

Consumer market study on the functioning of the real estate services for consumers in the European Union

Country fiche – FINLAND

General information

Country	Finland
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Main Sources Used	See list at point 1.2

1. Regulatory background

1.1 Level of regulation in the country

Table 1: Level of regulation			
	Level of regulation (e.g. strictly regulated, framework regulation, partly regulated, non-regulated, deregulated) and explain your assessment	Source of relevant legislation	Ongoing discussion on regulation/deregulation (if applicable): current state of affairs and main arguments in the debate
Real estate transactions ¹	Strictly regulated	<p>Real estate: <i>Maakaari</i> 540/1995 [Land Code], translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1995/en19950540</p> <p>Sale of an apartment (shares): <i>Asuntokauppalaki</i> 843/1994 [Housing Transactions Act], translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1994/en19940843</p> <p>Renting:</p> <p><i>Laki asuinhuoneiston vuokrauksesta</i> 481/1995 [Act on Residential Leases], translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1995/en19950481</p> <p><i>Laki liikehuoneiston vuokrauksesta</i> 482/1995 [Act on Commercial Leases]</p>	<p>Deregulation: When legislation about digital conveyancing was adopted, the Government Bill (HE 146/2010 on digital conveyancing, which followed a committee report in 2005 and extensive consultations from 2005 to 2010) explained the removal of the requirement of an official witness in real estate transfers. Since the 1930s, the official witness has authenticated signatures and informed authorities. According to the Government Bill, by means of information technology some legal checks and the timely informing of public authorities may now be carried out more efficiently. In addition, the personal meeting was said to have been too brief to create a comparative advantage in determining legal capacity, and in any case, other transactions of comparable value to real estate transfers were not subject to similar official control (Government Proposal [HE] 146/2010). Today, if the contract is uploaded to the digital service of the National Land Survey, the contract is signed in the signature system of the service and registered: in this case, no certification by an official witness is required.</p>

¹ E.g. limitations or prohibitions of certain transactions; specific formality requirements etc.

Table 1: Level of regulation

		<p>Digital conveyancing:</p> <p><i>Laki maakaaren muuttamisesta 96/2011</i> [Act Amending the Land Code]</p> <p><i>Laki sähköistä kiinteistön kauppaa, panttausta ja kirjaamismenettelyä koskevan lainsäädännön voimaanpanosta 622/2013</i> [Act on the Entry into Force of Legislation Concerning the Electronic Sale, Mortgaging, and Registration of Real Estate]</p> <p><i>Laki maakaaren muuttamisesta 418/2016</i> [Act Amending the Land Code]</p>	
Notary system (or lawyer/conveyancer system) ²	The greater part of the conveyancing market is held by estate agents, who also provide legal services. The agent and a possibly hired home inspector are responsible for professional performance, but the basic liability rests on the seller; occasional disputes concerning questions of liability and, for instance, what the buyer should have understood based on the inspection report involve attorneys.		
Profession of estate agents	Partly regulated	<p><i>Laki kiinteistönvälitysliikkeistä ja vuokrahuoneiston välitysliikkeistä 1075/2000</i> [Act on Real Estate Agents and Letting Agents]</p> <p><i>Laki kiinteistöjen ja vuokrahuoneistojen välityksestä 1074/2000</i> [Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act]</p> <p><i>Valtioneuvoston asetus asuntojen markkinoinnissa annettavista tiedoista 130/2001</i> [Government Decree on</p>	Regulation: Since the latest changes in the regulation of estate agents in 2013, half of the people carrying out brokerage activities in every business entity and in every branch must have obtained the 'LKV' or 'LVV' title (see Section 9 below). Previously, one responsible 'LKV' or 'LVV' agent per office was required. According to the Government Bill, which explains the rejection of the regulatory option that would impose an exam – the passing of which is necessary to obtain the title – on every practising agent, this option would not be proportionate in the light of the constitutionally protected freedom to engage in commercial activity

² Only in countries where notaries do not exist or do not have a monopoly on conveyancing.

Table 1: Level of regulation

	information to be provided in the marketing of dwellings] <i>Laki rahanpesun ja terrorismin rahoittamisen estämisestä</i> 444/2017 [Act on Preventing Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing]	and would limit market entry that is quite free at the moment (Government Proposal [HE] 196/2012).
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1.2 National legislation

Table 2: List of national legislation

List of national legislation	Classification of national legislation	Content of the national legislation
Contracts Act: <i>Laki varallisuus oikeudellisista oikeustoimista</i> 228/1929, translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1929/en19290228	Transactions	Formation and invalidity of contract
Advocates Act: <i>Laki asianajajista</i> 496/1958, translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1958/en19580496	Regulation of professions	Regulation of the Finnish Bar Association and advocates (members of the Bar Association)
Consumer Protection Act: <i>Kuluttajansuojalaki</i> 38/1978, translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1978/en19780038	Consumers, transactions	A large part of mandatory consumer protection law
Housing Transactions Act: <i>Asuntokauppalaki</i> 843/1994, translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1994/en19940843	Transactions	Sale of shares in a housing company; protection of the buyer in the construction stage
Act on Residential Leases: <i>Laki asuinhuoneiston vuokrauksesta</i> 481/1995, translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1995/en19950481	Transactions	Residential tenancy act
Act on Commercial Leases: <i>Laki liikehuoneiston vuokrauksesta</i> 482/1995	Transactions	Commercial lease

Table 2: List of national legislation

Land Code: <i>Maakaari</i> 540/1995, translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1995/en19950540	Transactions	Sale of real estate; registration; mortgages
Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act: <i>Laki kiinteistöjen ja vuokrahuoneistojen välityksestä</i> 1074/2000	Transactions	Estate agency and letting agency agreement
Act on Real Estate Agents and Letting Agents: <i>Laki kiinteistönvälitysliikkeistä ja vuokrahuoneiston välitysliikkeistä</i> 1075/2000	Regulation of professions	Estate agents and letting agents
Government Decree on information to be provided in the marketing of dwellings: <i>Valtioneuvoston asetus asuntojen markkinoinnissa annettavista tiedoista</i> 130/2001	Consumers, transactions	Marketing of dwellings (a decree passed in accordance with the Consumer Protection Act)
Government Decree on marketing and customer relations practices that are unfair for consumers: <i>Valtioneuvoston asetus kuluttajien kannalta sopimattomasta menettelystä markkinoinnissa ja asiakassuhteissa</i> 601/2008	Consumers, transactions	Unfair Commercial Practices Directive, Annex I. (A decree passed in accordance with the Consumer Protection Act)
Act on Official Notary Witnesses: <i>Laki kaupanvahvistajista</i> 573/2009	Transactions	An official witness checks formal requirements, authenticates signatures, and informs the National Land Survey and the municipality. The task is carried out by public officials, high-ranking police officers, land surveyors and others
Government Decree on Official Notary Witnesses: <i>Valtioneuvoston asetus kaupanvahvistajista</i> 734/2009	Transactions	Same as above
Act Amending the Land Code: <i>Laki maakaaren muuttamisesta</i> 96/2011	Transactions	Digital conveyancing
Licensed Legal Counsel Act: <i>Laki luvan saaneista oikeudenkäyntiavustajista</i> 715/2011, translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2011/en20110715	Regulation of professions	Legal counsel

Table 2: List of national legislation

Act on Energy Certificates for Buildings: <i>Laki rakennuksen energiatodistuksesta</i> 50/2013	Transactions	Energy Performance of Buildings Directive ³
Act on the Entry into Force of Legislation Concerning the Electronic Sale, Mortgaging, and Registration of Real Estate: <i>Laki sähköistä kiinteistön kauppaa, panttausta ja kirjaamisenettä koskevan lainsäädännön voimaanpanosta</i> 622/2013	Transactions	Digital conveyancing
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Decree on National Land Survey charges and official notary witnessing charges and compensation: <i>Maa- ja metsätalousministeriön asetus Maanmittauslaitoksen maksuista sekä kaupanvahvistuksesta perittävistä maksuista ja korvauksista</i> 1158/2014	Transactions	Fees
Act on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications: <i>Laki ammattipätevyyden tunnustamisesta</i> 1384/2015, translation: http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2015/en20151384	Regulation of professions	Professional Qualifications Directive
Act Amending the Land Code: <i>Laki maakaaren muuttamisesta</i> 418/2016	Transactions	Digital mortgage
Act on Mortgage Credit Intermediaries: <i>Laki asunto-omaisuuteen liittyvien kuluttajaluottojen välittäjistä</i> 852/2016	Regulation of lending institutions	Registration
Act on the Registration of Certain Lenders and Credit Intermediaries: <i>Laki eräiden luotonantajien ja luotonvälittäjien rekisteröinnistä</i> 853/2016	Regulation of lending institutions	Registration
Act on Preventing Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing: <i>Laki rahanpesun ja terrorismin rahoittamisen estämisestä</i> 444/2017	Professional conduct	Money Laundering Directive

³ For national implementing legislation, see http://www.ym.fi/enUS/Land_use_and_building/Legislation_and_instructions/Legislation_on_the_energy_efficiency_of_buildings

1.3 Implementation of relevant EU legislation

Table 3: Implementation of relevant EU legislation

EU legislation	Implementation achieved?	Implementation of EU legislation at the national level (e.g. the name of the law)	Source of the national implementation legislation	Content of the national legislation in keywords	Which parts of the EU legislation have been transposed?	Which parts of the EU legislation have <u>not</u> been transposed?
Directive 2005/29/EC on unfair commercial practices (UCPD)	Yes	Consumer Protection Act, Chapter 2 (amended 561/2008); Annex I, Government Decree on marketing and customer relations practices that are unfair for consumers 601/2008	Government Proposal [HE] 32/2008	Unfair commercial practices	All	None
Directive 93/13/EEC on unfair terms in consumer contracts	Yes	Consumer Protection Act, Chapters 3 and 4 (amended 1259/1994)	Government Proposal [HE] 218/1994	Unfair contract terms	All	None
Directive 2008/122/EC on the protection of consumers, in respect of certain aspects of timeshare, long-term holiday product, resale and exchange contracts	Yes	Consumer Protection Act, Chapter 10 (amended 227/2011)	Government Proposal [HE] 220/2010	Timeshares	All	None

