum applications and applications for temporary protection were received on the eastern border to a significantly larger extent as a result of the Russian attack on Ukraine.



In 2022, substantial investments were made in developing our operational capabilities. The additional funding granted by the Parliament made this possible. We were able to increase the volume of training for our personnel as well as refresher training exercises for reservists. The Border Guard Act was urgently amended in response to the changed security situation. The new provisions, which entered into force in July 2022, will facilitate the centralised processing of applications for international protection at one or several border crossing points, as well as the construction of a heavier border fence. The relevance of the current legislation was also assessed



more broadly in the preliminary survey completed in spring 2022. The legislative development work will continue in 2023.

Our material capabilities were enhanced during the course of the year. As a result, we are now able to tackle more extensive and longer-lasting abnormal situations. Our leadership systems and situational awareness are even better and more secure than before.

Our strategic projects are advancing on schedule. The new offshore patrol vessels will be taken into use in 2025 and 2026. The procurement contract for two new surveillance aircraft will be made in 2023. The renewal of the technical surveillance systems for our land and sea borders has also proceeded as planned and the project will enter into its next phase this year.

The border barrier fence to be built on a part of the eastern border will essentially reduce our dependence on the efficiency of the Russian border control. The barrier fence will make our border control and surveillance of territorial integrity more efficient, and it is necessary for managing large-scale or engineered migration. The construction of the first phase of the eastern border fence started in March 2023.

### Powerful collaboration

The ability of various authorities to collaborate in abnormal situations was developed in many ways in 2022. We paid particular attention to the management of large-scale and engineered migration. However, we need to further prepare ourselves for these situations. Close collaboration with the Frontex standing corps is an essential part of this work.

The Finnish Border Guard's participation in Frontex operations increased clearly in 2022. By contributing to international operations, we prevent cross-border criminal activities farther from our own borders. Correspondingly, we developed our ability to receive assistance from the European Border and Coast Guard by arranging practical training jointly with their personnel along our eastern border. Our liaisons in embassies and consulates worked effectively to prevent border crossing crime in advance.

In sea areas, joint exercises were arranged to practice multisectoral collaboration in SAR operations and environmental damage prevention both at the national and international levels. The new IT system for maritime SAR operations was taken into operative use, as was the MERT system to support the operational command in the prevention of environmental damage. Our capacity to prevent environmental damage was further developed by improving the preparedness storage and through increased collaboration with the European Maritime Safety Agency, EMSA.

### Highly committed personnel

An extensive personnel survey was conducted within the Finnish Border Guard in autumn 2022. It provided us with plenty of information on work satisfaction, organisational management and needs for development. The results show that leadership, supervisory work, interaction and communication are the strengths of the Finnish Border Guard. The members of our personnel find their work important and know the objectives of their work. Aspects related to equality and non-discrimination have developed positively. The atmosphere in various work units has improved, especially in terms of open discourse. Our personnel are willing and motivated to develop their competences. Opportunities for competence development, better balance between work and private life as well as recovery from the burden of work appeared in the survey as areas of development, and we will invest in these areas in the coming years.

I wish to thank the entire personnel of the Finnish Border Guard for their valuable and persistent work as the gatekeepers for our native land. I would also like to extend my gratitude to all our co-operative partners for their excellent collaboration in the eventful year 2022.

**Pasi Kostamovaara**

Lieutenant General

Chief of the Finnish Border Guard



# Societal impact and performance

The societal impact goals of the Finnish Border Guard include border security and maritime security, as well as territorial integrity and defence readiness. Operations are carried out cost-effectively on land, at sea and in the air under all natural conditions and in any abnormal situations and emergencies.

Exceptional times continued into the year 2022 with major impacts on the activities and performance of the Finnish Border Guard. The internal border control was in effect from 28 December 2021 until 31 January 2022, extensive mutual assistance was provided to the health authorities until 28 February 2022 and restrictions on the external border traffic continued until 30 June 2022. Russia attacked Ukraine in February and initiated large-scale mobilization. As of 30 September 2022, the entry of Russian nationals was restricted on the external border to safeguard Finland's international relations.

Despite the exceptional conditions, the Finnish Border Guard's societal impact grew from the preceding year, with an increase both in the impact and cost-effectiveness of the activities. Impact reflects changes in the circumstances and state of the society and

its members resulting from the activities of the Finnish Border Guard. Cost-effectiveness shows the ratio between the results achieved and available resources.

As a result of the changes in the operating environment, the measurable output was higher than planned within the areas of border surveillance and territorial integrity and defence readiness, but, because of the restrictions on external border traffic, lower than planned within the border control activities.

The productivity of the Finnish Border Guard improved because more was achieved with less person-year resources than in the preceding year. Economic efficiency also improved: more could be accomplished along with increased appropriations.







# The Finnish Border Guard's reputation and public image

Reliable, professional and cooperative. These values, guiding the activities of the Finnish Border Guard, were successfully conveyed to citizens and media representatives in the past year, as shown by recent surveys.

In the Luottamus&Maine (Reputation&Trust) 2022 survey conducted by T-Media, the Finnish Border Guard was the most trusted organisation in the public sector in Finland. The Finnish Border Guard shared the top position with the Regional Emergency Services, as it did with the Emergency Response Centre Agency in 2021. Public evaluations concerning the reputation and reliability of the Finnish Border Guard have been consistently at a high level.

Pasi Kostamovaara, Chief of the Finnish Border Guard, comments on the survey results:

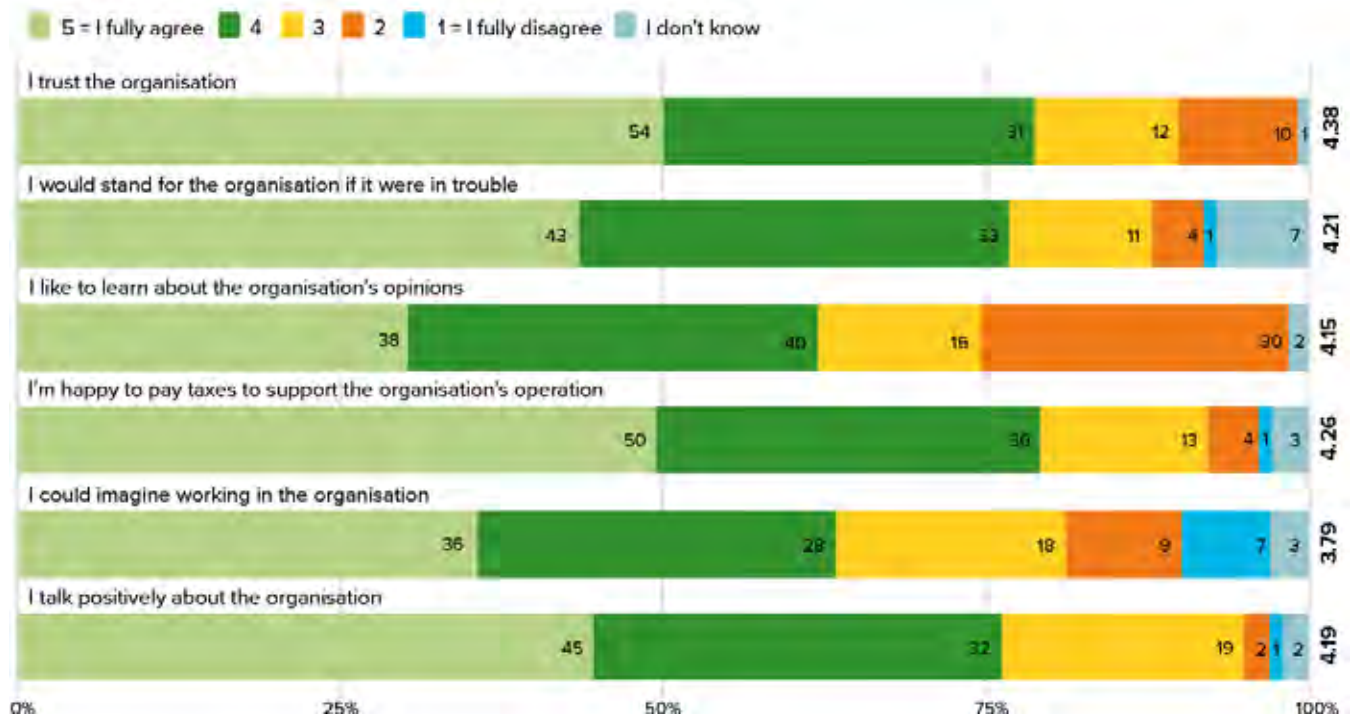
“Public trust is the foundation of our activities and we are grateful for the confidence shown to us. The changed operating environment has highlighted the significance of our work. Thanks for the excel-

