

# Finland

## Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System

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**Abstract:**

This is an overview of the VET system in Finland. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General policy context - framework for the knowledge society;
2. Policy development - objectives, frameworks, mechanisms, priorities;
3. Institutional framework - provision of learning opportunities;
4. Initial education and training - pathways and transition;
5. Continuing vocational education and training for adults;
6. Training VET teachers and trainers;
7. Skills and competence development and innovative pedagogy;
8. Validation of learning - recognition and mobility;
9. Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment;
10. Financing: investment in human resources;
11. European and international dimensions: towards an open area of lifelong learning.

This overview is part of a series produced for each EU Member State (plus Norway and Iceland). Each report is prepared by Cedefop's national network member (ReferNet) and is updated on an annual basis: this one is valid for 2006. Later editions can be viewed from August 2007 at:

[http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Information\\_resources/NationalVet/](http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Information_resources/NationalVet/) where more detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can be found.

**Keywords:**

training system; training policy, initial training, continuing vocational training, training of trainers, skill development, vocational guidance, recognition of competences, validation of non formal learning; financing of training

**Geographic term:**

Finland



Finland

## 01 - GENERAL POLICY CONTEXT - FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

### 0101 - POLITICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL/ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Finland is a republic which became independent in 1917. Its constitution dates from 1919 and was renewed in 1999. The constitution defines the basic rights of citizens and establishes the fundamental principles of legislation, administration, jurisdiction, public finances; national defence, education, religious communities and public office. According to the constitution, basic education is compulsory and provided free of charge to everyone. The state is charged with the responsibility to provide or support vocational education and training, general education, higher and university education.

Finland is a parliamentary democracy with a multi-party system. Legislative power rests in the unicameral parliament of 200 members elected for a 4-year term. The cabinet must enjoy the confidence of parliament. In the 2003 general election the Social Democrats received 24.5%, the Coalition Party 18.6% and the agrarian Centre Party 24.7% of votes.

The government is appointed by the president, who is elected by direct, popular vote for a term of 6 years. In 2006, Ms Tarja Halonen was elected for the president for the second term.

Executive powers are vested in different levels of government: central, regional and local. Central government is represented by ministries and central administrative agencies that answer directly to the appropriate ministry. The National Board of Education is one such agency, answerable to the Ministry of Education. Ongoing changes will see these administrative units transformed into expert agencies. Regional government is divided according to 6 provinces: one, the Åland Islands, forms an autonomous, demilitarized and Swedish-speaking province. They consist of more than 6 500 islands and skerries, 6 400 of which are larger than 3 000 square metres.

The main thrust in ongoing campaigns to streamline public administration is towards a leaner central government and greater autonomy at local level.

### 0102 - POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Finland covers 338 000 square kilometres and is one of the biggest countries in Europe. Population density is 17.0 inhabitants/square kilometre. About 83.3% of the population live in urban areas.

Table 1: Population in Finland			
1991	1996	2001	2004
4 986 430	5 132 320	5 190 102	5 236 611

Source: Statistics Finland

The population is divided into 3 language groups: approximately 92.3% speak Finnish; 5.6% speak Swedish; and 0.03% speak Sámi. Finnish and Swedish are the 2 official languages. All public services (including education) are available in Finnish or Swedish.

There are 2 official national churches; the Lutheran Church (84.9% of the population) and the Orthodox Church (1.1%). 12.9% of the population has no church affiliation.

<b>Table 2: Age-specific demographic trends</b>				
<b>AGE GROUP</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2030</b>
<b>0-24</b>	1 616 058	1 604 540	1 588 345	1 137 487
<b>25-64</b>	2 705 010	2 784 625	2 821 231	2 529 588
<b>65 +</b>	667 347	743 155	780 526	1 389 126
<b>TOTAL</b>	4 986 415	5 132 320	5 190 102	5 290 563

Source: Statistics Finland

Statistics Finland has forecasted that the population will remain above 5 million at least until 2030. The proportion of the working-age population will continue to grow at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century but after that it will decrease rapidly. In 2030 approximately 1/4 of the population will be over 65.

<b>Table 3: Migration</b>			
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>IMMIGRATION</b>	<b>EMIGRATION</b>	<b>NET IMMIGRATION</b>
<b>1991</b>	19 001	5 984	13 017
<b>1996</b>	13 284	10 587	2 707
<b>2004</b>	20 300	13 700	6 700

Source: Statistics Finland

Finland has relatively few immigrants (approximately 1.9% of the population). Most come from the former Soviet Union and 20% from EU countries.

### 0103 - ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Generally speaking, the economic situation is good in Finland. The employment level has steadily risen during the 2000. In addition, unemployment has slightly decreased. However, unemployment level is still relatively high in Finland.

Table 1: Gross domestic product per capita (at current prices)	
YEAR	€
1991	17 643
1996	19 226
2004	28 643

Source: Statistics Finland

Since the recession of the early 1990s when unemployment peaked at close to 17% (1994), the economic growth rate has been high. There are now approximately 2.3 million employed Finns (9% more than in 1994).

Table 2: Unemployment rate				
YEAR	MEN	WOMEN	-25 YEARS	TOTAL
1991	8.0%	5.1%	16.5%	6.6%
1996	14.3%	14.9%	29.7%	14.6%
2001	8.6%	9.7%	19.8%	9.1%
2004	8.7%	8.9%	20.7%	8.8%

Source: Statistics Finland

Table 3: Employment rates by sex 1991, 1996 and 2003			
YEAR	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
1991	71.5%	68.4%	70.0%
1996	64.2%	59.5%	61.9%
2004	68.9%	65.5%	67.2%

Source: Statistics Finland

The net wealth of households is at the average level for EU Member States. In 2004, GNP per capita was around € 28 600.

<b>Table 4: The average change in consumer price index per year</b>		
<b>1991</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>2004</b>
4.1%	0.6%	0.2%

Source: Statistics Finland

Forests are Finland's most crucial raw material resource, although the engineering and high technology industries have long been the leading branches of manufacturing. There are 3 major export sectors: paper industry; electronics; and other metal and engineering. Electronics growth has been huge with the success of the mobile phone industry and other telecommunication equipment.

<b>Table 5: Industrial structure 2003</b>	
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>	4.9%
<b>MANUFACTURING</b>	25.7%
<b>SERVICE</b>	69.4%

Source: Statistics Finland

<b>Table 6: Employed person by industry (Condensed classifications)</b>				
		<b>AGRICULTURE</b>	<b>MANUFACTURING</b>	<b>SERVICE</b>
<b>1991</b>	<b>MEN</b>	11.0%	40.7%	48.4%
	<b>WOMEN</b>	6.6%	16.0%	77.4%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	8.9%	28.7%	62.4%
<b>1996</b>	<b>MEN</b>	9.5%	39.4%	51.0%
	<b>WOMEN</b>	5.3%	13.9%	80.9%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	7.5%	27.3%	65.2%
<b>2001</b>	<b>MEN</b>	7.5%	39.4%	53.1%
	<b>WOMEN</b>	3.7%	13.8%	82.5%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	5.7%	27.2%	67.1%
<b>2003</b>	<b>MEN</b>	6.7%	38.1%	55.2%
	<b>WOMEN</b>	3.0%	12.4%	84.6%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	4.9%	25.7%	69.4%

Source: Statistics Finland

In the mid-1990s, expenditure on education and training as a proportion of GNP was 6.5%. In 2003, this had fallen to 6%.

<b>Table 7: Percentage expenditure on education and training (GNP)</b>	
<b>1995</b>	6.5%
<b>1999</b>	5.8%
<b>2003</b>	6.1%

Source: Statistics Finland

## 0104 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

Table 1: Educational attainment of the population aged 25-64 by ISCED level, % (2002)			
LEVEL OF EDUCATION			
	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6
EU-15	35%	43%	22%
FINLAND	25%	42%	32%

ISCED 0-2: Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education

ISCED 3-4: Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education

ISCED 5-6: Tertiary education

Source: Eurostat, Newcronos, Labour Force Survey

Table 2: Percentage of the population, aged 18 to 24 years having left education and training with a low level of education (2000, 2002)		
FINLAND		
2000	2002	2003
8.9	10.7	

Low level of education: pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education, levels 0-2 (ISCED 1997)

Source: Eurostat, Newcronos, Labour Force Survey

## 02 - POLICY DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVES, FRAMEWORKS, MECHANISMS, PRIORITIES

### 0201 - OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

Finnish society is built on knowledge and creativity and values such as equity, tolerance, internationalisation, gender equality and responsibility for the environment. Everyone has an equal right to participate in education according to their abilities and in keeping with the principle of lifelong learning.

According to the Development Plan for Education and University Research for the period 2003/2008 (*Koulutuksen ja tutkimuksen kehittämissuunnitelma 'KESU'*), the following priorities are important:

- expand opportunities to study general and vocational subjects simultaneously in post-compulsory schooling;
- increase cooperation between polytechnics and universities and clarify their separate roles;



- develop adult education and training to make a coherent system which can respond to educational needs of adults and labour market requirements;
- devise ways to recognise prior learning for all levels of education;
- make educational content more relevant to the modern world taking into account the growing role of international cooperation and multiculturalism;
- enhance remedial teaching, special needs teaching and student welfare services to improve early intervention;
- promote entrepreneurship by improving links between education and working life, enriching teachers' and guidance counsellors' entrepreneurial knowledge, and ensuring better educational content and methods;
- improve the quality of work practice and work-based learning;
- provide more flexible options to maintain and improve vocational/professional skills of the working population;
- ensure that by 2015 the share of 25-29 years old with at least secondary qualifications will rise from 85% to at least 90%; and that the share of 30-34 years old with higher education will rise from 40% to at least 50%;
- provide opportunities for those completing secondary education to gain qualifications or degrees in initial vocational training;
- ensure that by 2008, 25% of new polytechnic students and 2–3% new university students graduate through the basic education – vocational qualification track;
- ensure a better gender balance in participation in vocational and general upper secondary education;
- provide post-compulsory education of training for all, so that by 2008 at least 96% of comprehensive school-leavers begin in an upper secondary school, in vocational education and training or in voluntary additional basic education;
- improve the teaching for guidance counsellors as well as for pupils with special educational needs and immigrants, and improve the use of information and communication technology in teaching.

From August 2006 (on the basis of a pilot project running since 2000), skills demonstrations will be incorporated into all qualifications completed in upper secondary VET as a way both to improve and assure the quality of training. Students will show how well they have achieved the objectives of their vocational studies and acquired the vocational skills required by the labour market. Skills demonstrations will run throughout

the entire period of education and training and will be organised in cooperation with workplaces. The objective is to organise them in realistic work-like situations.

One recent development which has recently been reversed was the introduction of performance-based funding for education providers introduced in 2002. From 2006, this will be integrated into the normal unit funding system in accordance with the government bill (HE88/2005).

### 03 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK - PROVISION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

#### 0301 - ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK

##### NATIONAL LEVEL

Education policy is defined by government and parliament. In addition to legislation, policy is specified in various documents as well as in the state budget. The Development Plan for Education and University Research (*Koulutuksen ja tutkimuksen kehittämissuunnitelma 'KESU'*) is approved by the government and lasts for a 5-year period. The current plan for 2003/2008 was adopted at the end of 2003. The plan includes measures for each field and level of education, as well as the main definitions for education and research policy and the allocation of resources. The implementation of these policy definitions rests with the Government, the Ministry of Education and the National Board of Education.

