GUIDE TO INTERNATIONAL DEGREE STUDENT SERVICES
IN THE HELSINKI METROPOLITAN AREA

September 2009 (2nd ed.)

Marja-Liisa Helenius (ed.)
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Helsinki Education and Research Area, HERA, is a consortium of nine universities and eight universities of applied sciences in the Helsinki metropolitan region. The primary objective of HERA is to promote the sustainable development of the Helsinki metropolitan region with a special emphasis on education and research. HERA is divided into four domains according to activities.

1. HERA International
2. HERA Competence
3. HERA Innovation
3. HERA Bilingual

HERA International develops the international activities of higher education institutions and the services offered to international students and personnel in the Helsinki metropolitan area. HERA International aims at increasing awareness of the Helsinki metropolitan region and creating interest in it as an attractive area to study, work, and live.

HERA International would like to thank a variety of people consulted due to the wide scope of this guidebook from KELA, CIMO, SAMOK; HY, TKY, staff of Career Services, Student Services and International Services as well as International Staff Services of the University of Helsinki, staff of the Haaga-Helia, the Laurea and the Helsinki Metropolia Universities of Applied Sciences and all the international affairs officers at the universities and universities of applied sciences in the Helsinki metropolitan area for their help at one point or another. Sincere thanks also to people from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior and the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS). A special thanks to the international students interviewed about their life in Finland, as well as for Susanna Wolkoff from the University of Helsinki Strategic Planning and Development Department for her excellent guidance in this process, as well as the Director of HERA International Mikko Toivonen, and the other past and present members of HERA International, Anne Kettunen, Ira Levääho, Najil Mohammed and Filipp Zimin for their advice and background material.

Marja-Liisa Helenius
Editor
15 September 2009
1. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN FINLAND

The universities and universities of applied sciences in Finland are becoming more international, and more and more attention is paid to providing adequate services and guidance for international students. The number of international students in Finland is indeed growing rapidly, and this tendency can be seen in all the institutional statistics.

International students coming to study in Finland can be divided into long-term and short-term students. Long-term students consist of undergraduate degree students studying for a Bachelor’s degree or Master’s degree, and post-graduate students studying for a Ph.D. or equivalent, as well as other researchers, who are working under a contract but not necessarily to obtain a degree. Short-term students include exchange students, usually coming to Finland via one of the many international exchange programmes for a period of three to nine months, visiting students and trainees coming to a Finnish higher education institution for a work practice period.

A variety of services are available for international students in the Helsinki metropolitan area provided by the educational institutions, the public sector and several foundations. Students themselves need to be active in finding out how to obtain these services.

The purpose of this guidebook is mainly to provide useful information and contacts for long-term students, but much of the information concerns short-term students as well. It is noteworthy that even though the guidebook has been made in co-operation with several higher education institutions in the Helsinki metropolitan area, a large share of the material and examples are from the University of Helsinki. Hopefully this guidebook will provide some useful advice for all students in their effort to integrate into Finnish society. It may seem difficult at times due to the language and other barriers, but the ultimate aim is to make international students feel welcome and to help them learn to appreciate the many good aspects of Finnish culture and society and especially working life.

1.1 The Position of Doctoral Students

Doctoral students can be classified as students, researchers or practising professionals. When a Doctoral student comes to Finland to study and funds his or her studies independently, he or she is considered a student. When the person has a contract and an official post at a university or university of applied sciences, he or she is considered an employee of the respective institution, and receives the appropriate benefits (Directorate of Immigration 585/0031/2008).
Since August 1st, 2009, Doctoral students at universities no longer have access to the services of the Finnish Student Healthcare Services (YTHS/FSHS). If the person is employed by a university or university of applied sciences, he or she can use the occupational health care services of the respective institution. If the local register office has registered the person as having the right of residence in a Finnish municipality (domicile), he or she can use the municipal healthcare services.

A person can receive the Finnish Social Security (KELA) benefits depending on the duration of the employment relationship, and the salary. According to legislation, the number of working hours must be 18 hours per week, or 80 hours per four weeks. The salary must abide with the collective agreement (työehtosopimus). If there is no valid collective agreement, the salary requirement is 940 euro a month (http://www.edilex.fi/kela/fi/lainsaadanto/20021290/L5P4).

In most higher education institutions, services for orientation, internships and mobility are usually more limited for Doctoral students. Much of the guidance and orientation depends on the research group, department or other unit that the student belongs to.

2. ARRIVING IN FINLAND

“I wanted a different experience”

Luis applied to Finland to study, because he wanted to experience a culture different from his own in Mexico. He also wanted to come to Finland because he knew that it would be possible to study and get by in English. Despite a few minor problems with the application procedures and finding accommodation, Luis is happy with his decision and the job he got in Helsinki. He thinks Finnish people are very friendly and helpful.

-Luis*, Mexico, Helsinki School of Technology

* Names changed.

2.1. Legislation

The Alien Law regarding residence (HE 277/2006 vp) as well as a proposal on the law on foreigner’s right to domicile (HE 206/2006 vp) have been passed in the Finnish Parliament. The purpose of
these propositions is to bring closer the requirements for obtaining a residence permit and the requirements for granting domicile, and make the procedures more coherent.

2.2. Visas

When students apply to a Finnish higher education institute, they are rejected, accepted based on their application, or invited to the entrance examination. Students who are not citizens of the EU/EEA or equivalent countries (Switzerland) need to obtain a visa from a Finnish embassy or consulate before entering Finland. It may be difficult in some cases, for individual embassies and diplomatic institutions have the right to reject a visa application for various reasons. For example, the largest international student groups in Finland, Russian and Chinese students, are included in the group with a visa requirement.

2.3. Residence Permits

If the student is admitted to a Finnish higher education institute, he or she must apply for a residence permit if his or her stay will exceed three months. According to the the alien law, having a health insurance policy that is valid in Finland is a requirement for obtaining a residence permit (more about insurance in section 3.3.1.).

**EU citizens**

Citizens of Nordic and EU/EEA countries, and Switzerland do not need a residence permit. However, with the exception of citizens of Nordic countries, international students must register at the local police office to obtain a certificate of residence.

**Non-EU citizens**

A student outside the EU/EEA area should apply for the first residence permit in their home country, or possibly in a third country, before arriving in Finland. This may be problematic for students taking an entrance exam, as they cannot apply for the permit before hearing the results of the exam and would therefore have to travel back to their country of origin. In order to obtain the residence permit, students need to present **proof of subsistence** (see 2.4.) and **insurance** (3.3.1.).

The application for a residence permit must be accompanied by a clarification of studies. These documents should be submitted at the local police station (contact information below).
The applications are available online at

The processing times of applications vary greatly according to the case. The Finnish Immigration Service has established a separate team to process applications for students applying for the first residence permit, to reduce the processing period. The objective is 17 days, but this depends on the case and also on the time of year; the summer period is the busiest, and usually it takes over a month. Sometimes the procedure can even take several months. Therefore the Finnish Immigration Service advises students to apply for the residence permit as early as possible.

The applicant’s passport will be held by the officials during this period, and even though the passport can be requested back, this may extend the processing period even further.

The average processing times can be found at
http://www.migri.fi/netcomm/content.asp?article=3704

Those from outside the EU/EEA area must also renew their residence permit every year. For this the student needs to have a certificate of studies to prove sufficient progress. In practice, the police mainly check that the person is a full-time student. For university students, the required amount of credits is 48 ECTS, and for a student from a university of applied sciences the required amount is 50 ECTS. The time of the renewal process also varies, and the student should renew the permit as early as possible.

A residence permit may either be for a fixed-term or permanent. There are three types of residence permits (www.migri.fi):

1) Fixed-term, continuous – letter A
2) Fixed-term, temporary – letter B
3) Permanent, valid until further notice – letter P

Picture: Ida Pimenoff
A fixed-term residence permit is granted according to the nature of residence either as a temporary or a continuous residence permit. The first permit is usually granted for a year, unless the residence permit is specifically requested for a shorter period.

The student residence permit is always temporary (Fixed-term, B). It is usually granted for a year at a time, and expires when the studies end, although the student can obtain an extended residence permit of up to 6 months in order to stay and look for a job after graduation. The procedure is not as strict for students from OECD countries.

