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Finland’s lesson is not how to build a timber building. It is how to build a market for timber construction.

Explore Finland – What can Belgium learn from Finland?

Sini Koskinen I Leading Specialist
Federation of the Finnish Woodworking Industries

1.10.2026





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Sini Koskinen

Leading Specialist,
Federation of the Finnish Woodworking Industries

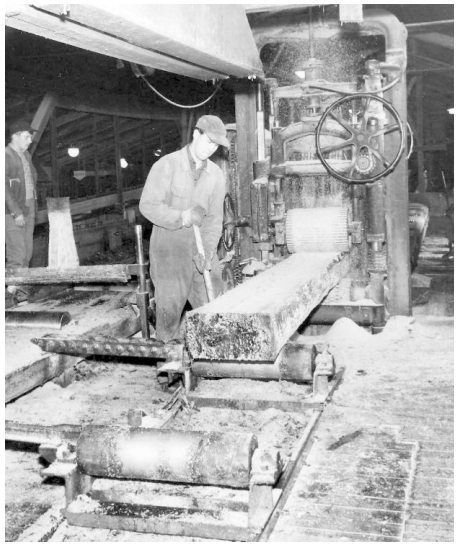
- Architect
- Background in public timber construction and national wood building programmes
- Focus areas: public procurement, low-carbon construction, circular economy and market development
- Working with municipalities, industry and policy makers to support timber construction
- In practice, I dream about a future where choosing timber feels obvious, not exceptional

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1. Finland has a long tradition in building with wood











- Finland has built with wood for centuries
- Timber construction is part of our architectural and technical tradition
- Our climate sets high demands for buildings and materials
- Durability, moisture safety and technical performance are essential

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2. Timber construction needs a strong ecosystem

- A successful timber market needs more than good products
- It needs clients, designers, industry, contractors and clear rules
- Each part of the value chain depends on the others
- A strong ecosystem makes it easier to develop repeatable and competitive solutions

