

Home accessories in Finland



Finnpartnership

2018

Image: Myfashionlifestyle blog

A decline in the Finnish production of home accessories opens up new opportunities for exporters from developing countries. Additionally, Finnish exports of home accessories make Finland a possible entry point for reaching surrounding markets, when the exports supplied many other European destinations. This fact-sheet provides specifications for the home accessories products in the Finnish market.

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A. Product description

1. Language for home accessory products in Finnish

In English	Candle	Storage	Basket	Box	Photo frame	Decoration	Casket
In Finnish	Kynttilä	Säilytys	Kori	Laatikko	Valokuvakehys	Koriste	Lipas
In Finnish plural	Kynttilät	Säilytykset	Korit	Laatikot	Valokuvakehykset	Koristeet	Lippaat

2. Home accessory product description

Sizes of home accessories vary widely depending on type of products and on exporter's offer.

Product	Material and production method	Function and quality
 <p>Candles</p>	<p>The quality of a candle depends on the quality of the raw material, including paraffin wax, beeswax, mineral oil and a polymer (gel candles). The cotton wick (made of cotton) should suit the candle type, candle diameter, manufacturing process, and burning mass.</p>	<p>According to the European Candle Association, a good candle has impeccable burning characteristics: bright and steady flame, ideal wick curvature, no carbon black in home from candle burning, no dripping, adherence to the nominated burning time, and minimum wax remaining. Regular sizes are 2.2x27cm/2.2x35cm/6-7x10cm/6-7x15cm.</p>
 <p>Storages</p>	<p>Storage products may consist of boxes, baskets, and containers made from materials, i.e. natural fibres (i.e. bamboo, rattan), plastic, paper, wood, and fabric.</p>	<p>Basic storage products are usually designed for functionality, with a basic shape, material, and price. In higher segments, storage products are also widely used as quality decorative pieces made from high-end materials and employing multiple production methods.</p>
 <p>Decorations</p>	<p>Decorative products may consist of statuettes, (photo) frames, caskets, and cases for jewellery made from materials, i.e. wood, ceramic, stoneware, pottery, or base metal (i.e. copper, zinc, tin).</p>	<p>Basic as well as higher-end decoration products are used more for decorative purposes than for functionality. Hence, the most important quality of decoration items is appearance. Accessories differ greatly in shape, material, price, and production methods.</p>
 <p>Seasonal/party decorations</p>	<p>Seasonal and party decorations may consist of Christmas, Easter, festivals, Vappu (1st May), or other entertainment articles made from glass, wood, and other materials.</p>	<p>Basic as well as higher-end seasonal and party decoration products are used more for decorative purposes than for functionality. Therefore, the most important quality of seasonal and party decorations is appearance. As they vary widely according to tradition, the products come in different sizes, shapes, prices, and materials.</p>

B. Home accessories market in Finland

1. Finnish brands of home accessories

There are popular Finnish brands and smaller design brands. [Finlayson](#), [Pentik](#), [Balmuir](#), [Iittala](#), [Aarikka](#), and [Casa](#) (Stockmann's brand) are popular brands in the middle to higher-end ranges. [Kotikulta](#) ([Tokmanni](#)'s brand) and House ([S-group](#)'s brand) are also well-known in the lower-end range.



Finlayson



Casa Stockmann



Iittala



House



Balmuir



Pentik

Small brands in Finland are divided into middle-end and higher-end ranges, i.e. [Momono](#), [Artek](#), [Finnmari](#), and [Nougat](#). [Havi](#), [Desico](#), [Puttipaja](#), and [Kynttlä-Tuote Oy](#) specialize in making candles. Other small design brands are: [Antrei Hartikainen](#), [Be&liv](#), [Inno](#), [Katriina Nuutinen](#), [Palaset](#), [Woodnotes](#), and [Verso Design](#).

2. Imported products

There are large chain stores, that are operated in Finland, and design brands sold in retailers. Popular names are (from lower-end to middle- and higher-end ranges, in each country's category):

- Swedish brands [IKEA](#), [H&M Home](#), [Hemtex](#), [Indiska](#);
- Danish brand [Flying Tiger Copenhagen](#), [Jysk](#), [Sirius Home](#), [Living Georg Jensen](#), [Nomess](#);
- Swiss brand [Spirella](#), and import/corporated with developing countries [Day](#), [Nest Factory](#).



