

# The development of Helsinki Airport's terminals

The first passenger building at Helsinki Airport was a wooden barrack opened in 1952. The building was originally meant to be temporary, but it ended up serving passengers for many years. The terminal was expanded several times over the years and eventually became known as the recumbent skyscraper.

The first proper terminal building was opened in 1969. In 1983, the terminal was expanded and the new extension included, for example, a renovated restaurant, duty-free shops, bars and separate waiting areas for tourist and business class passengers. Passenger bridges for boarding wide-body aircraft were built at seven departure gates.

The presentation of flight data progressed from old flip boards to new electroluminescence boards. A computer was used for check-in, and luggage was transported to the aircraft on conveyor belts.

A new separate domestic terminal was opened in 1993. Interconnections between the domestic and international terminals were built in 1996. At the same time, the international terminal was expanded.

Helsinki Airport was first chosen as the best airport in the world in 1998.

The terminal division for domestic and international flights was abolished in autumn 2009. A widely used model with terminal allocation by airline was introduced.

In 2014, Finavia launched the largest development programme in the history of Helsinki Airport. The development programme reached an important stage in December 2021, when the new extension of Terminal 2 was opened. Terminal division became a thing of the past in June 2022, when all flights were centralized in one single terminal.

Finavia in collaboration with Finnish Aviation Museum.  
Photo: Pietari Vanhala / Finnish Aviation Museum.

