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Is Finland's Wood City the future of building?

By Maddy Savage/BBC News, Helsinki
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Link to Article

<https://www-bbc-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.bbc.com/news/business-62798950.amp>



IMAGE SOURCE, MADDY SAVAGE This school is part of Finland's target to use much more wood in construction

It smells like a lush pine forest in the lunch room of a new upper secondary school in Helsinki, but there's no scented air freshener.

Instead, most of the five-storey building has been constructed out of wood.

The school won't be completed until next year, although smooth wooden panels already line many of the interior walls. Wood has also been used in load-bearing structures, to support the ceilings between the floors, and as cladding on the exterior.

"It's a more sustainable choice," says Miimu Airaksinen, an engineer and vice president of development at SRV, the Finnish construction company behind the school.



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"But we're also working with wood because wood is a nice material, people appreciate and like wood and the design of wood."

The project is part of a growing trend in the Finnish building industry. Developers are increasingly swapping out more mainstream materials like concrete and steel, in favour of wood. It's linked to the country's ambitious efforts to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035 and become Europe's leading circular economy.

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