Indiska



Living Georg Jensen



Day

3. Retailers

[K-Citymarket](#) (belonging to [K-group](#)), [Prisma](#) and [Sokos](#) ([S-group](#)), [Tokmanni](#), and [Stockmann](#) are the main retailers of home accessories in Finland. Among those, Stockmann offers middle- to higher-end products, while the others sell lower-end and middle-end products. These retailers sell their own brands, Finnish design brands, and imported products.

There are stores and online shops that sell products collecting from big Finnish brands or small firms/individual artists, i.e. [Finnish Design Shop](#), [Seven Art](#), [Hobby Hall](#), and [Hongkong](#).



K-citymarket



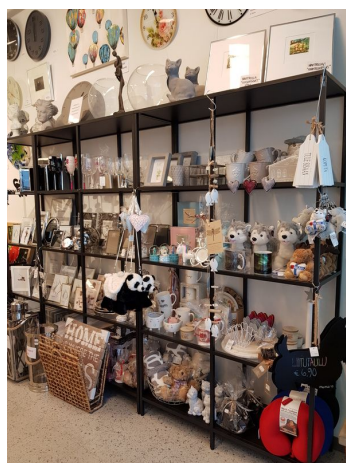
Prisma



Tokmanni



Stockmann



Seven Art



Seven Art

C. Retail price

In the Finnish market, prices of home accessories may differ substantially, based mainly on the product's size, composition, and design. Imported products will be sold to consumers in Finland at prices that are many times higher than the selling prices of exporters. Consumer prices are approximately 4-6.5 times the free-on-board (FOB) prices in its country of origin.

Besides energy, labour, and transport costs, FOB prices depend heavily on the availability and prices of raw materials. Price increases of raw materials are not usually passed on to consumers directly, instead, are deducted from margins of exporters, importers, and retailers.

Table 1: Indicative consumer prices per segment of home accessories in Finland

Product	Brand	Price	Product	Brand	Price
Lower-end range			Middle- to higher-end ranges		
Chandelier candle Per unit	IKEA 2.2x20cm	€0.5	Chandelier candle Per unit	Casa Stockmann	€1,95
	Kotikulta 2.2x27cm	€0.9		Desico	€0.7 - 2.75
	Havi 2.3x24cm	€0.59		Pentik 2.2x30cm	€1.5
Storage	IKEA	€0.7 - 35	Storage 70x140cm	Pentik	€8.5 - 89
	Kotikulta	€1.5 - 10		Finlayson	€22 - 35
	House	€4.5 - 27		Momono	€13 - 88
	Jysk	€0.5 - 24		Casa Stockmann	€3.8 - 40
Decoration (including seasonal/ party decoration)	Kotikulta	€1.19-15	Decoration	Iittala	€20 - 149
	IKEA	€1 - 25		Aarikka	€8.5 - 69
	House	€1 - 25		Pentik	€3.5 - 89
	Jysk	€2 - 17		Casa Stockmann	€6 - 47

Additional information

For detailed prices of home accessories, please refer to the websites of [Ikea](#), [Kotikulta](#), [House](#), [Jysk](#), [Stockmann](#), [Finlayson](#), [Pentik](#), [Balmuir](#), [Finnish Design Shop](#), [Seven Art](#), [Hobby Hall](#), [Iittala](#), [Aarikka](#), and [Momono](#).

D. Channels to bring home accessories into Finland

1. Direct contact with buyers through trade fairs



[Forma](#) - meeting place for professional sellers and buyers of lifestyle products. Hosted in Helsinki, Finland.



[Habitare](#) - annual furniture, design, and interior decoration event in Finland, offering experiences and ideas on interior decoration, and on the functioning and look of homes and other spaces.

However, the following trade fairs, held in European countries, focus more on home accessories and offer opportunities to meet Finnish buyers.

