

OLU
CAPITAL OF NORTHERN
SCANDINAVIA

Welcome to Oulu

GUIDE FOR FOREIGNERS



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Foreword (Alkusanat)

The City of Oulu is happy to welcome you to Finland and to Oulu, the Capital of Northern Scandinavia. Whether you have come to Oulu for a shorter period or plan to settle in Oulu permanently, we hope that you will feel at home with us. Internationality, diversity and sense of community are essential values in the city's development.

This guidebook gives you practical information for the first weeks and year of settling into life in Oulu. You will find, among other things, practical information on housing and work-related issues, schools and day-care, where to get started with the Finnish language as well as ideas to enjoy your free time, whether indoors or out, during all four seasons. Contact details of various authorities help you take care of all the necessary formalities when moving to Oulu.

In addition, should you have ideas for a viable business, you will also find relevant contact information for various business support and development organisations included in this guidebook. Oulu has one of Finland's most supporting environments for start-ups and international businesses – we have the tools and networks necessary to help you develop your company or idea in a systematic and long-term manner for growth.

The number of foreigners living in Oulu has been steadily increasing over the last decade. Newcomers come here for various reasons; work, family, studies, security. Now, in 2013, the city has more than 4,600 foreign residents from 122 countries, accounting for about 2.6% of the total population.

We hope that this guidebook will help you to find your way through the Finnish system and make it easier for you to settle in our lovely city.

Welcome to sharing everyday life in Oulu,
I hope you will feel at home with us!

Mayor Matti Pennanen
City of Oulu



Other sources of information

About Finland

Infobank

Very good information on services, authorities and life in Finland and in Oulu. Also gives you useful input about your particular situation (student, worker, refugee etc...) Oulu information: Arabic, Chinese, English, Finnish, Russian

www.infopankki.fi

Albanian, Arab, Chinese, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, Kurdish, Persian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Somali, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish

Welcome to Finland guidebook

Basic information about Finnish culture, authorities and society in Finland.

www.lifeinfinland.fi

Arabic, English, Chinese, Finnish, French, Persian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Swedish, Thai

Working in Finland guidebook

Useful information for employers and foreign employees about rules, permits and working culture.

www.mol.fi/finnwork

English, Estonian, Finnish, French, Polish, Russian, Swedish

Study in Finland portal

English

Information about Finland as a study destination.

www.studyinfinland.fi

Immigrant Nettinappi

Information for young people about society and youth culture in Finland, leisure activities and facilities in Oulu.

www.nettinappi.fi/immigrant

Arabic, Finnish, French, English, Russian

About Oulu

The City of Oulu

Information about the city and its services.

www.ouka.fi

English, Finnish, Swedish

Oulu City Tourist Office

Information about services, activities, sights, etc. in the Oulu region.

www.visitoulu.fi

English, Finnish, German, Norwegian, Swedish

Oulu Guide Finland 2013

Comprehensive information for travellers and locals on services, culture, sightseeing, activities for adults and children

www.visitoulu.fi

English, German, Russian, Swedish, Finnish

Information portal of Oulu

English, Finnish

Basic information, search engine and links to the region's websites.

www.oulu.com/en

The material in this guidebook is for informational purposes only. Some of the information is subject to change without prior notice.

An online version of this guidebook can be found at

www.ouka.fi/oulu/villavictor-english/upon-arrival

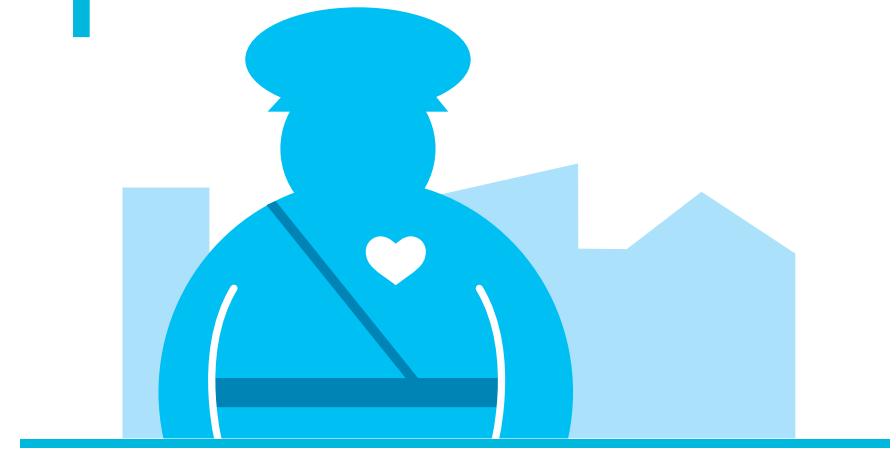
Prior to arrival (*Ennen saapumista*)

There are many things to consider when you plan moving to another country. This checklist helps you to get organised before you arrive in Oulu.

- Organise valid passports and visas (if needed) for all your family
- Collect necessary documents and take photocopies. Any marriage/registration certificates and birth certificates of children need to be authenticated before arrival by the Apostille Certificate (stamp or paper certificate) if the document was issued by the authorities of a country that has ratified the Hague Convention of 1961. The information also needs to be translated in English, Finnish or Swedish
- Search for information about Oulu and Finland
- Find out about job opportunities in Oulu
- Research and organise accommodation before coming
- Enquire about schools and day-care if your family is accompanying you
- Consider taking health insurance from your home country to cover at least the first year of your stay. We also strongly recommend this for EU/Nordic citizens since the European Health Insurance Card only covers necessary medical treatment in the public sector
- Note that Finland electric voltage is 230V and 50Hz
- Check if you need an international driving licence
- See what formalities you need to go through if you want to bring your vehicle into the country
- Obtain a letter of explanation (in English) from your doctor for any medical care instructions and prescribed drugs you may need to bring with you
- Find out about taxation in Finland

See Expat Finland (www.expat-finland.com) and Infobank (www.infopankki.fi/en/frontpage) for issues to consider when moving to Finland.

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Welcome to Oulu, Finland, Capital of Northern Scandinavia (*Tervetuloa Ouluun!*)

The first section is a quick guide to city services for newcomers. Guidance is also given on how to deal with emergency situations.

Oulu in a nutshell

Oulu is the largest city in Northern Finland and Northern Scandinavia and the fifth largest city in the country, with a population of 191,000 in 2013.

The median age of the residents is 34.0 years, making it one of the youngest cities in the country. From being a town known for tar and salmon, Oulu has evolved into a modern, international centre of technology, reputable universities and professional schools.

Inspiring business and research communities, services for families, versatile opportunities for studies, safety, security and a clean environment make Oulu an excellent setting for living, studying and working.

Services for newcomers

City Service Point Oulu10

Oulu10 or “Oulu-kymppi” is a public service point for visitors and residents, where you can find help and advice on a wide range of matters related to Oulu and services offered by the city.

Turn to Oulu10 for answers to questions regarding childcare, services for senior citizens or opportunities for sports, for example. Staff can also provide help in filling in different kinds of forms necessary for services provided by the City.

Oulu Tourist Information is located under the same roof. Information material like maps, brochures, forms, bus timetables, etc. can also be collected from here.

The services at Oulu10 are available on a daily basis in English and Finnish. Services are also provided in some other foreign languages. Check the Oulu10 website for language and timetable-related updates.

INFORMATION SERVICE IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES

Language	Time	Telephone	Email
Chinese	Monday 15.00-17.00	050 911 0436	oulu10.cn@ouka.fi
Turkish	Tuesday 15.00-17.00	050 911 8559	oulu10.tr@ouka.fi
Vietnamese	Wednesday 15.00-17.00	050 911 0279	oulu10.vt@ouka.fi
Thai	Thursday 15.00-17.00	050 406 3296	oulu10.th@ouka.fi

OULU10 SERVICE POINT

Torikatu 10, city centre

Tel. 08 558 558 00

Working hours: Mon–Thu 8.00-17.00, Fri 8.00-16.00

www.ouka.fi/oulu10

oulu10@ouka.fi

ULU TOURIST OFFICE

Torikatu 10, city centre

Tel. 08 558 41330

Working hours: Mon–Thu 9.00-17.00, Fri 9.00-16.00

www.visitoulu.fi

touristinfo@ouka.fi



City Service Point Oulu10. White building on the left.

MULTICULTURAL CENTRE VILLA VICTOR

Kirkkokatu 54, Heinäpää district

Tel. 044 703 1868

Open: Mon–Thu 8.00-20.00, Fri 9.00-18.00, Sat 12.00-18.00

www.ouka.fi/villavictor

The aim of the city's Multicultural Centre (Monikulttuurikeskus) Villa Victor is to promote the integration of foreigners as well as increase multicultural interaction between the residents of Oulu. It is an international meeting place; a living room and an activity centre open to everyone. The Centre offers free Finnish language courses and info sessions on Finnish society. In addition, it organises and hosts a variety of cultural events and clubs. Everyone is welcome to attend the activities or just pop in.

SERVICES ALSO INCLUDE:

- Internet access free of charge
- newspapers
- possibility to play piano, guitar and drums
- venue for organising your own multicultural events

The same premises houses the multicultural Friendship House (Ystävystalo) run by the NGO Oulun seudun Setlementti ry.
www.oulunsetlementti.fi/ystavyystalo

Support for the integration of immigrants

Finnish law includes an Act on the Promotion of Integration. Under the Act, all immigrants who are granted a residence permit or have registered their right of residence in Finland will receive basic information about Finnish society and guidance on the services available to them. They may also request that an initial assessment be made, in order to develop an individual integration plan.

The initial assessment is made to evaluate the immigrant's employment, training and other integration capabilities, along with their needs for Finnish language training and other measures promoting integration.

The objective of the integration plan is to help people adapt to everyday life and play an active role in Finnish society. The integration plan will be implemented for the first three years after arriving in Finland.

Integration plans are drawn up for those registered as job seekers and for those receiving social assistance. A plan may also be drawn up for any immigrant who, on the basis of the initial assessment, is deemed to be in need of one. If you are not registered as a job seeker or you are not a customer of social services, contact the City Service Point Oulu10 for more information.

Interpretation and translation services

You are entitled to interpretation services when doing important business with the authorities (e.g. health care, day-care, Social Insurance Institution – Kela). If you are unable to make yourself understood in Finnish or Swedish, the authority in question has the duty to arrange interpretation or translation services in matters initiated by the authority and take care of related costs. Remember to ask for the interpretation service in advance.

Associations, clubs, communities for foreigners

The largest foreign national groups in Oulu at the moment are from Russia, Iraq, China, Somalia, Vietnam and Sweden. Approximately 40% of foreigners are from Europe, 37% from Asia, 14% from Africa, 4% from the Americas, and 1% from Oceania.

Many foreigners have set up registered or non-registered associations. Feel free to ask for the latest contact details for these associations from Multicultural Centre Villa Victor and Oulu10 Service Point.

Emergency situations

THE GENERAL EMERGENCY NUMBER IN FINLAND IS

112

Call the general emergency number (häätänumero) **112** for help in cases of emergency. Call if someone's life, health, property or the environment is threatened or in danger, or you are witnessing a crime. With this number you can reach the following:

- fire department
- ambulance services
- police
- emergency social services
- sea rescue

The emergency number is always the same (it does not need any prefixes) and is free of charge, whether you are calling from a landline, a mobile phone or a foreign mobile phone.

WHEN A CALL TO 112 IS MADE, THE CALLER MUST

- 1) tell the operator his/her name
- 2) explain what has happened and where (the address and the city)
- 3) wait for instructions
- 4) not disconnect until told to do so
- 5) don't disconnect if the emergency number is busy. A recorded message will ask the caller to hold on. Emergency calls will be answered as soon as possible and in order of arrival. If you don't speak Finnish or the operator doesn't speak your language the operator will try to get another person or an interpreter on the phone

THE POISON INFORMATION CENTRE, TEL. 09-471 977 (24/7)

The poison information centre answers questions concerning the prevention and treatment of acute poisoning. The line is open every day of the week, 24 hours a day. However, the centre does not analyse or treat patients.

ICE (IN CASE OF EMERGENCY) NUMBERS

ICE numbers are used to contact family or friends in case of an incident or mishap. You should always have a few 'ICE contacts' in the contacts list of your mobile phone. This can be done by adding the prefix ICE to the name of the person you would like to be contacted in case of an emergency.

2



How to get started

(Miten pääsen alkuun?)

When you move to Finland, this is what you should do during the first days and weeks after arrival.

RESIDENCE

Find yourself a place to live. You cannot be registered as a resident in Finland unless you have a residential address.

LOCAL REGISTER OFFICE

One must register oneself on the population information register at the Local Register Office (Maistraatti) as a person resident in Finland and in order to obtain a personal identity code, i.e. social security number. (Note: you cannot get a social security number unless you have a work or residence permit.)

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A RESIDENCE PERMIT

The police station handles questions regarding residence permits and right of resi-

dence. Applications for a residence permit are also made at the police station. Visit the police station for questions regarding the residence permit and right of residence.

TELEPHONE

It is also a good idea to get a personal mobile telephone as there are almost no public telephones available. You can either get a SIM card or buy a prepaid connection.

BANK ACCOUNT

Open a bank account, as in Finland your salary will be paid into the bank, not in cash. Any possible social benefits will also be paid directly to your bank account. In order to open a bank account, you will need a passport or an identity document.

FIND OUT YOUR RIGHTS TO THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME FROM THE SOCIAL INSURANCE INSTITUTION (KELA)

Visit the local Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela) to find out if you are entitled to national health insurance. The Kela card is proof of your entitlements under the national Health Insurance scheme when you visit a doctor or a pharmacy.

TAX CARD

In Finland, everyone must have a tax card which illustrates the percentage of tax deduction whether you are working or unemployed. You can obtain the tax card at the tax office (Verotoimisto). Remember to bring a passport or an identity document.

FINDING A JOB

Be active in looking for a job. If you are unemployed, visit the Employment and Economic Development Office (TE-toimisto) to register as a job seeker. TE-offices also organise Finnish language courses for job seekers.

START LEARNING THE LANGUAGE

If you speak Finnish, it will be easier to find a job and feel at home. Non-stop courses are available at the Multicultural Centre Villa Victor.

Registration at the Local Register Office



OULU LOCAL REGISTER OFFICE (OULUN MAISTRAATTI)

Isokatu 4, city centre

Tel. 08 71 876 0241

Working hours: Mon-Fri 9.00-16.00

Email: info.pohjois-pohjanmaa@maistraatti.fi

www.maistraatti.fi/en

After obtaining a residential address, you must register at the Local Register Office (Maistraatti) in the population information register as a person resident in Finland and in order to obtain a personal identity code.

FOR REGISTRATION YOU WILL NEED:

- Passport
- Your own and the family's residence permit (if you are not a citizen of the EU, the Nordic countries or the EEA) valid for at least one year
- Relevant original certificates and authorised official translations (e.g. marriage and children's birth).

All official documents issued abroad (excluding the Nordic countries) must be notarised originals or authorised translations. Legalisation takes place by two different means depending on the country: an Apostille Certificate or a certification of the foreign ministry of the issuing country legalised by a competent Finnish embassy (or of another Nordic country) in that country.

After registration, a social security number (henkilötunnus) will be issued, which will be sent by post. In Finland, the social security number is used for identification by most authorities and registries.

Citizens of the Nordic countries are not required to report to the local register office, unless they plan on residing in Finland for a period exceeding one year.

Notification of change of address

You must inform your Local Register Office (Maistraatti) of any change of address by submitting the Change of Address Notification when you move:
to Finland from abroad

- between different localities within Finland
- away from Finland

On first moving to Finland, you should notify the Maistraatti in person.

Afterwards, the notification of moving within Finland or within Oulu is best done by filling in a standard form for the Maistraatti and the post office. The post office will inform other officials of the change of address, and will forward your post for one month free of charge.

Find notification of change of address online

www.posti.fi/muuttouilmoitus (in Finnish, English, Swedish).

You can also pick the form up from the Maistraatti or post offices.

OULU MAIN POST OFFICE (POSTI)

Hallituskatu 36, city centre

Tel. 0200 71000

Working hours: Mon–Fri 8.00–20.00, Sat 10.00–14.00

www.posti.fi

Postal services are also provided in various shops in different parts of the city and usually have longer working hours. Check the updated list on the Posti website.

Note that a "door to door" delivery service is not available in every area. Please check with your local post office for the services you require.

Residence permit

A residence permit (oleskelulupa) is an authorisation to live in the country. It is granted to a foreign national for purposes other than tourism or similar short-term stays.

- Nordic country nationals do not need residence permits
- EU nationals or EEA nationals may reside, work and practise a profession or study in Finland for three months, after which they have to apply for right of residency (oleskeluoikeus) at the police station
- Non-EU or EEA nationals wishing to reside in Finland need a residence permit to enter the country. The grounds for getting a residence permit differ from case to case (working, studying, family ties, humanitarian, etc.)

Residence permit types

A residence permit may either be for a fixed term or permanent. A fixed-term residence permit is granted according to the nature of residence either as a temporary or a continuous residence permit. The first residence permit is always issued for a fixed term.