Table 3: Implementation of relevant EU legislation

Directive 2010/31/EU on the Energy Performance of Buildings	Yes	Act on Energy Certificates for Buildings 50/2013 ⁴	Government Proposal [HE] 161/2012	Energy performance certificate	All	None
Directive 2005/36/EC on Recognition of Professional Qualifications, as last amended by Directive 2013/55/EU	Yes	Act on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications 1384/2015; Act on Eligibility for Public Posts Provided by Higher Education Studies Completed Abroad 1385/2015	Government Proposal [HE] 22/2015	Professional qualifications	All	None
Mortgage Credit Directive, 2014/17/EC	Yes	Consumer Protection Act, Chapter 7a (851/2016); Act on Mortgage Credit Intermediaries 852/2016; Act on the Registration of Certain Lenders and Credit Intermediaries 853/2016	Government Proposal [HE] 77/2016	Mortgage credit; registration; registration	All	None

⁴ For national implementing legislation, see: http://www.ym.fi/enUS/Land_use_and_building/Legislation_and_instructions/Legislation_on_the_energy_efficiency_of_buildings

1.4 Communications and strategy papers

Table 4: Communications and strategy papers					
Communication or strategy paper	Have the following communications and strategy papers been referred to in national documents?	Name of document	Source	Content	Differences with respect to communications and strategy papers listed in the first column
COM(2015) 550 final Communication of the Commission Upgrading the Single Market: more opportunities for people and business	Yes	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment memorandum; Memos and opinions concerning legislation on restructuring and insolvency, for instance Ministry of Justice memorandum	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment memorandum TEM2015-00456, 3 December 2015; Ministry of Justice memorandum OM2016-00105, 30 May 2016	Description of Communication; Reference to Communication	None
COM(2013)676 Communication from the Commission on evaluating national regulations on access to professions	Yes	Ministry of Education and Culture memorandum	OKM2013-00276, 6 November 2013	Explanation of Communication	None
COM(2016)820 Communication from the Commission on reform recommendations for regulation in professional services	No				

Table 4: Communications and strategy papers

European Consumer Agenda	Yes	Among others: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment memorandum	TEM2012-00475, 14 September 2012	Explanation of Communication	None
Consumer Programme 2014-2020	Yes	Finance Committee of Parliament, discussion on the proposal. <i>Kuluttajapoliittinen katsaus 2015</i> [Consumer Policy Review 2015]	Finance Committee of Parliament Opinion 3/2012. <i>Kuluttajapoliittinen katsaus 2015</i> , Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority Reports 2/2015, p. 11	Discussion on the proposal. Description of aims and measures	None

2. General market information

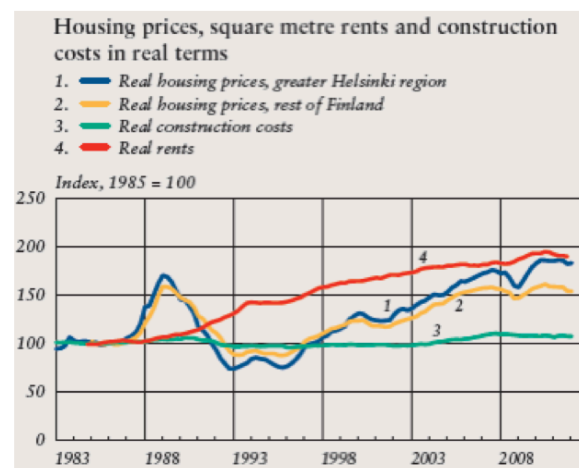
2.1 Key market data

Table 5: Key market data

General market situation
(e.g. trends in the market, recent developments in the market, price fluctuations, etc.)

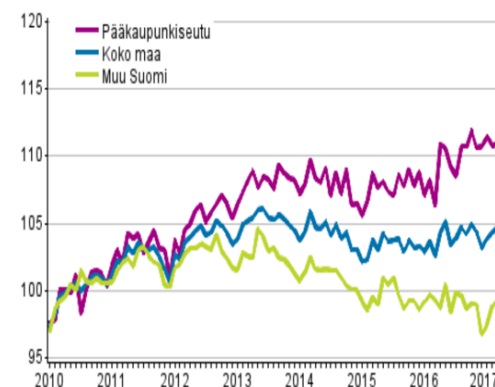
The housing bubble of 1987–1989 remains the most conspicuous feature of national house prices over the last several decades. The development of house prices in the Helsinki region and the rest of the country is illustrated in Figure 1a. Figure 1b shows the price development of old housing-company apartments in the capital area (purple) and the rest of Finland (light green) since 2010.

Figure 1a. Housing prices, rents per square metre and construction costs in real terms (1985 = 100).



Source: Statistics Finland.

Figure 1b. The prices of old housing-company apartments (2010 = 100).



Source: Statistics Finland.

Housing markets are sectionalising into areas with few inhabitants, where rents are decreasing, and areas of strong demand, where rents are increasing. Markets have differentiated between not only the capital region and the rest of Finland, but also between certain urban areas and others. As rents are high in the metropolitan area, it is viable to buy apartments from cheaper parts of the city and let them; according to some estimates, half of New Build apartments are purchased for investment. Rent levels do not vary much between the areas of the capital city, in part because housing allowance and income support do not include any supplement for the central city area. Since the mid-1990s, rents have risen in step with house prices, but

Table 5: Key market data	
	<p>recently continued to increase faster than incomes and house prices, a development that may be attributable to housing benefits.</p> <p>After rent regulation was abandoned entirely in 1995, for twenty years the landlord had market power because of scarcity of rental dwellings and an increasing rent level. By the mid-2010s, a partial shift was reported for the first time as a result of increased supply, as large investors had more rental apartments, housing investment funds were on the market, and large landlord companies had New Build properties in the capital region. Middle-sized, new, expensive free-market rental apartments are available. Yet small, reasonably priced rental dwellings are scarce.</p> <p>Furthermore, as the nature of the accredited 'general-interest organisations' that used to produce state-subsidised dwellings has changed into profit-seeking, there is a pressing need to promote social state-subsidised production of reasonably priced apartments. In this connection, supporting corporations creates the threat that owners operate on markets and the state subsidy accrues to the owner rather than the residents.</p>
Total value of residential transactions for buying and renting for the year 2015 (2014 or 2013 depending on the latest available data) expressed in EUR	<p>The total value of residential sales in Finland was €17.3 billion in 2015. The main part of these transactions is made in housing-company shares: €9.5 billion (2015).</p> <p>Statistics do not appear to be available regarding renting.</p>
Ratio house owners – tenants (i.e. the percentage of households that are owners resp. tenants of dwelling units)	<p>Home ownership 64.6%; renting 33.1%; other (incl. right-of-occupancy housing) 2.3%.</p> <p>Source: Income distribution statistics 2015, Statistics Finland, 31 March 2017.</p>
Usage of land	<p>Land use: agricultural land: 9% forest and scrub land: 77% built land: >4% (2010)</p> <p>In most regions, built land makes up 4–8% of the land area. Built land comprises residential and leisure areas, business, administrative and industrial areas, supporting activity areas (traffic and infrastructure maintenance areas), and rock and soil extraction areas.</p> <p>Source: <i>Environmental Statistics: Yearbook 2014</i>, Statistics Finland, Environment and Natural Resources, Helsinki: Edita Prima 2014, pp. 8–9.</p>

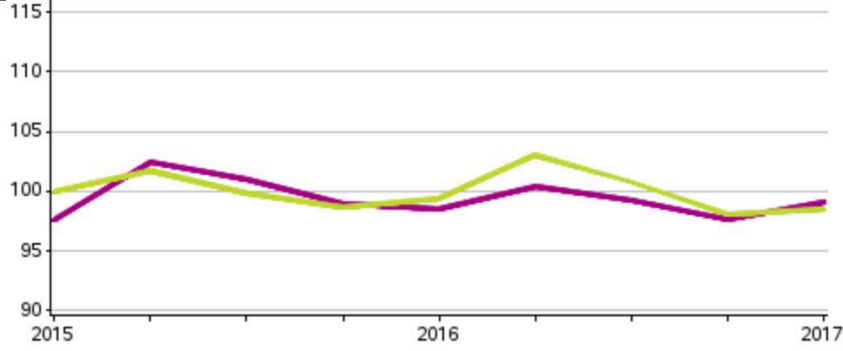
Table 5: Key market data

Average prices of residential property	<i>According to the type of property</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-room apartment: €2,697/m² • Two-room apartment: €2,314/m² • Three-room apartment: €2,216/m² • Terraced house: €1,878/m² • Detached house: €1,549/m²
	<i>According to the type of location</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old housing-company apartments: national average €2,348/m²; capital region €3,757/m²; rest of the country €1,717/m² • New housing-company apartments: national average €3,688/m²; capital region €5,037/m²; rest of the country €3,212/m² • Detached houses: national average €1,549/m²; capital region €3,044/m²; rest of the country €1,447/m²
Price development of residential property	<i>According to the type of property</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-room apartment (blue line in the figure below): €2,784/m² [15Q1]; €2,682/m² [16Q1]; €2,697/m² [17Q1]; • Two-room apartment (black line in the figure below): €2,295/m² [15Q1]; €2,273/m² [16Q1]; €2,314/m² [17Q1]; • Three-room apartment (green line in the figure below): €2,163/m² [15Q1]; €2,166/m² [16Q1]; €2,216/m² [17Q1]; • Terraced house (orange line in the figure below): €1,852/m² [15Q1]; €1,856/m² [16Q1]; €1,878/m² [17Q1].