A permanent residence permit can be granted to a person who, by virtue of a continuous residence permit, has resided in Finland for four years without interruption. The person is allowed to travel, but they must have a valid residence permit at all times and must live primarily in Finland. It is important to note that the time spent in Finland with a student visa is not taken into consideration when applying for a permanent residence permit, if the primary purpose for coming to Finland was to study.

The family members of residents wishing to move to Finland must also have a residence permit. The permit can be granted on the basis of family ties. The Finnish definition of family is more restricted than in many other countries, and it is defined in Finnish law. According to the alien law (statute 37), a family member is a spouse or a legally registered partner, an underage child or any child whose legal guardian the person is. A partner can be equated to a spouse regardless of sex if the partners have lived in the same household for over two years. If the partners share custody of a child, there is no time requirement. In some cases it is possible for children over 18 years of age or for the parents of the student to be included in the definition of family members, if the person living in Finland is their actual caretaker.

Local Police Offices (to obtain residence permits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helsinki</th>
<th>Espoo</th>
<th>Vantaa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Viljatie 2 B, 00700 Helsinki</td>
<td>Nihtisillankuja 4, 02631 Espoo</td>
<td>Kielotie 21, 01301 Vantaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. +358 (0) 71 877 3220</td>
<td>Tel. +358 (0) 71 873 0281</td>
<td>Tel. +358 (0) 71 873 0291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Immigration issues [maahanmuuttovirasto@migri.fi](mailto:maahanmuuttovirasto@migri.fi)

Other inquiries: Mon-Fri 9-15
2.4. Subsistence

In order to obtain a residence permit to live in Finland, the student must have proof of sufficient financial means of supporting him/herself. Students from EU/EEA countries need to clarify in their application how they plan to finance their studies, but **proof of subsistence is required from students from outside these countries**. In practice, the student must present a bank statement proving an income of 6000 euro every year, or alternatively of 500 euro every month, when the residence permit is being renewed. If the student has a part-time job in Finland, this amount can be reduced.

2.5. Domicile Legislation

In order to be entitled to municipal health care services, a student coming from a non-EU/EEA country must be **granted domicile (kotipaikka), i.e., he or she must have a permanent address in one of the municipalities in Finland**. New legislation on the foreigner’s right to domicile (HE 206/2006) allows all international degree students whose studies will last at least two 2 calendar years from the date of arrival the right to apply and be granted domicile in any of the municipalities in the metropolitan area (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Kauniainen). This entitles them to municipal health care services, but not to Finnish social security (KELA) benefits. This applies to all students from outside the EU area.

The student should go to the Local Population Registration Office (Maistraatti) with their passport, visa, a certificate from their institution of study to prove the length of their studies and the information about their Finnish address, and fill out a form labelled “Notification of Moving/Change of Address”. They will be registered in the Finnish population information system and will receive a Finnish ID number.

**Local Population Registration Offices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>Albertinkatu 25</td>
<td>+358 (0) 9 695 441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>00181 Helsinki</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mon-Fri 8-16:15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Espoo</td>
<td>Itätuulentie 2 A</td>
<td>+358 (0) 9 502 4270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02101 Espoo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mon-Fri 8-16:15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vantaa</td>
<td>Kielotie 15</td>
<td>+358 (0) 9 836 2480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>01301 Vantaa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mon-Fri 8-16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finnish Population Register Centre [www.vaestorekisterikeskus.fi](http://www.vaestorekisterikeskus.fi)

Local Register Office [www.maistraatti.fi](http://www.maistraatti.fi)

Finland Post Corporation [www.posti.fi](http://www.posti.fi) (forms for registration)
3. STUDENT SERVICES AND BENEFITS – INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

3.1. Student Union Membership and Benefits

At universities in the Helsinki metropolitan area, student union membership is obligatory for all undergraduate and graduate students (Bachelor’s and Master’s students). Every student automatically joins the student union of their respective school as payment of the annual fee is obligatory. For doctoral students, joining the student union is optional, and the student union services as well as the membership fee are not the same for doctoral students. However, if the doctoral student also has right to study for an undergraduate degree, the membership is obligatory. Exchange students and other short-term students can also join the student union if their stay lasts longer than three 3 months, but membership is not obligatory for them.

In universities of applied sciences, student union membership is optional. The members of student unions are entitled to a number of services, and the student union represents its members in administrative and political forums in order to improve academic and social conditions for students.

The student unions of the different universities belong to SYL (Suomen Ylioppilaskuntien Liitto), The National Union of University Students in Finland, which aims to defend the benefits and rights of all university students. The student unions of most universities of applied sciences belong to SAMOK (Suomen Ammattikorkeakouluopiskelija-yhdistysten Liitto), the Union of Students in Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences, a national interest and service organisation administered independently by students of universities of applied sciences. The student cannot join these unions directly, but becomes a member by joining the student union at his or her educational institution.
The national benefits for student union members at universities include inexpensive health services, housing services, discounts in student cafeterias, student price tickets to cultural events and discounts in some shops, restaurants, travel agencies and hostels. The benefits for student union members at universities of applied sciences include student discounts and other similar benefits, excluding health care and student housing. Benefits for student union members also vary depending on the institution, and the most up-to-date information can be found on the respective school's webpages.

**Student Benefits at Universities: The Case of the University of Helsinki**

The Student Union fee and the benefits vary according to the University. At the University of Helsinki, for example, the fee to join the Student Union (HYY) is currently 80 euro per year (2009–2010). This does not include insurance, but the benefits include inexpensive healthcare (YTHS/FSHS, see section 3.3.), reduced fares on public transportation (see section 3.1.2.), inexpensive but quality food at student cafeterias (Unicafés at the University of Helsinki), legal assistance, the possibility to apply for short-term loans, child care services (HYY Lapsiparkki provides day care for 3 euro/hour for students with children; contact lapsiparkki@hyy.fi, Tel. +358 (0) 50 3038 333) as well as discounts to many cultural events (opera, cinema) and in many places of business. HYY members are also entitled to housing services provided by HOAS – the Helsinki Region Student Housing Foundation. More information on the housing services is provided below and at www.hoas.fi. It is noteworthy that doctoral students at the university are not entitled to student healthcare services (YTHS/FSHS), and in addition some of the other benefits do not apply to doctoral students. The Student Union (HYY) membership fee for doctoral students is 40 euro per year (2009-2010).

*More information* on the discounts and benefits HYY offers (including a list of all the Unicafé Student Cafeterias) is found in English at [http://www.hyy.helsinki.fi/english/5/](http://www.hyy.helsinki.fi/english/5/).

**Student Benefits at Universities of Applied Sciences:**

**The Case of Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences**

The Student Union (METKA) for the students enrolled at Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences provides services for their students, such as reduced fares on public transportation, reductions on meals in student cafeterias, sports services and
reduced prices for some travel companies, hostels and shops and other places of business. METKA also offers tutoring for new students. The fee to join METKA is currently 12.50 or 24 euro (2009–2010).

**More information** on the benefits METKA provides is available in English at [http://www.metkaweb.fi/English/](http://www.metkaweb.fi/English/).

### 3.1.1. Student Card

After paying the student union fee at university or university of applied sciences, the student is entitled to a national student card. The universities have a different card than the universities of applied sciences. **The card functions as a discount card and a student ID card.** The universities have a national SYL card, but the card looks different depending on the university. The universities of applied sciences have two different national SAMOK cards, blue and green. The blue card is for full-time students, with a wide scope of benefits. The green card entitles the bearer only to inexpensive student meals and a few other benefits.
3.1.2. Transport and Travel Card

The metropolitan area (Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen and Vantaa) forms an integrated regional transport area with a unified system for travel fares. It is easy and inexpensive to travel with the Helsinki Region Travel Card (Matkakortti). The Helsinki City Transport Committee (Joukkoliikennelautakunta YTV) makes the decisions concerning travel fares and traffic in the metropolitan region. The Travel Card can be used on all public transport – buses, trams, local trains and metro.

All students studying full-time for two calendar years and who have been granted domicile in one of the municipalities in the metropolitan region are entitled to buy a personal student Travel Card. Students are entitled to a 50 percent discount on internal tickets of the municipality they are registered in, as well as a 50 percent discount on the regional ticket. Students above 30 years of age must be entitled to student financial aid (opintotuki) in order to receive the discount. Postgraduate students of universities (Licentiate or doctoral students) are not entitled to the discount.

