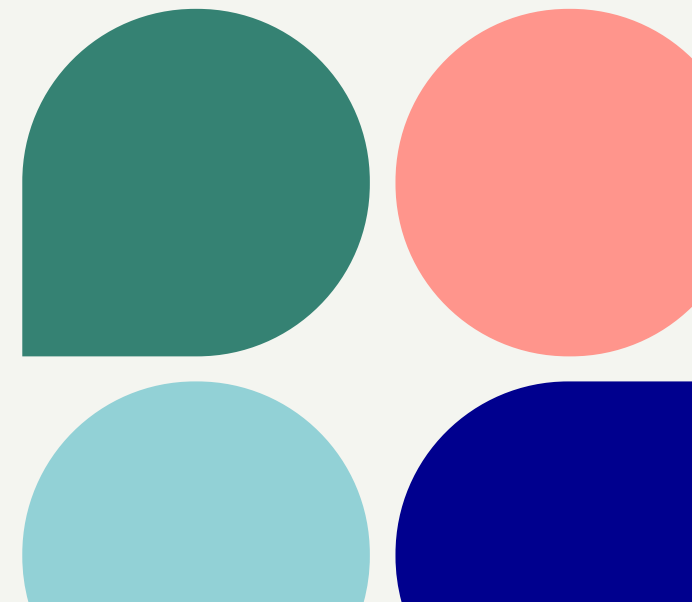


Professional practice rights in social welfare and health care

Finnish Supervisory Agency

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The Finnish Supervisory Agency is tasked with permit, guidance, and supervision tasks

- The Finnish Supervisory Agency is a multi-sectoral, national government authority.
 - The agency's operations were launched at the beginning of 2026.
- The Finnish Supervisory Agency carries out licencing, guidance, supervision, and registration tasks in numerous sectors.
- The Finnish Supervisory Agency has 18 offices throughout Finland, in each region.
 - The agency's headquarters is situated in Tampere.



Tasks of the Finnish Supervisory Agency

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Health and social services sector

- We monitor the legality of health and social sector activities.
- We are responsible for the alcohol administration's tasks
- We promote health protection
- We manage the administration of adoption matters
- We are responsible for steering and supervising the Tobacco Act

Early childhood education and care, education, and culture

- We provide guidance to providers of early childhood education and care, teaching, young people, education, libraries and physical activity.
- We supervise early childhood education and care, and education services
- We provide government grants
- We carry out tasks under the Funeral Services Act

Environment

- We process environmental permit matters
- We assess environmental impacts
- We monitor areas such as nature conservation, environmental protection, land use and public interest in environmental matters
- We carry out tasks related to water and marine management, as well as land use and the cultural environment

Tasks of the Finnish Supervisory Agency 2/2

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Occupational Health and Safety

- We supervise and guide employers
- We provide advice on issues related to occupational safety and health
- We process permit matters
- We monitor the safety of certain products in working life

Rescue services and preparedness

- We monitor the legality of rescue services
- We carry expert assessments on the level of rescue services and investments made to these
- We organise regional cooperation in preparedness
- We support regional and local government safety planning

Tasks related to other sectors

- We register and supervise real estate and letting agents and debt collection agencies
- We carry out supervision tasks related to employment services and unemployment security
- We carry out tasks under the Anti-Money Laundering Act
- We manage legal protection matters related to associations and organisations
- We process complaints concerning municipalities and wellbeing services counties
- We handle payment deposit and collateral matters
- We also carry out various tasks related to business supervision and legal protection

Professional practice rights - year 2025

Health care professionals

Degree completed outside the EU/EEA

- Medical doctors licensing 50
 - specialists licensing 4
- Medical doctors and dentists recognition of degree 208
- Registered nurses licensing 186

Degree completed in the EU/EEA

- Medical doctors licensing 280
 - specialists 54
- Registered nurses licensing 21

<https://lvv.fi/tietoa-meista/toiminnan-suunnittelu-ja-seuranta>

Professional practice rights in health care

Licensing is granted to the following healthcare professions:

- physician, dentist, pharmacist, psychologist, speech therapist, dietician, dispenser, nurse, midwife, public health nurse, physiotherapist, medical laboratory technologist, radiographer, dental hygienist, occupational therapist, optician and dental technician.
- The practice of these professions is restricted to licensed professionals only.

