

# Preparing

**Getting ready to resettle**



Before you leave, some preparation needs to be done. In addition to your luggage, you must prepare mentally for your trip.

**In this module, you will learn about:**

- How to prepare for a permanent move
- What are the most important things to take with you
- How to prepare for your integration
- What is a cultural shock and how to deal with it

Read about this module at  
[mof.fi/sections/preparing/en](https://mof.fi/sections/preparing/en)  
or scan the QR code below



Find this module online at  
[mof.fi/exercises/preparing/en](https://mof.fi/exercises/preparing/en)  
or scan the QR code below



# Preparing for a permanent move

Let's read the following text.

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As a quota refugee you and those included in your submission file have been granted refugee status, continuous residence permits, and the right to work in Finland. It is important to discuss with the members of your family about the prospect of a permanent move and its meaning, and it is good to prepare for the trip together. Ahead of you there is a new living environment and new people with different customs and habits, and who will talk to you in a new language.

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Discuss with your family or colleagues about the following questions. If one of your family members does not know how to write, you can also help them.

1. When you move to Finland, what do you want to achieve? Are you looking to raise a family? Earn money? Have stability and peace of mind? Ensure education opportunities for yourself or your family? Something else?

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2. What are you willing to do to achieve these goals? Are you willing to learn a foreign language? Are you willing to do your best to integrate a new society? Something else?

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- Your resettlement to Finland is the beginning of a new phase in life. Do your best to make your new life good and rewarding.

3. Based on your answers above, write a letter to a friend or a family member to tell about why you want to go to Finland, what you are going to do in there, and what you are willing to do in order to succeed. Include as many details as possible.

A large, light blue scroll-shaped writing area with horizontal lines for text. The scroll is unrolled, showing a wide surface for writing. The top and bottom edges are rounded, and there are small grey tabs at the top and bottom left corners, suggesting the scroll is being held open.

- People change, and you are not an exception. After your resettlement to Finland, you will also change. At certain times, you may feel lonely and forget the reasons why you made some decisions; this letter can help you remember some of these reasons.

# Travel documents and other certificates

The lesson page, which is accessible through the link found at the beginning of this chapter, contains information about travel documents, school and work certificates, as well as medicine prescribed by the doctor. The paragraphs below are only an extract of the page. Let's read them.

Remember to take with you all existing travel documents and identification papers. Original documents help in the registration process, and later on, in getting the new travel documents.

It is important that you take with you all the original certificates related to education and work. It is good to notarize the certificates by a notary and, if possible, to translate them to English already in the country of departure.

In the first interview at the health centre, the public health nurse will go through the history of your earlier illnesses, medication, and vaccinations. Therefore, it is important to take with you the old prescriptions, doctors' statements, and vaccination cards from your country of departure. These will help speed up the process of finding correct treatment and medication in your new municipality of residence. You should also take with you a month's supply of your obligatory medication.

1. Now that you have read the text, do you have something similar in mind that you are planning to take with you from your current location? Let's use the list below as a helpful reminder. Check the items that you will take and write down other similar and important stuff.

| Item                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Notes |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Travel document          | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |
| School certificates      | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |
| Work certificates        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |
| Medication               | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |
| Medical certificates     | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |
| Family photos            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |
| Other personal documents | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |
|                          | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |
|                          | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |
|                          | <input type="checkbox"/>            |       |



- Documents concerning your medical history and your education and work history, as well as other official documents are very important. Make sure to take them with you.

# Education and job seeking plan

Upon arriving to your home municipality, you will start your integration plan. Let's read the text and answer the questions to find out more about it.

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To work in Finland, immigrants usually need to go through the integration training and to get further education in Finland. To ensure finding the appropriate education in Finland, you should do a preliminary plan for further education and work already in your current place of residence. In your plan you should include where, when, and what you have studied, which degrees you have gained, and where you have worked. You should also write down your own special skills and your personal assessment regarding what kind of work you would fit into. It is also very useful to make a resume which lists your skills and experience. You can find tips on making a resume on the internet.

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1. Do you believe you are ready to go through more education in Finland? Why?

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2. What would your plan include? Read the questions from the text and answer them.

