

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2022

FINLAND

A GULF NEWS SPONSORED SUPPLEMENT

BENCHMARK
COLLABORATION
IN EDUCATION A
HIGH POINT IN
UAE-FINLAND
RELATIONS

Hit the growth trail!

Today, as Finland celebrates its 105th Independence Day, strong collaboration across key sectors including tourism and trade mark the ever-strengthening bond between Finland and the UAE



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Founded in 1942, Rejlers success is built on the ability to constantly embrace new knowledge. Our vision "Home of the learning minds" guides us to continuous learning, development and growth. Our services are important building blocks for achieving a sustainable society. Powered by value-driven digitalisation, we are creating a sustainable future through knowledge.

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MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE

The season of National Days is again at hand: The UAE celebrated its 51st National Day on December 2 and Finland is celebrating its 105th Independence Day today on December 6. The two nations are looking into the future with the same confidence and pride of what they have achieved so far.

Most importantly, Finland and the UAE share the vision that investment in education, knowledge and skills – in people – is the main building block for a bright future. It is also a key enabler for achieving equality.

Sustainable development and circular economy are gaining further momentum, when the UAE is preparing to host the next UN Global Climate Summit COP28 in November 2023. The UAE and Finland have a common interest in developing a sustainable future. Finland stands ready to share its know-how and best practices.

Finland was again ranked the world's happiest nation, for the fifth time in a row. Happiness is not something we Finns want to keep to ourselves. We are still in the business of sharing it.

When asked about our secret recipe for happiness, I always stress that it is not about some short-term projects to increase happiness. Instead, the whole society needs to be built on an infrastructure of happiness – a mixture of mutual trust, stability, quality education and equality among others.

Finland and the UAE might be geographically apart but there is a lot of scope for learning from each other and working together on key themes for the global development and development of our two nations such as sustainability or education.

MARIANNE NISSILÄ
Ambassador of Finland to the UAE



Economic cooperation, trade ties strengthen further for Finland-UAE

Meeting last month in Abu Dhabi between ministries of both nations reviews opportunities to enhance bilateral ties through new avenues of collaboration

The UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MOFAIC) and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Finland met last month at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Abu Dhabi, as part of the first Political Consultation Committee meeting to be chaired by the bodies.

Collaborating on shared interests

The UAE has maintained its ever-strengthening diplomatic ties with Finland since 1975, with excellent trade relations bolstered between both nations across various spheres. Non-oil bilateral trade between the UAE and Finland, for instance increased 9.5 per cent between 2020 and 2021 and currently stands at \$274.7 million.



The meeting between UAE and Finland officials was chaired by Ambassador Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for Political Affairs and UAE Permanent Representative to the UN, and Kai Sauer, Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Security Policy,

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The meeting saw the two bodies reviewing the bilateral relationship between the UAE and Finland, with topics of discussion including exploring opportunities to enhance ties through collaboration on shared interests such as economic development, technology, climate change, and international peace and mediation, among others.

Climate change initiatives

With both parties agreeing on specific steps to be undertaken to bolster and expand trade and economic relations, avenues of note included opportunities to deepen business-to-business ties and foster entrepreneurship. During the course of the meeting, both UAE and Finland officials also confirmed a shared commitment to addressing

the challenge of climate change and advancing climate security. Concrete initiatives were also advanced by spokespersons from the two official bodies to cooperate on these issues in the run-up to COP28, which the UAE will host in Dubai in 2023 in Expo City Dubai. The Committee also reviewed the global political situation, including the latest regional developments in the Middle East and Europe.

Expressing a shared commitment to peaceful resolution of conflict and the role that regional and international organisations could play in this regard, the meeting concluded with officials of both nations emphasising the importance of actionable and concrete outcomes to their consultations, with a continued review process on agreed targets discussed over the course of the meeting.

Extreme survivability

Finland is known for high technology and extreme resilience. The harsh nature and limited resources have pushed us to learn and innovate efficiently. Thorough preparation for the future is the backbone of our culture.