- **Important international trade fairs for home accessory products in Europe:**
 - [Ambiente](#) - the world's important consumer goods trade fair. Hosted in Germany.
 - [Christmas world](#) - international trade fair for seasonal and festive decoration. Hosted in Germany.
 - [Maison et Objet](#) - the leading home decor fair connecting the international interior design and lifestyle community. Hosted in France.
 - [Tendence](#) - trade fair for consumer goods. Hosted in Germany.
 - [Casa](#) - trade fair for furnishing and interior design, including home accessories. Hosted in Austria.

Additional information

When visiting a trade fair, one should always have samples that are well-finished and properly labeled. These samples need to represent product quality and showcase skills to potential buyers.

2. Market information and promotion

- *Candles:*

Candles are no longer just functional items but have become decorative home accessories, influenced by home decoration trends. Besides appearance, scent is also of importance.



Low-end segment: basic candles are normally imported in simple consumer packaging, packed in sets, and stating the burning time.



Mid-end segment: fancy candles are typically used as gift articles. They are normally sold through department stores, specialty home accessories, and gift shops. Fancy candles are imported without consumer packing, and may carry a tag or sticker stating their brand names as well as any specific features, i.e. origin, material, burning time. Retailers often take care of the in-store promotion and will offer a branded carrier bag at cashier.



High-end segment: scented candles or other high-end candles are often sold under specific brand names in the market. The exporters often supply tailored products on request, including packaging. Retailers will offer them in display units in their shops.

- **Storages:**

Storage products are amongst the most important categories in home decoration. They are used for many purposes, i.e. to store jewellery, linen, laundry, toys, and for inside as well as outside.



Low-end segment: price and volume are the most important. Products are often offered in sets, stacked or nested to indicate their functional purposes. Low-end storages can be found at different types of outlets, from large chain interior stores (i.e. IKEA), to supermarkets (i.e. Prisma, K-Citymarket, Tokmanni) and lower-end department stores.



Mid-end segment: products are trendier than the lower-end segment. However, compared to the higher-end one, there is less focus on new/innovative shapes or handmade effects. Some material combinations (i.e. [wicker](#) and fabric) are used and accessories are added (i.e. screen-printed text).



High-end segment: products are often handmade and used intricate weaving techniques. Their 'origin' is well appreciated and promoted. They are normally displayed as stand-alone objects or as part of collections of decorative products, and promoted as beautiful gifts.

- **Decorations:**

Attractive consumer packaging is important, especially for home decorations that are intended to sell as gifts. Consumer packaging should attract attention, clearly show the contents - either by picture or by see-through packing - and contain information about the use of products. The packaging should match the design, image, quality, and price of products.



Low-end segment: products are often purchased to decorate or refresh home interior at low cost.



Mid-end segment: trends are decisive factors in the saleability of the products. They should promote a certain atmosphere or mood. This can be achieved by using special colors, materials, forms, fragrance, etc. All these tools should give customers a specific and personal feeling, such as 'cozy', 'relax', 'strong', 'active', etc.



High-end segment: consumers appreciate a fact that products are handmade, unique, and exclusive. Provided that their quality and finishing should be comparable to machine-made products. The emphasis in this segment lies on objects in small series, using innovative ideas. They must be clearly distinguishable by consumers with a strong individual preference for quality.

- *Seasonal/party decorations:*

Bonding, creating nostalgia and cosy atmosphere are part of this product type. Recently, people would like to make home cosy and tend to spend more money on items which can bring that feeling. Christmas is one of the main festivities in Finland. Other festivities are birthdays, school graduation, Easter, Mid-summer, and Vappu (Vappu is celebrated on the evening of 30 April and continues to 1 May, with Finnish traditional drinks and food).



Low-end segment: basic decoration is still popular. Cheap materials are used, i.e. plastic (rather than glass). Finishing of products is of basic quality. Products are often machine-made and standardized.



Mid-end segment: products are purchased to create the festive atmosphere, rather than to show one's identity. This segment is usually trend sensitive, but for Christmas/Easter articles, consumers remain rather conservative. Product design should, thus, stay within their comfort zone, such as use of traditional colors, like baubles in red, white, green, silver, and gold.



High-end segment: articles are made from a variety of materials, from paper maché, wood to glass. Handmade is important, as well as the possibility to add new items to old ones, instead of acquiring an entirely new collection.

