

The background of the entire page is a blue-tinted photograph of a group of people in a gymnasium. In the foreground, a man in a grey t-shirt is seen from the back, high-fiving a woman in a dark blue zip-up jacket. The woman is smiling and looking upwards. Other people are visible in the background, some also high-fiving. A basketball hoop is visible in the upper center. The overall atmosphere is one of celebration and teamwork.

MEMBER GUIDE

TRADE UNION OF EDUCATION IN FINLAND (OAJ)



OAJ



Get to know, participate & follow:

→ oaj.fi/en

→ Facebook / Twitter / Instagram @oajry



Contact

You can contact us by filling the online contact form at yhteydenotto.oaj.fi/index?lang=en

We also assist our members through our free-of-charge telephone service lines:
Membership information and union fees: +358 (0)800 418 401
Employment terms: +358 (0)800 418 402
Legal protection: +358 (0)800 418 403

In matters related to earnings-related daily allowance and job alternation compensation, for instance, contact the Teachers' Unemployment Fund directly at opetk.fi/en.

Join the union!

→ oaj.fi/en/join

You can get help with filling the membership application from the OAJ contact teacher of your workplace or by calling our membership services, tel. +358 (0)800 418 401.



Many people think that an individual teacher cannot impact many things. But by uniting, we at OAJ have the chance to make an impact. Teachers do not always see eye to eye on matters, and a union is necessary in order to reach agreements. What the teachers' goals and interests are in each specific situation is defined by the union members together. Our mission is to find common ground and compromise. That is how we can change the things that need changing. ”

Thang Nguye
special class teacher, OAJ member



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1

Being a member is worth it



Together we are more.
Read more about why you
should join OAJ:
→ oaj.fi/en/membership

What have OAJ and other
trade unions achieved?
→ [oaj.fi/en/oaj/
about-oaj/results-of-
our-operations](https://oaj.fi/en/oaj/about-oaj/results-of-our-operations)

UNION MEMBERSHIP protects you in the working life. As a member, you are not left alone when you need help or advice. You have the support of our community of 116,000 members.

OAJ members are professionals in the fields of education, training and research, ranging from early childhood education to adult education and training. The Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ) protects the interests of its members. Out of the Finnish trade unions, OAJ is the only one to negotiate the conditions of teachers' employment relationships. Our high unionisation rate guarantees that the union is heard when it comes to education-related decision making. The values of fairness, openness and responsibility direct our operations.

Advocacy is your most important membership benefit. Our network of shop stewards, union operators, occupational safety and health representatives and other specialists supports the members also in difficult situations. There are numerous other benefits as well.

The Trade Union of Education in Finland OAJ is the professional organisation for those working in the fields of education, training, and research. Together we are more.

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We protect your interests

OAJ NEGOTIATES matters related to salary, working hours, and other conditions related to the employment relationships of education professionals. OAJ's most important duties include securing and developing the terms of employment relationships as well as overseeing that the agreed terms of employment relationship are adhered to all around Finland.

Collective bargaining advocacy includes supervision of the functionality of the members' pay and working time systems. We advise and train shop stewards and answer our members' questions. We inform members about the payment of wages, working hours, study leave, or family leave as well as job search and resignation, for instance.

OAJ defends the position of its members in the event of temporary layoffs or cutting down of resources. Without a united, strong and large opposing side, the employer can easily demand different kinds of things. OAJ's members are supported by their local shop stewards and, if necessary, the experts of labour market advocacy working at the OAJ office. You can find important information related to your work in our 'Pay, conditions & help' section, such as the salary counter and an employment contract template.



Information about the terms and conditions of employment and solutions for problematic situations:
→ oaj.fi/en/pay-conditions-help

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Security in the constantly changing working life



Information related to occupational well-being and unemployment security:

- oaj.fi/en/pay-conditions-help/occupational-safety-and-health
- oaj.fi/en/pay-conditions-help/well-being-at-work
- yhteydenotto.oaj.fi/index?lang=en
- opetk.fi/en

THERE ARE surprising working-life situations where advice and security are needed. OAJ has industry experts in local, regional and national levels working to protect its members. Reach out to your contact teacher or local association to find out who your shop steward and occupational safety and health representative are. OAJ experts also advise union members regarding their questions.

