

Education in Finland

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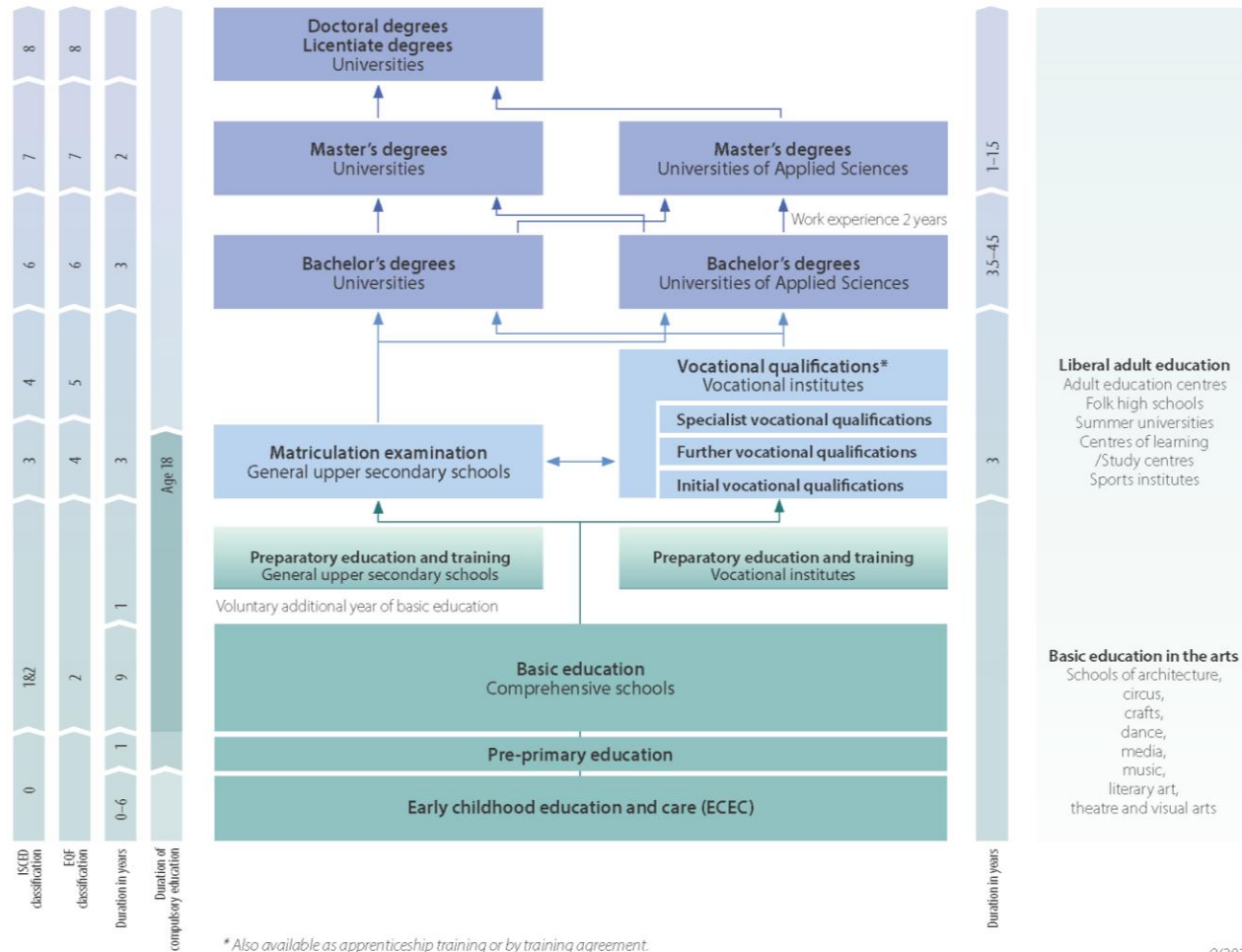


Flexible system

The education system

- gives each student great flexibility.
- Binding decisions are not expected to be made at an early stage.
- The road all the way to tertiary education is untracked, with none of the paths leading to a dead end.

EDUCATION SYSTEM IN FINLAND



Recent and ongoing reforms

Raising the leaving age in compulsory education to 18 to ensure that students have genuine opportunities to pursue further studies, and to continue upskilling during their working life.