The Ministry of Education is the highest authority and is responsible for all publicly funded education. It is responsible for preparing educational legislation, all necessary decisions and its share of the state budget for the Government. There are several expert bodies supporting the work of the Ministry usually with social partner representation.

The Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) (*Opetushallitus*) is a governmental body under the Ministry of Education. It is an expert body responsible for planning primary and secondary education as well as for adult education and training (excluding higher education institutions). It draws up and approves national core curricula and qualifications requirements, and evaluates the education system. The NBE assists the Ministry of Education in preparing education policy decisions.

##### REGIONAL LEVEL

Finland is divided into 6 provinces. In each Provincial State Office (*Lääninhallitus*), affairs falling under the Ministry of Education are conducted by the Education and Culture Department led by the Provincial Counsellor of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

15 Regional Councils draw up regional development plans in cooperation with local authorities as well as with business representatives and non-governmental organisations. Regional development work also involves the 15 Employment and Economic Development Centres (*Työvoima- ja elinkeinokeskus*). These centres improve the operating conditions for businesses, support the rural economy, and promote employment and the functioning of the labour market as well as promoting labour market training (under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour).

##### LOCAL LEVEL

Municipal authorities are responsible for organising basic education and are partly responsible for financing it. There is no statutory obligation for municipalities to organise VET, but they are obliged to contribute to its financing. Vocational institutions are maintained by municipalities, joint municipal boards (federations of municipalities), the

State and private organisations. Municipalities and joint municipal boards maintain the majority (about 80%) of vocational institutions.

### **ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

The responsibility for organisation, development and administration of education rests with an institutional board. Each vocational institution must always have a rector responsible for its operation. The general criteria for the organisation of education, administration, authority and duties of bodies and staff and other necessary matters are determined in the institutional regulations. Vocational institutions must always have a student body.

Adult education may be provided by a municipalities, joint municipal boards, registered association, or foundations. Vocational adult education and training is usually organised in the same educational institutions as vocational education and training for young people. The responsibility for an institution's activities rests with its board and usually with a head of department or some other person specifically in charge of adult education and training.

There are also vocational adult education centres which have a board accountable to their owner and a rector is responsible for day-to-day operations. The majority of them are owned by local authorities or joint municipal boards. Continuing education centres of universities are subordinate to the universities.

### **0302 - LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Finnish educational legislation has traditionally been detailed and targeted to the different types of educational provider. However, there has been an attempt to consolidate legislation into a general framework act, with the focus of regulation on education instead of institutions.

The legislation governing primary and secondary level education as well as part of the legislation governing adult education were reformed on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999 with detailed legislation based on institutions being replaced with more uniform legislation concerning the objectives, contents and levels of education as well as students' rights and responsibilities. The new legislation has substantially increased the independent decision-making powers of local authorities, other education providers and schools. For example, national working hour regulations in schools have been replaced by local decision making. Similarly, providers of general upper secondary education and VET may purchase certain services from other sources (e.g. religious instruction can be purchased from the local parish). In terms of basic education, the most significant change is the abolition of the division of comprehensive schools into lower and upper stages.

VET and adult education and training are based on following acts: Act 630/1998 and Decree 811/1998 on Vocational Education (*Laki 630/1998 – ja asetus 811/1998 ammatillisesta koulutuksesta*) and Act 631/1998 and Decree 812/1998 on Adult Vocational Education (*Laki 631/1998 ja asetus 812/1998 ammatillisesta aikuiskoulutuksesta*).

### **0303 - ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS**

The Vocational Education Act regulates the need to include working life within VET. VET must be organised in cooperation with representatives of business life and other sectors of working life. The most important channels through which the social partners can participate in VET planning are the Adult Education Council (*Aikuiskoulutusneuvosto*),

the training committees and the Advisory Board for Educational Cooperation set up by the Ministry of Education as well as the governing bodies and consultative committees of educational institutions.

The Adult Education Council proposes developments to adult education and training, and prepares reports on the situation of adult education and training. The task of vocational training committees and the Advisory Board for Educational Cooperation is to plan and develop vocationally oriented education and training and to promote interaction between education and working life in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the National Board of Education.

Vocational adult education and training includes a system of qualification committees. These are appointed by the National Board of Education and organised on a tripartite basis. Their tasks include supervising and steering the organisation of competence tests, confirming qualifications and signing qualification certificates.

Usually, VET providers establish local networks to become involved in regional business life. The board of a vocational institution may include working life experts from those fields in which the institution provides instruction. Vocational institutions may also have one or more advisory councils which are composed of people representing the institution, its teaching staff, the major labour market organisations in the field and other experts involved in the development of the institution. Their tasks are to promote the activities of the institutions and improve their cooperation with local working life. They may also handle curricula and other issues concerning the internal development of the institution.

There are a number of different ideological associations (for instance religious and political associations) maintaining adult education institutions. In these institutions, other actors are represented on the board.

## **04 - INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

### **0401 - BACKGROUND TO THE IVET SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM**

#### **COMPULSORY EDUCATION**

According to the Basic Education Act (*Perusopetuslaki*), children must attend education from the age of 7 for 10 years. Parents/guardians are required to ensure that children comply with this obligation. Local authorities are obliged to organise basic education free of charge for children living within their area (including those with special needs).

Local authorities are also partly responsible for financing compulsory education as almost all schools are maintained by them. Basic level education is also offered by a few dozen private education providers, which have been granted a licence by the Government.

The subjects included in the curriculum are defined in the Basic Education Act. In forms 1–6, every pupil should receive the same education although schools may focus on different subjects due to the flexible time allocation. In forms 7–9, both common and elective subjects are included. The curriculum also includes a work placement period lasting two weeks. This allows pupils to acquire some experience of working life in real working environments.

## UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION

After completing basic education, a young person can continue studying or enter working life. It is not considered advisable to move into working life immediately, but one of the objectives of education policy is to provide the whole of each age group with upper secondary education free of charge. If schooling is continued, a choice is usually made between general upper secondary school and vocational education and training.

Over 90% of those leaving post-compulsory education continue their studies. During recent years, about 56% continue in general upper secondary education, about 35% in upper secondary VET and about 3% in the voluntary 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

General upper secondary education builds on the basic education syllabus. The scope of the general upper secondary school syllabus is 3 years. The upper secondary school syllabus should be completed within a maximum of 4 years, unless a student is granted a continuation of the completion period for a legitimate reason. At the end of general upper secondary education, students usually participate in the national matriculation examination, which provides general eligibility for higher education. Upper secondary schools select their students autonomously on the basis of criteria determined by the Ministry of Education.

The objective of general upper secondary education is to promote the development of students into good, balanced and civilised individuals and members of society and to provide them with the knowledge and skills necessary for further studies, working life, their personal interests and the diverse development of their personalities. In addition, the education should support and provide the student with skills for lifelong learning and self-development later in life.

The scope of upper secondary level vocational qualifications taken after basic education is 3 years (120 credits). Even if the education and training mostly takes place in institutions, all qualifications include at least 20 credits (approx. 6 months) of instruction in the workplace. Vocational qualifications may also be completed as apprenticeship training, which also contain courses arranged in the institutions. In Finland, most of the apprentices are adults. Majority of the youngsters complete their IVET studies in the school-based education.

Furthermore, upper secondary vocational qualifications may also be obtained through competence tests independent of how the vocational skills have been acquired. Those who complete competence-based qualifications are usually adults. Like other vocational adult education and training, competence-based qualifications are governed by a separate act. It is also possible to apply for vocational upper secondary education and training upon completion of general upper secondary schooling.

The objective of upper secondary vocational education and training is to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to acquire vocational competence and to provide them with the potential for self-employment as well as further studies.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

After completing general upper secondary school or vocational upper secondary education and training, students can apply for higher education. The Finnish higher education system consists of 2 sectors: universities and polytechnics. Eligibility for polytechnic studies is gained through upper secondary education – either the general education completed in an upper secondary school or an upper secondary vocational qualification. General eligibility for universities is provided by the matriculation

examination or a vocational qualification with a scope of at least 3 years. The majority of new students have completed the matriculation examination.

### ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education and training offers citizens the opportunity to obtain education and complete qualifications at any stage of life. Adults can study either in the same educational institutions as young people, or at institutions and units aimed at adults, as is done in liberal adult education. Vocational upper secondary qualifications, further vocational qualifications and specialist vocational qualifications can also be obtained through competence tests independent of how the vocational skills have been acquired. Polytechnics and universities also organise adult education and Adult students are responsible for their own choices concerning studies and their progress.

See below the Diagram of education system.

### [Diagram of education system](#)

#### 0402 - IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL

In Finland IVET does not exist at lower secondary level.

#### 0403 - IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)

Upper secondary education in Finland is divided into general and vocational (IVET). General upper secondary and IVET are primarily free of charge for students; a small amount of student fees may be charged for a specific reason with permission from the Ministry of Education. Students have to pay for textbooks, work clothes and other materials. In 2004 there were 110 000 students in general upper secondary schools and 143 000 students in upper secondary VET.

In 2004, pupils from comprehensive schools took the following pathways:

- 54% to general upper secondary education;
- 38% to vocational upper secondary education and training;
- 3% to comprehensive school's 10<sup>th</sup> form;
- 5% did not immediately continue studying.

Table 1: Students in upper secondary education by programme orientation (general/vocational), 2000	
FINLAND	
UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION TOTAL ENROLMENT	292 429
UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES (%)	55%
UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION GENERAL AND PRE-VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES (%)	45%

Upper secondary education: ISCED 97 level 3

Source: Eurostat, Newcronos, Education statistics based on ISCED 97

## GENERAL

General upper secondary education provides students with the capabilities to start university or polytechnic studies and vocational education. It builds on the basic education syllabus and is intended for young people (usually aged 16 to 19 years). It lasts 3 years and completion comprises finishing at least 75 courses (1 course usually lasts 38 hours). Upper secondary schools hold the matriculation examination which entitles students to enter further studies at institutions of higher education.

Most general upper secondary schools (Lukio) are owned by local authorities but a minority are also owned by private organisations (7%) and by the State (2%).

## VOCATIONAL

Most upper secondary vocational education and training institutions are owned by local authorities and joint municipal boards but a minority are also owned by private organisations and foundations (18.5%). The state owns 5 providing special education (2.5%). The following fields of study are available:

- humanities and education;
- culture;
- social sciences, business and administration;
- natural sciences;
- technology, communication and transport;
- natural resources and the environment;
- social services, health and sports;
- tourism, catering and domestic services.

Since 2001, all programmes leading to upper secondary vocational qualifications take 3 years to complete and comprise 120 credits (40 credits per year and 1 credit is equivalent to 40 hours of study). The qualifications provide general eligibility for both polytechnics and universities and build on the basic education syllabus. Students in vocational upper secondary education and training are mainly aged 16 years or more.

Students apply for IVET through the national joint application system. Selection criteria usually include the general study record, grades, work experience and various entrance tests. Students may also be selected on special grounds.

The curriculum consists of the national core curricula, each education provider's curricula and individual study plans. The National Board of Education approves the qualification-specific core curricula and the requirements of each competence-based qualification. These are drawn up in cooperation with employers and employees, other representatives and experts of economic life as well as teachers and students. The curriculum combines extensive basic vocational skills for various assignments as well as more specialised competence and vocational skills. Specialisations are determined by the study programmes chosen. For example, the vocational curriculum in logistics is divided into

study programmes for transportation services and storage services, which in turn have their respective qualification titles, driver and warehouse operative.