The employer is responsible for ensuring the health and safety, equality and occupational well-being of the personnel's working environment. The employee, on the other hand, is responsible for notifying their supervisor if they detect any shortcomings in the working conditions or face violent or threatening situations at work. In such an event, it is important to notify your own occupational safety and health representative to receive guidance and support.

After an incident, it is important to submit a notification as soon as possible. More information about occupational health and safety and instructions for submitting an OSH notification can be obtained from the OSH guide on the OAJ website.

Teachers' Unemployment Fund membership is included in the union fee of OAJ. Staff at the Teachers' Unemployment Fund are experts on the special features of the field of education and training.

Help for problematic situations

If you experience any work-related problems or have any questions, first contact your own supervisor. In matters related to the union and memberships, contact your workplace contact teacher.

IF THE MATTER IS NOT RESOLVED,
ask for help:

Shop steward

- ▶ working time and salary
- ▶ conditions of the employment relationship
- ▶ leaves of absence
- ▶ personnel administration and management
- ▶ essential changes to work
- ▶ fixed-term employment
- ▶ warnings and notices
- ▶ termination of employment and temporary layoff

Occupational safety and health representative

- ▶ rules on occupational safety and health
- ▶ occupational health care
- ▶ work-related stress
- ▶ matters related to occupational well-being
- ▶ changes to work or working conditions that impact health and safety

Local OAJ association (or other member association)

- ▶ resources of education and early childhood education
- ▶ local matters related to education
- ▶ initiatives to develop OAJ's operations
- ▶ association activities
- ▶ membership-related matters
- ▶ closure of schools



Professional legal protection

THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION or school is responsible for the psychological and physical safety of the study environment.

In the event of an accident, fingers are usually first pointed at teachers and principals. Parents are usually not directly demanding for the teacher to be sentenced; however, they might take the case to court in order to demand compensation. The court decides whether a person is guilty or not and bases its verdict largely on evidence.

In cases of serious damage, the consequences for the teacher might include termination of their employment contract, receiving a warning, having to pay for damages or being sentenced with criminal sanctions. The liability for damages usually falls on the education organiser, meaning that the damages are primarily paid by the employer.

After completing six months of membership, the members of OAJ have valid legal expenses insurance that recompenses the member's own legal costs and those of their opposing party in court cases related to working in the field of education in line with the terms of insurance.

Our legal services also provide advice for other legal questions related to education work, such as matters related to teacher's responsibilities and copyright.



OAJ's insurances and advice protect you in legal matters.
→ oaj.fi/en/benefits

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We impact decision making in the field of education, training and research

OAJ'S OBJECTIVE is to make Finland the best place in the world to teach, learn, and do research. We impact education policies in many different ways in order to reach this goal.

Education policy impacting slightly differs from labour market policy impacting in that OAJ is not a negotiating party and impacts decision making right at the preparation stage. We highlight the concerns and observations of teachers and promote their position when education reforms are being carried out. The voices of our members are important in this work. Through OAJ, the members have their voices heard in the decision-making related to their work.

In Finland, several same objectives are often shared by different parties when developing education policies. However, OAJ is the only operator defending the position of education professionals in matters related to reforms.

Our reform-related objectives are for teachers to always have enough resources and to get to keep their jobs. For instance, OAJ has impacted the decrees of the Act on Early Childhood Education and Care related to the necessary number of teachers and the competences required for teachers in the professional reform.

OAJ is a significant education policy impactor that is recognised internationally as well. The union's broad member base provides it with significant authority at the decision-making tables. Due to its responsible advocacy work, OAJ is regarded as a trustworthy operator. This helps our members' voices to be better heard when deciding for matters related to Finnish education, training and research.