‘Celebrations’ offers great opportunities for exporters from developing countries to adapt to a ‘moment’ market – a market that focuses on a moment in consumption rather than on a general functional or emotional consumer need and demand.

Additional information

Opportunities are mostly found in the mid-end and premium segments, as Finland is considered one of the mature markets. Any exporter entering a mature market, like Finland, may have to offer distinguished benefits from what consumers have already seen. It is crucial to pay special attention to design, accessories, and hand-weaving.

- A mature market is well segmented. In all segments of the market, sub-segments can be found. Most opportunities often come from higher-end segments. Designs, handmade, and branding are of utmost importance when targeting these segments. European mature markets are, for example, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and United Kingdom.

Generally, the low-end segment is dominated by products from cheap mass-production and it is very difficult to enter. If an exporter is able to consistently supply large quantities at low prices, large retail chains may be potential partners.

More information of market trends for home accessories can be found in this [CBI's document](#).

Promotion

- *Sustainability*: As in other mature markets, Finnish consumers are increasingly interested in products that are produced in a sustainable and ethical manner. Exporters should take into account of the importance of environmental issues and illegal issues, i.e. child labour abuse.
- In order to access the middle-end and premium segments, exporters need a promotion strategy, where the story of their products would be told. Features that can interest Finnish buyers are:
 - *Handmade*: home accessories can be handmade and are usually sold at a premium price compared to mechanically produced products.
 - *Promote health and nature*: the use of natural products can be promoted as a premium, i.e. using wood as raw material.
 - *Traditional designs or handicrafts*: home accessories can be made based on traditional and ethnic designs. These products are often purchased as arts and considered heirlooms.
- If a producer of home accessories from a developing country would like to export modern products (in terms of design) to Finland, it is essential to partner with Finnish/European buyers. It is very difficult for exporters to familiarize with Finnish taste in this small niche segment, hence Finnish or European buyers can assist with designs that are in harmony with Finnish fashion.

Additional information

Doing business in Finland:

- Adapt to the Finnish business culture

Finnish people consider punctuality as essential. Therefore, be consistent, punctual, reliable, and honest. That means replying in time to inquiries (within 48 hours), being open and realistic, as well as not making promises that might not be fulfilled. Physical contacts such as backslapping or putting hands on shoulders are not generally done.

Finnish partners also value the following factors in doing business: efficient negotiations, explicit offers and terms, consistent quality, punctuality, as well as compliance with law, contracts, and other specified requirements. In addition, product documentation should be ready and up-to-date. Visit this [link](#) for more information.

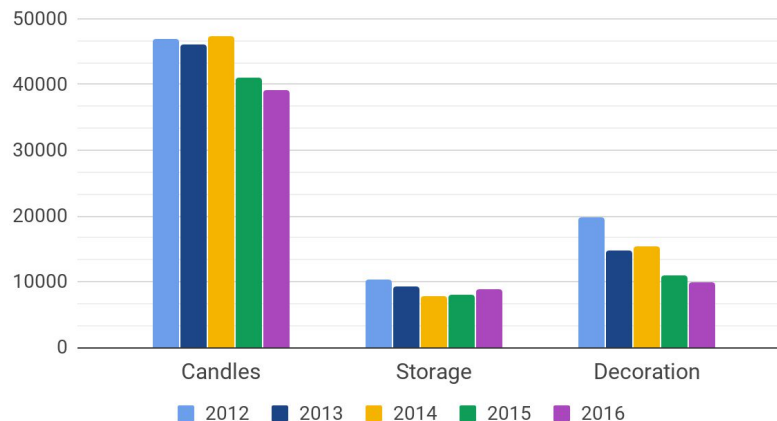
- Invest in communication

Finnish buyers will greatly appreciate if suppliers invest in professional communication, such as a good website, company brochure, product specifications, and business cards. Modern (free of charge) methods of communication to stay in touch with their buyers, e.g. LinkedIn, Skype and Facebook, are widely known and increasingly accepted as (additional) promotional tools.