The curriculum includes:

- vocational studies and on-the-job learning which vary according to the qualification (90 credits);
- core subjects, common to all qualifications (20 credits, out of which 16 credits are compulsory and 4 are optional);
- free-choice studies, which vary (10 credits) - these include at least 1½ credits of student counselling and a final project with a minimum 2 credits.

The compulsory core subjects (16 credits) are:

- language - Finnish, Swedish (4 credits);
- other national language - Finnish, Swedish (1 credit);
- foreign language (2 credits);
- mathematics (3 credits);
- physics and chemistry (2 credits);
- social, business and labour-market subjects (1 credit);
- health education (1 credit);
- physical education (1 credit);
- arts and culture (1 credit).

Students may choose from a range of free-choice studies available either at their own or another institution. Free-choice studies can be either vocationally complementary or supplement core subjects to enable students to complete general upper secondary school and/or the matriculation examination at the same time as the vocational qualification.

Qualifications can be completed in the form of school-based education and training, apprenticeship training or competence-based qualifications (these allow adult students to demonstrate their vocational skills regardless of how and where they have acquired them). All qualifications include a period of on-the-job learning worth 20 credits. On-the-job learning is focused, supervised and assessed study carried out in service or production capacities at the workplace. The objective is to familiarise students with real working life to enhance their employment opportunities.



<b>Table 2: Students in vocational upper secondary education and training 2004</b>			
<b>SECTOR</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>MALE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>HUMANITIES AND EDUCATION</b>	834	1 708	2 542
<b>CULTURE</b>	3 991	6 597	10 588
<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES, BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION</b>	7 293	8 838	16 131
<b>NATURAL SCIENCES</b>	5 675	1 950	7 625
<b>TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT</b>	41 881	12 707	54 588
<b>NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT</b>	4 140	4 050	8 190
<b>SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND SPORTS</b>	8 183	15 634	23 817
<b>TOURISM, CATERING AND DOMESTIC SERVICES</b>	5 785	12 283	18 068
<b>OTHER EDUCATION</b>	1 015	280	1 295
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78 797</b>	<b>64 047</b>	<b>142 844</b>

Source: Statistics Finland, National Board of Education

Vocational special institutions provide facilities and services for students with severe disabilities or chronic illnesses. Students with no such disabilities are also admitted. Students apply to the institutions directly and the institutions accept applications throughout the year.

The Vocational Education and Training Act provides that working life is a focus within education. Education must be organised in cooperation with representatives from enterprises and labour unions. The most important channels through which the social partners participate is in the planning of VET through the national training committees set up by the Ministry of Education and the governing bodies and advisory councils of educational institutions. Usually, vocational institutions establish local networks to become involved in regional business life.

#### **0404 - APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING**

All upper secondary level vocational qualifications available at VET institutions (see section 0403) may be obtained through apprenticeship training.

Apprenticeship training is based on national core curriculum or the guidelines for the relevant competence-based qualification; either can form the basis of a student's individual learning programme. The individual learning programme is drawn up to reflect the needs and prerequisites of the workplace and the student. It defines the qualification to be completed, its scope, central assignments, theoretical instruction included, timing, the instructors responsible, and other issues relevant to the qualification arrangement. The student's previous education and work experience must be taken into account and accredited in the learning programme. The programme is drawn up by the student, the employer and the local administrative authorities in cooperation and is appended to the apprenticeship contract.

The practical part of apprenticeship training takes place at the workplace. It is complemented by theoretical studies, which may be arranged at VET institutions, vocational adult education centres or at other educational institutions. The training is based on a written employment contract of fixed duration between the apprentice and the employer. These contracts are based on agreements between employers and education providers.

The training emphasises on-the-job learning and the integration of practical and theoretical instruction. Approximately 70–80% of the time is spent in the training workplace under the responsibility of an on-the-job instructor(s).

To be able to participate in apprenticeship training, enterprises must be engaged in production and service activities of sufficient size. The necessary work equipment for apprentices must be available as must be the necessary personnel to be assigned as responsible instructors of apprentices.

Apprentices must be at least 15 years of age at the time of signing the contract and have completed the basic education syllabus or equivalent (or be approved by the education provider to have sufficient capabilities to participate). Their wages are paid by the employer on the basis of the collective labour agreement. The pay varies in different fields, but is usually approximately 80% of the wages of a skilled worker in that particular field. The employer is not obliged to pay wages for time spent in theoretical training, unless otherwise agreed.

In 2004 participants in apprenticeship training totalled 18 000 in upper secondary vocational training and 29 500 in additional training (non-qualification oriented).

<b>Table 1: Students in apprenticeship training in vocational upper secondary education and training 2004</b>			
<b>SECTOR</b>	<b>FEMAL E</b>	<b>MALE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>HUMANITIES AND EDUCATION</b>	470	213	683
<b>CULTURE</b>	163	136	299
<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES, BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION</b>	3 128	963	4 091
<b>NATURAL SCIENCES</b>	469	555	1 024
<b>TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT</b>	708	4 586	5 294
<b>NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT</b>	564	325	889
<b>SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND SPORTS</b>	3 766	557	4 323
<b>TOURISM, CATERING AND DOMESTIC SERVICES</b>	1 206	327	1 533
<b>OTHER EDUCATION</b>	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10 474</b>	<b>7 662</b>	<b>18 136</b>

Source: Statistics Finland, National Board of Education

#### **0405 - OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS**

Other types of IVET programmes are available for both young people and adults in the form of workshop training. They were originally introduced in the 1980s to combat youth unemployment but since the 1990s their target group has grown to include adults although the focus remains on unemployed people. Workshop activities try to address problems faced by those at risk of social exclusion who are already excluded from the labour market.

The workshops offer young people and adults practical work-related training as well as guidance and support for managing their own lives. As a labour market tool, they are not part of the education system and do not automatically lead to formal qualifications. The workshop programme offers subsidised employment and practical training, rehabilitative work-related activities, job coaching, training co-operation, individual counselling, preventive work among substance abusers and apprenticeship training.

The workshops do not have official status recognised by law and consequently, no detailed statistical data on their activities exists. It has been estimated that some 70% of clients are young people, while adults account for the remaining 30% each year. According to estimates for 2004 made by the "*Työpajayhdistys*" association, the total volume of workshop clients is 10 000 and the number of workshops is 230. Most workshops are owned by municipalities and they are primarily funded by municipalities and the labour administration.

#### **0406 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL**

Post-secondary non-tertiary VET in Finland is available for specialist vocational qualifications, which are considered competence-based qualifications. Specialist vocational qualifications are primarily intended for adults – mainly for people skilled in different fields to demonstrate their practical competence and vocational skills in the skill tests. With specialist vocational qualifications adults can improve their position in the labour market.

Majority of the students participate to preliminary training in order to complete the skill tests. Preliminary training is organised for instance in the adult education centres and in VET institutions.

#### **0407 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL**

Institutions of higher education include universities (*yliopisto*) and polytechnics (*ammattikorkeakoulu*). General access requirement to higher education is an upper secondary qualification. Over 90% of students at universities and 70% of students at polytechnics have a general upper secondary qualification. The path from upper secondary VET to higher education is less used, only about 20% of polytechnic students have a VET background. Instruction at institutions of higher education is free.

#### **UNIVERSITIES**

According to legislation, the purpose of universities is to promote independent research and scientific knowledge and to provide the highest education in their fields of study. Universities must also aim to prepare students to be of service to their country and humankind.

University education is divided into 20 fields of study, which are regulated by field-specific decrees: theology, humanities, law, social sciences, economics and business administration, psychology, education, natural sciences, agriculture and forestry, sports sciences, engineering and architecture, medicine, dentistry, health sciences, veterinary medicine, pharmacy, music, art and design, theatre, drama and dance, as well as fine arts.

Access is available through the matriculation examination. In addition, those with a polytechnic degree, post-secondary level vocational qualification or at least a 3-year vocational qualification also have general eligibility.

The structure of university degrees has been reformed in almost all fields of study. The new system introduced the Bachelor degree, into almost every field (at least 120 ECTS and 3 years of full-time study). The Master degree is worth 160 ECTS and at least 5 years of full-time study (2 years after completing the Bachelor degree). Postgraduate programmes, i.e. those leading to Licentiate and Doctor degrees, are available for students with a higher academic degree or a corresponding foreign degree.

### **POLYTECHNICS**

Studies leading to a polytechnic degree provide the knowledge and skills for professional expert functions. Polytechnics carry out research and development and play an important role in regional development as providers of high-quality education and developers of the economic life of the regions, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises. Polytechnics usually offer courses in a number of fields with a professional emphasis. Degrees tend to take 3-4 years to complete. Polytechnics also organise adult education.

There are 29 accredited polytechnics in Finland (18 owned by local authorities and joint municipal boards, 11 private). The operating licence granted by the Government to each polytechnic defines the mission of the institution, the fields of education, the number of study places and the language of instruction.

Enrolment criteria are the achievement of general or vocational upper secondary education and training (i.e. those who have completed the matriculation examination, general upper secondary school or an upper secondary vocational qualification, or those with a corresponding international or foreign qualification). Students apply to polytechnics through the joint national application system. Student selection is based on previous study record and work experience and, in many cases, entrance examinations are also arranged.

Polytechnics provide education in the following educational sectors:

- humanities and education;
- culture;
- social sciences, business and administration;
- natural sciences;
- technology, communication and transport;
- natural resources and the environment;
- social services, health and sports;
- tourism, catering and domestic services.

Polytechnic degree programmes consist of basic and professional studies, optional studies, practical training to promote professional skills and a diploma project. The Ministry of Education has usually confirmed the scope of the degree programmes as being equivalent to 210–270 ECTS (3½–4 years of full-time study). Full-time students must complete their studies within no more than one year over and above the standard duration of the studies, unless the institution makes a specific exception. Polytechnic post-graduate degrees are worth approximately 60-90 credits.

Polytechnics have developed their teaching methods to increase students' independent and self-motivated study. There are various forms of project and teamwork and studies have also increasingly been transferred outside the institution. The role of the teacher has clearly become more instructor-oriented. Compulsory practical on-the-job training, worth a minimum of 30 ECTS, enables many students to combine their diploma project included in the degree programme with hands-on work experience and to apply their theoretical knowledge in real situations.

## **05 - CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS**

### **0501 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

#### **ORGANISATION OF ADULT TRAINING**

The Finnish education system is built on the principle of lifelong learning so as to provide opportunities for further study for people of all ages and with any previous level of education. Both certificate-oriented and non-certificate-oriented forms of education and training are available for adults. Some of these include education and training specifically for adults leading to initial qualifications, whereas others cover additional and continuing education and training.

The adult education sector is commonly divided into 3 parts:

- self-motivated learning is to provide adults education and training appropriate to each student's own objectives, circumstances and level of education. It is completely or partially funded by the educational administration;
- labour market training for unemployed people procured by the Ministry of Labour;
- in-service training is training financed by individual employers and usually undertaken during working hours. It provides training for employees in accordance with employer needs with a view to increasing productivity and profitability and motivating personnel. In-service training takes place either in workplace or in training organisations which commonly are the same as in self-motivated and labour market training.

#### **RECENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

Current adult education policy is based on the work of Parliamentary Adult Education Committee which completed its work in February 2002. The Committee set 4 general objectives which were used to derive concrete proposals for action. The general objectives were as follows:

- self-development will become the lifestyle of an increasing number of Finns and working communities will develop into learning organisations;
- adult education and training will provide skilled labour for all employee levels and for all occupations;
- methods will be developed so as to provide adults with high-quality opportunities for self-development; and
- adult education and training will be used to uphold and reinforce participatory democracy, prevent social exclusion and support active citizenship.

