

## The basics of working in Finland

In Finland, laws and collective agreements define the rights and obligations of employees and employers, i.e. the terms and conditions of employment. In Finland, foreign employees have the same rights and responsibilities as Finnish employees.

In this online service, we provide information on the rights and obligations of employees in Finland, as well as the permits required by employees coming to Finland. We also provide guidance on what to do if you encounter problems in your workplace.





## 01 Check what kind of residence permit you need

If you are a foreign employee, make sure you have all the necessary permits before you come to Finland. Once in Finland, you will have to prove to your employer that you have the right to work.

### Citizens of the Nordic countries

If you are a citizen of Iceland, Norway, Sweden or Denmark, you are free to seek employment and to work in Finland.

If you spend more than 6 months in Finland, you must report your residence to the Digital and Population Data Services Agency. You can register your residence at the service point of the Finnish Immigration Service (Migri). You can also register online at [enterfinland.fi](https://enterfinland.fi) (in Finnish, Swedish and English). After that, you must still be authenticated by the Finnish Immigration Service.

### Citizens of EU countries, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland

If you are a citizen of a Member State of the European Union, Liechtenstein, or Switzerland, you are free to seek employment and to work in Finland.

If you spend more than 3 months in Finland, you must report your residence to the Digital and Population Data Services Agency. You can register your residence at the service point of the Finnish Immigration Service (Migri). You can also register online at [enterfinland.fi](https://enterfinland.fi) (in Finnish, Swedish and English). After that, you must still be authenticated by the Finnish Immigration Service.

### Citizens of other countries

If you are not a citizen of a Nordic country, a Member State of the European Union, Liechtenstein, or Switzerland, and you come to work in Finland, the following instructions apply to you:

- Typically, you will need an employee residence permit. You must first have a job in Finland.
- Go to [enterfinland.fi](https://enterfinland.fi) (available in English, Swedish and Finnish) to submit your application online.



- If you are not in Finland and are applying for your first residence permit, you must always identify yourself in person at the nearest Finnish embassy or consulate, or at an outsourced service provider's office.
- If you are applying for your first permit in Finland, you must visit a service point of the Finnish Immigration Service to identify yourself.

The conditions for working in Finland without a residence permit are listed in the Finnish Aliens Act (ulkomaalaislaki).

Your employer has the right to take a copy of your passport and residence permit – they are obligated to verify that you have the right to work. However, your employer cannot hold on to your documents unless you give them permission to do so.

**Never pay to get a job. It is against the law in Finland for employers to request money from employees in order to give them a job.**

**More information:**

[Finnish Immigration Service Application Finder](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English)

[InfoFinland.fi: Moving to Finland](#) (Finnish, Swedish, English, Russian, Estonian, Ukrainian, French, Spanish, Turkish, Chinese, Farsi and Arabic)

## Students

If you have a student residence permit in Finland, you can engage in paid work for an average of 30 hours per week in any field. The number of hours per week may be exceeded in some weeks, as long as it is an average of 30 hours per week at the end of the year.

If your degree includes work placements or a final project, you can complete them without restrictions.

**Read more:**

[Finnish Immigration Service: Residence permit application for studies](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English)



## Seasonal workers

If you come to Finland for a specific season for work in sectors such as agriculture, horticulture, forestry, or tourism, you are a seasonal worker. The duration of seasonal work can be up to 9 months in a 12-month period.

In Finland, the law regulates some aspects of working life, but many matters are governed by collective agreements (known as “työehtosopimus” in Finnish, commonly abbreviated as TES). Collective agreements are made jointly by an employer association and a trade union that represents workers.

The terms and conditions of employment in the collective agreement for rural industries apply to seasonal work performed in employment relationships, such as on berry, fruit, and vegetable farms. In Finland, harvesters of wild berries and other natural products are also generally employed and are subject to the terms and conditions of employment for rural industries.