E. Export and import of home accessories in Finland

Figure 1: Apparent demand for home accessories in Finland, value in € thousand

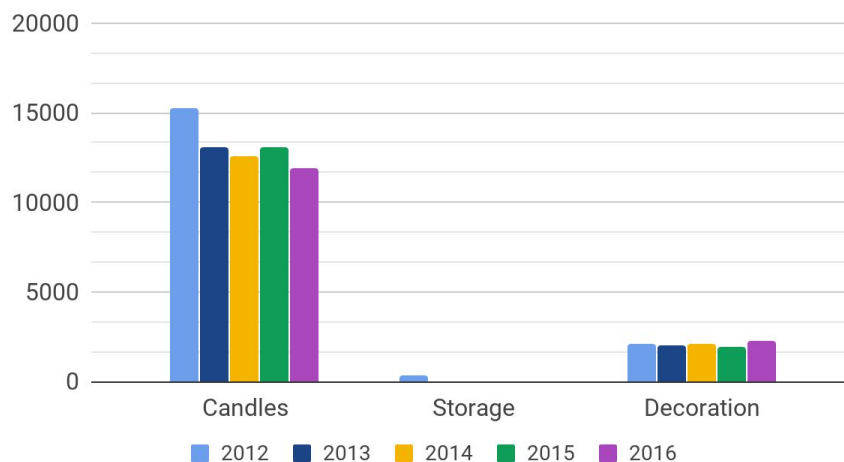
Source: calculated from Eurostat database



Apparent demand of a product is calculated by total of sold production plus import minus export of that product. Demand for candles in values were the highest among the home accessory products, about €40 million annually from 2012 to 2016. By contrast, storages were in low demand, at about €8 million annually. In total, demand for home accessories decreased, from nearly €77 million in 2012 to €57 million in 2016.

Figure 2: Sold production of home accessories in Finland, value in € thousand

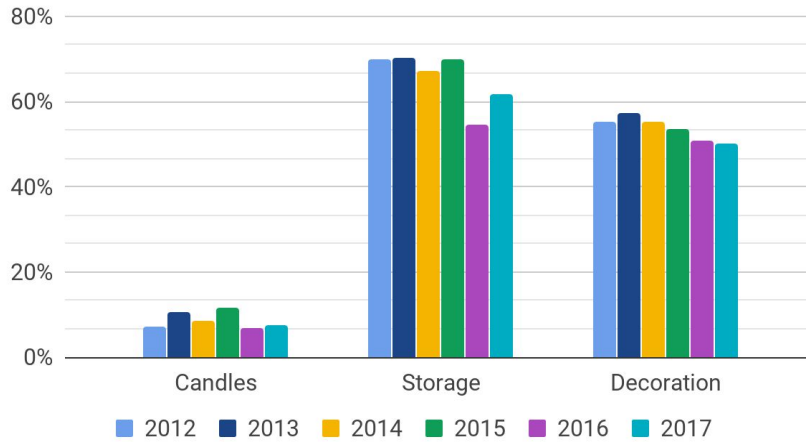
Source: Eurostat\Industry,Trade,Service\Statistics on the production of manufactured goods



From 2012 to 2016, production of candles in Finland decreased by 22%, from €15 million to over €11 million. Production of storages went down significantly, from about €300 thousand in 2012 to nearly zero. This large decline was likely to be replaced by imports, as demand did not change so much. Production of decorations remained quite stable at around €2 million annually.

Figure 3: Developing country share in Finland imports of home accessories, in % of total imports

Source: International Trade Center 2018 (Trade Map)

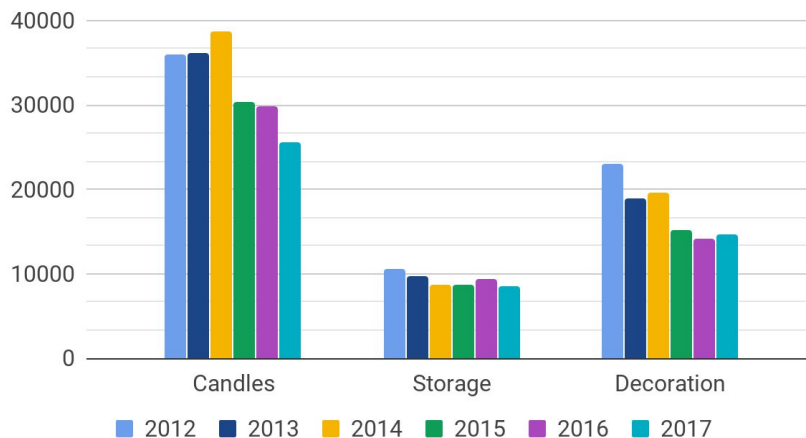


The figure 3 illustrates the fluctuation in imports of home accessories from developing countries in the period 2012 - 2017. Finland imported candles mostly from Poland, Estonia, Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States of America in 2017, explaining why imports from developing countries was only over 7%.