In order to obtain the discount, an international student has to be registered at the Population Registration Office of their municipality as a resident. International students who can prove that their studies will last at least two years will be granted domicile in any of the cities in the metropolitan area. Short-term students, such as exchange students, who are not granted domicile can apply for temporary residence and buy a normal priced ticket, but do not qualify for the reduction. In the autumn of 2009, YTV published a form with which exchange students staying in Finland for a shorter period can register their place of study and temporary address, receiving the right to purchase an adult price ticket. The student only needs a signature from the institute of study and does not have to register at the Population Registration Office.

Link to the application


A change in regulation concerning student discount tickets for international students has been proposed, and depending on the decision, may be implemented in the beginning of 2010 at the earliest.

The Travel Card can be bought at local communal service points. If the student does not have a student ID card yet, they can fill out a form at the Counseling Office at their educational institution and get a certificate confirming their student status. A Travel Card costs 9e (2009-2010), and one
can choose whether to load the card with a time period between 14-366 days during which the student can travel freely, or with money (value) and pay for each journey separately. The Travel Card must be updated at the beginning of each academic year at a HKL or YTV service point. When buying or updating the Travel Card, the student must have with them an official proof of identity with a photograph – passport, driver’s license or KELA card (Finnish Social Security card) – and a proof of studies, such as a municipality application form, confirmed by their educational institution. Application forms are available at the educational institutions. If a student has a valid student card (a SYL student card or a blue SAMOK card) with a valid term sticker on it, only the student’s own signature is needed on the application form.

Traveller’s Information: tel. +358 (0)100 111 (personal service 0.41 euro/call + local call charge; automatic service 0.25 euro/call + local call charge).

Contact information (local points to buy the Travel Card):

HELSINKI
HKL office in Helsinki
Rautatientori Metro Station, (Central Railway Station, The Station Tunnel) Tel. +358 (0)9 310 12345 Mon-Thu 7:30-19, Fri 7:30-17, Sat 10-15
Itäkeskus Metro Station, Paasaari, 2nd floor Tel. +358 (0)9 310 12345 Mon-Fri 10-17:15
YTV Service Point, Itä-Pasila Address:
Paasaari, 2nd floor Opastinsilta 6 Aa, pedestrian level,
Tel. +358 (0)9 310 12345 Tel. +358 (0)9 1561 488
Mon-Fri 10-17:15 Mon-Fri 8:30-16

ESPOO AND KAUNIAINEN
Communal Service Points in Espoo (see section 3.4. for contact information).

VANTAA
Communal Service Points in Vantaa (see section 3.4. for contact information).

HKL Helsinki City Transport

YTV Helsinki Metropolitan Area Council
http://www.ytv.fi/eng
3.1.3. Housing Services

The international student should make housing arrangements **well in advance and before arrival if possible**, as there is usually not enough student housing options for everyone. The intermediary housing services provided by most universities and universities of applied sciences in the metropolitan region are only for exchange students, but services for degree students are being developed. At this time, most of the higher education institutions cannot guarantee housing for all arriving exchange students, but some assistance is available. The private sector and rental agencies are good sources for most degree students.

The Foundation for Student Housing in the Helsinki Region (HOAS) is the best way to find housing. Any full-time student at a secondary level educational institution or university can apply for HOAS student housing. HOAS has reserved a fixed number of rooms for exchange students and researchers. For postgraduate students HOAS is rarely able to find accommodation. More information on HOAS can be found at [www.hoas.fi](http://www.hoas.fi).

The application form for HOAS housing is also available on the website.

**For all students:** [https://www.hoas.fi/web/hak_inet.nsf/WebHakemus?OpenForm&02.04](https://www.hoas.fi/web/hak_inet.nsf/WebHakemus?OpenForm&02.04)

**For exchange students:** [https://www.hoas.fi/web/hak_inet.nsf/KVHake?Openform](https://www.hoas.fi/web/hak_inet.nsf/KVHake?Openform)

For university students, the Student Unions of the universities in the metropolitan region (the University of Helsinki, the Helsinki University of Technology, the Helsinki School of Economics, the Sibelius Academy, the University of Art and Design, and the Academy of Fine Arts) provide a housing service for all students of these universities who have paid their Student Union membership fee. The Student Unions’ Housing Service provides housing options on the private market (flats or rooms). More information and how to register can be found here:

[http://hyy.helsinki.fi/asunto-en/1](http://hyy.helsinki.fi/asunto-en/1) or [asunto@hyy.fi](mailto:asunto@hyy.fi), tel. +358 (0) 9 549 900

Some universities or universities of applied sciences have their own housing services, and therefore the student should check with their respective institution. As an example of a good practice, the International Exchange Services of the University of Helsinki and the Student Union of the University of Helsinki (HYY) provide a free service through which an exchange student at the University of Helsinki can look for flats or sub-rented rooms from the private market.

[http://hyy.helsinki.fi/asunto-en/16/](http://hyy.helsinki.fi/asunto-en/16/) or [exchange@hyy.fi](mailto:exchange@hyy.fi) Tel. +358 (0) 50 576 5073

More information and links on other housing options can be found at [http://www.infopankki.fi/en-GB/Accommodation/](http://www.infopankki.fi/en-GB/Accommodation/)
Rent Levels

The level of rent varies greatly in the metropolitan region, between approximately 300 to 600 euro a month. A studio apartment of 30 m² located near the centre of Helsinki costs on average 650 euro, and further from the centre 400 euro (Statistics Finland). Prices for shared and student flats vary greatly. For exchange students in the metropolitan region, fixed rent in a shared flat is approximately 400 euro a month.

3.1.4. International Student Organisations

There are many international student organisations in the metropolitan area. Some of them are sections of European-wide or even worldwide organisations, but some are local. Most of them are run by students from one university or university of applied sciences, but some are open to students from all educational institutes.

For example, Tsemppi is an organisation for foreign degree students at the University of Helsinki (www.tsemppi.com). Many other schools have similar organisations. There are also European-wide organisations such as AEGEE, the European Students’ Forum, which functions in 260 cities in Europe in and many higher education institutions, organising summer universities, conferences and other activities (www.karl.aegee.org, www.helsinki.fi/jarj/aegee). Another international
student network is the ESN Erasmus Student Network, supporting student mobility in many ways in more than 250 cities all over Europe, including five sections in the Helsinki metropolitan area in Finland (www.esn-finland.org). The AIESEC is a worldwide network providing work practice opportunities and other possibilities for students and young people all over the world (www.aiesec.org/finland). All of these international organisations have sections in many of the higher education institutions in the metropolitan area.

More information and listings of national student benefits:
SYL, The National Union of University Students in Finland http://www.syl.fi/english/

Contact Information for Student Unions of Universities in the Helsinki metropolitan area:

HYY Student Union of the University of Helsinki
Helsingin yliopiston ylioppilaskunta
Mannerheimintie 5 A, 00100 Helsinki
E-mail: tiedottaja@hyy.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 1311 4211, fax. +358 (0) 9 1311 4216
http://www.helsinki.fi/hyy/index.shtml

KY Student Union of Helsinki School of Economics
Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulun ylioppilaskunta
Pohjoisen Rautatiekatu 21 B, 00100 Helsinki
E-mail: tiedotus@ky.hkkk.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 43 131
http://www.kyweb.fi/fi

SAY Student Union of the Sibelius Academy
Sibelius-Akatemian ylioppilaskunta
Töölönkatu 28, 00260 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)40 710 4298
http://webusers.siba.fi/SAY

SHS Student Union of the Swedish School of Economics
Svenska Handelshögskolans Studentkår
Sanduddsgatan 7 A II, 00100 Helsingfors
E-mail: styrelsen@shs.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 431 33440
http://www.shsweb.fi

STAKO Student Union of the Academy for Fine Arts
Kuvataideakatemian oppilaskunta
Kaikukatu 4, 00530 Helsinki
http://www.kuva.fi

TeYo Student Union of the Theatre Academy
Teatterikorkeakoulun ylioppilaskunta
P.O. Box 163 (Haapaniemenkatu 6)
00531 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 742 66 333
http://www.teak.fi/ylioppilaskunta

TKY Student Union of the Helsinki University of Technology
Teknillisen Korkeakoulun Ylioppilaskunta
P.O. Box 69 (Otakaari 11), 02151 Espoo
E-mail: tky@tky.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 4681
http://www.tky.fi