lent results belong to our entire personnel working on the national borders, at headquarters and in training units. We are well aware of the fact that the public confidence must be earned every day.”

## Journalist survey

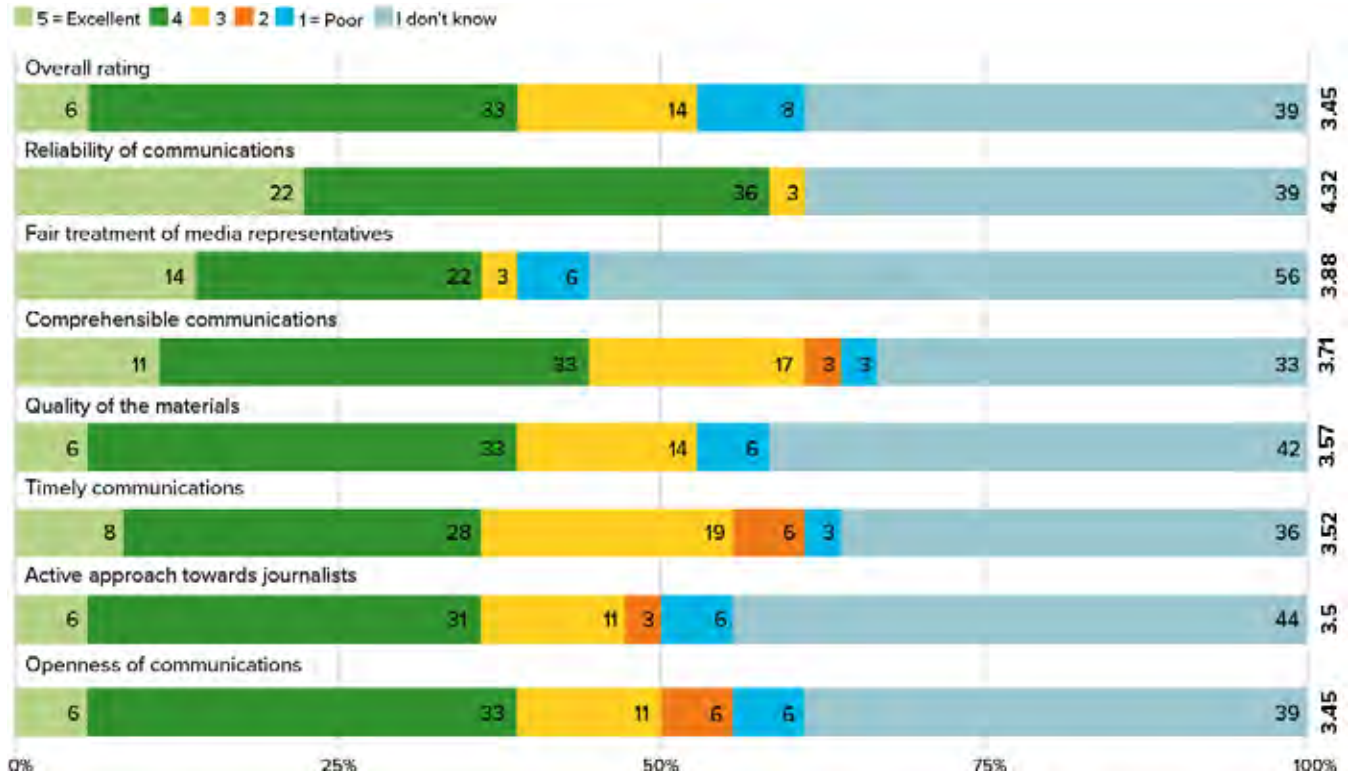
The MediaBarometri (Media Barometer) 2022 survey among journalists was commissioned jointly by the Ministry of the Interior and the agencies under the Ministry. The results were highly positive. The communications are considered reliable and the expertise of the interviewees is recognised. According to the results, the Finnish Border Guard has succeeded in its media services better than other agencies.

Luottamus&Maine 2022 survey results for the Finnish Border Guard





Ratings by media for the media services of the Finnish Border Guard





# Responsibility

The responsibility plan published in 2021 states the Finnish Border Guard's commitment to sustainable development. The plan describes the key goals of the Finnish Border Guard based on selected UN Sustainable Development Goals, together with the principal actions to achieve the set goals. The Finnish Border Guard will publish its Responsibility Report for 2022 in spring 2023.

## Equality and non-discrimination

The Finnish Border Guard aims to ensure and advance the equality and non-discrimination of personnel and customers in all situations with due respect for basic and human rights. Consideration for the needs of individuals in a particularly vulnerable position is a focal area in all activities.

The equality and non-discrimination plan of the Finnish Border Guard was updated in 2021 and its implementation continued in 2022. The definition of and goal setting for functional equality and non-discrimination was included in the plan as a new section. The results of the personnel survey in 2022 show an improvement in experienced equality and non-discrimination across the board.

## Communications

The communications of the Finnish Border Guard supports good corporate governance and responsibility as well as transparency in all activities. In 2022, the Finnish Border Guard initiated an internal development project to ensure high-standard performance in the coming years. The accessibility of the contents and channels of communications is being further developed. Members of the personnel are continually being trained as a means of enhancing services and their accessibility. Multichannel communications responding to changes in society in a timely and current manner is used to strengthen the trust and confidence experienced by citizens.

## Carbon footprint

The Finnish Border Guard's carbon footprint was calculated in spring 2022 as part of the responsibility reporting. The carbon footprint has increased despite the actions taken in compliance with the responsibility plan. The increase is mainly due to the numerous procurement and strategic projects underway to upgrade the capabilities of the Finnish Border Guard. Because of the calculation method applied by the Ministry of the Interior, these acquisitions have an increasing effect on the carbon footprint. The increased carbon footprint of fuels is mainly explained by the growth of operational activities.