Imports of storages and decorations from developing countries in the period fluctuated, but remained at around 60% and 50%, respectively.

Figure 4: Imports of home accessories in Finland, value in € thousand

Source: International Trade Center 2018 (Trade Map)

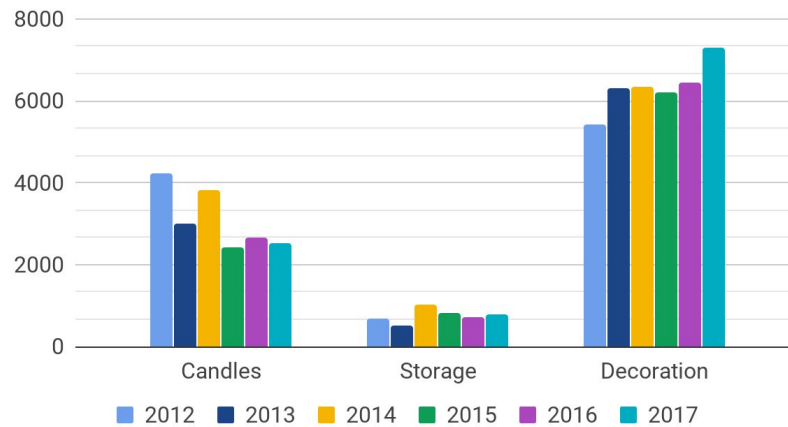


Values of home accessory products imported to Finland generally decreased. For candles, the import values reduced from about €35 million in 2012 to €25 million in 2017. Similar situation happened to decoration products, from €23 million to €14 million. Storage's import values remained at around €9 million annually.

Top 6 countries outside the European Union successfully made their ways to Finnish home accessory market during the period 2012 - 2017. These countries were China, Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Turkey, and Thailand. Top 6 countries in the European Union were German, Sweden, Estonia, Denmark, Netherlands, and Poland.

Figure 5: Exports of home accessories in Finland, value in € thousand

Source: International Trade Center2018 (Trade Map)



Of all products in this study, decorations brought the largest values when its export continuously increased in the period 2012 - 2017, from €5,5 million to over €7 million. Export values of storages slightly increased after 5 years but were at the lowest among home accessory products, about €700 thousand annually. Export values of candles decreased significantly from €4 million in 2012 to €2,5 million in 2017.

Finland's popular destinations for home accessories in the period were European countries, i.e. Sweden, Estonia, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, the United Kingdom, and Russia. This makes Finland a possible entry point to reach surrounding markets.

Note: Data extracted from [Eurostat](#) and [Trade Map](#). Due to the wide variety of decoration and storage products, the above data is for reference only.

F. Requirements for importing home accessories into Finland

1. Labeling

- Product's label on the outer box should include information concerning the product (i.e. order number, product code), producer, consignee, material(s) used, quantity, size, volume, and caution signs. Information on the carton should correspond to the packing list sent to importers.
 - Candles' labels should also include burning time.
 - Higher-end boxes and basketry should have their brands in the form of swing tags.
 - For all glassware and porcelain articles, it is strongly recommended to label all boxes with warning notices, i.e. "Fragile!" or "Handle with care!".
- On the product label, EAN/Barcodes are widely used within Europe. A small label on the bottom of each product with the name of its producer, country of origin, and material(s) used, which are the main information that consumers might need for their purchase. Importers often specify what information is needed on product labels or on the item itself. All labels must be in English.



2. Packaging

Home accessories should be packed in accordance with the importer's instructions. Every importer may have their own specific requirements related to the use of packaging materials, filling of cartons, palletisation, and stowing of containers. Exporters should ask for those specifications as part of the order.