TOKYO Student Union of the University of Art and Design
Taideteollisen korkeakoulun ylioppilaskunta
Hämeentie 135 C, 00560 Helsinki
E-mail: tokyo@uiah.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 7563 0431
http://www.uiah.fi/-tokyo
Contact Information for the Student Unions of Polytechnics / the Universities of Applied Sciences in the metropolitan area:

ASK Student Union of Arcada University of Applied Sciences
Arcada studerandekår
Majstadsgatan 11, 00550 Helsinki
E-mail: styrelse@asken.fi
Tel: +358 (0)2 07 699 407
www.asken.fi

HAMKO Student Union of HAMK University of Applied Sciences
Hämeen ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijakunta
P.O. Box 230 (Visamäentie 35 A), 13101 Hämeenlinna
E-mail: hamko@hamko.fi
Tel: +358 (0)3 646 4865
Tommi Lindroos, International Affairs
E-mail: kv@hamko.fi
www.hamko.fi/english.php

HELGA Student Union of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences
Haaga-Helian opiskelijakunta
Ratapihantie 13, 00520 Helsinki
E-mail: helga@helga.fi
Tel: +358 (0)9 2296 5868
www.helga.fi

HUMAKO Student Union of Humak University of Applied Sciences
Humanistisen ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijakunta
Annankatu 12 A 17, 00120 Helsinki
E-mail: humako@humak.edu
Tel: +358 (0)44 257 8884 (Secretary General)
www.humak.edu/humako/index.php

LAMKO Student Union of Lahti University of Applied Sciences
Lahden ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijakunta
P.O. Box 214 (Paasikivenkatu 7 A), 15101 Lahti
E-mail: paasihteeri@lamko.fi
Tel: +358 (0)50 502 0656
www.lamko.fi

LAUREAMKO Student Union of Laurea University of Applied Sciences
Laurea-ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijakunta
Ratatie 22, 01300 Vantaa
Tel: +358 (0)9 849 52 702
E-mail: laureamko@laureamko.fi
www.laureamko.fi

METKA Metropolia University of Applied Sciences
Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijakunta
P.O.Box 4060 (Bulevardi 29 b), 00079 Metropolia
E-mail: metka@metkaweb.fi
Tel: +358 (0)9 310 805 70
www.metkaweb.fi

O’Diako Student Union of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences
Diakonia-ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijakunta
P.O. Box 15, 02701 KAUNIAINEN
Tel: +358 (0)2 01 606 497
www.diak.fi/odiako
3.2. Student Financial Aid and Other Grants

Full-time Finnish students in need of financial assistance are entitled to student financial aid (opintotuki), which is divided into study grants (opintoraha), housing supplements (asumislisä) and government guaranteed student loans (opintolaina). The loan must be paid back after graduation. Non-citizens of Finland are entitled to apply for student financial aid if they have come to Finland for a purpose other than studying. Students outside the EU area must also live in Finland on a permanent basis (permanent residence, P permit) in order to be able to apply. In this case they must be registered as a permanent resident in the Finnish population register system. Matters such as the residence permit, registration and acceptance to a Finnish educational institution determine the purpose of residence in Finland when deciding whether an international student is entitled to aid. Applications for financial aid must be accompanied by KELA's appendix form OT10 for foreign residents.

The right to student financial aid is equal for students at universities and universities of applied sciences in the metropolitan area, and KELA (The Social Insurance Institution of Finland) is responsible for its allocation. Universities have their own Student Financial Aid Offices and a Student Financial Aid Board which co-operates with KELA and makes the decisions based on the applications. The University of Helsinki, the Helsinki University of Technology, the Helsinki School of Economics and the Hanken School of Economics each have their own Student Financial Aid Board, where decisions about student financial aid are made in accordance with KELA policy.
Contact information of the Student Financial Aid Offices of Universities

University of Helsinki
P.O. Box 3, 00014 Helsingin yliopisto
studentinfo@helsinki.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 191 22251 (Tel. hours: Mon-Fri 9-10)

Helsinki School of Economics
E-mail: opintotuki@hkkk.fi
Runeberginkatu 14-16
00100 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 4313 8230

Helsinki University of Technology
E-mail: opintotuki@tkk.fi
P.O. Box 1100, 02015 TKK
Tel. +358 (0)9 451 5060

Hanken School of Economics
P.O. Box 479, 00101 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)9 4313 3235

The financial aid for students in most of the universities of applied sciences as well as in the Academy for Fine Arts (Kuvataideakatemia), University of Art and Design (Taideteollinen korkeakoulu), Theatre Academy of Finland (Teatterikorkeakoulu) and Sibelius Academy (Sibelius-akatemia) are processed by the Kela Centre for Student Financial Aid, and some local Kela service points.

Kela Centre for Student Financial Aid
P.O Box 228, 40101 Jyväskylä
E-mail: opintotuki@kela.fi, Tel.: +358 (0)20 634 11
Director: Eija Aarnio, eija.aarnio@kela.fi

The student aid applications for students of Arcada University of Applied Sciences are processed in the local Kela office in Vaasa, and the applications for the HAMK University of Applied Sciences are processed by the local Kela office in Lahti.

Vaasa Kela Office
Rauhankatu 24, 65100 Vaasa
P.O. Box 13
65101 VAASA
E-mail: vaasa@kela.fi
Tel. +358 (0)20 692 209

Lahti Kela Office
Address: Kirkkokatu 8, 15140 LAHTI
P.O. Box 153
15141 Lahti
E-mail: lahti@kela.fi
Tel. +358 (0)20 635 1400
Other Grants

According to a study by Kulsoom Ally (2002), scholarships are not a significant source of funding for international students in Finland. The most important sources include income from work, Finnish state grant for students (student financial aid), savings, financial support from family and research funding (Ally 100-101). Scholarships – bilateral or from the student’s home country – are important to those few who obtain them, but in Ally’s research they were significant for only about 7% of the entire sample. Scholarships and the systems for funding studies vary greatly according to the country of origin.

In addition to student financial aid, other scholarships from Finnish institutions and foundations are available, but they are usually not granted to international students, although some are more easily available to doctoral students.

The financial support systems and grants that international students receive from their home countries vary greatly depending on the country. The Centre for International Mobility CIMO offers some information on scholarships. There are also country-specific scholarships, for example the CIMO India Fellowships for researchers from India, provided by Sitra, the Finnish Innovation Fund (Suomen itsenäisyyden juhlarahasto) and CIMO.

Additional information on grants and scholarships

Centre for International Mobility CIMO  [www.cimo.fi](http://www.cimo.fi)
Tel. +358 (0)20 7868 500

A scholarship database (in Finnish) at SYL’s web site  [www.syl.fi/opiskelijapalvelut/apurahat](http://www.syl.fi/opiskelijapalvelut/apurahat)

A Guidebook on CIMO Scholarships

Eurydice European Unit  [http://www.eurydice.org/portal/page/portal/Eurydice](http://www.eurydice.org/portal/page/portal/Eurydice)
3.3. Student Health Care

Students of universities are entitled to the Finnish Student Healthcare Service, with the exception of doctoral students (see 3.3.3.), and students of universities of applied sciences use mainly communal services (see 3.3.4.). When determining the right to treatment and payment of the costs, registered domicile is crucial, not citizenship. According to the legislation on domicile, international students staying in Finland for at least two years will be granted domicile and are entitled to communal health care. Also family members are entitled to treatment, if they share a household and are registered as residents. However, unless the student is working in Finland and certain criteria are fulfilled, students outside the Nordic countries are not entitled to Finnish social security (KELA) benefits, relating to medical and other costs.

According to Finnish law, the municipality where the school is situated is responsible for student health care. All students are entitled to communal health care services in the municipality where their institution of study is situated. This includes basic health care services as well as hospital care. Students from EU countries are equal to Finnish students, and they are entitled to immediate and basic health care with the same fees as Finnish students. Students from outside EU countries are entitled to immediate care and other health care can be provided depending on the case, but in both cases the student him/herself must pay the actual costs. For this reason it is important for the student to have insurance. Finland also has a social security contract with Quebec and Australia, in which cases the student is entitled to immediate health care, but the student must pay for himself/herself for other health care services.

