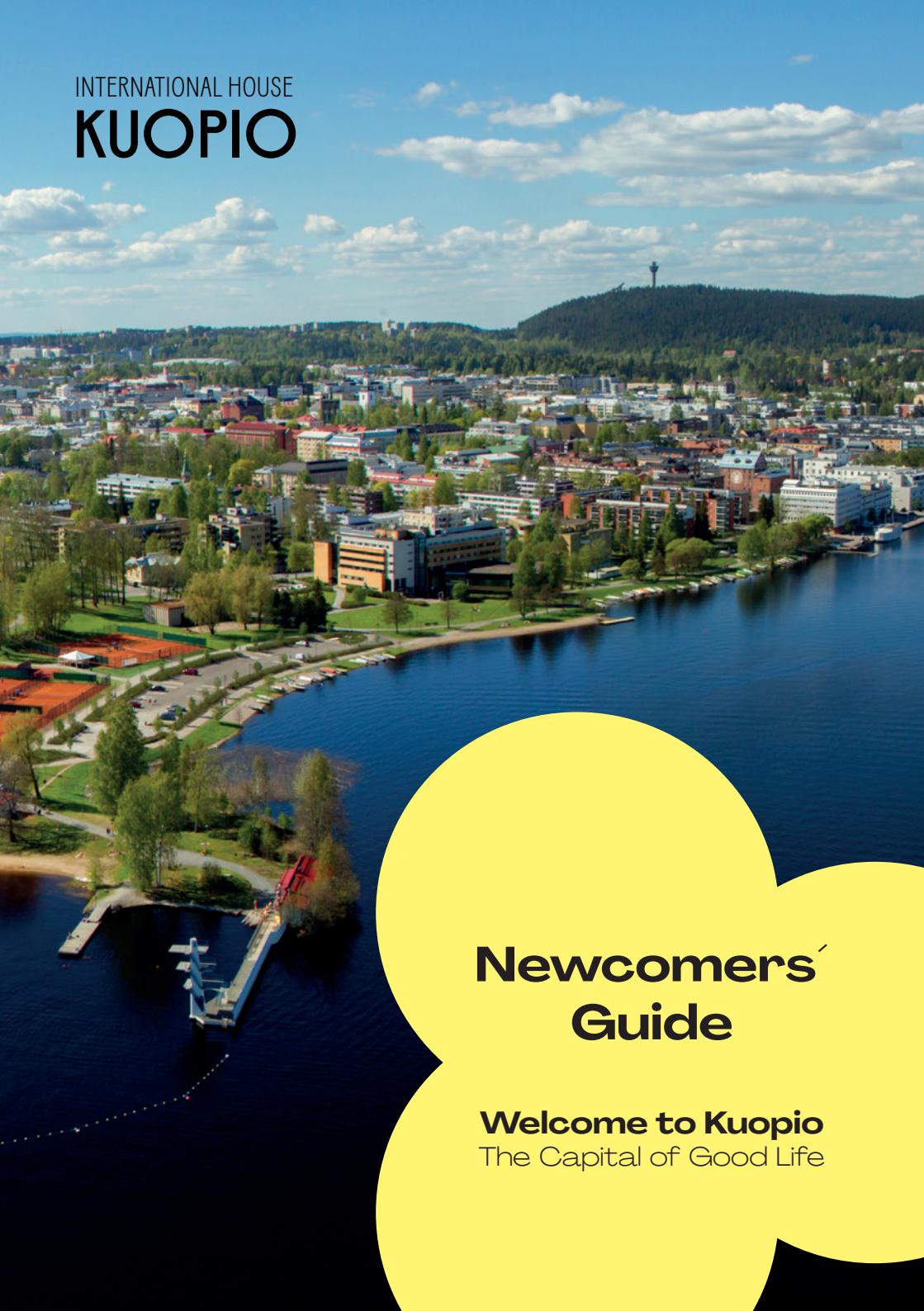


INTERNATIONAL HOUSE  
**KUOPIO**



## Newcomers' Guide

**Welcome to Kuopio**  
The Capital of Good Life

# Welcome to Kuopio!

We have prepared this guide to help you find all the information you need in one place. This guide provides help you to know where to search for more information on your topics of interest. If there is something you want to know about but cannot find here, please feel free to contact the International House of Kuopio. We are here to help you get settled.

How to contact the International House:

1. Email [tyonavigaattori@kuopio.fi](mailto:tyonavigaattori@kuopio.fi) for an appointment.
2. Come in person to our office at Asemakatu 7 and fill out the contact request form.



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# About Finland and Kuopio

Finland (Suomi in Finnish) has a population of about 5.5 million people, and Kuopio, with approximately 124 000 residents, is the 8th largest city. The official languages in Finland are Finnish and Swedish, with about 5 % of the population speaking Swedish. There are also about 10000 Sámi people in Finland, and they are the only indigenous people group in the European Union. Most Finns also speak English.

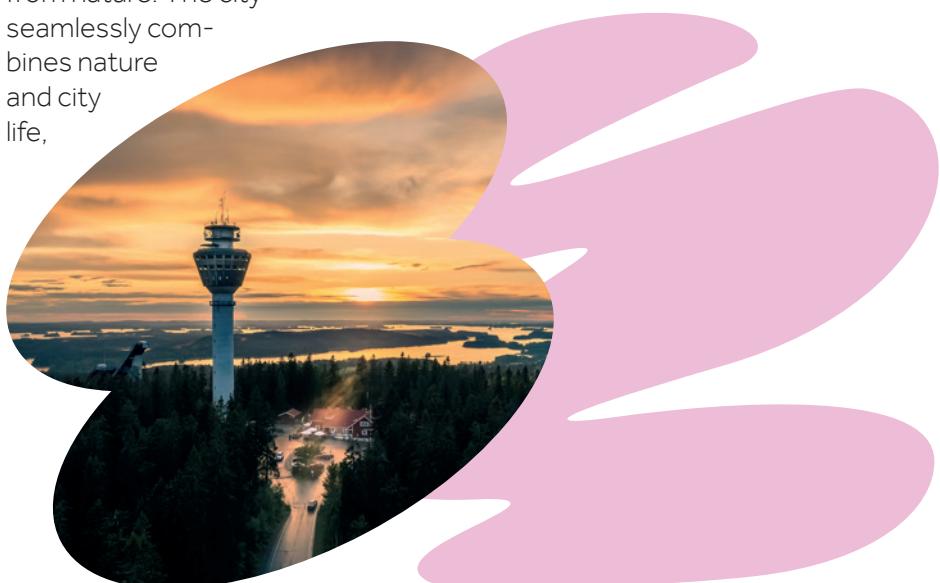
Kuopio is located in Eastern Finland and is part of the Northern Savonia region. It is called the Capital of Finland's Lakeland area, and about a quarter of the city's area is water. Half of Kuopio is forest area, which means in Kuopio you are never far from nature. The city seamlessly combines nature and city life,

making it a wonderful place to live all year-round. Tahko Ski Resort in Kuopio is the 4th largest ski centre in Finland, so it is worth a visit.

Kuopio Market Square (Kuopion Tori) is the city's centre and the heart of the city, and many events are held there all throughout the year. Kuopio has been ranked as the second most attractive city to live in Finland, and the friendly locals are probably part of the reason why.