THE NATURE OF THE RESIDENCE PERMIT IS INDICATED IN THE RESIDENCE PERMIT WITH A LETTER:

A: a continuous residence permit

B: a temporary residence permit

P: a permanent residence permit

P-EY: an EU residence permit for third-country nationals with long-term EU resident status

Applying for a residence permit

A first residence permit is generally applied for at a Finnish diplomatic mission (embassy or consulate) in the applicant's home country. The decision to grant a residence permit is made by the Finnish Immigration Service (Maahanmuuttovirasto).

Application for several types of residence permits can be submitted online (students, work-related, citizenship application, registration of EU citizens). The applicant still needs to visit a Finnish embassy or a police in person to verify their identity and to give their fingerprints for the biometric residence permit card.

A family member of a Finnish citizen doesn't need to apply for and wait for a residence permit abroad; he/she can come to Finland and apply for his/her residence permit here. In this case, the local police will decide whether or not to grant a residence permit.

An application for an extension of a residence permit (jatko-oleskelulupa) must always be submitted to the local police.

After obtaining your residence permit, remember to register at the Local Register Office.

More information: Online applications, application forms and instructions see Finnish Immigration Service (Maahanmuuttovirasto) at www.migri.fi.

The police upon arrival



OULU POLICE STATION (OULUN POLIISIASEMA)

Rata-aukio 2, Raksila district

Tel. 071 876 0211

Mon - Fri 08.00-16.15

www.police.fi

Foreigners' affairs help desk, Tel. 071 876 5776 (Tue 9 - 11 and 13 - 15)
Licences and permits for foreigners, Mon, Wed - Fri 8 - 11, closed Tue

Licence services (passports, residence permits, driving licences, etc.) are available only by appointment which can be made online (in Finnish, English and Swedish). No appointment is needed for collecting processed documents; just take a queuing number and wait for your turn.

If you do not have access to the Internet, you can make an appointment in person at the service desk or as self service at the Oulu central police station. A telephone help desk service is available for new Internet users tel. 071 876 5764 (Mon–Fri 9.00–10.00).

THE POLICE HANDLE MATTERS CONCERNING:

- Applications for renewal/long-term residence permits
- Transfer of residence permits to new passports
- Applications for citizenship
- Applications for identity (ID) cards for foreigners

- Licences (e.g. driving, firearms)
- Permits (e.g. for events)

There are also police stations in Haukipudas and Liminka, police service points in Muhos and Vaala, as well as a citizen's office (yhteispalvelupiste) in Kiiminki.

Kela – the Social Insurance Institution of Finland

Kela looks after basic health and social security for all persons resident in Finland. The terms and conditions of the benefits provided by Kela are defined by legislation. Once your social security number has been issued by the Maistraatti, you must visit Kela to find out if you are entitled to Finnish social security benefits and get a Kela card.



OULU KELA OFFICE

Sepänkatu 18, city centre

Postal address: PL 221, 90101 Oulu

Working hours: Mon-Wed and Fri 9.00-16.00, Thu 9.00-17.00

www.kela.fi

Kela has customer service telephone numbers for different benefits (Mon-Fri 8.00-18.00), see more details at www.kela.fi.

There is also a Kela office in Haukipudas and a citizen's office (yhteispalvelupiste) in Kiiminki and Ylikiiminki.

There are prepaid, addressed envelopes available at the Kela offices you can take home.

Benefits provided by Kela

BENEFITS FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

- maternity grant
- maternity allowance
- paternity allowance
- parental allowance
- child homecare allowance
- private day-care allowances

FINANCIAL AID AND OTHER ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS

- Unemployment benefit
- Pension for retired people
- Housing benefits

- Sickness benefits
- Disability allowance
- Rehabilitation allowance
- Pension for surviving spouses and children

The Kela card

If you are entitled to Finnish social security, Kela will send you a personal health insurance card, i.e. the Kela card (Kela-kortti) by post. The expiry date is marked on the back of the card. If you leave Finland permanently, the card must be returned to Kela.

By presenting the Kela card at the pharmacy or at private medical clinics, part of the cost can be reimbursed by Kela. No reimbursements are available for medical services obtained from public sector providers.

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A KELA CARD YOU WILL NEED

- to have a residence permit which is valid for at least one year (if a residence permit is required)
- to be considered residing permanently in Finland (e.g. return migration, employment lasting at least two years, a marriage or other close familial relationship with a person permanently residing in Finland)
- persons moving to Finland solely for studying are not considered as taking up permanent residence

In addition, eligibility for the card depends on agreements between Finland and the country you are moving from. For example, EU/EEA countries and Swiss nationals will have access to necessary medical care by presenting their European Health Insurance Card.

Taxation

Everyone in Finland has to pay taxes from their revenues to the state and the municipality. Salaries or unemployment benefits are subject to earned income taxes. Earned income taxes in Finland are progressive, which means they are based on income level. For capital income the tax rate is 30%. Tax funds are used to pay for public services such as healthcare, education and social benefits.



OULU TAX OFFICE (POHJOIS-POHJANMAAN VEROTOIMISTO)

Torikatu 34 B, city centre
 Tel. 020 612 000 (switchboard)
 020 697 024 (international taxation)
 020 697 050 (tax card)
 Fax. 020 613 4901
 Working hours: Mon-Fri 9.00-16.15
www.tax.fi

Tax card and tax percentage

If you work in Finland, a tax card (verokortti) must be provided to the employer. The employer deducts taxes directly from your gross salary and credits the net salary into your bank account. In order to get a tax card you must visit the tax office, taking along your work contract, passport and social security number. A tax card can also be applied for online if you have access codes to Internet banking. Thereafter, the tax card can be renewed online or by phone.

The tax percentage (determined according to income) will be stated on the tax card as well as the estimated total amount of annual income. A revision of the tax percentage and a new card can be requested during the year if the realised income is higher or lower than estimated.

If you work simultaneously for two employers, a second tax card (sivutuloverokortti) must be obtained for additional income, which must also be immediately disclosed to the employer.

PLEASE NOTE: YOU WILL BE TAXED 60% ON EVERYTHING YOU EARN WHILE WORKING WITHOUT A TAX CARD.

Tax return and outstanding tax

The Finnish Tax Administration will send a pre-completed tax return form (esit ytetty veroilmoitus) for the previous year in April. The taxation has been calculated according to information given by employers, banks and other parties. The tax return shows whether you will get a tax refund or if you have to pay outstanding tax.

The pre-completed tax return should be checked carefully.

- If the information on the tax return form is correct, nothing needs to be done. However, do not throw it away, as it might be required for renting a house or applying for certain benefits.
- If there is income to add or deductions to claim, corrections must be made and the tax return form should be sent to the tax office. A new taxation decision will be sent in the autumn.
- Ensure that the bank account number is written correctly on the tax return form. Any possible tax refunds are paid at the beginning of December.

For more information on real estate and capital income taxation, contact the tax office.

Tax number

All Finnish and foreign individuals who work on construction sites must have individual tax numbers. You can get yours at a tax office. If you already have one, you should have it entered in the public register of Tax Numbers. Foreign nationals who work on construction sites can obtain a Finnish personal identity code and a Tax Number from the tax office. For more details visit www.tax.fi/taxnumber.

Bank services

In Finland, almost all financial transactions are managed through a bank (pankki). Therefore, you must have a bank account. A bank card is provided when a bank account is opened, which will enable you to draw cash from cash machines (pankkiautomaatti/Otto) and pay for purchases. All banks offer Internet banking services and various types of cards for additional services.

You are free to choose which bank you use. Some banks in Oulu: Aktia, Danske Bank, Nordea, OP Oulun Osuuspankki, POP-pankki and S-Pankki.

N.B. Banks have no duty to arrange interpretation services. The customer is responsible for the interpretation services s/he needs. Some banks in Oulu offer services in English, feel free to ask!

Opening an account

IN ORDER TO OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT YOU WILL NEED

- Name(s) of the person(s) opening the account and/or ordering a bank card
- Personal identification documents (a valid passport or a permanent or temporary Finnish ID card issued by the Finnish police)
- Finnish residential address (and if you pay taxes abroad, your address in that country)
- Other documents that might be required: rental agreement for the residential address in Finland, work contract, study certificate

Paying Bills

Bills are paid through Internet banking. The bank can provide instructions for paying bills online. Some banks may require a stable income for Internet/online banking services. Ask your bank for further details. Bills can also be paid at the cashier's desk at a bank, for which a fee is charged.

PLEASE NOTE: BILLS SHOULD ALWAYS BE PAID ON TIME. The due date (eräpäivä) on the bill gives the last day for payment. If you pay late, you will be charged extra. If you encounter difficulties in paying the bill on the due date, contact the company in question well in advance and agree on a payment arrangement with them.

MORE INFORMATION

Expatriate banking, guidelines by the Federation of Finnish Financial Services
www.fkl.fi/en/material/publications/Publications/Expatriate_Banking.pdf

Insurance

Insurance (vakuutus) secures the financial situation of a person, family or company in case of accidents. Compulsory insurances in Finland are car insurance (motor insurance = liikennevakuutus) and home insurance (kotivakuutus). In addition to the statutory insurance types, you can also take private insurance to cover e.g. your property, family members or when travelling. Employers insure their employees with statutory accident insurance covering working time and trips related to work.

Ask for offers from different insurance companies (e.g. If, OP-Pohjola, and Nordea) to find the appropriate insurance.

Finnish language courses

The official languages in Finland are Finnish and Swedish. The large majority of people living in the Oulu region are Finnish speakers. It is important to study Finnish as language skills make it easier to find a job and to integrate into daily life. Start today!

Several institutions offer Finnish language courses (suomen kielen kurssit) of different levels and costs. Courses usually start in September-October or January. You can prove your existing language skills by taking the general language proficiency test.

If you are registered as a job seeker in the TE Services, you will be offered a full-time intensive courses in Finnish language and society.

Finnish language course organisers in Oulu



MULTICULTURAL CENTRE VILLA VICTOR, CITY OF OULU (MONIKULTTUURIKESKUS)

Kirkkokatu 54, Heinäpää district

Tel. 044 703 1868 (Mon-Thu 8.00-20.00, Fri 9.00-18.00, Sat 12.00-18.00)

www.ouka.fi/villavictor

Level: From beginner to advanced, training for National Certificate of Language Proficiency

Time: Daytime and evenings

Price: Free, non-stop registration

 **FRIENDSHIP HOUSE, OULUN SEUDUN SETLEMENTTI RY (YSTÄVYYSTALO)**

Villa Victor, Kirkkokatu 54, Heinäpää district

Tel. 041 433 1414, O40 728 OO83

www.ystävyyystalo.fi

Level: From beginner to advanced

Time: Daytime and evenings

Price: Subject to a fee

 **SUMMER UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN OSTROBOTHニア (POHJOIS-POHJANMAAN KESÄYLIOPISTO)**

Kauppurienkatu 8 B, 2nd floor, city centre

Tel. 044 465 2205, O44 465 2206 (Mon-Fri 9.00-15.00)

www.pohjois-pohjanmaakesayliopisto.fi

Level: From beginner to advanced

Time: Evenings

Price: Subject to a fee/Free (students are expected to acquire and pay for the books and equipment themselves)/Free online courses

 **OLU INSTITUTE (OLU-OPISTO)**

Suvantokatu 1, Karjasilta district

Tel. 050 316 6729

www.oluopisto.com

Level: Beginner

Time: Evening

Price: Subject to a fee

 **OLU GENERAL UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS (OLULIN AIKUISLUKIO)**

Itäkangastie 9, Tuira district

Tel. 08 557 3493 (Mon-Thu 9.00-19.30, Fri 9.00-14.00), O44 703 9374

www.ouka.fi/olu/oulun-aikuislukio

Level: From beginner to advanced, Finnish as a second language S2-matriculation exam preparation, national language proficiency test preparation (basic and intermediate levels)

Time: Evenings

Price: Subject to a fee

 **OLU UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDIES (OLULIN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU)**

 **OLU UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES, OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDIES (OLULIN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU)**

School of Business and Information Management

avoin.liike@oamk.fi

www.ouas.fi

For international degree students of the UAS. Other participants are welcome if there is room in the groups.

Level: From beginner to advanced

Time: Daytime

Price: Subject to a fee

 **SUMMER UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN OSTROBOTHニア (POHJOIS-POHJANMAAN KESÄYLIOPISTO)**

 **UNIVERSITY OF OULU LANGUAGE CENTRE (OLULIN YLIOPISTON KIELIKESKUS)**

Student centre, office KE1012-2, Linnanmaa campus

Tel. 0294 48 3200 (Mon-Fri 9.00-11.00 and 12.00-15.00)

www.oulu.fi/kielikoulutus

For international degree students of the university. Other participants are welcome if there is room in the groups.

Level: From beginner to advanced, national language proficiency test (intermediate and advanced levels)

Time: Evenings

Price: Subject to a fee

Finnish language proficiency test

The national language proficiency test (yleinen kielitutkinto, YKI-testi) is intended for adults. Passing the test in Finnish or Swedish and attaining the national certificate of language proficiency is required for obtaining Finnish nationality.

The test can be taken at three different levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced. The tests are arranged in Oulu a few times a year by the Oulu General Upper Secondary School for Adults (Oulun aikuislukio) and the University of Oulu Language Centre. Registration must be made 1-2 months in advance. The fee in 2013 was €90-145 according to the level.

For more information contact the above-mentioned institutions and Finnish National Board of Education (Opetushallitus), email yki@oph.fi, www.oph.fi.

3



Housing (Asuminen)

Oulu is divided into districts with excellent basic services such as grocery stores, schools, day-care, community centres, libraries and health care centres available in the centre of each community. Below you find information on different types of housing and links to sources for more information to find the suitable home for your needs.

Types of housing

- Rented accommodation (vuokra-asunto)
- Right-of-occupation housing (asumisoikeusasunto): a right-of-occupation house/apartment can be obtained by making a down-payment (about 15% of the total price of the apartment) plus a monthly rent. It ensures a permanent right to occupy the premises.
- Owner-occupied housing (omistusasunto)

For more information, see Private and public provider links on housing, by the Ministry of the Environment, www.asuminen.fi. Examples of popular Finnish web sites for owner-occupied housing include www.etuovi.com and www.jokakoti.fi.

Rented accommodation

You can rent a house or an apartment from the municipality (Sivakka-yhtymä Oy), real estate agents or private individuals.

When you rent a house or an apartment, a written rental agreement (vuokrasopimus) must be made. The rental agreement can be made for a fixed period (määräaikainen) or on a continuous basis (toistaiseksi voimassa oleva). The amount of rent payable and the date on which it should be paid is stated in the rental agreement.

A security deposit has to be paid (equivalent to one – three months' of rent), which will be returned when the house is vacated if there is no damage to the property and the rent has been paid on time. Special accommodation is provided for students and young people as well as people with disabilities and senior citizens.

Where to find accommodation?

Houses and apartments for rent can be found on the housing office web pages and through advertisements in local newspapers or estate agent listings.

- **Avara Oy/Ovenia** www.avara.fi (in finnish)
- **KAS Vuokra-asunnot** www.kas.fi
- **Otokylä Ry (students)** www.otokyla.fi
- **Oulun Palvelusäätiö (senior citizens)** www.oulunpalvelusaatio.fi
- **Oulun seudun Nuorisosauntoyhdystys OsNa (young people)** www.osna.fi
- **Pohjois-Suomen opiskelija-asuntosäätiö PSOAS (students)** www.psoas.fi
- **Riihi säätiö r.s.** www.kiinteistotahkola.fi
- **SATO Oyj** www.sato.fi
- **Sivakka-yhtymä Oy** www.oulunsivakka.fi
- **TA-Yhtymä Oy** www.ta.fi
- **Oulun Villa-Metsola (senior citizens)** www.metsolakodit.fi
- **VVO-yhtymä Oyj** www.vvo.fi
- **Walo-Asunnot Oy** www.waloasunnot.fi

TO FIND PRIVATELY RENTED ACCOMMODATION, SEE

www.vuokraovi.com in English. The service includes available accommodation from many real estate agencies and also private individuals.

Examples of current, local real estate agencies include Habita, Huoneisto Idea, Huoneistokeskus, Kiinteistömaailma OP-Kiinteistökeskus, Realia Asuntovuokraus, and Vuokraturva.

You can also check the classified section of the local papers such as Kaleva, Forum24 and Oulu-lehti.

For short-term stays, there are many options available from low-cost hostels to high-quality hotels: Omena Hotel, Summerhostel Välkkylä, Nallikari Camping, Radisson Blu Hotel, Sokos Hotel Arina.

Alternatively, you can opt for a furnished rented apartment. Providers include Kotimaaailma and Forenom, for example.

Important information on housing

Electricity (Sähkö)

An electricity contract (sähkösopimus) can be obtained by calling an electricity company and supplying them with your name and address. Residents have the responsibility for buying and changing light bulbs and fuses.

Oulun Energia is responsible for electricity distribution in the Oulu region.
Tel. 08 5584 3300, info@oulunenergia.fi

You can buy electricity from another provider company as well. Prices can be compared at www.sahkonhinta.fi

Water (Vesi)

The tenancy agreement will indicate whether water is included in the rent or whether it is payable separately each month.

Oulun Vesi is responsible for the fresh water supply and waste water treatment.
Tel. 08 5584 3800, oulunvesi@ouka.fi

Fire alarm (Palohälytin)

By Finnish law, every home must have a fire alarm. Residents are responsible for making sure the fire alarms are working and for replacing the batteries once a year. Home insurance will not cover a fire if the fire alarm was out of order prior to and during the fire.