Patria is a modern and international defence and technology company with over 100 years of experience. We use resources wisely, create innovative solutions and build intelligent systems that provide extreme survivability in any condition. We work with our customers throughout the entire lifecycle to ensure maximum value. Honest and straightforward cooperation is at the core of our work.

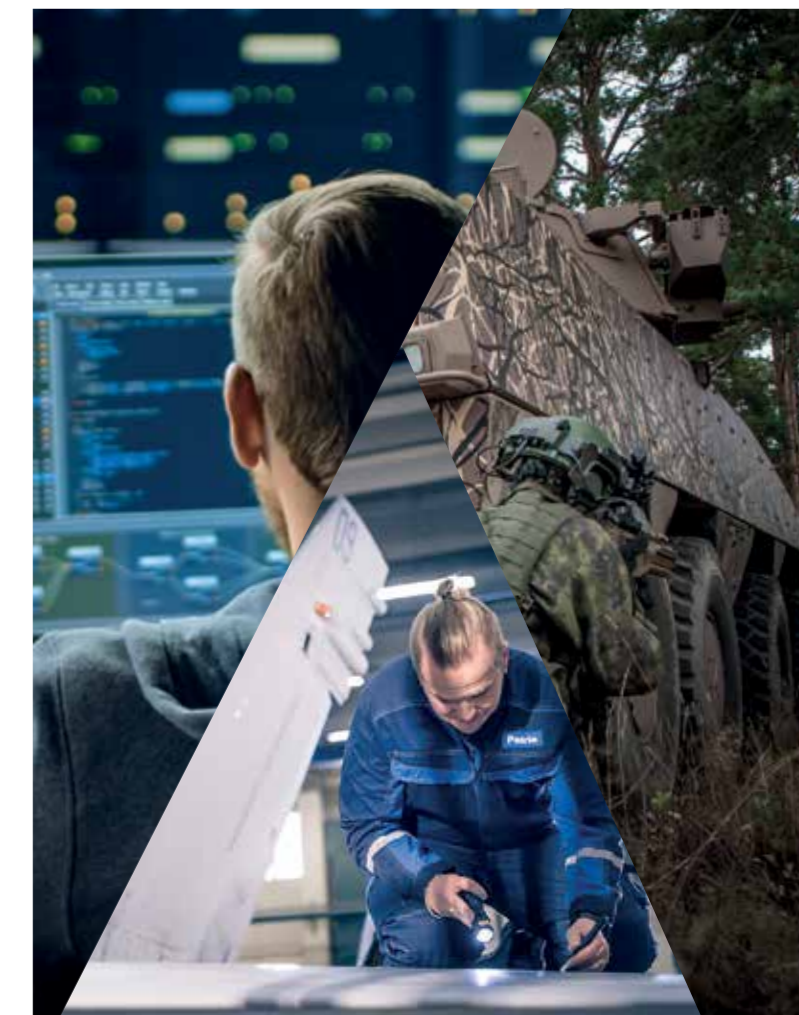
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UAE and Finland education bodies collaborate to launch Arabic PGDE Programme

Partnership between Sharjah Education Academy and the University of Helsinki for Continuing Study seeks to promote use of advanced technology to raise classroom performance levels among students

Under the directives of His Highness Dr Shaikh Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah, the Sharjah Education Academy Board of Trustees, chaired by Dr Muhadithah Al Hashemi, President of the Academy, announced the launch of the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) programme in Arabic. The step, announced during the

fifth meeting of the Council at the Academy's headquarters earlier this month, comes in the wake of the programme obtaining academic accreditation last September from the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA), UAE Ministry of Education, for meeting all the criteria and conditions set by the Commission.

UAE-Finland collaboration

The programme was designed in cooperation with the University of

Helsinki for Continuing Study (HY+) in Finland, to meet the educational needs in the UAE and to promote the use of advanced technology to raise the level of performance in the classroom. HY+ was selected from among 35 esteemed global universities to collaborate with the Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA), and the Sharjah Education Academy (SEA) in the development of the new Postgraduate Diploma Programme. HY+ has collaborated with SPEA and SEA

for the past two years in different education sector development programmes. The new Postgraduate Diploma Programme is a groundbreaking project to develop a sustainable, scalable and research-based teacher training process in Sharjah.