## **The official city website is:**

[www.kuopio.fi/en](http://www.kuopio.fi/en) and you can find information about happenings in the city on the [Kuopio International Facebook Page](#) or on [Instagram](#).



# Finnish weather

In Finland you can experience all four seasons – the longest of course being winter. Every season has its own beauty and Finns have found a way to make the best of what each season brings.

## Summer

is from June to August and is filled with long days and white nights. Summer temperatures are on average about +18 degrees Celsius, but they can be over +25 degrees Celsius. There are also rain showers and, at times, thunderstorms.

## Winter

starts when the first snow falls, sometimes in November, but by December the ground is usually already covered in snow. Temperatures can go down to -30 degrees Celsius. Winter days are short, but the snow makes everything brighter.

## Autumn

begins in September and is a beautiful season of changing colours, as the leaves turn red, orange, and yellow. Temperatures range between 0 to 20 degrees Celsius, with warm days and colder nights. In November, the days are dark, and it can be rainy too.

## Spring

begins in April when nature slowly begins to wake up, and as the snow melts it can be muddy. With the mud it's not the most beautiful season, but the thought of summer round the corner makes it all worthwhile!



**Moving  
to Kuopio**

# Immigration matters

Requirements differ according to your status: Non-EU citizens must apply for a residence permit from the Finnish Immigration Service (Migri). EU citizens must also apply for registration of an EU citizen's right of residence at Migri. Nordic citizens do not require a residence permit, but they must register at the Digital and Population Data Services Agency (DVV).

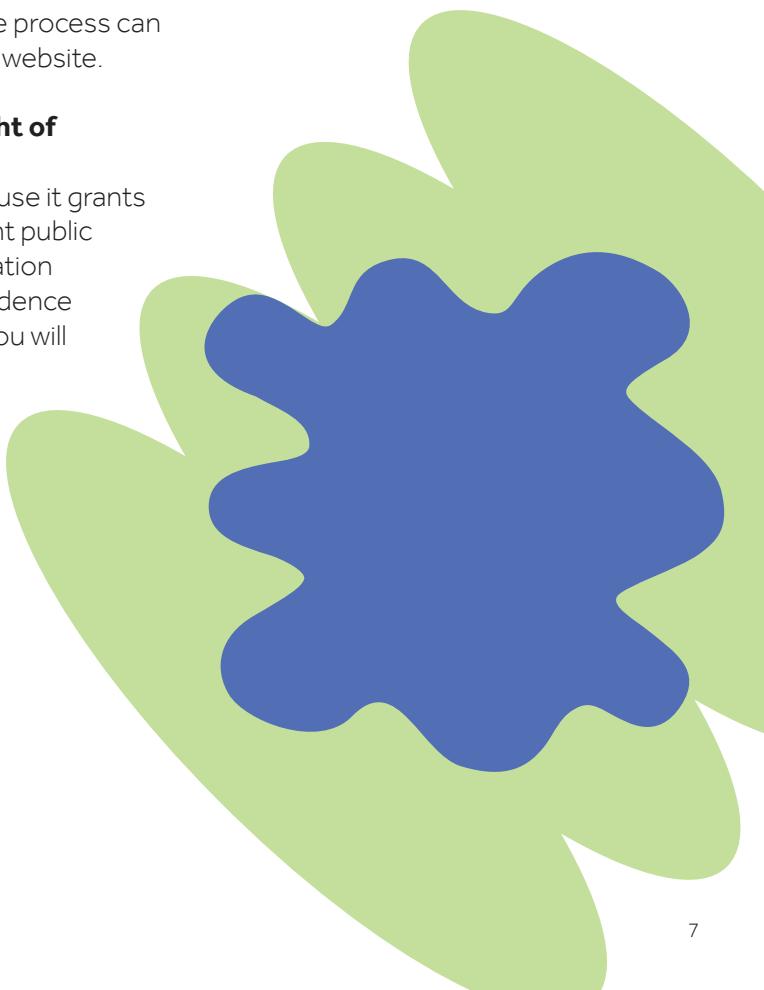
Information about the process can be found on the Migri website.

## Registering your right of residence

This is essential because it grants you access to different public services. The registration of municipality of residence is done at the DVV. You will need to book an appointment to visit the DVV. All newcomers, including Nordic citizens, must register in person.

## Documentation preparation

It is important to make sure that you have all the documentation you need and that they have been legalized. If you are coming with family members you will also need original marriage certificate, original certificate of registered partnership, and original birth certificates of the children.



# Other Important Documentation

**Strong identification** – This is used to check your identity when using the internet. You can also use online banking codes (which you can get when opening a bank account) and from your mobile phone operator. You can also use the suomi.fi e-identification. You may need to first apply for the foreigners' identity card from the police before you can get the strong identification.

**Foreigners' identity card** – this is a card issued by the Finnish police. You can apply for it online or at a police station. This is useful for setting up strong identification which is important for doing things online in Finland.

**Personal identity code (henkilötunnus)** – If you did not get this when you applied for a residence permit or registration as an EU citizen you can get more information from the DVV.



**Bank account** – Depending on which bank you choose, opening an account can take a while, so plan your finances ahead of your arrival in Finland. You need to book an appointment to open a bank account. Contact the bank in advance to ask about the documentation they require.

The largest banks offer service in English, and you can use all major credit cards in Finland.

**Kela card (Social Insurance Institution - Kansaneläkelaitos)** – You can get a Kela card which serves as your personal health insurance and gives you some benefits under the National Health Insurance Scheme.

You can apply for the card online or using an application form. Also, depending on your status in Finland and where you are from, you may be entitled to some other benefits from Kela.

**Mobile Phone Subscription** – You may only be able to get a prepaid card initially, but you can change later. Mobile phone use is inexpensive, and most plans offer unlimited data usage (rajaton).

**Tax card (verokortti)** – This is a document from the Tax authorities which shows your income tax rate. You do not necessarily need a printed version. You can find information about getting a tax-card on the Vero (Verohallinto) website.

**Pension** – If you are employed in Finland, your employer will make earnings-related pension payments for you. You can see more about pensions on the Finnish Centre for Pensions website.



If you need help  
with any of these:  
send email to  
**tyonavigaattori@kuopio.fi**  
to get an individual  
guidance meeting with  
an immigration councillor.



Living  
in Kuopio

# Housing

## Housing Advisory Service

If you need help finding a rental apartment or have other issues regarding housing, you can contact Setlementti Pujola, asumisneuvonta. More information: [www.pujola.net/kuopion-asmusneuvonta](http://www.pujola.net/kuopion-asmusneuvonta)

## Renting a house in Kuopio

Most foreigners in Kuopio live in rental housing. There are several companies that rent out apartments with the city, Kuopio's Niiralan Kulma Oy being the largest. You can apply for an apartment online or you can visit the office at Hatsalankatu 37, Kuopio, and complete the application with the help of a service advisor.

M2 Kodit and A-Kruunu Oy are also state subsidized. There are also private rental companies such as Vuokraovi, Etuovi, and Oikotie.

## Housing for students

Students can apply for subsidized housing through these organizations: Kuopas and Tekman Tuki ry.