Table 5: Key market data

	<p><i>According to the type of location</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Capital city</i> • <i>Urban areas</i> • <i>Rural areas</i> 	<p>Old housing-company apartments (Figure 1b above):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National average: difference 16Q2–17Q2: 1.2% ; • Capital region: difference 16Q2–17Q2: 2.7%; • Rest of the country: difference 16Q2–17Q2: 0%. <p>New housing-company apartments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National average: difference 16Q2–17Q2: 4.5%; • Capital region: difference 16Q2–17Q2: 8.0% • Rest of the country: difference 16Q2–17Q2: 2.5% <p>Detached houses (figure below, index: 2015 = 100):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital region (purple line in the figure below): difference 16Q1–17Q1: 0.6% • Rest of the country (green line in the figure below): difference 16Q1–17Q1: -0.9%

Table 5: Key market data

		 <p>Detached houses, national average: difference 16Q1–17Q1: -0.7%</p>
<p>Development of price index (Housing price index if existing, otherwise Consumer price index)</p>	<p>Owner-occupiers housing expenditures: http://www.stat.fi/til/oahi/2017/01/oahi_2017_01_2017-06-30_tau_001_en.html (2015 = 100)</p> <p>Consumer Price Index by commodity groups (04 Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels): http://www.stat.fi/til/khi/2017/07/khi_2017_07_2017-08-14_tau_001_en.html (2015 = 100)</p> <p>Consumer Price Index: http://www.stat.fi/til/khi/2017/07/khi_2017_07_2017-08-14_tau_006_en.html (2005 = 100); http://www.stat.fi/til/khi/2017/07/khi_2017_07_2017-08-14_tau_005_en.html (2010 = 100)</p> <p>Cost-of-living Index: http://www.stat.fi/til/khi/2017/07/khi_2017_07_2017-08-14_tau_003_en.html (1951 = 100)</p>	

2.2 Service providers

Table 6: Service providers

	Total number of firms	Total number of professionals	Total number of employees	Branch offices per firm	Market concentration in % of turnover	Average turnover per firm (expressed in EUR)
Estate agents⁵	1,600 (2015)	4,600 (2014)	N/A	Sector total 2,275 offices (2015)	N/A	Sector total turnover: €534M (2014)
Lawyer/Advocate/Solicitor	850 (2011)	<p>Members of the Bar Association: 2,100 (2016)</p> <p>Also around 1,300 (2011) other lawyers providing legal services in law offices and public legal aid offices.</p> <p>The Association of Finnish Lawyers has 16,000 members, which accounts for over 75% of all lawyers.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	Legal services sector total turnover estimated: €350–450M (2011)
Notary	n.e.					

Table 6: Service providers						
Licensed conveyancers	n.e.					
Architects	1,598 (2008)	N/A	4,050 (2008)	N/A	N/A	Sector total turnover €363M (2008)
Surveyor	N/A	N/A	National Land Survey of Finland: number of employees 1,760 (2016) ⁶	N/A	N/A	N/A
Engineers (not relevant)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other relevant service provider	Official notary witness: 1,398 authorised persons (2013)			N/A	N/A	N/A

⁶ About the National land survey of Finland: <http://www.maanmittauslaitos.fi/en/about-nls/organisation/about-national-land-survey-finland>

3. Roles of professionals and services in the real estate market

Table 7: Role of professionals in the real estate market

	Estate agent	Property valuator ⁷	Lawyer/ Advocate/ Solicitor	Notary	Bank	Licensed conveyancer	Technical expert (architect, engineer, surveyor)	Other relevant professional
Main function: does the professional typically work independently or as part of a firm or another organisation?	1,600 estate agent businesses. Many are franchisees	Firm (estate agent or real estate valuator)	Firm	The task of an official 'notary' witness is performed by public officials, high-ranking police officers, land surveyors, the staff of foreign services, and others	N/A	–	Land surveyor: state or municipal official	Home inspector: firm
Extent of engagement (at which point(s) does each professional intervene in the process?)	Estate agent services include steps at least until the conclusion of the contract	Valuation service for decision-making	Expert assistance, including disputes	Certification of signatures	Loan negotiations, securities		When an unseparated parcel has been sold, a land surveyor converts the unseparated parcel into a new property in a cadastral procedure	At early stages

⁷ In some EU countries, the real estate property valuers are regulated as a profession that is separate from estate agents (e.g. Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia); their services might be obligatory, especially when taking mortgage loans.

Table 7: Role of professionals in the real estate market

Mandatory involvement	No. Approximately 70–80% of apartments (i.e., shares) and 90% of real estate are sold via estate agent	No	No. The remaining 10–20% of sales may comprise consumers selling their own homes or lawyers acting on behalf of client	Yes, except in digital transfers	N/A		In a subdivision procedure	No
How are their fees/charges structured	% value	Fees starting from a fixed amount, it is not tied to the value of the property	Reasonable fee	Fixed fee	Fixed fees, subject to agreement		Based on the size of the area	Fixed fees depending on the features of the dwelling

4. Land registration

Table 8: Land registration	
Responsible authority(ies) dealing with land registration	National Land Survey of Finland
Actors involved in the registration procedure and their main functions	Conclusion can take place in the buyer's bank. An official witness required in non-digital transfers will be present. The representative of the seller's bank brings the seller's mortgage instruments , which are handed over to the buyer's bank against the payment of the purchase price. Digital mortgage is mandatory starting from 1 January 2020 (Act Amending the Land Code 418/2016) and will alter practice. The buyer must register title in the National Land Survey within 6 months of signing the sale contract, with the transfer tax paid. Often, the buyer's bank will carry out the registration. If the contract is uploaded to the digital service of the National Land Survey, the registration is automatically initiated when the contract is signed in the system.
Intermediate steps of the registration procedure, if applicable	Not applicable

5. The process to buy or sell a property

5.1 Main steps in the transaction process to buy or sell a property

Table 9: Main steps of the process to buy or sell a property			
Main steps	Main function	Applicable	National specificities/additional functions/main actors
Estate agent services	Matching the parties	Yes	Estate agents are the principal expert actors in all the main steps below.
Alternative matching devices	Matching the parties	Yes	Internet services (including services that keep track of markets on behalf of the client, services where planned future sales can be on 'silent sale' and interested buyers can earmark apartments, and services where buyers can express their desire to buy in a certain area); newspapers
Preliminary contract	Securing the transaction before the final contract is concluded	Unusual Occasionally used	Real estate: A preliminary contract can be used, for instance, for the sake of financing, incomplete spatial planning, municipal pre-emption right, or home inspection. A binding preliminary contract requires the same formality as the final contract, and the digital service of the National Land Survey is available as in the case of the final contract. Shares: a preliminary contract can be used when the final transaction requires a board approval or depends on a suspected defect or a building permit, or when an existing housing company issues shares because of a planned apartment and wants to find a buyer before issuing the shares.
Preliminary checks (land register, administrative permits)	Ensuring that the buyer knows all legal obligations and relevant features related to the property	Yes	The estate agent has the legal obligation to present to the buyer all relevant documents (land register, etc., in the case of real estate; ownership of and liens* on shares in the case of an apartment (*the seller supplying a document from his or her bank to the agent)). The estate agent is also legally responsible for the accuracy of information in the prospectus, the minimum content of which is regulated in a decree (all

Table 9: Main steps of the process to buy or sell a property

			relevant object-, company-, and planning-related information); the articles of association and financial statements or plan of the company must be available when a prospective buyer views the apartment.
Drafting the sales contract and/or deed of conveyance	Summarising the agreement of the parties	Yes	The estate agent is legally responsible for drafting the contract, unless otherwise agreed.
Legal advice or counselling	Ensuring that the transaction is valid and that the parties know about their rights and duties	Yes	The estate agent must inform the buyer of all things the agent knows or should know which affect the purchase decision. It is the estate agent that usually assists in legal questions. If complex legal questions or specialist engineering questions are involved, the estate agent must inform the buyer about these, so that the buyer can obtain further expert advice should he or she decide to do so.
Certification of signatures	Ensuring the validity of the agreement	Real estate: yes. Shares: no	In transfers of real estate, an official witness checks formal requirements, authenticates signatures, and informs the National Land Survey and the municipality. This task is performed by public officials, high-ranking police officers, land surveyors, the staff of foreign services, and others. All signatories must be present before the official witness at the same time (themselves or represented by agents). If the contract is uploaded to the digital service of the National Land Survey, the contract is signed in the signature system of the service and registered, and no certification by an official witness is required any longer.
Contract execution (transfer of payment)	Executing the contract (and securing that both parties perform their obligations)	Yes	Estate agent
Contract execution (transfer of property)	Executing the contract (and securing that both	Yes	Estate agent

Table 9: Main steps of the process to buy or sell a property

	parties perform their obligations)		
Registration	Making the transaction visible to third parties and the public	Yes	<p>Real estate: The buyer must register in the land register (National Land Survey of Finland) within 6 months of signing the contract, with the transfer tax paid. Exceeding the 6-month limit increases the transfer tax for every 6-month period; the maximum is twice the amount of the tax. The estate agent does not have an obligation to carry out the registration; often, the buyer's bank will do it. If the contract is uploaded to the digital service of the National Land Survey, the registration is automatically initiated when the contract is signed in the system.</p> <p>Shares: The transfer of shares must be notified to the tax authority no later than the 15th of the following month. The estate agent normally does this; if no agent is involved in the purchase, then the buyer notifies.</p>
Taxation (esp. transfer tax)	Creating revenue for the state	Yes	<p>The buyer and the estate agent are responsible for paying the transfer tax, except in the case of the purchase of new built flats the buyer. In detail:</p> <p>Real estate: 4% transfer tax must be paid before registration, and within 6 months of signing the contract at the latest.</p> <p>Shares:</p> <p>2% transfer tax must be paid within 2 months of signing the contract.</p> <p>Exception 1: in purchases through an estate agent, the transfer tax must be paid when the contract is concluded.</p>

Table 9: Main steps of the process to buy or sell a property

			Exception 2, shares in new built flats: The transfer tax must be paid within 2 months of transfer of ownership. In practice, the estate agent is not responsible for this.
Post-transaction controls (if applicable)	Securing that the contract is duly executed	Yes	The housing company must be requested to enter the new owner of shares in the share register. The estate agent must advise the new owner. If the bylaws of the housing company include a redemption clause, the period for exercising these rights starts to run when the company is notified of the transfer of ownership, so the estate agent should inform the company immediately after the transfer. If the shares are redeemed, the estate agent must assist the manager of the housing company to organise the process.
Other steps		Yes	A home inspection ordered by the seller, the buyer, or both parties is common at an earlier stage.

