

Teaching in Finland: Career Opportunities for Early Childhood Education Teachers in Helsinki

City of Helsinki, Education Division
Autumn 2026

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Who are we?

- City of Helsinki (Ayuntamiento de Helsinki) is **the largest employer in Finland**, over 39,000 employees.
- [Inclusive and secular employer](#) – committed to equality, diversity, and non-discrimination
- [Education Division](#) with over 15,000 employees **provides services to Helsinki citizens of all ages** from babies to the elderly.
 - the City's early childhood education
 - pre-primary education
 - basic education
 - general upper secondary education
 - Finnish-language vocational education and training & liberal adult education.
- **All our daycares operate in Finnish or Swedish language.**
English speaking daycares are available only in the private sector.

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- We have been **recruiting Early Childhood Education Teachers from abroad** since 2023, partnering with **EURES**.
- We have a **long-term need** for hiring ECE teachers from abroad.
- [Ethical principles of the City of Helsinki for recruitment from abroad](#) to ensure transparent and fair recruitment process for employees and provide enough support for work and settling into new country.

What we offer?

- **Permanent** public-sector contract from day one
- Competitive salary – **€3298,06 gross/month** (approx. €2,400–2,700 net, depending on your tax code) + **3% increase** for 5 years of relevant previous work experience and 8% increase for 10 years of relevant previous work experience
- **Holiday pay**
- **Free Finnish language course**
- **Apartment** from City of Helsinki upon arrival
- **High-quality healthcare** – access to a private clinic and Finland's public healthcare system
- **Full relocation support** – we guide you through every step: degree recognition, regulatory checks, registration with Finnish authorities and banking (also for the partner and children who relocate with you), setting up electricity and mobile phone contracts

- **Good working conditions** – good child-adult ratios, you are never alone in the classroom, paid sick leave, and a strong culture of professional trust
- **Language support** continues during employment – 2–3 hours of paid language training per week during working hours.
- Additional benefits – **€550 per year for wellbeing, culture, leisure and commuting** (ePassi)
- **Professional development** – work within one of the best education systems in the world
- **Social integration** –peer support from previously internationally recruited teachers



What is the ECE Teacher work like in our daycares?

Play-based & child-centered learning

- Teaching and learning is based on play --> no typical teaching in a classroom setting
- Taking into account children's preferences and interests
- Fewer formal curriculum targets → more flexibility

Full-day pedagogy

- Every moment is a pedagogical moment –e.g. mealtimes
- Teachers are with children all day (meals, naps, outdoors)

Role includes care + pedagogy

- Teacher is responsible for child groups pedagogy and goal oriented and child-centred activities.
- Teaching + daily care (e.g. dressing, toilet routines, diapers)
- Strong teamwork with other staff with planning pedagogical work

High autonomy, less structure

- Weekly planning, fewer required documents
- Freedom to organize your group → can feel unclear at first

Daily life

- Outdoor play in all weather
- "There is no bad weather, only wrong clothing."
- Flexible routines (no strict timetables for children)

Work culture

- Variable shifts, but clear working hours
- Low hierarchy → initiative expected
- Less comparison, more trust in teachers

An example of a typical day in a daycare centre in Helsinki

6.30 – 7.00 The day care center opens (the time depends on the family's needs of care for their children)

8.00 Breakfast for the children who arrive early

8.30 – 11.00 Planned activities and play both indoors and outdoors

11.00 Lunch

12.00 – 14.00 Naptime or quiet time, listening to a story or music, time to play

14.00 Snack

15.00 – 17.30 Play indoors and outdoors, the parents pick up their children, and the day care closes

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Your work week is 38h 15min,
approximately 7h 40min/day (varies);
NB: You do not start / finish work
every day at the same time

What makes this a unique opportunity?

A clear and guaranteed pathway:

1. Learn Finnish or Swedish → **secure a permanent, well-paid public-sector job** with significant additional benefits.
2. **No competitive exam required** to get the employment contract in one of the best Early Childhood Education systems in the world.
3. **Structured support before and after arrival** – ensuring you are never alone at any stage of the process.
4. **A career-boosting experience** that strengthens your professional profile internationally.



What are the requirements?