These general objectives were used to derive the following development areas:

- all citizens would have the opportunity for training for 1 to 2 weeks each year and for more thorough upgrading of their competence every 10 to 15 years;
- to provide adults with sufficient educational opportunities at all levels, organising education and training with due consideration given to the pedagogical and other learning conditions of adults who were often gainfully employed;
- promotion of equality in adult learning, in particular, through the action programme for adults with a low level of initial education;
- reinforcement of teaching methods and counselling and the development of new learning environments and virtual education, development of recognition of learning and investment in the competencies of teachers and trainers;
- development of social benefits for adult students and retention of fees charged for adult education and training at a reasonable level.

#### **ENHANCING THE TRAINING POSSIBILITIES FOR POORLY EDUCATED PEOPLE**

The Noste programme is a five-year (2003/2007) action programme for education and training targeted at adults aged 30-59 who have only completed basic level education. The programme provides an opportunity to complete upper secondary level vocational qualifications (vocational upper secondary education and training, further or specialist vocational qualifications) or specific modules of these free of charge. Funds may also be used for instruction in information society skills required in working life: i.e. training for Computer Driving Licences. Funds may also be used for completion of basic education (targeted at 25-54 years old).

The general objectives of the Noste programme are to improve the career development for people who have not completed any education and/or training beyond a basic level, to mitigate labour shortages due to early retirement and to improve the employment rate.

## **0502 - PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL**

Publicly provided adult education and training is available for anyone and is funded for the most part by the Ministry of Education. There are different possibilities available, the main types are listed below.

### **UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

#### **INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IVET)**

IVET is the primarily targeted to young people at upper secondary level but there is a specific form designed for adults which leads to the same set of vocational qualifications. The qualifications are completed in the form of competence-based qualifications, irrespective of the method of acquiring the skills, and the completion period is usually shorter than the standard period set for young people. The qualifications can also be completed following apprenticeship training. Providers are funded in the same way for adult participants as for young people.

#### **ADDITIONAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

Additional vocational training is caters specifically for adults. According to law, it is designed “to maintain and enhance the vocational competence of the adult population, to provide students with opportunities for independent self-employment, to develop working life and promote employment and to support lifelong learning”. It provides an opportunity to complete further or specialist vocational qualifications or individual modules of these qualifications. It can be followed in a school-based or apprenticeship form.

All qualifications are competence-based. The purpose of further and specialist vocational qualifications are to provide a study track for adults who already command the basics of their occupation and who wish to obtain formal recognition. Adults may complete further and specialist vocational qualifications either by demonstrating their vocational skills through competence tests without any preparatory training or at the end of their training. Additional vocational training doesn't always have to lead to a formal qualification.

The state funds 90% of the costs of certificate-oriented additional vocational training. Where training is organised as in-service training, the state covers 50% of the costs.

Legislation governing additional vocational training consists of a framework act. The Act does not determine the institutions providing such training; instead, state funding for additional training is available to those local authorities, joint municipal boards, registered associations or foundations or state-owned enterprises with a licence to provide it.

### **HIGHER EDUCATION**

Higher education comprises polytechnics and universities. The former are experts in working life and its development, whereas universities focus on scientific research and education based on such research.

#### **POLYTECHNICS**

Adult education is one of the basic tasks of polytechnics and adults can complete the same Bachelor degrees as young people which are exactly the same as those provided for young people. The only difference is in pedagogical approach which is more tailored to adults and also course organisation to reflect that adults cannot always study full-time.

In 2002, Finland launched a trial project for postgraduate polytechnic degrees “[...] based on requirements set by polytechnic degrees and development of working life, to

provide sufficient basic knowledge and skills as well as the abilities to function in working-life development and other assignments requiring special expertise”. The programmes are open to those who have completed an appropriate polytechnic degree or some other appropriate higher education degree and who have at least 3 years of post-degree work experience in the relevant field.

Polytechnics also provide adult education that does not lead to degrees. The Open Polytechnic provides individual parts of education leading to polytechnic degrees. Polytechnics also provide professional specialisation studies mainly for those who have already completed a polytechnic degree.

Polytechnic education may be provided by local authorities, joint municipal boards or registered associations or foundations with a licence. They receive state subsidies.

## UNIVERSITIES

Education leading to Bachelor and Master academic degrees is not provided separately for young people and adults; instead, people of all ages study the same degree programmes. Nevertheless, universities organise separate Master’s programmes mainly intended for those who have already completed a higher education degree. These programmes give credit for previous higher education level studies allowing for taking a new degree in less time than the standard duration.

Universities also provide specialisation studies to complement the degree system and promote professional development. Universities offer other forms of continuing education, which are usually implemented by continuing education centres operating in conjunction with them.

Open University studies are open to all participants irrespective of their educational background. Subject to certain conditions, Open University students are also entitled to apply for full-degree studies.

All universities are state-owned and receive funding directly from the state budget.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

In certificate-oriented additional vocational training (and in initial training preparing for competence-based qualifications), the key quality assurance mechanism comprises the respective qualification requirements themselves and whether they are met. Responsibility for organising and supervising competence tests rests with qualification committees which contain social partner representatives to ensure that qualifications are designed in accordance with the requirements of working life.

The Vocational Education Act and the Vocational Adult Education Act require education providers to evaluate their educational provision and its effectiveness and to participate in external evaluations of their operations. Responsibility for external evaluations rests with the Evaluation Council for Education and Training.

The Polytechnics Act also includes provisions on evaluation: “The polytechnic shall be responsible for the standard of quality and continuous development of its educational provision and other operations and shall participate in external quality assessment on a regular basis”. Polytechnics are also required to publish the results of evaluations.



The Universities Act determines an equivalent obligation for universities; they are required to evaluate their education, research and artistic activities and the effectiveness of these operations and to participate in external evaluations. Similarly, universities are also required to publish evaluation results.

## EVALUATION

Two independent expert bodies are responsible for evaluating education and training: the Evaluation Council for Education and Training and the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council. The role of the former is to support education providers in evaluation matters, organise external evaluations relating to education policy, make proposals to develop evaluation and promote research into evaluation. The role of the later is to assist higher education institutions and the Ministry of Education with their evaluations. Both councils are appointed by the Ministry of Education and they also have duties concerning adult education and training.

## PARTICIPANTS

The table below shows the participation structure in adult education and training. It should be noted that participants include for all types of adult education whether formal or non-formal, vocational or non-vocational. Figures don't make a difference in target groups either, so include both employed and unemployed people.

<b>Table 1: Participation in adult education and training in 2000, population aged 18-64</b>			
	<b>N</b>	<b>% OF PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>% OF THE GROUP IN QUESTION</b>
<b>AGE GROUPS</b>			
<b>18-24</b>	225 413	13	49
<b>18-64</b>	1 754 057	100	54
<b>25-34</b>	409 527	23	62
<b>25-64</b>	1 528 644	87	54.5
<b>35-49</b>	713 085	40.5	61
<b>50-64</b>	406 033	23	42
<b>GENDER</b>			
<b>MALE</b>	798 731	45.5	49
<b>FEMALE</b>	955 326	54.5	59
<b>LEVEL OF EDUCATION</b>			
<b>PRIMARY OR LOWER SECONDARY</b>	340 450	19.5	37
<b>UPPER</b>	725 994	41	51

<b>SECONDARY</b>			
<b>TERTIARY</b>	687 614	39	76

Statistics Finland, Adult Education Survey 2000

**0503 - TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHERS VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION IN THE LABOUR MARKET**

Administrative and funding responsibility for training for unemployed people (and those at risk of unemployment) rests with the Ministry of Labour. Participation of unemployed people in education and training organised by the educational administration is often difficult as full-time students cannot receive unemployment benefits.

Labour market training is part of active labour policy and is divided into 2 main parts: vocational training, and career guidance and preparatory training. The former develops the vocational skills of participants and about half of provision leads to a formal educational qualification. Certificate-oriented studies provided as labour market training include training for initial, further or specialist vocational qualifications and, subject to certain conditions, upper secondary school studies and education leading to polytechnic and university degrees. The objective of career guidance and preparatory training is to find appropriate employment and educational options for each individual.

Labour market training may be purchased from a licensed organisation such as a university, a polytechnic or another appropriate education provider. In other words, training is mostly purchased from the same education providers that receive state subsidies granted by the educational administration. Training is funded through procurement, where a representative of the labour administration, most typically a regional Employment and Economic Development Centre purchases training from a provider of educational services.

Labour market training is governed by the Public Employment Services Act which states that each registered job-seeker is to have an individual job-seeking plan within 5 months, which outlines the person's competencies and possible additional training needs. The plans provide as individually tailored a service process as possible and refer each client to the type of education or training that is best suited to him or her.

Different groups apply for labour market training based on their own needs and on negotiations with employment officials. Extensive provision makes it possible to offer customised educational services to different target groups. In 2002, vocational initial and continuing training and retraining were provided for more than 200 occupations. The majority of labour market training is purchased from publicly supervised educational institutions, which are required to evaluate their operations. In addition, the labour administration started to collect electronic feedback from students in 2001, in order to assure quality and improve the development conditions for training.

Table 1: Monthly average of persons attending labour market training					
YEAR (JANUARY)	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
ON LABOUR MARKET TRAINING	29 300	25 800	33 300	33 500	33 000

Ministry of Labour (2005)

#### **0504 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES OR SOCIAL PARTNERS**

In principle there is no government regulation on in-service-training which is viewed as an enterprise responsibility. Enterprises tend to purchase certificated and non-certificated training from the formal education institutions.

In-service training is promoted both in legislation and through general incomes policy agreements. The law encourages the use of in-service training in situations where an enterprise's production structure changes so that staff competences no longer match the enterprise's operational models. The Act on Co-operation within Undertakings requires enterprises with at least 30 employees to draw up annual training plans and to update them where the number of employees is reduced due to lower production.

The Employment Contracts Act imposes an obligation on employers to provide training in situations where termination of employment can be prevented by means of additional training. In-service training is required to be such that it can be considered as being feasible and reasonable from the point of view of both contracting parties.

Adult education and training also play a role in collective agreements: the most recent national collective agreement between the central organisations of the social partners for 2005/2007 contain a proposal for governments to increase allowances targeted at higher vocational adult training and adult education.

Participation in employer-sponsored training is large as seen in the table below (although figures include self-motivated learning although much of this would receive some form of indirect employer support such as allowing training time).