5.2 Sale contract and transfer of ownership

Table 10: Contract of sale and transfer of ownership

Main steps	Actors involved per intermediate step	Payment details ⁸		Typical risks associated to these steps, if relevant (not relevant)
		Payments expressed : • In EUR as % of total purchase price <u>and</u> • As a fixed amount if available (add if VAT applies)	When is the payment made	
Estate agent services or alternative matching devices	Approximately 70–80% of apartments (i.e., shares) and 90% of detached houses are sold via estate agent. Estate agent services include steps at least until the conclusion of the contract.	Estate agent: for instance, 4% of selling price + VAT 24%.	The agent is entitled to a fee only when a sale is concluded, unless otherwise agreed in the commission agreement (Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act 1074/2000, 20[1]).	N/A
Preliminary contract (usual)		Average estate-agent fees: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shares: 4.14% including VAT (see Figure below);• Real estate (detached houses): 4.32% including VAT (see Figure).		N/A
Preliminary checks (land register, administrative permits)				N/A
Drafting the sales contract and/or deed of conveyance				N/A
Legal advice or counselling		Certification of signatures: €120.00 (often split fifty-fifty)		N/A

⁸ Payment shall be considered as the 'discharge of an obligation by its settlement equal to the monetary value of the debtor's obligation' while fees can be defined as 'a charge for services rendered' (Retrieved from: <http://www.investorwords.com/3634/payment.html>, <http://www.investorwords.com/1922/fee.html>). Payment, therefore, includes both the cost of the service and the fees for the service in question

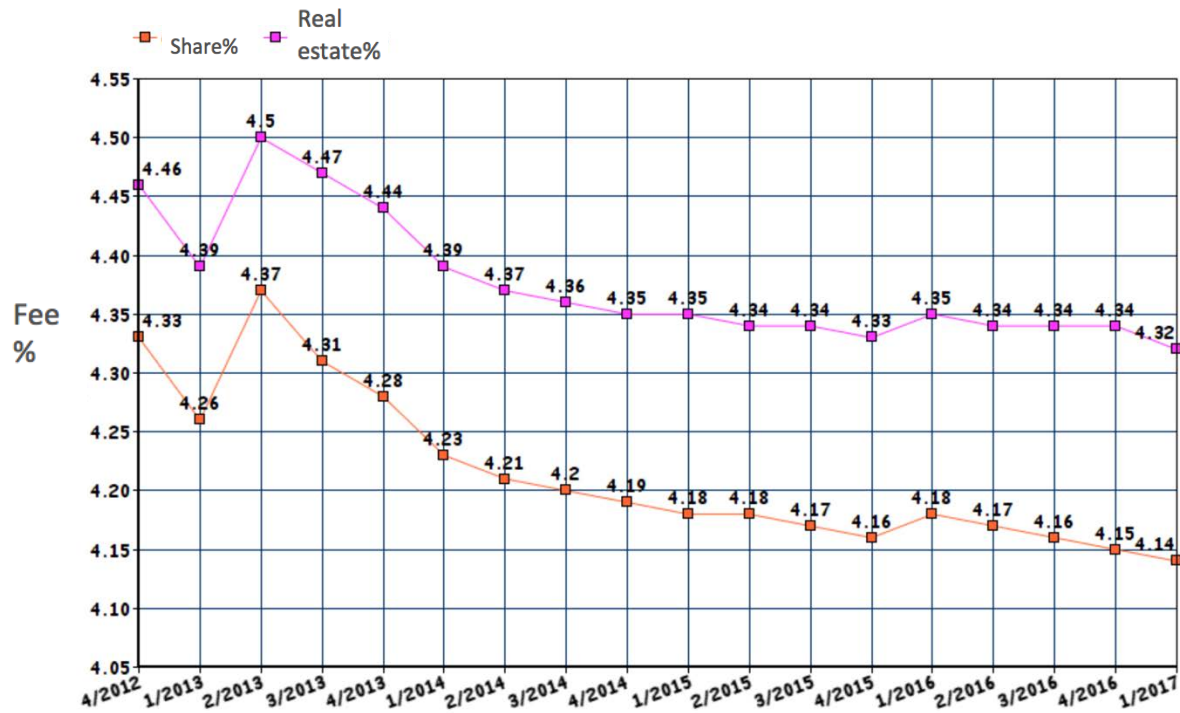
Table 10: Contract of sale and transfer of ownership

Certification of signatures		between the buyer and the seller).	Certification of signatures: paid with cash immediately	N/A
Contract execution (transfer of payment and registration; transfer of property)				N/A
Registration in land register or similar device		Real estate: €119.00 (no VAT)		N/A
Taxation (esp. transfer tax)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: 2%; • Real estate: 4%; <p>See 10.3 below</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate: prior to registration, and within 6 months of signing the contract at the latest; • Shares: within 2 months of signing the contract. Exception 1: in purchases through an estate agent, transfer tax must be paid when the contract is concluded. Exception 2: shares in new built flats: transfer tax must be paid within 2 months of transfer of ownership. 	N/A

▲ **The legal position of a tenant occupying the dwelling to be sold. In particular: Does the rule *emptio non tollit locatum* apply?**

When the ownership of the apartment is voluntarily transferred, the tenancy agreement is binding for the new owner if any one of the following three conditions is met: the tenant has taken possession of the apartment before the transfer takes place; the agreement transferring ownership includes a provision on the continuance of the lease agreement; or a mortgage has been registered to secure the permanence of the lease. The new landlord has only the normal rights to terminate the contract.

Estate agent fees, Finland (% including VAT 24%) 4/2012–1/2017



Source: Asuntojenmyynti.fi at <https://www.asuntojenmyynti.fi/välityspalkkiot-2017-kvartaali-1.php>.

5.3 Professional services performed in the real estate market related to buying and selling a property

Table 11: Professional services performed in the real estate market related to buying and selling a property

Services in the real estate market	Minimum standards for information provided by law, if applicable	Service providers involved	Quality of involvement (mandatory, optional; if optional, indicate whether usual or not)	Fees expressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In EUR as % of total purchase price <u>and</u> • As a fixed amount (if available)
Estate agent services or alternative matching devices	The estate agent must give by law all the information to the seller and to the buyer that the agent knows or should know will affect the decision to make the transaction.	Estate agent	Optional, but approximately 70–80% of apartments (i.e., shares) and 90% of real estate are sold via estate agent. Estate agent services include steps at least until the conclusion of the contract.	Estate agent fees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shares: 4.14% including VAT (see Figure above) • real estate (detached houses): 4.32% including VAT (see Figure above) Certification of signatures: €120.00 (often split fifty-fifty between the buyer and the seller)
Provision of mandatory information before the start of the transaction, if applicable	This means that the agent must provide to the seller, among others, a price estimate and information about tax implications.			
Preliminary contract (usual)	To the buyer the agent must present by law:			
Preliminary checks (land register, administrative permits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title, encumbrances, land-register extract, and any other document showing rights and limitations in the case of real estate; • Ownership and liens regarding shares in the case of an apartment; • A document showing that the agent has the 			
Drafting the sales contract and/or deed of conveyance				

Table 11: Professional services performed in the real estate market related to buying and selling a property

Legal advice or counselling	right to receive payments intended for the principal.			
Certification of signatures	<p>The purpose of this law is that the documents will always be presented to the buyer before the buyer makes a binding offer; the agent must present them so that the buyer has reasonable time to acquaint him/herself with the information. Good real estate brokerage practice requires also that the agent should explain the significance of the information, including the meaning of legal terminology if necessary.</p> <p>The minimum content of the prospectus is regulated in a decree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding any dwelling: the type of dwelling and tenure; availability; the spatial planning situation and public official responsible; price, payment schedule; transport and local services. 	<p>In the case of real estate (but not that of an apartment): an official witness must check formal requirements, authenticate signatures, and inform the National Land Survey and the municipality. This task is performed by, among others, public officials, high-ranking police officers, land surveyors, and the staff of foreign services. All signatories must be present before the official witness at the same time (themselves or represented by agents). If the contract is uploaded to the digital service of the National Land Survey, the contract is signed in the signature system of the service and registered: in this case, no certification by an official witness is any longer required.</p>		
Contract execution (transfer of payment; transfer of property)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding real estate in particular (while apartments, by contrast, 	Estate agent		

Table 11: Professional services performed in the real estate market related to buying and selling a property

<p>Registration in land register or similar device</p>	<p>belong under the next point immediately below): areal information, building permit, and limitations on use and transfer, as regards land; the age, the construction material, the heating system and costs, and rooms and residential and other area, as regards dwelling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding apartments (housing-company shares), the additional information comprises: the company and shares; the manager of the company; the age, construction material, and heating system of the building; redemption rights, other limitations; housing costs; the part of company's debt connected with the shares; and the decided or otherwise known major planned repairs and improvements and an estimate of their costs and timing. The articles of association, the latest financial statements or the financial plan of the company and the ground plan of the apartment must be available when a 			<p>Real estate only: €119.00 (no VAT)</p>
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Table 11: Professional services performed in the real estate market related to buying and selling a property

	prospective buyer views the apartment. Service contracts used by estate agents are standard form contracts approved by the Consumer Ombudsman.			
Taxation (esp. transfer tax)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: 2% • Real estate: 4% <p>See 10.3 below</p>

