



HEL7W0626-71

CIRCULAR NOTE

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs present their compliments to the Diplomatic Missions, Consular Posts and International Organizations accredited to Helsinki and have the honour to inform them of the following:

There will be changes in the issuing of a Finnish driving licence to members of Missions with effect from the beginning of next year. As from 1 January 2016 the competent authority to issue a Finnish driving licence will be the Finnish Transport Safety Agency (Trafi) instead of the Police. A new application form (Driving licence permit for applicants with a foreign driving licence) will be introduced on the same date.

The Protocol Services of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs request the Missions to pay attention to the following instructions that will be valid as from 1 January.

VALIDITY OF FOREIGN DRIVING LICENCES IN FINLAND

Driving a motor vehicle in Finland is only permitted with a valid driving licence. Trafi gives advice of the validity of foreign driving licences in Finland.

A driving licence which has been issued in an EU Member State or in Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway shall, as a rule, entitle the holder to drive a motor vehicle also in Finland (equivalent to the category for which it is indicated to apply). The licence holder must be at least 18 years old. The renewal of these driving licences is taken care of by the domestic authorities of the licence holder.

A national driving licence, together with an international driving permit or with a translation of the driving licence into Finnish or Swedish, which has been issued by a country that has acceded to the Geneva or Vienna Convention on Road Traffic, shall, as a rule, entitle the licence holder to drive a motor vehicle in Finland for the time of the person's posting in Finland. The driving licence must be in agreement with the above mentioned Conventions and the person must fulfil the age requirement set in Finland for a similar licence.

Other foreign driving licences do not entitle the licence holder to drive a motor vehicle in Finland unless otherwise is provided in international agreements.

OBTAINING A FINNISH DRIVING LICENCE

On the basis of a certificate issued by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Finnish Transport Safety Agency issues a Finnish driving licence to a foreign member of a mission who has been assigned to a duty to Finland and to his/her family members, who have a foreign driving licence, without requiring a new driving test.

To obtain a Finnish driving licence, a person who holds a valid national driving licence which does not entitle the person to drive a motor vehicle in Finland must submit the following documents to the Protocol Services:

- a verbal note from the Mission including a request for the change of a foreign driving licence to a Finnish one
- an application form duly filled in
- a Finnish medical certificate
- two photographs attached to the application form (NOT with staples or a paper clip). The photographs must comply with the requirements set down by the Finnish authorities (http://www.poliisi.fi/passport/passport_photo_instructions)
- the original driving licence (with a translation in case the driving licence includes other than Latin alphabets).

Another foreign driving licence than the person's national driving licence can be changed to a Finnish driving licence if the competent licence authority of the sending state confirms that the person does not possess a national driving licence.

THE APPLICATION FORM

The application form must be duly completed. Uncomplete application forms will be returned to the Mission.

It is necessary to include the contact information of the applicant (telephone number and e-mail address) in the application form. However, it is not necessary to certify in the form that the applicant has a minimum of six months' experience of driving in Finland.

The applicant must sign the form in the two boxes as indicated in the form, using a black ballpoint pen (sharpness 0,8 mm).

Application forms are available at the customer service points of Ajovarma (www.ajovarma.fi → choose "Palvelupisteet"). The forms are not available on the Internet.

THE CONTACT INFORMATION OF TRAFI

The Protocol Services will forward the application together with the enclosures to Trafi. The original national driving licence will be returned to the Mission by the Protocol Services.

The Finnish driving licence may be collected at the customer service point of Trafi in Kumpulantie 9, 00520 Helsinki (from Monday to Friday between 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Trafi will inform the applicant with an e-mail message or a text message (SMS) when the Finnish driving licence can be collected. The person must prove his/her identity when collecting the Finnish driving licence.

When a Finnish driving licence is granted, the foreign driving licence of the person is deposited in the custody of Trafi for the period of time the person will stay in Finland. The foreign driving licence will be returned upon the person's final departure from Finland. It can be collected from the customer service point of Trafi.

It is necessary to inform Trafi in advance of the person's intention to collect the foreign driving licence to the below-mentioned e-mail address of Trafi. The Finnish driving licence must be returned to Trafi at the same time. This concerns also those foreign driving licences that are in the possession of the Helsinki Police Department at the moment.

The contact information of Trafi in issues related to foreign driving licences is ajo-oikeudet@trafi.fi

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs avail themselves of this opportunity to renew to the Diplomatic Missions, Consular Posts and International Organizations accredited to Helsinki the assurances of their highest consideration.

Helsinki, 29 December 2015



To
The Diplomatic Missions, Consular Posts and International Organizations
accredited to Helsinki