## Moving into a new home

In Finland, a two-room property generally includes one bedroom, a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom. Most Finnish housing is unfurnished, and properties have in-unit laundry facilities while others use shared laundry rooms.

## Leases

Note that leases must always be given in writing. InfoFinland offers more information to be aware of related to tenancy agreements. It is important to know the rights and obligations that apply to all tenants.



# When renting a house in Finland

The **rental guide** by the Consumer Union of Finland provides a checklist for things you should know when renting an apartment.

## Home insurance (kotivakuutus)

It is good to take out home insurance; this will cover damage to your property. Most landlords will also require you to have it. The Finnish Financial Ombudsman Bureau provides advice regarding insurance and other matters.

## Security Deposit and rent payment

The security deposit is usually about 1- or 2-months' rent (legally, the maximum is 3 months). It is returned to you at the end of your contract period unless there is damage to the apartment or rent is unpaid. You must agree on the condition of the property when your rental agreement starts, or you will be charged for any damage at the end of your contract.

## Keys

Make sure to take good care of your apartment keys as they can be very costly to replace. If you need a copy of your keys, you should request a copy from the landlord. Usually, only the landlord can make copies of keys.

## Utilities

You will have to get an electricity contract (sähköopimus). You can shop around for a provider. The Energy Authority website provides some information on how to go about choosing an electricity provider.

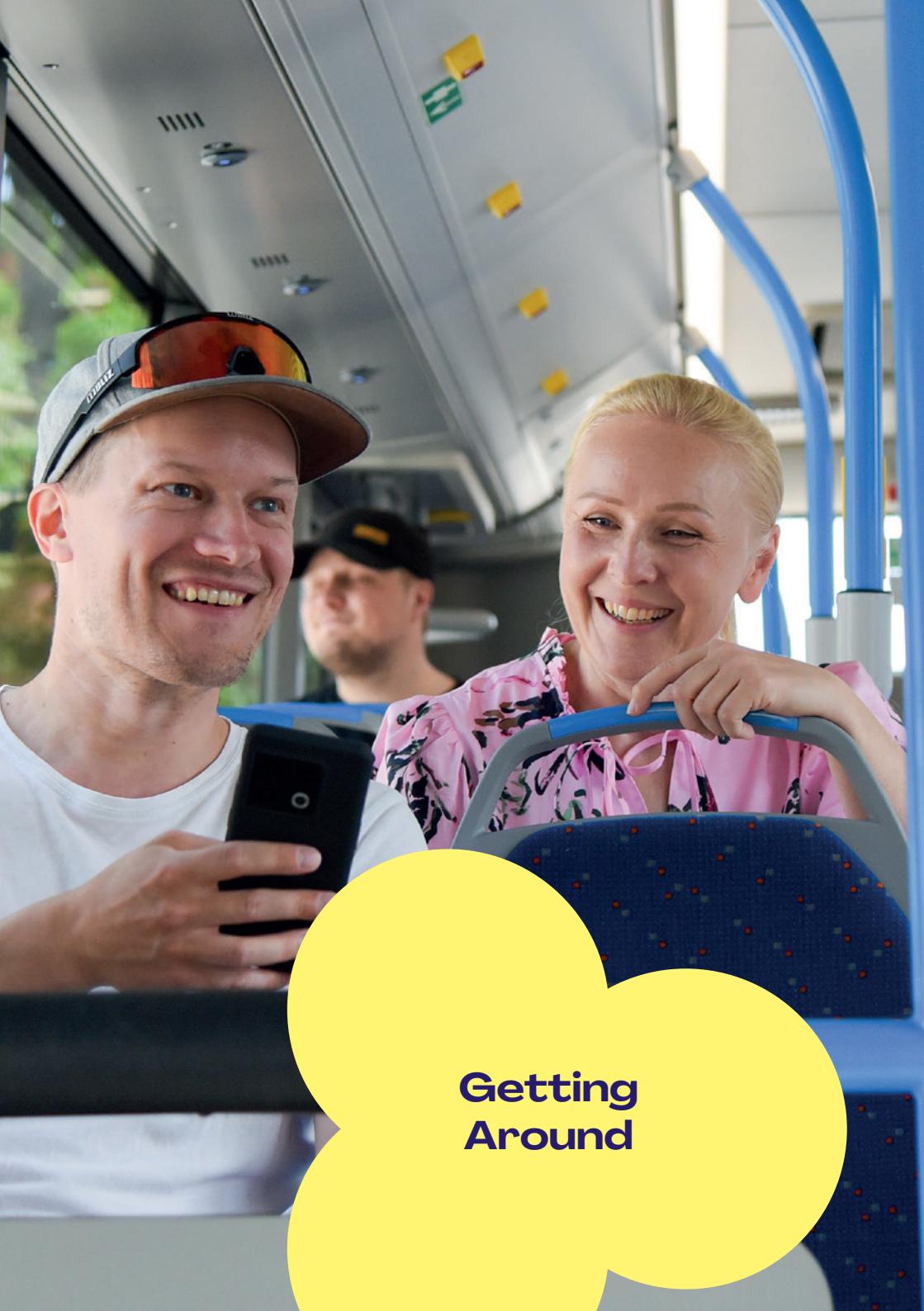
# Waste Management

In Finland, it is very important to ensure that you do waste disposal correctly. Certain items must be put in recycling containers and others may simply be thrown away. The kinds of sorting containers you will find at most apartments are marked with an \* in the table below.

You can buy plastic bags for disposing of biowaste (biojäte) and mixed waste (sekajäte) at most grocery shops. If you need to know where recycling points are in your neighborhood, you can type your address into the [kierratys.info](http://kierratys.info) website.

Some waste cannot be disposed of in the trash. Hazardous waste must be taken to a collection point. Batteries should be taken to red battery collection containers that you can find in stores and kiosks. Bottles and cans can be returned to a grocery store return machine. Electrical equipment should be taken to electronic waste collection points. Search for collection points on [kierratys.info](http://kierratys.info).

Biowaste (Biojäte)*	Paper (Paperi)*	Carton (Kartonki)*	Glass (Lasi)
Metal (Metalli)	Plastic (Muovi)*	Mixed waste (Sekajäte)*	Textiles
Hazardous waste (Vaanallinen jäte)	Batteries (Paristot)	Electrical equipment (Sähkölaitteet)	Returning bottles and cans