5.4 Creating a Mortgage

Table 12: Mortgage requirements

Main steps to create a mortgage	Actors/institutions involved	Minimum standards for information	Additional requirements for consumer mortgages, if relevant	Fees expressed: • In EUR as % of total purchase price <u>and</u> • As a fixed amount (if available)	Typical risks associated to these steps, if relevant
Conclusion of credit and mortgage agreement with lender (bank)	As a first step before searching for an apartment, a buyer should negotiate conditions of a loan with a bank. Clients are advised to contact several banks, as loan margins and service fees differ from one bank to another.	Lender institutions have detailed information duties in accordance with a chapter on consumer credit and a new chapter on mortgage credit in the Consumer Protection Act. The use of the European Standardised Information Sheet	Since 2016, a housing loan may not exceed by law 90% of the value of the security (for first-home buyers, 95%). Even though the cap was enacted to curb over-indebtedness, it	Besides benchmark interest rate, interests include a margin that banks negotiate with customers. A margin can be 1% of the loan sum, but also significantly lower for good, secure clients. Then, the price of a loan will include fees under various names,	N/A

Table 12: Mortgage requirements

		<p>became mandatory when the new chapter implemented the Mortgage Credit Directive. Both the Financial Supervisory Authority and the Consumer Ombudsman have published guidelines. Good Banking Practice is self-regulation by the banks.</p>	<p>has limited effect, because the home to be bought is in fact accepted as security for 70-75% of its fair value (purchase price) and buyers need additional collateral.</p> <p>Moreover, it is in practice possible for consumers to buy apartments entirely by loan if they have additional collateral such as a parents' apartment.</p>	<p>generally altogether around 0.4–0.6% of the sum. These fees are likewise subject to negotiation.</p>	
<p>Insertion of mortgage in the land register, usually at first rank</p>	<p>When real estate is used as security, the seller transfers mortgage instruments to the buyer and the lender takes them as security. Mortgage instruments are created for chosen sums by applying for the instruments from the National Land Survey at any time (if existing instruments, which the buyer must receive at the moment of conclusion, do not cover the entire value for which the buyer uses the property as security, new</p>			<p>Real estate: digital mortgage €35</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Table 12: Mortgage requirements

	<p>instruments will be applied for). The conclusion usually takes place in the buyer's bank. In the non-digital system, the representative of the seller's bank brings the seller's mortgage instruments, which are handed over to the buyer's bank against the payment of the purchase price; the transfer tax is paid and ownership registered⁹.</p> <p>When purchasing shares of a housing company and using the shares as security for a housing loan, the buyer receives ownership of the shares and the lender will keep the pledged share certificates. For an unpaid part of the sale price, the seller can obtain a secondary lien on the shares kept by the lender.</p>				
Credit sum paid to mortgagor (buyer) or seller	Lender institution			An administrative fee typically around €150–300, included above in the 0.4–0.6% estimate regarding other expenses.	N/A

⁹ For the use of digital mortgage instruments, see National Land Survey of Finland, 'Property Transaction Service' and 'Apply for a mortgage' at <http://www.maanmittauslaitos.fi/en/real-property>.

6. The process to rent or let a property

6.1 Main steps in the transaction process to rent and let a property

Table 13: Main steps of the process to rent and let a property	
Main steps	Process involved
Finding and matching landlords and tenants	From the landlord's point of view, the most convenient way of finding a tenant is to use an estate or letting agent. Landlords also place advertisements on the Internet and in newspapers. When asked some years ago, landlords in Helsinki had often found and searched for tenants through agents, but also through the Internet, acquaintances and newspapers; tenants had been informed about their current dwelling through the Internet or an acquaintance and, to a lesser extent, newspapers or agents ¹⁰ .
Information search by landlords or tenants (e.g. about salary, outstanding debts)	Landlords and agents carry out thorough searches concerning the tenant's background for the reason that landlords might be left with the cost of unpaid rent or damage to the property. The paramount criteria for selecting tenants are ability to pay and income as proof of that; credit information is also important. The tenant may be asked for his/her income, proof of income, and – for the sake of a credit-information check – identifying data. The same information can be collected from any person responsible for the tenancy, including a married or unmarried partner. Applicants viewing apartments may only be asked about their income, and then proof of income required from a party with whom the contract is to be made. When an agent has asked for the proof of income, the agent may not transmit the documentary proof to the landlord without the consent of the tenant.
Inspection of the property by tenants (in some cases with the help of professionals)	The landlord and tenant should agree on an inspection, and an inspection should take place preferably prior to the signing of the contract and always before the tenant provides a deposit.
Delivery of mandatory information to tenants prior to the conclusion of the contract (if relevant)	N/A

¹⁰ See Anneli Juntto, Anne Viita, Sonja Toivonen, Mia Koro-Kanerva, *Vuokra-asunto Helsingissä sijoituksena ja kotina: Vuokranantaja- ja vuokralaiskyselyn tuloksia* [A Rental Dwelling in Helsinki as an Investment and a Home: Results from Landlord and Tenant Survey], Ministry of the Environment, Helsinki 2010, 39–40, at https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/37966/SY29_2010_Vuokra-asunto_Helsingissa_sijoituksena_ja_kotina_verkkoon.pdf?sequence=1

Table 13: Main steps of the process to rent and let a property

Delivery of energy performance certificate to tenant	The landlord or the agent obtains the certificate from the housing company and gives it to the tenant.
Provision of additional guarantees to landlord, if relevant	The tenant can ask someone from his/her circle to be a personal guarantor, for instance, if the tenant is a student or has low income. The contract of personal guarantee must be in writing. The guarantor cannot have credit defaults; an agent will always check the credit information of the guarantor.
Conclusion of the contract in the usual form (e.g. oral, written, preformulated)	In general, a valid contract may be written, oral, or tacit, unless otherwise provided in special legislation. According to tenancy act, if not made in writing, a tenancy agreement may only be valid for an unlimited term. Usually, tenancy agreements are made in writing. Standard forms are used widely, at least as checklists.
Rent payment and deposit (e.g. bank account)	Rent must be paid from an account on the due date. Security is invariably required. By law, the maximum security is three months' rent. The tenant typically agrees to deposit security of one or two months' rent in a separate bank account. A landlord can have a separate account for the deposit or hold a lien on a tenant's separate deposit account. Normally, the security is a money deposit, but it is also possible to agree in writing on a personal guaranty. The legal maximum of three months' rent has been considered to apply to the personal guaranty, but the matter is disputed and a relevant case is pending before the Supreme Court.
Registration of the contract in the land register (e.g. excluded, optional or mandatory)	No registration is needed. (It is possible to have a 'mortgage' registered as security for the permanence of lease rights in the title and mortgage register, but this option is rarely used.)

6.2 Rent contract

Table 14: Rent contract				
Main steps	Actors involved per intermediate step	Payment details ¹¹		Typical risks associated to these steps, if relevant (not relevant unless indicated)
		Payments expressed : • In EUR as % of total purchase price <u>and</u> • As a fixed amount if available (add if VAT applies)	When is the payment made	
Finding and matching the parties	In larger towns often a letting agent	One month's rent + VAT 24%	The agent is entitled to a fee only when a tenancy agreement is concluded, unless otherwise agreed in the commission agreement (Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act 1074/2000, 20[1]).	N/A
Information search by landlord on tenant (e.g. about salary, outstanding debts)	Landlord and often an agent			N/A
Inspection of the property by tenant (in some cases with the help of professionals)	The condition of the property is inspected as agreed. Particular attention should be given, especially if the landlord and tenant cannot carry out the inspection together, to drawing up a well-documented list of deficiencies and defects, accompanied by photos and videos,			No consistent custom of evaluation exists regarding inspection of the condition of the apartment in the beginning of the lease compared with its condition at the end of the lease.

¹¹ Payment shall be considered as the 'discharge of an obligation by its settlement equal to the monetary value of the debtor's obligation' while fees can be defined as 'a charge for services rendered' (Retrieved from: <http://www.investorwords.com/3634/payment.html>, <http://www.investorwords.com/1922/fee.html>). Payment, therefore, includes both the cost of the service and the fees for the service in question.

Table 14: Rent contract

	because the documentation may be later the only evidence of the condition of the apartment at the time of renting. Standard forms for these reports are available.			
Delivery of mandatory information to tenant prior to the conclusion of the contract (if relevant)				N/A
Delivery of energy performance certificate to tenant	The landlord or the agent obtains the certificate from the housing company and gives it to the tenant.			N/A
Conclusion of the contract in the usual form (e.g. oral, written; if written, indicate whether preformulated are usual)	Tenant, landlord, and often an agent			N/A
Rent payment and deposit (e.g. bank account)	Tenant, landlord, and often an agent			N/A

Table 14: Rent contract

Registration of the contract in the land register or other device (excluded, optional or mandatory)	No registration is needed			N/A
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6.3 Professional services performed in the real estate market related to renting and letting a property

Table 15: Professional services performed in the real estate market related to renting and letting a property

Services in the real estate market	Minimum standards for information provided by law, if applicable	Service providers involved	Quality of involvement (e.g. mandatory; exclusive rights)	Fees expressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In EUR as % of total purchase price <u>and</u> • As a fixed amount (if available)
Finding and matching landlords and tenants	A detailed decree on information to be provided in the marketing of dwellings applies to all marketing from business to consumer, including the marketing of rental dwellings. Advertisements for rental dwellings must contain the location and type of dwelling, number of rooms, residential area, tenant's exclusive use, rent and deposit, the duration of fixed-term contract if applicable, the name and contact details of the marketing business, and energy class as regulated by law; the prospectus must indicate, in	Estate agent or letting agent	Optional; agreement	One month's rent + VAT 24%

Table 15: Professional services performed in the real estate market related to renting and letting a property

