MEMBER MAGAZINE OF
Maahanmuuttajien Varautumis- ja Maanpuolustusyhdistys (MVM)ry

KANTAMA

#6
September 2026



At the centre of the diamond is the

INDIVIDUAL

Editorial
Everyone Can Prepare, and Everyone Should

WOMEN INVOLVED
Preparedness Is Not About Fear. It Creates a Sense of Security

EVENTS
From Receiving Information to Sharing It

Maanpuolustusyhdistys ry
Varautumis- ja Maanpuolustusyhdistys ry

IHMISET
YHTEISKUNTA
TURVALLISUUS



YHDESSÄ
VAHVEMPI
SUOMI

CONTENTS

September 2026 | Nro 6

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S GREETINGS 3
At the Heart of Comprehensive Security, There Is You

EDITORIAL 4
Everyone Can Prepare, and Everyone Should

EXPERT PERSPECTIVE 5
The Police as an Actor in Finland's Comprehensive Security

EVENTS 6–7
From Receiving Information to Sharing It

WOMEN INVOLVED 8
Preparedness Is Not About Fear. It Creates a Sense of Security

PREPAREDNESS TIPS 9
The Days Are Getting Darker – Are You Prepared?

YOUTH'S VOICE 10
The army is only a small part of life, but you can learn a lot during that time

CURRENT TOPICS 11
Why is it worth completing military service, and what benefits can it provide later in civilian and working life?

SECURITY VOCABULARY 12

At the centre of the diamond is the individual

At the **Heart** of Comprehensive Security Is **You**

At the centre of the diamond is the individual

When we talk about preparedness, many people's first thought is war. That is understandable, especially in today's world. But preparedness and comprehensive security mean much more than that.

Finland's National Risk Assessment identifies 21 nationally significant threat scenarios and disruptions. The use of military force is just one of them. Our society also prepares for, among other things, disruptions to electricity and telecommunications, serious accidents, natural phenomena, epidemics, and many other situations that can disrupt our everyday lives.

Looking more closely at this, we also come to understand something very important about Finland:
a safe everyday life does not happen by itself.

Behind it lies an enormous amount of work carried out every day by the state, authorities, municipalities, businesses, organisations, and many other actors.

Much of this work goes unnoticed in our everyday lives—and perhaps that is precisely a sign of how well the system works. We wake up in the morning, the electricity works, water comes from the tap, telecommunications function, help is available when needed, and essential public services continue.

A safe everyday life does not happen by itself

Comprehensive security is often illustrated as a diamond. To me, the most important thing is to look at the centre of that diamond.
That is where the individual is. That is where you are, and where I am.



Shaho Jaff
Executive Director
MVM ry

Society can build systems, authorities can prepare, and organisations can provide training, but a secure society also needs people who are able to function when faced with disruptions and crises

None of us needs to be a security professional. Our role can begin with very simple things: knowing what to do during a power outage. Being able to take care of ourselves and those close to us. Knowing where to find reliable information. Being able to remain calm and act appropriately during a disruption. And if our own strength and skills allow it, perhaps being able to help someone else as well.

This makes a significant difference. The more of us who are able to take care of ourselves and those close to us, the more resources authorities and volunteers have to help those who need assistance the most. That is why I want to encourage each of us to find our own place in Finland's comprehensive security now—not only when something happens.

People with immigrant backgrounds in particular have an important role to play in this. Our language skills may differ, our backgrounds may be different, and our areas of expertise may vary. Comprehensive security, however, doesn't ask where a person was born. It asks what we know, how we act, and whether we are able to take care of one another when needed.

Preparedness is not about fearing the future. It is about knowledge, skills, responsibility, and the ability to act.

Finland's security is not built by the work of the authorities alone. It is built by all of us.
At the centre of the diamond is the individual.
And each of us can make that diamond stronger

Everyone Can Prepare, and Everyone Should

Finland's security situation and people's sense of security have changed over the past four and a half years. National defence has gained new partners and additional resources, both in terms of equipment and financial support. According to studies, people have also expressed their support for strengthening national defence.