Home insurance (Kotivakuutus)

Home insurance is provided by insurance companies. One must read the insurance papers carefully to understand what exactly is covered by the insurance.

Parking (Pysäköinti)

Cars must only be parked in allocated areas. An agreement can be signed with your landlord whereby a parking place can be allotted to you as a tenant. Visitor parking spaces are marked with a sign "vieraspaijka".

Household appliances (Kodinkoneet)

Household appliances are the responsibility of residents, so look after your refrigerator, freezer, cooker, extractor and washing machine. Most rental houses come furnished with kitchen appliances.

Smoking (Tupakointi)

Smoking is usually forbidden inside the building and on the balconies.

Balcony (Parveke)

Balconies are for the residents' recreational purposes only. Cooking, storing food or beating a carpet on a balcony is not permitted.

Silence (Hiljaisuus)

Note that between 22.00–7.00 one does not have the right to make a loud noise in the building.

Garbage/litter (Roskat, jätteet)

Garbage/litter must not be left in the hallway – it should be disposed of in the bins outside.

Common spaces (Yleiset tilat)

Common spaces include for example sauna, laundry room, and storage facilities, etc. Check the rules for the use and reservations from the estate manager.

The house manager (isännöitsijä) can be contacted in case of housing-related problems.

Waste management

In Finland, most of the waste is recycled. People sort their waste at home and then either take it to the appropriate bin located in the yard of their building, or to the nearest recycling centre (ekopiste). Each container is labelled. Most buildings have containers for burnable household waste, bio waste, paper, glass, cardboard and metal. Local recycling points can also be found e.g. near supermarkets, local waste paper collection bins or the waste treatment area in Rusko district (Ruskon jätekeskus).

Waste removal is the responsibility of residents.

If you live in apartment building or in a terraced house, the charges are included in the maintenance costs.

For single-family houses and semi-detached houses, a waste removal contract must be made with a waste transportation company.

WASTE IS GENERALLY CATEGORISED AS FOLLOWS

- Biowaste (biojäte)
- Paper (paperi)
- Paperboard cartons (keräyskartonki) and cardboard (pahvi)
- Glass (lasi)
- Metals (pienmetalli)
- Energy waste (energijäte): burnable mixed household waste including plastic
- Hazardous substances (ongelmajätteet)
- Electrical goods and electronic scrap (sähkö- ja elektroniikkaromu)

 **OULU WASTE MANAGEMENT (OULUN JÄTEHUOLTO)**
www.ouka.fi/jatehuolto/english

 **RECYCLING CENTRE (KIERRÄTYSKESKUS)**
Kurkilantie 2, Värttö district
Tel. 08 5584 3966
Working hours: Mon-Fri 10.00-17.00, Sat 10.00-14.00

For More information see waste recycling
www.ekokumppanit.fi/index.php/ekokumppanit/julkaisut (in Finnish, Arabic, Somali)

Housing allowances

HOUSING ALLOWANCE (ASUMISTUKI) IS PAID BY KELA TO

- families with a low household income
- housing allowance can be used towards rented accommodation, right-of-occupancy accommodation or owner-occupied accommodation in Finland
- is granted for a household (people sharing a living space)
- amounts to a maximum of 80% of the housing costs
- is reviewed on an annual basis

Notify Kela immediately of any changes affecting the amount of allowance. If Kela has paid too much housing allowance, you will have to repay it. Refer to section 2.5 for Kela contact information.

Checklist for moving out of rented accommodation

- Give notice to the landlord well in advance, at least one month before. The rent agreement will inform you of the notice period that should be provided before vacating rented accommodation. It is a good idea to give notice on the existing house only once a written agreement has been signed for the new accommodation
- Notify the electricity provider of the move and ask for a final statement
- Find out whether the new housing association has an agreement with a specific electricity provider or whether you can choose your own supplier. Finalise the new electricity supply agreement around two weeks before the move
- When moving out, remember to return all the keys to the landlord or property manager
- Clean the old property and empty the storage facility before moving out. This will make moving in much more pleasant for the new tenant. Items that you no longer want can be taken to a recycling centre or a flea market provided that they are still in good working order
- Do not forget to submit a Change of Address Notification to the post office. Alternatively, you can submit it online at www.muuttoilmoitus.fi
- If you are moving out of Finland, remember to inform the authorities such as Maistraatti, the police station, Kela and verotoimisto in advance





Health (*Terveys*)

This section gives you information on health-care services in Oulu. Before your arrival, consider taking health insurance from your home country to cover at least the first year of your stay. We also strongly recommend this for EU/Nordic citizens since the European Health Insurance Card only covers necessary medical treatment in the public sector.

IN CASE OF A HEALTH-RELATED EMERGENCY, CALL 112.

Public health care

All residents with a Kela card have the right to use the social and health care services provided by the City. Municipalities take care of most health care services, which include basic health care, child health and maternity clinics, school health care and oral health care. Employed persons are entitled to occupational health-care. Check what services are covered by your employer.

Emergency duty service



OULU UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL EMERGENCY UNIT (Oulun yliopistollinen keskussairaala OYS, päivystys). Kajaanintie 50, entrance A1, Kontinkangas district. Tel. 08 315 2655, you can call 24/7.

During office hours, Mon-Thu 8.00–16.00, Fri 8.00–15.00, contact your local health care centre. In case of sudden illness or minor injury, a nurse or physician at your local health care centre can help you.

Outside office hours, contact the emergency duty service (päivystys) at Oulu University Hospital. Please call the health advice number (08 315 2655) before going to the emergency unit. The health advice service is available 24/7, also on weekends and public holidays. The service will assess your medical condition and urgency of care.

At the emergency unit, you must first register. Patients are treated in order of urgency. Take a seat and wait to be called in.

List of Health care centres

Health care centres (terveysasema) are responsible for the basic health care of the residents within the district. You may also choose another centre if it is more convenient, once every 12 months. For more information, contact your health care centre.

HEALTH CARE CENTRES IN OULU

DISTRICT	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
City centre (keskusta)	Saaristonkatu 22	08 558 44312
Haukipudas	Simppulantie 15	08 558 54600
Höytyä	Hanhitie 15	08 558 44200
Kaakkuri	Pesätie 11	08 558 44510
Kaijonharju	Kalevalantie 5	08 558 44228
Kiiminki	Terveystie 1	08 558 59312
Kontinkangas	Kajaanintie 48 A	08 558 44333
Myllyoja	Karvarinaukio 16	08 558 44366
Oulunsalo	Kauppiaantie 10	08 558 73401
Rajakylä	Ruiskukkatie 4	08 558 44428
Seppä	Uusikatu 49	08 558 44630
Tuira	Kangastie 12	08 558 44477
Yli-Ii	Kirkkokuja 2	08 550 58280
Ylikiiminki	Vesaisenlinnantie 2	08 5587 70722

Health care centres are open Mon-Thu 8.00-16.00, Fri 8.00-15.00.

In non-urgent matters, please avoid calling during peak hours (8.00-9.00 and 11.00-12.00).

Making an appointment at the health care centre

To make an appointment (ajanvaraus), call the health care centre. When on the phone with the nurse, describe the symptoms as clearly as possible. The nurse will then assess the patient's needs, and make an appointment. The nurse will tell the caller the date, the time, the name of the nurse/doctor and the room number.

When making an appointment with a doctor, you can also ask if a female doctor is available. Interpretation options should be enquired in advance.

Doctor's appointments must be arranged in advance. Usually one sees the nurse first. After checking the patient's condition, the nurse decides if a doctor's appointment is needed and the patient is asked to wait or come back later.

If the line is busy, follow the instructions given by the automated voice machine (usually in Finnish).

- Music will be played at the beginning, after which you will hear a voice asking you to hold the line
- After the message the music will play again for 20 seconds
- The message asking you to hold is repeated and informs you to press 1 on your keypad
- The caller can choose either to continue to hold or to press 1 and hang up. By pressing 1 the caller's phone number is automatically registered and the nurse will call him/her back the same day, so you do not need to call again
- The callback service is provided from Mon-Thu until 15.00 and Fri until 14.00

At the appointment

Be punctual and sit near the door of the nurse's room. Wait until the nurse calls you by name. If you are late, the following patient might be called in. If you are unable to go to the health care centre, call and cancel the appointment at least one day beforehand. If the appointment is not cancelled, a fee will be charged.

Laboratory tests and X-rays

You need to have a doctor's (not a private or occupational healthcare doctor) referral and an appointment for lab tests and X-rays. To make an appointment, call 08 558 44355. Bring your Kela card with you to the appointment.

The laboratories are located at the health care centres in Höyhtyä, city centre, Tuira, Oulunsalo, Haukipudas, Kiiminki and Yli-Ii and at Oulu City Hospital.

Patients will be directed to the X-ray from the health care centre.

Refilling of prescriptions

Electronic prescriptions can be refilled online at www.oulunomahoito.fi (in Finnish).

Prescriptions are electronic (eResepti) and they are saved in a central database. You will get instructions on paper on how to take your medicine and you can pick up the medicine from any pharmacy with your Kela card.

Vaccinations

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE: All children in Finland are vaccinated free of charge against certain serious, contagious diseases, some of which are fatal. Children under school age are given age-appropriate vaccinations at child health clinics. School-age children are vaccinated at school health clinics.

ADULTS: Basic vaccinations are provided free of charge for adults: tetanus (lockjaw), diphtheria and MPR (= measles, mumps, and rubella/German measles). Prescriptions for other vaccinations that are not free of charge (e.g. for travelling) can be obtained from health care centres and occupational health care.

SEASONAL INFLUENZA: Certain groups of people with a high risk of death or diseases caused by influenza are entitled to a vaccination free of charge.

Sexual health

Advice related to family planning, pregnancy prevention, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases (STD) is provided by school health clinics, student health care centres and local health care centres.

In Finland, abortion is legally allowed until the 12th week of pregnancy and after that for certain medical or social reasons. A doctor's referral is needed.

STDs are diseases caused by bacteria or viral infections, which can be transmitted from one person to another through mucous membrane contact during sexual intercourse or oral sex. Using a condom is the best protection against STDs.

Please note: Health care staff are bound by professional secrecy and are therefore committed to keeping the treatment and health information of their patients private. This also applies to minors (under 18) who according to their age and developmental level have the right to decide not to give the information to their parents/guardians.

At the hospital (*Sairaala*)

A referral by a health care centre or private doctor is required for examination and treatment at the hospital. The referral is not needed in case of emergency.

 **OULU UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL** (Oulun yliopistollinen keskussairaala, OYS). Kajaanintie 50, Kontinkangas district. Tel. 08 315 2011 (switch board). www.pphp.fi

A patient at the hospital pays a daily charge, which includes examination, treatment, medication, care and meals.

PARKING AT THE HOSPITAL

Parking garage, where the ticket is collected at the entrance and paid before leaving. Charged parking Mon-Fri 7.30-16.00.

Parking places at the street level, in front of entrances A1-A6, where a ticket must be bought from an automatic machine. Charged parking Mon-Fri 7.00-21.00, Sat 9.00-18.00.

Pregnancy, baby and child healthcare

Child health and maternity clinics

The health of a mother and a baby is monitored on a regular basis at the child health and maternity clinic (neuvola) throughout the pregnancy. **The clinic must be informed of the pregnancy before the end of the fourth month of the pregnancy to be eligible for a maternity grant from Kela.** You can also see a private doctor, but almost all mothers in Finland use the free public services.

After the birth, the child's health and development are monitored in the child health and maternity clinics on a regular basis until the age of seven years. After that the check-ups will be made at the school health clinic. The child is also vaccinated in accordance with the national vaccination programme. One or both parents can take the child to the clinic.

Part of the nurse's job is to support the family's overall well-being by giving advice. New mothers or fathers should not hesitate to share their feelings, family circumstances and problems with the nurse.

There are child health and maternity clinics in Oulu, Haukipudas, Kiiminki, Oulunsalo and Yli-Ii.

 **CHILD HEALTH AND MATERNITY CLINICS**

Tel. 08 558 44356 (Mon-Thu 8.00-15.00, Fri 8.00-14.00)

Giving birth

In Finland, women usually give birth in maternity hospitals. The father or another support person is welcome to accompany the mother during delivery. More information will be provided by the maternity clinic. One has to pay for the overnight stay at the hospital after giving birth. Post natal check-ups of mothers are provided at child health and maternity clinics.

Check the entrance of the maternity/child birth unit of the hospital beforehand to avoid confusion when the time comes for giving birth. If you go to the maternity unit at night, press the button next to the door to be let in. You may only park your car on the ramp for a short period of time.

 **MATERNITY WARD AND MATERNITY RECEPTION,**
OULU UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Entrance B2:2 (on the ramp). Kajaanintie 50, Kontinkangas district. Tel. 08 315 3198.

When a child is unwell

If your child is ill, call the local health care centre or child health and maternity clinic.

Parents are entitled to three days off work without loss of salary if their child is sick, until the child turns ten years old. You are obliged to provide a certificate to the employer/school about the child's sickness. The certificate can be obtained by calling the child health and maternity clinic, tel. 08 558 44356.

School Health Clinics

The school health clinics (kouluneuvola) provide healthcare services for children attending basic education (starting at seven years) and young people in general upper secondary education (lukio).

Children will attend regular check-ups. The school nurse can make an appointment for your child to see a psychologist, speech therapist, etc. if needed.

Children are invited to regular dental check-ups until they are 15 years of age. If the mouth and teeth are healthy, check-ups are not required every year. Children over 15 make their own appointments for check-ups. Dental care is free for those under 18 years of age.

Oral Health care



MUNICIPAL DENTAL CLINICS (HAMMASLÄÄKÄRI)

Appointments tel. 08 5584 6430

Working hours: Mon-Thu 7.45-16.00, Fri 7.45-15.00

In urgent situations, call on weekdays between 7.45-10.00. Appointments are allocated based on the assessment of treatment need. Otherwise in non-urgent cases, calls should be made after 10.00.

The patient will be invoiced after each visit to the dentist, based on the care received. For an unused appointment that was not cancelled, a fee will be charged for patients over 15 years old.

DENTAL CLINIC	ADDRESS
City centre	Saaristonkatu 22, 2nd floor, 90100 Oulu
Haukipudas	Simpulantie 15, 90830 Haukipudas
Herukka	Risuniityntie 7, 90800 Oulu
Höyhtyä	Hanhitie 15, 90150 Oulu
Kaakkuri	Pesätie 11, 90420 Oulu
Kaijonharju	Kalevalantie 5, 90570 Oulu
Kiiminki	Terveystie 1, 90900 Kiiminki
Kontinkangas	Aapistie 3, 90220 Oulu
Maikkula	Jatulikivenkatu 1, 90240 Oulu
Myllyoja	Valjastie 17, 90650 Oulu
Oulunsalo	Shopping centre Kapteeni, 2nd floor, Karhuojantie 2, 90460 Oulunsalo
Rajakylä	Ruiskukkatie 4, 90580 Oulu
Tuira	Kangastie 12, 90500 Oulu
Ylikiiminki	Vesaisenlinnantie 2, 91300 Ylikiiminki
Yli-Ii	Elatuspellontie 2, 91200 Yli-Ii
Special dentistry unit (referral required)	Aapistie 3, 90220 Oulu and Saaristonkatu 22, 2nd floor, 90100 Oulu
Teaching health care centre	Aapistie 3, 2nd floor, 90220 Oulu Appointments for dentist students (new patients) 12.00-14.00, tel. 050 3166 928



EMERGENCY DENTAL CLINIC

Aapistie 3, Kontinkangas district

Tel. 044 703 6426

In case of acute dental pain, during weekends and public holidays, emergency dental care is available at the emergency dental clinic (10.00 to 12.00).

At other times and in cases involving serious injury, contact the joint Emergency Unit in Oulu University Hospital directly, tel. 08 315 2655.

Specialised health services

Mental health services

Mental health services (mielenterveyspalvelut) offer help and support in crises, psychiatric care and rehabilitation as well as housing services for residents of Oulu. The primary contact in all mental health-related issues should take place at the district health care centre, from where the patient will be referred to special care, if necessary.

EMERGENCY HELPLINE

In crisis situations, emergency mental health services can be contacted. An appointment is not required for these services. Tel. 044 703 5940 (adults), 044 703 5919 (children and youth).

Intoxicants and addiction



INTOXICANTS EMERGENCY DUTY SERVICE (A-CLINIC, REDI 64 & ROAD 14)

Mäkelininkatu 43, 3rd floor, city centre. Tel. 044 703 6160. Working hours:
Mon-Fri 8.00-11.30

You can get help for intoxicant and addiction (gambling, alcohol, drugs, etc.) related problems from your local health care centre, occupational health care, school and student health care or the child health and maternity clinic.

Help concerning different dependencies is also provided by A-Clinic and the Rehabilitation clinic Redi 64 for young people (outpatient care). A-Clinic provides care for people over 29 years of age and Redi 64 for people under 29 living in the Oulu region. Haukiputaan Road 14 is intended for people under the age of 30. Patients are directed to the services by the intoxicants emergency duty service (pähdepäivystys).