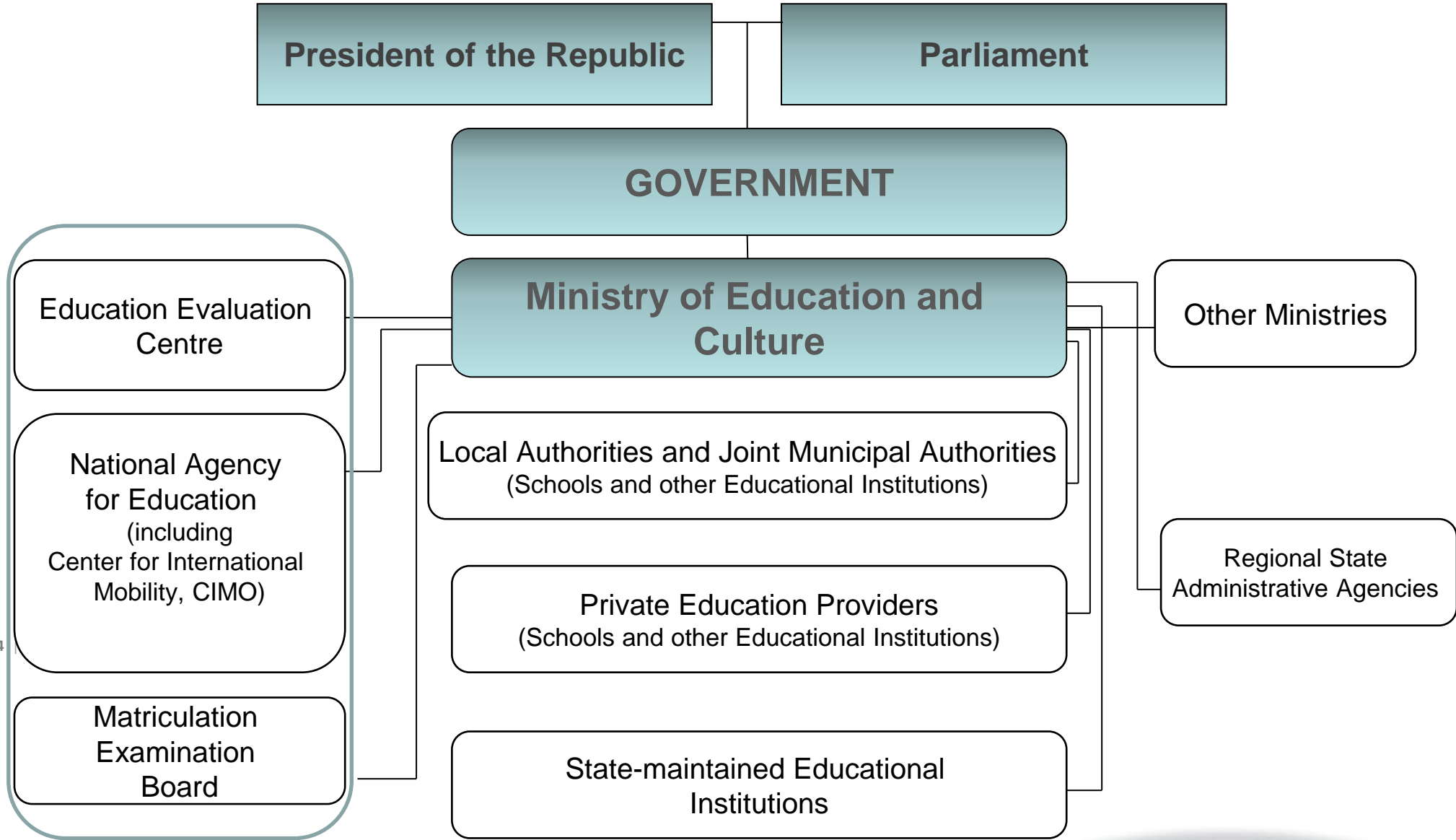
New **Education Policy Report** paves the way for equitable and high-quality education in the 2040s in Finland. The report outlines the goals, and the necessary changes to achieve them.