<b>Table 1: Participation in employer-sponsored job, or occupation-related adult education and training in 2000, employees aged 18-64</b>			
	<b>N</b>	<b>% OF PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>% OF THE GROUP IN QUESTION</b>
<b>AGE GROUPS</b>			
<b>18-24</b>	62 174	6.0	45.5
<b>18-64</b>	1 004 515	100.0	56.0
<b>25-34</b>	241 793	24.0	56.5
<b>25-64</b>	942 342	94.0	57.0
<b>35-49</b>	484 943	48.0	59.5
<b>50-64</b>	215 605	21.5	52.5
<b>GENDER</b>			
<b>MALE</b>	483 852	48.0	54.0
<b>FEMALE</b>	520 663	52.0	58.0
<b>LEVEL OF EDUCATION</b>			
<b>PRIMARY OR LOWER SECONDARY</b>	154 706	15.5	41.0
<b>UPPER SECONDARY</b>	358 260	35.5	49.0
<b>TERTIARY</b>	491 550	49.0	72.0
<b>SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP</b>			
<b>UPPER WHITE-COLLAR EMPLOYEES</b>	413 202	41.0	73.0
<b>LOWER WHITE-COLLAR EMPLOYEES</b>	341 123	38.0	60.0
<b>BLUE-COLLAR WORKERS</b>	250 189	25.0	38.0
<b>EMPLOYER</b>			
<b>CENTRAL GOVERNMENT</b>	157 180	15.5	74.0
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT</b>	311 712	31.0	63.0
<b>PRIVATE</b>	512 853	51.0	49.0
<b>OTHER/DON'T KNOW</b>	22 769	2.0	66.0

Statistics Finland, Adult Education Survey 2000

## **0505 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

While participation in CVET may be individually motivated, most participants will receive funding subsidies from the state, municipalities or employers.

## **06 - TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS**

### **0601 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN VET**

The qualification requirements for the learning facilitators found within VET, i.e. vocational upper secondary schools, vocational adult education centres and polytechnics, are mostly defined by law (Teaching qualifications Act 948/1998, Polytechnics Decree 352/2003).

Teaching staff whose qualification requirements are regulated include:

- polytechnic VET teachers;
- polytechnic senior lecturers;
- vocational studies teachers;
- core subject teachers;
- teachers providing special needs education;
- guidance counsellors;
- principals, who are also members of the teaching staff.

Learning facilitators whose qualifications and training are not regulated:

- trainers in apprenticeship training;
- workplace instructors.

At the beginning of 1999 teacher qualifications for general and vocational institutions were harmonised. All teachers within all types of formal educational institution (basic education, general upper secondary schools, vocational institutions and liberal adult education institutions) must have pedagogical studies worth a minimum of 60 ECTS points (European Credit Transfer System). The principle is that student teachers are to achieve a core knowledge of teaching and learning that can be generalised to all forms of education and training.

The education of core subject teachers, e.g. mathematics and language teachers is the same for basic as general upper secondary education, and pedagogical studies are usually taken alongside subject-specific ones. Vocational teacher education is always consecutive. It builds on 2 basic requirements: the degree and work experience. When student teachers apply, they are already professionals with experience of a career in a certain field. Special needs teachers and guidance counsellors can either have the same training as core subject teachers or vocational studies teachers before their specialisation.

The quality of all teacher education is monitored through the self-evaluation of each university or polytechnic and external evaluations conducted by the Finnish Higher Education Revaluation Council (FINHEEC).

There are no formal qualification requirements for trainers/workplace instructors. These posts tend not to exist in school-based VET as colleges and adult education centres have teachers which are responsible for all training, including student supervision during periods of on-the-job learning in enterprises. For apprenticeship training, apprentices work in enterprises under the guidance of a trainer, an older, experienced worker or foreman. As on-the-job learning periods and skills demonstrations are included in upper secondary qualifications, the workplace instructors' role has become more important.

VET teachers have opportunities to influence their work through their involvement in work on curricula and requirements for competence-based qualifications as well as in training committees (cf. table below). They can also influence at institutional level where they can take their own decisions regarding pedagogy, learning materials and student assessment. Finnish teachers can also participate in making decisions on the school budget and, in particular, on the allocation of resources within the school.

<b>Table 1: Roles and tasks of VET teachers and trainers (in addition to the instruction of students)</b>		
<b>ROLES AND TASKS</b>	<b>TEACHERS</b>	<b>TRAINERS</b>
<b>CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT</b>	X	
<b>SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN PREPARING THEIR INDIVIDUAL STUDY PLANS</b>	X	X
<b>EVALUATION OF EDUCATION</b>	X	
<b>STUDENT ASSESSMENT</b>	X	X
<b>COOPERATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND ENTERPRISE</b>	X	X

#### **0602 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET**

The following types of teacher and trainer can be found in institutions providing vocational upper secondary and adult education and training as well as professionally-oriented higher education (polytechnics):

- polytechnic VET teachers;
- polytechnic senior lecturers;
- vocational studies teachers;
- core subject teachers;
- teachers providing special needs education;
- guidance counsellors;
- principals, who are also members of the teaching staff;
- trainers;
- workplace instructors.

Table 1: Teacher groups in IVET, place of teaching, educational background				
	UPPER SECONDARY VET SCHOOLS	VOCATIONAL ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES	POLYTECHNICS	APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING <sup>1</sup> /ENTERPRISES
POLYTECHNIC VET TEACHER			V	
POLYTECHNIC SENIOR LECTURER			V <sup>2</sup>	
VET TEACHER	X	X		
SUBJECT TEACHER	V	V	V	
SPECIAL NEEDS TEACHER	V X	V X <sup>3</sup>		
GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR	V X	V X <sup>3</sup>	V X <sup>4</sup>	
PRINCIPAL	V X	V X	V X	
TRAINER				O
WORKPLACE INSTRUCTOR				O

**V**= Master's degree including pedagogical studies

**X**= Master's or Bachelor's degree in relevant field and pedagogical studies at voc teacher education college

**O** = not regulated

<sup>(1)</sup> The practical training period in apprenticeship training is complemented by theoretical studies, which may be arranged at institutions providing vocational education and training or at vocational adult education centres.

<sup>(2)</sup> Polytechnic senior lecturers are required to hold a postgraduate licentiate or doctorate.

<sup>(3)</sup> Adult education centres are not required to provide guidance counselling or special needs education by law, but especially the bigger centres employ special needs teachers and guidance counsellors.

<sup>(4)</sup> Some polytechnics employ guidance counsellors even if they are not required to by law.

VET providers are responsible for employing their teaching staff and determine the types and number of posts needed. As a general rule, posts should be filled by permanent employees wherever possible.

Universities and polytechnics enjoy a degree of autonomy which allows each university pedagogical faculty and vocational teacher education college to draw up their own education programmes within the limits of legislation and agreements made with the Ministry of Education.

## **PRE-SERVICE TRAINING FOR IVET TEACHERS**

### **POLYTECHNICS VET AND SENIOR LECTURERS**

Polytechnics VET lecturers must hold a Master's degree and senior lecturers a postgraduate licentiate or doctorate.

### **CORE SUBJECT TEACHERS**

Teachers of core subjects at vocational institutions and polytechnics have the same education as subject teachers working in general education. They must have a Master's degree worth 300 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) points, 60 ECTS points of pedagogical studies is included (Decree on the Degrees in Education and Teacher Training – 576/1995). Pedagogical studies focus on didactics as well as teaching practice.

They must apply to university following the usual procedure. Those admitted to a degree programme and aiming to be subject teachers will then separately apply for subject teacher education. Admission to subject teacher education is based either on aptitude tests alone or combined with the applicant's study record. The education of subject teachers is the same regardless of the subject taught.

As well as the concurrent training model described above, a consecutive path is available: people with a Master's degree may complete separate pedagogical studies for teachers with a scope of 60 ECTS within a teacher education unit.

### **VOCATIONAL STUDIES TEACHERS**

Teachers of vocational subjects are required to have a Master's degree or a polytechnic degree or the highest possible qualification in their own occupational field. In addition, they must complete pedagogical studies worth 60 ECTS points and have at least 3 years of work experience in the field (Decree on Vocational Teacher Training 357/2003).

Students applying for vocational teacher education colleges must have the required degrees and work experience. Colleges are autonomous and can decide on further selection criteria such as:

- degrees;
- basic studies in education;
- work experience (non-teaching);
- teaching experience;
- special activities.

In vocational teacher education colleges the aim is to provide students with the skills and knowledge to guide the learning of different kinds of students and to develop their own field of teaching, taking developments in occupations and working life into account. The studies include basic studies in education, vocational subject pedagogic studies, teaching practice and other studies. Students may complete the education in 1 academic year by studying full-time or flexibly as multiform education in 1-3 years. Studies comprise: basic studies in pedagogy; studies in vocational education; teaching practice and other studies.

Vocational teacher education is provided at 5 colleges, affiliated to 5 polytechnics.



### **SPECIAL NEEDS TEACHER EDUCATION FOR VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

Teachers with subject or vocational subject teacher qualifications can specialise in special needs education. Vocational teacher education colleges offer pedagogical qualifications worth 60 ECTS, which qualifies teachers to work with students with special needs. The aim is to train experts who, in addition to their own educational work, can supervise the special pedagogical work of other teachers and the institution as a whole. Most special needs teachers work at vocational special institutions. Admission requirements include teacher qualifications and at least 1 year of teaching experience at a vocational institution.

### **GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR EDUCATION FOR VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

Guidance counsellors at vocational institutions have the same basic qualification requirements as subject or vocational subject teachers. In addition they are required to gain a pedagogical qualification worth 60 ECTS points and organised by vocational teacher education colleges.

Students familiarise themselves with the underlying social factors involved in student counselling as well as with various counselling methods used both within their own institutions and in cooperation with other organisations.

Admission requirements include teacher qualifications and at least one year of teaching experience at a vocational institution.

### **PRINCIPALS AT UPPER SECONDARY VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND VOCATIONAL ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES AND POLYTECHNICS**

Principals at upper secondary vocational institutions and vocational adult education centres should have a Master's or Bachelor's degree and pedagogical qualifications. They should also have sufficient teaching experience and a certificate of educational administration accredited by the National Board of Education (or studies in educational administration at a university, or they must have acquired comparable administrative experience).

Principals of polytechnics should have a licentiate or doctorate, sufficient knowledge of the educational field as well as administrative experience.

### **TRAINERS OR WORKPLACE INSTRUCTORS**

There are no formal qualification requirements for trainers or workplace instructors.

### **ASSESSMENT AND QUALITY MONITORING**

Student teachers are assessed at the end of their studies which comprises:

- assignments carried out during the studies;
- final project (often an independent development project);
- assessment of teaching practice.

There is no formal procedure for assessment; it is the responsibility of the principals. Where performance is sub-standard, the principal can only try to solve it through discussions. Dismissal is very rare although a teacher may be dismissed if he/she is unable to carry out his/her duties adequately or if he/she continuously neglects them.

### **IN-SERVICE, CONTINUING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR IVET TEACHERS**

Teaching staff are obliged to participate in in-service training. For teachers in vocational upper secondary schools this is based on collective agreements for civil servants. The number of days required for in-service training varies from 1-5 outside school hours per school year depending on the vocational sector.

Teachers at vocational adult education centres are not formally required to participate in in-service training, but generally it is promoted as they have to compete with other institutions as training providers.

The National Board of Education has drawn up 2 continuing training programmes for vocational teachers, the specialist in competence-based qualifications (*näyttötutkintomestarikoulutus*) and studies for teachers to increase their competence in the world-of-work (*opettajan työelämäosaamisen opinnot*). Both are worth 23 ECTS points.

Polytechnic teachers are obliged to participate in training activities to develop their professionalism as well as familiarise themselves with the world of work.

Most continuing training is free of charge and teachers enjoy full salary benefits during their participation. Funding responsibility rests with teachers' employers, mainly local authorities. Training content is decided by individual employers.

Trainers/workplace instructors who supervise students during on-the-job learning periods in enterprises are generally experienced foremen and skilled workers. Thus they frequently have a vocational qualification, but hold no pedagogical qualifications. For some years, workplace instructors have been able to participate in 3 courses, based on curricula approved by the National Board of Education.