Social and health care services for refugees

SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

Kauppurienkatu 8 B, 4th floor, city centre

Tel. (nurses) 044 703 4881, 044 703 4882, 044 703 4766

Working hours: Mon-Fri 8.00-15.30

www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/social-and-health-services2

Social and health care services for quota refugees, asylum seekers who have been granted a residence permit and returnees are provided by the social and health services for refugees. After the initial period (three years for refugees and asylum seekers and six months for returnees), clients are served by local social and health care offices.

Rehabilitation for torture survivors

A torture victim can contact his/her doctor or social worker who will then direct him/her to the torture survivors' rehabilitation services (Kidutettujen kuntoutuspalvelut) provided at Oulun Diakonissalaitos medical centre.

Private health care

Although Finnish public health care is of high quality, you can choose to go to private clinics. It may be easier and quicker to get an appointment, especially if you need to see a specialist. Appointments can be made by phone or Internet.

Please note: Although a child might have private insurance giving the parents the option of taking him/her to see a private doctor, the child still has to undergo regular check-ups at the public child health clinic.

The main private clinics (lääkäriasema) in Oulu are Mehiläinen, Terveystalo and Botnia Hospital. In addition, there are a lot of private dental clinics (hammaslääkäri). You can find contact information about those on the Internet.

Pharmacies and medicines

Medicines (lääkkeet) are sold in pharmacies (apteekki). A doctor's prescription is required for certain medicines. The pharmacy staff will inform the customer if a cheaper alternative exists for medicines containing the same active ingredients.

There are many pharmacies in the Oulu region. The following are found in the city and have long opening hours:

UNIVERSITY PHARMACY (YLIOPISTON APTEEKKI)

Isokatu 27, city centre

Working hours: Mon- Sun 8.00-23.00

CENTRAL PHARMACY OF OULU (OULUN KESKUSAPTEEKKI)

Isokatu 45, city centre

Working hours: Mon-Fri 8.30–21.00, Sat-Sun 10.00–21.00

SENDING MEDICINES BY POST

It is forbidden to receive medicines sent by post from countries outside the EEA area. Although medicines can be sent from EEA countries, there are rules concerning the quantity as well as individual country regulations. Contact the customs authority (tulli) before having any medicine sent from abroad. Customs Information Service tel. 020 690 600.

Fees and compensation for health care expenses

Fees

Public health care services are free for those under 15 years old. Consultation with the nurse at the health care centre is also free of charge for adults. The doctor's consultation fee for an adult at the health care centre can be charged for a maximum of three times a year. From the fourth visit onwards, a consultation fee will not be charged. The fee for a doctor's consultation is €13.80 in 2013. For a specialist's consultation at the hospital, the fee is €27.50 in 2013. If you miss or forget to cancel a scheduled appointment, a fee of €33.90 will be charged.

If you plan to visit private health care provider, it is advisable to ask for the possible cost estimate beforehand.

Compensation

If you are entitled to Kela benefits and have been granted a Kela card, Kela provides reimbursements for the cost of medical treatment and pays sickness allowances on account of loss of earnings.

- No reimbursements are available for medical services obtained from public sector providers. However, health services provided by the City cost significantly less than those provided by private sector companies.
- The cost of treatment by a doctor or dentist in private practice is reimbursed according to a schedule of fees. Take your Kela card with you in order to get the compensation. Despite partial compensation from Kela, private doctors remain expensive (approximately €60-120 per visit).
- Reimbursements are available for prescription medicines. The reimbursement amount is normally deducted from the price of the medicine at the pharmacy if you show your Kela card.
- Sickness allowance is intended to compensate for loss of earnings during a period of incapacity to work caused by your own or your child's sickness. A ten-day waiting period must normally be completed before sickness allowance is paid. If you are being paid a wage or salary while on sick leave, the allowance is paid to the employer.

Health care for students and employees

Students

UNIVERSITY OF OULU

- FINNISH STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES
(YLIOPPILAIKEN TERVEYDENHOITOSÄÄTIÖ, YTHS)**
- Yliopistonkatu 1 A, Linnanmaa campus
- Tel. 046 710 1062, Dental care tel. 046 710 1065
- Working hours: Mon-Thu 8.00-15.00, Fri 8.00-14.00
- www.yths.fi/en

The Finnish Student Health Service provides health services for students at Finnish universities. The student ID card entitles students to free medical examinations and consultations, free vaccinations and general medical treatment. Some services are payable.

UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES OUAS, VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- OULU STUDENT HEALTH CARE CLINIC (OPISKELUTERVEYSASEMA)**
- Kajaanintie 48 A, 3b floor, Kontinkangas district
- Tel. 08 558 46310
- Working hours: Mon, Tue, Thu 8.00-16.00, Wed, Fri 8.00-14.00

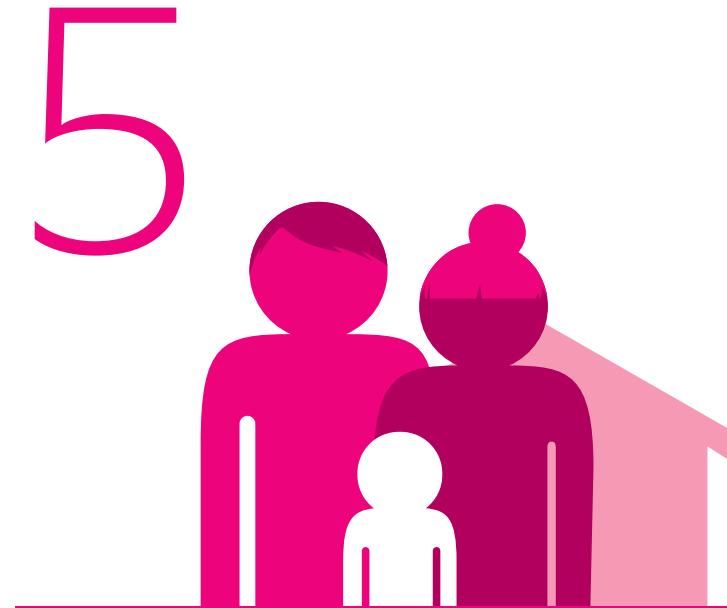
Health care services for students provided by the City of Oulu are aimed at full-time students who study for at least two months at the University of Applied Sciences, a vocational institution or a vocational adult education institution.

Foreign students are entitled to public dental care in acute cases. Treatment provided at municipal dental clinics will be charged according to health care centre tariffs.

Employees

In Finland, each employer is legally responsible for providing the minimum, preventive, occupational health services to all employees. Check from your employer what kind of occupational health services it provides to employees.

Employers may also provide their employees with access to medical services. Self-employed persons and entrepreneurs may also wish to arrange for access to occupational health services. Part of the cost of such services is reimbursed by Kela.



Services for families and children *(Perhepalvelut)*

This section provides you with useful information on services for families in different life situations, e.g. getting married, giving birth, finding a suitable day-care for children and benefits for families.

Day-care services

Children under school age (under 7 years) are entitled to municipal day-care (päivähointo). Day-care is organised in day-care centres, in family day-care and in playgroups. Day-care can be part-time or full-time. The cost of day-care depends on the parents' income. A day-care placement must be applied for well in advance. Before attending a day-care centre, children must have a health check-up in a child health and maternity clinic.

Private kindergartens also offer day-care services. Financial support for the private day-care costs (private kindergarten or private family day-care) is available in the form of a service voucher from the municipality. To hire a nanny, financial support is available from Kela.

A parent of a child aged three or under can take childcare leave and stay at home with the child and get benefits from Kela (homecare allowance).

Municipal day-care centres

The following options for day-care can be chosen:

- Open early education (avoin varhaiskasvatus): toddler groups, Little schools, family clubs
- Municipal day-care centre (kunnallinen päiväkoti)
- Family day-care (perhepäivähoido): maximum of four children in a group
- Group family day-care (ryhmäperhepäiväkoti): maximum of 12 children

Some day-care centres are open 24 hours daily for families with parents working shifts. There are also day-care centres providing teaching in English, Swedish or Sámi. English immersion is also available. Language immersion is a method of teaching a second language in which the target language is used as the means of instruction.

DAY-CARE APPLICATIONS

All day-care-related matters can be managed electronically. All Oulu-based families who wish to enrol their child in day-care or pre-school must fill in a day-care application. Day-care centres can be visited before applying for a placement.

The application is processed by the day-care service coordination team, who will contact the family during the application process. Families with children in City-provided day-care can also update their contact details, online.

The application must be submitted four months prior to the date when day-care services are needed. In urgent cases, it will take two weeks for the day-care services to find a place for the child. The decision on granting a day-care placement will be sent in writing. If you do not accept the placement and fail to cancel it before the start date of care specified in the acceptance notification, a fee for 15 days' care will be charged.

The day-care service coordination team is happy to help you in all day-care-related matters.



DAY-CARE SERVICE COORDINATION TEAM

Tel. 08 55845300, varhaiskasvatuksenpalveluohjaus@ouka.fi,
www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/daycare-applications

FEES

A monthly fee, which includes meals, is charged for children's day-care. The fee is based on the parents' income, and is revised every year. If a household's income changes, the day-care centre must be contacted. If there is more than one child at the day-care centre, parents/caretakers are entitled to a discount.

LIFE AT THE DAY-CARE CENTRE

Children are divided into groups mainly according to their age. Usually each group has one teacher and two nursery nurses. Day-care offers free balanced meals (breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack).

Day-care centres are usually open Mon-Fri 06.30-17.00. Children have a daily routine with planned activities, free play and rest. Children play outdoors twice a day.

The day-care centre must be informed if the child is not attending (due to illness or for some other reason). A sick child should not attend day-care. A parent is entitled to three days off work or school to take care of his/her child. A doctor's certificate is required for most employers.

Day-care staff and parents draw up an individual plan for each child for early education or for pre-school. The implementation of this plan is monitored and evaluated at least once a year. If required, the day-care centre can arrange an interpreter.

OPEN EARLY EDUCATION

Open early education provides guided activities for children staying at home with their parents. Applications are sent to the day-care application unit. Open early education is free of charge.

- Toddler and Little school groups: Children meet for three hours, two to three times per week. Parents can also come along
- Family clubs: Children always come with their parents to the club. Activities are planned together by the parents and the staff

Private day-care

Private day-care offers various options:

- private day-care centre
- private family day-care
- hiring a nanny in your own house

Some day-care centres provide teaching in different languages; some focus on arts, alternative education (Montessori, Steiner) or religion.

Financial support for private day-care costs is available in the form of a service voucher. The service voucher has to be applied for beforehand, and will be active from the be-

ginning of the month the child starts private day-care. The value of the service voucher depends on family size and income. For more information on the service voucher, contact the municipal day-care services or a private kindergarten.

For hiring a nanny, financial support is available from Kela. To be eligible the child must be looked after by a private child care provider, recognised by the municipality.

PRIVATE DAY-CARE CENTRES IN OULU

All private centres:

www.ouka.fi/oulu/paivahoito-ja-esiopetus/yksityiset-paivakodit (in Finnish)

Centres offering foreign language:

www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/day-care-in-english (in English)

Short-term childcare

MANNERHEIM LEAGUE FOR CHILD WELFARE (MANNERHEIMIN LASTENSUOJELULIITTO, MLL)

Nummikatu 32, city centre

Tel. 045 1215562 (Mon- Fri 8.00-13.00)

mll.pohjois-pohjanmaa@mll.fi

pohjois-pohjanmaa.mll.fi

Finding a babysitter online: <https://lastenhoito.mll.fi/client>

If you have a need for a babysitter, contact associations such as MLL. Besides childcare help, MLL offers also other activities, such as clubs and peer groups, and services for children and families.

Child protection

The aim of the child welfare services (lastensuojelu) is to protect children and provide help to families. Child welfare services include many different services. Ask for advice and help from the city services, e.g. the child health and maternity clinics, school or student health care, day-care centres, family counselling office, or social services.

In case of emergency, a social worker is available Mon-Fri 8.00-16.00, tel. 044 703 6235. At other times, contact the general emergency number 112.

More information of the role of child protection in several languages at www.lastensuojelu.info.

Benefits for families

Families with children are entitled to various benefits provided by Kela.

MATERNITY GRANT (ÄITIYSAVUSTUS):

Pregnant women are entitled to a maternity grant which can be provided either in the form of a cash benefit or a maternity package. The maternity package contains children's clothing as well as other maternity items. Apply for it at Kela at least two months before the birth of the baby.

You are entitled to a maternity grant if

- you reside in Finland
- your pregnancy has lasted for at least 154 days in Finland
- you, as the expectant mother, have undergone a medical examination at a maternal welfare clinic or a doctor's office before the end of the fourth month of pregnancy

MATERNITY ALLOWANCE (ÄITIYSRAHA), PATERNITY ALLOWANCE (ISYYSRÄHA) AND PARENTAL ALLOWANCE (VANHEMPAINRAHA):

Parents are entitled to various parental leave: mothers are paid a maternity allowance for 105 working days and fathers a paternity allowance (maximum 18 working days). In addition, the parental allowance (158 working days) is payable to the parent looking after the child after maternity leave ends.

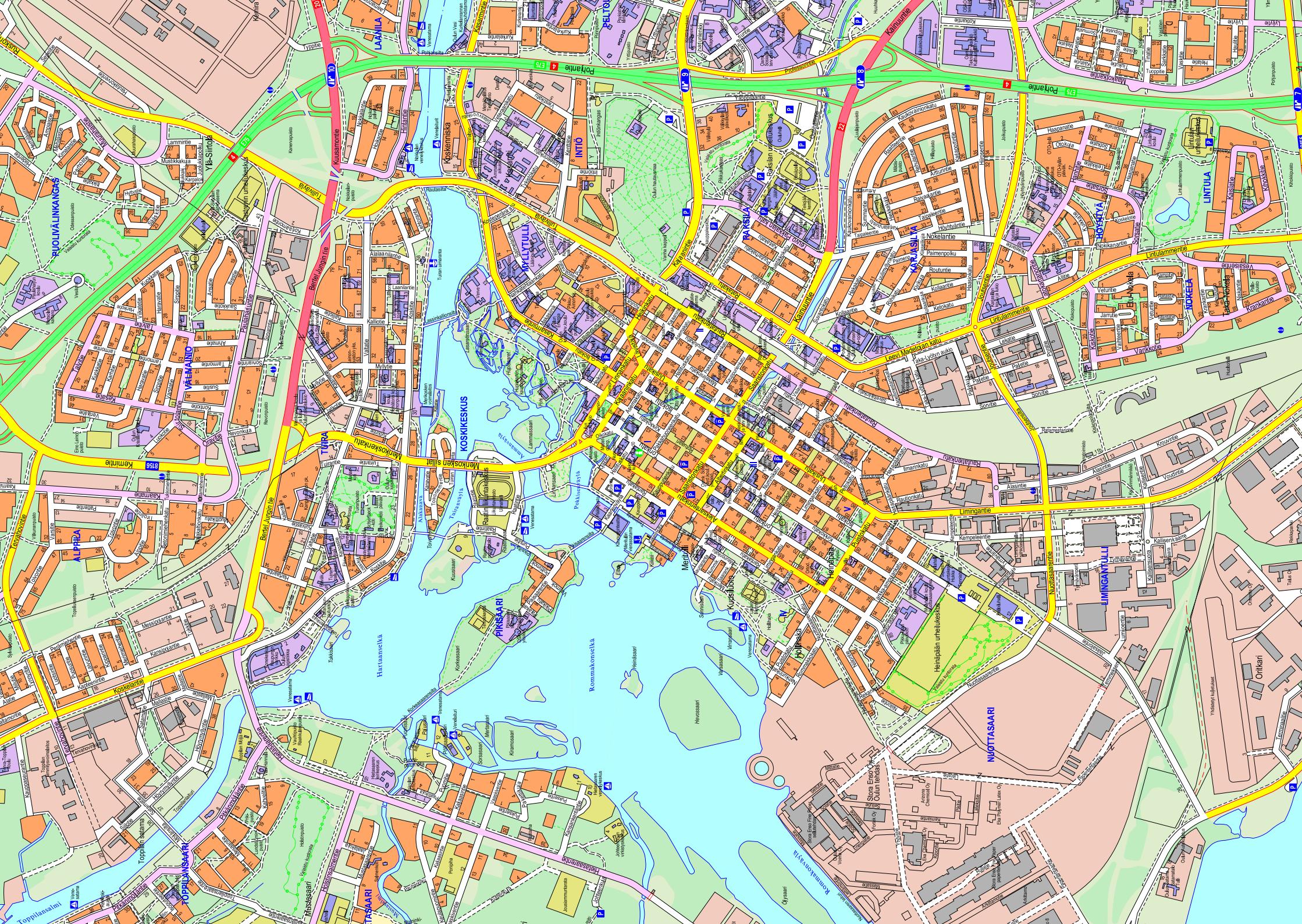
The applicants must have lived in Finland for at least 180 days immediately before the calculated due date of their baby to qualify for these allowances.

CHILD BENEFIT (LAPSILISÄ):

Kela provides a monthly child benefit for each child under 17 years of age. Higher rates of child benefit apply for single parents.

