



# Private roads in Finland



**In Finland, roads are divided into three categories: state roads, municipal street network roads and private roads. Private roads are an important part of the road network. There are many more private roads in Finland than publicly owned roads.**

## What is a private road?

A private road is a road built and maintained with the funds of landowners and it is generally intended for the shareholders' own use only. According to right of public access, walking and cycling are allowed for everyone, regardless of their ownership and participation in the maintenance of the road. In Finland, private roads are often owned jointly by many real estate properties and they are also jointly maintained.

Private roads are private property, but they are of great benefit to society as a whole. Among other things, they are important for commerce, recreational use and rescue operations. A good road also increases the value of the property.

## What is a road maintenance association?

Property owners can set up a road maintenance association to make it easier to manage a common road. The association

is a community of road shareholders established for the maintenance and administration of the road. The association, that is the shareholders, are jointly responsible for road maintenance and traffic safety.

The association organizes meetings where shareholders decide on matters by voting. Decisions apply to all members of the association, even to those who are not present at meetings. However, decisions must treat all shareholders equally. Membership in the association and road rights of way are usually obtained when purchasing a property alongside of a private road. Road rights of way mean the right to access one's own property by traversing other properties.

## Road tolls

When the deal is being concluded, the seller must inform the buyer of the property's road rights of way and shareholding in the association. The property owner is obliged to contribute to the

cost of maintaining the common road. For those who do not pay the toll voluntarily, the municipality may charge tolls through debt recovery. This means that the shareholder's assets can be expropriated against unpaid tolls.

Tolls are used to maintain the road and repair damages. The shareholder's share of costs and decision-making power are calculated according to the use of the road and the benefit gained from it. The more the road is used, the higher the property owner's share of road maintenance costs. There is official guidance on fair cost sharing.

## Rights and obligations of a shareholder

Shareholders have a right to participate in, and take up matters of their concern

at the meetings of the road maintenance association. They can influence the decisions of the association in proportion to their shares.

Shareholders are obliged to pay the toll on time. They must inform the association of their address and any changes in the road use so that meeting invitations can reach them and tolls can be calculated correctly.

## Additional information

Private roads and road maintenance associations are for shareholders. If you need more information, contact your local representative. Further information on private roads and functions of the road maintenance association can also be obtained from the Finnish Road Association, the Finnish Forest Centre and the municipality of the property.



Kaakkoisen Suomen yksityistiestön parantaminen – Kaakon tiet -hanke  
Kaakkois-Suomen yksityistiestön siltainfran parantaminen – Kaakon sillat -hanke