"This project is an outcome of a long process of exchanging ideas and sharing values during the past two years. The programme truly represents our joint vision of the future of teacher training," says Project Direc-

tor, Minna Saadé, from HY+.

Responding to teacher needs

The new programme will be offered in Arabic for the first time starting in January 2023. The first cohort of the PGDE English programme being scheduled to graduate this December, after having enrolled earlier this year. The Arabic edition of the programme is launched particularly in response to the needs of teachers in various educational institutions

across the UAE and abroad.

Dr Muhadditha Al Hashimi, President of Sharjah Education Academy and Chairperson of Sharjah Private Education Authority, says, "We are very proud of the unremitting efforts and the rapid steps taken by the Academy to provide a wide range of academic programs offered in Arabic to meet the needs of all teachers in Sharjah and the UAE. This step comes in line with the vision and efforts of His Highness Shaikh Dr

Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah, and his keenness to support educational content in the Arabic language and to promote its use in various educational institutions."

The level 8 programme (as classified by the National Qualifications Framework), provides the academic knowledge, pedagogical studies, the latest educational tools and means to develop the educational skills of teachers across the UAE.

Dr Jeanine Romano, Executive Director of Sharjah Education Academy, emphasises the uniqueness of the PGDE programme offered by the academy, as it pays special attention to the practical application of the skills acquired during the study period.

Integrated training in schools

"The programme offers a comprehensive experience that integrates both the theoretical and practical aspects, says Dr Romano. "Perhaps the most prominent value it offers is integrated training in schools, where specialised counsellors monitor the performance of teachers to assess their level of understanding of the learning mechanisms with which they became acquainted during the

program period. The practical aspect has been integrated in all program activities, with a focus on the culture of cooperative and professional learning networks, which includes emotional and social intelligence."

The programme also focuses on qualifying new graduates and in-service teachers by providing them with 21st century skills and competencies, which will enable them to innovate the outcomes of education.

The hybrid educational model programme combines both in-person and online study, which facilitates the enrollment process and studies for the student over the course of 12 months.

Furthermore, the programme provides the essential foundations that qualify teachers to become lifelong learners, which include research and analytical skills to gain new knowledge capacities and assets.

Focusing on teacher capabilities, the programme enables educators to develop pedagogical strategies based on the latest international standards and best practices. Schools will directly benefit from these outcomes, which will produce capable teachers who can develop and advance their schools through research-based knowledge.

— With input from agencies

Gender equality milestone for Finland: Report

Women and men work almost equal hours reveals Statistics Finland study

Finland has announced a gender equality milestone as men and women worked an almost equal number of hours for the first time on record. The figures are part of a study released by Statistics Finland in October this year and are based on a year-long survey of 21,278 people in Finland aged 10 and over, who were given diaries to record their use of time. It is the fifth such survey since 1979 and the first in which there has been next to no gender gap in total hours worked. It includes unpaid domestic work and reveals that men's contribution to housework and childcare has noticeably risen.

In decades past, women worked longer in total because of their roles in domestic labour. However, the time used by men for gainful employment has decreased and



that used for domestic work has increased, according to the study.

According to Statistics Finland's data, women's and men's total working time used on domestic and gainful work reached the same level for the first time in 2020 to 2021 during the good 40-year long meas-

uring history of the Time Use Survey. The time used by men for gainful employment has decreased and that used for domestic work has increased. For women, there has been a decrease in the time used for both activities. The time spent especially on childcare has increased among

men. The decrease has particularly taken place among women in the time used for cooking and shopping and running errands.

For women, the study reveals, there has been a decrease in the time used for both activities. The time spent, especially on childcare has increased among men. Finland is known as one of the world's most equal countries, where women make up a majority of Cabinet ministers and just under half of MPs.

However, Prime Minister Sanna Marin was forced to shelve a law on pay equality in August because her coalition could not agree a position. The new figures showed that men in Finland worked an average of five hours and 17 minutes a day in 2020-2021, while women worked five hours and 16 minutes.

Women spent an average of 37 minutes longer on domestic work every day, but this gap has narrowed.