3.3.1. Insurance

Citizens of the EU who have the European Health Insurance Card are entitled to all the same health care services as Finnish citizens. The new law requirements for being granted a residence permit require that a student from outside the EU area obtain insurance that covers costs for basic treatment before coming to Finland. The insurance should cover the treatment and health care provided by municipal health care services, not services in the private sector. Students staying for at least two years are entitled to communal health care services, and they are required to have an insurance that covers at least medication costs, but in practice also medical care costs up to 30 000 euro. Students staying for less than two years must obtain an insurance policy covering health care costs up to 100 000 euro.

In practice, it is only possible to obtain insurance from a Finnish insurance company if the student is entitled to Finnish social security services. In order to obtain a private health insurance in
Finland, the person has to be entitled to municipal health care and Finnish social security services, and also provide proof of a certain level of subsistence. To be eligible for Finnish social security (KELA) services, one must be living in Finland permanently. International students are not granted permanent residence, which means it is very difficult for them to obtain insurance in Finland.

Nevertheless, insurance policies that meet these requirements are available abroad, but their price and coverage vary, from 100 to 1000 euros per year (HE 277/2006 vp). Taking insurance from an international insurance company is recommended. They cost on average 1000 euro per year. Universities are looking into the possibility of a group insurance for students.

**International insurance companies that provide insurances accepted in Finland:**

- BUPA (http://www.bupa.co.uk)
- International Student Insurance (http://www.InternationalStudentInsurance.com)
- ACS-AMI (http://www.finndealer.com, the name of the insurance is Globe Partner)
- Aon consulting (http://www.students-insurance.eu)
- CareMed (http://www.caremed-travel.com)
- Swisscare: http://www.swisscare.ch/plan_finland.html

### 3.3.2. Finnish Social Security (KELA)

**Students are usually not granted permanent residence (a P permit), and therefore they are not entitled to Finnish Social Security (KELA) benefits and cannot receive a Finnish Health Insurance Card (KELA card).** The Social Insurance Institution KELA assesses independently whether a student is entitled to KELA benefits in certain cases due to work, legislation, social security agreements or other reasons. Those students can then be registered with the institution and receive a KELA card, which entitles them to various KELA benefits in health care and social security. In principle, however, international students are not considered as living in Finland permanently.


In To Finland Service Point
Salomonkatu 17, doorway A, 2nd floor
P.O. Box 82, 00601 Helsinki
Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9-12 and 13-16
E-mail: info@intofinland.fi
[http://www.infopankki.fi/into/](http://www.infopankki.fi/into/)

KELA Office for international Affairs
Address: Höylämöntie 1a B, 00380 Helsinki
PO Box 78, 00381 Helsinki
E-mail: inter.helsinki@kela.fi
Tel. +358 (0)20 634 2650
3.3.3. Health Care for University Students

Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS/ YTHS)

All undergraduate and graduate students (Bachelor’s and Master’s students) at Finnish universities must join their student union by paying the annual fee, which includes a mandatory health care fee. **Student union members are entitled to inexpensive health care provided by the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS/YTHS in Finnish).** The Finnish Student Health Service provides all Finnish university students with preventive health care, medical care, mental health care and dental health care. Post-graduate (Licenciate and doctoral) students are not entitled to the FSHS services.

The FSHS has 16 health centres in 16 university cities in Finland. Students can use the services of any of these centres in any city, in addition to the one located nearest to their university. The services include all central health care services the students might need, but hospital care, the services provided by maternity, child or family clinics, and nighttime and weekend duty services are not included. In these cases the student must turn to communal health care services, or use private sector services with his/her health insurance policy.

FSHS services are provided at a very low cost or are free. Visiting a nurse or a general practitioner is free of charge, appointments for a specialised doctor cost 3.50 to 4 euro and dentist appointment cost 6 euro. Hospital care and medication costs are not included. The student union fee, including the mandatory health care fee, **does not include any insurance policy.** It is recommended that students from EU countries have the European Health Insurance Card verifying their health insurance in their home country (or that they fill in an E109 form at a social security office in their home country). If the student has the European Health Insurance Card, he or she is entitled to the FSHS services and all the same health services as citizens of Finland. **Students outside EU countries must obtain health insurance (covering illness and accidents) prior to their arrival in Finland.** The insurance policy must be valid and renewed annually.

**FSHS Health Centres in the metropolitan area:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>HELSINKI</th>
<th></th>
<th>ESPOO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSHS Töölö</td>
<td>FSHS Kamppi</td>
<td>FSHS Espoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Töölönkatu 37 A</td>
<td>Pohjoinen Rautatiekatu</td>
<td>Otakaari 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00260 Helsinki</td>
<td>21 B, 4th and 5th floor</td>
<td>02150 Espoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. +358 (0) 46710 1000</td>
<td>00100 Helsinki</td>
<td>Tel. +358 9 4682 899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tel. +358 (0) 46710 1030</td>
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NYYTI ry

Nyyti ry is a Student Support Centre based on voluntary student work. It offers support for university students through a Virtual Shoulder service, support groups and other activities during terms. It also organises hangout evenings, where international students are very welcome. However, the Nyyti ry support groups and theme nights are in Finnish.

Some information can be found on Nyyti ry in English at
http://www.nyyti.fi/toimisto/in_english.htm

3.3.4. Health Care for Students at Universities of Applied Sciences

Students at universities of applied sciences in the Helsinki metropolitan area are not entitled to FSHS services. Health care and dental care services are therefore communal services. As mental health services have few resources in communal health care, most schools have their own student psychologists and other counselors. Some of the biggest universities of applied sciences have school nurses and doctors available at the school for a moderate fee. The Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, for example, provides some student health care services on the institution's premises as well as in several communal locations, depending on where the student lives or studies. Some educational institutions also have inexpensive health care services provided by their own students studying to become health care professionals (e.g. dental care students). The services vary depending on the institution and its location, and the most accurate information can be found on the respective school's webpages or at the information office.
3.3.5. Services in Case of Crisis Situations

In case of crisis situations, there are certain service numbers that one can call:

**HELSINKI**
Helsinki City Social Services
Telephone counselling and answering service:
Emergency Social Services open every day 24 hours, phone +358 (0)106 6006

**ESPOO**
The City of Espoo Social Services has a Crisis Telephone Service which operates 24 hours a day.
Tel. +358 (0)9 8164 2439.

**VANTAA**
The City of Vantaa has a Crisis Service point at
Kielotie 15, 01300 Vantaa
Tel. +358 (0)9 8392 4005

**Finnish Association for Mental Health** (Ulkomaalaisten kriisikeskus)
The Finnish Association for Mental Health is a non-governmental, voluntary public health organisation. The Association provides crisis and rehabilitation services and pilot projects, provides information about mental health issues, and acts as consultant to authorities.

Finnish Association for Mental Health
SOS centre
Maistraatinportti 4 A, 4th floor
00240 Helsinki
Tel. +358 9 413 50 501 (weekdays 9-15)
[www.mielenterveysseura.fi](http://www.mielenterveysseura.fi)

For university students, the Finnish Student Health Service has a crisis group in case of sudden traumatic experiences involving group situations. The aim is to have faculty or student organisation members recognise a student in need of immediate help and contact the FSHS.
3.4. Information and Guidance Services

3.4.1. Virtual Guidance

Most higher education institutions in the Helsinki metropolitan area provide excellent information and guidance services for their students, also in English. The best starting point is always the information office and the institution website or intranet. There are also other sources for information available on the internet. Most of the information is available in English, if the student knows where to look.

Some useful websites:
Helsinki Region Portal – a portal for finding the joint services in the Helsinki metropolitan area http://www.helsinginseutu.fi/wps/portal/HelsinginSeutu?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/HS/The+Region+of+Helsinki/First+page

Discover Finland http://finland.cimo.fi

Virtual Finland http://virtual.finland.fi


The Centre for International Mobility http://www.cimo.fi

Publications in English:
Useful advice on studying and living in Finland, as well as basic information on Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences http://www.cimo.fi/dman/Document.phx/~public/Julkaisut+ja+tilastot/English/HigherEducation2007.pdf


3.4.2. Communal Information Services

Communal Service Points

In Espoo and Vantaa, there are several communal service points for citizens, offering information about communal services and guiding customers to the right officials. Most of the service points also offer mailing and payment services and copy machines, fax machines and internet for public use. It is also possible to load the Travel Card at the service points. In Helsinki, there are three service points for obtaining and loading the Travel Card (see section 3.1.2.), and also an
information point for immigrants as well as an Immigration Unit. Some of the service points offer services especially for immigrants, although the ones in Espoo and Vantaa serve all citizens equally.