	<p>addition to the foregoing, if the apartment is sublet or re-let, how the tenant will attain possession, external space in tenant's use, main transport and local services unless unnecessary, and the decided or otherwise known major planned repairs and improvements and an estimate of their timing.</p>			
<p>Information search by landlords or tenants (e.g. about salary, outstanding debts)</p>	<p>The tenant may be asked for his or her income, proof of income, and – for the sake of a credit-information check – identifying data. The same information can be collected from any person responsible for the tenancy, including a married or unmarried partner. Applicants viewing apartments may be only asked about their income, and then proof of income required from a party with whom the contract is to be made. When an agent has asked for the proof of income, the agent may not transmit the documentary proof to the landlord without the consent of the tenant.</p> <p>The landlord or agent has the right to ask about the tenant not only income, proof of income, and credit information, but also the number and birth dates of children. Besides, enquiries that</p>	<p>Estate agent or letting agent</p>	<p>Optional; agreement</p>	

Table 15: Professional services performed in the real estate market related to renting and letting a property

	<p>are not specifically allowed are not thereby prohibited; for instance, rental agreements can include clauses about smoking and pets. The landlord or agent may not ask for criminal records as the transmission of these data are prohibited by law. Likewise, enquiries about sexual or religious orientation are prohibited. Despite the legal framework, in rental markets a person who provides ample information often is successful in getting an apartment. Yet another perspective on prohibited questions is that the addressee may give wrong information without direct legal consequences.</p> <p>Rules on data protection and anti-discrimination are in general legislation, and in the field of data protection in rental markets, major associations and actors together with the Data Protection Ombudsman have published a supplementary guideline.</p>			
<p>Inspection of the property by tenants (in some cases with the help of professionals)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Estate agent or letting agent</p>	<p>Optional; agreement</p>	

Table 15: Professional services performed in the real estate market related to renting and letting a property

Delivery of mandatory information to tenants prior to the conclusion of the contract (if relevant)	N/A	Estate agent or letting agent	Optional; agreement	
Conclusion of the contract in the usual form (e.g. oral, written, preformulated)	In general, a valid contract may be written, oral, or tacit.	Estate agent or letting agent	Optional; agreement	
Rent payment and deposit (e.g. bank account)	N/A	Estate agent or letting agent	Optional; agreement	
Registration of the contract in the land register (e.g. excluded, optional or mandatory)	No registration is needed			

7. Professional services regulation: notaries

7.1 Market entry and structure regulation

Table 16: Market entry and structure regulation

Table 16: Market entry and structure regulation		
	Regulation	
Subjective requirements	<i>Qualifications (diplomas, exams, concours) required to become a notary in the Country:</i>	<p>Not applicable.</p> <p>In transfers of real estate, an official witness checks formal requirements, authenticates signatures, and informs the National Land Survey and the municipality. This task is performed by public officials, high-ranking police officers, land surveyors, the staff of foreign services, and others (Act on Official Notary Witnesses 573/2009) (1,398 authorised persons in 2013). All signatories must be present before the official witness at the same time (themselves or represented by agents). In the past, the requirement of an official witness derived from the inter - and postwar era. Nowadays, when the contract is uploaded to the digital service of the National Land Survey, the contract is signed in the signature system of the service and registered: in this case, no certification by an official witness is required.</p>
Objective requirements	<i>Do numerus clauses and other objective requirements exist?</i>	
Citizenship requirements	<i>Are foreign candidates admitted de iure and also de facto under the same conditions as nationals?</i>	
Inter-professional cooperation	<i>Are forms of collaboration between notaries and other professionals allowed and usual?</i>	
Business structure	<i>Are notary associations/corporations allowed?</i>	
Geographical limitations	<i>Are there limitations with respect to the area in which the notary can exercise his/her activities (e.g. at the regional or municipal level)?</i>	
	<i>Are these limitations restricted to specific tasks?</i>	
		No

7.2 Market conduct regulation

Table 17: Market conduct regulation		
	Regulation	
Exclusive rights	<i>Specify for which transactions or parts of them only notaries may act against payment.</i>	Not applicable. See 7.1 above.
Duty to provide services	<i>Are notaries allowed to refuse a request to act?</i>	
Professional standards	<i>How are professional standards regulated? What are the tasks of the professional representation (e.g. Chamber of Notaries) in this context?</i>	
Mandatory intervention	<i>Is the intervention of a notary required for the registration procedure?</i>	
Compulsory indemnity insurance	<i>Is indemnity insurance compulsory? If yes, what is the indicative amount of the insurance? List of the different types of indemnity insurance (if applicable).</i>	
Continuing education	<i>Do forms of continuing education exist? If yes, is continuing education mandatory?</i>	
Advertising restrictions	<i>Are there limitations on advertising?</i>	
Fee regulation	<i>Brief explanation of the notarial fees system. In particular: indicate whether notarial fees are fixed by statute and which party has to bear them.</i>	

8. Professional services regulation: lawyers or other licensed conveyancers (only relevant if legally admitted to perform real estate transactions and/or to assist the conclusion of tenancy agreements)

8.1 Market entry and structure regulation

Table 18: Market entry and structure regulation		
	Regulation	
Subjective requirements	<i>Conditions (diplomas, exams, concours) required to become a lawyer in your country.</i>	Advocate: Only a member of the Finnish Bar Association is allowed to use the professional title <i>asianajaja</i> (advocate/attorney-at-law). According to the Advocates Act, Section 3(1):
Objective requirements	<i>Do numerus clauses and other objective requirements exist?</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A person who has attained the age of 25 years may be accepted as an advocate provided that s/he: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is known to be honest and in respect of his/her other characteristics and way of life suitable for the profession of advocate; • Has completed a Master of Laws degree in Finland, other than a master of international and comparative law degree, or has completed a law degree outside Finland and has received a decision by the Finnish National Board of Education on the eligibility for the post requiring a Master of Laws degree, other than a master of international and comparative law degree, in accordance with the Act on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (1093/2007 as amended) or the Act on Eligibility Provided by Foreign Higher Education Degrees for Public Posts in Finland (531/1986 as amended) and has completed any additional requirements required in the decision; • Has achieved the competence needed to practise as an advocate and the practical experience as defined in the by-laws of the Bar Association;

Table 18: Market entry and structure regulation		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has passed an examination on the provisions concerning the activities of an advocate and the requirements of the proper rules of professional conduct for advocates (<i>Bar examination</i>); and • Is not a bankrupt and has full legal capacity. <p>Legal counsel: According to Licenced Legal Counsel Act (715/2011), Section 2(1):</p> <p>1) The licence referred to in this Act to serve as an attorney and legal counsel is granted until further notice to a person who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has completed a Master of Laws degree in Finland other than a master of international and comparative law degree, or a corresponding law degree abroad which has been recognized in Finland as separately provided; • Has become sufficiently acquainted with the work of an attorney and legal counsel; • Is honest and is not manifestly unsuitable for the work of an attorney and legal counsel; and • Is not bankrupt and has full legal capacity.
Citizenship requirements	<i>Are foreign candidates admitted de iure and also de facto under the same conditions as nationals?</i>	Yes. For the requirements, see Advocates Act, Section 3(2–3).
Inter-professional cooperation	<i>Are forms of collaboration between lawyers and other professionals allowed and usual?</i>	For prohibitions on ‘Multi-Disciplinary Practice’ and on external equity and the requirements for consolidated law firms, see <i>The State of Liberal Professions Concerning Their Functions and Relevance to European Civil Society</i> , European Economic and Social Committee EESC/COMM/05/2013, 117–120.
Business structure	<i>Are lawyer associations/corporations allowed?</i>	Yes

Table 18: Market entry and structure regulation

Geographical limitations	<i>Are there limitations with respect to the area in which the lawyer can exercise his/her activities (e.g. at the regional or municipal level)?</i>	No
	<i>Are these limitation restricted to specific tasks?</i>	

8.2 Market conduct regulation

Table 19: Market conduct regulation

	Regulation	
Exclusive rights	<i>Transactions or parts of them only lawyers may act against payment</i>	<p>The greater part of the conveyancing market is held by estate agents, who also provide legal services. Lawyers provide expert legal assistance in all questions relating to sales of apartments and real estate and residential and commercial leases. Transactions in shares and real estate transactions are common sources of dispute from lawyers' point of view. The general rules of proper professional conduct for advocates apply in the case of members of the Bar Association. The central rules and regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocates Act (Attorneys-at-law Act) • Finnish Bar Association By-Laws • Code of conduct for attorneys-at-law • Fee Guidelines • Guidelines concerning the continuing education of attorneys-at-law • Finnish Bar Association Mediation Rules are available at: https://www.asianajajaliitto.fi/en/supervision/code_of_conduct.
Neutrality	<i>Is the lawyer allowed to act on behalf of both parties involved in the transaction? In this case, what type of fees apply and which party has to bear them?</i>	
Duty to provide services	<i>Are lawyers allowed to refuse a request to act?</i>	
Professional standards	<i>How are professional standards regulated? What are the tasks of the professional representation (e.g. Chamber of Lawyers/Advocates) in this context?</i>	
Compulsory indemnity insurance	<i>Is indemnity insurance compulsory? If yes, what is the indicative amount of the insurance?</i>	
Continuing education	<i>Do forms of continuing education exist? If yes, is continuing education mandatory?</i>	

Table 19: Market conduct regulation

Advertising restrictions	<i>Are there limitations on advertising?</i>	No specific restrictions
Fee regulation	<i>Are lawyer fees fixed by statute and which party has to bear them.</i>	Fees are agreed between the parties and must be reasonable (Commercial Code 3/1734, 18:5). The fee shall be commensurate with the nature of the task and the amount of work required, and shall otherwise be reasonable (Bar Association Fee Guideline).