## Environmental protection

The Finnish Border Guard complies with environmental legislation and international agreements in all its activities. In 2022, work was initiated to assess the environmental risks related to the existing facilities and those no longer in use but falling within the sphere of responsibility of the Finnish Border Guard. The assessment in 2022 included the inspection of the Finnish Border Guard's vehicle, vessel and helicopter fuel stations for their compliance with regulations. Following the assessment and inspection, a separate renovation and renewal plan will be drawn up.



The Finnish Border Guard collected expired emergency signals at the boat fair.



# Border surveillance

The purpose of border surveillance is to maintain security and public order at land and sea borders. Situational awareness obtained through surveillance facilitates the efficient use of resources. Any situations threatening the border security on land or at sea are managed under all circumstances. At the internal borders of the Schengen area, preparedness is maintained to temporarily reinstitute border control. On land borders, the border guards patrol on foot or skis or using off-road vehicles, snow mobiles and motor boats. Border guard dogs play an important role in border surveillance. Various stationary and mobile technical systems are employed to ensure the coverage of surveillance. On sea borders, surveillance is carried out by utilising the maritime fleet backed by surveillance aircraft and helicopters.

In 2022, the situation on the external land and sea borders remained stable. There was a slight increase seen in the latter half of the year in terms of unauthorised border crossings on the land border. These cases were successfully investigated. There was no significant change in the overall number of territorial violations. The volume of patrolling resumed the level of the years prior to the period of internal border control. The volume of mobile technical surveillance increased as compared to the years preceding the internal border control. The extent of mutual assistance provided by the Finnish Border Guard returned to the normal level once the provision of mutual assistance to health authorities required at the border-crossing points ended.

## Eastern border barrier fence

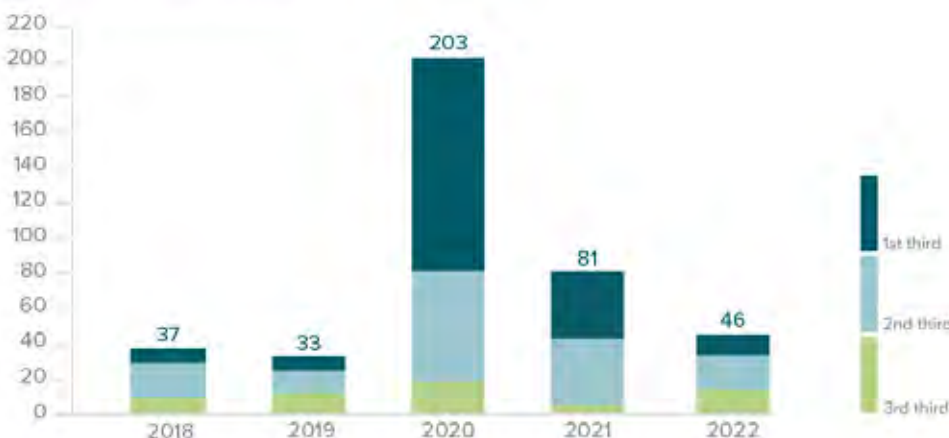
In its fourth supplementary budget proposal in 2022, the Government allocated 6 million euro in funding for a pilot of the barrier fence to be built on the eastern border. The Finnish Border Guard has initiated the procurement process for the pilot phase as well as the planning of the next phase. In the pilot phase, a barrier fence of

approximately 3 kilometres will be built on either side of the Imatra border crossing point in Pelkola, Imatra. The Finnish Border Guard will initiate the drafting of an implementation plan for the construction of the barrier fence in the most important target areas, including the eastern border crossing points and their surroundings, as well as certain other areas that pose the highest threat.

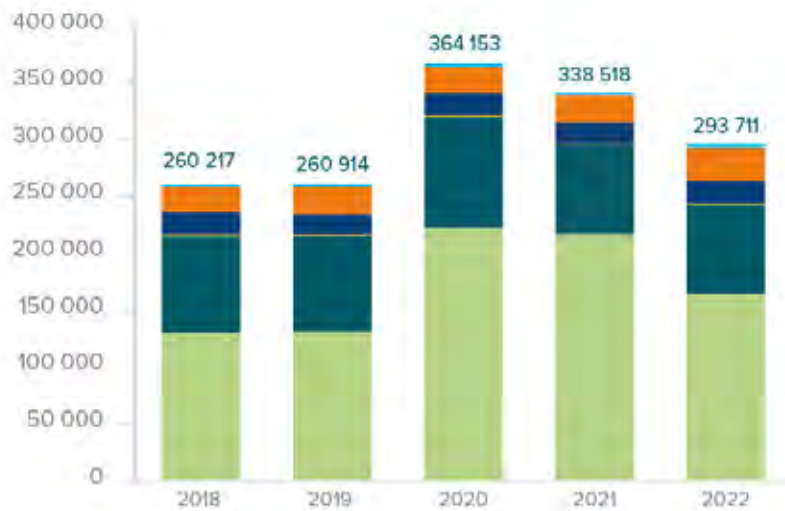
The pilot fence will be built in spring 2023. The barrier fence comprises the fence, the adjacent road and technical surveillance. The fence will be three metres high and any direct penetration, crossing or underpassing of the fence will be prevented. The fence will have an exposing, hindering, guiding and blocking effect. The barrier fence alone will not offer a solution to anything, but it contributes to the overall border surveillance. Once completed, the barrier fence will provide significant added value for border surveillance and play an important role in terms of situational management and operational efficiency.

The Eastern Border Barrier Fence pages can be found at [raja.fi/en/the-eastern-border-barrier-fence](https://raja.fi/en/the-eastern-border-barrier-fence)

Illegal border crossings  
(persons, aircraft, vessels)



