

Finland as the company’s operating environment

4.12.2023

In Finland, the company’s operating environment differs probably very much from what you have used to know in your home country if you are not from the European Economic Area (EEA). This article is targeted to give you some basic information on how to get started, and what you should know before you can register your company in Finland.

Read the text carefully and go with your first steps according to SeAMK Y-Zone Start a Business -Path. We offer you tools and support for developing and starting a business. After our first entrepreneurial steps at SeAMK Y-Zone, you are ready to take contact our local business association Into Seinäjoki. (Into Seinäjoki.)

Business plan gives you the headlines from your important topics

The very first step is to become familiar with your business idea. What are you selling? To whom are you selling? How are you selling? Many ready platform guides guide you to write down your business plan. Very often, the table of contents contains a title that points out some basic information about your business. There are needs also basic information about you and your business partners if you have any. For example, on Yritystulkki’s Business plan (i.a.) we do find a document platform for Business plan as well as the Memory list for the new entrepreneur. These kinds of tools are very valuable for every beginner entrepreneur. The Memory list for the new entrepreneurs is valuable to go through. The list is divided into three parts. In the first part, there are tasks before registration application. On the second part there are tasks after registering and on the third part of the list are tasks after the beginning of entrepreneurship.

The very first (Memory list for the new entrepreneur) recommends creating a business plan and the second task is to do all economical calculations. Economic calculations are essential before getting started. When you make financial calculations, you can assess the profitability of your company.

Professions and services in Finland which are subjected to license

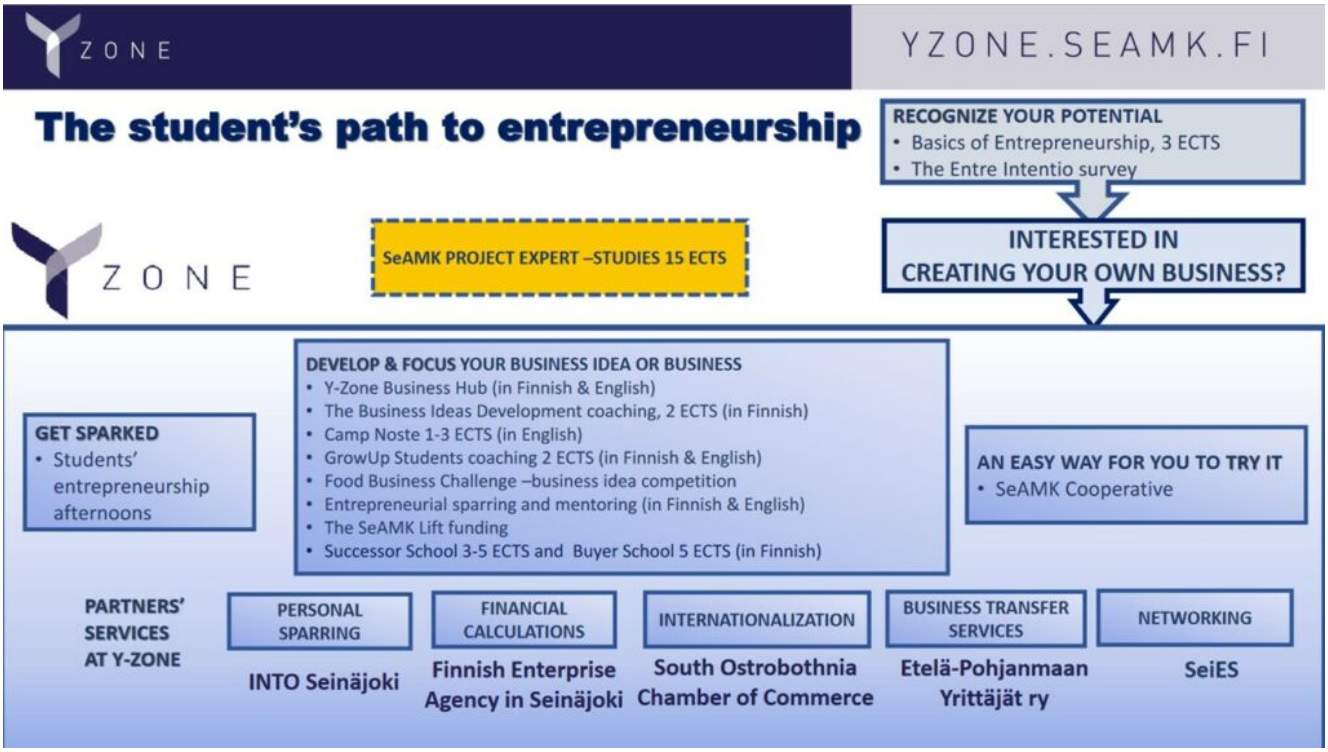
Note that we do have many professions and services in Finland which are subject to license, or you are obligated to give a notice to an authority before starting your business. The list of determining whether a business is subject to permit is in Elinkeinotoimintalaki 565/2023 there are English translations of this Act, and it is called the Enterprise Act (565/2023). (That act was former called Laki elinkeinon harjoittamisen oikeudesta 122/1919.) The Act contains provisions on the right of a trader to engage in business activities. You need example a permit or notification if you are thinking of doing something related to food. Further information you find out Finnish Food Authority/Food sector.