These developments have also affected the work of other security authorities and the development of preparedness. Authorities have recognised the importance of cooperation both in planning and in practical exercises. Well-planned action makes it easier to cope with real-life situations.

Preparedness is cooperation

In January, Finland published the Security Strategy for Society 2025 as a Government Resolution. The strategy aims to provide everyone, regardless of their starting point, with a shared framework for implementing comprehensive security.

The Security Strategy describes a comprehensive security operating model in which society's vital functions are safeguarded through cooperation between the authorities, businesses, organisations and citizens. Comprehensive security forms the foundation of Finnish society's resilience to crises.

All actors in society work together to safeguard vital functions. Flexibility and continuity in cooperation between different sectors and levels of activity in society are essential to strengthening resilience to crises.



Individuals are key actors in comprehensive security

Society conducts exercises and identifies areas of activity that are weak or need to be developed. Preparedness is also developed through various initiatives, such as the preparedness recommendation campaign launched a couple of years ago by authorities and organisations, which was aimed at households. The campaign provided detailed preparedness instructions in the form of a booklet

You can receive training in civil defence

Did you know that Finland is a European leader in civil defence? Finland has 50,500 civil defence shelters, providing 4.8 million shelter spaces.

On 2–3 September, Kuopio hosted the Suojaan 2026 civil defence exercise. The exercise tested the protection of a large number of people in various disruptions and exceptional circumstances. Some 2,000 people took part. The aim was to improve cooperation between authorities and regional actors, as well as strengthen leadership, situational awareness and communications in situations where the normal functioning of society has been disrupted.

Do we know what a civil defence shelter is, what the markings look like, or how to act in a civil defence shelter? Finding this information requires persistence and consulting several different sources. Once again, volunteers from organisations have an important role to play. The practical information package compiled by the Association for Immigrants' Preparedness and National Defence (Maahanmuuttajien Varautumis- ja Maanpuolustusyhdistys) is a good place to start. It can be found on the association's website

The Police as an Actor in Finland's Comprehensive Security



Sami Kalliomaa
Senior Police Superintendent

The primary task of the Finnish police is to protect people and society. The police prevent and investigate crimes and are responsible for maintaining public order and safety as well as safeguarding the functioning of society. The police are also responsible for various matters prescribed by law, such as issuing passports and identity cards.

The police assist in accidents, violent situations and other disruptions. In acute emergencies, the police can be reached by calling the general emergency number, 112.

Police Work in Finland Is Based on the Law

The police treat people equally and with respect for everyone's fundamental and human rights. Police services are available to everyone regardless of, for example, their origin, nationality, language or religion. Anyone who has been the victim of a crime can report it to the police. If necessary, an interpreter can be requested when dealing with the police.

Much of the police's work is also visible in everyday life through preventive measures. The police meet young people, visit schools, advise communities and monitor phenomena that may undermine safety. The aim is to prevent problems before they develop into crimes or serious disruptions.

The Police Are an Important Actor in Finland's Comprehensive Security

Comprehensive security means that authorities, municipalities, businesses, organisations and individuals work together to keep society safe during various crises and disruptions. Finland's comprehensive security model is an important part of preparedness, and it defines the vital functions of society that must be safeguarded in all circumstances. One of these functions is internal security, for which the police bear extensive responsibility.

Regardless of how they arise, various disruptions in society often also manifest themselves as disturbances to public order and safety within the police's area of responsibility.

Residents also have an important role in maintaining comprehensive security. Everyone can contribute to security by following laws and official instructions, helping others, and reporting crimes and dangerous situations to the authorities. At the same time, it is important to approach information circulating online with caution and to check official communications through the authorities' own channels. False information should not be spread, as it can increase fear and make the authorities' work more difficult.

You Can Trust the Police

Trust between the police and residents supports the security of society as a whole. People can approach the police, ask for advice and seek help. A safe Finland is built through cooperation and by ensuring that everyone can feel that they belong to society. Each of us can strengthen the security of society through our daily actions and choices.