## Patrolling (hrs)

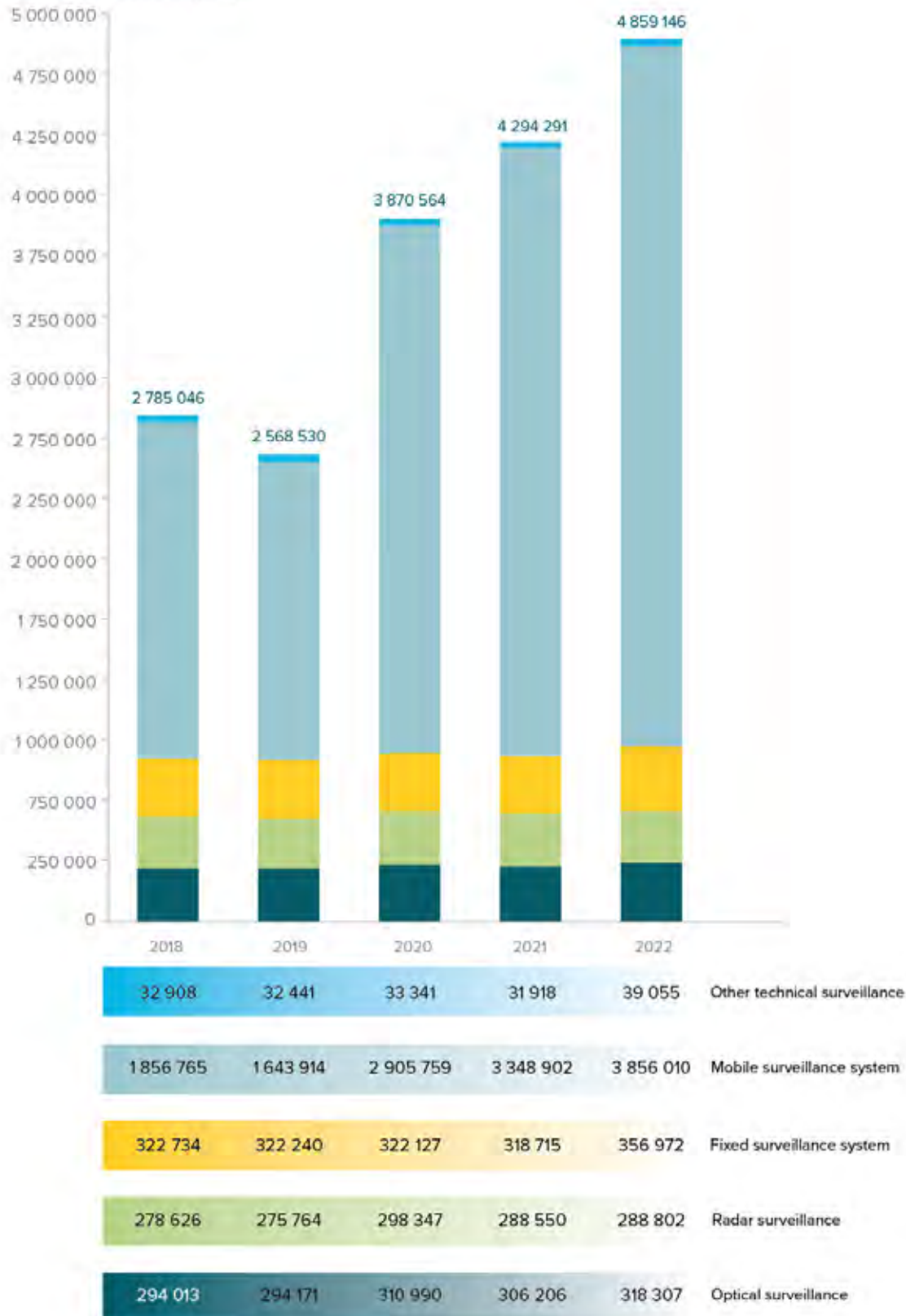


2 039	3 131	933	1 880	1 842	Joint patrols
127	302	335	423	1 347	UAS patrolling*
				2 137	Foreigner control**
22 528	23 372	23 726	23 624	26 737	Boat, hydrocopter and hovercraft
19 592	18 097	18 255	18 461	20 099	Patrol vessel
531	594	618	624	598	Aeroplane
931	806	631	448	723	Helicopter
83 997	83 225	96 988	77 865	77 139	On foot, motorcycle, snowmobile, car (etc.); dog
130 471	131 386	222 667	215 192	163 089	On foot, motorcycle, snowmobile, car (etc.)

\*) UAS = Unmanned Aerial System

\*\*) New surveillance target

## Technical control (hrs)







# Border checks

The Finnish Border Guard is responsible for conducting border checks at border crossing points. Border checks refer to checks performed for the purpose of ensuring that persons, including their means of transport and the objects in their possession, may legally enter or leave the country.

At the border crossing points under its responsibility, the Finnish Border Guard carried out border checks for passengers in compliance with the Schengen Borders Code. Overall, the number of border crossings increased from the previous year. However, as a result of the restrictions on external border traffic until 30 June 2022, the volumes decreased from the normal level at all border crossing points. In autumn, the entry of Russian nationals was restricted to safeguard Finland's international relations, which reduced the number of border controls, especially on the eastern border, as compared to the normal situation.

Restrictions concerning the entry of Russian nationals contributed to the growth in the number of entry refusals, with most of the cases (82%) occurring at the eastern border. The Russian attack on Ukraine increased the number of received applications for asylum as well as for temporary protection.

Internal border control in response to the threat caused by the coronavirus pandemic to public health was implemented on the basis of Government resolutions until 31 January 2022. The entry restrictions concerning external border traffic were valid until 14 February 2022. Border checks at internal borders increased the workload of coast guards, in particular. The provision of pandemic-related mutual assistance to health authorities continued until 30 June 2022. As of 30 September 2022, in accordance with the Government resolution, the entry of Russian nationals was restricted on the external border to safeguard Finland's international relations.

## An increase in air passenger border checks

At Helsinki Airport, the volume of external border traffic increased by 253% from the year 2021. The most important underlying factor

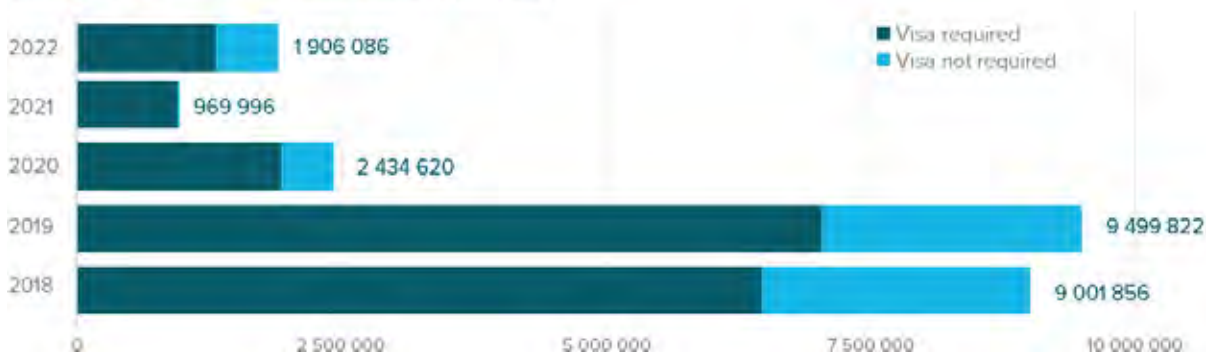
was the ending of pandemic-related restrictions on 30 June 2022. However, the number of passengers in external border traffic began to grow at Helsinki Airport already before the coronavirus restrictions ended. The relatively largest growth occurred in May-June at the rate of 32%.

During the period of internal border control, from 28 December 2021 to 31 January 2022, a total of 103,811 border checks were conducted in the passenger traffic crossing the internal border. The restriction concerning the entry of Russian nationals, imposed on 30 September 2022 as a result of the war in Ukraine, changed the forms of border-crossing passenger traffic. In October 2022, a total of 68% of all border checks were conducted at Helsinki Airport.

In early 2022, when the internal border control was temporarily reinstated, altogether 79,083 border checks were carried out at the Port of Helsinki. At the Gulf of Finland ports, there was no regular scheduled incoming traffic crossing the external border during 2022. In the summer, however, 164 passenger cruise ships arrived at the Port of Helsinki. The number of travellers onboard amounted to approximately 161,000 persons. A total of 380 visas were granted at the border to seamen landing at the Port of Helsinki. This number corresponds to 49% of all visas granted by the Finnish Border Guard.

At the border crossing points for leisure boat traffic, the number of border checks was minimal (40 leisure boats) during the year 2022. The number of leisure boats at border checks reduced by half (-56%) from the number in 2021. As a result of the sanctions adopted by the European Union due to the war in Ukraine, the exports of leisure boats for use in Russia and imports for use in the Schengen area were prohibited, which had a direct impact on the number of border crossings.