In the Enterprise Act (565/2023) the second section is statutes a right to engage in business activities. There are great rights to engage in business activities if a natural person or corporation our foundation is from EEA. The third section is important if the entrepreneur is not from EEA. In that case, the right to engage in business activities under a license granted by the Finnis Patent and Registration Office (Trade Register 15.8.2023). For further information about residence permit, visit the Finnish Immigration Service. Note that you cannot get a residence permits only because you own a company. You must also work in the company in Finland. (Residence permit).

Centre for Economic Development, Transport, and the Environment (ELY Centers) have three areas of responsibility. The areas are first Business and industry, labor force, competence, and cultural activities, second transport and infrastructure, and third environment and natural resources. (ELY Centers). They do very often offer services for starting a business. On Seinäjoki area we do have Uusyrityskeskus Neuvoa-antava (Uusyrityskeskus Neuvoa-antava). They do offer counselling and assistance for aspiring entrepreneurs in very practical matters when comes to starting a business here.

What we can offer at SeAMK

At SeAMK your process as an entrepreneur looks like how it is presented in Picture 1. The student’s path to entrepreneurship.



Picture 1. The student's path to entrepreneurship. (SeAMK Y-Zone, i.a.)

If you are an international student and you have recognized your entrepreneurial potential, you can contact Senior Lecturer Margit Mannila by sending an email to her. She can discuss about your topic and counsel you for your next steps on your entrepreneurial path.

Y-Zone Business Hub (SeAMK) offer you room to develop your business idea while completing your degree. You can also develop your current business if you already are an entrepreneur. Elina Ojala helps you with Business Hub agreement.

We can also offer you SeAMK Cooperative. Cooperative is entrepreneurship with a community. It is commonly called light entrepreneurship. This is a clever solution when you want to test your business idea in practice. (SeAMK Cooperative.) Elina Ojala is the coordinator.

Seinäjoki Entrepreneurship Society – SeiES ry is a multidisciplinary non-profit association for students of higher education in South Ostrobothnia. Their vision is to offer a platform for dreams, innovations, and self-development. They also cooperate with local companies and organizations to inspire, support, and encourage students for an entrepreneurial mindset and develop skills needed in entrepreneurship and career. (SeiES ry.)

GrowUp Students coaching is organized once a year. You can earn 2 ECTS credits and 8 participants are selected for the coaching by their sales pitch. (GrowUp Students.) This event is a chance to get feedback from talented business professionals.

Camp Noste is a week-long workshop to clarify and accelerate your business idea. It also gives you basic information about Finland as a business environment. You may get 1–3 ECTS based on your participation in the course.

What do you need to know?

When you have decided to a establish business in Finland you find out steps on how to make things happen on the Business Finland Site under the title: Starting up in Finland is simple – follow these steps. When you are ready to go, the local Business Center offer you help, if needed.

First, you need to open a bank account. You need it to handle your finances. Further information is available on infoFinland.fi.

When you are ready to go and register your business to PRH Trade Register (Trade Register), you need to have your business category code from Statistic Finland's sites. The category is called Statistics Finland Standard Industrial Classification TOL 2008.

Via YTJ (YTJ) you can check in your company name if it is available. With registration, you get exclusive rights to the business name. Others cannot use the same company name with the same main activity.

You also need to become familiar with our pension system. Pensions for the self-employed/YEL income is a thing, you must read. YEL income is based on your confirmed income from self-employment. So are your sickness allowances, the amount of your unemployment allowance and your daily allowances for parents. (Pensions for the self-employed.)

When you import or export you need to become familiar with Tulli, and Customs in English. Tulli for Business contains a lot of information about customs declaration, customs declaration fees, and other important things.

Accounting is one legal thing that needs to be taken care of when you start a business. To find out a good accountant is important. You can as the accountant if s/he is familiar with the business area you are going to operate. To search accountant on the Internet is maybe the easiest way to do it. If you have friends in the same business field, you are going to operate, you can ask for them some advice.

You need your accountant not only to be informed about how your business is running but also for taxation. Vero for Business and Corporations is an important site for entrepreneurs. Your accountant plays an important role from the point of view of taxation. S/he can help you to understand for example our value-added tax (VAT) and the financial statements that are needed to send for Trade Register annually. You also must pay taxes regularly. It is based on an estimate of taxable profits.

When you are ready to go on

When you are ready to register your business, you do it in the Trade Register. The Finnish Patent and Registration Office offers the Set-up package for limited liability companies. The set-up package includes all the documents you need to form a limited liability company and notify the Trade Register. It includes a memorandum of association, articles of association, Start-up Notification Form Y1, Trade Register's Appendix Form 1, and the Personal Data Form.

Registration is done in Finnish or Swedish. The set-up package can be a helpful tool for you to understand

what information you must give.

We all wish you passion to your process. Hard work, entrepreneurial attitude, and positive incidents on your path to becoming an entrepreneur.

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Dr Margit Mannila is a lecturer, Ph. D (Econ.) at SeAMK, who is particularly enthusiastic about entrepreneurship and environmental law. Mannila's passion is learning new things. She also likes to structure things by writing.

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