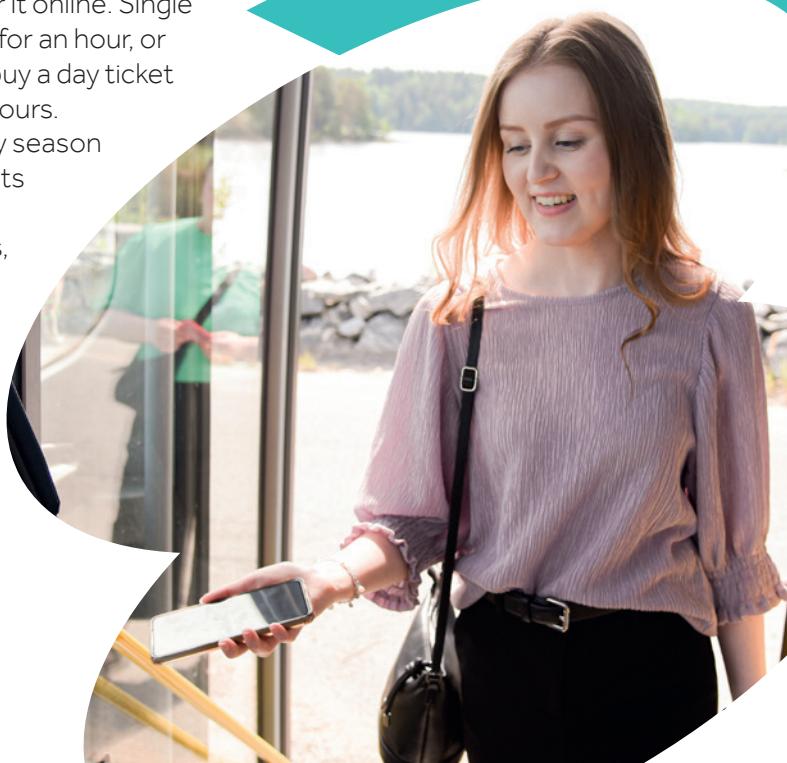
**Getting  
Around**

# Public Transportation in Kuopio

The public transportation in Kuopio works very well, so you can travel to most places without a personal car. The Kuopio region public transport is Vilkku ([vilkku.kuopio.fi](http://vilkku.kuopio.fi)). Vilkku organizes Kuopio's bus system as well as the city bike service.

## By bus

- You can pay your bus fare with contactless payment, mobile tickets, cash or with the Waltti card ([waltti.fi](http://waltti.fi)). Note that prices vary depending on the payment method you use. Cash is the most expensive option.
- You can get a Waltti travel card at the service point at Suokatu 42, or you can order it online. Single tickets are valid for an hour, or you can opt to buy a day ticket which lasts 24 hours.
- You can also buy season tickets. Discounts are available for different groups, namely students, seniors, children, youth and adults.



# Traveling around Finland

The public transportation system works efficiently, allowing you to travel long distances easily. To plan out the best way to travel, you can use Traficom's [matka.fi](http://matka.fi) service.

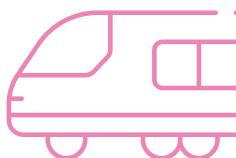
## By air

There are 20 airports in Finland operated by Finavia ([finavia.fi](http://finavia.fi)). Most flights from outside Finland arrive at Helsinki airport. In Kuopio, Kuopio airport, which serves mostly flights from Helsinki, is about 14 km away from the city center. There is a bus service from the airport to the city center.



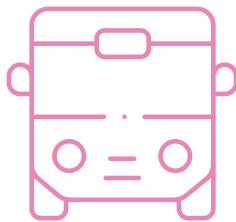
## By rail

The railway system is operated by VR ([vr.fi](http://vr.fi)). Tickets can be bought on the website, the VR Matkalla app, ticket vending machines, ticket points at railway stations, by calling VR customer services and also at R-kiosks. (Tel. 0600 41 900)



## By bus

You can get tickets for long-distance buses from the Matkahuolto website ([matkahuolto.fi](http://matkahuolto.fi)). Another bus service is Onnibus ([onnibus.com](http://onnibus.com)) which is very reasonably priced. All these services offer discounted fares for different groups. You can also download their apps which make it easier to buy your tickets and plan your trip.



# Owning a car in Finland

Owning a car is quite expensive in Finland, and usually, the public transportation system is such that you do not always need a car. Traficom ([traficom.fi](http://traficom.fi)) gives detailed instructions on how to go about buying and selling vehicles in Finland.

## Using a Foreign car in Finland

Traficom and Finnish customs ([tulli.fi](http://tulli.fi)) provide a guide to importing vehicles. Cars must be declared as removal goods. You can find more information about driving in Finland on the Expat Finland site ([expat-finland.com](http://expat-finland.com)).

## Electric car

If you have an electric car, you can use the Latauskartta website to find charging points around the country.

## Getting a Driving Licence

Driving licences from certain countries can be used to drive in Finland. Licences can be exchanged for Finnish licences at Ajovarma service points. Ajovarma in Kuopio can be found at Savilahdentie 12.





**Education**

# Early childhood education to Basic Education

**Early childhood education** in Kuopio is provided by day care centres. The City of Kuopio website provides more information about the different day-care centres around Kuopio and the services they provide.

**Pre-primary education** is mandatory for all children. This is provided free for children who are 6 years old. The City of Kuopio also provides preparatory instruction for children of immigrants who do not speak Finnish.

**Basic education** is for children in grades 1 to 9 and is also mandatory for all children. As with pre-primary education, preparatory instruction is also provided for students who do not speak Finnish.

**Kuopio has 6 upper secondary schools**, and one school for adults. Kuopion Lyseo offers an English language program - the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. General upper secondary education usually lasts about 3 years and is made up of both compulsory and elective courses.

**Vocational education** is more practical, and it can be undertaken by young people after their basic education or even by working adults.



# Kuopio's Vocational Colleges

**Palvelualan Opisto Kuopio** (PAOK) is a service industry college. PAOK is work life-oriented: as part of your studies, you work both at school and in companies in the field.

**Pohjois-Savo Opisto** (PSKO) is a Northern Savonia Folk High School that offers vocational education, and sign language studies. These studies provide a good foundation for Humak's interpreter studies.

**Portaanpää**, a Christian College, is one of the largest folk colleges in Finland. They offer vocational education, and basic education courses for immigrants who want to learn

Finnish and continue their studies which they could not complete in their country of origin.

**Kuopio Conservatory** is one of Finland's largest music and dance schools (approx. 2,600 pupils and students in music and dance). They provide high-quality and diverse education in basic music, dance, and vocational music studies

**Savon Ammattiopisto** (SAKKY) is a vocational college which offers seven fields of study and up to 117 different qualifications, as well as upper secondary education.

## Higher Education

**The University of Eastern Finland** is Finland's most multidisciplinary university offering 11 fields of study and 100 majors. They offer a large number of programs in English, including 3 Bachelor's degrees and over 20 Master's programs.

**Savonia University of Applied Sciences**, one of the largest applied sciences in Finland, has nearly 8,000 students in Iisalmi, Kuopio and Varkaus. They also have several English Bachelor's and Masters degree programmes.

**Humak University of Applied Sciences** operates throughout Finland. At the Kuopio unit students can gain professional skills in interpretation and AAC instruction leading to a bachelors' degree.

**Pelastusopisto** is a Rescue College in Kuopio and the only one of its' kind in Finland. Various qualifications prepare students to be lifeguards, emergency center duty officers and to participate in international rescue missions.

# Adult Education

**Kuopio Civic College** has eleven different subject areas with almost 2000 courses to choose from. They also offer online courses.

**Snellman Edu** offers short professional courses on a variety of subjects. You can also do open university courses through them.

## Finnish Language Classes in Kuopio

### **Kompassi**

In Kuopio, free Finnish language courses are offered at Kompassi. You can see more information on their Facebook page.

### **Kuopio Civic College**

(Kuopion Kansalaisopisto)

Finnish language education is offered at several skill levels. The costs may differ depending on the content and length.