Professions with protected occupational titles:

- practical nurse for social and healthcare, podiatrist, chiropractor, trained masseur, naprapath, osteopath, psychotherapist, orthopaedic technician, hospital cell biologist, hospital chemist, hospital geneticist, hospital microbiologist, hospital physicist.
- Professions with protected occupational titles may also be practiced by those who possess the required training, experience and professional skills and knowledge.

Professional practice rights for social welfare professionals

Licensing is granted to the following social welfare professions:

- social workers
- social service professionals (sosionomi in Finnish, socionom in Swedish)
- professional of applied gerontology (geronomi in Finnish, geronom in Swedish)
- rehabilitation counsellors (kuntoutuksen ohjaaja in Finnish, rehabiliteringshandledare in Swedish, only for applicant trained in Finland)

Professions with protected professional titles:

- practical nurse
- home support worker (only for applicants trained in Finland)
- disability support worker (only for applicants trained in Finland)

Language proficiency

- National certificate of Language Proficiency (YKI): at least the intermediate level test (levels 3-4) in all skills areas
- Civil Service Language Proficiency Certificate, the requirement is at least 'Satisfactory skills' in all skills areas (The Civil Service Language Proficiency Certificates will be abolished in stages by the end of 2028, and the tests can be taken until 30 June 2026)
- A certificate showing that you have completed studies in Finnish for civil servants or Swedish for civil servants at a university.
- A statement from employer vouching for your language proficiency.
 - the certificate of language proficiency at the latest when filing final legalisation application (outside the EU/EEA)
 - recognition of professional qualifications without language skills (EU/EEA citizen & training in the EU/EEA)
- Employers are required to evaluate whether a person has sufficient language proficiency in order to perform their duties.

Application processing periods

- The processing period for applications when **the training has been completed in another EU/EEA Member State** is **3–4 months**.
 - If any documents are missing, notification will be sent to the applicant **within 30 days** of receiving the application.
 - The processing period for applications when **the training has been completed outside the EU/EEA** is **at least 4 months**.
 - The processing period is calculated from the time when Valvira has received all the required documents, so the processing time can be much longer than 3-4 months.
- In order to ensure equal treatment of applicants, applications will be processed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Application fees: health care applications

- Fee is charged also from the rejected decisions
- Half of the fee will be charged for the cancelled application
 - Decision fee 1390 euros (legalization or protected occupational title when qualified outside the EU/EEA) + expert opinion 200-600 euros
 - Decision fee 710 euros (qualified in the EU/EEA) + expert opinion 100-400 euros

Typical example for a person qualified outside the EU/EEA Member States:

- Fee for expert opinion EUR 200–600
- Decision mandating supplementary studies EUR 520
- Legalisation after completing supplementary studies EUR 870

[Check the updated fees always on Finnish Supervisory Agency's webpage!](#)

Application fees: social welfare applications

- Fee is charged also from the rejected decisions
- Half of the fee will be charged for the cancelled application
 - Decision fee 2900 euros (legalization or protected occupation title when qualified outside the EU/EEA) + expert opinion 200-600 euros
 - Decision fee 1470 euros (legalization or protected occupation title qualified in the EU/EEA) + expert opinion 100-400 euros

Typical example for a person qualified outside the EU/EEA Member States:

- Fee for expert opinion EUR 200–600
- Decision on conditional recognition EUR 2070
- Legalization after an adaptation period or aptitude test EUR 830

Check the updated fees always on Finnish Supervisory Agency's webpage!