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3. Write which skills you have and in what kind of work you believe you would fit.

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Soon after the move to Finland children are placed in preparatory classes for immigrant children that prepare them for comprehensive education. It is useful that parents prepare their children to face the new school environment. You can get information about the Finnish school system through the language and links sections on the [mof.fi](http://mof.fi) website.

4. Have you discussed with your family about each person's plan, including your children? What did you discuss?

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5. Check the links section from the Moving to Finland website.



- Each person will have their own education and employment plan.
- Your own plan is your map for succeeding in Finland.
- Start thinking about what you hope to achieve.

# Mental preparation for the move

1. What do you hope to gain in Finland? What are you afraid of losing? In the following exercise, there are some points that might concern you. Read them and sort them into things you hope to gain, things you are afraid of losing, or things you do not think will change or do not interest you.

Friends

Piece of mind

Change in daily habits

Learning a language

Making a new family in Finland

New culture

Religious freedom

Contact with family in home or current country

Forgetting a language

Employment

Weather

Stability

Heathcare

Wealth

| 😊 Hope | 😞 Fear | 😐 No change |
|--------|--------|-------------|
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|        |        |             |
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2. Add any other things that come to mind, whether to gain, to lose, or to remain as they are.  
 3. How do you feel about the table? Do you see that there is more fear or more hope?  
 Circle the most important hope and the worst fear you have.

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4. Do you think you are ready for the changes that will happen in your living environment? Do you see the positive side of these changes? What kind of change do you think you will go through after moving to Finland?

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# Adjusting to a new culture

**In Finland, women and men, young and old, immigrants and Finns, are considered equal.**

In the following pages, there are a few pictures of people. Let's take a look at the pictures first and then read the questions.

1. What are the women and men doing in the pictures?

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2. What do you think of the pictures "a" and "b"?

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3. Are there pictures that might represent you? Why?

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4. Are there pictures that do not represent you? Why not?

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5. Find pictures that represent each of the following statements in your opinion.

a. A family can be composed of a man and a woman.

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b. A family can be composed of a single parent.

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c. A family can be composed of two people of the same sex.

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d. Women can do all kinds of work.

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e. Men do house work and take care of the children.

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f. Men can do all kinds of work.



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**g.** People can express their opinions freely.

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**h.** There are also homeless and poor people in Finland.

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**i.** Old and young people in Finland can both enjoy life.

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**j.** Foreigners and Finns, men and women work together in the same space.

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**k.** Everyone, regardless of age and gender, have the right to choose what they wear and what they do as long as it is within the limits of the law.

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**l.** Religious freedom is respected.

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**m.** Anyone can practice sports in Finland.

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**n.** There are also people with disabilities in Finland.

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**6.** If you meet someone who does not agree with your religious or political views, what would you do?

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**7.** As a foreigner in Finland you will be part of a minority. How do you feel about that?  
What efforts will you make to connect with Finns?  
What efforts will you make to connect with other groups?



- Equality is one of the most important values in the Finnish society.
- Discrimination based on gender, background, religion, sexual orientation, or any other factor, is prohibited by law.





- Women and men participate equally in all aspects of life.
- Women of all ages have an active role outside the home. It can be related to hobbies, studies, work or something else. Women and their families should be prepared for new roles.

8. Read the following statements and write whether you agree with them or not?  
Explain why.

a. Sexual harassment is a crime.

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b. Wearing short clothes does not mean women can be harassed.

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c. Domestic violence can happen in all types of families – rich, educated, and poor.

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d. Women contribute to the economy when they work outside the house.

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e. Only certain cultures or religions are aggressive towards women.

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- Women and men are equal.
- Women have the right to work, study, and live independent lives.
- Sexual harassment is always a crime.
- Violence is always a crime.
- No one – family members included – can be punished for their life choices, as long as they are within the Finnish law.

9. Let's take a look at the following tasks and read them. Discuss who does each task in your society or in your family? Now write on the table who you think does each task in Finland.