The information and service points are a part of the metropolitan area strategy for supporting the integration of immigrants, and offer guidance and information for immigrants to help them with education, employment, social services and integration into Finnish society in general. According to a case study by Helsinki City Social Services at the Information Point for Immigrants in East Helsinki, there were 646 registered customers who visited the service point in 2005. Of this study, 65 percent of them were educated (vocational or higher education), and 10 percent were students. 49 percent were unemployed. Most of the questions concerned citizenship and residence permits, employment, social security, housing, education, family life and finances. Less than 10 percent of the questions concerned health, crime, child care and other issues.

Contact Information of the Service Points:

**HELSEINKI**

**Information Point for Immigrants**

Tallinnanaukio 1 A, 4th floor
P.O. Box 7440, 00099 Helsingin kaupunki
Open Mon-Fri 9-15
Tel. +358 (0)9 3106 2674

**Helsingin vastaanottokeskus**

Kyläsaarenkatu 10
E-mail: helsingin.

vastaanottokeskus@hel.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 310 42900 (24h)

**Immigration Unit**

(Maahanmuuttoyksikkö)

Dagmarinkatu 6
P.O. Box 8610, 00099 Helsingin kaupunki
E-mail: mayk@hel.fi
Tel. +358 9 3104 011
Information Service,
Mon-Fri 8:15-16
Tel. +358 050 5528 434

**ESPOO Service Points** Tel. +358 (0)9 816 57070 (Central Service number)

**Espoon keskus**

Kirkkojärventie 4, 02770 Espoo
Open Mon 8-17, Tue 12-17,
Wed-Thu 8-17
and Fri 8-16
Tel. +358 (0)9 8165 7070

**Espoonlahti, Lippulaiva Shopping Centre**

Espoonlahdenkatu 4-6, 2nd floor
02320 Espoo
Open Mon 10-19, Tue 12-19,
Wed-Fri 10-17
Tel. +358 (0)9 8165 7070

**Kalajärvi**

Ruskatalo, Ruskanitty 4, 02970
Espoo
Open Mon, Wed, Thu 9.30-16,
Tue 12-18
and Fri 8-14
Tel. +358 (0)9 8163 0010

**Leppävaara, Sello Shopping Centre**

Sello, Leppävaara library
Leppävaarankatu 9, 02600
Espoo
Open Mon, Wed, Thu10-19, Tue
12-19, Fri 10-18
Tel. +358 (0)9 8165 7070

**Matinkylä, Iso Omena Shopping Centre, 3rd floor**

Plisiansilta 11 S 20, 02230
Espoo
Open Mon, Wed-Fri10-19, Tue
12-19
and Sat 10-15
Tel. +358 (0)9 8165 7070

**Tapiola, Espoo Cultural Centre**

Kulttuurialuokia 2, 02100 Espoo
Open Mon, Wed-Fri 10-19, Tue
12-19
Tel. +358 (0)9 8165 7070
3.4.3. Disability Services

All higher education institutions in the Helsinki metropolitan region offer guidance for disabled applicants and students. In principle, however, the universities or universities of applied sciences do not offer special aids for disabled students, but these special services are arranged by the student through communal social or health services and are financed by the Finnish social security system. Most of these services, such as personal assistance, interpreter services, laptops and special aids, are for Finnish citizens and require citizenship. Some services can be made available, however, if the foreign student will remain in Finland for two years or more. The matter also depends on social security agreements between countries, so it is a complicated issue. For these reasons, a disabled student is advised to contact the higher education institution that he/she is applying to well in advance. Many universities and universities of applied sciences have advisers and planning officers to assist disabled students case by case, and to help them find their options for the required services. Special arrangements for lessons and exams can be made; the student is allowed to use aids and have extra time at exams.

Arranging a personal assistant is also the student’s responsibility, and even though the university will help with the arrangements, the costs must be paid by the student him/herself.

Many of the universities and universities of applied sciences have a special adviser appointed for disabled students, although not all. For example, the Disabled Student Adviser at the University of Helsinki can offer more help and advice for university students. vammaisneuvonta@helsinki.fi. For more information, please contact the Student Services of the respective institution.
4. WORKING IN FINLAND – TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION

The Pros and Cons of Supporting Oneself by Working

Diana sees it as very positive that she is able to work to support her studies in Finland, and that she can afford to live on that salary given the tax rate level and student discounts available to her. This would not be possible in many other countries. The fact that she knows Finnish to some extent also makes her life a lot easier. However, she has had some difficult experiences as well, for sometimes she feels like she cannot afford to get sick because she would lose part of her freelance salary.

Diana*, Kenya, University of Helsinki

The Internet is an Important Source in Looking for Work

Luis got a job in his field through an Internet service. He thinks Internet sources serve both Finns and foreigners equally, even though many of the job announcements are in Finnish. He emphasises that Finnish language skills are needed, but he was surprised how easy it was to find a job.

Luis*, Mexico, Helsinki School of Technology

* Names changed.

4.1. Work Permit

EU citizens and citizens of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland can freely work in Finland if the work lasts less than three months. After that, they must register their right to reside in Finland at the local police department, but they do not need a residence permit while they are employed. The police register the right of residence in the Register of Aliens and issue a registration certificate. Sometimes a certificate of health is required. The right of residence is valid until further notice, and after four years of continuous residence the person can apply for permanent residence. Non-EU citizens must apply for a residence permit to be able to work in Finland.

A student entering Finland with a student visa is allowed to work a maximum of 25 hours per week and full-time during the summer vacation. To be able to work more than 25 hours per week, the student must apply for a work permit. The application should be delivered to either the local employment office or the local police. The employment office where the work permit is applied for makes the decision on whether to grant the permit.
are taken into consideration in this process, and usually a certificate from the employer is required. The employment offices make decisions on the basis that EU citizens are given first priority to job openings in the EU area. The employment office delivers its preliminary decision to the Directorate of Immigration, who makes the official decision. A work permit is usually granted for a certain professional field, and the person can change employers only within that field.

The residence permit for students normally ends as soon as the student has finished his or her studies, but the student can apply for an extended residence permit of up to six months in order to stay in Finland and look for a job after graduation.

Local Police Offices:

**HELSDINKI**

**Helsinki Police Station** (Helsingin kihlakunnan poliisilaitos)
Punanotkonkatu 2, 00131 Helsinki
Tel. +385 (0) 71 877 0111
Licence Unit (passports, driver's licences etc.)
Mon-Fri 8-16:15
Tel. +358 (0)9 189 3125

**Service Number 24 h Tel. +358 (0) 71 877 4002**

**Passports and ID Cards are issued also at:**

**Pasila**
(Pasilanraitio 13)

**Malmi**
(Viljatie 2 B, 00700 Helsinki, Tel. +358 (0) 71 877 3220)

**Itäkeskus**
(Tallinnanaukio 1)

**ESPOO AND KAUNIAINEN**

**Espoo Police Station**
Nihtisillankuja 4
P.O. Box 20, 02631 ESPOO
Tel. +358 (0) 71 873 8606
Open (Licence Unit): Mon-Fri 8-16:15

**VANTAA**

Vantaan kihlakunnanvirasto
Kielotie 21
P.O. Box 98, 01301 Vantaa
E-mail: palaute@vantaa.poliisi.fi

**Service Number 24 h Tel. +358 (0) 71 873 0291**

**Licence Unit:**
(passports, drivers' licence and ID cards)
Mon-Fri 8-16.15
Telephone Service (Licence Unit):
Mon Fri: 8-16.15,
Tel. +358 (0) 71 873 6770

**Licence Issues for Foreigners**
(Ulkomaalaisen lupa-asiat):
Mon-Fri 8-16:15
Telephone Service: Mon-Fri 9-11,
Tel. +358 (0) 71 873 6780
4.2. Employment Services for International Students

4.2.1. The Finnish Labour Administration

The Finnish Labour Administration aims to enhance the functioning of the labour market, to develop working life organisations, to ensure the availability of skilled employees and develop their skills and to advance employment and integration of immigrants.

There are over 200 employment offices in Finland. Employment offices serve as channels of communication between employers and the labour force; they offer vocational training services, information on employment and employment benefits as well as counselling for vocational planning and development.

