

Global Immigration alert

January 2026

Finland

Heightened requirements for permanent residence permits

Executive summary

Effective 8 January 2026, Finland implemented stricter eligibility requirements relating to permanent residence permit applications.

Key developments

The main changes include:

- Increasing the required period of continuous residence for holders of A-permits and Brexit permits who seek to obtain permanent residence from four to six years
- Requiring applicants to demonstrate proficiency in the Finnish or Swedish language, and provide evidence of two years of work experience in Finland
- Allowing individuals who complete a master's, postgraduate or bachelor's degree in Finland to qualify for permanent residence without having to reside in Finland for six years, provided they held a valid residence permit during their studies, and currently possess "developing" language skills in Finnish or Swedish (e.g., at least 15 credits of Finnish or Swedish language studies obtained at a higher education institution)

Holders of A-permits and Brexit permits who have resided continuously in Finland for four years may still qualify for a permanent residence permit, provided they:

- Receive an annual income of at least EUR 40,000
- Hold a master's degree recognized in Finland, and have two years of uninterrupted work experience in Finland without receiving social benefits for more than three months, or

- Demonstrate "particularly good" Finnish or Swedish language skills, as determined by the immigration authorities, and have at least three years of uninterrupted work experience in Finland without receiving unemployment security or social assistance for more than three months

Impact on employers

Employers may experience longer timelines and additional administrative steps when supporting employees' applications, as third-country nationals are now subject to heightened eligibility and application requirements when obtaining a permanent residence permit.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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