### **0603 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET**

CVET is mainly provided by vocational institutions and particularly adult education centres. In addition, non-certificate-oriented additional training is given in liberal adult education institutions. These centres are publicly funded and they need permission to provide education from the Ministry of Education. Their aims and duration vary considerably.

The types of teachers and trainers in CVET, including the liberal adult education institutions, are identical to those in IVET (see section 0602). The qualification requirements are mostly defined by law (Degree on Competence Requirements of Municipal Education Administration Personnel 1998/986, Polytechnics Decree 352/2003) (*Asetus opetustoimen henkilöstön kelpoisuudesta 1998/986, Valtioneuvoston asetus ammattikorkeakouluista 352/2003*).

## **07 - SKILLS AND COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGY**

### **0701 - MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS**

The “Development Plan for Education and University Research” (KESU see section 0301), which the Government approves every 4 years defines education policy guidelines. The current KESU for 2003/2008 includes development measures for each field and level of education, as well as the main definitions for education and research policy and the allocation of resources.

Quantitative skills anticipation information undertaken by the National Board of Education (supported by the Ministry of Education and the European Social Fund) was used when the KESU was prepared through the Project to Anticipate the Quantitative Educational Needs in Vocational Education and Training (MITENNA). MITENNA's objective was to collect the statistical and other information necessary for anticipating skills needs and to create a calculation model that could be applied. On the basis of results, a national forecast of educational needs was produced.

The calculation model has been used to forecast vocational training needs for 2001/2010 derived from the forecasts of changes and natural wastage in the total labour force. These forecasts were then presented for different fields of study and levels of education in qualification-oriented initial vocational education and in higher (polytechnic and university) education.

While the MITENNA project is over, the quantitative anticipation work continues at the National Board of Education. Forecasts have been extended to 2015 with the recent involvement of regional authorities.

Quantitative skills anticipation information is also provided by the Labour Force 2020 Project coordinated by the Ministry of Labour. The main aim is to anticipate economic development and the need of the labour force between years 2000/2020.

The important governmental bodies for skills anticipation are training committees and the Advisory Board for Educational Co-operation. Their task is, among others, to monitor, evaluate and anticipate the development of vocationally oriented education and training and competence required in working life in their own field.

### **0702 - BRIDGING PATHWAYS AND NEW EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

Cooperation between different levels of education has increased in Finland since the 1990s. Cooperation between basic and vocational education mainly takes the form of guidance and information provision with career counselling and a 1-week workplace guidance period in the 9<sup>th</sup> form as the central elements. Working life contacts are increased by the reformed core curriculum of the additional and voluntary 10<sup>th</sup> form, according to which pupils can focus on vocational studies more than before.

Interaction between general upper secondary schools and vocational education has also increased. The background is the legislative reform that took effect in 1999 and that obliges education providers to cooperate with other education providers. This was the basis for the so-called youth school experiment in which students had a wide variety of choice in selecting studies offered by other educational institutions.

The institution designs its education and training together with other local institutions. Thus students can include study modules from other fields and from general upper secondary schools and upper secondary vocational institutions into their qualification.

There is some unofficial cooperation between vocational institutions and polytechnics, as most polytechnics are actually former vocational institutions. Cooperation between vocational institutions and universities has traditionally been rare. Studies at an institution may be linked to local economic and working life, for example, by using representatives from these fields as external lecturers and by compiling projects of different scope and emphasis together with them. This provides students with the opportunity to participate in planning and development projects, which serve working life needs.

### **0703 - RENEWAL OF CURRICULA**

The VET curriculum consists of the national core curriculum, each institution's individual curriculum and personal study plans.

#### **NATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM**

The national core curricula constitute a legal norm for educational institutions and apply to all upper secondary vocational providers for competence-based qualifications for young and adult students.

The National Board of Education approves the qualification-specific core curricula and the requirements of each competence-based qualification. They are drawn up in co-operation with social partners in different fields, other representatives and experts of economic life as well as teachers and students.

The core curricula and the competence-based qualification requirement include the following topics: internationality, promotion of sustainable development, utilisation of technology and information technology, entrepreneurship, high-quality and customer-focused activity, consumer skills and management of occupational health and safety. They also include the following core skills: learning skills, problem-solving skills, interaction and communication skills, cooperation skills and ethical and aesthetic skills.

#### **EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS' CURRICULA**

The core curricula provide the framework for more detailed curricula which are defined in each institution's individual curriculum. Providers organise their instruction as they see fit, and may take local and changing needs into account.

Teachers themselves may choose methods to achieve objectives defined in the curriculum. They often adopt a wide range of working methods and teaching not tied to year classes, integration of theory and practice as well as co-operation and interaction between institutions in the planning and implementation of instruction. The curriculum includes:

- vocational studies and on-the-job learning (90 credits);
- studies in both national languages and a foreign language, mathematics and natural sciences, humanities and social studies, physical education and other art and practical subjects, as well as health education (20 credits);
- free-choice studies (10 credits).

Courses include a period of on-the-job learning, during which students familiarise themselves in practical assignments and achieve the objectives of the occupation as laid down in the curriculum.

## **PERSONAL STUDY PLANS**

Students are provided with personal study plans which outline what, when, and how they study.

## **MODULAR QUALIFICATIONS**

The modular qualification structure increases flexibility and options and makes it easier for students to gain credit for previous studies. Qualifications consist of large modules, which students may choose themselves and complete in the manner best suited to them.

## **08 - ACCUMULATING, TRANSFERRING AND VALIDATING LEARNING**

### **0801 - VALIDATION OF FORMAL LEARNING: GENERAL CONCEPTS AND SCHEMES**

In the mid 1990s, education providers were given greater autonomy. The National Board of Education formulated core curricula on the basis of which comprehensive schools, upper secondary schools and vocational institutes drew up their own curricula. Individual education and training providers, qualification committees or educational institutions award qualifications (there is no national body).

In terms of the validation/accreditation of formal, non-formal and informal learning this decentralization means that education providers have a great deal of freedom in applying the legislative framework. There is also separate legislation on the validation/accreditation of formal, non-formal and informal learning at universities and polytechnics, which falls within the remit of the Ministry of Education.

“Accreditation” allows a student to compensate for some necessary studies within their qualification with studies, practical work or work experience acquired elsewhere. The legislation makes this the student’s right, to some extent. Accreditation is increasingly used in VET to shorten study times and avoid an overlap of studies. It is closely linked to student assessment.

Accreditation procedures are based on the Act on Vocational Education (630/1998, amendment 601/2005). This allows for studies to be arranged differently if the student is already considered to possess some of the necessary knowledge and skills indicated in the curriculum. Students can be accredited with studies completed elsewhere provided that the objectives and main content of these studies conform with the curriculum.

Where students transfer from one qualification to another or from general upper secondary school to vocational upper secondary education and training, they can be accredited for the completed core subjects and free-choice studies, at least. Summer jobs and previous work experience can also be accredited, provided that the competence acquired through these conforms to curriculum objectives. Where necessary, the competence can be verified by skills demonstrations.

Where a student has completed a whole study module the grade acquired can be transferred. If the grading scale is different, there is a conversion formula. Where no grade has been awarded a separate assessment shall be arranged (Act 630/1998 on Vocational Education and amendment 601/2005 and Act 631/1998 Adult Vocational Education).

According to 1998 legislation, all education providers are obliged to cooperate with other education providers in the region, and the curriculum must provide students with choices to study courses at all providers. Students also have the right to be accredited for their

previous studies at other institutions when the objectives and key contents of the studies are in line with the curriculum.

## **0802 - VALIDATION AND RECOGNITION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING**

The strategy for validating non-formal and informal learning is stated in legislation and can be grouped into three practices: skill tests; validation for accessing formal education; and accreditation.

### **SKILLS TESTS**

Legislation permits comprehensive, upper secondary and initial vocational education qualifications to be acquired in tests not dependent on how the competence was acquired. It also allows for vocational skills testing (initial vocational qualifications, vocational qualifications and special vocational qualifications) and language testing.

From August 2006, skills demonstrations will be incorporated into all qualifications completed in upper secondary VET as a way to improve its quality and attractiveness. Skills demonstrations are part of the VET assessment system for students to show how well they have achieved the objectives of their vocational studies and acquired the vocational skills required by the labour market. They will be scheduled to run throughout the entire period of education and training and organised in cooperation with workplaces to ensure that they are as realistic as possible.

### **REGULATION OF ACCESS TO FORMAL EDUCATION**

Legislation allows for students to apply to formal education without the previous education or training normally required.

### **ACCREDITATION**

Legislation provides for students to be accredited for studies undertaken elsewhere to be recognised. This right is further developed in Development Plan for Education and University Research for the period 2003/2008 (*Koulutuksen ja tutkimuksen kehittämissuunnitelma 'KESU'*) which states: The procedures for recognising prior learning and experiential knowledge, the relative share of competence-based qualifications and other forms suited for adults and responding to working life needs will be increased in cooperation with training providers.

This provision has enabled older people to have their skills and knowledge gained through experience to be accredited thereby enabling them to compete with younger people who tend to have higher level qualifications.

The principle of accreditation is further supported by the introduction of competence-based qualifications and the modularisation of further vocational qualifications. Qualifications are awarded when all the modules have been taken in the form of competence-based qualifications which allow for adult students to demonstrate their vocational skills regardless of how and where they have acquired the skills. Candidates can take their exams after or during formal training or without any training at all. Tests are based on national standardised field-specific qualification guidelines.

There are 3 levels of competence-based qualifications: initial vocational qualifications (equal to that taken in the formal IVET system for young people), further vocational qualifications and specialist vocational qualifications (primarily intended for adults).

Another form of accrediting prior learning is the national language proficiency test system, developed at the beginning of the 1990s. This enables all adults to have their language skills tested regardless of where and how they have acquired the skills. National tests are arranged twice a year in 9 languages (English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Sami, Spanish and Swedish). In 2003, about 2 800 people was awarded by the National Certificates of Language Proficiency.

In polytechnic adult education, the time spent to complete a degree is usually slightly less than in regular polytechnic education, since their previous studies and work experience may be taken into account.

Accreditation is also needed for qualifications acquired in other countries. This is the responsibility of the National Board of Education (NBE). The academic recognition of qualifications involves either having foreign studies recognised as part of Finnish qualifications or gaining eligibility for further studies. All decisions of academic recognition are made at higher education institutions.

## **09 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR LEARNING, CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT**

### **0901 - STRATEGY AND PROVISION**

The educational and labour administrations are involved in guidance counselling although main responsibility lies with the educational administration. They are complemented by the careers counselling services provided through the labour administration. Guidance counselling is governed by legislation (Upper Secondary Schools Act 629/1998 and Degree 810/1996 and Act 630/1998 and Degree 811 on Vocational Education) (*Lukiolaki 629/1998 ja – asetus 630/1998 ja Asetus ammatillisesta koulutuksesta 811/1998*). Careers counselling within the labour administration is governed by the Act on Public Manpower Service (1295/2002) (*Laki julkisesta työvoimapalvelusta 1295/2002*).

There are also private operators in educational guidance including labour market organisations, associations of student counsellors and student unions. The Economic Information Office, maintained by employers' organisations, produces plenty of guidance material presenting working life and occupations and provides training for student counsellors.

Guidance counselling aims to support, help and guide pupils so that they perform as well as possible in their studies and can make correct and appropriate decisions concerning their education and career. Guidance counselling provides the abilities necessary for career choices, working life and further education.