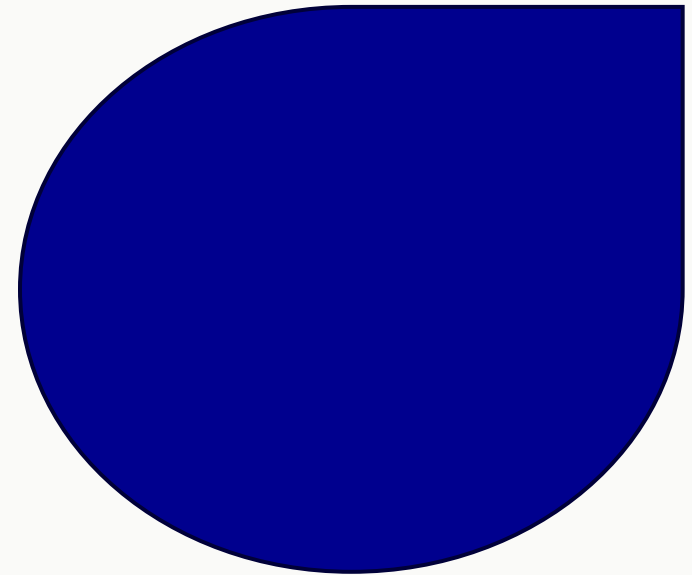
Formal requirements for documents 1/2

- Training completed outside the EU/EEA Member States:
- Original degree certificate (diploma) should be legalized in the country in which you completed your training
 - Apostille or Grand Legalization procedure
- All the other documents should be officially certified:
 - a notary public in Finland or in another EU or EEA Member State
 - a Finnish mission in other countries
 - copies issued by a notary public outside the EU/EEA + Apostille or Grand Legalization
- Documents must be submitted to Finnish Supervisory Agency by mail.

Formal requirements for documents 2/2

Training completed in EU/EEA Member States:

- Copies of the documents are sufficient
- Documents can be submitted by email



Translations

- Finnish Supervisory Agency needs translations from the documents that are not originally in Finnish, Swedish or English.
 - An authorized translator in Finland or in another EU/EEA Member State
 - Translations in Finnish, Swedish or English
- If the translator is not an official or authorized translator in an EU/EEA Member State, the translation may nevertheless be acceptable if the translator's status is confirmed by Apostille or Grand Legalization.

Training completed in Finland

- If your profession requires a legalization or protected occupational title, you must apply the professional practice rights from Finnish Supervisory Agency even if you have completed your training in Finland.
- See the application instruction in Finnish Supervisory Agency's webpage: [Hae sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ammattioikeutta - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#)
- **Fees:**
 - Legalization of a health or social care professional EUR 120 €
 - Legalization of a doctor EUR 160 €

Training completed in the EU/EEA Member States 1/2

- The following degree programmes have been harmonized, i.e. rendered equivalent, within the European Union: **physician, dentist, pharmacist, registered nurse and midwife.**
 - qualifications in these professions can almost always be automatically recognized in another Member State. However, in some cases automatic recognition is not possible.
- Other professions have not been harmonized at the European Union level.
 - Finnish Supervisory Agency cannot automatically recognize professional qualifications in these professions
 - Finnish Supervisory Agency needs to do the comparison between the completed education and the Finnish education.

Application instructions: [Hae sosiaali- ja terveysalan ammattioikeutta - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#) (select your profession from the list)

Training completed in the EU/EEA Member States 2/2

- Finnish Supervisory Agency will investigate whether the training completed by the applicant qualifies for the same profession as the relevant Finnish training
- Finnish Supervisory Agency can request an expert opinion on the applicant's professional qualifications
- If there are found to be substantial differences between the applicant's training and the corresponding Finnish training compensation measures
- Aptitude test and adaptation period: [Sopeutumisaika ja kelpoisuuskoe sosiaali- ja terveysalalla - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#)

Training completed outside the EU/EEA Member States (excluding medical doctors and dentists) 1/3

- Finnish Supervisory Agency will investigate whether the training completed by the applicant qualifies for the same profession as the relevant Finnish training.
 - Work experience, supplementary professional training and continuing education may be considered in the comparison and may compensate any differences in the training between countries.
- Finnish Supervisory Agency can request an expert opinion on the applicant's professional qualifications
- If the training qualifies for the same profession and differences are found between the applicant's training and the current Finnish training, Finnish Supervisory Agency may mandate the applicant to complete additional studies.