EDUCATION, SKILLS, COMMUNITY, SAFER FINLAND

FROM RECEIVING INFORMATION TO SHARING IT

September has been an exceptionally active month for MVM ry. At the same time, we have been both receiving and sharing information: our training team has taken part in several security and preparedness training sessions, while also passing on information through our own information sessions.

The idea is simple. In order to share reliable security information with others, we must first learn, practise and develop our own skills. In September, we took several important steps forward in this area.

Building Our Capacity as Trainers

Members of MVM ry's training team have completed MPK's K1 Trainer Training. The training provides the skills needed to serve as an MPK trainer and lays the foundation for us to take a more active role in delivering training in the future.

At the same time, our expertise has been strengthened in several different areas of security

Some members of our team took part in MPK's Everyday Safety course, organised in cooperation with the National Defence Women's Association. The course focused on identifying safety risks at home and in the surrounding environment and preparing for them in practice.

Topics included calling for help, initial firefighting, first aid in emergencies, home emergency supplies, the basics of cybersecurity, and preparedness for various disruptions.

The course was not limited to lectures; the skills were also practised. Practical training is what makes many things concrete: knowledge only becomes a skill when you have the opportunity to put it into practice yourself.

Security Also Requires Mental Resilience

Some members of our training team also completed a two-day course on mental resilience in crises, organised in cooperation with Turvakurssin Kilta ry, the Uusimaa Regional Council of the National Emergency Preparedness Association for Women, and Järvenpää Library.

The training covered different types of crisis situations, psychological first aid, and how a volunteer helper can encounter and support someone in a difficult situation.

When we talk about preparedness, it is easy to think of emergency supplies, power outages or civil defence shelters. In a crisis, however, we also need the ability to meet people where they are, recognise when support is needed, and maintain our own ability to function.

Mental resilience in crises is therefore an important part of comprehensive security.

Civil Defence Expertise Progresses Step by Step

We have also taken new steps forward in civil defence training.

Our team now has its first civil defence trainer, Shaho Jaff. One member has had the opportunity to work as an assistant civil defence trainer, and some members have completed their first advanced civil defence training course.

Our goal is for as many members of our team as possible to progress along the trainer pathway at their own pace

First we learn.
Then we practice.
And we pass on the knowledge

PUTTING WHAT WE LEARN INTO PRACTICE

In September, however, we did not only study ourselves

3 september

Information event in Espoo for the Arabic-speaking target group

We organised an information session in Espoo for an Arabic-speaking target group. The session covered topics including comprehensive security, call-ups, military service, service options, and various opportunities to contribute to building the security of Finnish society.

The comprehensive security perspective was particularly important at the session. In Finland, security is not built by the Finnish Defence Forces or other authorities alone. Businesses, organisations, communities and ordinary people are also involved. Everyone can find their own way to contribute based on their own circumstances.







6 september

Event for Russian-speaking youth

The discussion focused particularly on call-ups, military service, volunteering, and opportunities for young people to find their own place within national defence and security.

In both events, the opportunity to ask questions was also important. The Finnish security and national defence system can seem complicated if you have not previously become familiar with it. Being able to discuss these matters in a language that is easy to understand lowers the threshold for finding out more and getting involved.





Daily Safety Course (MPK)



K1 Training (MPK)



Civil Defense Training





VSS

Security Information Online

Not everyone is able to attend training sessions or information events. That is why we have started compiling information on security, preparedness and civil defence on our website, where people can return to it whenever they need it.
We first published guidance on civil defence shelters in several languages. Our aim is to continue developing this resource and gradually add more practical information on security and preparedness to the website.
For us, multilingual security communication is not simply about translating words from one language into another. The aim is also to ensure that people understand the information and know how to apply it in their own lives

Next Stop: Tampere

Sharing information will continue in October. On Saturday, October the 24th, at 10:00-14:00, you can meet us at the Liisankallio civil defence shelter in Tampere, near Kaleva Church, at Liisankatu 2.
During the day, members of the public will have the opportunity to visit the civil defence shelter and learn about civil defence and 72-hour preparedness.
If you are in Tampere or the surrounding area, come and say hello, visit the civil defence shelter and learn something new about preparedness. You can also ask about anything that may have remained unclear before.