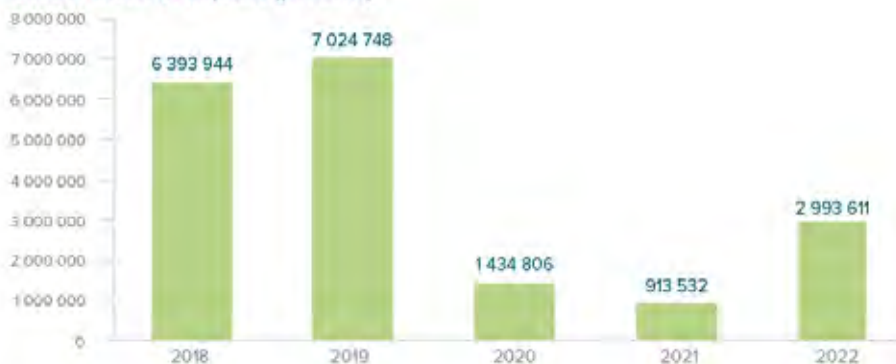
## Traffic on the Finnish-Russian border (persons)



Because of the restrictions based on the Government resolutions as well as the sanctions against Russia, the statistics on border crossings and other activities are not comparable with the preceding years.



Border traffic at airports (persons)



Because of the restrictions based on the Government resolutions as well as the sanctions against Russia, the statistics on border crossings and other activities are not comparable with the preceding years.

## Criminal investigations

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Facilitation of illegal entry	85	91	83	91	97
Forgery offences	305	262	144	192	231
Territorial violations*	4	1		0	7
Border offence	341	339	619	570	354
Driving while intoxicated	120	117	31	25	26
Waterway traffic intoxication	168	171	140	113	88
Environmental and natural resources offences	148	121	142	92	69
Human trafficking			1	0	1
Other offences	5 269	4905	2073	1155	1731
Total	6 440	6006	3233	2238	2604

(\*Opened pre-trial investigations)



# Crime prevention

Crime prevention activities focus on the external border of the Schengen area. The Finnish Border Guard seeks to prevent, expose and investigate severe cross-border crimes in collaboration with other law enforcement authorities in Finland (the Police and Customs). It conducts the preliminary investigation into any incidents that fall within its jurisdiction, such as the facilitation of illegal entry and human trafficking, state border offences, forgeries, drunk driving on land or water, or fishing and hunting offences. The Finnish Border Guard contributes actively to maritime environmental protection by leading the monitoring of spills from vessels at sea and by conducting preliminary investigations of maritime environmental crimes.

## Exposing skilful forgeries

The Southeast Border Guard district exposed an exceptional number of false and forged travel documents in border crossing traffic. The largest single case involved false residence permits of Schengen countries. Nearly 70 false documents were discovered in the incoming cross-border traffic in autumn 2022. The false residence permits were skilfully prepared and of high quality. The forged documents had been obtained for illegal entry to country and people had paid several thousand euros per document to the facilitators. In the same context, forged border check stamps of Schengen countries were also found in passports.

## Unauthorized access to the border zone and across the border

In 2022, the Finnish Border Guard identified altogether 14 cases of illegal entry along the land border, with a total of 26 persons

involved. Six cases (9 cases in 2021) occurred within the area of the Southeast Border Guard District, 4 cases (5 persons) within the North Karelia Border Guard District, 3 cases (11 in 2021) within the Kainuu Border Guard District and only one case (1 in 2021) on the land border of the Lapland Border Guard District.

Minor state border offences were attributable to people moving without authorisation in the border zone. A total of 41 cases (27 in 2021) were exposed within the area of the Southeast Border Guard District, 9 cases (15 in 2021) within the North Karelia Border Guard District, 30 cases (10 in 2021) within the Kainuu Border Guard District and 3 cases (34 in 2021, including internal border control cases along the western and northern borders) within the Lapland Border Guard District.





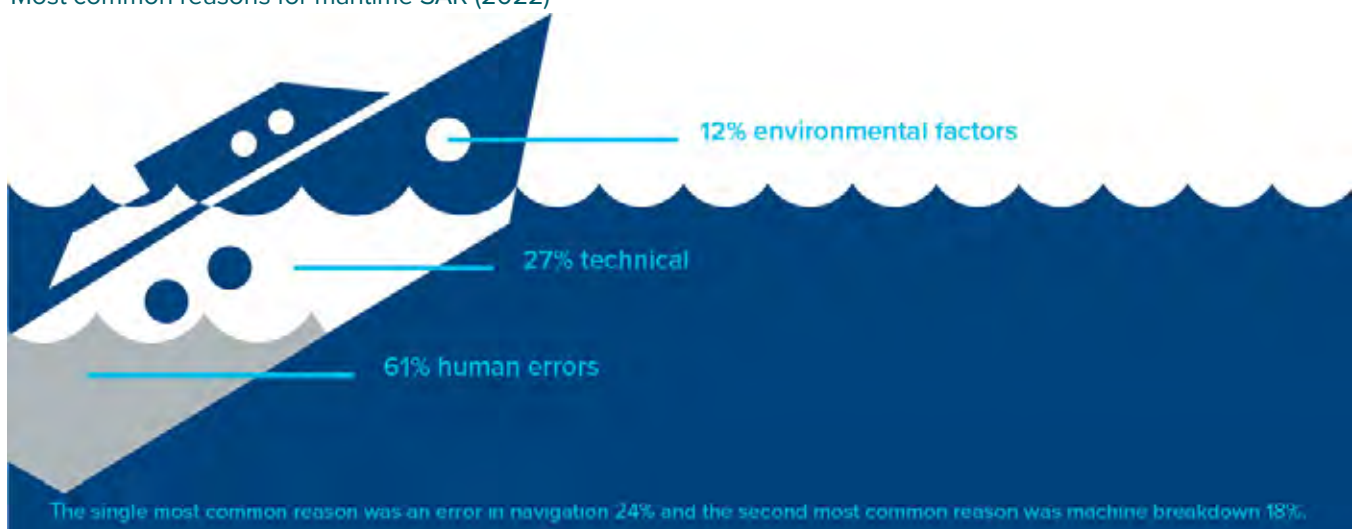
# Maritime security and search & rescue at sea

The Finnish Border Guard is the leading national authority in maritime search and rescue (SAR) and responsible for organising operations at sea. It contributes to the rescue operations with in-house resources, manages the planning, development and supervision of maritime SAR activities and is responsible for the coordination of the maritime SAR activities between various actors. The Finnish Border Guard carries out other maritime safety and security tasks as well, including surveillance of Finland's borders and territorial integrity, general law enforcement, customs and fisheries control as well as surveillance of waterborne traffic.

The total number of reported maritime SAR and assistance tasks reduced by about 10% from the year 2021. The decline is explained by, among other things, the reduction in domestic travel as a result of increasing outbound tourism, the high fuel prices as well as weather conditions. The number of tasks declined especially within the Gulf of Finland SAR section. Within the West Finland SAR section, the total number of maritime SAR and assistance tasks remained at the level of 2021. Similar to previous years, human factors were the underlying cause in most maritime SAR events.