9. Professional services regulation: estate agents

9.1 Market entry and structure regulation

Table 20: Market entry and structure regulation

	Regulation	
Subjective requirements	<p><i>Qualifications (level and duration of education and training, diplomas, exams, traineeships or professional experience requirements, concours) required to become an estate agent in your country. Other access requirements for a professional (such as compulsory membership in professional bodies/compulsory registration, minimum age requirements, clean criminal record, etc.)</i></p>	<p>An estate agent is a person who has passed an estate agent exam. Passing a real estate agent exam entitles the person to use the designation 'LKV' (legalised real estate agent) and passing a letting agent exam entitles the person to use the designation 'LVV' (legalised letting agent). Taking the exam does not require prior professional experience. The number of candidates taking the real estate agent exam is more than ten times the number of people taking the letting agent exam. The real estate agent exam is demanding; only one third of candidates pass the exam. The exams are held twice a year and can be written in Finnish or Swedish (not in English).</p> <p>Passing the exam is not mandatory for all persons operating in the field. Any entity functioning as an estate or letting agent must be registered and have a chief operator who has the title 'LKV' or 'LVV'; the chief operator has the responsibility that in every business entity and in every branch at least half of the people carrying out brokerage activities have acquired the 'LKV' or 'LVV' title. Individuals who perform only administrative or office work are not counted among those who carry out brokerage activities.</p> <p>Members of the profession have various educational backgrounds, mostly business administration or administrative studies, but also, in some cases, full legal degrees or other occupations. In all, 12% have obtained a university-level degree.</p> <p>Estate agents do not handle all sales and transactions. New build apartments are often marketed and sold directly by the developer or construction company. Many individuals, firms, foundations, banks, even municipalities' broker some transactions.</p>

Table 20: Market entry and structure regulation

Objective requirements	<i>Do numerous clauses and other objective requirements exist?</i>	<p>Before starting a business, an estate or letting agent must register in one of the six Regional State Administration Agencies. A professional-licence requirement was removed in 1993 on grounds of lessening administrative permit procedures and of deregulation.</p> <p>Finland Chamber of Commerce organises the exams and keeps a register of persons who have passed the exam.</p>
Licence requirements	<i>Are estate agents licenced or do they work as employees?</i>	<p>Only those who have passed an exam can use the 'LKV' or 'LVV' titles. Many work as employees of a firm. Firms employ also sales agents, managers, and other staff.</p>
Citizenship requirements	<i>Is unlimited access to the profession granted to foreign professionals de iure and de facto?</i>	<p>There are no citizenship requirements, only the exams. A foreign service provider may register a branch, and a service provider from another EU or EEA country may temporarily carry out brokerage activities. A temporary activity is interpreted on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the case law of the European Court of Justice.</p>
Inter-professional cooperation	<i>Are estate agents allowed to exercise another profession or business activity? Is inter-professional cooperation regulated?</i>	<p>An estate agent may offer a wide variety of services, such as valuation, auction, preparation of family- and inheritance-law documents, title-registration and mortgage applications, moving, interior design, house management, accounting, home inspection, and development.</p>
Business structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Indicate the share of estate agent acts acting as sole practitioners and as companies (if data are available)?</i> • <i>Can the agent be employed by another agent or establish a partnership with other agents?</i> • <i>Are there any restrictions on the corporate structure of a real estate enterprise (such as voting rights reserved to qualified members of a profession, shareholding requirements etc.)?</i> 	<p>According to a survey in 2012, sole practitioners comprise one fourth of the profession, one third of businesses have two to three employees, and another third have four to ten employees. Many estate agent businesses are franchisees.</p>

Table 20: Market entry and structure regulation

Geographical limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there limitations with respect to the area in which the estate agent can exercise his/her activities (e.g. at the regional or municipal level)? 	No
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are these limitation restricted to specific tasks? 	No

9.2 Market conduct regulation

Table 21: Market conduct regulation

	Regulation	
Neutrality	<p><i>Is neutrality regulated? Is the agent allowed to act on behalf of both parties involved in the transaction? In this case, what type of fees applies and which party bears these?</i></p>	<p>The estate agent is presumed to be neutral in transactions between private persons. The agent has statutory duties to give and to obtain information in relation to both parties. The agent must also comply with good brokerage practice. The agent is generally employed by the seller or landlord. The only person who should pay the agent's fee is the principal, who purchases the service. When both sides are principals, only one fee may be collected per target of assignment.</p>
Professional standards	<p><i>How are professional standards regulated? Are entities or associations ensuring the professional representation and respect of rules of good practice (e.g. association of real estate professionals)?</i></p>	<p>Suspected acts against law or good brokerage practice can be notified to the relevant Regional State Administrative Agency. The Agency may issue requests and warnings and may ban operations for at most six months. The most severe prohibition is removal from the register.</p> <p>In addition, compliance with the Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act is supervised by the Consumer Ombudsman in so far as violation of this act automatically constitutes a violation of the Consumer Protection Act in business-consumer relations.</p>

Table 21: Market conduct regulation		
Compulsory indemnity insurance	<i>Is indemnity insurance compulsory for estate agents? If yes, what is the indicative amount of the insurance?</i>	Indemnity insurance is required for registration. Adequate coverage is required. The insurance does not cover damage caused by gross negligence or wilful misconduct.
Continuing education	<i>Do forms of continuing education exist? If yes, is continuing education mandatory? What are the requirements related to the content and duration of continuing education? What are the consequences of non-compliance?</i>	Once passed, the exam confers competence permanently. Continuing education is provided by associations in the field, but is not mandatory.
Advertising restrictions	<i>Are there limitations on advertising?</i>	A detailed decree on information to be provided in the marketing of dwellings applies to all marketing from business to consumer (see 5.3 and 6.3 above). Consumer Protection Act also contains a chapter on marketing. Finally, the Regional State Administrative Agencies monitor advertising in the press and the Internet and have issued guidelines and letters.
Fee regulation	<i>Are fees limited by statute? Which party is responsible for their payment?</i>	<p>The agent's fee must be reasonable, taking into account the character of the assignment, the amount of work carried out, the economically appropriate way of carrying out the assignment, and other circumstances (Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act 1074/2000, 20[3]). The only person who should pay the agent's fee is the principal, who purchases the service. When both sides are principals, only one fee may be collected per target of assignment. (Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act 1074/2000, 20[2])</p> <p>For average estate agent fees, see figure in 5.2 above.</p> <p>Estate agents do not have a collective agreement. Performance-related pay is generally used.</p>
Compulsory membership in professional bodies/compulsory registration	<i>Is membership in professional bodies compulsory? If so, what are the membership conditions and the membership fees? Does the professional body have a supervisory or another important regulatory role?</i>	<p>No. The national unions include the Central Federation of Finnish Real Estate Agencies (KVKL) and the Finnish Association of Real Estate Agents (SKVL).</p> <p>For registration, see above.</p>

10. The real estate market

10.1 Transaction costs for sample transactions

Table 22: Transaction costs VAT excluded

	Estate agent ¹²	Technical services (if usual)	Land register fee	Transfer tax/stamp duty	Total usual transfer costs
€100,000 sales price (no mortgage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €3,300 • Real estate: €3,500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: house manager's certificate (€50–200, typically €90–120): €100 • Real estate: official witness €120 • Real estate: home inspection¹³ €1,000 	Real estate: €119	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €2,000 • Real estate: €4,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €5,400 • Real estate: €8,739

¹² An agent usually receives a percentage of the transaction value.

¹³ Home inspection prices vary between €800–1,600 (includes VAT). Home inspection is usual in the case of detached or semi-detached houses, but significantly less common in the case of apartments.

According to publications of Aalto University School of Engineering, transaction costs in land sales in Finland are viewed more broadly as follows:

'[T]he main part of the transaction costs in Finland is generated by transfer tax and the possible estate agent's fee. In a typical sale of a single-family house site, the transaction costs to the seller and the buyer are around 10% of the purchase price [. . .] The number of real estate transactions in Finland was 60,100 sales in 2013, and the money spent in these real estate transactions was approximately €7.6 billion. As a rough estimate based on this, the total amount of transaction costs to be paid by sellers and buyers in Finland was around €700–800 million in 2013.

From the perspective of the national economy [the costs of real estate transactions] may also include the costs to society of maintaining the real estate information system. [. . .] The maintenance costs of the real estate information system were approximately €12.5 million in 2013, of which the actual maintenance costs of the system were around €1.5 million and renovation costs around €11 million. [. . .] [T]he state and the municipalities also obtain revenue through official witness' fees, subdivision fees, registration fees, and sale of register excerpts. For instance, in 2013, the National Land Survey earned revenues of around €8.2 million from information services. In addition, when considering revenues, it must be pointed out that transfer tax revenues

Table 22: Transaction costs VAT excluded

€100,000 sales price + 100.000€ mortgage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €3,300 • Real estate: €3,500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €100 • Real estate: €1,120 • Bank (0.4%) €400 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate: €119 • Real estate: digital mortgage €35 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €2,000 • Real estate: €4,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €5,800 • Real estate: €9,174
€250,000 sales price (no mortgage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €8,250 • Real estate: €8,750 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €100 • Real estate: €1,120 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate: €119 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €5,000 • Real estate: €10,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €13,350 • Real estate: €19,989
€250,000 sales price + 250,000€ mortgage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €8,250 • Real estate: €8,750 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €100 • Real estate: €1,120 • Bank (0.4%) €1,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate: €119 • Real estate: digital mortgage €35 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €5,000 • Real estate: €10,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €14,350 • Real estate: €21,024
€500,000 sales price (no mortgage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €16,500 • Real estate: €17,500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €100 • Real estate: €1,120 	Real estate: €119	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €10,000 • Real estate: €20,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €26,600 • Real estate: €38,739
€500,000 sales price + €500,000 mortgage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €16,500 • Real estate: €17,500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €100 • Real estate: €1,120 • Bank (0.4%) €2,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate: €119 • Real estate: digital mortgage €35 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €10,000 • Real estate: €20,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: €28,600 • Real estate: €40,774

from only real estate sales were around €300 million in 2013[.]' (Arvo Vitikainen, *Kiinteistötekniikan perusteet* [The Basics of Real Estate Technique], Aalto University Publication Series: Science + Technology 11/2014, Helsinki 2014, 100–101)

Table 22: Transaction costs VAT excluded

%VAT applicable	24%	Home inspection 24%	–	–	
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10.2 Transaction features