Cooking

Cleaning

Changing  
diapers

Paying rent

Fixing broken  
things

Drinking  
an alcohol  
beverage

Making coffee

Working  
outside  
the house

Picking the kids  
from school

Starting a family  
business

Working as  
a nurse

Working as  
a midwife

| Men | Women |
|-----|-------|
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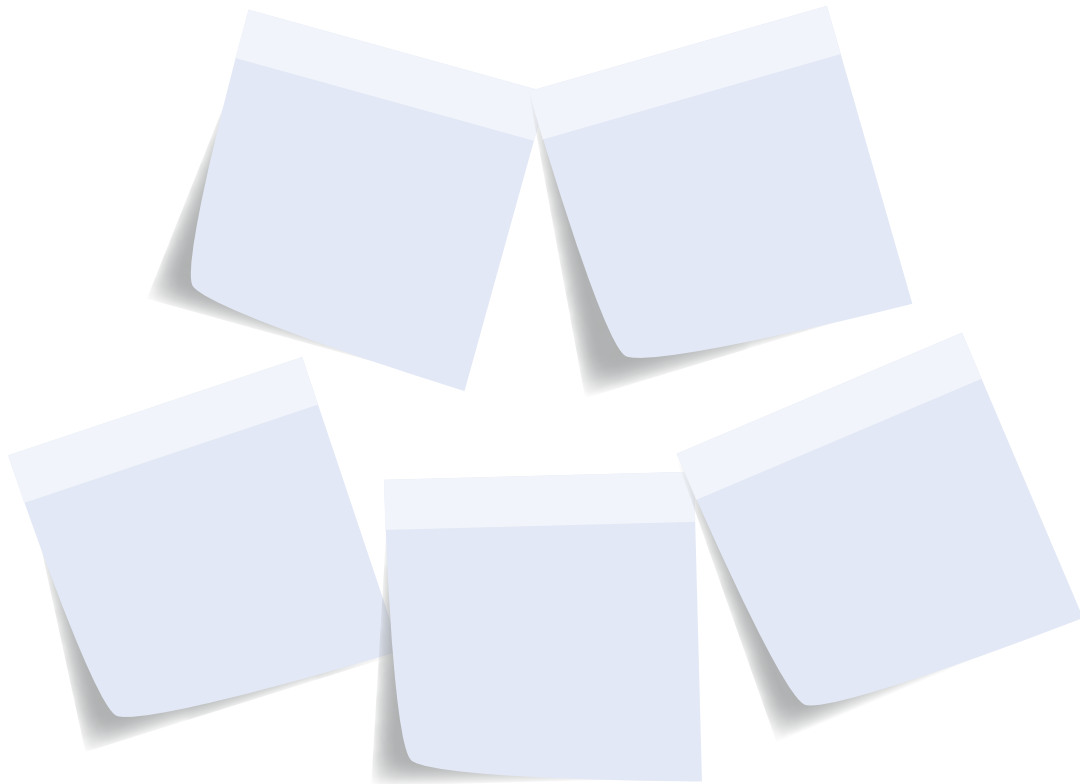


- In Finland, men and women share the responsibilities inside and outside the house.
- Keep an open mind; be ready to do many things that you have not been able to do, and many things that you were not ready to do.

10. Are you left-handed or right-handed? If you are right-handed, put the pen in your left hand, and if you are left-handed, put it in your right hand.

On each post-it note below, write one sentence three times. You can write the English sentence "I can write." or the Finnish sentence "Minä osaan kirjoittaa.". You can also choose a phrase using the alphabet that you are most familiar with. If you cannot write, draw three smiling faces, 😊😊😊, on each note.

Now choose a sentence and write it three times on each note, so fifteen times in total.



That was not so hard, wasn't it?