The terms and conditions of employment for rural industries are available in the Finnish Industrial Union’s Teollisuusliitto app in Finnish, Swedish, English, Ukrainian, Russian, and Thai. Among other things, the Teollisuusliitto app also provides information on the terms and conditions of employment in the horticultural and forestry sectors in several languages. You can download the app to your phone [via this link](#) or from the Google or Apple app stores, where you can find it under the name *Teollisuusliitto*.

## Residence permits for seasonal workers

If you are a citizen of an EU or EEA country and you come to Finland for seasonal work, you do not need a work permit.

If you are not a citizen of an EU or EEA country and you come to Finland for seasonal work that lasts less than 3 months, you do not need a residence permit. However, you will need to apply for a seasonal work visa or a seasonal work certificate:

- If you come to work for less than 3 months from a country subject to a visa requirement, you must apply for a seasonal work visa from a Finnish embassy or consulate.
- If you come to work for less than 3 months from a visa-exempt country, you must apply for a seasonal work certificate from the Finnish Immigration



Service. Please note that you must have visa-exempt days available during the validity of the certificate.

If you are not a citizen of an EU or EEA country and you come to Finland for seasonal work that lasts 3–9 months, you must apply for a residence permit for seasonal work from the Finnish Immigration Service. If your employment lasts longer than 9 months, you must apply for an employee residence permit.

If you have previously been employed in seasonal work in Finland, this may affect your new seasonal work permit. When calculating the length of your seasonal work, the Immigration Service will also take into account any previous period of seasonal work that falls within the 12 months preceding the expiry of the permit you are applying for.

If you want to add a new seasonal employer to your current seasonal work permit, you can submit an application to the Finnish Immigration Service to add an employer.

Seasonal workers must apply separately to the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Finnish abbreviation “Kela”) for the right to health care in Finland. More detailed instructions are available in [Kela’s online service](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English).

**Detailed instructions on permits required for seasonal workers:**

[Finnish Immigration Service: Seasonal work](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English)

## **Wild berry pickers**

In Finland, harvesters of wild berries and other natural products are generally employed, which means they are subject to the same regulations as other seasonal workers. However, if you sell berries you have picked to a berry business and you are not an employee of that company, i.e. you are not in an employment relationship, you are subject to the Berry Act. You can find information about your rights under the Berry Act in the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s online service](#) in Finnish, Swedish, English, Thai, Ukrainian, and Russian.



## Posted workers

A posted worker usually works in a country other than Finland. A posted worker is sent to Finland by their employer for a fixed period to perform temporary work there as a subcontractor, an internal company transfer, or a temporary agency worker.

A posted worker must be paid at least the wage specified in the Finnish collective agreement.

### Read more:

[Tyosuojelu.fi: Posted worker](https://tyosuojelu.fi/Posted-worker) (in Finnish, Swedish and English)



## 02 Know your rights and responsibilities

The rights and responsibilities of you and your employer – meaning your terms of employment – are governed by the law and collective agreements of Finland.

**In Finland, foreign employees have the same rights and responsibilities as Finnish employees.**

No discrimination is allowed based on age, ethnicity, nationality, language, religion, beliefs, opinions, political activity, trade union activity, family relations, health, disability, sexual orientation or any other grounds related to the employee's person. Discrimination based on gender, gender identity or gender expression is also prohibited in Finland.

For example, your pay may not be reduced because you are a foreign employee.

### Collective agreements

A collective agreement (in Finnish “työehtosopimus”, often abbreviated as “TES”) is an agreement negotiated by a trade union representing employees and an employers' association concerning the rights and obligations of employers and employees, i.e. the terms and conditions of employment in the sector. These include, but are not limited to, wages, wage supplements and working hours.

Almost every industry has a collective agreement. For example, the retail, cleaning, accommodation and food service, agricultural, and construction industries each have their own collective agreements. Request a copy of your industry's collective agreement from your employer or trade union.

You can also search for the collective agreement of your sector through the [Finnish Trade Union Confederation's \(SAK's\) online service](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English): start by clicking on the trade union's introduction page for your sector (*Get to know the union*). At the bottom of the page, you will find a link to the collective agreements negotiated by the trade union.