Men with jobs spent slightly longer on childcare than women in employment, although this was not the case for household tasks such as cooking and cleaning. Fathers of new generations clearly spend more time on childcare than fathers 20 to 40 years ago, say researchers.

REJLERS GROUP

Celebrating 80 glorious years of growth and progress



Rejlers Group is celebrating its 80th anniversary in different countries where Rejlers is currently established. Rejlers Abu Dhabi is no exception, and is celebrating this remarkable achievement and its presence of 11 years in the UAE.

Rejlers Abu Dhabi and its Middle East operations are headquartered in the heart of Abu Dhabi city, in the close vicinity of its main customer offices. Rejlers Abu Dhabi office has further expanded during 2022, in line with its RAD200 strategic initiative and is currently having the strength of more than 200 permanent professionals stationed in its Abu Dhabi downtown state of art and modern engineering office. Another 300 professionals are available through Rejlers Extended Design Center in India.

During 2022, Rejlers Abu Dhabi has signed new and renewed existing frame agreements with ADNOC and its operating companies and continues to serve the entire supply chain from upstream onshore and offshore to midstream and all the way to downstream energy, oil and gas industries.

The current customer base includes both national oil companies and EPCs (Engineering, Procurement and Construction), starting from concepts and FEED (Front End Engineering Design) studies to detail engineering. Our portfolio covers all engineering disciplines. Rejlers Abu Dhabi continues to improve its ICV rating during 2022 and is looking forward to continuous improvement.

Rejlers Abu Dhabi is involved in several energy efficiency, decarbonisation, sustainability and decarbonisation projects.



Jarmo Suominen, Director, ME Region and GM, Abu Dhabi Branch, Rejlers International Engineering Solutions

Jarmo Suominen, Director, Middle East Region and General Manager, Abu Dhabi Branch, Rejlers International Engineering Solutions, says, "We are working hard to support the UAE's sustainability development and to build up a strong local engineering and project management hub.

"At Rejlers, we believe in local presence, long-term commitment and continuous learning. Rejlers is the Home of the Learning Minds."

Bring Finland's reindeer back

In an ancient forest, one woman's actions help slow down climate change

Paulina Feodoroff walks through one of the world's last ancient forests, with lingonberries, wild mushrooms and reindeer droppings crunching gently beneath her dirt-caked boots. Her stride falters though as she enters a clearing littered with tree stumps, limbs and branches. Chainsaws mowed down this section last winter, and it is now off-limits for the hundreds of reindeer who once helped it blossom. Feodoroff - a member of the Smi indigenous group, a community that numbers up to 140,000, mostly across the northern stretches of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia and that revolves around the reindeer and their habitats - wants to buy this land back, and summon the reindeer to return.

Global repercussions

It's part of a grand experiment to rewild the Arctic by regenerating the biodiverse latticework of reindeer habitats, which help regulate the planet's temperatures. Quickly and quietly, 44-year-old Feodoroff, a filmmaker, theater director, community advocate and mother of two is deploying dozens of Smi negotiators to buy up strategic plots of land. She's allying with conservationists and institutions to raise awareness about deforestation in reindeer habitats, and is pushing to redefine these forests as falling under international jurisdiction, rather than national.

If Feodoroff succeeds, experts predict the repercussions will be global. Regenerating Finland's northern taigas, part of a coniferous halo that spans 6 million square miles across

the northern latitudes of Eurasia and North America, would restore one of the world's most potent shields against climate change.

"If we have one example of forest where we stopped its current damage that now thrives, it will have a domino effect," says Feodoroff. If negotiations go well, Feodoroff's team will start right away, essentially, doing nothing. They aim to take this forest out of production and allow it to return to its natural rhythms.

It is a radical idea in Finland, a country built on the timber industry that still boasts Europe's largest swath of pristine forests and its oldest carbon sinks. It is also a place where industrial-level deforestation has been growing.