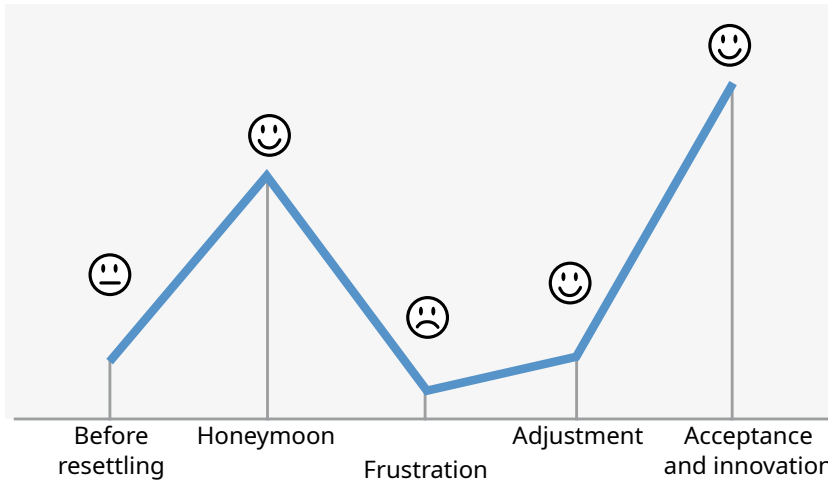
Remember that feeling, because **that is what learning Finnish and integrating into the Finnish society first feels like**. As you noticed, it was long but you were able to do it. That feeling of achievement is what you will feel once you manage to have your first conversation in Finnish: An amazing feeling.



- Integration is a long process and mental preparation for it is necessary.
- Your key to integration is the Finnish language, keeping an open mind, and willingness to learn new things.

In this exercise, you will read about cultural shock and how to deal with it.

**What is cultural shock? Cultural shock is the stress caused by the difficulty to understand how a new culture works. Not everyone goes through cultural shock, but it is good to know what it is and how to deal with it, if you ever experience it.**



**Bonus task!** You can read more about culture shock on Wikipedia at [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture\\_shock](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_shock) or by scanning the QR code.



**11.** On the graph, you can read the names of the four stages of cultural shock. Below, you find some short descriptions of these stages.

Now let's read the descriptions and match each one with the right stage.

a. Honeymoon

b. Frustration

c. Adjustment

d. Acceptance and innovation

w. You develop a deeper understanding on how to deal with the culture and start to adjust to the culture with a positive attitude.

x. You can fully participate in the new culture. You still keep parts of your old self but also learn many new things about your new culture and about yourself too, and experience multiculturalism in a personal manner.

y. Certain things may be perceived as different from your culture and you may feel offended or find them strange, possibly resulting in the excitement being replaced by feelings of disappointment and unhappiness. In Finland, this may occur when you realize that people always wish to maintain their personal space or that Finnish is hard to learn.

z. In the beginning, most people are excited about the new culture and eager to discover its aspects and to start chatting with people.

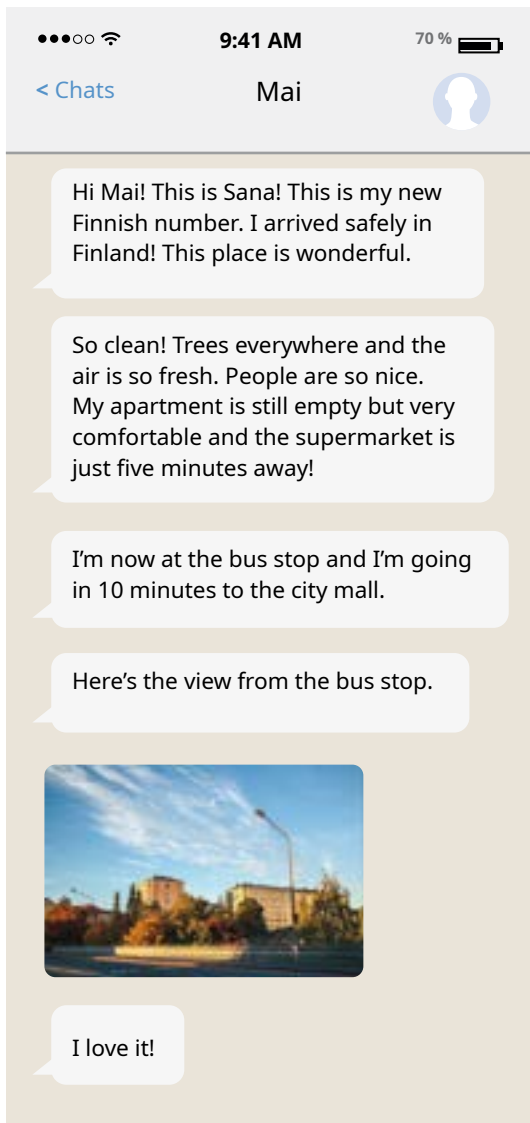


- Cultural shock is the stress resulting from not being able to understand how the new environment works.
- You can manage your cultural shock and integrate well.

