



**SUOMI
FINLAND**

KOREA MARKET UPDATE 2026

A Market Guide for Finnish Food company

Agenda



1. Korea Market at a Glance
2. Online Retail is growing faster
3. Pop-up culture in Korea
4. Korean consumers : Why do trends move so fast?
5. Korean consumers : What they are looking for?
6. Import dependence ≠ Market opportunity : What Finnish offerings fit.
7. Understanding Korean business groups (Korea's Conglomerates)
8. Key Takeaways for Finnish companies
9. How we can support your journey to Korea
10. Market Entry Readiness

1. Korea at a glance



51.7 M

Population

Finland : 5.6 M

€ 1.7 T

GDP

Finland : € 310 B

€ 33 K

GDP per capita

Finland : € 55 K

2.6 %

GDP growth

Finland : 0.8 – 1 %

Korea is a sizeable consumer market.

2. Online Retail is growing faster

ONLINE
+11.8%

OFFLINE
+0.4%

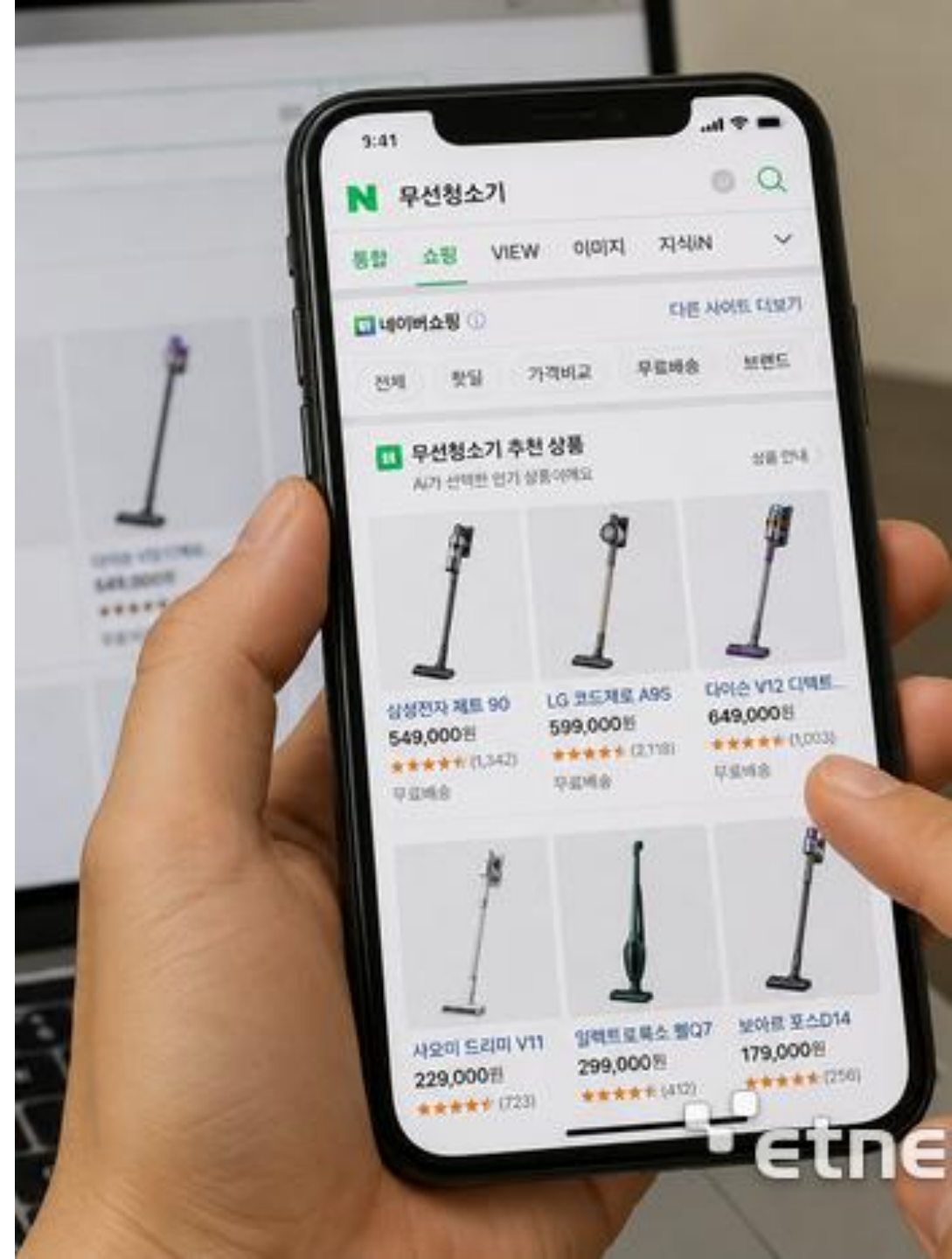
Retail Sales Growth

59% of sales at major retailers were online in 2025

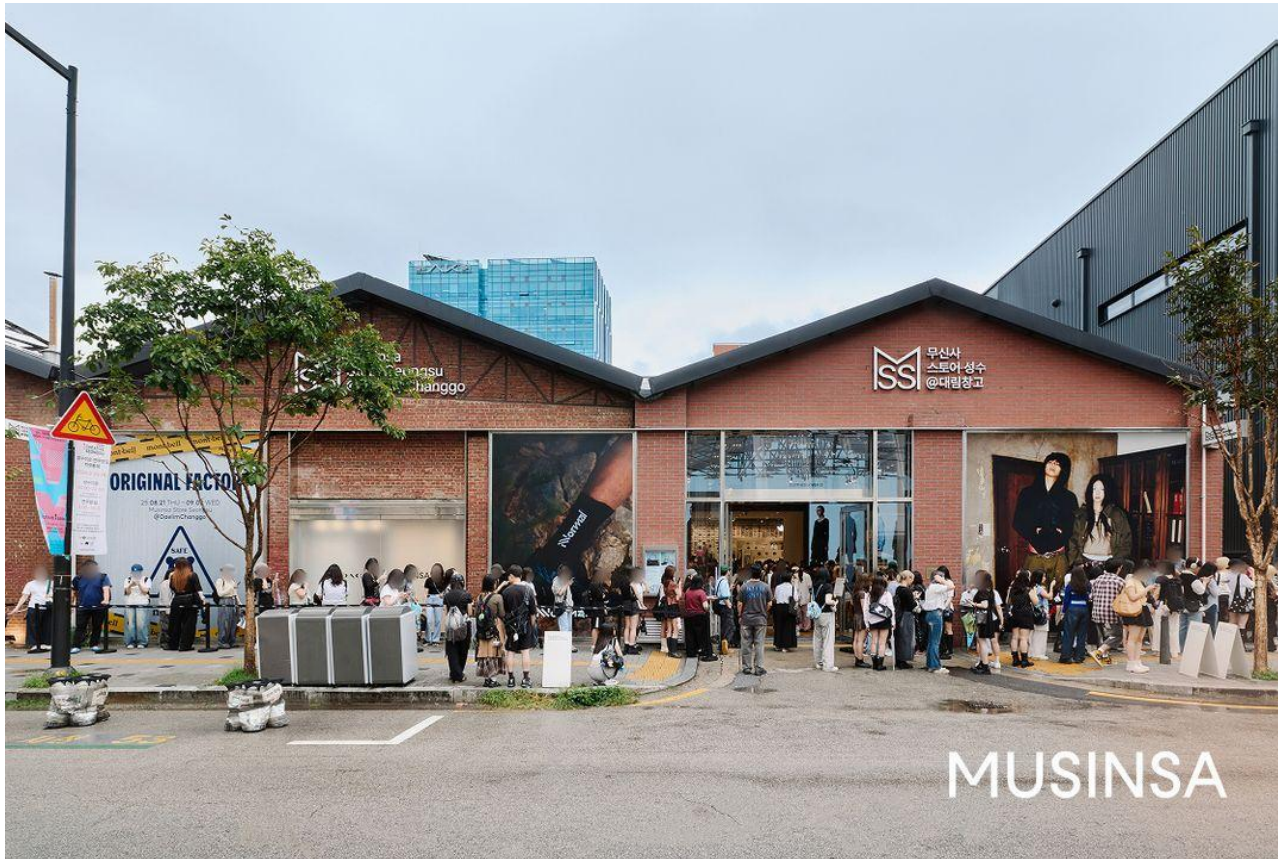
77.5% of online shopping transactions were made via mobile

Brands entering Korea, being digitally visible – and particularly mobile-friendly – is very important.

Source: Ministry of Trade, MOTIR major retailer survey / Statistics Korea online shopping survey.



3. Pop-up culture in Korea



SUOMI
FINLAND



Ex. Lotte Xylitol Gum Pop-up in Nov.2025

- What is Xylitol, Birch forest media room
- Pre-reserved Dental check
- customizing products, drinks and bakery using Finnish xylitol