CHILD HOME CARE (LASTEN KOTIHOIDON TUKI):

- After the maternity, paternity or parental allowances stop, you can apply for child home care benefit if the child does not go to municipal day-care. Child home care allowance can be paid until the child turns three
- Children under two years of age being taken care of at home by their parents are eligible for the supplement provided by the City of Oulu (Oulu-lisä). This is paid automatically along with the child home care allowance



Marriage and relationship registration

Marriage

In Finland, you can get married if you are:

- over 18 years old
- under 18 years old and you have permission from the Ministry of Justice
- not married
- not in a registered partnership with someone else

Before getting married, both persons need to sign an assurance stating there are no obstacles to the intended marriage. If required, papers must be provided that prove you or your partner are divorced or a widow/er. After a minimum of seven days, a certificate of no impediment (obstacles) to the marriage will be issued. If the marriage does not take place within the next four months, you will have to apply for the certificate again. Two witnesses must be present at the marriage.

One can legally get married at

- a Local Register Office (Maistraatti)
- a Lutheran or Orthodox Church
- a church which has been granted a licence to perform weddings

Registration of civil partnership

Two persons of the same sex can register their partnership as a civil partnership (rekisteröity parisuhde) at the Local Register Office (Maistraatti). No witnesses are needed. A certificate of no impediment must be submitted to the local Register Officer before the ceremony.

A civil partnership can be registered in Finland as long as one of the parties is a Finnish citizen and has been resident in Finland or if both parties have been resident in Finland for the duration of the previous two years. Citizens of countries where legislation provides for the registration of civil partnership with largely the same legal effects as Finland (e.g. the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, Germany) are treated as Finnish citizens.

Birth registration

The parents or guardians of a baby must inform the population register of the names and native language of a child at latest two months after the birth. The form sent automatically to you by post has to be filled in and returned to the mother's local register. If the child is baptised in the Lutheran or Orthodox Church, the form is returned to the priest.

The child is given the common surname of the parents, or if they have different surnames, they have to state which one they have chosen for the child. However, the child must have the same surname as his/her siblings of the same parents.

The mother is always the legal guardian of the child if the parents are not married (even in a registered relationship). If the father wishes to have his rights established as the child's guardian, paternity must be confirmed. The municipal child welfare officer is responsible for the proceedings confirming paternity.



MUNICIPAL CHILD WELFARE OFFICER (LASTENVALVOJAT)

Elektroniikkatie 6, 3th floor, Technology Village

Tel. 044 703 4875

Divorce

A marriage is terminated by a court decision. Divorce can be filed for either by one or both spouses. Divorce is filed in the office of the local district court of one of the spouses. The proceedings will lead to a divorce, even if the other party objects. Divorce can be attained after a compulsory six-month consideration period or when both parties have been separated (i.e. not living together) for two years.

The spouses need to agree on child custody and visiting rights, allowance for the spouse or child and the distribution of belongings. If the spouses cannot agree on the above-mentioned issues, they can be submitted to the district court, which will decide on them. When granting a divorce, the court may order one spouse to pay maintenance to the other, either at fixed intervals or as a lump sum.

Divorce can affect the right of a foreigner to stay in the country if the initial grounds for the residence permit was marriage/a Finnish spouse. In case of divorce, the right to stay in the country and the grounds for a residence permit will be evaluated by the Finnish Migration Office. Long residence in Finland, children born in a marriage or strong connections to Finland can be an asset to the final decision.

A prenuptial agreement (avioehitosopimus) is a contract in which the parties agree that, in the event of the divorce or a break-up of registered civil partnership, their assets will not be divided equally as is the usual case under marriage law.



Crises (Kriisit)

Crises of various types are part of life. If you are depressed, ill, a victim of violence or behave violently yourself, contact a health centre, the social welfare services or an agency engaged in preventing violence for help. These services are provided confidentially. You can also seek for help if you are unemployed or do not have enough money to live on. Contact the social welfare services of your municipality of residence. If you are a victim of violence or other type of crime, call the police.

Help available

The home help

The Home help (kodinhoitoapu) service is meant for those who are going through a difficult time in their life (e.g. illness, difficult maternity) and cannot take care of the household.

Income support

Income support (toimeentulotuki) is the last resort which guarantees a minimum income in situations where a person's or a family's income and assets are not adequate to cover everyday living expenses. The social services of the City of Oulu are responsible for processing income support applications.

Social services

Social services (sosiaalityö) promote social well-being, functional ability and independent coping of adults facing problems, such as coping with and planning daily life, unemployment, housing problems, mental health problems or substance abuse, a sudden crisis, and provide advice on social security and services.



Tel. 050 575 0457

Face-to-face advice with social services

Mäkelinkatu 33 A, 2nd floor, city centre

Working hours: Mon-Fri 9.00-15.00

The Family Advice Centre

The Family Advice Centre (perheneuvola) serves families who have concerns with children under 16 years of age (behaviour, school, development and upbringing)
a relationship crisis (conflict, divorce)
experienced child or family trauma (e.g. accident, illness)



Arkistokatu 4 B, 4th floor, city centre

Tel. 044 703 6120

Appointments Mon-Tue and Thu-Fri 10.00–12.00

Debt advice

Debt advice (velkaneuvonta): If you cannot pay a bill, contact the sender of the bill immediately. Help with payment or debt problems is available from your local debt counsellor.



Mäkelinkatu 33 A, 4th floor, city centre

Tel. 044 703 6824 (Mon-Fri 9.00-10.00)

velkaneuvonta@ouka.fi

Legal Aid Office

Legal Aid Office (oikeusaputoimisto): If there are questions about legal issues, the Legal Aid Office must be contacted. Legal aid can be given both in court proceedings and in other matters. Legal aid is provided free of charge to those with no means to pay. Others are liable to pay for the legal aid they are given.

-  Hallituskatu 13-17 D, 4th floor, city centre
- Tel. 010 366 1420, O5O 4058137
- Working hours: Mon-Fri 8.00-16.15
- oulu.oikapu@oikeus.fi

Mother and child home and shelter

The mother and child homes are one form of child welfare aimed at supporting parenthood and helping families to find their own resources and strengths again. Care is planned according to the family's needs, to help parents cope with life and look after their children.

The shelters are service centres in which persons either suffering from or threatened by domestic violence can find help in overcoming a crisis. All the parties involved in a domestic incident receive attention, the primary objective being to safeguard the interests of the child at all times. The shelters are on duty round the clock, and one can go there anytime if they need protection.

-  MOTHER AND CHILD HOME AND SHELTER (ENSI- JA TURVAKOTI)
- Kangastie 9, Tuira district
- Tel. 08 561 5500 / 0400 581 606 (24/7)
- www.oulunensijaturvakoti.fi

Monika helpline for immigrant women: You can call to speak about your problems and ask about your rights in Finland. The trained support persons will assist you in finding additional help for resolving your situation. Services are available in several languages.

Tel. 09 692 2304 (24 hours)

Restraining Order

-  OULU DISTRICT COURT (OULUN KÄRÄJÄÖIKEUS)
- Rata-aukio 2, Raksila district
- Tel. 010 364 9500
- oulu.ko@oikeus.fi

-  OULU POLICE STATION (OULUN POLIISSI)
- Rata-aukio 2, Raksila district
- Tel. 071 876 0211

A restraining order (lähestymiskielto) means that in order to protect the life, health, freedom or peace of a person, another person may be ordered not to contact him/her. Typical cases in which a restraining order may be used include the harassment (contacting, trying to visit) of a present/former spouse or cohabiter as well as financial extortion from an elderly parent.

A restraining order can be applied for either from the police or directly from the district court. To support the application, it is important that you record all the events as soon as they happen and gather all possible evidence as well as the contact information of the witnesses. If you have been subjected to violence, you should be examined by a doctor.

In case of emergency, a temporary restraining order, which will enter into force immediately, can be issued.

7



Services for senior citizens (*Vanhuspalvelut*)

Help is available for older people so that they can live healthy and safe lives in their own homes for as long as possible. Seniors are entitled to social and health care services based on the evaluation of individual needs. Some of the services are subject to a fee. The right to some benefits is dependent on how long the older person has lived in Finland.

Municipal and private homes for seniors look after those who can no longer live independently in their own homes. Service accommodation is also another good alternative.

THE SERVICES INCLUDE:

- housing allowance for pensioners on a low income
- pensioner's care allowance for illness or disability
- home care services (cleaning, nursing)
- meals service (at a service centre or delivered at home)

- bathing, clothes washing
- transportation services (special service line bus and taxi)
- reimbursement for home adaptations (e.g. to make it easier to move around in a wheelchair)

Aino Consultation Service

The City provides various exercise, group and stimulating activities for senior residents. Several organisations, religious communities and associations also offer services for the elderly. Individual support services are available as well, usually provided by volunteers.

The Aino Consultation Service provides information on services provided by the public, private and voluntary sectors for the elderly. The following information is only general, so please contact the consultation service for detailed information on services for the elderly.



AINO CONSULTATION SERVICE (AINO NEUVONTAPALVELU)

Tel. 044 703 4973, 044 703 5120

aino@ouka.fi

Counsellors available:

Oulu10, Torikatu 10, city centre, Mon-Fri 9.00–11.00 and 12.00–15.00

Aleksinkulma, Aleksanterinkatu 9, city centre, Mon-Fri 9.00–15.00

Support at home

Home care: The City provides home care services, social work, day activities and sheltered housing for seniors. Home care refers to home help as well as other support services and home nursing. Home care is available 24/7. The clients pay a fee based on the services received, family size and gross income.

Informal care allowance (omaishoidon tuki): If an elderly, a chronically ill or severely disabled person is cared for at home, the caregiver can receive an informal care allowance under certain conditions. An agreement on home care needs to be made with the municipality. The allowance is taxable income. The informal caregiver is entitled to at least three free days a month with the municipality organising replacement care.

Service centres: These centres offer seniors many services to support their independence. Some of the services are free. Services include meals, sauna, washing, exercise, hobbies, studying, library and café. The centres are located in the districts of Höyhtyä, Ranta-Kastelli, city centre, Koskela and Tuira.

Accommodation services and institutional care

Serviced accommodation: If an elderly person cannot carry on living at home, he/she can rent an apartment in serviced accommodation (palvelutalo) with help and support services available. Some serviced accommodation provides intensive care and personnel are available round the clock.

Hospital and institutional care: If an older person's health does not allow him/her to live at home or in serviced accommodation (i.e. they need help and nursing day and night) care can be organised as short-term care at Oulu City Hospital and in long-term institutions.

Need for short-term care is evaluated by the service counsellor, tel. 044 703 4017. Patients for long-term institutional care are selected by the service guidance unit, tel. 044 703 5078, 044 703 5090.

Pensions

Pensions provide economic security in old age, disability and late-career unemployment. Finland has two statutory pension (eläke) systems, which complement each other

- Earnings-related pension (työeläke) rights are accrued through employment and self-employment. They are paid by earnings-related pension providers
- National pensions (kansaeläke) and guarantee pensions (takuueläke) offer a basic income for persons who are entitled to a very small earnings-related pension or none at all. They are paid by Kela

The amount of pension also depends on how long the person has been living and working in Finland. Foreigners who have lived in Finland for a sufficient length of time are entitled to receive a pension on the basis of old age or disability.

Foreigners who have not lived in Finland long enough to receive an adequate pension may apply to Kela for special assistance for foreigners. Special assistance may be granted to foreigners in a precarious financial position after they have lived in Finland for a minimum of five years.

MORE INFORMATION (IN FINNISH, SWEDISH, ENGLISH)

- Earnings-related pensions www.tyoelake.fi
- National and guarantee pensions, Kela www.kela.fi
- Finnish Centre for Pensions www.etk.fi



Services for the disabled (Vammaispalvelut)

Special services and assistance are available for the disabled and chronically ill persons in relation to accommodation, transport, education or personal assistance, for example. A doctor's certificate from health care centre or similar is needed when applying for services for the disabled. The service guidance unit provides services for the disabled.



CITY OF OULU SERVICE GUIDANCE UNIT FOR THE DISABLED

Tel. 044 703 6468 (Mon-Fri 9.00-11.00)

Financial support

Financial support is provided by Kela, please contact the local Kela office for more detailed information.

- Disability Allowance (vammaistuki) for disabled persons aged 16-64 who have lived in Finland for a sufficient period of time

- Medical Rehabilitation for the seriously disabled (lääkinnällinen kuntoutus vaikeavammaisille)
- Occupational Rehabilitation (ammatillinen kuntoutus) for incapacitated people
- Special Care Allowance (erityishoitoraha) for parents if they cannot take part in employment due to the care of a disabled child under the age of 16 in hospital or in some cases at home
- Child Disability Allowance (lapsen hoitotuki) if a parent is taking care of a disabled child under the age of 16 at home
- In certain cases, a seriously disabled child can also receive medical rehabilitation (kuntoutus)

Interpreting services for disabled

People with severe hearing, visual or speech impairments may be provided with an interpreter to help them in various situations, such as work, study, hobbies and social interaction. Apply for the service from Kela.



Education (*Koulutus*)

Education is highly valued in Finland. Lifelong learning is essential for succeeding in life today. Lifelong learning means that a person goes on training and improving his/her skills regardless of age and previous training. This section provides you with information on Finnish education system, basic cost information and opportunities for continuous learning.

Costs of education in Finland

Basic education is free of charge since it is financed from tax revenues. At the comprehensive school the instruction, food, school materials and travel arrangements are free of charge. At general and vocational upper secondary school, students must buy their books and materials, but education and food are free of charge.

At universities and universities of applied sciences/polytechnics, education is free of charge. However, university students pay a term fee to the student union, and in exchange they are given discounts on student canteen food, transportation, study materials, etc. Universities may charge foreign students coming from outside the EU/EEA area a tuition fee and can decide individually on the amount of the fee.

School terms and holidays for basic and upper secondary education

AUTUMN TERM FROM MID-AUGUST TO DECEMBER

- autumn holiday (syysloma) in October (usually 1 week)
- Christmas holiday (joululoma) in December (2-3 weeks)

SPRING TERM FROM JANUARY TO BEGINNING OF JUNE

- winter holiday (hiihtoloma) in March (1 week)
- summer holiday (kesäloma) from June to mid-August

Up-to-date information about the working days can be found from
www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/school-terms-and-holidays

Finnish Education System

The education system is divided into basic education, secondary education, higher education and adult education. Girls and boys have equal educational opportunities.

Basic education in Finland is compulsory. This means that all children, whether Finnish or foreign-born, are subject to compulsory education from the year they turn seven until the nine years of the school curriculum are covered, or until they turn 17. Before comprehensive school, children may attend optional pre-primary education in day-care centres.

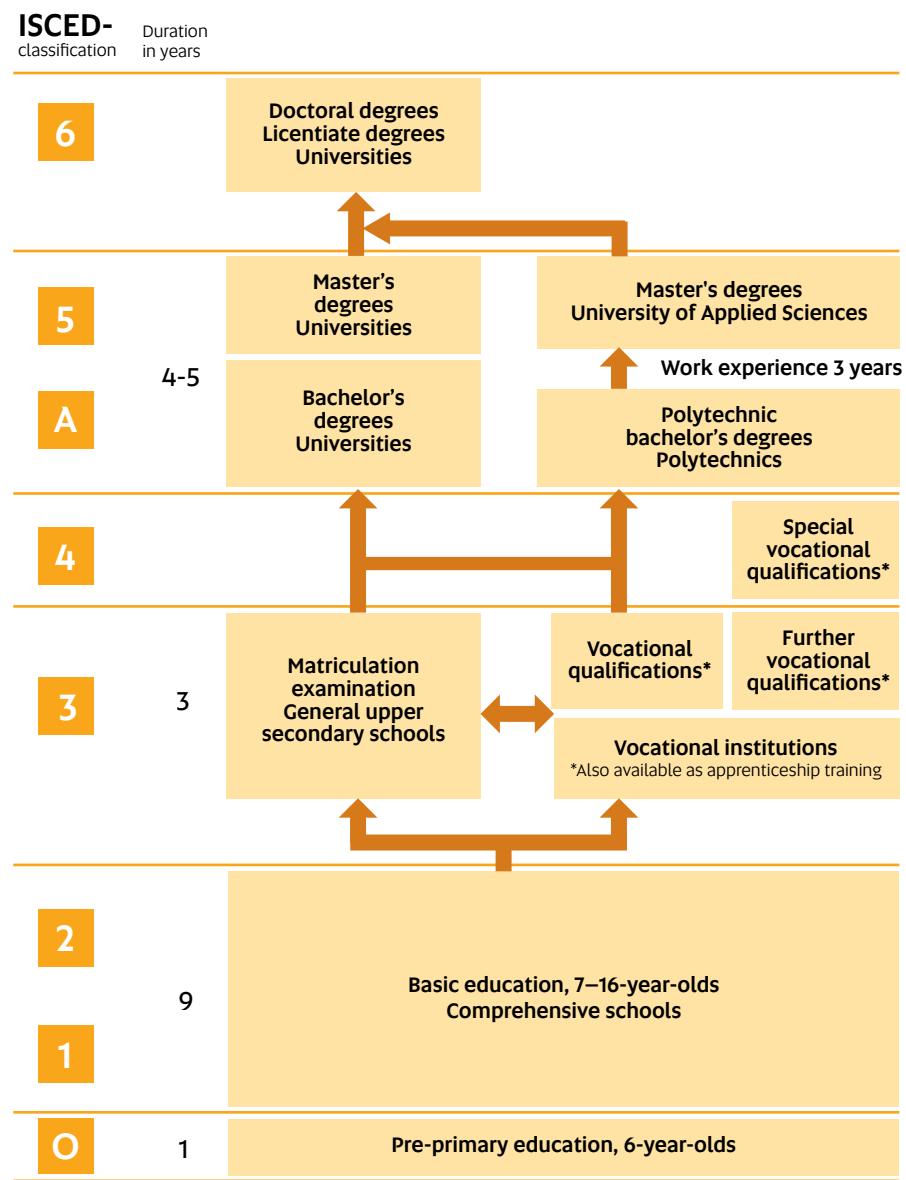
Completing comprehensive school is generally not enough for getting a job. Most young people go on to study at general upper secondary school or at a vocational upper secondary school. Many study further at a university or university of applied sciences (also called polytechnic).