Read more about OAJ's opinions and ways of impacting:

→ oaj.fi/en/policies

→ oaj.fi/en/news/opinions



Training and occupational information



OAJ organises training events for advocacy shop stewards and teachers in the beginning of their career:

→ oaj.fi/en/membership/oaj-trains-and-educates
→ oaj.fi/en/membership/oaj-trains-and-educates/nope-training

OAJ'S TRAINING promotes the advocacy skills of those working in the field as well as strengthens association activities and the members' own professional identity.

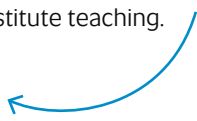
The experts of the OAJ office provide training to shop stewards, association presidents, occupational safety and health operators, regional operators and those taking part in the operations of OAJ and its associations. Remote training events and webinars are organised more and more often and the selection of training offered directly to members is growing in line with OAJ's members' wishes.

Entering working life and starting to work as a teacher is a big change.


OAJ offers the popular NOPE training to those beginning their professional life as a teacher. The training is intended for teachers who have worked in the field for less than five years and are under 35 years of age. The abbreviation 'NOPE' comes from the Finnish words nuori opettaja (young teacher).

OAJ's member associations organise training for their own employees and members. These local and regional member training events are intended for all members of the associations in question. Training is an important membership benefit.

OAJ's website contains a lot of information related to the daily lives of professionals working in the fields of education, training and research. You should also see the 'Pay, conditions & help' section of our website to have more information about matters related to agreements, working time, salary, holidays and substitute teaching.



Leisure time insurances and benefits




**Smile,
you're safe with
Turva.**

**TaskuTurva –
insurance coverage
always with you**

With TaskuTurva, the insurance coverage provided by your trade union and the travel insurance card that secures your travels are always with you. With the hospital search, you can find the contact information of a reliable doctor while abroad. Safe travels!

Download the TaskuTurva app from Google Play Store or App Store. Read more in Finnish at turva.fi/taskuturva.

Mutual Insurance Company Turva
www.turva.fi • Tel. 01019 5110



AS A MEMBER of the union, you are entitled to Turva's travel insurance, luggage and travel liability insurance and are also insured against accidents. Travel insurance also covers accompanying children under the age of 20 as well as accompanying close relatives living permanently in the same household as the insured. When attending OAJ's events, you are covered by the union insurance against any personal and material damage.

OAJ members are entitled to a discount on several holiday and recreational services. Discounts are offered by Holiday Club, various hotel chains and cruise lines as well as several other service providers.

Danske Bank offers financial benefits for taking out a mortgage or requiring investing services. You can save money in your everyday life with the petrol discount of ST1 stations. OAJ members get discounts from several publishing companies for magazines subscriptions and book purchases.

Your local and regional associations also offer leisure time recreational and event discounts.

As an OAJ member, you are entitled to enjoy the versatile membership benefits of the trade union confederation Akava. These benefits are included in the Member+ service. The service is available in Finnish.



→ oaj.fi/en/benefits

→ memberplus.fi



Participate and make a difference



As an OAJ member, you have many ways of impacting and improving the position of all teachers:

→ oaj.fi/en/oaj/about-oaj/council

→ oaj.fi/en/wedogood

OAJ WANTS to strengthen and increase participation and interaction. We use surveys to find out the opinions and wishes of our members and to direct our activities in line with the obtained information. We also use our different communication channels to find participants for our projects. You should actively keep an eye on our communication channels!

The most important decisions at OAJ are made by our members from all around Finland. All teacher groups have their representative in OAJ's Council and Executive Board, for instance. You can best get involved in making an impact by participating in the activities of your association. Active teachers are also needed at the national level. Our goal is to have more teachers to participate in the OAJ Council elections as candidates or voters. An OAJ representative has influence and is at the core of the Council.

OAJ improves the position of teachers and strengthens the rights of association operations in the world. We engage in solidarity and development work with Education International and the Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland SASK, for instance. The members of OAJ are welcome to join our network of solidarity work.