Collective agreements may give permission to agree on some matters locally at the workplace. Local agreements are always made between the shop steward or other employee representative and the employer. Check the local agreement procedure in your industry's collective agreement.

Collective agreements are not the same as employment contracts.



## Employment contracts

When you start a new job, make sure you sign a written employment contract with your employer. In case of trouble, you can refer to the contract to check what was agreed upon when you started.

In an employment contract, you agree to do certain work and your employer agrees to pay a certain compensation and abide by the terms of employment.

You should always make your employment contract in writing. Oral agreements are also valid, but if you have a problem, it is easier to prove what was agreed upon if you have a written contract. Even if you make an oral agreement, your employer must give you the terms of employment in writing.

**The terms of employment contracts must be at least as good as those of the collective agreement.**

### **Always check your employment contract for the following:**

- Name of the employer.
- The name of the employee, that is, your name.
- The start date of the work.
- Is there a probationary period? How long is it?
  - The purpose of the probationary period is to give you and your employer time to consider whether to continue the employment contract. It usually has a maximum length of six months. During the probationary period, the employee or employer may cancel the employment contract without a notice period.
- Duration of the employment:
  - Is your employment permanent (open-ended or ongoing) or temporary (fixed term)?
  - Temporary contracts must state the reason for the temporary nature. However, the Finnish government is preparing a proposal that would allow employment contracts of up to one year to be concluded without a justified reason. It could come into effect as early as 2026.
  - The end date or estimated end date of a fixed-term employment contract.
- Where will the work be done?
- What are your tasks?
- How much are you paid for your work?



- The minimum pay is decided by the collective agreement. Finland has no legislation for minimum pay.
- The date on which your wages are paid.
- Working hours, or how many hours you will work.
  - In Finland, full-time work usually means working 5 days a week and no more than 8 hours a day.
  - If you do shift work, your working hours will vary. However, they must comply with the collective agreement of the sector.
  - In Finland, the law requires additional compensation for overtime and work on Sundays. Compensation for evenings and weekend work are often included in the collective agreement.
- If you are making a part-time contract, make sure you have enough working hours to receive sufficient pay. A minimum number of hours means that you will receive at least the number of hours promised in your employment contract.
  - For example, if your employment contract states 0–20 hours a week, you may not receive any work or wages during some weeks.
  - If you have agreed to variable working hours (e.g., 10–30 hours per week) at the employer's initiative, the employer must provide you with an explanation of how your working hours will vary in practice.
  - Always write down when and how many hours you have worked. You can check your notes to make sure that you are paid correctly. It can also be helpful in disputes.
- Determining annual leave:
  - You accrue annual leave when you work at least 35 hours or 14 days per month.
  - If you have been employed for less than a year, you accrue two days of leave each month.
  - After working for more than a year, you accrue 2.5 days of leave each month.
- Period of notice:
  - The period of notice is how long you must work after your employment contract is terminated by you or your employer.
  - An employer must always have a valid reason for terminating your employment.
  - Employers may not terminate a fixed-term employment contract while it is valid.
  - Employees may not resign while a fixed-term employment contract is valid, but they can often negotiate the matter with their employer.
- What is the collective agreement for your job?



Read your employment contract carefully before signing. Never sign something that you don't understand.

### **Check whether you are an employee or self-employed**

Always check with your employer to make sure you are signing an actual employment contract (in Finnish “työsopimus”). If your employer offers you work as a self-employed person instead, you do not have an employment relationship with the company you perform to work for. In this case, instead of an employment contract, the contract may be called a “commission agreement” (in Finnish “toimeksiantosopimus”).

As a self-employed person, you are not protected by Finnish working time and occupational health and safety legislation, and you are not entitled to occupational health care. Furthermore, if you are self-employed, an employer will not provide you with statutory occupational accident and occupational disease insurance. Instead, you must arrange your insurance yourself.