The Finnish Border Guard maintained uninterrupted operational readiness for SAR and monitored SAR distress radio traffic. All SAR emergencies were responded to and assistance was provided as required. Capacity development included fleet and equipment acquisitions, exercise activities and the upgrading of the Collaborative preparedness plan for multisectoral maritime accidents (MoMeVa), also known as the Mass Rescue Operations (MRO) plan. The system will be further developed on the basis of observations and experience.

## Most common reasons for maritime SAR (2022)



## New information system for maritime SAR

On 16 May 2022, the Finnish Border Guard took the new information system for maritime SAR (MEPE) into operative use to support the leadership of SAR in a maritime situation. The system replaced the earlier maritime SAR application, which had been in use for over 20 years.

Developed and deployed to meet the needs and requirements of the Finnish Border Guard, the information system is much more versatile and multifunctional than its predecessor. The system provides plenty of new tools for the use of the maritime rescue co-ordination centres (MRCC Turku, MRSC Helsinki). The new system will facilitate, for example, mobile phone positioning for people in distress and access to registry data concerning vessels involved in an accident. In addition, it offers upgraded tools for the monitoring of evacuations and planning of search activities.



### SAR at sea

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Maritime SAR assignments	1 560	1 433	1 391	1 138	1 108
Maritime SAR emergency care	65	50	29	41	46
Maritime assistance assignments	113	107	348	462	537
Other maritime SAR assignments	276	272	132	147	259
Persons rescued	3 610	4 746	3 723	2 846	2 724
Prevented accidents	9	8	7	3	5





# Maritime environmental protection

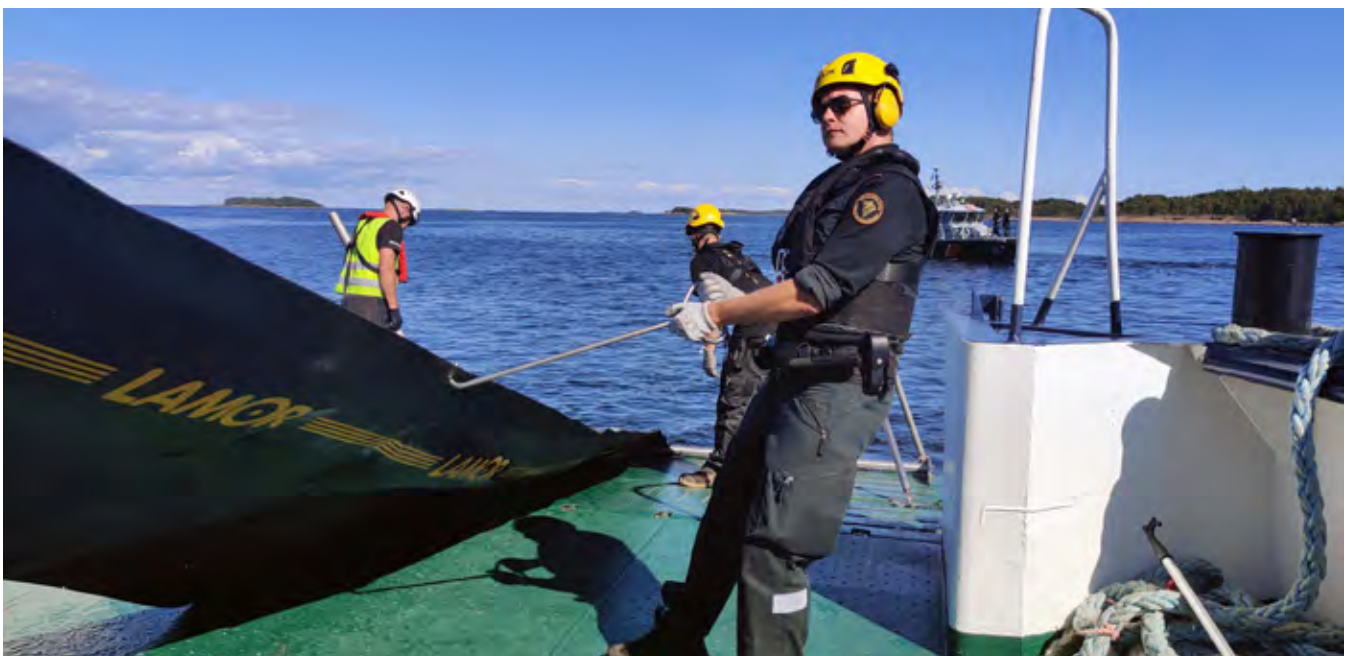
The Baltic Sea has traffic volumes that are among the highest worldwide and the risk of a major vessel oil or chemical accident is constantly present. In case of an accident, the damage caused to the vulnerable ecosystems, the residents of the coastal areas and the business and trade within the Baltic Sea region would be disastrous with long-term consequences. Near miss situations that have occurred in the Baltic Sea have demonstrated the critical need for sufficient capabilities in terms of the prevention of environmental damage. In addition to oil, a range of hazardous chemicals are transported over the Baltic Sea and it is crucial to prepare for the related risks also in ice conditions. Along with the growing volume of maritime traffic, the spectrum of risks also becomes broader.

The Finnish Border Guard's readiness for the prevention of environmental damages declined, as compared to the year 2021, due to the fewer patrolling days of the ageing Tursas class offshore patrol vessels. In 2022, the number of oil spills from vessels was clearly lower than in 2021. The Finnish Border Guard was informed of six oil spills in Finnish waters. The observed spills occurred in the vicinity of ports or the coastline and were minimal in volume.

## New IT system for environmental damage prevention

The new MERT (Marine Environment Response Tool) information system to support the operational command in the prevention of

environmental damage was taken into operative use on 1 June 2022. It replaces the technically outdated system, BORIS 2, which was previously in use in maritime regions. The Finnish Border Guard is the owner of the MERT system, while the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) will have the role of system developer and administrator in the future. The system is intended to serve a wide range of actors involved in the prevention of environmental damage, but the initial development of the system functionalities has focused on the maritime functions.





# International cooperation

International cooperation is vital for Finland's border security. International operations focus on cooperation with the border guard services of neighbouring countries and active participation and influence in the European Union with regard to the development and implementation of the EU border management legislation, joint external border surveillance and maritime policy. Bilateral and multilateral connections are maintained both with EU Member States and third countries. The Finnish Border Guard takes part in international border security projects and crisis management operations, and maintains and develops a network of liaisons working abroad. The Finnish Border Guard contributes actively to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency's (Frontex) standing corps and operations.

## Cooperation with the authorities of neighbouring countries

Bilateral and multilateral collaboration aims at preventing offences against border regulations and maintaining security and public order at borders.

The cooperation of Finnish and Russian border guard authorities continued in order to solve operative issues deemed necessary for the border security of Finland. In 2022, some 160 meetings between the Finnish and Russian border guard authorities were arranged to regularly exchange information concerning illegal entry and crime prevention. No tripartite collaboration involving Finland, Estonia and Russia, or Finland, Norway and Russia was implemented in 2022.

The blockades reported and the advance information provided by the Russian authorities increased considerably from the previous years and in relation to the low border-crossing volumes on the eastern border. This resulted in the rise of the performance indicator for cross-border cooperation.

