Recognition of qualifications in the fields of education and training and early childhood education and care

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Practical issues

• Please keep your mic muted unless you wish to speak
• Questions are welcome throughout the presentation
  • Raise the hand or use the chat
• Please fill in the feedback form sent to you in the chat
• Slides will be shared on our website
Content of the webinar

• General information on the recognition of qualifications in Finland
• Professions in the field of education and training
• Professions in the field of early childhood education and care
• Principles of decision-making
  • Recognition of professional qualifications
  • Recognition of higher education studies completed abroad
• Consultation services offered by the Finnish National Agency for Education
General information on the recognition of qualifications
Recognition of qualifications refers to a decision on the eligibility that foreign qualifications provide when applying for a job or a study place.

Decisions on recognition are made by different parties depending on where the qualification is used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational institutions</th>
<th>Employers</th>
<th>Authorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• If you want to complete a qualification in Finland</td>
<td>• If you want to work in a profession that is not regulated</td>
<td>• If you want to work in a regulated profession or a public sector post</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regulated professions in Finland

• A profession is regulated when according to Finnish legislation, a specific training, qualification or the right to practice a profession is required

• Examples of regulated fields and their competent authorities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regulated field</th>
<th>Competent authority to issue a recognition decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education and training</strong> (e.g. subject teacher, class teacher)</td>
<td>Finnish National Agency for Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early childhood education and care</strong> (e.g. teacher in ECEC, childcarer)</td>
<td>National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health VALVIRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degrees in law</strong></td>
<td>Finnish Transport and Communications Agency TRAFICOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social and health care</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transport</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

→ If a person has qualified abroad to a profession that is regulated in Finland, they will need a recognition decision from the determined competent authority

• A list of all regulated professions and their competent authorities can be found on our website
Decisions made by the Finnish National Agency for Education

1. Decisions on eligibility for the regulated professions, such as
   - Professions in the field of education and training
   - Professions in the field of early childhood education and care

2. Decisions on the recognition of the level of the degree
   - Needed for public sector posts, e.g. in municipalities or state
General information on the decisions

• The applicants apply for the decision themselves.

• The decision
  • is made based on the documents submitted and the legislation in force at the time of the decision-making.
  • is formulated according to the eligibility requirements stated in the legislation.
  • provides eligibility for the profession only concerning the education requirement(s).
    "The decision does not concern, for example, language skills."
  • might be conditional requiring the applicant to complete a compensation measure (e.g. supplementary studies in Finland)
  • is issued either in Finnish or in Swedish.

• Guidance is always provided also in English.
A person has completed a degree abroad and wishes to qualify as a teacher in Finland. Should they find out if a recognition decision is possible?

### Yes
- if they have qualified for the same teaching profession abroad
- if they have a higher education degree completed abroad and they wish to complete teacher education studies in Finland

### No
- if they intend to complete a higher education degree in Finland, which qualifies for the profession
  - contact the higher education institution
A person has completed a degree abroad and wishes to qualify for a profession in early childhood education and care in Finland. Should they find out if a recognition decision is possible?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- if they have qualified for the same early childhood education and care profession abroad</td>
<td>- if the degree completed abroad is from another field than education or social services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- if they have completed abroad a higher education degree in the field of education or social services and wishes to complete qualifying studies in Finland</td>
<td>- if they intend to complete a degree in Finland, which qualifies for the profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ contact the higher education institution or educational institution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Factors that affect the legislation applied in the decision-making

- The country where the qualification was completed
- The nationality of the applicant
- The level and content of the applicant’s education
- The level and content of the education required for the profession in Finland
- The applicant’s professional competence in the country where the qualification was obtained
Professions in the field of education and training
Regulated professions in the field of education and training in Finland