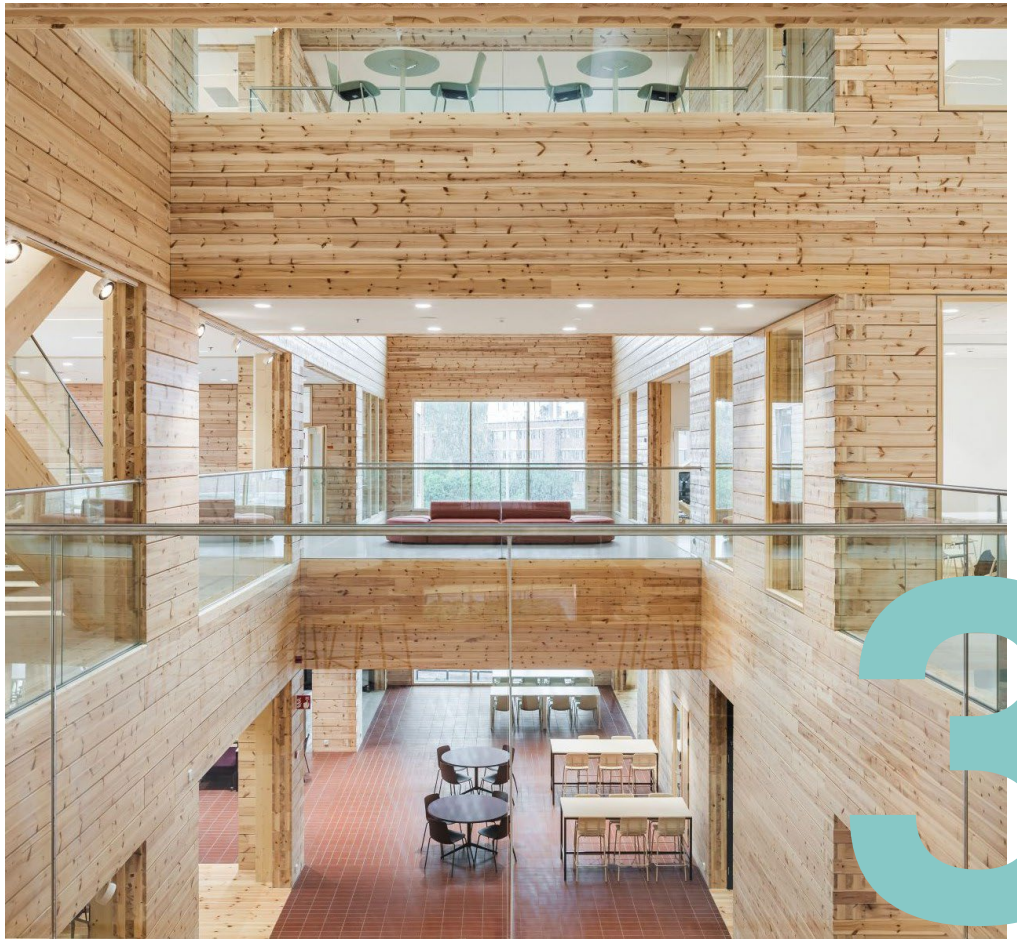


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A strong market is built by the whole value chain.

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3. Public construction has helped the market grow



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- Public buildings have been an important driver of timber construction in Finland
- Schools, day-care centres and other municipal buildings have created steady demand
- Public projects help companies gain experience and develop competitive solutions
- They also provide strong reference projects for international markets
- A strong export market is difficult to build without a credible home market

A strong home market opens doors abroad.

4. Policy helps, but policy alone is not enough

- Finland has used national programmes and targets to support timber construction
- Public procurement has been an important tool
- Low-carbon regulation is becoming more important
- But targets only work when they lead to real projects
- Clear rules and practical tools are needed to turn policy into action
- Political goals need measurable targets — “promote timber construction” is not enough
- For example: 40% of new public buildings built in timber is a target that can be followed



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A target on paper does not build a building

— but a measurable target can drive action.

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5. The main barriers are not only technical



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- Cost and the fear of higher costs
- Lack of experience and confidence
- Procurement models that favour familiar solutions
- Risk is often seen as higher when the solution is less familiar
- Many barriers are related to the process, not the material itself

The problem is often not the wood. It is the process around it.

6. Skills are a key part of market growth

- Timber construction needs skills across the whole value chain
- Designers and engineers need technical knowledge
- Clients and municipalities need confidence to choose timber
- Contractors and project managers need experience
- Education and training help reduce risk and improve quality
- **Wood Construction Academy Finland** can be shown here as one practical example.



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A market cannot grow faster than its skills

7. What can Belgium learn from Finland?



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- Build the market step by step
- Create demand, especially through public projects
- Invest in skills across the whole value chain
- Use measurable targets, not only general ambitions
- Make sure the process fits the material

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Turning policy into practical tools



How to get your municipality building climate-smart with wood – checklist

The more of these actions your municipality has in place, the stronger the foundation for sustainable timber construction.

- ☐ Timber construction is included in the municipal strategy
- ☐ The strategy includes clear targets and timelines
- ☐ Emission reduction targets are included in strategies and action plans
- ☐ Zoning avoids unnecessary restrictions on timber construction
- ☐ Zoning enables and encourages timber construction
- ☐ Land allocation criteria include material or carbon footprint targets
- ☐ Incentives are used, for example lower land prices or additional building rights for timber projects
- ☐ Local building regulations support timber construction
- ☐ Carbon footprint calculation is required in public projects
- ☐ Procurement considers life-cycle costs and quality, not only price
- ☐ Market dialogue is organised before procurement
- ☐ Carbon neutrality is included in tender evaluation criteria
- ☐ Two-stage procurement models are used, where carbon performance can affect which proposals move forward
- ☐ The municipality has completed or started at least one public timber building
- ☐ Decision-makers and public officials share a common view on the role of timber construction in the municipality

Turning policy into practical tools



Guide for municipal strategy



Guide for land policy and planning



Guide for market dialogue

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And this is what it creates...



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Thank you!

Sini Koskinen
Federation of Finnish Woodworking Industries
sini.koskinen@puutuoteteollisuus.fi

https://kestavastipuusta.fi/