### **Savonia**

Savonia offers free online Finnish classes. You can apply for the classes through Savonia Open UAS or CampusOnline.

### **University of Eastern Finland**

The university offers Finnish lessons through their open university.

### **Suomen Punainen Risti**

The Finnish Red Cross has a language café. More information on their Facebook - 'Suomen Punainen Risti Kuopion osasto.'

**Finnish courses.fi** provides a listing of online courses from organizations around Finland.

**Kielibuusti** is an online guide to learning Finnish and Swedish developed by five universities

**Suomen Kielen Alkeet** teaches the basics of Finnish.

**Yle Kielikoulu** is an website and app for learning Finnish.



**Health  
Services**

# Public Healthcare

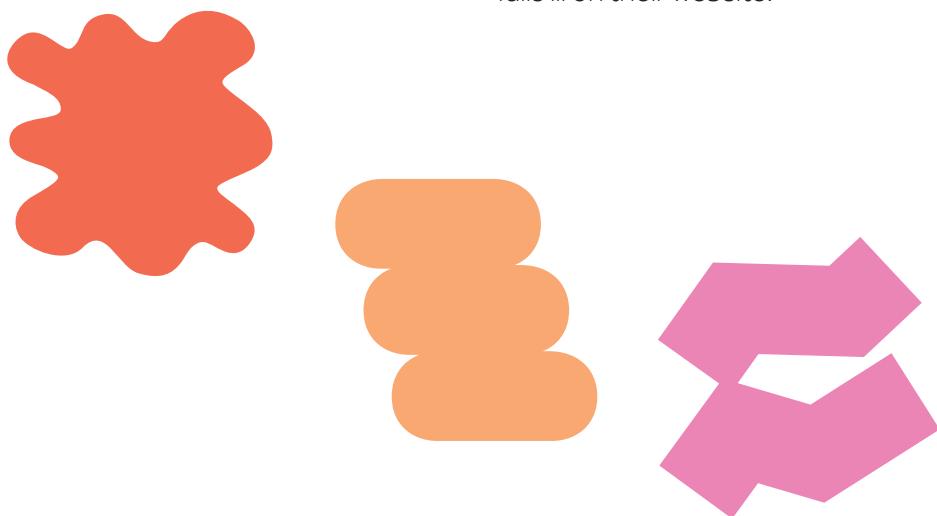
Finland's universal healthcare system is funded by tax revenue, and this means that services like medical care, dental care, maternity and childcare services, student health services, and ambulance assistance are available to everyone at a low cost. Anyone who has a municipality of residence can use the public health care system. There are also annual limits on fees for public healthcare services but wait times to see a doctor can be long.

Social and health services for Kuopio are organized by the North Savo Welfare Region. You can find information on public social and health services, at [pshyvinvointialue.fi](http://pshyvinvointialue.fi).

## Public Healthcare Centres (terveysasema)

Your public healthcare center ("terveysasema") is based on your residential address (enter your address in the search bar and it will show you your local healthcare centre). This local public healthcare facility serves as the primary point of contact for all medical needs, including most emergency situations. Centres are usually open from 8.00 to 16.00 during the week. Outside these hours, you can call 116117 for medical help. Specialists can be seen with referral.

Schools have their own nurses and doctors. You can get this information from the school. You can find some more information about Kela benefits and what to do when a child falls ill on their website.



# Health care at School, Work, Booking Appointments

## Private healthcare

If you use private health care providers, you will get an appointment more quickly, but it will be more expensive. Kela does provide some reimbursement for visits to private doctors. Some private health care providers are Mehiläinen, Aava, and Terveystalo.

## Health care at work

Employers in Finland are legally obligated to provide preventive healthcare but not medical care. You can find more information about occupational healthcare from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

## Booking appointments

Before contacting the health center, you can assess your need for treatment on the [terveyskyla.fi](http://terveyskyla.fi) or [omaolo.fi](http://omaolo.fi) websites, this helps you determine whether it is necessary to apply for assessment for professional treatment. You can then call the municipality-specific nurse telephone number. Your need for treatment is assessed and you may then be referred to a doctor, nurse, or other specialist, or you will receive home care instructions to help you cope at home. Electronic appointment booking for a doctor is possible in some health centers. You can have your doctor's appointment at a health center or remotely.

## Cancellations

### Note:

If you cannot go to your appointment, make sure to cancel it in time or you will be charged a non-attendance fee.

# Emergencies

The number for all life-threatening emergencies in Finland is

**112**

Calls are free and you do not need to input the area code.

This number is the same for all EU countries.

It is a good idea to

**install the 112**

**Suomi mobile application.**

If you have this app, you do not need to  
tell them your location.

## ***Do not use this number when a situation is not life-threatening.***

Call 112 if you know or suspect that somebody's life, health, property or the environment is under threat or in danger and you need help from the authorities. When you call 112, if the operator does not speak English, they can transfer you to another operator.

See [InfoFinland Emergencies](#)

## **Going to the Emergency room**

It is a good idea to go to the emergency room if you have an illness or injury that requires treatment before your own health center opens. Before heading to the emergency room, call the emergency number **116117**. In the emergency room, patients are treated in the order of urgency based on the severity of the illness.

# Important Numbers

## Social emergencies

The social emergency service provides assistance in situations that require immediate intervention from the social welfare authority. For instance, in situations of domestic violence, or when concerned about a child's safety. You can ask for help

for yourself, a loved one, or a friend from the authorities. The services are free of charge. You can call 112 in a traumatic emergency situation. Otherwise, you can call **+358 447183930** (no text messages).

## Important Phone Numbers

Emergency Number	112 (no area code)
Dental emergencies	116117 weekday evenings 16:00 to 08:00 and on weekends and public holidays
Social and crisis emergency	044 718 3930
Shelter	017 183 393
Before going to emergency room	116117 (all municipalities)
Women's acute center phone	017-172 361, 017-173 817

# Mental Health Services

You can contact your local health center for mental health services. Private mental health services are also an option, although they are more expensive, you can get some reimbursement from Kela.

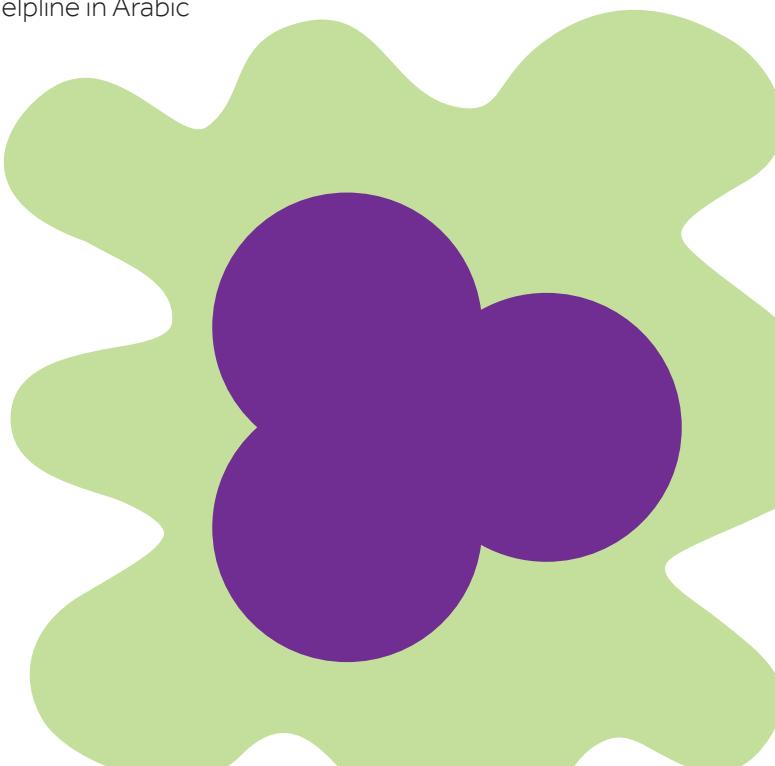
In urgent situations, you can call **116 117**, and let them know what is happening. You can ask for help for others and they can be taken in for coercive treatment, with a doctor's referral. In life-threatening situations, you can call **112**.