Some of the public employment services are available for international students as well, but services are also provided by the educational institutions. The services provided by the universities and universities of applied sciences are examined in the next section, and after that the public employment services in the Helsinki metropolitan area are presented.

4.2.2. Career Services at Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences

Most universities and universities of applied sciences have their own Career Services, whose aim is to ease students’ transition into working life. Career Services provide information on jobs related to the student’s field of education, as well as help in searching and applying for work. It is also possible to make an appointment with a counsellor. The number of personnel in career services varies depending on the school, from 1-10 persons. Career Services have more and more services available for international students, but the students must be active themselves in order to make the most out of the services.
All higher education institutions have English language websites for career services and advice, but information about jobs is often in Finnish because the employers usually submit the job advertisements in Finnish.

**In order to look for and obtain a job in Finland, having some basic skills in the Finnish language is very important.** Therefore it is extremely advisable for international students to include Finnish studies in their curriculum. Especially for jobs in the public sector a good knowledge of Finnish is crucial, and students should be motivated early on to learn Finnish.

Many schools provide career planning courses for Finnish students, and recently they have started to provide some courses in English as well. At the University of Helsinki, for example, all degree studies include work life orientation in English.

Career Services at the University of Helsinki coordinates the VALOA Project, an extensive nation-wide project that was initiated in 2009 in order to increase and improve the integration of international degree students into the Finnish labour market. The project initiated from the HERA International sub-project, whose aim is to support international students in getting started with their professional careers. The VALOA project aims at creating counselling tools and operating models for university staff and employers in order to enhance the work prospects of international degree students and to guarantee quality services and work life cooperation. The project is
coordinated by the University of Helsinki and works in close cooperation with other universities and universities of applied sciences in the metropolitan region and the Oulu, Lapland, Tampere and Pirkanmaa regions. VALOA is partly funded by the ESF (European Social Fund).

Universities

Aarresaari Academic Career Services [www.aarresaari.net/english](http://www.aarresaari.net/english) is a network of 19 Finnish universities offering students basic information and advice in career planning. The information pages in English are a good place to get started ([http://www.aarresaari.net/english/info.htm](http://www.aarresaari.net/english/info.htm)) with the search for academic jobs. The vacancies (The Jobboard) are mostly announced in Finnish, as most employers require a sufficient level of Finnish.

University of Helsinki Career Services
Customer Service: Fabianinkatu 33, ground floor 
(University Main Building)
Other Activities: Yliopistonkatu 2 F
P.O. Box 3, 00014 University of Helsinki
E-mail: urapalvelut@helsinki.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 191 22125
[www.helsinki.fi/rekry](http://www.helsinki.fi/rekry)

The Helsinki University of Technology has a Career Web service with job announcements in English at [https://ssl.uraverkko.net/en/](https://ssl.uraverkko.net/en/). The Helsinki University of Technology offers counselling and training programmes also in English. The Otaniemi International Club is a project for developing a network with working life agents (e.g. the Helsinki University of Technology, Otaniemi Marketing, Otaniemi Lions Club, Espoo Chamber of Commerce) to facilitate the networking of international students and researchers at the Helsinki University of Technology.

Helsinki University of Technology Career Services, Innovation Centre
Tekniikantie 14 (Innopolli 2)
P.O. Box 9202, 02015 TKK
+358 (0)9 451 4701, Fax. +358 (0)9 451 4703
E-mail: rekrytointipalvelut@tkk.fi, harjoittelu@tkk.fi
[http://www.uraverkko.net/en](http://www.uraverkko.net/en)

The Helsinki School of Economics (HSE) has its own CareerWeb-service with advice and vacancies at [http://www.hse.fi/EN/services/career/careerweb](http://www.hse.fi/EN/services/career/careerweb)

Helsinki School of Economics Career Services
Runeberginkatu 14-16 (HSE Main Building), C-wing, 3rd floor
P.O. Box 1210 Helsinki
E-mail: career@hse.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 4313 8742
Open during the term: Mon-Fri 11-14, Tue 11-17, in summer: Mon-Fri 11-14
Universities of Applied Sciences

All students of universities of applied sciences can register for the JobStep Career and Recruitment Service of the Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences, [www.jobstep.fi](http://www.jobstep.fi), which offers basic information and advice on job search, vacancies as well as the contact information of counsellors in all the universities of applied sciences (a user-ID is needed to log in). Universities of applied sciences and most universities also offer opportunities for work practice, and many international students come to Finland for a work practice period (usually three to six months) in different programmes.

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences Career Services [www.haaga-helia.fi/rekry](http://www.haaga-helia.fi/rekry) (in Finnish)
E-mail: asiakaspalvelu@haaga-helia.fi
Tel. +358 (0)9 2296 5244

Arcada University of Applied Sciences C&R Centre
E-mail: arbetsforum@arcada.fi
Coordinator Jenni Laxén, Tel. +358 (0)20 769 667

Laurea University of Applied Sciences Career Services
Contact: Johanna Härkkinen
Ratatie 22, 01300 Vantaa
Tel. +358 (0)9 8868 7266
E-mail johanna.hakkinen@laurea.fi

HUMAK University of Applied Sciences Career Services
Contact: Pekka Harjula, Tel. +358 20 7621 267
E-mail: pekka.harjula@humak.edu
Johanna Laitinen, Tel. +358 (0)20 7621 277
E-mail: johanna.laitinen@humak.edu

HAMK University of Applied Sciences Vocational Teacher Education Unit

Lahti University of Applied Sciences (LAMK) Career Services Urppi
Paasikivenkatu 7, P.O. Box 214, 15101 Lahti
E-mail: urppi@lamk.fi

Diaconia University of Applied Sciences Career Services
[www.diak.fi/urajarekrytointi](http://www.diak.fi/urajarekrytointi) (in Finnish)
Contact Person: Niina Tikkanen
E-mail: niina.tikkanen@diak.fi
Administration Office
Maistraatinportti 2 A, 00240 Helsinki
Tel. +358 (0)20 160 6204

Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences Career Services
E-mail: rekry@metropolia.fi
4.2.3. Public Employment Services

The first person to contact when starting to look for a job is the counsellor at the respective higher education institution. Employment offices also provide advice and concrete help in job search, and some of them offer special services for foreigners. However, immigration counselling is meant only for immigrants with permanent residence. An immigrant must also be a resident for three years before it is possible to register as an unemployed person. The education counselling services are also available for international students. A student can contact the nearest employment office to ask advice from counsellors.

The Ministry of Labour National Helpline (Työlinja) also offers advice for job seekers at +358 (0)10 19 4906 and +358 (0)10 60 76711, Mon-Fri 8-19, E-mail: tyolinja@mol.fi


An excellent guide to working is the Ministry of Labour Working in Finland guide. [http://www.mol.fi/mol/en/02_working/05_foreigners/index.jsp](http://www.mol.fi/mol/en/02_working/05_foreigners/index.jsp)

More links to guides for foreigners on working in Finland: [http://www.mol.fi/mol/fi/99_pdf/fi/06_tymisterio/06_julkaisut/05_esitteet/tme7601e_workinginfinland.pdf](http://www.mol.fi/mol/fi/99_pdf/fi/06_tymisterio/06_julkaisut/05_esitteet/tme7601e_workinginfinland.pdf)

Contact information of the employment offices in Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen:

**HELSINKI**

Helsinki Employment Office, Haapaniemi
Haapaniemenkatu 4 B, 00530 Helsinki
P.O. Box 172, 00531 Helsinki
Open: Mon-Fri 9-15.45
Email: helsinki@mol.fi
Tel. +358 (0)10 19 4100 and +358 (0)10 60 40100

Students coming from countries in the EU/EEA-area or Switzerland can visit EURES (The European Employment Services), a network administered by the European Commission. It aims to promote mobility on the European labour markets by providing advice for job seekers who are interested in working abroad and to employers who are recruiting workers from abroad. In the metropolitan area, EURES counselling is available at Kluuvi employment office in Helsinki.
Kluuvi Employment Office for Academic Job Seekers and EURES Services
(Akatteenisten alojen työvoimapalvelut ja EURES-palvelut)
Mikonkatu 7, 3rd and 4th floor
P.O. Box 293
00100 Helsinki
Email: Helsinki.kluuvi@mol.fi
Tel. +358 (0)10 60 70800

