

Turning Expert Source Material into a Defence Market Guide

Finland market entry / research synthesis / industry intelligence

Context

The source material consisted of a recorded defence-market bootcamp speech, a draft transcript that required repeated verification, and the speaker's presentation deck. The task was to turn those materials into a standalone English-language guide for companies evaluating entry into Finland's defence market.

Source workflow

Recorded speech -> draft transcript -> presentation deck -> verified English publication

My contribution

- Reviewed the video and repeatedly cross-checked the draft transcript for accuracy.
- Reconciled information across the speech, transcript and presentation slides.
- Selected, reorganised and clarified the material for a practical decision-maker audience.
- Structured and wrote the complete English-language publication.
- Defender Media subsequently translated the English version into Ukrainian.

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Publication screenshots; article text follows

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How to enter Finland's defence market: an ultimate guide from Mikko-Pekka Hanski of DTI

Key takeaways from the presentation at Calibrated's Defence Tech Comms Bootcamp

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As a resource11 minSave



Finland is not an easy market to enter, especially for foreign defence companies. Procurement procedures are complex, and trust needs to be built long before contract discussions begin.

Who influences procurement decisions in Finland, where commercial opportunities can be found, and what Ukrainian companies need to do to be taken seriously by Finnish decision-makers? Mikko-Pekka Hanski, co-founder of investment firm Double Tap Investments Ltd, addressed these questions during the May edition of the Defence Tech Comms Bootcamp. Go Global, organised by Calibrated & Tech PR School.

With the author's permission, Defender Media publishes Hanski's key advice for founders of Ukrainian defence tech companies looking to build closer ties with Finland's defence ecosystem.

Understanding the Finnish mindset

To enter Finland's defence market, companies must understand how Finns communicate, make decisions and view national security.

- Silence signals attention.** Finns often process information quietly. Do not fill every pause. A quiet Finnish counterpart often means that the person is listening and thinking. Calm, precise communication builds credibility.
- Practical users carry authority.** Sergeants, platoon leaders, technical officers and lifecycle managers are those who shape procurement outcomes. Do not sell to generals. Convince the people who will operate and maintain your product.
- Practical capability matters more than status.** Rank, headlines and political visibility will not compensate for an inadequate product. Finnish users will examine reliability, maintenance requirements, interoperability and performance in temperatures that can fall below -25°C.
- Do not arrive as Finland's saviour from Russia.** As they say in Finland, "the threat always came from the east". Finland has planned around risks from its eastern border for generations. Every parking garage in Helsinki is a shelter. Every bridge can be mined.
- Defence is embedded in society.** Military preparedness, ~900K reservists, civil-defence infrastructure and national resilience form part of Finland's security model. Understand this system before proposing how to improve it.
- Knowing some culture enhances business.** Finland's first men's Ice Hockey World Championship victory in 1995 is sometimes described humorously as another Finnish

- Joint capabilities, effects and systems operating across several domains.
- Logistics: supply chains, sustainment and security of supply.
- ISAR: intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance.
- C4: command, control, communications and computers.

By future wave: where attention is moving

- Unmanned systems, including UAVs, UGVs and other uncrewed platforms.
- Artificial intelligence, robotics and autonomy.
- Sensor-to-shooter integration.
- Commercial off-the-shelf and dual-use technologies.
- Space and cyber capabilities.



Determine the exact service, function and capability area your solution serves before approaching the Finnish Defence Forces.

Investors active in defence-adjacent capital

Finland offers several routes into defence-adjacent investment, research funding and innovation programmes.

Defence-first investors

- Double Tap Investments (DTI)
- Tea - Finland's state-owned investment company and a NATO Innovation Fund co-investor.
- AIMO Innovation Fund (NFI)

Deep-tech generalists

- Lifeline Ventures
- Maki VC
- Inventor
- OpenOcean
- Voima Ventures
- Icebreaker
- Finnish Business Angels Network (FIBAN)

These investors may consider dual-use companies. Pure defence businesses can face restrictions imposed by a fund's limited partners.