September clearly demonstrated what moving from receiving information to sharing it means to us.

First, we learn ourselves. Then we practise. And as our skills grow, we pass them on —to new people, new communities, and gradually also in new languages

Preparedness Is Not About Fear. It Creates a Sense of Security



Security skills are useful both at work and in everyday life. For one MVM ry member who works in early childhood education, anticipation, risk management and the ability to act in different situations are part of her everyday work. In this issue, she explains why she joined MVM ry and why preparedness gives her, above all, a sense of security.

Natalia Pienimaa

I am a Finnish citizen with an immigrant background. I have lived in Finland for more than 30 years, which is most of my life. Finland is my home. My family, children and grandchildren are here, and I feel strongly that I am part of this society.

I want to be an active member of society and do my part to make Finland an even safer and more cohesive place for all of us.

I am a social services professional specialising in early childhood education, and I work at a daycare centre. In my work, safety, consideration for others and caring for others are an important part of my professional identity. In early childhood education, creating a safe environment, anticipating situations and being able to act in different circumstances are part of everyday work. I want to do my part to strengthen the sense of security of children, families and the entire work community.

The current unstable global situation has strengthened my desire to learn more about security, preparedness and society's resilience to crises. I want to better understand what I can do myself and how I can act in different disruption and crisis situations.

Through MVM ry, I can develop knowledge and skills that are useful both in working life and in my everyday life. To me, preparedness does not mean being afraid. On the contrary, knowledge, anticipation and preparation create a sense of security. When you know how to act in different situations, you can approach them more calmly and systematically.

I joined the Maahanmuuttajien Varautumis- ja Maanpuolustusyhdistys ry and its training team because I want to learn, participate and be useful. I also feel it is important that people with immigrant backgrounds actively participate in building the security and sense of community of Finnish society.

I also encourage others to get involved. Through the association, you can get up-to-date information about its activities, training and partners. At the same time, you can learn new things, meet new people and find ways to participate that suit you.

I believe that each of us can do something to strengthen our shared security. When we strengthen our own skills and help one another, we are also building a safer society.

THE EVENINGS ARE GETTING DARKER – ARE YOU PREPARED?



As autumn arrives, the days grow shorter and there are more hours of darkness. Darkness affects everyday safety both at home and outdoors. Even an ordinary power outage feels quite different if it happens on a dark evening or at night. That is why now is a good time to check a few small but important things.

Be visible outdoors



A reflector helps motorists spot pedestrians much earlier. The current recommendation is to use at least two reflectors so that you are visible from different directions. A hanging reflector should be attached at about knee height so that it can swing freely. It is particularly important that the reflector is visible from the side facing the road. Reflectors can also be worn on both arms or calves.

Remember visibility when cycling, too



In the dark, a bicycle must have a white or light-yellow front light and a red rear light. Also check your bicycle's reflectors. Even if you are cycling on a well-lit street, do not assume that motorists will automatically see you—the darkness, rain and headlights of oncoming vehicles can make it harder to spot you.

Your pet needs to be visible, too



When walking your dog in the dark, it is a good idea for your pet to wear a reflector, reflective harness or collar, or a small light. This helps motorists, cyclists and other road users notice both you and your dog in good time. A dark-coloured dog in particular can be almost impossible to see in the dark

Do you know where your flashlight is?



Keep a flashlight or headlamp somewhere you can easily find it, even in complete darkness. At the same time, check the batteries and keep your power bank charged.

Take extra care with candles



Candles are used more often in autumn, both for atmosphere and lighting. A lit candle should never be left unattended. Place candles on a stable, non-combustible surface and keep them far enough away from curtains, decorations, paper and other flammable materials. Also keep children and pets in mind. Always extinguish candles when you leave the room or go to sleep.



A power outage can happen at any time, but during the darker months, being prepared in advance can make the situation considerably easier.