The balance of packaging is between using maximum protection and avoiding excess materials (waste removal is a cost to buyers) or shipping 'air'. Proper packaging can minimize the risk of damaging through transportation shocks, fluctuations in temperature and humidity. Packaging dimensions and weight should make it easy to handle. Ideally, it should be possible to place the boxes or bales together on pallets.

In general, it is good marketing policy to have consumer packaging when supplying the middle-end or higher-end segments or when sold as gift products. This should match the design, quality and price of the product sold. Such packaging is usually designed by importers and it reflects their brand's identity. Exporters are not always responsible for attractive consumer packaging.






- **Candles:** candle packaging usually consists of firm corrugated carton boxes. Gift candles are often packed in containers of glass or other fancy materials.
- **Storage:** storage products are mostly flat-packed (collapsible) or stacked for transport. The better they fold or compact, the more space-efficient containers importers use, thus reducing their costs. Consumer packaging is relatively unimportant in this category when compared to the other products. Flat-packed items often come in a simple plastic cover for protection, and may be offered in sets.

- (Seasonal/party) decorations: decoration packaging usually consists of plastic wrapping to protect products from water and stains.

3. Legal requirements

General product safety	The General Product Safety Directive applies to all consumer products marketed in the EU. The purpose of this legislation is to ensure consumer safety.
Control on chemical substances - REACH	REACH , Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals, is the European chemical legislation that came into force in June 2007. It is the strictest law regarding chemical substances to date, concerning existing and new substances. There are sets of requirement for manufacturers in the EU and EU importers of chemicals and products containing chemicals. Information on REACH for companies established outside the EU.
Packaging and packaging waste. Directive 94/62/EC	EU packaging legislation restricts the use of certain heavy metals, among other requirements.
Wood packaging materials used for transport, including dunnage. Directive 2000/29/EC	The EU sets requirements for wood packaging materials (WPM) such as packing cases, boxes, crates, drums, pallets, box pallets, and dunnage (wood used to wedge and support non-wood cargo).
Prevention of illegal logging (FLEGT) Regulation (EC) 2173/2005	An EU Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance, and Trade (FLEGT) has been published to improve governance in wood-producing countries, and a licensing scheme is set up to ensure that only legally harvested timber is imported into the EU.
Liability for defective products. Directive 85/374/EEC	The Product Liability Directive states that EU importers are liable for the products that they put on the European market. EU importers, however, can in principle pass on a claim to producers or exporters.

4. Non-legal requirements

	<p>The Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) is a supply chain management system to drive the social compliance and improvements of suppliers. BSCI implements the principle international labour standards protecting workers' rights.</p>
	<p>Forest Stewardship Council - FSC certification assures the environmentally appropriate use of forest.</p>
	<p>Besides social and environmental aspects of production, Fair Trade certification also covers a fair wage to labor involved in the production of candles. This is still a small yet growing segment. Fair Trade candles are often made of alternative base materials, i.e. palm wax, beeswax.</p>
	<p>The ISO 14001 standard provides generic requirements for an environmental management system. It maps out a framework that companies and organisations can follow to set up an effective system.</p>
	<p>SA 8000, Social Accountability International certification, is an international certification standard that encourages organizations to develop, maintain, and apply socially acceptable practices in the workplace.</p>

[Additional information](#)

More information about requirements for home accessory products in the European market can be found in this [CBI's document](#).

G. References and useful sources

- [CBI's market information on requirements for home accessory products in European markets](#)
- [CBI's market information on exporting home decoration products to Europe](#)
- [CBI's market information on exporting baskets and boxes to Europe](#)
- [CBI's market information on exporting candles to Europe](#)
- [CBI's market information on exporting decorative objects to Europe](#)
- [CBI's document on market trends in home accessory market in Europe](#)
- [Finnish retailers - Who sells what](#)
- [Finland business culture](#)
- [International Trade Center's trade statistics](#)
- [Eurostat - trade statistics in the EU](#)
- Information on packaging can be found at the [website of ITC on export packaging](#)
- [The European Chemicals Agency Helpdesk](#)
- [The EU Trade Helpdesk](#)

This report was compiled and updated by Finnpartnership based on CBI's marketing reports.