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CONTINUOUS LEARNING – RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE AGE OF GREAT TRANSITION

Pekka Metso, Ambassador of Finland to the Republic of



Photo: Sakari Piippo



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FINLAND HAS ONE OF THE BEST PERFORMING EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN THE WORLD

#1
EDUCATING FOR THE
FUTURE INDEX

(Economist 2019)

#1
DIGITAL SKILLS

(WEF Global
Competitiveness Report
2020)

#1
THE HAPPIEST
COUNTRY IN THE
WORLD

(World Happiness
Report 2022)



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THE FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM IN A NUTSHELL



Education for all

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- The development of the whole education system takes time. During the first years of the 20th century, only a third of rural children went to school.
- The 1921 act on compulsory education started the path towards a modern education system based on the **philosophy of education for all**.
- Today **education from pre-primary to higher education is free of charge** for Finns and citizens from EU/ETA countries. Early childhood education and care is subsidized.



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School meals work as an equalizer between children from different backgrounds, strengthen equal opportunity and most importantly, promote learning.

Photo: Elina Manninen/Keksi



The Finnish education system today

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0-5-year-olds

Early childhood education and care

6-year-olds

Compulsory pre-primary education

Basic education 7-16-year-olds

Basic education in comprehensive schools

Secondary education 16-19-year-olds

Matriculation examination in general upper secondary schools

16-19-year-olds
Vocational qualifications in vocational institutions

Tertiary education

Appr. 3+2 years
Bachelor's and Master's degrees at Universities

Appr. 3+2 years
Bachelor's and Master's degrees at Universities of Applied Sciences

Doctoral degrees and licentiate degrees in Universities

An OECD study
ranks Finland as
#2 in the world,
for highest
performing
graduates (2019).



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REFORM OF CONTINUOUS LEARNING



Vision for continuous learning

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- Everyone develops their **skills and competence** during their careers.
- Everyone has the knowledge, competence and skills required for **employment and a meaningful life**.
- Competence **renews** the world of work and the world of work **renews** competence.



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Riku Isohella



Why?

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- Educational need arising from changes in the world of work
- Labour market demand
- Demographic challenges
- Employment rate
- Migration



How? Reform policies and progress

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- Continuous learning as **part of the working life**
 - on-the-job learning; recognition of competence; links between the world of work and the education system
- Creating a **service system** for continuous learning
 - short-term competence services; tailored study opportunities; digital service solutions
- Ensuring the **accessibility** of continuous learning
 - continuous learning for everyone; advisory and guidance



VET and continuous competence development

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- Half of the Finnish students completing basic education continue to vocational education and training (VET) and half to general upper secondary training.
- Supporting lifelong learning and student's development as human being and members of society.
- Education is publicly funded and free of charge.
- Vocational education and training are held in high regard.



VET and continuous competence development

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- Continuous competence – more than half of the VET students over 20 years old
- Open pathways to higher and further education
- Work-based learning
- Flexible learning pathways



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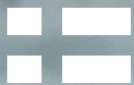
Photo: Velhot Photography Oy/
Riku Isohella

+ Continuous development

- High-quality education for all is the best way to nurture the most valuable of all potential resources – **human capital**.
- The reforming of the education system in Finland **continues even today**.
- Finnish education institutions and companies are eager to work with **international partners** in



Photo: Jeswin
Thomas/Unsplash



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Thank you!

Photo: Sakari
Piippo