## The network of liaisons and international operations

The liaison network helps to prevent, in advance and within the areas of origin, illegal immigration, human trafficking and other cross-border crime. The liaison network also supports the activities of other EU Member States. The participation of the Finnish Border Guard in international border security operations and civilian crisis management will improve the border security of both the EU and Finland.

In 2022, as a result of the liaison activities of the Finnish Border Guard, a total of 766 entries to Finland or, by exploiting visas granted by Finland, to other Schengen countries were prevented in advance. Although the number declined from the previous year, it is high in relation to the number of visa applications, amounting only to about one tenth of the level prior to the coronavirus pandemic. For this reason, the impact of liaison activities remained at a high level. Also, as shown by a questionnaire survey, the satisfaction concerning the success of liaison activities was higher than normal.



In 2022, the Finnish Border Guard contributed to Frontex operations to meet the obligations set forth by the EU Regulation of the European Border and Coast Guard. The number of reported operation days increased from the year 2021. Since 2021, in addition to shorter operation secondments, the Finnish Border Guard has posted officials in the Frontex standing corps on an annual basis. International exercises have again been arranged after the termination of the restrictions related to the coronavirus pandemic.

## NACGF chairmanship

The Finnish Border Guard serves as chair of the North Atlantic Coast Guard Forum (NACGF) during 2022–2023. Commodore Tom Hanén of the Finnish Border Guard received the chairmanship of the Forum from the Spanish Navy at the NACGF summit held in Cartagena on 20 October 2022. The Finnish Border Guard's one-year chairmanship will end in October 2023.

The objective of the NACGF, which was established in 2007, is to develop cooperation and the exchange of information between the coast guard authorities of the Member States in matters related to maritime security and coast guard functions. The members of the Forum include coast guard authorities from the Baltic Sea region, Western and Southern Europe as well as North America.



# Territorial integrity and defence readiness

The Finnish Border Guard carries out national defence tasks in collaboration with the Finnish Defence Forces. Border surveillance on the land and sea borders also serves the safeguarding of Finland's territorial integrity. The Finnish Border Guard trains conscripts in reconnaissance and guerrilla actions in the Border Jaeger Companies in Onttola (North Karelia Border Guard District) and Ivalo (Lapland Border Guard District). Special Border Jaeger training is provided at the Border and Coast Guard Academy in Imatra.

In 2022, the Finnish Border Guard updated the plans for preparedness and defence, maintained the required command and operational readiness to respond to various situations and kept up the readiness to establish military troops. Continual crisis preparedness and the capability to carry out surveillance and safeguard Finland's territorial integrity were an integral part of activities. The Finnish Border Guard prepared for the upcoming alliance.

The number of training days for conscripts and reservists grew from the level of 2021 as the restrictions related to the coronavirus pandemic ended. There was a marked increase in the numbers of training days for the personnel, refresher training exercises and military defence training events. The productivity and economic efficiency in the area of territorial integrity and defence readiness improved as a result of the rapid development of operational capabilities.

In 2022, the Finnish Border Guard expanded the reservist training significantly by increasing the number of refresher training exercises and adding new target groups for voluntary exercises. Refresher and voluntary exercises are crucial in terms of training both reservists and regular personnel for tasks required during crises. The training is structured with an upward and goal-oriented approach, advancing from individual skills to troop exercises in relevant operational environments.

Some exercises are arranged as part of the Defence Forces' exercises to facilitate effective training for collaboration in normal and exceptional circumstances with various threat scenarios. The reservists in the border troops have shown exemplary motivation and competence during the exercises. Their feedback on the arrangements by the Finnish Border Guard has been positive.

Training days



# Technical sector

The Technical Division of the Headquarters of the Finnish Border Guard is responsible for ensuring that the Finnish Border Guard has, at all times, access to adequate and up-to-date equipment, IT and surveillance systems, fleet and premises to successfully carry out its various duties.

## Information management and IT

The Finnish Border Guard implemented its information management in compliance with the currently valid regulations. The operating processes concerning the core and support tasks of the Finnish Border Guard were described in accordance with the requirements given in the Information Management Act (906/2019).

The implementation of the technical border surveillance systems renewal project (RAVALU) continued, with consideration for the Eastern Border Barrier Fence project. The renewal project is aimed to improve the existing land and sea border surveillance systems and to facilitate the introduction of new technologies. The technical surveillance as part of the Eastern border barrier fence will replace the target areas of the current technical surveillance for the land border as applicable.

The Finnish Border Guard has taken part in the preparation of the European Union's Smart Borders and ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorisation System) projects. The majority of the IT services required by the Finnish Border Guard were procured from the Government ICT Centre, Valtori.

## Facilities management

In 2022, the Finnish Border Guard continued, jointly with the Senate Property, the preparation and implementation of the three most essential real property projects as part of the real property development programme. The aim of the programme is to ensure that premises used by the Finnish Border Guard are functional, safe, healthy and economically sound. For the garrison area in Immola, the second phase was completed, the third phase was initiated and the project is advancing on schedule. For the garrison area in Ivalo,

the first phase is underway and the implementation of the second phase is being prepared. For the garrison area in Onttola, the first phase was initiated and the second phase is being prepared.

The general cost level will have an impact on the planned implementation of the garrison projects in both Ivalo and Onttola.

The Finnish Border Guard drew up a preliminary report concerning the implementation of the Eastern Barrier Border Fence project. The pilot phase was initiated in line with the Government resolutions. The construction of the Eastern border barrier fence will take place in 2023–2026 in compliance with the Government resolutions.

## Fleet

The three offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) were maintained and kept in good operational condition, and the capabilities of OPV Turva were enhanced by installing new onboard equipment.

In compliance with the authorisation granted to the Finnish Border Guard, the procurement of two new OPVs was confirmed. The new OPVs are intended to replace the two existing Tursas class vessels and the patrol vessel Merikarhu, which has already been removed from operational use and transferred to the possession of the new owner.

The outdated Coast Guard boats are being replaced by a new boat type during 2020–2023. Two boats of the commissioned series were accepted in 2022. The Finnish Border Guard initiated the lifecycle upgrading of PV 08 class patrol boats. The first seven upgraded boats will be received during 2023. The harmonisation of AV class boats used as support vessels continued as planned. The maintenance, repair and inspections of the vessel fleet were carried out as planned.



# Legislative work

The Finnish Border Guard Headquarters also serves as the Border Guard Department within the Ministry of the Interior. Its duties include legislative work related to the statutory functions and powers of the Finnish Border Guard.

In its legislative work, the Finnish Border Guard took into consideration the quality improvement targets, both the shared targets set by the Ministry of the Interior and those specified internally. The Finnish Border Guard has a system for collecting data on the functioning of the relevant legislation and related amendment needs.

The Border Guard Act was supplemented with urgent amendments in order to prepare for hybrid operations, those exploiting migration, in particular. The amendments entered into force in July 2022.

Supplementary legislation concerning the Entry Exit System (EES) and the European Travel Information and Authorisation system (ETIAS) was confirmed in December 2022. The amendments will enter into force gradually during 2023 when the systems are taken into use.

The functioning of the Border Guard legislation was evaluated in the preliminary survey project that ended in spring 2022, with a special focus on border surveillance, border checks and crime prevention activities carried out by the Finnish Border Guard. On the basis of the survey, several legislative projects will be set up in 2023.