If your work meets the characteristics of an employment relationship, it is considered an employment relationship under Finnish law, even if you have signed a commission agreement, for example.

### **Payslip**

Wages must be paid into a bank account. Wages can only be paid in cash for a compelling reason. Such a reason may be that the employee does not have a bank account. Bank accounts are personal.

When you open an account, you need a passport or other official identity document. Opening an account is easier if you have a Finnish personal identity code. You can apply for a personal identity code from the Digital and Population Data Services Agency. For more detailed instructions on applying for a personal identity code, see the Digital and Population Data Services Agency's [website](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English). Check with your bank to see what other documents you will need to open a bank account.

When you receive pay, you must always receive a payslip as well. The payslip details how much you have been paid, what deductions have been made from your gross pay, and how much money will be paid to your account, i.e. your net pay.



Every time you receive pay, you pay taxes and other statutory payments. This means that the pay you receive into your account will not quite be the full amount of wages agreed in your employment contract.

Always check your payslip carefully! You can find the translations of the payslip terms below the image.

## Model payslip in Finnish

<b>YRITYS OY</b>	Maksupäivä 15.2.2026	Palkkakuusi 1.2.–28.2.2026
	Henkilötunnus XXXXXX-XXXX	Ammattinimike Myyjä
Etunimi Sukunimi Työntekijäntie 1 A 45100 Kouvola	Maksetaan filille FIXX XXXX XXXX XXXX XX	Työsuhteen aloituspäivä 15.2.2023
	Käytettävissä olevat lomapäivät: 10	Uusi lomapäivien kertymä 27,5
	Verokorttitiedot Veroprosentti 12 %, Lisäprosentti 38,5 %	

  

	Määrä	Yksikköhinta	Palkkajaksolla	Vuoden alusta
Rahapalkka				
<b>Bruttopalkka</b>		14 €/ t	<b>2 240,00 €</b>	<b>4 480,00 €</b>
Lauantailisä (20 %)	8	2,40 €	19,20 €	22,40 €
Sunnuntailisä (100 %)	8	14,00 €	112,00 €	112,00 €
Lisät yhteensä			131,20 €	131,20 €
<b>Bruttopalkka yhteensä</b>			<b>2 371,20 €</b>	<b>4 611,20 €</b>
Ennakkonpidätys (sis. sairausvakuutusmaksun)	12 %		284,52 €	553,34 €
Työeläkemaksu	7,15 %		169,53 €	345,84 €
Työttömyysvakuutusmaksu	0,59 %		13,99 €	27,21 €
Vähennykset yhteensä			468,04 €	926,39 €
<b>Nettopalkka</b>			<b>1 903,16 €</b>	<b>3 684,81 €</b>
Ay-jäsenmaksu	1,5 %		35,56 €	69,16 €
<b>Maksetaan</b>			<b>1 867,60 €</b>	<b>3 615,15 €</b>

The terms of employment contracts must be at least as good as those of the collective agreement.



### Translations of payslip fields

Maksupäivä Payment date	€/t (euroa per tunti) €/t (euros per hour)
Henkilötunnus Personal identity code	Rahapalkka Cash pay
Maksetaan tilille Paid to account	Bruttopalkka Gross pay
Käytettävissä olevat lomapäivät Leave days available	Lauantailisä Saturday allowance
Verokorttitiedot Tax card information	Sunnuntailisä Sunday allowance
Veroprosentti Tax rate	Lisät yhteensä Total allowances
Lisäprosentti Additional withholding	Bruttopalkka yhteensä Total gross salary
Palkkakausi Pay period	Ennakonpidätys (sis. sairausvakuutusmaksun) Withholding tax (incl. health insurance contribution)
Ammattinimike Job title	Työeläkemaksu Earnings-related pension contribution
Työsuhteen aloituspäivä Start date of employment	Työttömyysvakuutusmaksu Unemployment insurance contribution
Uusi lomapäivien kertymä New accrual of leave days	Vähennykset yhteensä Total deductions
Määrä Quantity	Nettopalkka Net pay
Yksikköhinta Unit price	Ay-jäsenmaksu Trade union membership fee
Palkkajaksolla During the pay period	Maksetaan To be paid
Vuoden alusta From the beginning of the year	



## **Unpaid on-the-job training**

Unpaid on-the-job training is legal only when the placement is offered via an official educational institution or public employment services. If an employer wishes to test a suitable candidate, they can include a probationary period in the employment contract. You must be paid even during your probationary period.