In VET, guidance counselling provides students with support for drawing up their personal study plans. Students also receive information on the possible effects of their choices on vocational competence, further studies and job placements. Educational institutions organise counselling and guidance services for students to support their entry into working life and promote and follow job placement. Students can also receive special support when they apply for education.

The time dedicated to guidance counselling is decided by the government. The objectives and content are determined in the national core curricula approved by the National Board of Education. Each education provider decides on the practical implementation of student counselling and on the resources available.

## USE OF INTERNET RESOURCES IN GUIDANCE SERVICES

Plenty of computer-based information on educational and career opportunities is available. The labour administration maintains occupational and educational databases and local employment offices have information service units that are also used by young people. The National Board of Education runs the “Koulutusnetti” Internet database and the EDU.fi portal. It also publishes annual educational guidebooks for choices at upper secondary and higher education levels. The Ministry of Labour, in turn, maintains educational and vocational information services intended for those applying for education and training.

The “Koulutusnetti” database is a nationwide web-based service for the use of different counselling and guidance organisations and for those applying for education and training. The service contains up-to-date information on educational opportunities at different levels and in different fields of study (<http://www.oph.fi>).

EDU.fi is an educational portal for non-academic education and training in Finland published by the National Board of Education. The portal gathers together services categorised according to the different levels, fields and themes of the education and training system. Through the portal we provide a gateway also to services by other actors in Finland or abroad. (<http://www.edu.fi>)

Opintoluotsi [Study Pilot] is to help people to find information on education and training and its availability in Finland. Opintoluotsi helps people to discover and use education and training opportunities in a way that suits their individual needs (<http://www.opintoluotsi.fi>).

## 0902 - TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

Both young people and adults are the target groups for guidance services in VET. Section 0901 describes the numerous ways in which people can access career guidance and counselling services.

## GUIDANCE IN THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SECTOR

In VET, all qualifications include at least 1½ credits of guidance counselling. In addition, each student shall have the right to receive sufficient personal and other necessary educational guidance as part of their studies. Each educational institution shall attend to the guidance of students faced with study difficulties (such as dyslexia), absences from education and training or difficulties related to life management.

Guidance counselling should ensure that students:

- receive enough information on their education and training prior to its start and during it;
- receive information and experience of working life, entrepreneurship and occupations;
- familiarise themselves and are provided with the opportunity for international contacts, study and work;
- receive support for problems related to their study and lives.

Students should be provided with information on the qualifications to be completed, the composition and contents of the studies involved, as well as the studies they may choose



from other educational institutions. Students are provided with a personal study plan in accordance with their choices. All staff participates in student guidance, but the main responsibility rests with student counsellors.

Vocational institutions develop their careers and recruitment services in cooperation with local employment offices and also promote students' access to employment and further education.

#### **GUIDANCE AVAILABLE IN THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICE**

The labour administration has a wide training and vocational information service to support appropriate educational choices and job placements as well as to promote vocational development by disseminating information on educational opportunities, the content of work assignments and occupations. The labour administration organises careers counselling primarily for adults and those who have already entered working life through their employment offices. They also organise what is known as career guidance training, which is primarily intended for unemployed people and which aims to guide individuals into suitable training or to working life according to their own needs and abilities.

The labour administration provides guidance and counselling services for employed, unemployed and disadvantaged people as well as young people and adults.

#### **0903 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL**

All formal education and training providers have guidance counsellors who must have all the usual VET teacher qualifications plus at least 1 year of teaching experience.

Vocational teacher education colleges organise guidance counsellor education worth 35 credits, which qualifies teachers to work as student counsellors. Students familiarise themselves with the underlying social factors involved in student counselling as well as with methods of counselling. People fulfilling the qualifications requirements set for guidance counsellors in general education are also qualified to work as guidance counsellors at vocational institutions.

In-service training for guidance counsellors is offered mostly by universities, polytechnics, Provincial State Offices, National Board of Education and the National Centre for Professional Development in Education (OPEKO). The other important professionals involved are career psychologists, who mainly work at employment agencies. They are required to have a master's degree in psychology.

Every year, the Ministry of Labour organises specialist training (40 days) and other in-service training for career psychologists. A number of them also participate in academic post graduate training at universities. In addition, they participate, on a voluntary basis, in training in therapy and on-the-job guidance organised by different organisations.

### **10 - FINANCING - INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES**

#### **1001 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONCERNING FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING**

The Ministry of Education is responsible for funding education and training except for labour market training which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour.

Responsibility for educational funding and capital expenditure is divided between the state and local authorities (or other owners of provider). The funding criteria are the same irrespective of ownership.

State subsidies for operating costs are granted on the basis of calculations based annually on per pupil, lesson or other unit. Unit prices are scaled to allow for cost differences between various fields of education. Other factors included in the calculation are special educational needs.

The subsidy is calculated to cover 57% of operating costs. The most significant factor influencing the amount of state subsidy is the student quantity. The municipal contribution is a proportion of the educational costs of the entire country per each inhabitant of the municipality (municipality must fund students from their municipality even where they chose to study at a provider elsewhere). The state subsidy is payable to the education provider, it is not earmarked for a particular purpose. In addition, some vocational institutions are awarded performance-based funding. (The Act on the Financing of Educational and Cultural Provision 1998/635) (*Laki opetus- ja kulttuuritoimen rahoituksesta 1998/635*).

The Act on the Financing of Educational and Cultural Provision also covers most educational institutions providing adult education and training. Each year as part of the budget, the Ministry of Education confirms the maximum number of lessons or other performance indicators for each type of institution and the education provider is then granted state funding for the adult education operating costs.

Funding for the operating costs of basic education, upper secondary vocational education and training and general upper secondary education (upper secondary school) arranged for adults is granted along the same lines as for the corresponding education for young people. The local authorities participate in funding certificate-oriented adult education and training along the same lines as apply to youth level education.

A system for funding vocational additional training has been applied since the beginning of 2001. Such training is for example training preparing for vocational and special vocational qualifications as well as language proficiency tests. The education provider receives funding from the state as state subsidies and institutions offering liberal adult education, polytechnics and universities as subsidies from the Provincial State Offices.

There is a dual system for organising and funding training for the unemployed in Finland. The training is mainly provided by institutions supervised by the Ministry of Education and funded by the Ministry of Labour. The regional and local labour administration, under the Ministry of Labour, are responsible for purchasing training courses for the unemployed from a variety of training providers. The Ministry of Labour allocates the budget to the Regional Employment and Economic Development Centres (*Työvoima- ja elinkeinokeskus*). These district organisations fund employment training directly, they also allocate money to the Local Labour Offices (*työvoimatoimisto*) to acquire training locally.

## **1002 - FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

### **SCHOOL-BASED IVET**

The majority of vocational institutions (usually VET institutions) are maintained by local authorities and joint municipal boards. 18.5% are maintained by private organisations. Funding criteria are uniform irrespective of ownership.

State subsidies for operating costs are granted on the basis of calculations based annually on per pupil, lesson or other unit. Unit prices are scaled to allow for cost differences between various fields of education. Other factors included in the calculation are special educational needs.

The subsidy is calculated to cover 57% of operating costs. The most significant factor influencing the amount of state subsidy is the student quantity. The municipal contribution is a proportion of the educational costs of the entire country per each inhabitant of the municipality (municipality must fund students from their municipality even where they chose to study at a provider elsewhere). The state subsidy is payable to the education provider, it is not earmarked for a particular purpose. In addition, some vocational institutions are awarded performance-based funding. Training providers can also sell services to raise income.

The performance-based funding system was started in 2002 when education providers were granted separate state subsidies based on their performance. In 2006, the performance-based funding system changed and expanded. Now it is part of the unit price determination basis in the funding of 2006 in accordance with the government bill (HE88/2005). The performance-based funding answers for approximately 2.0% (roughly 20 million €) of the whole funding of vocational education.

The allocation of performance-based funding distribution is based on the performance-based funding index, which has been combined from the following indicators:

- a. Effectiveness (job placement and further studies);
- b. Processes (dropping out, % ratio of qualification certificate holders to entrants);
- c. Staff (formal teaching qualifications and staff development).

When the performance-based funding index is calculated, indicators are assigned different weights of importance, as shown in the table below.

<b>Table 1: Indicators of performance-based funding for upper secondary vocational education and training in 2002</b>		
<b>INDICATORS</b>	<b>WEIGHT OF INDICATOR IN 2002</b>	
<b>EFFECTIVENESS</b>	Job placement	40%
	Further studies (in higher education)	15%
<b>PROCESSES</b>	Dropping out	15%
	% ratio of qualification certificate holders to entrants	13%
<b>STAFF</b>	Formal teaching qualifications	11%
	Staff development	6%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Finnish National Board of Education

In 2004, total operating costs of vocational institutions amounted to € 1 107 million: the average unit costs per student were € 8 467.

Instruction is usually free of charge at all levels of education. Basic education is completely free of charge for pupils, but with higher levels of education, students may have to pay for study materials, meals and transport. Students receive financial aid for full-time post-basic studies lasting at least 2 months. It's payable for studies at upper secondary schools, folk high schools, vocational institutions, polytechnics or universities through to doctorate level. Financial aid is also available for study abroad. Financial aid comprises a study grant, a housing supplement and a government-guaranteed student loan. There is an adult study grant for mature students, which is determined on different criteria.

Click on the link below to see the flow of funding through the school-based IVT institutional structure.

[Flow of funding through the school-based IVT institutional structure](#)

#### **APPRENTICESHIP**

The state is responsible for funding for apprenticeship training: it accounts for 80 % of the unit price confirmed by the Ministry of Education which are confirmed separately for upper secondary (IVET) and additional vocational training (CVT).

The state funding covers costs caused by school-based education period and training at the work place. The wages of the apprentices are paid by the employers.

In 2004, total expenditure on apprenticeship training amounted to about € 129 million (state funding). The costs per student for apprenticeship training leading to upper secondary vocational qualifications (IVET) stood at about € 4 873 in 2004. The costs of additional training (CVT) per student amounted to about € 3 057.

The state grants training compensation for the employers, which is compensation for the given training at the workplace. The amount of training compensation paid to the employer is agreed upon separately for each apprenticeship contract before the contract is approved.

The apprentice is entitled to a wage during the time spent at work. The apprentice's wage is paid by the employer on the basis of the collective labour agreement in force in the field concerned. The pay varies in different fields, but is in practice about 80% of the wages of a skilled worker in that particular field. The employer is not obligated to pay wages for the time spent in theoretical training, unless otherwise agreed.

See below the following figure.

[Flow of funding through IVT apprenticeship training](#)

#### **OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES: WORKSHOPS**

The workshop programmes offer young people (under the age of 25) and adults practical work-related training as well as guidance and support although they are not a formal part of the Finnish educational system and cannot award formal qualifications. Workshops have, however, become an important tool for providing training for people at risk of social exclusion to assist their integration into working life and society in general.

As the workshop programmes do not have official status, no detailed statistical data on their activities exists. Most workshops are owned by municipalities and they are primarily funded by municipalities and the labour administration. There is no covering information about the financing.

### **1003 - FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING**

The Act on the Financing of Educational and Cultural Provision also covers most educational institutions providing adult education and training. Each year as part of the budget, the Ministry of Education confirms the maximum number of lessons or other performance indicators for each type of institution and the education provider is then granted state funding for the adult education operating costs.

Funding for the operating costs of basic education, upper secondary vocational education and training and general upper secondary education (upper secondary school) arranged for adults is granted along the same lines as for the corresponding education for young people. The local authorities participate in funding certificate-oriented adult education and training along the same lines as apply to youth level education.