[The Kuopio Crisis Center](#) also provides help in crisis situations. They have staff who provide counseling in English and a crisis helpline in Arabic and English.

[Mieli Mental Health Finland](#) has information that can help in strengthening mental health. They also have a crisis helpline in Finnish, Swedish, Arabic, Ukrainian, Russian and English.

**Pharmacies** - In Finland, medicine is highly regulated and only sold in pharmacies. Vitamins can be bought in grocery shops. Pharmacists can suggest cheaper alternatives to prescribed medicines if they are available. Prescriptions are issued electronically in Finland. You can use MyKanta to manage your prescriptions.

**MyKanta** is a digital service where you can find your health data and prescriptions. To log into [MyKanta](#) you need strong identification.



# Families

[InfoFinland](#) provides a comprehensive guide to family in Finland which looks at areas such as marriage, divorce, children, death and other issues relating to family life.

Families can get support from the government in a variety of ways. This brochure from Kela provides details of the benefits available to families with children.

Government support is offered at different stages in the family's growth. For example, support is offered during pregnancy and when a child is born.

The government also offers benefits if you look after your child at home.

It is important to know what the differences are between bringing up children in your own country and in Finland. Children's rights are highly respected in Finland, and parents should be aware of what rights are given to children.







Working  
in Kuopio

# Help for Finding a job

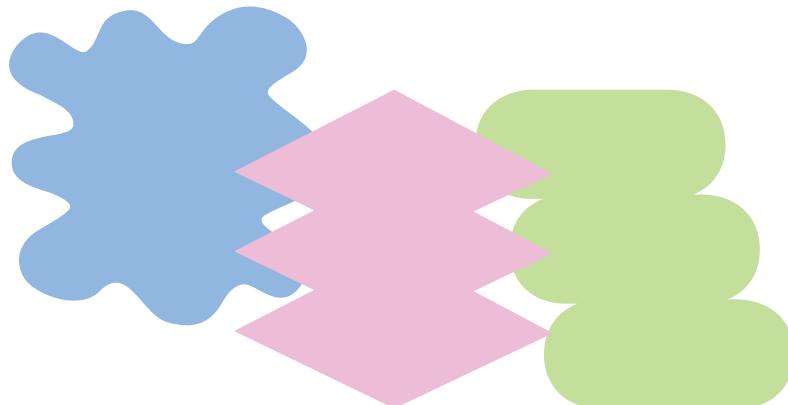
**InfoFinland and Work in Finland are useful resources for finding information about working in Finland.**

Moving to a new country and finding work is challenging, so the City of Kuopio provides support for job-seekers. **TyöNavigaattori** provides guidance for job seekers and offers services to help you in your job search. They are located at Asemakatu 7, Kuopio

**International House Kuopio** helps newcomers to Kuopio and companies wanting to work with international talents. They hold different events that are useful to internationals in Kuopio.

Some services provided by the City of Kuopio:

- **Digiparkki** is a service provided by TyöNavigaattori where you can receive help with creating CVs, job applications, and any other computer and job search related tasks. Please verify if you are eligible to attend Digiparkki before attending this service. It is possible that this service is applicable only to job seekers.
- **Guidance counsellors** help you when you are considering education to improve your skills.
- At the **Financial Clinic** anyone who is having financial challenges can get help from experts.
- **Ohjaamo** is a service for young people between the ages of 18 – 30, offering advice to job seekers.



# The Hidden Job Market

Be aware that in Finland the hidden job market is just as important as the visible job market. Often job opportunities are not advertised, and companies often hire through their networks. For the jobseeker this means that rather than simply applying on job sites, they must actively seek to create professional networks as these are often essential in helping you find a job.

LinkedIn is very popular in Finland and recruiters frequently use it. As a jobseeker in Finland, learning how to use LinkedIn can benefit your career.

Voluntary work can be useful as a stepping-stone into working life. It can help you build your network, gain experience in Finland and possibly be an opportunity to improve your Finnish skills. You can find opportunities to volunteer in Kuopio on the Vapaaehtoistyö website. See the Leisure time section for more ideas about volunteering in Kuopio.

Networking is crucial and there are many opportunities for this in Kuopio. Keep your eyes open for events on LinkedIn or events run by organizations such as Business Centre North Savo or Hub Panastamo.

Job Market Finland also has tips for finding a job which provides guidance with application documents such as CVs and cover letters. Digi-parkki is also available to help should you require further assistance.



# Useful Jobsites

**Job Market Finland** allows you to search for jobs according to specific criteria, even allowing you to search for jobs where English is spoken.

**Jobs in Finland** also has English speaking jobs. It is part of the Finnish government's Talent Boost program.

**The Hub** gives information about jobs in start-ups.

**The European Employment Services Cooperation Network EU-RES** also has an area for jobseekers to look for jobs around the EEA and Switzerland.

**Opiskelija toihin** – is a website with jobs for students

**Duunitori** – is another useful website with a section on Jobs in English.

**Recruiting companies** working in Kuopio and North Savo area.



miro

Mitä meidän pitää  
käytävässä tehdä  
tavoitetilan  
teutumiseksi?

Seuraavat stepi  
steppaa?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

1) 2) 3)



# Employment Services

If you are unemployed you should register as a job seeker with Employment Services. Employment Services offer customers various services that support integration and employment. Find out more about the services available from the local employment office.

In Kuopio, the Employment Services TyöNavigaattori is located at

Asemakatu 7. You can visit them on weekdays between 8am and 4pm without an appointment. At this service point the customer can get help when starting their job search, preparing job applications, doing job searches or getting training and other aspects of the job search. After registering as a job seeker, you will be directed to become a customer of the Employment Services.

# Entrepreneurship

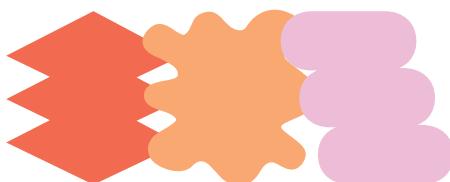
Finland is a great place for entrepreneurs. If you are interested in starting a business, there are many organizations in Kuopio which can assist you to develop your business idea.

**Business Kuopio** outlines compelling reasons why Kuopio is a great place for starting a business. Besides the fact that Kuopio is a great place to live, the region is also seeing a lot of economic growth and there is support for entrepreneurs. It is also home to different ecosystems which represent areas of focus and development.