EURES-counsellors in the metropolitan area:
Tuula Kinnunen (EURES counsellor)
Tel. +358 (0)10 60 70863
Fax +358 (0)10 60 70805
E-mail: tupu.kinnunen@mol.fi

Aila Mackel (EURES counsellor)
Tel. +358 (0)10 60 70862
Fax +358 (0)10 60 70805
E-mail: aila.mackel@mol.fi

Lella Mobiglia-Wikström (EURES counsellor)
Tel. +358 (0)10 60 70861
Fax +358 (0)10 60 70805
E-mail: lella.mobiglia-wikstrom@mol.fi

A European-wide EURES-guide at ec.europa.eu/eures/

Other Employment Offices in Helsinki:
Kampi Employment Office
Address: Annankatu 42 D,
4th floor, P.O. Box 570,
00100 Helsinki
Open Mon-Fri 9-15:45
E-mail: helsinki.kampa@mol.fi
Tel: +358 (0)10 19 4100
and +358 (0)10 60 40100

Malmi Employment Office
Address: Malmin Kauppatie 18,
3rd floor, P.O. Box 65, 00701 Helsinki
Open Mon-Fri 9-15:45
E-mail: helsinki.malmi@mol.fi
Tel. +358 (0)10 60 70805
and +358 (0)10 60 40100

Itäkeskus Employment Office
Address: Itäkeskus Shopping Centre, Itäkatu 3-5, 4th floor,
00930 Helsinki
Open Mon-Fri 9-15:45
E-mail: helsinki.itakeskus@mol.fi
Tel. +358 (0)10 19 4100
and +358 (0)10 60 40100

ESPOO AND KAUNIAINEN

Espoo Employment Office, Tapiola
Itätuulentie 2 A, 2.krs
P.O.Box 9, 02101 Espoo
Tel. +358 (0)10 19 4105 and +358 10 60 40105
E-mail: espoo.tapiola@mol.fi
Opening Hours
Office Hours Mon-Fri 9-15.45
Telephone Service Mon-Fri 8-16.15

Espoo Employment Office, Espoon keskus
KamrPinkie 8 A, 2.-3. krs
P.O. Box 85, 02771 ESPOO
Tel. 010 19 4106; (0)10 60 40106
E-mail: espoo.espoon_keskus@mol.fi
Opening Hours
Office Hours Mon-Fri 9-15.45
Telephone Service Mon-Fri 8-16.15

Labour Administration: +358 (0)10 19 4101 or +358 (0)10 60 40101 (telephone centre)
City of Espoo: +358 (0)9 816 5011 (telephone centre)
VANTAA

Vantaa Employment Office, Tikkurila
Vernissakatu 8 A
P.O. Box 111, 01301 Vantaa
Open Mon-Fri 9-15:45
E-mail: Vantaa.tikkurila@mol.fi
Tel. +358 (0)10 60 40108 and +358 (0)10 19 4108

Vantaa Employment Office, Myymälä
Vaskivuorentie 25
P.O. Box 113, 01601 Vantaa
Open Mon-Fri 9-15:45
E-mail: vantaa.myyrmaki@mol.fi
Tel. +358 (0)10 19 4471 or +358 (0)10 60 71810

Work Permit Unit for Uusimaa Area in Vantaa
Issues concerning work permits for Finns and foreigners in the Uusimaa area are concentrated to this unit.
Elannontie 3, Leija Yrityspalvelukeskus, 3rd floor
P.O. Box 252, 01511 VANTAA
E-mail: vantaa.tyolupayksikko@mol.fi
Opening Hours
Tel. Service Mon-Fri 9-16, Tel. +358 (0)10 19 4491
Office Hours 9 – 15:45
USEFUL LINKS

Living and Studying in Finland
Orientation Handbook for International Students at the University of Helsinki 2009-2010.

Guide for International Students at Helsinki University of Technology 2006-2007

Helsinki Region Portal – a portal for finding the joint services in Helsinki Metropolitan area
http://www.helsinginseutu.fi/wps/portal/HelsinginSeutu?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/HS/The+Region+of+Helsinki/First+page

The Centre for International Mobility http://www.cimo.fi

Publications in English: useful advice on studying and living in Finland, as well as basic information on Finnish universities and polytechnics
http://www.cimo.fi/Resource.phx/cimo/publications.htx

Living In Finland: A Brief Guide for International Students and Trainees

Discover Finland http://finland.cimo.fi/

Virtual Finland http://virtual.finland.fi/

Info Bank Web Portal: important basic information for immigrants on Finnish society in 14 languages http://www.infobank.fi

In To Finland Service http://www.infopankki.fi/into/

Schools and Day-care

Helsinki
The City of Helsinki Education Department (for schools, activities and daycare for children)
The English School: www.eschool.edu.hel.fi
Ressu Comprehensive School: www.ressuy.edu.hel.fi
The International School: www.ish.edu.hel.fi

Espoo
City of Espoo: http://english.espoo.fi/

Vantaa
City of Vantaa: http://www.vantaa.fi/en
Research
Academy of Finland http://www.aka.fi
The Researcher’s Mobility Portal http://europa.eu.int/eracareers
Intellectual Property Rights:
IPR Helpdesk www.ipr-helpdesk.org

Employment
Directorate of Immigration www.uvi.fi/en
Career Services for University Students www.aarresaari.net/english
Career Services for University of Applied Sciences Students www.jobstep.net

Medical Care
National Agency of Medicines: www.nam.fi/english
Health Centres:
Health Care in Espoo http://english.espoo.fi/default.asp?path=32373;37337;45340;36841

Public Transport
Helsinki Metropolitan Area Council www.ytv.fi/eng
Helsinki City Transport www.hkl.fi
Journey Planner http://aikataulut.ytv.fi/reittiopas/en

Taxation
Taxation in Finland www.vero.fi

News in English
Virtual Finland http://virtual.finland.fi/news
Helsingin Sanomat www.helsinki-hs.net

Statistics
KOTA Online service is a database maintained by the Ministry of Education, and it offers statistical data on universities in Finland http://kotaplus.csc.fi:7777/online/ Etusivu.do

AMKOTA Online service is a database maintained by the Ministry of Education, and it offers statistical data on polytechnics universities of applied sciences in Finland http://amkota.minedu.fi:8080/

Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus) http://www.stat.fi/index_en.html
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Reports and Research


Helsingin kaupungin terveyskeskus/ Pysyväisohje/ T-Ta7.17(1.1. 2007) ULKOKUNTALAISTEN YM. HOIDOSTA LASKUTTAMINEN HELSINGIN TERVEYDENHUOLLOSSA

Helsingin kaupungin terveyskeskus/ Pysyväisohje/ T-Ta7.1/ (1.11. 2005) KOULU- JA OPISKELIJATERVEYDENHUOLLON MAKSUT SEKÄ KUNTIEN VÄLINEN LASKUTUS

Helsingin kaupungin terveyskeskus/ Pysyväisohje/ P54 (1.2. 2007) ULKOMAALAISEN OIKEUS HOITOON, MAKSUT JA KORVAUKSET

HE 277/2006 vp. Lakiehdotus ulkomaalaislain 46 §:n muuttamisesta.


Koivisto, Janna & Juusola, Henna (2008): "We need more English information about our study, life in Finland and this country". Tutkimus ulkomaisten tutkinto-opiskelijoiden asemasta Suomen ammattikorkeakouluissa vuonna 2007. Helsinki: SAMOK ry.


Why Finland? Some of the many good reasons for international students to choose Finland. Helsinki: CIMO


HELPSINKI EDUCATION AND RESEARCH AREA

Academy of Fine Arts (www.kuva.fi)
Hanken School of Economics (www.hanken.fi)
Helsinki School of Economics (www.hse.fi)
Helsinki University of Technology (www.tkk.fi)
National Defence University (www.mpkk.fi)
Sibelius Academy (www.siba.fi)
Theatre Academy of Finland (www.teak.fi)
University of Art and Design Helsinki (www.taik.fi)
University of Helsinki (www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto/)

Arcada University of Applied Sciences (www.arcada.fi)
Diaconia University of Applied Sciences (www.diak.fi)
Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences (www.haaga-helia.fi)
HAMK University of Applied Sciences (www.hamk.fi)
Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (www.metropolia.fi)
Humak University of Applied Sciences (www.humak.fi)
Lahti University of Applied Sciences (www.lamk.fi)
Laurea University of Applied Sciences (www.laurea.fi)