A quick check today can make a dark evening much safer

THE ARMY IS ONLY A SMALL PART OF LIFE, BUT YOU CAN LEARN A LOT DURING THAT TIME

In the previous issue, we met Najma in the Women Taking Part section. Now it is her brother Mohamud Ali Abdi's turn to speak. He is currently completing his military service at Vekaranjärvi. Mohamud talks about what his service has given him so far, how he has experienced equality in the military, and what he would like to say to young people preparing for military service

Where are you currently serving?

I am at Vekaranjärvi, serving as an artilleryman. I started my service in July, and my service period is six months.

What has the army given you?

The army has taught me responsibility, self-discipline and order. I have had new experiences and challenged myself in ways I did not know I was capable of. My service has also taken me outside my comfort zone.

How have you experienced equality in the army?

Well. I have not experienced discrimination or unequal treatment. We are all treated the same, and I have not been treated differently from others because of my background.

You did not apply for leadership training yourself. What do you think about that now?

I chose the six-month service period because I have other plans as well. At the time, I perhaps did not think about how much leadership training could offer.

For example, I have seen a non-commissioned officer with a Somali background who is very professional and exemplary. Looking at him, you realise that leadership training can genuinely help a person develop a great deal. If your own plans allow for it, I would definitely recommend applying. You can gain a lot of skills that will also be useful later on.

What would you say to a young person who is going to the call-ups or starting their service?

Go there with a positive attitude and motivation. The army is only a small part of life, but you can learn a lot during that time. You get to try new things, challenge yourself and discover new sides of yourself.

What has been the best thing about your service?

The best thing has been the new friends and people I have met. In the army, you also get to experience things that you would not get to do in ordinary civilian life. I have had the opportunity to practise using weapons, and soon we will also be training with artillery. It is interesting to learn how to act in different situations.

What if Finland ever had to be defended?

Finland has given me many opportunities, such as the opportunity to study and build a life here. If Finland had to be defended, I would defend it. In the army, I am being taught how to do that, and as an artilleryman I am also learning my own role. For me, defending Finland would be a duty.

Mohamud Ali Abdi



Security Brings Siblings Together

Mohamud's sister Najma was introduced in the previous issue of Kantama in the Women Taking Part section. Mohamud says he is proud of his sister and of her education and training through MVM ry's activities.

The siblings' story also highlights the importance of the people around us. A family's example and attitudes can influence how a young person sees their place in Finnish society and as part of our shared security.

WHY IS IT WORTH COMPLETING MILITARY SERVICE, AND WHAT BENEFITS CAN IT PROVIDE LATER IN CIVILIAN AND WORKING LIFE?

The benefits of military service are often also discussed through young people's own experiences. Interviews repeatedly highlight things such as self-confidence, taking responsibility, new friendships, teamwork skills, and the importance of leadership training.

But what can military service concretely provide for later civilian and working life? In this issue, Jyri Vilamo, Major (Ret.) and Chair of the Federal Council of the Finnish Reserve Officers' Federation, explores the subject in more detail from an expert's perspective.

Successfully completing military service is beneficial in many ways, even though not all of its benefits are necessarily recognised in advance. The Finnish Defence Forces is one of Finland's most respected and trusted institutions. As many as 86% of citizens trust it.

Military service is a statutory civic duty for Finnish men and voluntary for women. However, every Finnish citizen has a constitutional duty to participate in national defence. In times of crisis, we are all needed, and everyone can take responsibility for the security of society, regardless of whether they have completed military service or not.

Non-military service is another option alongside military service. Preparedness-related tasks can also be carried out on a voluntary basis in many different areas of society.
Below are some of the benefits offered by military service.
Millions of Finns have experienced them firsthand over the decades.

Personal Skills

- **Stress tolerance:** The ability to cope with stress develops when challenging situations are resolved under pressure and within time limits.
- **Time management:** Adhering to schedules and organising your own tasks improve.
- **Perseverance:** Persistence and goal-oriented work help you complete tasks even in the face of setbacks.