To secure a place on the Finnish language course:

1. **At least Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood Education** (fully recognisable by the Finnish National Agency of Education –a degree completed in the EU/EEA)
2. **Right to work in Finland** (e.g. On the basis of EU/EEA citizenship)
3. **Willingness and ability to commit to a language training** over several months
4. **Good English language skills (B2 or above)** to provide a strong support language for you during the Finnish language training and relocation to Finland.

To sign an employment contract:

1. **Passed B1 language test** in Finnish language
2. **Degree recognized** by the Finnish National Agency of Education
3. **Clean criminal record**
4. **Proof that you do not have respiratory tuberculosis**

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Objectives of the pre-employment training

- The training aims to develop participants' **Finnish language skills** to B1 level (CEFR) through comprehensive practice in vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, writing, and spoken interaction. Language learning is integrated with workplace contexts and early childhood education situations, enabling participants to use Finnish in both professional and everyday life.
- The program also introduces participants to the **Finnish early childhood education system**, including its pedagogical principles, work practices, values, and key responsibilities such as teamwork and cooperation with guardians.
- In addition, it prepares participants for **living and working in Finland** by covering societal structures, services, official procedures, and everyday life. The training further familiarizes participants with Finnish work culture, including communication styles, equality, and low hierarchy.

By the end of the training, participants are expected to have B1-level Finnish skills, understand the core principles of early childhood education in Finland, and be able to navigate Finnish society, services, and working life effectively.

The workload of the training

Workload per week:

- Teacher-led lessons 4 x 90min / week
- 4-8hrs homework and self-study
- Altogether 10-14 hrs of studying on a weekly basis

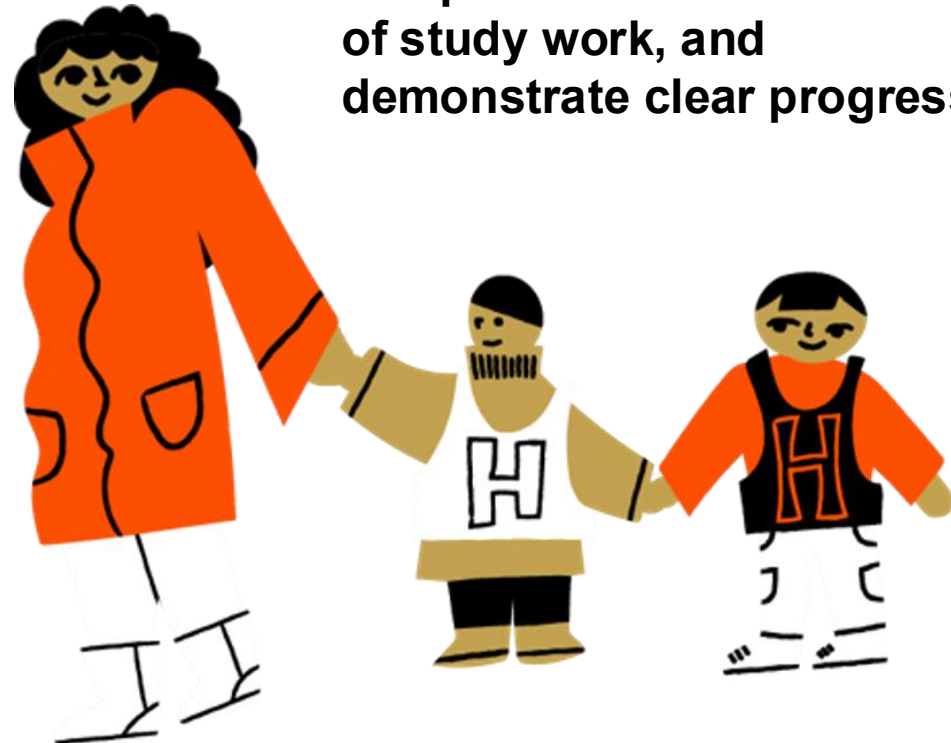
The training consists of four phases:

- A1 phase
- A2 phase
- B1 phase

The lessons can be recorded, but the baseline assumption is that you are able to attend them with approx. 75% attendance rate.

Between each phase, there is a language assessment.

To progress to the next phase, participants must attend lessons regularly, complete a sufficient amount of study work, and demonstrate clear progress.