Sana, her children and her brother Sam moved to Finland in 2015 as refugees. After moving to Finland, Sana and her family experienced the various steps of cultural shock. Sana has kept in touch with a friend from home and told her about what was going on in her life. Let's try to see what she and her family have been going through.

Let's read all the messages that Sana sent and answer the questions afterwards.

Message "a"



12. What stage was Sana going through on the message "a"?

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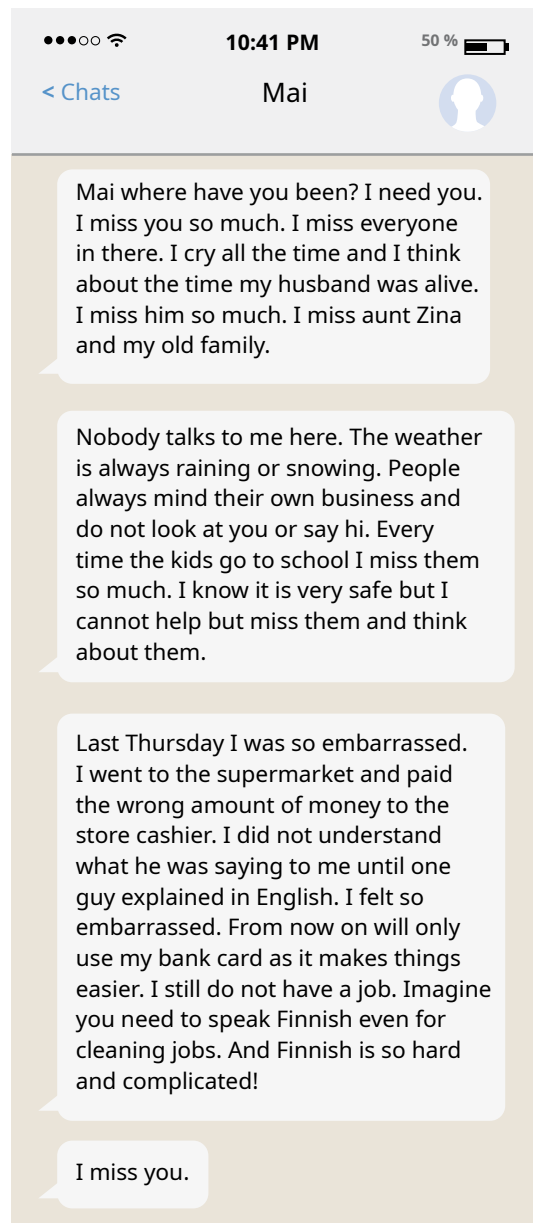


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Message "b"