• Subject teacher
• Class teacher
• Special needs teacher
• Teacher providing pre-primary education
• Teacher in vocational education (vocational or common qualification units)
• Teacher in liberal adult education
• Guidance counsellor
• School social worker
Examples from teachers’ eligibility requirements (Teaching Qualifications Decree 986/1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject teacher</th>
<th>Class teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Master’s degree</td>
<td>• Master of Arts (Education) degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Studies in a teaching subject (60/120 credits)</td>
<td>• Multidisciplinary studies in subjects and cross-curricular themes taught in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher’s pedagogical studies (60 credits)</td>
<td>primary education (60 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Teacher’s pedagogical studies (60 credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The eligibility of a subject teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Multidisciplinary studies in subjects and cross-curricular themes taught in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>primary education (60 credits)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocational education: teaching professional qualification units

- A suitable higher education degree
- Teacher’s pedagogical studies (60 credits)
- Work experience
- Professional practicing rights
Different decisions in the field of education and training

Decision types concerning the eligibility for the profession

- Recognition of professional qualifications
- Recognition of higher education degree or studies
- Decision on sufficient studies for providing instruction in a foreign language

Decision types concerning a partial eligibility for the profession

- Recognition of the level of the qualification
- Recognition of the studies in a teaching subject
- Recognition of teacher’s pedagogical studies
Professions in the field of early childhood education and care (ECEC)
Regulated professions in the field of early childhood education and care in Finland

• teacher (early childhood education and care)
• social pedagogue (early childhood education and care)
• childcarer (early childhood education and care)
• special education teacher (early childhood education and care)
• head of early education centre
• personnel at day care centres providing Steiner pedagogic early childhood education and care
Examples from eligibility requirements for professions in early childhood education and care (Early Childhood Education Act 540/2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession in ECEC</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Teacher in ECEC** | • At least a Bachelor of Arts (Education) degree  
• Studies providing professional skills for early childhood education and care and pre-primary education (60 credits) |
| **Social pedagogue in ECEC** | • At least a Bachelor's degree in Social Services and Health Care (UAS)  
• Studies oriented in early childhood education and social pedagogy (60 credits) |
| **Childcarer in ECEC** | • Vocational Qualification in Education and Guidance or a Vocational Qualification in Social and Health Care or other equivalent qualification  
• sufficient amount of training in the care, upbringing and education of children |
Different decisions in the field of early childhood education and care

Decision types concerning the eligibility for the profession

- Recognition of professional qualifications
  - -> Regulated professions in the ECEC

- Recognition of higher education degree or studies
  - -> ECEC professions for which a higher education degree is required

Decision types concerning a partial eligibility for the profession

- Recognition to a higher education degree in the field of education
  (e.g. to a Bachelor of Art (Education))

- Recognition to a Bachelor's or Master's degree in social services and health care
  (Bachelor of Social Services (UAS) or Master of Social Services (UAS))
Legislation
Legislation

- Professional Qualifications Act 1384/2015
  - Decisions on the recognition of professional qualifications
  - The Act is based on the European Union’s Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36/EC

- Act on eligibility for public posts provided by higher education studies completed abroad 1385/2015
  - Decisions on the recognition of higher education degrees and studies

- Teaching Qualifications Decree 986/1998
  - Decisions on sufficient studies for teaching in a foreign language
  - For whom: Those who intend to work as a teacher only in education that is provided in a foreign language. In these decisions, the teaching eligibility is restricted to a specific foreign language of instruction and a specific teaching post, e.g. class teacher in primary education provided in English.
Recognition of professional qualifications
Decisions on the recognition of professional qualifications

• Provides the eligibility for a certain regulated profession in Finland
  • Decisions are based on the Professional Qualifications Act 1384/2015

• Preconditions:
  • The nationality of an EU/EEA country
  • The qualification must have been obtained in an EU/EEA country
  • The qualification must have qualified for the same profession for which the applicant applies eligibility in Finland