Barometer for climate change

For centuries, reindeer have been central to land maintenance. In life, their droppings, and in death, their carcasses, are nutrient-rich fertilisers that sustain rivers, soil and the trees that absorb greenhouse gases to prevent them from accumulating in the atmosphere. The animal's digestive tracts, calibrated to sync with the harsh Arctic climate, fill with specific enzymes and bacteria that allow them to graze seasonal grasses, mosses and lichen, a stringy, highly nutritious algae-fungi composite that hangs in abundant wisps from the sturdy branches of ancient trees. When temperatures dip, the pads of their shovel-shaped hoofs shrink and their sharp rims emerge, enabling reindeer to dig lichen buried under the snow, and resulting in a kind of smooth mirror of white-covered ground. If too much lichen remains on the forest floor, it absorbs sun-



By highlighting the importance of Finland's reindeer to the nation's forests, Paulina Feodoroff is today a strong voice for Finland's narrative on climate change

Pictures: Washington Post

light and warms the earth instead of having that light reflected back into the atmosphere.

If the reindeer ecosystems are lost, ecologists predict, the planet will heat up even faster and its carbon sinks will disintegrate. A report this year from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change notes climate change has increased the vulnerability of reindeer herding "to the extent that its long-term sustainability is threatened." It noted Arctic and sub-Arctic temperatures have already risen 2 degrees Celsius in the past 30 years.

Smi society would dissipate too. The community uses virtually every part of the reindeer for every purpose in their lives: fur and skin for clothes, blankets and tents; antlers for knives; meat - tartare'd, flash-frozen, air dried, smoked, brined and boiled - as a primary protein to survive the dark, cold winter.

Dramatic pitch

Feodoroff is pushing to revive more of those practices, even as the animals are facing extinction. But to do that she's been experimenting with the market economy - on the global art scene. An invitation to present at the Smi Pavilion at Venice Biennale in Italy sparked Feodoroff's idea to use the world of global art to sound the alarm on Finnish deforest-

ation two years ago. It was the first-ever forum for Smi art at the world's most prestigious art event.

Feodoroff has developed a three-act performance called Matriarchy, which involves a troop of female performers including herself introducing Smi society, while issuing an immediate call to action - to save their culture, and the environment. The climactic second act, Auction, beseeches audiences to bid for viewing rights to the Arctic forests, to keep them out of harm's way. The subject is the reindeer terrain, the medium, the performers' bodies, voices and traditional dress and ritual items. The experience asks audiences to "gaze," assume responsibility and, as a last, offstage act, crack open their wallets.

"We can say it's a form of atonement," Feodoroff says. The first "auction" was to the Museum of Modern Art in Helsinki, for an undisclosed amount, enabling Feodoroff to buy about 100 acres of forest. Negotiations with five other institutions followed.

Eventually, what Feodoroff wants is to correct a widespread misconception: that wood is free, and its supplies nearly inexhaustible. Her "auctions" are symbolic, she says, seeking to "reframe the worth of the trees, reindeer and natural environments that are priceless."

— Washington Post

Sibanye Stillwater plans \$616m spend on Finland lithium project

Move sees South African mining behemoth looking at foothold in European battery metals market



● An installation of a light bulb at a park in Kokkola, Finland. The lithium hydroxide refinery at Kokkola industrial park will present the lowest carbon footprint for the industry

Sibanye Stillwater's board has approved 588 million euros of capital expenditure to advance its Keliber lithium project in Finland, the company said on Monday, seeking a foothold in the European battery metals market.

Lowest industry carbon footprint

Sibanye said its board-approved capital expenditure programme would start with construction of a lithium hydroxide refinery within Finland's the

Kokkola industrial park, a logistics hub from where the company plans to feed into the European battery sector.

In a statement to the press, Sibanye Chief Executive, Neal Froneman, said, "We are delighted to advance and grow our presence in the European battery metals industry through Keliber, which we expect will be the first fully integrated European lithium hydroxide producer supplying the European market, and is to have one of the lowest carbon emission footprints in the industry."

Sibanye plans to underwrite a 104 million euro capital increase by Keliber by the end of January while at least 250 million euros will be borrowed to fund construction of the project.