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

Pre-school/pre-primary education (esiopetus) is one year of school-like education for six-year-old children, before comprehensive school begins. Pre-primary education is voluntary and free of charge. If a child needs a day-care placement in addition to pre-primary education, a fee will be charged.

Pre-school education is organised at municipal and private day-care centres for four hours a day. The purpose is to practice skills that will be required at school making it easier for children to start school.

The application form is the same as for day-care.



ISCED-classification 1997

- 0 Pre-primary education
- 1–2 Primary education or lower secondary education
- 3 Upper secondary education
- 4 Post-secondary non-tertiary education
- 5 First stage of tertiary education
- 6 Second stage of tertiary education

BASIC EDUCATION

Compulsory education begins in the month of August of the year the child turns seven, and lasts until the child has covered all nine years of the school curriculum or until s/he turns 17 years old. School health care, school meals and study materials are free for all pupils undergoing basic education.

Results of the child's performance during the last year of studies at school will influence his or her opportunities for further education. It is important that the parents work together with the teachers to make sure the child does well at school.

There are about 50 public basic education schools in Oulu, two of which are for children with special needs. There is also the state-run Oulu University Training School and Tervaväylä National Special School as well as some private schools as well (Swedish Private School, Steiner School and Christian School).

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (OPETUSTOIMI)

Taka-Lyötyn katu 4, 4th floor, Taka-Lyöttö district
Tel. 08 558 410 (switchboard)
www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/schools-and-education

OULU INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, OIS (OULUN KANSAINVÄLINEN KOULU)

Kasarmintie 4, Myllytulli district
Tel. 08 557 1459 / 050 3716977
www.ouka.fi/oulu/Oulu-International-School

Oulu International School supports the educational need of the international and internationally minded community in and around Oulu. The school provides education in English from grades 1 to 9, and functions under the City of Oulu. The curriculum is based on the Finnish basic education curriculum and the International Baccalaureate Organization programme.

Enrolment into compulsory education

Enrolment into the first grade takes place in January-February. To enrol outside the standard enrolment period, please contact the regional head teacher.

Schools are divided into four catchment areas (Northern, Eastern, Central and Western). Pupils enrol in a school in their local district. Pupils from other districts can also be accepted if there are extra school places available. The contact details of schools providing basic education in Oulu are listed on the Department of Education website at www.ouka.fi/oulu/koulutus-ja-opiskelu/peruskoulujen-yhteystiedot (in Finnish)

Morning and afternoon care

First and second grade pupils and older pupils with special needs may apply for a place in morning and afternoon activities. The activities are intended for school children whose parents are at work or are studying before and after school. The activities are organised at or near the school building. Activities involve doing homework, playing and exercising. A monthly fee is charged which includes a daily afternoon snack.

Application for the groups starting in the autumn takes place when children are signed up for school in January-February.

 MORNING AND AFTERNOON CARE SERVICES, YOUTH AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
Tel. 044 703 8204
www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/morning-and-afternoon-care

Basic education for non-Finnish speaking children

Children whose Finnish language skills are not yet sufficient to join mainstream education groups attend preparatory education groups (perusopetuksen valmistava opetus). This preparatory education usually takes one year, depending on the student's personal progress. The focus is on learning Finnish language and becoming acquainted with the vocabulary of various school subjects. Preparatory education facilitates integration into mainstream education classes.

FINNISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, NATIVE LANGUAGE AND RELIGIOUS TEACHING

- After preparatory education the students will continue studying Finnish according to the Finnish as a second language (S2) curriculum.
- Students may receive teaching in their native language both during and after their preparatory education, if there are at least four students in the same language group. The lessons may not always be arranged at the student's own school.
- Students can study their own religion if there are at least three students from the same religious group in the municipality. Parents report their child's religion when registering for school.

For More information see www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/school/immigrant.htm

A very useful guidebook (Kotona Oulun koulussa) for guardians and teachers of children of different language and culture groups is available online in Finnish, Arabic, Russian and Somali.

www.ouka.fi/oulu/koulutus-ja-opiskelu/kouluoppaat

Application process after compulsory education

Students are selected to secondary schools on the basis of their school leaving certificates. Some schools also have entrance examinations. You can apply for several schools at the same time using the same application. Applications are submitted through the nationwide joint application system (yhteishaku) online at www.haenyt.fi

- Applications for all secondary schools starting in autumn must be made in the spring (at the beginning of March). The results are published in June. For some schools it is also possible to apply in the autumn (at the beginning of October)
- A flexible selection (joustava valinta) exists for foreigners who have school certificates from their home countries
- A complementary application round (täydennyshaku) is held in July if the programme still has vacancies. This provides a second chance to those who did not get in on the first round

Studying is free and students are entitled to school health care and a free lunch. However, they must buy their own books and materials.

General upper secondary education

General upper secondary school (lukio) is mainly organised without division into grades, and teaching is not tied to the starting year of studies. It takes two to four years of study, with three years being the most common length. It ends in the matriculation examination (lylioppilastutkinto) which gives eligibility for all higher education studies. It provides general education and does not qualify a person for any particular occupation.

There are 12 public general upper secondary schools in Oulu providing daytime education, and one high school for adults (Oulun aikuiskoulutus) providing mostly evening instruction. There are also two private upper secondary schools (the Swedish Svenska Privatskolan i Uleåborg and Oulun Steinerkoulu).

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma programme in English is available at Oulun Lyseo Upper Secondary School.

Vocational education

There are five vocational upper secondary education and training schools (ammattiopisto) in Oulu which provide vocational education in various fields. Completing a vocational qualification usually takes two to three years. In many vocational schools you can also gain a vocational qualification through an apprenticeship.

You can also study the general upper secondary education syllabus and take the ma-

triculation examination while completing a vocational education and training institute course (ammattilukio). This is quite demanding and usually takes four years.

VOCATIONAL INSTITUTES IN OULU

- **Luovi Vocational College** (Ammattiopisto Luovi) www.luovi.fi
- **Oulu Diaconia College** (Oulun diakoniaopisto) www.oulundiakoniaopisto.fi
- **Oulu Vocational College**
(Oulun seudun ammattiopisto, OSAO) www.osao.fi
- **Oulu College of Services** (Oulun Palvelualan Opisto) www.opo.oulu.net
- **Oulu Conservatoire** (Oulun konservatorio) www.oulunkonservatorio.fi

PREPARATORY TRAINING FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR FOREIGNERS

Some vocational colleges organise preparatory training for vocational education for foreigners (valmistava koulutus maahanmuuttajille), making it easier for them to undertake vocational education in Finnish. The preparatory training usually lasts for one year.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships (oppisopimuskoulutus) combine vocational education and on-the-job training. It is based on a work contract. It is available to both adults and young people, and also entrepreneurs or people with higher education diplomas.



CENTRE FOR APPRENTICESHIP IN NORTHERN OSTROBOTHニア (POHJOIS-POHJANMAAN OPPISOPIMUSKESKUS)

Kansankatu 47 B, 3rd floor, city centre

Tel. 08 3120 702, 044 3120 701

www.popo.fi

MORE INFORMATION

- TE Services (see 12.1)
- The Finnish National Board of Education www.oph.fi/english/education/adult_education/vocational_adult_education

Higher education

Higher education is offered at universities of applied sciences (UAS)/polytechnics (ammattikorkeakoulu) and universities (yliopisto). Universities of applied sciences train qualified professionals to meet the needs of working life. Academic universities concentrate on scientific research and higher education based on research. The three universities in Oulu offer a total of 14 international Bachelor's and Master's programmes.

Higher education students are selected on the basis of their certificates and entrance examinations. Education is free of charge, but students must buy or borrow their schoolbooks and other materials.

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN OULU

- **University of Oulu** (Oulun yliopisto) www.oulu.fi
- **Oulu University of Applied Sciences, OUAS** (Oulun seudun ammattikorkeakoulu) www.ouas.fi
- **Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, Oulu unit** (Diakonia ammattikorkeakoulu, Oulun yksikkö) oulu.diak.fi

MORE INFORMATION

- Higher education programmes in English in Finland and how to apply: www.studyinfinland.fi
- How to apply for secondary and higher education: www.koulutusnetti.fi

Open University studies

Finnish universities also organise courses open for all; anyone can take part in these regardless of age, educational aims or previous schooling. Courses are subject to a fee. The language of instruction is usually Finnish or Swedish.

- **Summer University of Northern Ostrobothnia** (Pohjois-Pohjanmaan Kesäyliopisto) www.pohjois-pohjanmaakesayliopisto.fi
- **Open University of Applied Sciences** (Avoin ammattikorkeakoulu) www.ouas.fi
- **All Open Universities in Finland** (Avoin yliopisto) www.avoinyliopisto.fi

Adult supplementary and further education

There are many opportunities for adult education for people from different educational backgrounds. Studies may lead to a degree or professional qualifications, develop professional skills or simply be a hobby. Studies range from single courses to larger programmes.

In addition to vocational and higher education institutions listed in previous sections and civic colleges in the next section, several institutions in the Oulu region offer adult education:

- **eLukio** (General upper secondary school studies in distance learning) www.elukio.fi
- **Limingan taidekoulu** (visual arts) limingantaidekoulu.fi
- **Markkinointi-instituutti** (Institute of Marketing) www.markinst.fi
- **Oulun aikuiskoulutuskeskus OAKK** (Oulu Adult Education Centre) www.oakk.fi

- **Oulun aikuislukio** (Oulu adult upper secondary school) www.oulunaikuislukio.fi
- **Oulun seudun koulutuskuntayhtymä** www.osekk.fi
- **Pohjola-Opisto** www.pohjolaopisto.fi
- **POHTO - Kehittämis- ja koulutuskeskus** www.pohto.fi
- **PSK-Aikuisopisto** (PSK Adult Education Centre) www.psk.fi
- **Virpiniemen liikuntaopisto** www.virpiniemi.fi/koulutus

OpinTori provides educational planning and counselling services to adults who wish to acquire skills to meet the job market requirements.



OPINTORI, TE SERVICES

Torikatu 34-40, city centre
Tel. 010 272 1180
Working hours: Mon-Fri 9.00-15.45
oulunseutu@opintori.info

Financial aid for students

Students under 25 years of age studying full-time in secondary or higher education institutions are eligible for financial aid for students (i.e. a study grant, a housing supplement and a government guarantee for student loan). A student's own income or his/her parents' income affects the amount of the aid available.

Foreign students are eligible for financial aid if they are registered as permanent residents in Finland and if the primary purpose of their residence is something other than study.

Adult students (25-64 years of age) may also be eligible for financial aid for students or unemployment benefit and maintenance allowance while studying.

More information from Kela and the TE Services.

Recognition of foreign qualifications

Degrees or other qualifications obtained outside of Finland can be applied for recognition for professional or academic purposes:

- The Finnish National Board of Education (Opetushallitus) decides on the eligibility conferred by foreign qualifications for public posts in Finland
- Field-specific authorities decide on granting the right to practise a profession or use a professional title. For instance, decisions on health care professions are made by the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira)

- Private sector employers generally assess the competence conferred by a foreign qualification themselves when deciding on employee recruitment
- Higher education institutions and other educational institutions decide on eligibility conferred by foreign qualifications for further studies and on the transfer of credits completed abroad towards a qualification to be taken in Finland

MORE INFORMATION

- The Finnish National Board of Education www.oph.fi/english -> Recognition and international comparability of qualifications
- National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, Valvira at www.valvira.fi



Work (*Työ*)

Be active in looking for a job. Having a job helps you to integrate into daily life in Oulu. It is far more easier to obtain a job if you speak at least little Finnish.

There are a number of websites that advertise vacancies. The largest is the one maintained by the labour administration at www.mol.fi. You can yourself contact a workplace where you would like to work. You can submit an application, even if there are no vacancies immediately. The employer may contact you at a later date when a vacancy does become available.

Employment and Economic Development Services (TE Services)

The Employment and Economic Development Offices offer services for job seekers and employers. Services for job seekers cover information on open vacancies, guidance on job seeking as well as information on training opportunities, professional development and entrepreneurship. Most services can also be accessed online or by telephone. The office is known by its Finnish acronym: TE Services (TE-palvelut).



NORTHERN OSTROBOTHニア TE SERVICES (TE-PALVELUT)

OULU

Torikatu 34–40, city centre
kirjaamo.pohjois-pohjanmaa@te-toimisto.fi

OTHER SERVICE OUTLETS

Haapajärvi
 Kuusamo
 Pudasjärvi
 Raahen
 Ylivieska

Working hours:

Mon-Fri 8.00-16.00

Tel. 0295 056 500 (switch board)

www.te-palvelut.fi

TE Services offer a wide range of services that anyone can use, regardless of whether they have registered as a job seeker or not.

SERVICES WITH NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED:

- **Online services**
 - Open vacancies can be viewed at www.te-palvelut.fi -> avoimet työpaikat (in Finnish)
 - CV database CV-netti
- **Help finding work**
 - Help with job seeking documents. You can also send your CV and application for comments to apua.tyonyhakuun@te-toimisto.fi
- Information on career choices and professions, training
- Information on entrepreneurship
- **Call centre services:**

The Job Line (Työlinja) gives advice by phone and e-mail and helps job seekers and employers in all job-related matters, TE Services and worker's residence permits.

Finnish, Swedish, English
 Tel. 0295 020 700
 (Mon-Thu 8.00–17.00)
tyolinja@te-toimisto.fi

Russian
 Tel. 0295 020 715
 (Mon-Thu 12.00–17.00, Fri 10-17)
trud@te-toimisto.fi

SERVICES FOR WHICH YOU ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER:

- Registration benefits most unemployed job seekers if they are eligible for employment measures such as Finnish language courses
- Unemployment benefits are linked to registration as an unemployed job seeker

Registration requires the candidate to have a right to the services, and that you meet the following criteria:

- EU/EEA country national or a family member
- For other than EU/EEA nationals:
 - a residence permit that does not have employment-related restrictions
 - a residence permit can be category A, B, P or P-EY
- You are looking for full-time employment
- You are available for the job market and you remain reachable by the TE Office (phone, mail, e-mail)
- You can accept work or training offered to you

Finally, **Working in Finland** is a comprehensive guide for foreigners moving to Finland focusing on employment and working life published in several languages by the Ministry of Employment and Economy. The guide is available at www.mola.fi/finnwork.

Unemployment

If you become unemployed

If you become unemployed, register at www.te-services.fi on your first day of unemployment at the latest. You should also register immediately when graduating or completing a period of subsidised employment. You can also register beforehand if you know that you are about to become unemployed.

TO REGISTER AT WWW.TE-SERVICES.FI YOU NEED

- a Finnish ID-number (social security number which is given by maistraatti or väestörekisterikeskus)
- Bank access codes (user Id and code) or
- a FINEID (electronic identification that uses Public Key Infrastructure, more on the subject at www.fineid.fi)

FOR THE VISIT TO THE TE-OFFICE YOU NEED TO BRING WITH YOU

- a passport or another official identity document
- residence permit or worker's residence permit
- official translations of previous work and study certificates
- Finnish language course, study, employment and other certificates that might help you find a job

To register as a job seeker, sign in using your Finnish online banking user access code. You will see a pre-filled form with your basic information (name, address, etc.). Using your online user access code, you can check your information and alter (certain) information, etc. If you have used banking access codes when registering, you will be contacted by the TE-Office within 14 days to set up an appointment if that is necessary.

If you do not have a Finnish online banking user access code or cannot fill-out the e-form you can visit the TE Office and fill-out a paper form. Remember to bring with you the required documents mentioned above.

Upon registration, a personal customer card is provided which should be taken along on every visit to the TE Services. **If you are unable to attend a scheduled appointment, the office must be notified in advance.**

Remember to notify the TE Services immediately of any changes in your circumstances (e.g. doctor's certificate for illness, travel abroad, change of address) as they might affect your benefits. The notification can be made by using e-services at www.te-services.fi or to The Job Line (*Työlinja*) by phoning or sending an e-mail.

Unemployment benefits

UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCE

If you have been working in Finland long enough, you will be entitled to unemployment allowance.