## **You have the right to induction**

Induction means that you are taught your job and the rules of the workplace. In other words, you will be informed about your job and workplace, the general instructions of the workplace, the use of machines and equipment, safe working methods, and the risks and hazards of your job. You must be paid for your induction period.

## **If you fall ill, you are entitled to be absent from work**

If you fall ill, immediately inform your employer or manager why you are absent. If your employer requires it, see a doctor about a certificate and send the certificate to your employer.

You must be paid sick pay for the day you fell ill, if it would have been a working day for you. If your illness continues and you are unable to work, you are entitled by law to receive pay for the 9 working days following the day you fell ill, if they would have been working days for you. If you have worked at the same job for at least 1 month, you will be paid your full normal pay. If you have worked for less than a month, you will receive half (50%) of your normal pay.

Also check your industry's collective agreement to see if it has other provisions regarding sick pay. Usually, collective agreements provide for better terms, meaning that if you are sick for a longer period, you will receive full pay for more than nine days.

## **Occupational health care**

Employers must arrange occupational health care to help you look after your health and ability to work. Many employers also offer medical services to their employees.



Employers also have an obligation to insure you against accidents and occupational diseases. Insurance may cover injuries suffered at the workplace or during your commute, for example. If you have an accident at work, it is important that you report it to your employer or supervisor immediately.

## Read more

**The Ministry of the Interior's Work Help Finland mobile application** is intended for foreign employees coming to Finland and those already residing in Finland. The app provides you with information about your rights and obligations as an employee in Finland.

[Download the app](#) (in Finnish, English, Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Bosnian, Dari, Spanish, Farsi, Hindi, Kurdish, Mandarin Chinese, Nepalese, Portuguese, French, Romanian, Swedish, Somali, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Urdu, Russian, Vietnamese, and Estonian)

**InfoFinland** is a multilingual website that provides information for people planning to move to Finland or those already living here.

[InfoFinland](#) (in Finnish, Swedish, English, Russian, Estonian, Ukrainian, French, Spanish, Turkish, Chinese, Farsi, and Arabic)



## 03 Recognising exploitation at work

Labour exploitation means that an employer, for example:

- pays less than the wages prescribed by the collective agreement and the law (underpayment)
- does not give employees the days off prescribed by the law and the collective agreement
- requires employees to work excessively long hours without compensation
- collects money from employees as compensation for the job or a residence permit
- prohibits employees from taking sick leave
- does not arrange for occupational health care
- provides inhumane housing conditions.

If your employer is insolvent and unable to pay wages, you can apply for pay security (in Finnish “palkkaturva”) from the KEHA Centre. You can submit an application electronically on the [KEHA Centre’s website](#) (in Finnish and Swedish) or submit a paper application to the KEHA Centre. Act quickly! The pay security application must be submitted within three months of the date on which you were supposed to receive your pay.

If you suspect that you are a victim of criminal labour exploitation, you can contact the police or Victim Support Finland (RIKU). You can contact Victim Support Finland confidentially and get advice on how to proceed. Please contact Victim Support Finland by e-mail ([help@riku.fi](mailto:help@riku.fi)) or by phone (including text messages or WhatsApp) at **+358 40 632 9293**.

Ihmiskaupan uhrien auttamisjärjestelmään saat yhteyden soittamalla numeroon **0295 463 177**.

Jos sinun henkesi tai terveytesi on akuutisti vaarassa työpaikalla, soita heti yleiseen hätänumeroon **112**.