**At TyöNavigaattori** you can get information and advice about entrepreneurship in a relaxed setting. They run an entrepreneur's living room where you can come for advice and learn about different kinds of entrepreneurship. It is open to everyone interested in entrepreneurship, even if you are just curious.

## **Date and time:**

Every other Thursday (odd weeks)  
13:00-15:00  
without an appointment  
(Asemakatu 7).  
Otherwise by appointment  
(Call +358 44 718 2512).



# Resources for Entrepreneurs

**Business Kuopio** coordinates all the services, expert help and networks intended for companies in the city. They also provide networks and partners that could be beneficial to your business. Business Kuopio also provides financial advice for setting up your business.

**The City of Kuopio's Business Development Services** page provides information for businesses that are new or those looking to expand. They also run the annual Tahko Ski Lift Pitching Contest, a start-up pitching contest which takes place at the Tahko Ski Resort.

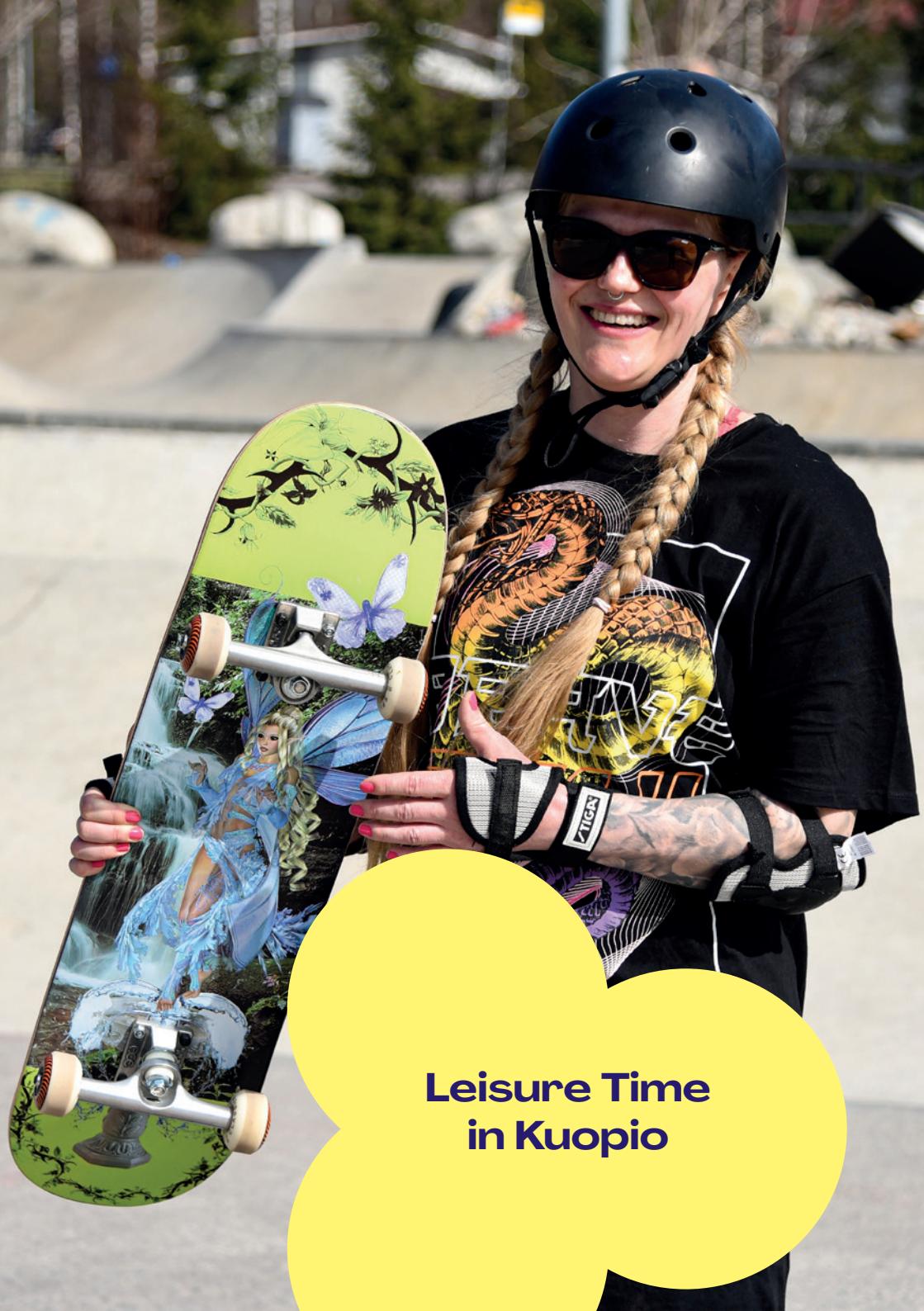
**The Finnish Enterprise Agency** has published a Guide to Entrepreneurship which provides guidance as you move from idea conception to running your own company. Contact the Kuopio branch for business advisory services, including assistance with applications for start-up money called Starttiraha (applied through Employment Services).

**The Business Center North Savo** is a service network in North Savo providing support for entrepreneurship and innovation, offering services like business coaching, idea development, and business studies. They host the Havuja Bootcamp which is open to anyone wanting to develop their business ideas.

**The Kuopio Region Chamber of Commerce** supports its' member organizations through advocacy, and internationalization and growth initiatives.







**Leisure Time  
in Kuopio**

# Sports

Finns value their hobbies and so there are many activities available for enjoying your free time. [InfoFinland](#) offers a guide to leisure activities all around Finland. On [Pinterest](#), you can also search for different activities around the country.

You can find all sports venues by category on the [Kuopio in motion page](#) on the City of Kuopio website.

## **Guidance for physical activity**

is available from the physical education instructors of the city of Kuopio. You can contact the Sports hotline by call or text the hotline at +358 44 718 2505 on Thursdays 12–14.

**Students** at higher education institutes can get access to sports facilities and gyms at a much lower rate through [Sykettä](#).

**Liikkis pass** is available for children and young people under the age of 20. This allows them unlimited access to swimming pools, gyms, as well as the Pujo first snow track.

**Children's Sports Card** (Lasten Sportkortti) is for Kuopio residents aged 7–12 and they can try activities three times for free.

**Adapted physical activities** are exercise and sports adapted to the needs of people with disabilities. The [Valtti program](#) is available to help young people 6 to 23 years old with special needs to find a sport they can participate in. [The Vauhtil project](#) is for children under 16 years old.



# Different Activities

**Winter outdoor activities** - in Finland are long but there are still plenty of activities to enjoy. The Kupo-Tahko webpage has information of wonderful things to do, see, eat all around Kuopio. Keep an eye on the Kuopio International page for information on events during winter too.

**Nature and camping** are possible all year round in Kuopio. You can enjoy hiking, birdwatching, fishing, and many other activities. Check out InfoFinland's page about everyman's rights and other must-know information about outdoor activities in Finland.

**Finnish libraries** are about more than just books and literature. Instead, they also offer many other services. Library cards are free and all you need to do is show some identification and provide your address. For instance, they hold language cafes at libraries, and you can rent out meeting rooms cheaply, borrow games, print and access many other services at the library.