- The basic unemployment allowance (peruspäiväräha) is granted and paid by Kela
- The earnings-related unemployment allowance (ansiopäiväräha) is granted and paid by an unemployment fund and can be paid for a maximum of 500 days. You should be a member of the unemployment fund for long enough during your employment or studies

If unemployed, fill in the first unemployment allowance application that is available from the TE Services and send or submit it online to Kela or to your unemployment fund. Kela/the fund will send a decision on the allowance with a notification of its payment. The unemployment allowance is always applied for retrospectively. Applications can be backdated by up to three months.

LABOUR MARKET SUBSIDY

You may be entitled to a labour market subsidy (työmarkkinatuki) even if you have not been employed before or if you are not a member of an unemployment fund. It is payable to unemployed job seekers who enter the labour market for the first time or otherwise have no recent work experience. For an immigrant, a labour market subsidy can be paid as integration assistance.

If you are granted or apply for unemployment benefit, you are required to:

- look for a full-time job and be available to the labour market
- accept work or training that you are offered
- participate in the drawing up of your employment/integration plan and follow the plan
- keep up your job seeking activity by checking in with the TE Services when required
- remain reachable by the TE Services by phone or e-mail

LOSING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT

You may lose your unemployment benefit for a period of 30, 60 or 90 days if you:

- refuse a job or labour market training that is offered to you
- resign or are dismissed from a job
- quit or are dismissed from labour market training
- are refused a job or training because of your own actions
- miss a scheduled appointment at the TE Services
- do not follow your employment/integration plan

INTEGRATION PLAN AND ASSISTANCE

A personal integration plan (kotoutumissuunnitelma) is drawn up for you as an applicant in consultation with the TE Services if you:

- have been a permanent resident in Finland for under three years
- are 17–64 years old
- are an unemployed job seeker
- have been unemployed for two months

You will receive a copy of your integration plan. The plan will offer you the opportunity to participate in integration training (työvoimapoliittinen kotoutumiskoulutus) where you study Finnish and familiarise yourself with Finnish society and working life through traineeship. Integration training is free of charge for participants and includes 35 hours of study per week. One may also apply for integration assistance (kotoutumistuki) from Kela.

Important facts about working life in Finland

Work contract

A work contract (työsopimus) is drawn up when you start work. The contract can be oral or written. A written contract is made in two copies, one for you as the employee and one for the employer. In case of conflict, you can check the contract as to what has been agreed upon.

The contract should include at least the following points

- employer's information
- employee's personal information
- start date of the work contract
- the nature of the contract (in case of a fixed-term contract the end date should be included)
- working hours per day, week or month
- amount of salary and payday date, possible fringe benefits
- collective agreement being applied
- date and signatures of the employee and employer

When the work contract ends, one has the right to get a work certificate from the employer. The certificate should specify the type, length and dates of the employment period, the job description and tasks, and the employer's information. If the employee specifically asks for it, an evaluation of his/her conduct and skills can be added.

As an employee one has the responsibility to abide by the agreed working hours and respect the workplace practices.

Collective agreement

Almost all work fields have a valid collective agreement (työehitosopimus, TES) where central unions of employers and employees have agreed on salary, working time, holidays and free time, for example, and it is valid for all workers whether Finnish or foreigner.

Salary

The employer pays a salary (*palkka*) to the employee. The employee needs to provide a tax card to the employer. The salary is paid directly into the bank account once or twice a month. A pay slip is provided every month. One can see the taxes and other social costs paid directly from the salary as well as the net salary.

- **Monthly salary** (kuukausipalkka) is a fixed sum paid every month on a set date
- **Hourly wage** (tuntipalkka) is paid for work done on an hourly basis
- **Commission salary** (provisiopalkka) is based on the amount of products or services sold
- **Overtime** (ylityö) has to be paid according to the collective agreement

Illegal work

It is illegal to work without a tax card and a work contract. In these cases, the employer does not usually pay pension payments or take care of the employee's occupational safety and insurance against accidents. Nor will the work accrue to your pension or be counted for the earnings-related unemployment benefit.

Trade unions and unemployment funds

The majority of Finnish employees are members of a trade union (ammattiiliitto). Trade unions are not political. The main purpose of a trade union is to safeguard the benefits and rights of its members by negotiating collective agreements. Members pay a membership fee which is usually one to two per cent of their wages. Different professions have their own trade unions, which are part of large central organisations of trade unions. One could consult his/her co-workers about joining a union and which union is best suited for the work one is doing.

You automatically joins an unemployment fund (työttömyyskassa) when you become a member of a trade union. If you become unemployed and fulfil certain conditions,

you will be entitled to an earnings-related unemployment allowance (ansiopäiväraha) that is related to your previous earnings.

You can also join an unemployment fund without being a trade union member by signing up to:

- any of the unemployment funds
- the General Unemployment Fund (www.tyj.fi)

Entrepreneurs have their own trade union and unemployment fund:
The Unemployment Fund for Entrepreneurs and the Self-Employed (Ammatinharjoittajien ja yritystäjien työttömyyskassa, AYT) www.ayt.fi

Help with problem situations at work

In problematic situations, one can seek counselling with an occupational safety representative (työsuojeluvaltuutettu), an occupational safety officer (työsuojelupäällikkö) or a trustee (luottamusmies) representing your worker representative.

More information on employment relationships at www.tyosuojelu.fi (in Finnish, Swedish, English, Estonian and Russian).

Entrepreneurship and starting a business

There is a dynamic and innovative business and entrepreneurship culture in Oulu. Several organisations provide information and counselling on starting and developing a business, also in English. It is possible to apply for financial aid for starting and developing your business. There are also lively networks and communities for entrepreneurs.

Advice services



UUSYRITYSKESKUS

Torikatu 34-40, 4th floor, city centre

Tel. 045 343 6132

www.oulunseudunuusyrityskeskus.fi

The Finnish Enterprise Agency (Uusyrityskeskus) is a free-of-charge counselling service for new and start-up companies. Services are also available in English.

The services include practical questions related to starting a new business, including

- evaluating the business idea
- choosing the company form
- market and competition situation
- evaluating personal characteristics/skills of the team
- planning the economy

- financing and grants
- insurance
- laws, agreements, taxation
- contacts with government officials and experts



BUSINESSOULU

Elektroniikkatie 5, Technology Village
Tel. 08 558 410 (switchboard)
info@businessoulu.com
www.businessoulu.com

BusinessOulu promotes the prosperity and competitiveness of companies in the Oulu region. It offers services for the following six sectors: cleantech, ICT, life sciences, creative industries, trade, logistics, tourism, and industry & major investment projects. It also provides contacts to the large regional service network. Services include:

- relocation services for companies
- start-up services
- growth services
- development services
- internationalization services

There are around 9000 companies in Oulu. Check the **company database** at www.businessoulu.com/en/company-database

THE TE SERVICES organises training and courses for people wishing to start a business.



NORTHERN OSTROBOTHTHIA CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT (Pohjois-Pohjanmaan ELY-keskus)

Veteraanikatu 1, Intiö district
Tel. 0295 038 000 (business and industry section), www.ely-keskus.fi

The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centre, ELY-keskus) support the establishment, growth and development of small and medium-sized enterprises by offering advisory, education and development services, and financing.

Enterprise Finland (Yrityssuomi) is a service delivered by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, providing information and guidance in matters related to starting and running a business. Tel. 010 19 4680 (Mon-Fri 9.00-16.00), www.yrityssuomi.fi (Finnish, Swedish, English).

Financial aid for starting a business

Find out about opportunities for financing before registering your new business. It is possible to get funding and financial aid for starting a business.

Some of the opportunities include

- funding, especially in the form of microloans and loans for women entrepreneurs, is provided by Finnvera
- banks can provide loans
- start-up grants (starttiraha) are available from the TE Services

Start-up communities in Oulu



TAKOMO (OULUN YRITYSTAKOMO OY)

Elektroniikkatie 3, Technology Village
www.yritystakomo.fi

An innovative work environment for entrepreneurial people. Provides its members with free facilities, training, know-how and support to help them develop new services and products.



STARTTAAMO

Nahkatehtaankatu 2, Myllytulli district
www.starttaamo.fi

A community run by entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs and non-profit organisations. It consists of a common space to meet, discuss and support start-up culture and growth ventures.



BUSINESSKITCHEN

Torikatu 23, 4th floor
www.businesskitchen.fi

Centre for start-up companies helping them to refine their business ideas, develop their business operations and utilise the competence of students.



TECHNOPOLIS UPSWING

Elektroniikkatie 3, 3rd floor, Technology Village
www.facebook.com/UpSwingOulu

The premises also houses Demola, where university students and companies co-create product and service demo concepts as a solution to companies' real-life challenges.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE

- Start-up package – a compact start-up guide for future entrepreneurs in several languages www.ouka.fi/villavictor
- Becoming an entrepreneur in Finland – a detailed guide in several languages www.masuuni.info/articles/521

11



Leisure time *(Vapaa-aika)*

Free time is important to Finnish people. Newspapers and local papers have details about events taking place daily. Local events are also advertised on the website of your town or municipality. Four seasons in Finland give opportunities for wide range of indoor and outdoor activities!

If you have questions concerning leisure activities in Oulu you can always contact the **City Service Point Oulu10**, Torikatu 10, city centre, tel. 08 558 558 00 (Mon-Thu 8.00-17.00, Fri 8.00-16.00).

Sports and recreation

Sports facilities



CITY OF OULU SPORTS AND RECREATION SERVICES

Tel. 08 558 410 switchboard (Mon–Fri 8.00–16.00)

www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/sports-and-exercise

The City of Oulu provides various sports facilities in different parts of the city. They can be used for playing a variety of sports, including badminton, basketball, volleyball, tennis, floorball, gym training, athletics, skateboarding, football and ice hockey. The facilities are generally open to the public but are sometimes reserved for clubs.

Oulu also has an extensive network of jogging and walking tracks which serve as cross-country skiing trails in winter. About 70 kilometres of the tracks are lit and in late winter skiing trails are laid on the sea ice.

SWIMMING POOLS AND BEACHES

Swimming pools

- **Raksila/Oulun uimahalli**, Pikkukankaantie 3, Raksila district, tel. 08 558 48100
- **Raatti**, Raatintie 2, tel. 08 558 48105
- **Vesi-Jatuli**, Jokelantie 20, 90830 Haukipudas, tel. 030 620 7000

Oulu has 15 official beaches by the river, lakes and sea fronts. During the peak summer season, lifeguards patrol Nallikari and Tuira beaches. Beach volleyball pitches are available on Nallikari, Pateniemi, Pyykösjärvi and Tuira beaches. An ice hole for winter swimming is situated at Tuira beach, Koskitie 58.

GUIDED EXERCISE AND SPORTS CLUBS

The City arranges low-cost, guided exercise (e.g. swimming classes, fitness instruction) for children, families, young people, adults and seniors in gyms, swimming pools and other facilities. Services are also provided for people with special needs. For more information, tel. 044 703 8015.

Various sports clubs (including golf, tennis, gymnastics, ballet, karate) and private gyms also organise sports and exercise classes for people of all ages. Sports range from dance, martial arts, different ball and racket sports or team sports to horse riding and archery. For a list of around 200 clubs in Oulu (seuraluettelo, in Finnish), see www.ouka.fi/oulu/liikunta-ja-ulkoilu/liikunta-ja-urheiluseurat.

Outdoors

If you are interested in growing your own food, the City of Oulu rents allotments for summer. Contact Oulu10 for details.

Oulu also has many nature trails, campfire sites and bird-watching towers. Brochures in Finnish and English can be found at Oulu10 (address: Torikatu 10) or in the lobby of the Environment Building (Solistinkatu 2). For more information, see www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/recreational-use-of-greenspaces.

There are many national parks and other recreational areas perfect for hiking and other recreational purposes all year round in all parts of Finland. National parks are managed by the state-owned enterprise Metsähallitus and access to them is free of charge.

The traditional Finnish legal concept of everyman's right (jokamiehen oikeudet) allows free right of access to the land and waterways, and the right to collect natural products such as wild berries and mushrooms, free of charge, without the landowner's permission. However, people are obliged not to cause any damage or disturbance. One should avoid moving around in gardens, in the immediate vicinity of people's homes and in fields and plantations which could be damaged. The rights also generally apply to foreign citizens with certain exceptions related to local boating, fishing and hunting rights.

For more information see

- National parks and their facilities www.outdoors.fi
- Everyman's right www.environment.fi (English, German, French, Russian)

Youth activities



YOUTH SERVICES (NUORISOPALVELUT) Tel. 044 703 8245,
www.ouka.fi/nuoret

Oulu is a city for children and young people – over one-third of the residents are under 25 years of age. Many activities and services are offered for young people.

Camps, trips and courses for children and young people are organised during the school holidays. The programme (Kesäfilis, Hiihtofilis, Syysfilis) offers sports, arts, science, crafts, adventure and simply spending time together with friends and tutors.

Youth centres (nuorisotilat) are places for young people aged 7–17 where one can play games, take a part of different activities and meet friends. All activities are free of charge and professional youth workers are always present to supervise and guide the activities. The centres are situated in different parts of the city.



BYSTRÖM YOUTH SERVICES

Byström House, Hallituskatu 5 A, city centre
 Tel. 050 599 2293
 Working hours: Mon-Fri 9.00-16.00
irc-galleria.net/bystrominuortenpalvelut

Byström Youth Services include the information service Nappi and various guidance and support services for young people related to employment, studies, health and daily life, for example. Counsellors are available with and without an appointment. Information sessions and group activities are also organised by the services.

Immigrant Nettinappi provides information for young people in several languages.
www.nettinappi.fi/immigrant

Culture and civic activities

Community house

A community house (Asukastupa) is "a public living room", open to everyone. It doesn't matter where you live. At a community house, you can enjoy an affordable lunch, have a cup of coffee, read newspapers, take part in various hobbies and activities, or have a chat with others. You can also use the computers provided free of charge. Community houses are run by resident associations and are supported by the city of Oulu.

Community houses provide various activities, events and clubs, IT and craft courses, fitness training in various forms, trips and visits to places of interest as well as the opportunity to use the premises for meetings, family events, clubs, etc. (make enquiries at the house).

Community houses provide various everyday welfare services such as sewing, home help and caretaker services, computer training, catering and baking services.

Community houses offer people opportunities to participate in voluntary work. The houses are the local offices for voluntary work, and you can enrol there if you want to offer or receive help.

Community houses and their websites provide more information!

www.ouka.fi/oulu/yhteisotoiminta/asukastuvat

COOPERATION GROUP

You are most welcome to take part in Oulu's community activities by joining cooperation group. The City of Oulu is divided into 22 areas. Each area has a cooperation group (Yhteistyöryhmä), open to everyone. Local residents, schools, day-care centres, library and youth services, parish, residential and retirement homes, associations and the police, etc., can all take part in the group.

The cooperation group is the residents' voice which enables them to reach decision-makers. It takes the initiative and supports actions and stands for the best interests of the residential area as well as developing interaction between different cultures, generations, citizens and decision-makers.

The group organises events and activities for all ages together with various cooperation partners and is responsible for the use of local activity grants allocated by the City of Oulu.

Let's get to know each other and make our neighbourhood the best place to live! For more information: www.ouka.fi/oulu/yhteisotoiminta/oma-suuralueeni

Library



OULU CITY LIBRARY (OULUN KAUPUNGIN KIRJASTO)

Kaarlenväylä 3, city centre

Tel. 08 558 47337

Working hours: Mon-Fri 10.00-20.00, Sat 10.00-17.00, (Sun 12.00-16.00 only the journal room)

www.ouka.fi/kirjasto

The main library (kirjasto) is situated in the city centre near to the market place. There are also several branch libraries in different parts of the city. Apply for a library card at the library. Getting a card and loaning items are free of charge. However, a fee has to be paid for reservations and late returns. You may borrow books, audio books, magazines, music and films. Items are available in almost 20 different languages. You can also order books from the Helsinki multilingual library collection for a small fee. You can read newspapers and magazines, as well as access the Internet free of charge (a reservation for this needs to be made beforehand).

Civic colleges

Civic colleges (kansalaisopisto) provide general informal education in many fields e.g. arts, sports and languages. The courses are subject to a fee.



OULU CIVIC EDUCATION COLLEGE (OULUN KANSALAIOSPISTO)

Kaarretie 14, Tuira district

Tel. 08 555 4060 (Mon-Fri 12-19)

www.oulunkansalaisopisto.fi



OLULI INSTITUTE (OULU-OPISTO)

Suvantokatu 1, Karjasilta district

Tel. 08 50 3166729 (Mon-Thu 9.00-17.00, Fri 9.00-15.00)

www.ouka.fi/oulu/oulu-opisto

Cultural activities

Oulu is an active city full of culture. Numerous theatres, cinemas, museums and exhibitions offer cultural experiences throughout the year. One can enjoy frequent classical, rock and dance music concerts. During the summer, various outdoor events and summer theatres extend the cultural offering even further.

The City of Oulu owns the seven biggest cultural institutions: the City Theatre, the City Library, the City Art Museum, the Northern Ostrobothnia Museum, the Oulu Symphony, the Cultural Centre Valve and Science Centre Tietomaa. Several private companies and guest performers enhance the city's cultural diversity. The most famous festivals are

the annually-held Oulu International Children's Film Festival and the Oulu Music Video Festival with its Air Guitar World Championships.

