

Europeans have more freedom than Americans

[Quora.com](#) answer by Jaakko Salmenius

Why haven't Europeans fully embraced the concept of freedom like Americans have?

I am a Finn living in the US. First time in my life I don't feel free. There are ton of things I could do back home, but I cannot do here.

I recently switched my work. I want to keep a few months' vacation in between jobs but I could not because our health insurance would stop. This would be no problem in Europe because your health insurance is not bound to your work.

I cannot walk everywhere in the forest. It is basically allowed only in the national forest or similar. Not on a private property. In the Nordic countries no problem. You can roam everywhere except other people's yard.

If I were out of the job, it would be extremely hard for my kids to have higher education. In Europe you don't need money to enter a university. In the Nordic countries, they even pay you when you enter.

My youngest son was born here, and he need US passport to leave the country. It takes 3 months to get a US passport. Hey, the country that has Google and Microsoft does not use IT when applying passport. In Finland, you get a passport in less than a week. You can even get that in a few hours at Helsinki airport.

Every time I return here, I need to wait an hour in the custom line even I use the same line as Americans. In Finland, the line takes about 15 seconds. In EU, everybody can use the automated custom lines. In the US, only those that have cleared the Global Entry and spent lots of time and money to get it. And even still it takes much longer that the European automated lines.

Recently my wife broke her ankle. Went to ER. They said that she needs an operation and send home! We need to call various orthopedist. Once we visited one, the doctor ordered MRI. My wife had to wait about 5 days that the insurance company would allow the MRI. Then another few days to get a green light for the operation. Totally she had to wait two weeks in pain lying flat in a bed waiting for the operation. In Europe, she would have got the MRI in a day and the operation right after that. In Europe. the doctor decides what is required, not the insurance company.

My kids cannot walk safely hardly nowhere because there are no safe pedestrian and bicycle paths. In Finland, most kids move by walking or by bicycle. Most of the time they do not have to cross the road because there are lots of safe under passages. In the US kids are prisoners at home unless Mom or Dad takes them with a car.

The fact is that people in the US are not even closely as free as in Europe. In the *Freedom in the World* index, USA is at the **61st** position. 7 out of top 10 are from Europe. **Top 3:** Finland, Norway and Sweden. They all got maximum points (100).