Process and approximate timeline



Recognition of degree

Criminal record and tuberculosis checks

Feb 2027

Apr 2027

Aug 2027

Dec 2027

Jan 2028

A1 course

A2 course

B1 course

Relocation work starts

Language test and Daycare Manager's interview

Language test

Language test (if pass, then employment contract to be signed)

IMPORTANT! The daycare manager makes the final recruitment decision. If they decide to hire you, they will offer you a position, on the condition that you achieve a B1 level in Finnish and provide the required documentation (degree recognition, criminal record extract and tuberculosis check).

NOTE! You are **not competing** on jobs with other people who are on the course with you. **We have a job available for everyone who meet the criteria** at the end of the language training.



Costs and financial support available

Degree recognition fee (you pay) (Finnish National Agency of Education)

- You pay approx. 100€ + 395€ out of pocket
- The amount that you paid can then be fully reimbursed - [The EURES Target Mobility Scheme](#) (an EU fund aimed at supporting labor mobility) usually covers 440€ and [City of Helsinki](#) pays the remaining 55€ once employment has started
- TMS to be paid retroactively

Criminal record check (you pay) (Legal Register Centre)

- To be applied from the Finnish authority who requests the information from your country of origin
- Document fee
- Postal fees (Carta de Recíbo)

Tuberculosis check

- No costs, covered by our occupational health services

Relocation costs (you pay, but TMS support available)

- Flights to Finland
- A couple of nights in a hotel/air bnb when you arrive
- Advisable to reserve one month's salary as a backup upon arrival

You do the applications yourself, and we guide and support you in all application processes.



Who qualifies for TMS support?

Basic conditions for jobseekers

- 18 years or older.
- **Citizen and resident of an EU country, Norway, or Iceland, or have a status as “EU long-term resident”** in an EU country (Denmark and Ireland not included). (To achieve this status, third-country nationals must have lived in the EU country where they apply for an uninterrupted period of five years and fulfil some further requirements, as defined in Directive 2003/109/EC).
- Looking for work in another country than your country of residence (must be a mobility taking place with a change of country of residence).
- Be in contact with an EURES Adviser and receive mobility services.
- **Not return to your country of origin, or former country of residence**, i.e., where you have lived/worked/studied, so called return mobility.

Conditions for recognition allowance

- **You can apply after an official recognition process has been initiated**, i.e. after submission of a recognition request to a competent certification body in new country of work.
- It is not possible to claim reimbursement for certified copies and/or translations if there is no official recognition process.
- **You are not already receiving recognition of qualifications paid for by your employer or other company/actor.**

Considering of moving with a partner?

- Spouse Program offered by International House Helsinki and the City of Helsinki: <https://ihhelsinki.fi/guidance-and-settling-in/spouse-program/>? provides **tailored support for international newcomers**, including opportunities to expand professional and social networks, receive guidance on entering the Finnish labour market, share experiences with other newcomers, and learn more about living and working in the Helsinki metropolitan area.
- Please note, however, **that finding and applying for jobs remains the responsibility of the partner**. A good starting point for exploring the Finnish labour market and available opportunities is InfoFinland: <https://infofinland.fi/en/work-and-enterprise> (in Spanish: <https://infofinland.fi/es/work-and-enterprise>).



Useful resources

Our ECE TEachers tell about their journey...

Álvaro y Eva:

https://youtu.be/KhcaHeu-xLc?is=qm4Vvv1cJiW_XUeL

Melissa:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6eyjJjnxRiY>

Yaiza:

<https://youtu.be/4IPA8d0pkl4?is=exA36KXesVO24Twh>

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Work in Finland

[Why Finland? - Work in Finland](#)

My Helsinki – Your Guide to Helsinki

<https://www.myhelsinki.fi>

International House Helsinki

ihhelsinki.fi

ECE in Helsinki

https://www.hel.fi/static/kasko/varhaiskasvatus/Varhaiskasv_tutuksi_ENG.pdf

ECE Curriculum in Helsinki

https://www.hel.fi/static/liitteet-2019/KasKo/vare/Helsinki_Vasu_EN.pdf

National Curriculum

<https://www.oph.fi/en/education-and-qualifications/national-core-curriculum-ecec-nutshell>

Fox Book about sustainable future

<https://mappa.fi/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/fox-book.pdf>

Our job is to make the recruitment and relocation a good experience for you.



Don't hesitate to get in touch with us!



To apply:

Early Childhood Education Teacher
(recruitment from abroad, permanent
position in public sector daycare)) | City
of Helsinki

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