MORE INFORMATION

- Information about Oulu www.oulu.com/en
- Tourism-related information and the city event calendar www.visitoulu.fi
- Links to cultural activities www.ouka.fi/oulu/english/culture-links

Religion and religious communities

There is freedom of religion in Finland. Everyone is entitled to practise their own religion and to choose whether or not to belong to a religious institution. The state is neutral with regard to religions and churches.

Most Finns are Christian Protestants and belong to the Evangelic-Lutheran church. The Evangelic-Lutheran and Orthodox churches enjoy a special status because of their historical and cultural role. They have, for example, the right to collect taxes from their members.

Many other churches and communities are also present in Oulu. The following list is not exhaustive.

PARISH AND RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN OULU

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN PARISHES IN OULU (OULUN EVANKELISLUTERILAISET SEURAKUNNAT)

7 congregations

Tel. 08 3161 300 (switch board)

www.oulunseurakunnat.fi

CATHOLIC PARISH OF OULU (OULUN KATOLINEN KIRKKO)

Liisantie 2, Koskela district

Tel. 08 347 834

perhe.katolinen.fi

INTERNATIONAL PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF OULU (OULUN HELLUNTAISEURAKUNTA)

Uusikatu 78, city centre

Tel. 040 194 3865, 040 187 7711

www.churchat78.org



ORTHODOX CHURCH (OULUN ORTODOKSINEN SEURAKUNTA)

Torikatu 74, Heinäpää district

Tel. 044 5115 741

www.oulunortodoksinenseurakunta.fi



OULU ADVENTIST PARISH (OULUN ADVENTTISEURAKUNTA)

Tuulimyllynkatu 18, Karjasilta district

Tel. 08 530 3953

oulu.adventist.fi



OULUN RAUHANYHDISTYS (EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, THE CONSERVATIVE LAESTADIAN REVIVALIST MOVEMENT)

Professorintie 7, Kontinkangas district

Tel. 08 338 065

www.oulunrauhanyhdistys.fi



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS (MYÖHEMPIEN AIKOJEN PYHIEN JEESUKSEN KRISTUKSEN KIRKKO)

Nokelantie 38, Nokela district

Tel. 040 700 6375

www.mormonit.fi



THE ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTHERN FINLAND (POHJOIS-SUOMEN ISLAMILAINEN YHDYSKUNTA)

Linnankatu 23–25, city centre

Tel. 0500 582 371

www.psiy.org



OULU BAHAI COMMUNITY (OULUN BAHÁ'Í-YHDYSKUNTA)

Tel. 08 333 900, 044 333 9026

www.bahai.fi

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Transport/Getting around (Liikenne/liikkuminen)

Oulu centre is easily accessible by foot, cycle, car and public transportation. Wide range of public transportation (train, coach, air) is offered to elsewhere in Finland and Europe.

Local transport

BICYCLE

Oulu has the most extensive cycle track network in Finland, covering the entire city and neighbouring municipalities. Bicycles should be parked on bicycle stands. Remember to lock your bicycle at all times when not in use. People also ride their bikes in winter. When it is dark you need to have a light on your bicycle or you risk getting a fine from the police. Wearing a helmet is highly recommended. Bicycles can be bought from bicycle shops, second-hand shops and the recycling centre.

BUS

In addition to local buses, three city bus routes operate within the city centre. Most of the local buses stop at Torikatu. You pay when boarding a bus. Individual tickets can be bought from the bus driver. Connecting buses are free within 1 hour from the time

of getting on the first bus. Different types of magnetic cards exist, offering multiple journeys as well as child and student discount cards. The bus fares double between 23.00 and 4.00 am.

BUSES ARE FREE FOR

- one adult with a baby pram
- children under seven travelling with adults
- people with physical disabilities in wheelchair and their helpers

TIMETABLES AND TICKET PRICES

www.koskilinjat.fi (Finnish, English)

YOU CAN BUY BUS CARDS FROM

- Stockmann department store service point, 3rd floor
Kirkkokatu 14, city centre
Working hours: Mon-Fri 9.00–20.00, Sat 9.00–18.00, Sun 12.00–18.00
- Koskilinjat Oy Välivainio Depot
Sorvarintie 3, Välivainio district
Working hours: Mon-Fri 8.00–16.00

The bus card can be reloaded on all buses and in some local R-kiosks.

TAXI

In Finland taxis are rather expensive. The fare depends on the length of the trip and the time of day. You cannot hail a taxi on the street, so you must either call for a taxi or go to a taxi stand. When calling, state your name and address and the place where the taxi should come to.



LOCAL TAXI SERVICE (OULUN ALUETAXI OY)

Tel. 0600 30081

Long-distance transport

OULU AIRPORT (LENTOASEMA) – the second busiest airport in Finland with numerous daily flights. It is situated in Oulunsalo, 20 minutes' drive from the city centre. Bus number 19 goes to the airport and takes the following route: airport – city centre – university/Technopolis in Linnanmaa. www.finavia.fi/airports/airport_oulu.

RAILWAY STATION (RAUTATIEASEMA) – Oulu railway station is situated in the city centre. Trains go north, south and east. Train timetables and ticket purchase are available at the railway station and online. The address is Rautatienkatu 11 A, city centre www.vr.fi/en.

LONG-DISTANCE COACH (LINJA-AUTOASEMA) – the coach station is located on the other side of the railway station. Information on timetables is available at the coach station and online. You can purchase coach tickets from the coach station, from the coach driver and online. The address is Ratakatu 6, Raksila district, www.matkahuolto.fi/en.

Driving

Driver's licence and moped licence

To drive a car or a motorbike, you must be over 18 years old and have a valid driving licence (ajokortti). You should find out at the police station whether your foreign driving licence is valid in Finland or if it can be exchanged for a Finnish driving licence without taking a new driving test.



In Finland, there are two ways to learn how to drive

- at a driving school
- via accompanied driving (another person teaches you how to drive)

To get a driving licence, you must first apply for a driving licence permit from the police. The permit must be paid for when submitting the application. If one attends a driving school, the school will usually handle most of the paperwork for a driving licence. In the case of accompanied driving, a driving instruction licence and a driving licence permit must be applied for at the police station.

To drive a moped, you need to be 16 years old and hold a moped licence or another valid driving licence. Mopeds must be driven on the road. Footpaths and cycle paths where mopeds are allowed are marked with the relevant traffic sign.

Responsibilities of a car owner

As a car owner you are responsible for registering the car, insuring it, and paying the vehicle tax as well as taking your car for regular motor vehicle inspections.

It is safer to buy a car from a car dealer than from a private party. When buying a used car you should consider at least the following points

- the car's data must match the register information
- has the vehicle tax (ajoneuvovero) been paid and the periodic inspection (katasitus) performed, or when they are due
- you can search for the vehicle data on the Trafi website
- fill in the registration document (rekisteröintitodistus) together with the seller
- check the condition of additional equipment (e.g. winter tyres, motor heater)
- take a sufficiently long test drive to see how the car drives
- you must register the car and buy insurance within seven days of purchase at an inspection office or an insurance company

MORE INFORMATION

Finnish Transport Safety Agency Trafi at www.trafi.fi (in Finnish, Swedish and English)

Driving and safety

PAY ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING POINTS

- Car lights have to be turned on whenever driving, even in broad daylight
- It is compulsory for all passengers to wear a seatbelt. Babies and children should be seated in an age-appropriate safety seat
- There are a lot of cyclists in Oulu. When turning, carefully check for other vehicles

- Extra care should be taken because of the changing seasons and weather conditions. The road is often very slippery with black ice. In winter, prepare for a longer braking distance and longer travelling times
- Winter tyres are compulsory from 1 December to the end of February. However, depending on the weather, studded tires may be used from 1 November until the first Monday after Easter or 31 March, whichever is latest
- In winter, the car's heating is usually switched on about an hour before the vehicle is needed with the use of car heating system (autonlämmityspistoike/tolppa)
- If you are driving in the countryside, you must beware of wild animals (e.g. reindeer, elk)
- Talking on your mobile phone while driving is prohibited unless you use a hands-free device
- The police use roadside breathalyser tests to screen drivers for drink-driving. The penalty for drink-driving is a fine, imprisonment or temporary driving ban

Even in case of a minor accident, the police are usually called to the site. Police tel. 112, which is also the general emergency number.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE

- **Traffic safety** (Liikenneturva) www.liikenneturva.fi (in Finnish, Swedish, English and Russian)
- **Road signs by the Finnish Transport Agency** (Liikennevirasto), www.liikennevirasto.fi -> Transport Network -> Road Signs and Devices (Finnish, Swedish, English)

Parking

Parking restrictions are strict but clearly indicated and most involve a parking charge in the city centre. If you exceed your parking time or park incorrectly, you will receive a parking fine.

If you park underground, in a parking garage or in a car park, the ticket must be taken when you enter the parking area. Pay at the meter before exiting.

There are some free parking areas in Oulu, but in order not to be fined, you must have a parking disc (pysäköintiekko). These areas are designated by an additional sign under the parking space traffic sign, showing a picture of a parking disc, as well as the length of time you are allowed to remain there. The arrival time must be shown on the parking disc, which must be placed under the windscreen so that it is clearly readable from the outside. Parking discs are sold at many shops, kiosks and service stations.



Daily life (Arki)

In this final section, information is provided on weather, telephone, Internet and media, public holidays, for example. Welcome to sharing everyday life in Oulu, hopefully you will feel at home with us!

Weather and the four seasons in Oulu

Finland's temperate climate is a mixture of maritime and continental climates. The Atlantic Ocean has a moderating effect on the climate and when westerly winds prevail, the weather is warm and clear in most of the country. The Asian continental climate also extends to Finland at times as severe cold in winter and extreme heat in summer.

The mean temperature of the warmest month is no lower than 10°C and that of the coldest month no higher than -3°C. However, there are four very distinct seasons. Weather can change quite rapidly, particularly in winter. Rainfall is moderate in all seasons.

Oulu is situated on the coast of the Bothnian Bay, 65 °N, less than 200 km south of the Arctic Circle. The amount of daylight varies from a few hours in the darkest of winter to almost full light at night in summer.

SEASON	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN
Months	November-February	March-May	June-August	September-October
Temperature	-35 °C to -0 °C	-15 °C to +5 °C	+10 °C to +25 °C	-0 °C to +15 °C
Characteristics	Permanent snow (up to 1 m thick) Open water bodies freeze Little natural light, possibility to see aurora borealis	Sunshine Melting snow Nature wakes up	Daylight almost round the clock Luscious green Mosquitoes are present	Beautiful autumnal colours Weather cools down, rain and first snow fall
Day's length	Very short days (about 3.5 hrs)	Days are lengthening	Very long days (20 hrs)	Days are shortening

PROTECTION AGAINST COLD WEATHER

- Wear a hat. An uncovered head vaporises up to 80% of body heat in cold weather
- Areas most sensitive to frostbite are fingers, toes, ears, nose and cheeks. Cover them well. Use woollen socks, mittens, etc.
- Strong wind increases the effect of cold. For example, when the temperature is -5°C and the wind blows at 10 m/s, this takes the 'wind chill factor' down to -22°C
- Wear several layers of clothes to keep warm. Ideally, the lowest layer should take the humidity away from your skin and keep it dry. The middle layer(s) can be fleece or wool. The outer layer should be windproof and waterproof

For more information, see The Finnish Meteorological Institute: climate, local weather forecast, etc. at www.fmi.fi.

Telephone, Internet and media

TELEPHONE

The international dialling code for Finland is +358. Almost everyone has a mobile phone. One rarely sees a land line phone at a house or a public telephone on the street. When calling a landline phone within Finland, you need a local area code. For the Oulu region it is 08.

There are various mobile phone operators such as DNA, Sonera, Elisa, Saunalahti and TeleFinland. You can also buy prepaid SIM cards from kiosks.

INTERNET

An open wireless network, panoULU, is available free of charge in the city centre, at the airport and on some local buses. All you need is a terminal with a WLAN access point.

You can purchase a home Internet connection from a local service provider. Numerous outlets can be found in the city centre. You can also find free computers and Internet access at libraries, Villa Victor and the TE Services. For this reason, there are few, if any Internet cafés in the city.

NEWS IN ENGLISH IN FINLAND

Some news providers in Eng

- Helsinki Times** – a weekly newspaper covering news and events in Finland www.helsinkitimes.fi
- YLE News** - the Finnish broadcasting company YLE, also provides news in Swedish, and Russian, on TV and radio yle.fi/uutiset/news
- 6 degrees** – Finland's monthly English language magazine www.6d.fi

Public Holidays

On public holidays, shops and banks are usually closed. On the eve of the holiday they may close earlier or work according to Saturday opening hours. Some public holidays are moveable, depending on the year.

Shopping

There are shopping areas in the city centre, in the market square, in Taka-Lyötty, Limingantulli, Kaakkuri and Kempele (Zeppelin Shopping Centre). Check on the Internet or ask at City Service Point Oulu10 for the addresses.

OPENING HOURS

Specialist shops are usually open Mon-Fri from 9.00 or 10.00 until 17.00 or 18.00, shopping centres and larger stores 8.00-21.00. On Saturdays, most shops are open from 12.00-18.00. On Sundays opening hours differ and many shops are closed.

Grocery stores are allowed to open Mon-Fri 7.00-21.00, Sat 7.00-18.00 and Sun 12.00-18.00. Smaller grocery stores are free to decide their opening hours and may even stay open 24 hours.

SECOND-HAND STORES

Second-hand stores and flea markets (kirpputori) are places where you can buy or sell used clothes and furniture. They are very popular in Oulu and the rest of Finland.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

DATE	NAME OF THE HOLIDAY	IN FINNISH	NOTES
1 January	New Year's Day	Uudenvuodenpäivä	
6 January	Epiphany	Loppiainen	
Moveable Friday (March-April)	Good Friday	Pitkäperjantai	The Friday before Easter Sunday
Moveable Sunday (March-April)	Easter Sunday	Pääsiäispäivä	
Moveable Monday (March-April)	Easter Monday	2. pääsiäispäivä	The day after Easter Sunday
1 May	May Day	Vappu	
Moveable Thursday (May-June)	Ascension Day	Helatorstai	39 days after Easter Sunday
Moveable Sunday (May-June)	Pentecost	Helluntaipäivä	49 days after Easter Sunday
Friday between 19 and 25 June	Midsummer's Eve	Juhannusaatto	Not official – however a de facto full holiday
Saturday between 20 and 26 June	Midsummer's Day	Juhannuspäivä	
Saturday between 31 October and 6 November	All Saints' Day	Pyhäinpäivä	
6 December	Independence Day	Itsenäisyyspäivä	
24 December	Christmas Eve	Jouluaatto	Not official – however a de facto full holiday
25 December	Christmas Day	Joulupäivä	
26 December	St Stephen's Day/ Boxing Day	2. joulupäivä or tapaninpäivä	

Finnish food, food stores and restaurants

Finnish food is mild and not very spicy. Meat/fish and potatoes are typically found in most dishes. Pasta and rice are also very common, as well as vegetarian diets. Finnish desserts are often made with berries, as wild berries are found locally in the forest. Many Finnish people enjoy picking berries and mushrooms in the late summer and autumn.

There are several food stores offering ethnic food products (e.g. Central European, Asian, Arab/Oriental and Mediterranean) and there is a large variety of restaurants of different styles in Oulu. When shopping, don't hesitate to ask the store personnel about the product you are searching for or about the use of unfamiliar Finnish food products.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE

- The Oulu Guide brochure, which lists some services (restaurants, shopping, etc.), is available at the Tourist Office and on their website.
- Food stores with a selection of ethnic products
 - Tuiran Oriental Kauppa (Merikoskenkatu 6, Tuira)
 - Asian market (Market Hall)
 - Aasian ruoka (Hallituskatu 30) and Stockmann
- Ethnic restaurants in Oulu see www.kaenkky.com -> Makuja maailmalta (in Finnish)
- Restaurants on the map search engine eat.fi/oulu (in Finnish, Swedish, English)



Intoxicants

Tobacco and smoking

You must be over 18 years of age in order to have the right to buy tobacco products. Snus tobacco (smokeless tobacco) may not be imported, sold or otherwise handed over for business purposes. The buyer of snus may also be found guilty and could be fined.

By law, smoking is forbidden in public premises. There are often special places for smoking outside.

Alcohol

Except for beer and cider, all alcohol (stronger than 4.7 %) only is sold at alcoholic beverage retail outlets called Alko. Please note: no alcohol can be bought at any shop by law between 21.00 and 9.00, even if the shop is open.

SOME KEY POINTS OF THE ALCOHOL ACT

- You must be over 18 to purchase or possess alcohol (max 22%)
- You must be over 20 to have strong alcoholic drinks (more than 22%) in your possession
- You may only have legally manufactured and imported alcoholic drinks in your possession

DRINKING ALCOHOL IS FORBIDDEN:

- at alcohol retailers and other shops
- at public events
- on public vehicles (train, bus, etc.)

The police can also forbid drinking in other public places.

Narcotics

Producing, manufacturing, importing, exporting, distributing, selling, possessing and using substances classified as drugs (including cannabis and khat) are forbidden by law.



OULU | 
MULTICULTURAL CENTRE VILLA VICTOR

BUSINESS OULU

Leverage from
the EU
2007-2013


European Union
European Regional Development Fund
European Social Fund

 **POHJOIS-POHJANMAA**
Council of Oulu Region