• The decision is conditional if there’s a substantial difference in the foreign education compared to the nationally required education
  • Compensation measure: an adaption period or an aptitude test
  • Applicant’s work experience in the same profession and lifelong learning in the field are taken into account in the decision-making and might compensate the substantial difference in the education
  • After the applicant has completed the compensation measure, they apply for a final decision from the Finnish National Agency for Education
### Example decision 1: Class teacher from Ireland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country and year in which the qualification was obtained</th>
<th>Ireland, 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The applicant’s professional qualification in the country where the qualification was obtained</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of formal qualifications</td>
<td>A document certifying that the applicant has been registered as a teacher in Ireland and that she or he has completed the required induction period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The applicant’s teacher education</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education. The qualification is obtained by following four years of higher education studies, specialising in teaching different subjects to pupils aged from 4 to 12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Finnish degree level to which the education has been declared comparable²</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The applicant’s professional experience or knowledge, skills and competence acquired through lifelong learning</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A substantial difference to the national training requirement</td>
<td>A difference in the content of the training; the training does not contain studies providing capabilities to apply scientific knowledge and methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Finnish National Agency for Education’s decision on the recognition of professional qualifications</td>
<td>The certificates will confer the eligibility referred to in section 4, subsection 1[1] of the Teaching Qualifications Decree [986/1998] to provide class instruction in basic education once the applicant has completed either an aptitude test or an adaptation period. The subject areas that would be covered by the aptitude test are ‘exploring teacherhood’ and ‘the Finnish school’, and a demonstration of skills in class instruction of mother tongue and literature (reading and writing). The aptitude test may be taken at a university that provides education conferring eligibility for the post of a class teacher. The adaptation period would be completed by working as a class teacher in Finland. The duration of the required adaptation period would be nine months.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Example decision 2: Teacher in ECEC from Germany

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country and year in which the qualification was obtained</th>
<th>Germany, 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant’s professional qualification in the country where the qualification was obtained</td>
<td>Erzieher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content of the profession: care and upbringing tasks in a group of children aged 0–6 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant’s qualification</td>
<td>Erzieher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content of applicant’s education</td>
<td>The education is post-secondary vocational education, which lasts 2–3 years. The education has prepared for tasks in the care and upbringing of children aged 0–6 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantial difference to the national education requirement</td>
<td>The studies in educational sciences included in the training differ substantially from the nationally required studies in educational sciences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant’s professional experience or knowledge, skills and competence acquired through lifelong learning</td>
<td>Working in the profession of Erzieher in Germany.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish National Agency for Education’s decision on the recognition of the professional qualification</td>
<td>The applicant’s diplomas provide the eligibility referred to in section 26 of the Act on early childhood education and care (540/2018) for the role of teacher in early childhood education and care. The knowledge, skills and competence acquired by the applicant through professional experience compensate for the substantial difference in the contents of the education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recognition of higher education studies
Decision on the recognition of higher education degree and studies that provide eligibility to a profession

- Higher education studies completed abroad can be recognised as comparable to those degrees and/or study modules that form the eligibility requirement for a certain profession, for example:

**Eligibility requirements for class teachers**

1) Master of Arts (Education) degree,
2) multidisciplinary studies in subjects and cross-curricular themes taught in primary education, and
3) teacher’s pedagogical studies

**Eligibility requirements for subject teachers**

1) Master’s degree,
2) studies in a teaching subject, and
3) teacher’s pedagogical studies

**Eligibility requirements for teachers in early childhood education and care**

1) Bachelor of Arts (Education) degree, and
2) studies providing professional skills in early childhood education and care and pre-primary education
Preconditions and additional requirements for recognition

• The applicant’s higher education degree must be comparable in terms of the level to the degree required in Finland for the profession in question

→ E.g. subject teachers: Studies in the teaching subject cannot be recognised if the applicant’s highest qualification is a Bachelor’s level degree

• The foreign higher education degree or study module must be comparable in terms of the level and content to the degree or study module to which it is being recognised as comparable

• The decision can require supplementary higher education studies to be completed in Finland, the maximum number of which is defined by a decree

  • After completing the supplementary studies, the applicant applies to FNAE for a final decision

• Work experience cannot be taken into account due to the legislation applied
Recognition decision that provides a partial eligibility for the profession

• Higher education studies completed abroad can be recognised as comparable to those degrees and/or study modules that form a part of the eligibility requirements for a certain profession, for example:

Example 1, the decision concerns:

1) the recognition of the level of a higher education degree and
2) the recognition of studies in a teaching subject

→ The applicant must additionally complete the study module of teacher’s pedagogical studies (60 credits) in order to qualify as a subject teacher

Example 2, the decision concerns:

1) the recognition of the degree as comparable to a Bachelor of Arts (Education)

→ The applicant must additionally complete the study module of studies providing professional skills for early childhood education and care and pre-primary education (60 credits) in order to qualify as a teacher in ECEC
# Example decision 1: Physics teacher from Ukraine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country and year in which the degree was completed</th>
<th>Ukraine, 1992</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The applicant’s qualification</td>
<td>Physics teacher. The qualification is a five-year higher education degree. The degree included teacher education which prepared the applicant for teaching physics at different levels of education and in different educational forms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Finnish National Agency for Education’s decision on recognition</td>
<td>The applicant’s higher education degree is recognised as comparable to a master’s degree completed in Finland. The studies in physics included in the applicant’s degree are recognised as comparable to 120 credits of studies in physics as a teaching subject. The applicant’s studies in education will be recognised as comparable to the 60 credits of teacher’s pedagogical studies completed in Finland if the applicant completes 25 to 30 credits of supplementing teacher education studies at a Finnish higher education institution, which must include didactic studies and supervised work practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Example decision 2: Teacher in ECEC from Turkey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country and year in which the degree was completed</th>
<th>Turkey, 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant’s qualification</td>
<td>Lisans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content of applicant’s education</td>
<td>The qualification is a four-year higher education degree in ECEC. It has included studies preparing for the education and upbringing of children aged 0–6 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish National Agency for Education’s decision on comparability</td>
<td>The higher education degree completed by the applicant is comparable to a bachelor’s degree completed in Finland. The higher education degree completed by the applicant is comparable to the Finnish Bachelor of Arts (Education) degree. The applicant’s higher education studies are comparable to the studies providing professional skills for tasks in ECEC and pre-primary education (60 credits) completed in Finland, if the applicant completes the following supplementing studies at a Finnish university: 10–15 credits worth of studies providing professional skills for tasks in ECEC and pre-primary education, including practical training and familiarisation with worldview education and ethical education and the system and administration of the Finnish daycare system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Summary: recognition of professional qualifications and recognition of higher education studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Recognition of professional qualifications</th>
<th>Recognition of higher education studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the preconditions for recognition?</td>
<td>Professional qualification obtained in an EU/EEA country by an EU/EEA citizen</td>
<td>Comparability of the degree and the study modules to the eligibility requirements of a certain regulated profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the decision be made conditionally?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the compensation measures?</td>
<td>Aptitude test or adaptation period</td>
<td>Supplementary higher education studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can work experience and lifelong learning be taken into consideration?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the decision be made on the eligibility partially?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes, for example decision on the recognition of the level of the degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Consultation services offered by the Finnish National Agency for Education
Our website

- All information can be found on our website in English, Finnish and Swedish: [www.oph.fi/recognition](http://www.oph.fi/recognition)
  - Information for holders of foreign qualifications e.g.
    - Occupation-specific information on professions in education and ECEC
    - Service guide and flow chart to find out whether a recognition decision is needed;
    - Instructions for applying for a decision;
    - Information for those who have already received a recognition decision (e.g. how to complete the compensation measures)
  - Regulated professions in Finland
  - Guidance videos on recognition of qualifications
Information for guidance purposes and employers

• **Information for guidance purposes**
  (e.g. basic information on recognition of qualifications, foreign educational systems, international sources of information)
  
  • Guides for recognition of foreign teacher education and ECEC education are available in 3 languages
  
  • Brochure on recognition of qualifications is available in 11 languages
  
  • Flowchart on whether a decision on recognition is needed is available in 5 languages
  
  • Diagrams on educational systems of 16 different countries

• **Information for employers**
  (e.g. whether the employee needs a recognition decision, completion of adaption period, occupation-specific information)
Thank you!

www.oph.fi/recognition
recognition@oph.fi