VET reform better responds to the needs of the working life, enhances lifelong learning. More individual learning pathways, competence development and skills for a good life.

National Core Curriculum for **pre-primary and basic education** was (renewed in 2014, implemented from 2016) emphasizes broad general knowledge and competence, more holistic approach.

NCC for **general upper secondary education** (2019 & 2021) promotes transversal competences, learning how to learn.

The **parliamentary reform of continuous learning** responds to the lifelong need for upskilling and reskilling



Two-tier national administration

Ministry of Education and Culture

- Education policy
- Preparation of legislation
- State funding

Finnish National Agency for Education

- National development agency
- National core curricula & qualification requirements (not higher education)
- Support for evidence-based policy-making
- Support for reform and development
- Services for learners
- Supporting internationalisation

Central steering, Local decisions

12.10.2023

National level

- Educational priorities
- Minimum time allocation
- National core curricula
- Size of state subsidies

Local level

- Educational priorities
- Local curricula
- Allocation of subsidies
- Class size
- Recruitment
- Teacher "evaluation"
- Quality assurance



Competent teachers

- On all school levels, teachers are highly qualified and committed
- They require Master's degrees, and teacher education includes teaching practice
- Teaching profession is very popular in Finland, and universities can select the most motivated and talented applicants
- Teachers work independently and have strong autonomy towards their work

Costs in Education

- Teaching
 - Accomodation and pupils travelling costs
 - Hot meals
 - Pupil/student counselling
 - Internal administration
 - Real estate
 - Miscellaneous (small costs)
-
- Unit price

Education is free of charge

- In Finland, education is free of charge at all levels from pre-primary to tertiary education. Adult education is the only form of education that may require payment.
- In pre-primary and lower secondary education (a.k.a. basic education), general upper secondary education and VET all textbooks and a daily hot meal are free of charge, as well as transportation for pupils living far from the school.
- In higher education the students themselves or their parents purchase the school books and meals are subsidised by the state.
- To ensure that study opportunities are open to everyone, we have a well-developed system of study grants and loans. Financial aid can be awarded for full-time study in an institution of higher education.
- Travel costs are free in basic education, upper secondary education and VET

Most education is publicly funded

- Most institutions providing basic and upper secondary level education are maintained by local authorities or joint municipal authorities.
- Central and local government bear shared responsibility for educational funding.
- Most private institutions do not differ from those that are publicly maintained. Private institutions adhere to the national core curricula and qualification requirements. They also receive public funding.
- Ministries calculates and grants central government transfers to local government or school providers.
- The central government transfer system equalise financial inequalities between local authorities and ensures equal access to services throughout the country.

FUNDING:

Pre-primary and basic education

- Pre-primary and basic (primary + lower secondary) education belongs to basic services provided by the municipalities. The municipalities (2023 n=309, from which 16 on autonomous Ahvenanmaa) in Finland receive statutory central government transfers.
- Statutory central government transfers to local government are computed based on the number of 6-18 year-old residents in each municipality and on certain special conditions of the municipality. There is also a tax equalisation system.
- This funding is not ear-marked and each municipality is free to decide how to allocate the funds. The statutory central government transfer for municipal basic services is on average a third of the imputed costs of local government expenditure. The rest is financed through municipal taxation.
- In cases of non-resident pupils, the municipality (or private-owned school) receives a statutory reimbursement from the home municipality of each pupil (clearing system).

Unit Prices in Finland

- Cost per student in basic education in 2016 is on average 7 437 €.
- The costs of general upper secondary education is 7 631 €.
- The total costs of vocational education is about 12 000 € per student.
- The pupil and student-based costs for school providers can differ.
- This funding is not ear-marked and each municipality is free to decide how to allocate the funds. The statutory central government transfer for municipal basic services is on average a third of the imputed costs of local government expenditure. The rest is financed through municipal taxation.

Specificities of the Finnish education system

Highly trained teachers
No ranking
Low annual instruction time
Support
Non-selective
Basic education starts at 7
Flexible groups
Focus on learning, not testing
Teaching is an active profession

Evolution
Public funding
Education as priority
Free education
Co-operation
Decentralized
Central steering
Local decisions
Trust

Thank you!