**Volunteering** - You could work as a volunteer in community centers, become a culture companion for the elderly or be a peer sports instructor through the City of Kuopio. You can also volunteer for the Finnish Red Cross or Vaapaehtoistyö.

**Theatre** - The main theatre in Kuopio is the Kuopio City Theatre but there are many other theatres. Some, such as the Minimi Dance Theatre are professional, while others are amateur theatre groups. **Movies and Photography** - There are a couple of movie theatres in Kuopio. The City of Kuopio owns Kino Kuvakukko, a movie theatre. Another option is Finnkino, which can be found all over Finland, and in Kuopio Finnkino Scala can be found at Ajurinkatu 16. Also, keep an eye out for film festivals that take place throughout the year. VB Photography centre also holds picture exhibitions.

**Dance** - There are also many opportunities to enjoy dance in Kuopio. For instance, the annual Kuopio Dance Festival (Kuopio Tanssi ja Soi), which is held in the summer.

**Food** - The Taste Savo website gives you a guide to local food, restaurants and food experiences in Kuopio. SATOA Kuopio food festival allows you a taste of different food from the local area and is held in Kuopio in summer.



# Media & Holidays in Finland

## Newspapers

YLE is the state-owned media company that provides news in a few different languages. You can read the news in English online on the YLE website.

## Radio

YLE has radio programmes in English. Yle Mondo radio channel is a multilingual round-the-clock radio channel.

## Television

You can watch Finnish TV series online at YLE Areena.



## Public Holiday and Traditions:

### Shrovetide (Laskiainen)

is about 6 weeks before Easter. This is celebrated by eating laskiaispulla and going sledding.

### Easter (Pääsiäinen)

is a public holiday and is celebrated as both a pagan and religious holiday

### May Day (Vappu)

the 1st of May is a big holiday in Finland as people celebrate the beginning of spring in many ways.

### Midsummer (Juhannus)

is celebrated throughout the Nordics and many Finns spend this time at their cottages.

### Independence Day (Itsenäisyyspäivä)

is a public holiday celebrated on the 6th of December.

### Christmas (Joulu)

is celebrated on Christmas Eve when families open presents, drink glögi, have Christmas dinner and even go to sauna

### New Year (Uusivuosi)

is usually celebrated in a similar way to other countries, with parties and fireworks.

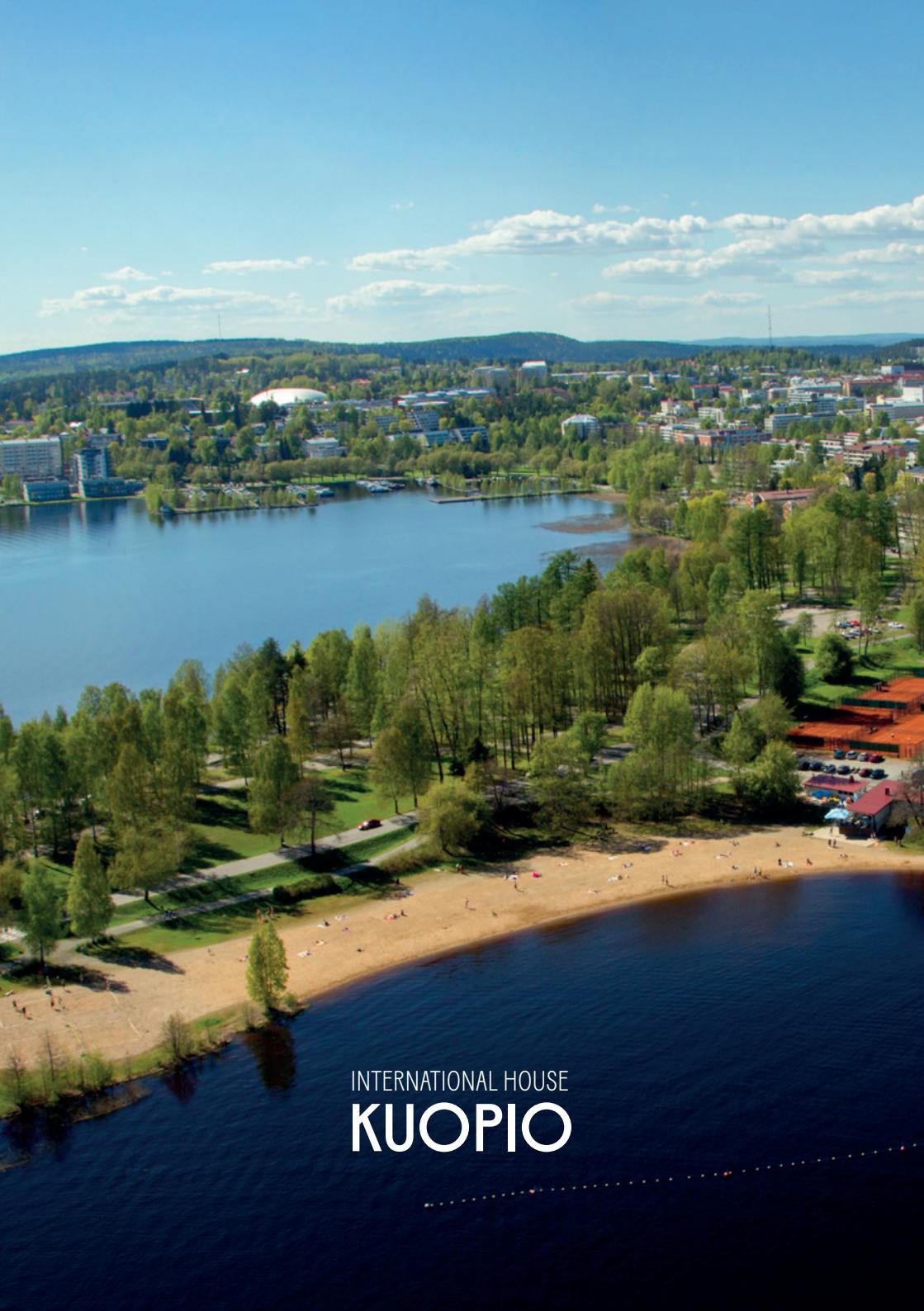
# Post Offices

Posti is the main Finnish postal service. They deliver mail and parcels, and their services can be easily accessed online through [OmaPosti](#), which can be used either as an app or online. Finland does not have stand-alone post offices but instead Posti service points can be found at different locations. You can check [here](#) for the Posti service point nearest you.

You can also clear items purchased, or gifts received online [through Posti](#). For items above a certain amount, you have to go through customs clearance with the [Finnish customs service](#). Note that goods that you bring when you are moving to Finland are classified as [removal goods](#) and the process is different from goods purchased or received as gifts.





An aerial photograph of a town situated on the shore of a large lake. In the foreground, a sandy beach is dotted with people and umbrellas, bordered by a line of tall evergreen trees. Beyond the beach, a paved path leads into a park area with more greenery. The town itself is built on a hillside, with numerous houses, apartment complexes, and industrial buildings visible through a dense cover of trees. In the far background, more hills and mountains are visible under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds.

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE  
**KUOPIO**