Useful names

- Oles Khudoba - Double Tap Investments
- Kaith Borend - Tea
- Taru Puhelinen-Laita - FIBAN

Family offices

A small group of Finnish families with industrial backgrounds provides quieter forms of capital. These investors can be highly influential within the Finnish industrial ecosystem.

Research and development

Finland has an integrated research ecosystem: VTT, Aalto University, Tampere University and other

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- **Do not arrive as Finland's saviour from Russia.**

As they say in Finland, “the threat always came from the east”. Finland has planned around risks from its eastern border for generations. Every parking garage in Helsinki is a shelter. Every bridge can be mined.

- **Defence is embedded in society.**

Military preparedness, ~900K reservists, civil-defence infrastructure and national resilience form part of Finland's security model. Understand this system before proposing how to improve it.

- **Knowing some culture enhances business.**

Finland's first men's Ice Hockey World Championship victory in 1995 is sometimes described humorously as another Finnish “Independence Day”. The Unknown Soldier film, The Moomins, created by Tove Jansson – add these topics in your conversations with Finnish people, and you get a lot of open doors.

- **Bring the human story behind the technology.**

Finnish partners will evaluate the engineering, but they also trust people they can imagine on a sauna bench. Bring your story, your family, and your personal reason for being in defence.

Selected market-entry points

Finland's defence ecosystem is compact and closely connected. For a Ukrainian company, the market has three power centres and one formal innovation entry point.

Who matters

- **The state and defence administration.**

The central actors are the Ministry of Defence (PLM), Finnish Defence Forces (PV), Defence Forces Logistics Command (PVLOGL), Ministry for Foreign Affairs (UM), Business Finland and VTT. They shape policy, capability requirements, procurement, research and funding.

- **The defence industry.**

Key companies include Patria, Insta, Bittium, Nokia, Telia, Sako, Nammo Lapua, Millog, Saab Finland and Lockheed Martin Finland. A Finnish industrial partner can provide integration capacity, local maintenance, regulatory knowledge and access to established networks.

- **The formal innovation entry point: PVINYX.**

The Finnish Defence Forces Innovation Unit connects the Defence Forces with companies, researchers and other innovation actors. PVINYX is a gateway, not a buyer.

Before pitching: locate your solution

- **By domain: service-level fit.**

Land - Army; Sea - Navy; Air - Air Force.

- **By function: cross-service fit.**

Joint capabilities; logistics; ISTAR; C4.

- **By future wave: where attention is moving.**

Unmanned systems; artificial intelligence, robotics and autonomy; sensor-to-shooter integration; dual-use technologies; space and cyber capabilities.

Rapid procurement and finding the right entry point

Since 2022, Finland has also used faster routes for capabilities made more urgent by the war in Ukraine, including Counter-UAS, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and electronic warfare. These procurements are smaller than major strategic programmes, but they are real opportunities.

Who do you actually call?

- **Substance: What do you bring?**

Your capability area determines the relevant branch and Inspector. Each area belongs to a different part of the Defence Forces. Contacting the wrong audience will usually end the conversation.

- **Maturity: How ready is the technology?**

Technology Readiness Level

- TRL 1-3 - Research: Finnish Defence Research Agency
- TRL 4-6 - Development: relevant Branch Inspector
- TRL 6-8 - Innovation: PVINYX, the faster innovation route
- TRL 9 - Finished product: Defence Forces Logistics Command tenders and HILMA

Conclusion: Find where you fit

The Finnish market is small, technically demanding and relationship-driven. Experience in another Nordic country does not automatically transfer. Start with dialogue. Build interest, ask for feedback, adapt the proposal and return with stronger evidence.

Success depends on finding the correct entry point and showing exactly how your capability fits Finland's existing defence system.

Full publication available from the linked screenshot page.