13. What stage was Sana going through on the message "b"?

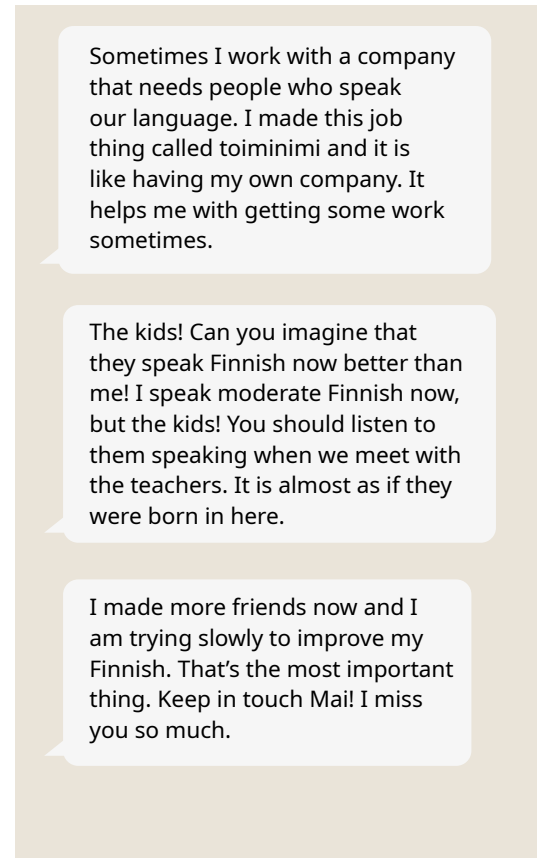
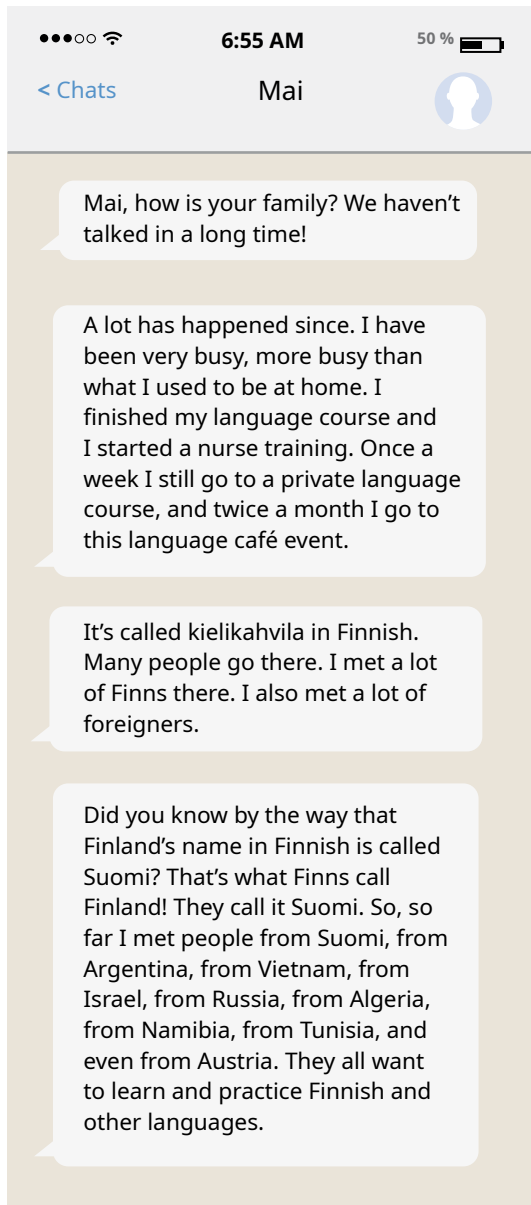
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## Message "c"