Table 23: Transaction features

Transaction / service	Party bearing the costs of intermediation service (buyers or sellers, landlords or tenants) Costs expressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In EUR as % of total purchase price <u>and</u> • As a fixed amount (if available) 	Indicate fees as expressed in the contract: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In EUR as % of total purchase price <u>and</u> • As a fixed amount (if available) 	Possible hidden costs faced by buyers or tenants, if applicable (not relevant)
Estate agents	Seller/Landlord	For instance, 4% of selling price + VAT 24% / one month's rent + VAT 24%	None
Technical services	Shares: House manager's certificate: seller Real estate: Official witness: split between seller and buyer Home inspection: seller, or split between seller and buyer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: House manager's certificate: €50–200, typically €90–120 • Real estate: Official witness: €120 • Home inspection: €800–1,600 (includes VAT) 	None (apart from the reimbursable travel costs of official witness in rare cases)

Legal services	Each party		None
Land register fees	Buyer	Real estate: €119	None
Taxes on conveyancing		VAT on fees	None
Transfer taxes	Buyer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares: 2% • Real estate: 4% 	None

10.3 Taxes during the process of buying and selling a property

Table 24: Taxes related to buying and selling a property

	Relevance of the tax	When to pay the tax as part of the process of buying or selling	Tax amount (expressed in EUR as % of total purchase price <u>and</u> as a fixed amount if available)
Registration tax¹⁴	No		
Mortgage tax	No		
Cadastral tax	No		
Stamp tax	No		
Transfer tax (tax on the acquisition of property)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate: prior to registration, and within 6 months of signing the contract at the latest • Shares: within 2 months of signing the contract. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real estate: 4% of the purchase price • Shares: 2% of the purchase price and the part of company's debt connected with the purchased shares (that is, the full

¹⁴ Registration taxes are public levies associated with the registration act. They are not to be confused with registration fees, i.e. the payment required by the registration office to carry out the registration. Registration fees are contained in Table 10.

Table 24: Taxes related to buying and selling a property

		Exception 1: in purchases through an estate agent, transfer tax must be paid when the contract is concluded. Exception 2, shares in new built flats: transfer tax must be paid within 2 months of transfer of ownership.	purchase price, with no adjustment due to housing-company debt) Exemption: transfer tax does not need to be paid on a first dwelling (an apartment or real estate), provided that the buyer is between 18 and 39 years old, intends to use the dwelling as his or her own home, and has not previously owned 50% or more of a dwelling or residential building.
Archives tax	No		
Other taxes	Capital gains tax	The seller is excluded if he or she has owned the home and used it as primary residence continuously for at least 2 years.	

10.4 Taxes during the process of renting and letting a property

Table 25: Taxes related to renting or letting a property

	Relevance of the tax	When to pay the tax in the process of renting or letting	Tax amount (expressed in EUR as % of total purchase price <u>and</u> as a fixed amount if available)
Registration tax	No		
Stamp tax	No		
Other taxes	No		

11. Consumer situation in the market

11.1 Consumer rights

Table 26: Consumer rights

<p>Are there specific consumer rights in the context of real estate transactions and residential tenancies in your country?</p> <p>In particular: are residential tenants treated as consumers?</p>	<p><i>With respect to buyers</i></p>	<p>Housing Transactions Act 843/1994: protection of the buyer in the construction stage</p> <p>Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act 1074/2000 (estate agency and letting agency agreement):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By law the estate agent must give to the buyer all the information that the agent knows or should know will affect the decision to make the transaction. The agent must, by law, present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Title, encumbrances, land-register extract, and any other document showing rights and limitations in the case of real estate; - ownership and liens regarding shares in the case of an apartment; and - A document showing that the agent has the right to receive payments intended for the principal. • The purpose of this law is that the documents will always be presented to the buyer before the buyer makes a binding offer; the agent must present them so early that the buyer has reasonable time to acquaint himself or herself with the information. <p>Government Decree on information to be provided in the marketing of dwellings 130/2001: see 5.3 above.</p> <p>Consumer Protection Act: lender institutions have detailed information duties in accordance with a chapter on consumer credit and a new chapter on mortgage credit (Chapter 7a, 851/2016) in the Consumer Protection Act.</p> <p>The Consumer Disputes Board deals with complaints about residential sales and about agents: see 11.2 below.</p>
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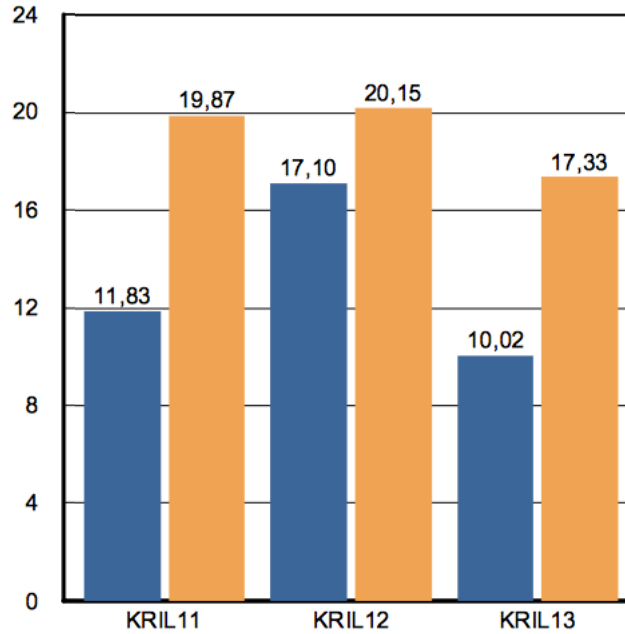
	<i>With respect to sellers</i>	<p>Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act 1074/2000 (estate agency and letting agency agreement):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By law the estate agent must give to the seller all the information that the agent knows or should know will affect the decision to make the transaction. This means that the agent must provide, among others, a price estimate and information about tax implications. <p>The Consumer Disputes Board deals with complaints about residential sales and about agents: see 11.2 below.</p>
	<i>With respect to tenants</i>	<p>Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act 1074/2000: estate agency and letting agency agreement.</p> <p>Government Decree on information to be provided in the marketing of dwellings 130/2001: see 6.3 above.</p> <p>The Consumer Disputes Board deals with complaints about residential tenancies and about agents: see 11.2 below.</p>
	<i>With respect to landlords</i>	<p>Real Estate and Letting Agent Transactions Act 1074/2000: estate agency and letting agency agreement.</p> <p>The Consumer Disputes Board deals with complaints about residential tenancies and about agents: see 11.2 below.</p>
<p>If relevant, which existing marketing practices are non-compliant with national consumer legislation?</p>	<p>Information is not available</p>	
<p>If relevant, which existing marketing practices are non-compliant with EU consumer legislation?</p>	<p>Information is not available</p>	
<p>Are there existing marketing practices detrimental to consumers, even if not necessarily illegal, in both domestic and cross-border transactions?</p>	<p>Information is not available</p>	

11.2 Consumer complaints

Table 27: Consumer complaints

<p>How often do <u>buyers and sellers</u> complain due to arising legal issues (e.g. invalid contract, missing information, hidden defects, missing building permit, delay in payment)?</p>	<p>The Consumer Disputes Board receives 400-500 complaints annually regarding sales of apartments (from business to consumer or between private parties) and estate agents. District courts deal with 500-1,000 disputes relating to real estate annually. National statistics about disputes relating to sales of apartments (housing-company shares) do not seem to be available from district courts. Most legal disputes concerning sales of used dwellings are about hidden defects.</p>
<p>How often do <u>tenants and landlords</u> complain due to arising legal issues (e.g. invalid contract, missing information, increase of rent, termination of the contract without proper notice)?</p>	<p>The Consumer Disputes Board receives around 350 complaints annually concerning residential tenancies (between private parties or complaints about business-landlords). By far the most common cause of dispute is an unreturned deposit used for covering repairs. District courts deal with a steady 25,000 residential-tenancy claims annually: 20,000-22,000 claims concern arrears of rent. There are very few cases concerning increase or decrease of rent; termination – rescission – and damages make up more than 2,500 of other claims besides those for rent arrears. District courts resolve 99.3% of civil cases in the preliminary stages.</p>
<p>Are consumer complaints against a professional service provider frequent, in particular as regards the fees and quality or service?</p>	<p>Regionally, tens of complaints are made about estate agents annually (in 2012, around 50 complaints in the busiest Regional State Administrative Agency, Southern Finland). Besides written complaints, the Regional State Administrative Agencies receive complaints by phone. Written complaints most often relate to missing information about the dwelling and to poorly prepared documents.</p>
<p>To whom can consumers complain (e.g. local or national administration, consumer protection agencies)? And through which means (e.g. formal letter, online form)? Is the procedure effective (in particular: average time needed for reply, solutions available for redress)?</p>	<p>A consumer may complain about estate and letting agents to one of the six Regional State Administrative Agencies (the form is free, and for written complaints forms can be downloaded). The Consumer Disputes Board deals with complaints about sales and tenancies concerning residential property and about agents. Complaints to The Consumer Disputes Board must be in writing (by mail or online). The Board hears the other side (in writing) and decides mostly as a five-member panel. Among the many sections of the Board are the following three housing-related sections: real estate and housing transactions in which the opposing party is a business; housing transactions between private persons; and rented housing and right-of-occupancy. The median duration of the process in these three sections is displayed in the figure below (the smaller value – the first pillar – from 2017 and the larger value – the second pillar – from 2016). Generally, the recommendations of the Board are followed by a reported 80% of the businesses. District courts resolve 99.3% of civil cases in the preliminary stages within a few months, while cases decided as an outcome of a main hearing take more than a year.</p>

The median duration of cases in in The Consumer Disputes Board in 2017 and 2016 (months)



Section 11: real estate and housing transactions in which the opposing party is a business

Section 12: housing transactions between private persons

Section 13: rented housing and right-of-occupancy

Source: The Consumer Disputes Board