A system for funding vocational additional training has been applied since the beginning of 2001. Such training is for example training preparing for vocational and special vocational qualifications as well as language proficiency tests. The education provider receives funding from the state as state subsidies and institutions offering liberal adult education, polytechnics and universities as subsidies from the Provincial State Offices.

Provincial State Offices, which represent the intermediate level of administration, decide on the allocation of appropriations related to the programme to improve the educational level of the adult population during the years 2003 to 2007. The prime aim of the programme, which has been granted €30 million in 2006, is to raise the educational level of adults with low educational attainments.

State funding for the operating costs of non-formal adult education is granted according to specific funding criteria for each type of institution. The local authorities have no statutory obligation to participate in covering these costs.

It is also possible for the institutions providing adult education to receive discretionary state subsidy for investments depending on the decision of the Ministry of Education and within the limits of the state budget.

Vocational adult education centres (a total of 45) and national specialised vocational institutions (8) receive operating subventions for education provided as chargeable services, which account for 10% of the average operating costs in the three previous years.

Vocational institutions may arrange upper secondary vocational education and training for adults. The financing system of adult education and training is similar to that of upper secondary vocational education and training for young people. Adult education in polytechnics observes the same principles as other polytechnic education. Music institutions provide young people and adults with basic and vocational education and training in music.

In addition, vocational education is provided by liberal adult education institutions. Folk high schools are maintained by private organisations and foundations, local authorities and joint municipal boards. Adult education centres are mostly maintained by local authorities. Study centres are maintained by private organisations and foundations.

In 2000, about 56% of gainfully employed people participated in in-service training. Generally speaking, the enterprises are themselves responsible for how much they invest in in-service training.

In 2001, the average training costs of industrial enterprises were equivalent to 3.2% of the wages and salaries paid. Over a corresponding period of time (in 2002), employers in the private services sector spent a sum equivalent to 3.4% of their payroll costs on in-service training. This data is based on educational needs surveys conducted by the Confederation of Finnish Industry and Employers (TT) and the Employers' Confederation of Service Industries (PT) among their members. (TT data covers 2001, while PT data covers 2000).

According to the business enterprises that responded to TT's educational survey, public support for staff development accounted for 6.7% of total costs in 2001.

Some sectors of trade and industry maintain their own institutions, which are called "Institutions for Specialised Training" (*Ammatilliset erikoisoppilaitokset*). These institutions (a total of 42) receive a state subsidy, which is included in the funding figures for central government above. In addition the financing of Institutions for Specialised Training is composed of funding from the owner, the revenue from selling products and services and from trainee fees.

Table 1: Cost of CVT courses as % of total labour cost (all enterprises), by type of cost (1999)			
	TOTAL COSTS	DIRECT COSTS	LABOUR COSTS OF PARTICIPANTS
EU-15	2.3	1.4	0.8
FINLAND	2.4	1.3	1.1

**Total costs:** sum of direct costs, staff time costs and balance of contributions to national or regional training funds and receipts from national or other funding arrangements

**Direct costs:** costs of CVT courses

Source: Eurostat, Newcronos, 2<sup>nd</sup> continuing vocational training survey in enterprises (CVTS).

#### **1004 - FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHER GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE LABOUR MARKET**

Within the framework of the state budget allocation, the labour administration acquires employment training mainly for unemployed people and for those at risk of unemployment. Training for these groups is provided by Adult Vocational Training Centres, IVT institutions, universities and other providers of training.

There is a dual system for organising and funding training for unemployed people as it is mainly provided by institutions supervised by the Ministry of Education but funded by the Ministry of Labour. The regional and local labour administrations (under the Ministry of Labour) are responsible for purchasing training courses for unemployed people from a variety of training providers. The Ministry of Labour allocates the budget to the Regional Employment and Economic Development Centres (*Työvoima- ja elinkeinokeskus*). These

fund employment training directly and also allocate money to Local Labour Offices (*työvoimatoimisto*) to acquire training locally.

Employers can also contribute to the financing of employment training with the labour administration. This kind of co-financing arrangement can be used when a company is restructuring its production and needs to hire personnel with new skills and/or needs to re-train its existing staff. The employer and the local labour office negotiate on the level of co-funding. This arrangement represents a minor share of total employment training.

Participants receive normal unemployment benefits which include a training grant or labour market grant plus maintenance and accommodation reimbursement. The training grant is divided into basic and income-based shares.

In 2004, € 194 billion was spent on training for unemployed people and there were approximately 69 800 participants and 54 200 people who completed their training. EU programmes have brought a new element to national employment policies. The Objective 3 programme of the European Social Fund is a development programme to seek, experiment with and produce new solutions and to disseminate good practices to labour, industrial and education policies. The programme emphasises:

- promoting the retention of older workers at work;
- developing working communities to match the level of technological change;
- breaking down the gender-based division of work on labour, education and training markets;
- preventing unemployment and exclusion;
- preventing labour force bottlenecks;
- increasing lifelong learning;
- developing training models compatible with working life.

The total budget for 2000/2006 is € 1 510 million, of which the EU share accounts for € 410 million. National funding comes from the national budget (€ 540 million), from the municipal sector (€ 85 million), from private funding (estimated € 460 million). The objective of the programme is to provide work and training for about 250 000 people.

#### **1005 - PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES: FROM FUNDING TO INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES**

In Finland, vocational education and training are primarily financed through public funds. This will continue to be the main form of funding in the future as well, although there are also ongoing discussions about increasing the share of financial contributions from employers and individuals.

Decentralisation of educational administration has been a key line of education policy since the 1990s. Education policy decision-making powers have been increasingly distributed from central government to education providers. This also applies to funding: education providers have relatively extensive powers to decide on the use of their funds.

In recent years, attention has also focused on the effectiveness and quality of vocational education and training. A new key initiative in this area is the performance-based funding system that became effective in 2002.

Funding received from the European Union has diversified the funding model for vocational education and training. EU funding is mainly used to finance development projects related to upper secondary and additional VET. In addition, EU aid is allocated to training intended for unemployed people.

A key source of EU funding is the ESF Objective 3 programme. Some funds are also channelled through the Leonardo da Vinci programme. In all, EU funding accounts for quite a small proportion of the total funding of upper secondary and additional VET and training for the unemployed.

## **11 - EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS, TOWARDS AN OPEN AREA OF LIFELONG LEARNING**

### **1101 - NATIONAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO POLICY PRIORITIES, PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES AT EU LEVEL**

The concept of lifelong learning is declared to be one of the main principles underlying the development of Finnish education. Its specific aims are geared to improving the following in terms of lifelong learning: the basic educational level of young people in the transition from school to working life, the basic educational level of the middle-aged; learning ability at all ages; learning opportunities available to senior citizens; formal recognition of skills and knowledge obtained outside education institutions; developing the co-operation between education and training and world of work; educational information and counselling; the criteria for funding education institutions; prevention of exclusion; recognition of learning difficulties and the enhancement of teaching skills.

The process of European integration will bring Finland ever closer into the international economic and political community. Globalisation has a significant impact on education and research. This means growing challenges for people's general education, cooperative and interaction skills, language proficiency and cultural knowledge. These challenges have been emphasised in the main educational policy paper, the Development Plan for Education and University Research 2003/2008 (*Koulutus ja tutkimuksen kehittämissuunnitelma 2003/2008 'KESU'*).

In the field of VET, Finnish educational institutions and organisations have actively participated in the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme. The coordination of networks like Cedefop ReferNet, TTnet and study visit programme as well as Eurydice, Eurostat working group on education and training statistics and the National Reference Points for Vocational Qualifications (NRP) are placed in the Finnish National Board of Education.

Finland is involved in educational cooperation between the Nordic and Baltic Countries as well as Russia. In addition, Finland has concluded bilateral cultural exchange agreements with several European countries. These agreements include exchange of people from different sectors of culture and cultural events. Finland participates actively in several projects of OECD like indicator project INES, PISA, Schooling for tomorrow and so on.

The Finnish National Board of Education is responsible for the recognition of foreign qualifications and developing transparency of qualifications at national level. The NRP as well as the ENIC (European Network of National Information Centres on Academic Recognition) and NARIC (Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres) are international information networks which promote the recognition of foreign qualifications, which are placed at the Finnish National Board of Education. The Finnish National Board of Education has produced Certificate Supplements and model certificates for vocational qualifications and is the Finnish liaison office for the development of Europass.



## **1102 - IMPACT OF EUROPEANISATION/INTERNATIONALISATION ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

The objective of internationalisation within VET is to improve the quality of education and training and to make Finnish education and training and working life known in other countries. The aim is to increase the international readiness of teachers, to improve conditions for student mobility, to increase the number of study periods and on-the-job learning periods abroad and to participate actively in European cooperation.

Internationalisation is one of the seven commonly emphasised objectives mentioned in the National Core Curriculum for upper secondary VET. The aims are for students to manage in a multi-cultural environment and to be tolerant and capable in languages, to be able to participate in student exchanges and to find placements in the international labour market.

In upper secondary VET, both national languages (Finnish and Swedish) are compulsory as is a foreign language. The core curriculum also states that students can complete part of their on-the-job-learning abroad (under 1999 legislation). According to law, education providers must co-operate with other education providers in the region, and the curriculum must provide students with choices of studies from all providers. Students also have the right to be accredited for their previous studies at other institutions when the objectives and key contents of the studies are in line with the curriculum (Upper Secondary Schools Act 629/1998 and Act 630/1998 on Vocational Education). In practice, this means that studies taken abroad can be accredited.

The guidance and counselling system is one way in which students familiarise themselves with and are provided with opportunity for international contacts, study and work.

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Act on the Financing of Educational and Cultural Provision (*Laki opetus- ja kulttuuritoimen rahoituksesta, Lag om finansiering av undervisnings- och kulturverksamhet*), 635/1998.

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Internet-sources for further information

Ministries and national agencies

Finnish Government

<http://www.vn.fi>

Ministry of Education

<http://www.minedu.fi>

Ministry of Labour

<http://www.mol.fi>

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

<http://www.stm.fi>

Ministry of Finance

<http://www.vm.fi>

Ministry of the Interior (links to the web-sites of the provinces)

<http://www.intermin.fi>

Finnish National Board of Education

<http://www.oph.fi>

Centre for International Mobility CIMO

<http://www.cimo.fi>

Statistics Finland

[http://www.stat.fi/index\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/index_en.html)

Leonardoprogramme in Finland

<http://www.leonardodavinci.fi>

(Coordinated by the Centre for International Mobility CIMO <http://www.cimo.fi>)

## **Central Labour Market Organisations**

The Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)

[http://www.ek.fi/ek\\_englanti/index.php](http://www.ek.fi/ek_englanti/index.php)

Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK)

<http://www.sak.fi/>

The Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees (STTK)

<http://www.sttk.fi>

Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ)

<http://www.oaj.fi>

## **Research institutions**

University of Jyväskylä, Institute for Educational Research  
<http://ktl.jyu.fi/ktl/english>

Research Unit for the Sociology of Education (RUSE), University of Turku  
<http://www.soc.utu.fi/RUSE/>

Work Research Centre, University of Tampere  
<http://www.uta.fi/laitokset/tyoelama/WRC.html>

Government Institute for Economic Research (VATT)  
<http://www.vatt.fi/english/index.htm>

Åbo Akademi University  
<http://www.abo.fi/aa/engelska/index.sht>