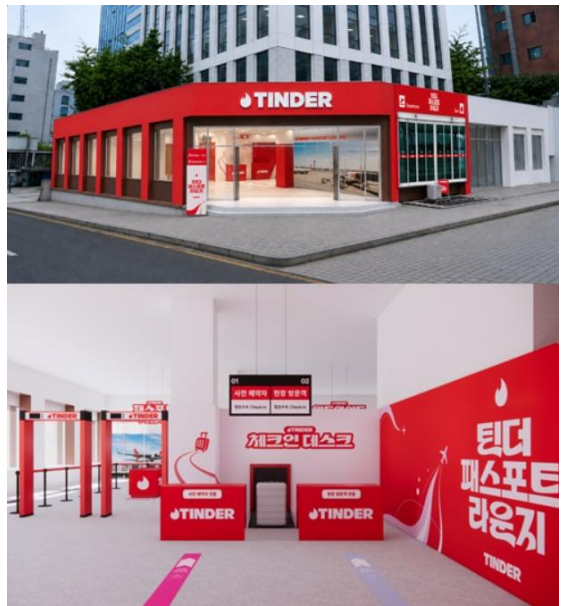
Vodka High-ball brand pop-up



Lots of Beauty brand pop-ups



Tinder – blind dating pop-up



K-pop idol' comeback pop-up



Olive Better Wellness pop-up : Eat well project



Charactor pop-ups



Ex. **Moomin Pop-up in Sinsegae Gangnam Aug.2026** – Photo booth, Customized T-shirts, Drawing my moomin, Photo spots, Luck draw for buyers, etc.



- **More than 3,077 Pop-ups** in Jan–Nov 2025 / 88% in Seoul / counted by one platform
- **Collaboration** is part of the same culture
- Brand × Character / IP / Entertainment / Platform

Pop-ups have become a major channel for brand discovery and experience.

4. Korean Consumers : Why do trends move so fast ?

- Discover : Newness
- Experience : FOMO / Limited
- Share : Social discovery and sharing
- Follow : Fast trend cycle

Pop-ups are increasingly used for brand discovery and consumer engagement, not only sales.

Korean consumers are highly exposed to fast-moving digital trends, accelerating brand discovery and diffusion.

5. Korean Consumers : What they are looking for?

HEALTH

Protein, low sugar, functional food, natural ingredients, gut health

~85% of households consumed health-functional foods in 2025

CONVENIENCE

Ready-to-eat / ready-to-cook / delivery / small portion / easy consumption

49% – willing to pay extra for convenience

45% – prefer a larger/bulk-size product at the same price

Premiumization & VALUE

Premiumization and value consciousness coexist

Planned consumption with a purpose

6. Import dependence ≠ Market opportunity

: Where can Finnish offerings fit?

Most import dependence

Wheat , Corn, Seed oil, Sugar, Coffee, Tropical fruits, Nuts

Finnish Opportunity

- Oats & Rye (vs. Canada, Australia, Sweden)
- Berries (vs. USA, Chile)
- Seafood (vs. Norway, Russia, Chile, Vietnam)
- Health & Wellness food (vs. USA, Japan, Australia)
- Premium bakery and processed food (vs. France, USA, Germany)

Import dependence creates demand – but differentiation creates opportunity.

7. Understanding Korean business groups (conglomerates)

	Lotte	Shinsegae	Hyundai	GS Retail (LG)	CJ Group	Hanwha	Samsung	SK	Other	
CVS										
Supermarket										
Hypermarket										
Department Store										
Warehouse Club										
Ecom										
Homeshopping										
Restaurant	 	 			 					
Food Service										

8. Key Takeaways for Finnish companies

1. Evaluate the Pros & Cons

The right partner matters more than the biggest partner.

2. Be prepared to work with big players

In many cases, large Korean retailers and groups work through local suppliers, importers or distributors.

3. Stay engaged

A local partnership is only the beginning – not the end.

4. Leverage Korea's fast-moving consumer culture.

Build momentum and take advantage of market response

9. How we can support your journey to Korea

Finnish F&B Showcase



Invite importers, introducing brands , providing product tasting and having feedbacks

Annual Importer Networking



Invite importers/distributors, retails in F&B and Consumer goods industry to share latest info.

Nordic Cooperation



B2B workshop and Co-promotion
Retail-Sales promotion

Support

- General Market insight
- Business matchmaking
- Partner identification
- Events / showcases
- Market follow-up

What's next ?

- Finnish Drink promotion (TBC)
- Finnish Seafood Delegation Study visit and Fair (1-7. Nov)
- Sauna Forum and Finnish Lifestyle showcase (TBC)

10. Korea Readiness Checklist

Product

- Korean labeling
- Ingredients compliance
- Shelf life
- Packaging
- Product format

Brand

- Brand story
- Nordic vs Finnish positioning
- Korean consumer relevance
- Digital content
- Pop-up potential

Commercial

- Target retail price
- Distributor margin
- Retail margin
- MOQ
- Logistics

Market

- Importer identified
- Distributor identified
- Target retailer identified
- Competitor benchmark
- First-year marketing budget

Tervetuloa !



Kiitos.
감사합니다 Gamsahamnida.

Gloria Choi

Advisor , F&N and Consumer goods

Economic and Commercial team, Embassy of Finland in S.Korea

Gloria.choi@gov.fi

24.8.2026

SUOMI
FINLAND