Teacher students



Channels for teacher students

→ sool.fi/in-english

→ [Facebook/Twitter/](#)

[Instagram: @sool_ry](#)

→ sool.fi/jasenelle/

[tyoelamaan](#)

→ oaj.fi/en/pay-conditions-help/career-guide

TEACHER STUDENTS CAN join the Teacher Student Union of Finland SOOL during their studies. SOOL takes care of the advocacy of teacher students on a national level and trains and unites all teachers-to-be. You can become a member through a member association. If a student cannot join any of the member associations, they can become an individual member.

Apart from unemployment security, the members of SOOL get the same membership benefits as actual OAJ members in addition to the membership benefits of their student association.

More instructions and information related to the student unemployment fund membership, substitute teaching, job search and entering working life can be obtained from the websites of SOOL and OAJ. A student who has worked as a substitute teacher for at least one term during their studies can become a member of OAJ directly. Once the OAJ membership begins, the membership of SOOL is automatically terminated; however, all membership benefits and the potential unemployment fund membership remain valid.

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Membership information and union payments

MAKE SURE that your information is up to date in the OAJ member register. Information about changes to home address, e-mail address or a change of employer, for instance, are not automatically updated in our membership service and need to be updated yourself.

Up-to-date information guarantees that you receive our electronic membership newsletters containing current information about the association and membership benefits. You can log in to the Omat tiedot section on our website to ensure that your information is up to date in our register. You can also check that your union fees have been paid.

Your union fee varies according to the membership payment of your own member association and is approximately 1.2 per cent of your gross earnings subject to tax. For instance, you will pay a fixed, lower union fee during parental or study leave.

You should make sure to pay your union fees in time because, for instance, the validity of membership benefits and receiving earnings-related daily allowance requires all your union fee payments to be up to date. If your employer deducts your union fees directly from your salary, make sure to check your pay slip to see that the fees have been deducted. If you notice any issues with the union fee payments, make sure to update your payments immediately or contact our member services.



Check that your information and union fee payments are up to date:

→ oaj.fi/en/membershipdetails
→ oaj.fi/en/unionfees

Who are we?

OAJ has 116,545 members (2021). Nine out of ten teachers have chosen OAJ membership. Each member belongs to their own member association.

OAJ member associations

OAJ-YSI and FSL

- OAJ General Education Teachers
- Teachers and head teachers of basic education, upper secondary schools and general adult education (adult education centres, night schools and folk high schools)
- 55,622 members

VOL

- Early Childhood Education Teacher's Union
- Early childhood education teacher and day-care center directors
- 13,499 members

OAO

- vocational teachers of OAJ
- Teachers, education supervisors, head teachers and supervisors of vocational institutions, adult education centres, universities of applied sciences, liberal adult education and basic education in arts
- 16,635 members

YLL

- Union for University Teachers and Researchers
- Teachers, researchers and education administrators working at universities
- 1,453 members

Opsia

- Association for experts in the education sector
- 128 members

Student members SOOL and FSLF

- teacher students
- 7,265 members

Retired Teachers in Finland

- 20,551 members

National Associations: oaj.fi/en/oaj/national-associations/

Webinars
EUR 40

Training
benefits
EUR 650

Travel
insurance
compensation
EUR 1540

Educa
trade fair
EUR 20

Member
events
EUR 50

Pay revision
EUR 1350

Member+
EUR 40

Earnings-
related
unemployment
allowance
EUR 3 016

Saving on
insurances
EUR 300

Hotel
discounts
EUR 80

ST1 petrol
benefit
EUR 20

Opettaja
magazine
EUR 95

Associations'
meetings
EUR 40

Benefits of
Danske Bank
EUR 200

Legal
protection
benefit
EUR 700

Holiday Club 's
holiday weeks
EUR 400

**By paying a few hundred
euros, you get membership
benefits worth
thousands of euros**

See what is included in the average
membership payment of EUR 450.
oaj.fi/en/membership-is-worthwhile