# Research and development

The Border and Coast Guard Academy is responsible for research activities within the Finnish Border Guard. Research produces knowledge that will support the development of activities and training, the strategic planning and the executive decision-making within the Finnish Border Guard. The emphasis in development projects is placed on opportunities to use new technologies in Finnish Border Guard assignments on land, at sea and in the air. The research and development activities within the Finnish Border Guard are funded by internal funding and, when available, by external project funding.

For the strategy period 2019–2027, research priorities include long-term research to forecast changes in the Finnish Border Guard's operating environment and multidisciplinary research that supports the development of operational activities and competency. The research themes and more detailed research topics cover border security, the maritime operational environment as well as operative performance.

The goals of the border security research are to guarantee the Finnish Border Guard's capability and reliability as a European border management organisation and to promote border security in Finland and the EU. The goal of the border security technology research is to ensure that advanced technological procedures are in use in the Finnish external border control, maritime surveillance and border checks, and that these procedures are sufficient for achieving situational awareness, combating cross-border crime and making developmental assessments in the context of the international operating environment.

The goal of the maritime operational environment research is to strengthen the Finnish Border Guard's role in combating environmental accidents and leading maritime search and rescue operations. The goal of the performance research is to improve the crisis resilience and readiness to act in rapidly changing security situations.

## Development projects

The most essential project in terms of development activities is the Finnish Border Guard's internal project for developing border surveillance technologies (RAVALU). The purpose of the project is to upgrade and renew the land and maritime border surveillance systems and solutions used for maintaining situational awareness and leadership.

Initiated in May 2019, the ARESIBO (Augmented Reality Enriched Situation awareness for Border security) project was completed in 2022. The Finnish Border Guard participated in the project in the role of an end-user. During 2022, the project partners gathered at a validation event arranged by the Border and Coast Guard Academy for the purpose of testing the ARESIBO system under winter conditions in Finland. The ARESIBO project explored the use of augmented reality in border surveillance tasks.

## Developing the exchange of maritime information

Within the EU, a project has been underway for years to develop the exchange of maritime surveillance data within the EU. CISE (Common Information Sharing Environment) is a voluntary collaborative initiative aimed at improving the exchange of maritime surveillance data within the EU. The ultimate objective is to enhance the efficiency, quality, responsiveness and harmonisation of EU maritime surveillance activities. The CISE Network is designed to facilitate the inter-sectoral exchange of maritime information, including data related to domains such as the marine environment, fisheries control, maritime safety and security, border control, law enforcement, customs and defence.

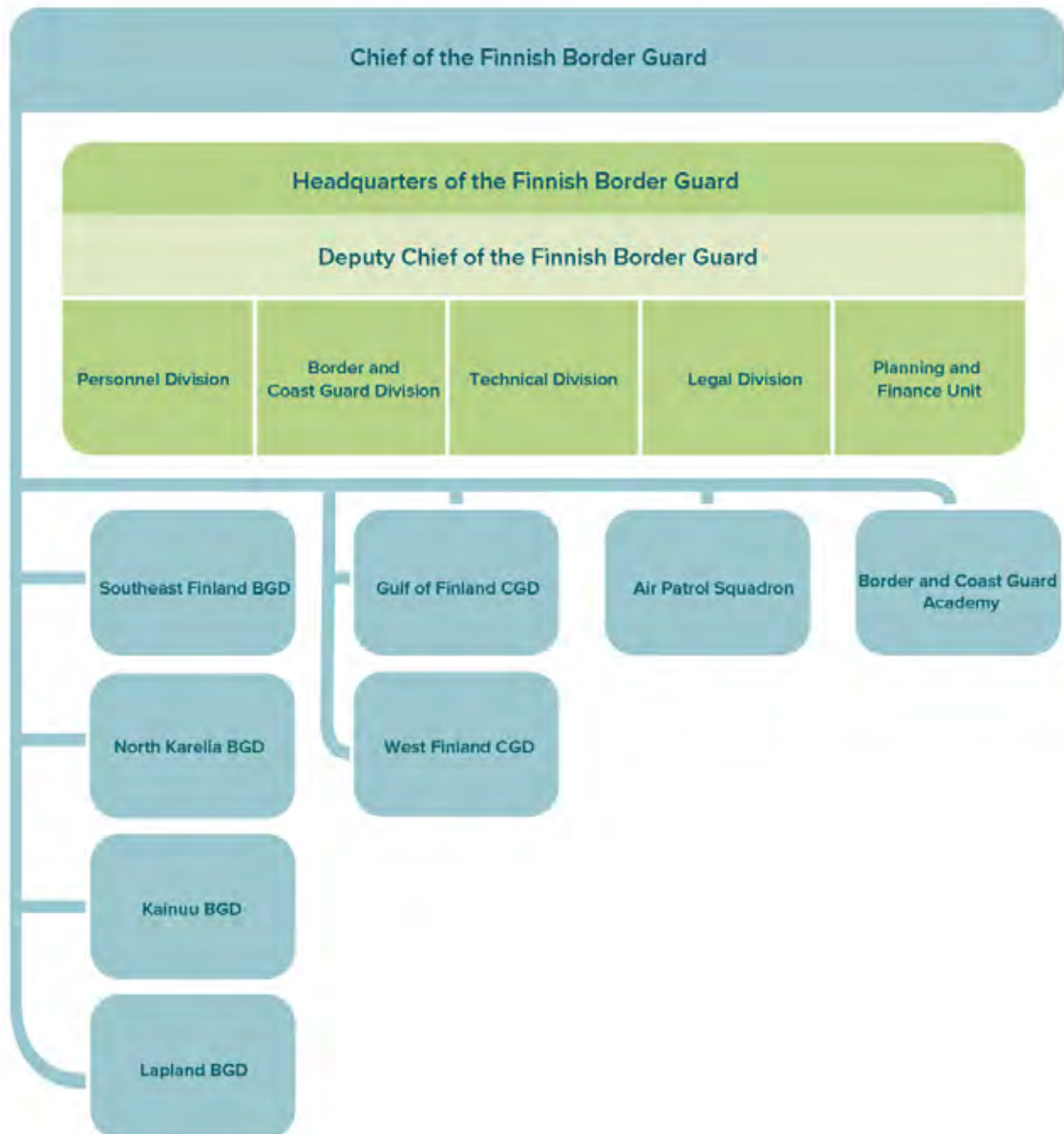
In 2020, the Finnish Border Guard received 500,000 euro from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for a national deployment project, FINCISE 2.0 (Valvonta 4), for the period of 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2022. The aim of the project was to develop the technical integration to CISE and deployment of data services provided via CISE while also supporting other relevant authorities in the deployment of CISE data services. On the basis of information system testing in August 2022, a protocol between the Finnish Border Guard and the system vendor was drawn up, recording the deficiencies concerning the CISE functionalities of the maritime situational awareness system. These will be finalised after the termination of the FINCISE 2.0 project.

## Studying online with eNalle

Taken into use in 2022, eNalle is the Finnish Border Guard's new digital training platform that members of the personnel can use to independently develop their competence. Online training courses responding to the needs of working life, both on operational and administrative topics, are now available for the personnel of the Finnish Border Guard in a centralised manner through eNalle. The basic details as well as the required information on the learning information and course keys are given for each course.



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