### Read more:

[Police: How to report a crime](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English)

[Victim Support Finland](#) (Finnish, Swedish and English)

[Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking](#) (In Finnish, Swedish and English)



[The website of the Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking](#) also provides information in the following languages:

- Albanian
- Arabic
- Bengali
- Bulgarian
- Dari
- Spanish
- Chinese
- Farsi (Persian)
- Kurdish (Sorani)
- Kurmanji
- Polish
- French
- Romanian
- Somali
- Thai
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Russian
- Vietnamese
- Estonian

If you have been the victim of exploitation and significant negligence by your employer, you can apply for an extension permit or a certificate of an extended right to work and change your employer. You must have a residence permit in Finland that includes the right to work.

[Finnish Immigration Service](#) (in Finnish, Swedish, English and Ukrainian)

The Finnish Immigration Service's website also provides information about extension permits and the certificate concerning the extended right to work in the following languages:

- Albanian
- Arabic
- Bengali
- Dari
- Hindi
- Chinese



- Nepali
- Sinhala (Sinhalese)
- Tamil
- Thai
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Uzbek
- Russian
- Vietnamese



## 04 Join a trade union

In Finland, the majority of employees belong to the trade union of their sector. You also have the right to join a trade union when you come to work in Finland. The trade union will help you if you have any problems with your employer.

Trade unions also negotiate the terms of employment with employer federations. In other words, the trade union negotiates the rules governing your work on your behalf.

Trade unions offer many benefits to their members. Trade unions organise training and events, offer affordable holiday accommodation, and can provide support for holidays and member discounts on travel services. Many trade unions also offer discounts on insurance, for example.

You can also join your industry's unemployment fund when you join a trade union. If you become unemployed, your unemployment fund will pay you an earnings-related unemployment benefit if you are entitled to unemployment security.

**Please note that membership of an unemployment fund alone does not entitle you to services provided by a trade union, such as assistance in case of problems.**

**You can easily find your trade union here:**

[Liitot.fi](https://liitot.fi) (in Finnish, Swedish and English)



## 05 When in trouble, ask for help

You may see things at work that you think are handled poorly or unfairly. Always try to discuss them with your employer first. Use text messages or e-mail for the discussions and save every message.

Here is what to do if talking with your employer goes nowhere:

### If you are a trade union member

Seek advice from your shop steward, employee representative, union representative, or the occupational safety representative. A shop steward or employee representative is a person elected by the employees from among themselves who represents the employees and the trade union at the workplace. The safety representative monitors the occupational safety of employees and knows the relevant legislation.

If your workplace has no shop steward, employee representative, or safety representative, seek advice from your trade union's regional office or call the union's helpline.

### If you are not a trade union member

Seek advice from a colleague or the safety representative at your workplace. If the problem persists, you can seek advice from the [occupational safety and health authority](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English) or [SAK's employee rights advisory service](#).

### Advisory services

You can contact **SAK's free employee rights advisory service** by email or phone. An advisor will respond to enquiries by email at [workinfinland@sak.fi](mailto:workinfinland@sak.fi). The hotline number is **0800 414 004**, and advisors are available to answer questions on Mondays, 14:00–17:00, and on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 9:00–11:00 and 12:00–15:00. Any exceptions to these opening hours are listed on the [English-language pages of the employee rights advisory service](#).

The number for the occupational safety and health authority is **+358 295 016 620** (Monday–Friday, 9:00–15:00).

**Read more:**

[SAK's free employee rights advisory service](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English)

[Occupational Safety and Health Administration's telephone service](#) (in Finnish, Swedish and English)

[The Non-Discrimination Ombudsman](#) (Finnish, Swedish, English, Estonian, Spanish, French, German, Somali, Russian, Portuguese, Turkish, Albanian, Arabic, Chinese, Thai, Farsi, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Polish, Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, Ukrainian, Nepali, Bengali, and Urdu) also advises by phone

[The Ombudsman for Equality](#) (in Finnish, Swedish, English, Estonian, Somali, Arabic and Russian) also advises by phone