Teamwork and Networks

- **Cooperation skills:** During service, you learn to work with different kinds of people to achieve a common goal.
- **Networking:** During service, you meet people from different parts of Finland, which can lead to long-lasting friendships and valuable professional networks later in working life.

Leadership and Supervisory Skills

- **Supervisory skills:** Leadership training (AUK or RUK) teaches you to give and receive feedback, plan activities, lead people, manage your time, and make decisions in challenging situations.
- **Taking responsibility:** Being responsible for the actions of others develops the skills needed to take on demanding tasks and leadership positions in civilian life as well

It is particularly worthwhile to apply for leadership training. The Finnish Defence Forces is Finland's largest provider of leadership training, and the leadership training it offers is also widely valued in working life. Many current supervisors and managers have completed non-commissioned officer or reserve officer training

One of the strengths of Finnish military service is that everyone essentially starts from the same starting point. Gender, background, skin colour or other personal characteristics do not determine how you are treated. It is worth actively expressing your interest in different roles, but final role assignments are made based on the needs of the Finnish Defence Forces and suitability assessments. The right attitude and good physical fitness make completing military service easier and help you succeed in it.

According to research, military service can also support integration into Finnish society. It strengthens a sense of community, helps prevent social exclusion, and provides opportunities to form friendships that can last a lifetime.

Jyri Vilamo

Major (Ret.)
Chair of the Federal Council
Finnish Reserve Officers' Federation

www.mvmry.fi toimisto@mvmry.fi

SECURITY VOCABULARY

COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY
KOKONAISTURVALLISUUS

Finland's approach to safeguarding society's security together. Authorities, businesses, organisations and citizens safeguard society's vital functions in all circumstances.

SECURITY OF SUPPLY
HUOLTOVARMUUS

The ability to ensure that products, services and systems essential to people and society continue to function even during serious disruptions and exceptional circumstances. These include, for example, food, energy, transport and healthcare

CRISIS RESILIENCE (RESILIENCE)
KRIISINKESTÄVYYS (RESILIENSSI)

The ability of an individual, community or society to maintain its ability to function in difficult situations, cope with disruptions and recover from them

SOCIETY'S VITAL FUNCTIONS
YHTEISKUNNAN ELINTÄRKEÄT TOIMINNOT

Functions that must operate in all circumstances to ensure that society can function. These include, for example, leadership, defence capability, internal security, security of supply, services for the population and mental resilience to crises

CYBERSECURITY
KYBERTURVALLISUUS

Measures taken to protect digital systems, information and their users from cyber threats. Cybersecurity concerns not only technology but also people and ways of working

INFORMATION INFLUENCE
INFORMAATIOVAIKUTTAMINEN

Harmful activity aimed at influencing people's perceptions, decisions or actions through information. It may involve false or misleading information, but also the deliberate use of accurate information for a specific purpose

CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT
JATKUVUUDENHALLINTA

An organisation's approach to preparing for disruptions so that essential activities can continue even in difficult circumstances and recovery from them is possible.

SECURITY ENVIRONMENT
TURVALLISUUSYMPÄRISTÖ

The circumstances, events, changes and threats that affect the security of Finland, society or individuals. It is influenced by factors such as the international situation, technology, the economy, the environment and various crises

COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL DEFENCE
KOKONAISMAANPUOLUSTUS

The combined set of military and civilian measures used to safeguard Finland's independence, the security of its citizens and the functioning of society against various threats

COOPERATION
YHTEISTOIMINTA

Joint action in which different actors share information and resources and work together to achieve a common goal. Comprehensive security is based precisely on this kind of cooperation

Maanpuolustuksen Varautumis- ja Maanpuolustusyhdistys ry MVM

Security belongs to everyone – Join Us!

As a member, you are not merely following our activities – you can learn, participate and help build a safer Finland together with others.

Apply for membership by scanning the QR code

More information:

toimisto@mvmry.fi

www.mvmry.fi

KANTAMA magazine is produced with the support of the Foundation for the Support of National Defence and the National Defence Guilds Foundation

Maanpuolustuksen kannatussäätiö