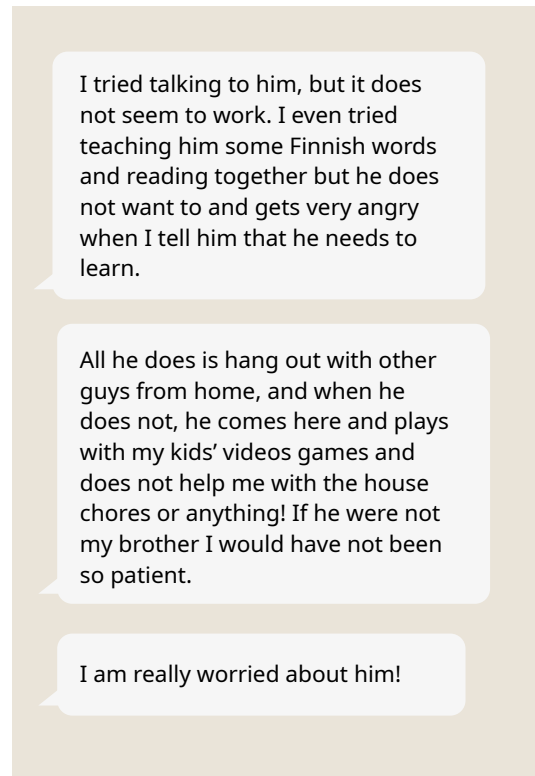
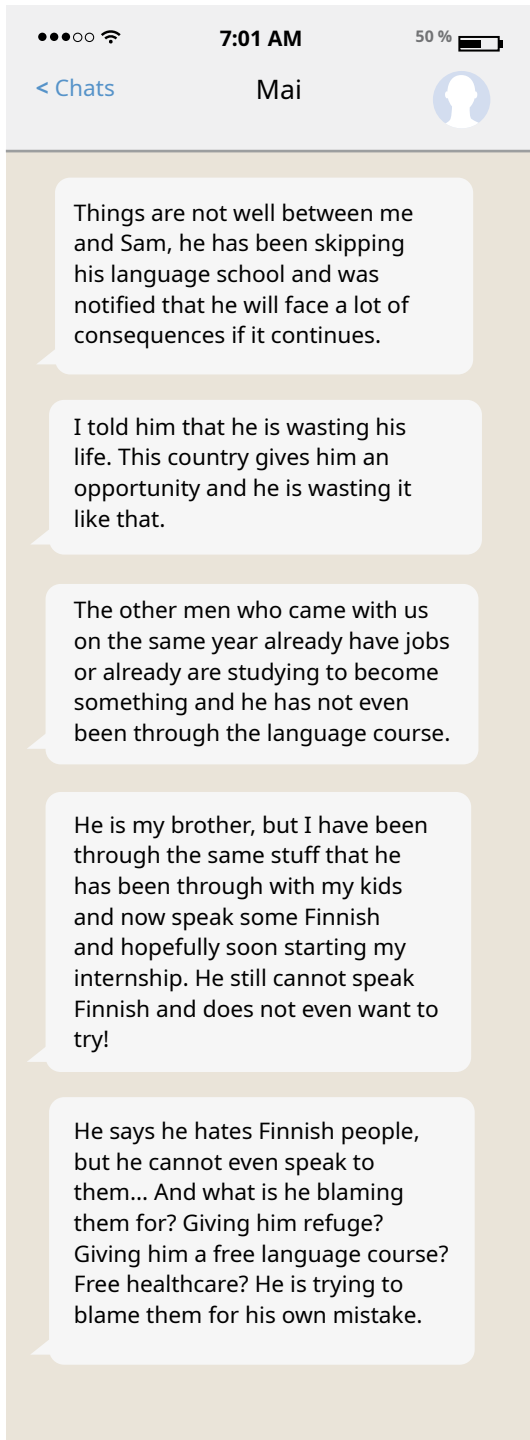
14. What stage was Sana going through on the message "c"?

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## Message "d"



15. What stage was Sam going through on the message "d"?


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## Message "e"

Message interface showing a conversation with Mai. The status bar at the top shows 9:12 PM and 80% battery. The header includes a back arrow, "Chats", the name "Mai", and a profile icon.

Guess who officially started her nurse job?



That's right! I am officially a nurse now.

We moved to a new apartment in a small town not far from a hospital where I found the job.

I'm trying to arrange for the children to move to another school. I am happy that the system in Finland gives me the possibility to follow what the children study.

I am thinking of buying a car. I already checked the advertisements and discussed with people in Finnish. I think many people think I am Finnish because Sana is close to the Finnish name Sanna. Actually many people call me Sanna instead of Sana. It was strange at first but now even I use it myself.

You know Finnish is hard but it is a nice language, and it makes sense once you get used to it.

I have been also selling some knitted scarfs by the way! You know the ones we used to make at home, but now I make them with Finnish colours. People seem to like them.

Even though I am selling them online, I have to inform the tax office.

Taxes are sacred here. Now I know how to do my tax announcement finally. It is really not that hard.

And after all, other people's taxes helped me study and become what I am today, so it's only fair.

In the meantime, I will keep working and enjoying what life brings.

It feels good.

16. What stage was Sana going through on the message "e"?

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17. Do you think Sana has integrated well into the Finnish society?

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18. Would you do something different if you were her?

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19. Based on what you read, what advice would you give someone who is going to move to another country permanently?

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- You have a personal responsibility regarding your integration in Finland.
- By learning Finnish, more opportunities for work and leisure will be available.