Training completed outside the EU/EEA Member States (excluding medical doctors and dentists) 2/3

Application process

1. Submitting an application and all the required documents according to formal requirements to Finnish Supervisory Agency
2. Supervisory Agency verifies the validity of the degree / Apostille or Grand Legalisation procedure [Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ammattioikeushakemuksen liitteiden laillistaminen - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#)
3. Finnish Supervisory Agency requests an expert opinion, if necessary
4. If the training completed by the applicant qualifies for the same profession as the relevant Finnish training and differences are found between the applicant's training and the current Finnish training
→ additional studies.

Training completed outside the EU/EEA Member States (excluding medical doctors and dentists) 3/3

Application process

5. The applicant is responsible for contacting a Finnish university or University of Applied Sciences to complete additional studies.

6. Once additional studies have been completed:

- Application
- Certificate of completion of additional studies
- Certificate of language proficiency
- A certificate verifying that your right to practice the profession has not been restricted or revoked (for example Certificate of Current Professional Status).

Doctors qualified outside the EU/EEA Member States

1. Recognition of medical degree.
2. Six months of internship in Finnish hospital or health center maintained by a public body, must be completed in either Finnish or Swedish
3. Examinations
 - Clinical examination
 - Examination on the Finnish health care system
 - Practical patient care examination
4. Limited license to practice – max. 2 years in total
5. Legalization – after all the previous steps are completed

Steps in the legalization process and the fees: [EU-tai ETA-valtioiden ulkopuolella koulutettu lääkäri - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#)

Dentists qualified outside the EU/EEA Member States

1. Recognition of dentistry degree.
2. Internship of at least three months as a dentist in a public health care facility - must be completed in either Finnish or Swedish
3. Examinations
 - consisting of both dental theory and practice and the knowledge of relevant legislation in Finland
4. Restricted practice rights with a limited license for at least one year
5. Legalization – after all the previous steps are completed

Steps in the legalization process and the fees: [Dentist trained outside of the EU or EEA - Finnish Supervisory Agency](#)

Using an agent or an assistant

- The applicant may authorize an agent or an assistant to act on their behalf in the matter of their application
 - the agent or assistant must present a power of attorney authorizing them to act for the applicant
 - the power of attorney may be an e-mail or physical document sent by the applicant, stating that the applicant authorizes the person in question to act for them in the matter of the application.

Central legislation

- [Act on Health Care Professionals \(559/1994\)](#)
- [Decree on Health Care Professionals \(564/1994\)](#)
- [Act on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications \(1384/2015\)](#)
- [Government Decree on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications \(1459/2015\)](#)
- [Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications \(Directive 2005/36/EC\)](#)
- [Act on Social Welfare Professionals \(817/2015\)](#)
- [Decree on Social Welfare Professionals \(153/2016\)](#)

Summary and key points

- It is good to be prepared that the application process takes time and financial resources.
- Be precise in submitting the required documents according to their formal requirements. If documents are not submitted as required, Finnish Supervisory Agency might not be able to accept them.
- Healthcare professionals must have sufficient language skills, and the final professional practice right cannot be admitted without the language skills → it could be a good idea to start practicing Finnish or Swedish even before the Finnish Supervisory Agency process.
- If adaptation period, internship or additional studies are required, Finnish Supervisory Agency does not arrange these, and the applicant must find the place to complete them by themselves.
- Doctors and dentists are in some sense special groups if training is completed outside the EU/EEA Member States, and they have different processes than other social and health care professionals.

Useful links

- Application instructions: [Hae sosiaali- ja terveysalan ammattioikeutta - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#)
- Language proficiency: [Riittävä kielitaito sosiaali- ja terveysalalla - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#)
- Formal requirements: [Sosiaali- ja terveysalan ammattioikeushakemuksen liitteiden laillistaminen - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#)

- Adaptation period and aptitude test: [Sopeutumisaika ja kelpoisuuskoe sosiaali- ja terveysalalla - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#)
- Additional studies: [Lisäopintojen suorittaminen sosiaali- ja terveydenhuollossa - Lupa- ja valvontavirasto](#)

Website is under construction and information in English will be added as soon as possible!

Thank you!

Contact information

Please contact us if you have questions about professional practice rights:

- Primarily by email: ammattioikeudet@lvv.fi
- Telephone: +358 295 256 932 (Monday–Friday 9:00–15:00)