— With input from agencies

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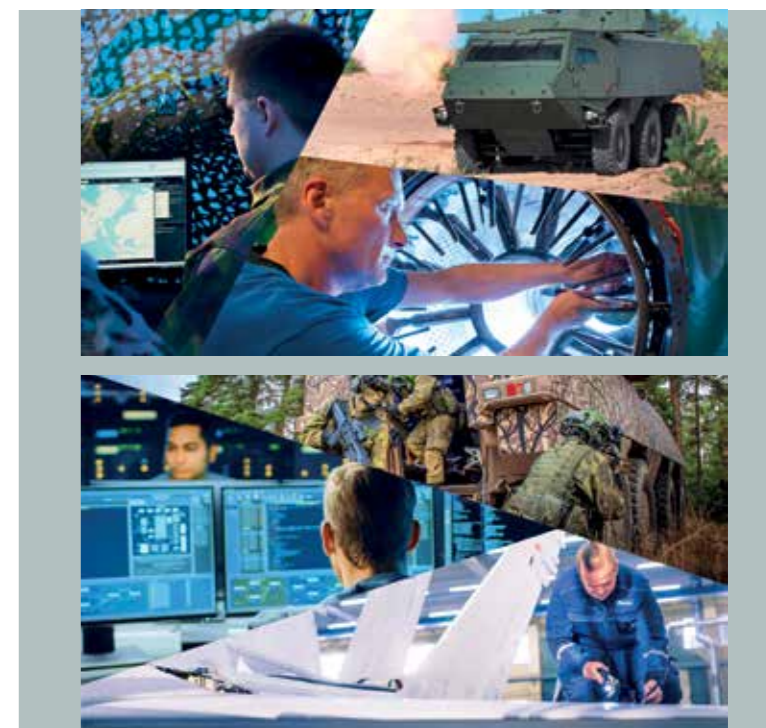
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- Critical systems and solutions for battlefield

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Patria's mission is to give its customers confidence in all condi-



tions, and the vision is to be the #1 partner for critical operations on land, sea and air. Patria has several locations including Finland, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Estonia and Spain. Patria employs 3,000 professionals.

Patria is owned by the State of

Finland (50.1 per cent) and Norwegian Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace AS (49.9 per cent). Patria owns 50 per cent of Nammo, and together these three companies form a leading Nordic defence partnership.

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New visitor records anticipated in Finnish Lapland this winter

Country's tourism sector expects tourist numbers to surge this festive season, post-pandemic, based on advance bookings

D Christmas tourism to Finnish Lapland will achieve visitor records this year based on advance bookings, according to a report in the Finnish newspaper, Yle. The pace is now increasing day by day, said CEO of Visit Rovaniemi, Sanna Kärkkäinen, while speaking to Finnish local media. The number of visitors and bookings indicate an increase from the record year 2019, she adds.

The high season for international tourism in Lapland takes place in the winter and especially around Christmas. Tourism is of great importance for the regional economy. Ari Vuorentausta, managing director of Finland's largest private hotel chain, Lapland Hotels, also sheds light on the anticipated visitor numbers to Lapland and states that December tourism is looking very robust.

However, the increase in the cost level creates problems. "In terms of turnover, December looks good, but the profitability is absorbed by rising costs. Prices have been agreed with large customers even before the current crisis," says Vuorentausta.

Tourist groups shift

Nonetheless, the tourism industry in Finland's Lapland is picking up again Covid. According to statistics from Business Lapland, 3.1 million overnight stays were registered in the region in 2019. In 2020, the number of overnight stays fell to 2.1 million due to the pandemic. After the spring of 2020, domestic tourism recovered somewhat, but the lack of international customers kept the general development low.

European tourists are now helping make up for the decrease in both Chinese and Russian tourism. Europeans are now the largest group, as well as travelers from South Asia, the US and Australia.

Chinese tourists were also not among the six largest tourist groups in 2021 according to information from Business Lapland, with no less than 89 per cent of international overnight stays being registered to European travelers. ●



A family enjoys a reindeer safari in a winter forest in Lapland



Huskies on the trail in Finland's Lapland. Husky sleds are extremely popular as part of the winter tourism offerings in Finland



The Northern Lights, seen above an igloo house in Finland



Hiking is a nother popular sport during the winter months in Lapland