# Answers

## Preparing for a permanent move

1. The answers vary depending on your personal goals.
2. Keeping an open mind about how to achieve your goals is a must. In addition to learning Finnish, you will learn a lot of other things. Be prepared for a fruitful journey.
3. The answers vary.

## Travel documents and other certificates

1. The answers vary; however, you must remember that travel documents, certificates, and medication are essential. If you do not have a travel document, you will be provided one.

## Education and job seeking plan

1. You should be prepared to get further education in Finland. You would need to learn Finnish and may need to gain new skills.
2. The answers vary.
3. The answers vary. You should however keep an open mind about what kind of work you would do.
4. The answers vary.

## Mental preparation for the move

1. The answers vary depending on your personal preferences.
2. The answers vary depending on your personal preferences.
3. The answers vary depending on your personal preferences. Nevertheless, having a hopeful attitude can help you in better preparing for your resettlement.
4. The answers vary. In any case, be prepared that you would change and that you would learn a lot more.

## Adjusting to a new culture

1. The answers vary. In general, the pictures represent different people from Finland and elsewhere doing tasks that many do in Finland.
2. Picture "a" represents a team of people from different background working together. Picture "b" represents a woman from an immigrant background working.
3. The answers vary depending on your personal preferences. Keep in mind that each person is free to identify with whichever picture they choose.
4. The answers vary depending on your personal preferences. Keep in mind that each person is free not to identify with whichever picture they choose.
5. The answers can be found on the following table.

| <b>a</b> | <b>b</b> | <b>c</b> | <b>d</b>      | <b>e</b> | <b>f</b> | <b>g</b> |
|----------|----------|----------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|
| d   h    | i   j    | k        | b   m   p   t | i   j    | l   s    | f   g    |
| <b>h</b> | <b>i</b> | <b>j</b> | <b>k</b>      | <b>l</b> | <b>m</b> | <b>n</b> |
| c        | d   n    | a        | c   d   e   n | q        | o        | r        |

6. The answers vary. Keep in mind that personal beliefs are personal.
7. The answers vary; you should nevertheless keep a positive attitude about your life in Finland and know that your rights are guaranteed by law, and that your integration requires interacting with other Finns as well as other residents of Finland.
8. The answers can be found below.
- a. Sexual harassment and rape are crimes and should not occur at all.
  - b. Women are free to wear and do whatever they want within the limits of the law. Wearing something does not mean anyone wants to be harassed.
  - c. Domestic violence is not related to income. Domestic violence can happen in all types of families. Domestic violence is always a crime.
  - d. Women have the right to benefit from working and to benefit society as well. This also brings more stability and income to households and insures, in case a partner dies or is not present anymore, that women would not have to become dependent or resort to measures that they would not resort to otherwise.
  - e. Aggression towards woman transcends culture, religion, and ethnicity, although it varies in prevalence. Being from a certain culture or background is not in any case an excuse to be violent against women, children, or other people.
9. The answers may vary regarding who does what in your family, however in Finland, all those tasks are shared between the family members regardless of their gender. Keep in mind that as long as a person does not break the law, it is prohibited to forbid them from doing something they wish to do so.
10. Congratulations on finishing the exercise. You should have the same positive attitude about your resettlement to Finland.

11. The answers can be found on the following table.
- |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>a</b> | <b>b</b> | <b>c</b> | <b>d</b> |
| <b>z</b> | <b>y</b> | <b>w</b> | <b>x</b> |

12. In message "a", Sana was going through the honeymoon phase of the cultural shock.
13. In message "b", Sana was going through the frustration phase of the cultural shock.
14. In message "c", Sana was going through the gradual adjustment phase of the cultural shock.
15. In message "d", Sam was going through a frustration that lead to a complete dissociation phase of the cultural shock.
16. In message "e", Sana went through all phases of the cultural shock and was therefore able to reach the acceptance and innovate step, and be able to properly contribute to her society.
17. Sana has integrated well into Finland and into Finnish society.
18. The answers vary. Sana's example is nevertheless very good.
19. The answers vary. Keep in mind that focusing on learning Finnish is the key to properly integrate in Finland.