

## FINLAND

### **Language:**

Finnish and Swedish are the two official languages in Finland.

Licensing or use of a protected title (see the text later) does not involve any language proficiency requirements confirmed by the public authorities. The employer (e.g. the local authority) may, however require a certificate of language skills. More than 90 percent of the population in Finland speak Finnish as their native language, and slightly over 5 percent speak Swedish.

### **Immigration Regulations and Requirements:**

1. Source of information: the nearest Finnish Consulate or Embassy.

2. Terms of employment with reference to immigration qualifications:

In order to be able to start working in Finland as a health care professional, you must submit an application to the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, Valvira (more information later in this text) for the right to practise your profession.

#### People coming from EU-countries:

In the fee-form application the applicant must specify the profession that s/he wishes to practise. The applicant must date and sign the document in his/her own hand. It is recommended that the application be made in Finnish, Swedish or English. The application must include the following enclosures:

Passport (copy)

Degree certificate

A valid certificate of your right to practise your profession in the EU Member state from which you come to Finland.

A certificate showing that your education complies with the requirements lay down in the pertinent EU Directives.

The enclosures must be officially certified copies of the original documents. Translations of the documents into Finnish, Swedish or English must also be presented. The certificate of the compliance of your education with the pertinent EU Directives must be the original document, and it may not be more than three (3) months old. Valvira will keep the application documents. Valvira's decision on the right to practise a profession is issued in Finnish or in Swedish. All decisions concerning professional rights are subject to a charge which is payable even if the application is denied.

#### Joint Nordic labour market:

The agreement on the joint Nordic labour market for certain personnel groups engaged in health care and in care of the sick came into effect on 1 January 1994. The agreement is based on the fact that the education in the health care sector is so similar in all the Nordic countries that a person licensed or otherwise approved in one Nordic country can be granted the corresponding rights in another Nordic country. The agreement applies to occupational therapists.

#### People coming from other than EU and Nordic countries:

Workers coming to Finland from abroad and outside EU and the Nordic countries must obtain also a residence permit if their employment lasts longer than three (3) months. The police department of the

place of residence grants the residence permit. For obtaining a permit, you need your passport or ID card, a photograph and your employment contract or some other document of your employment. Valvira is an information centre that provides information on issues such as practising OT in the health care sector.

The contact data for Valvira are:

National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, Valvira  
Lintulahdenkatu 10  
00530 Helsinki, Finland  
tel. Switchboard (09) 772 920  
[www.valvira.fi](http://www.valvira.fi)

#### Professional Information:

1. Association address:

Suomen toimintaterapeuttiliitto ry  
Maistraatinportti 4 A  
FIN- 00240 Helsinki, Finland  
Tel. 358-20-1235390  
Fax. 358-20-1235391  
E-mail: [toimisto@toimintaterapeuttiliitto.fi](mailto:toimisto@toimintaterapeuttiliitto.fi)  
[www.toimintaterapeuttiliitto.fi](http://www.toimintaterapeuttiliitto.fi)

2. Source of information about positions available:

Association see address above.

Employment office

International services

Haapaniemenkatu 4 A 2krs  
FIN-00530 Helsinki, Finland  
Tel: +358 9 7021

email [Helsinki.haapaniemi@mol.fi](mailto:Helsinki.haapaniemi@mol.fi)  
[www.mol.fi/mol/en/index.jsp](http://www.mol.fi/mol/en/index.jsp)

#### Educational Requirements:

1. Type of registration or certification:

Valvira inspects and approves the education for health care professionals and recognises their degrees.

2. Additional qualifications:

In cases where a person's qualifications do not correspond to the education received in Finland, Valvira may require professional experience, an adaptation period for a profession or a qualification test before the person can be licensed or permitted to use a protected title.

3. Minimum requirements:

Same as 1 and 2

4. Applicants from non-WFOT countries:

Same as 1 and 2

5. Additional requirements:

Employing agencies may have further requirements, eg concerning vaccinations.

Additional information:

Valvira is responsible for the Central Register of Health Care Professionals (TERHIKKI), which is maintained by the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES). TERHIKKI contains the following data on more than 200,000 health care professionals:

personal data and address

data on professional education and special qualifications

the right to practice a profession

control data e.g. limitation or revocation of the right to practice a profession

The Finnish health care system comprises workers with highly varied educational backgrounds. Some of these professional groups are encompassed by the system of registration. Registered professionals in health care are divided into three groups: those who are licensed, those who are granted a permit, and those entitled to use a protected title. Professionals coming from the EU Member States may either be licensed or entitled to use a protected title.

On application Valvira grants the right to practise a profession, i.e. a person is licensed. Occupational therapists are licensed professionals.

Updated 30.11.2009