

Finland / written by Jaakko Kauko

Country overview

Before Finland's independence in 1917, the moderate expansion of formal education was boosted by industrialisation and urbanization. After the Second World War the creation of a Nordic-style welfare state with economic growth rapidly expanded all levels of education. Today Finnish education is universally provided, funded by the state, and free from the pre-primary level.

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC, ISCED 0) includes pre-primary education for six-year-olds, and integrated ECEC services before that. Compulsory nine-year comprehensive schools cover primary and lower secondary education (ISCED 1-2). Three years of upper secondary education (ISCED 3-4) are organized by general or vocational institutions. Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS), both have three-year bachelor and two-year master's programmes (ISCED 6-7). Doctoral degrees (ISCED 8) can be pursued only in universities. There are no transition dead-ends. Liberal adult education is widely offered.

The Parliament has the legislative power over education. Government can draft legislation and it implements the reforms. Ministry of Education and Culture has the main responsibilities over general national planning. Finnish National Agency of Education plans the core curriculum from ECEC until upper secondary education. Regional authorities have tasks in relation to planning and complaints.

Municipalities are the main providers of ECEC, and primary and secondary education. There is also a small proportion of private providers, though growing in ECEC. Each education provider drafts a curriculum based on the national core curriculum.

Universities are either corporations under public law or private foundations, they are autonomous; UAS are non-profit limited companies. Most of higher education funding is provided by the state.

Student and institutional evaluation is done by an independent agency, the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre. All education providers are also required to evaluate their education. Evaluation is used for development purposes and not for inciting competition or top-down governance.

Statistical information

GDP (current US\$)

World Bank national accounts data, and OECD National Accounts data files.

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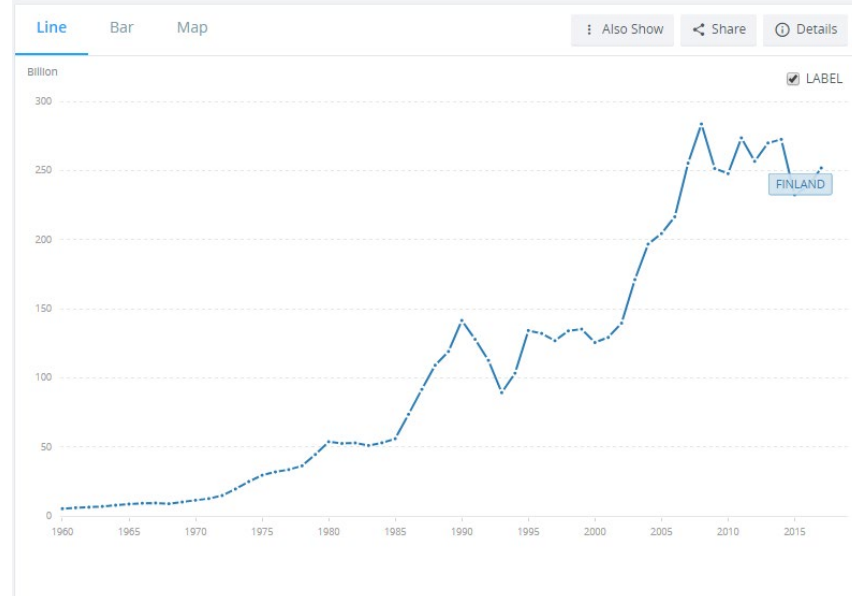


Figure one: World Bank <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=FI>

School enrollment, primary (% gross)

UNESCO Institute for Statistics

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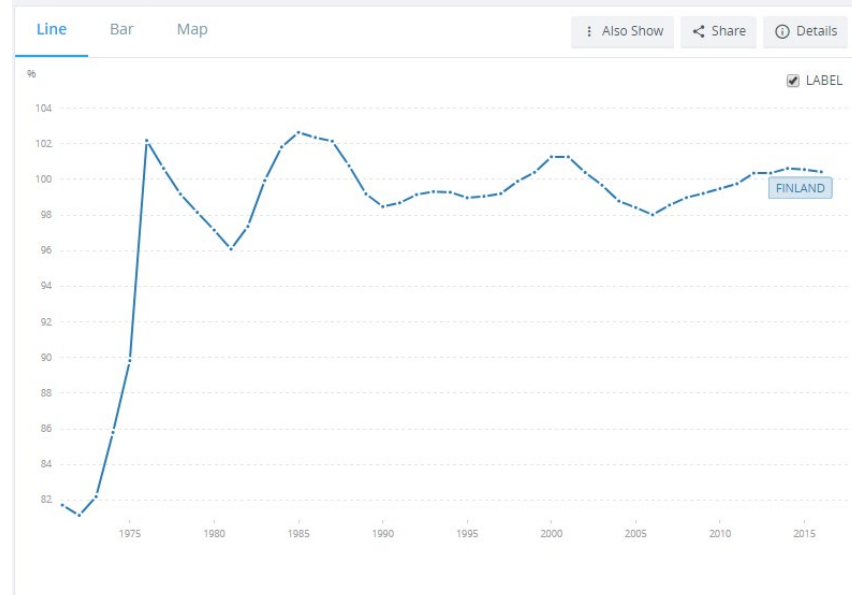


Figure two: World Bank <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.ENRR?locations=FI>

Life expectancy at birth, total (years)

(1) United Nations Population Division. World Population Prospects: 2017 Revision, or derived from male and female life expectancy at birth from sources such as: (2) Census reports and other statistical publications from national statistical offices, (3) Eurostat: Demographic Statistics, (4) United Nations Statistical Division. Population and Vital Statistics Reprint (various years), (5) U.S. Census Bureau: International Database, and (6) Secretariat of the Pacific Community: Statistics and Demography Programme.

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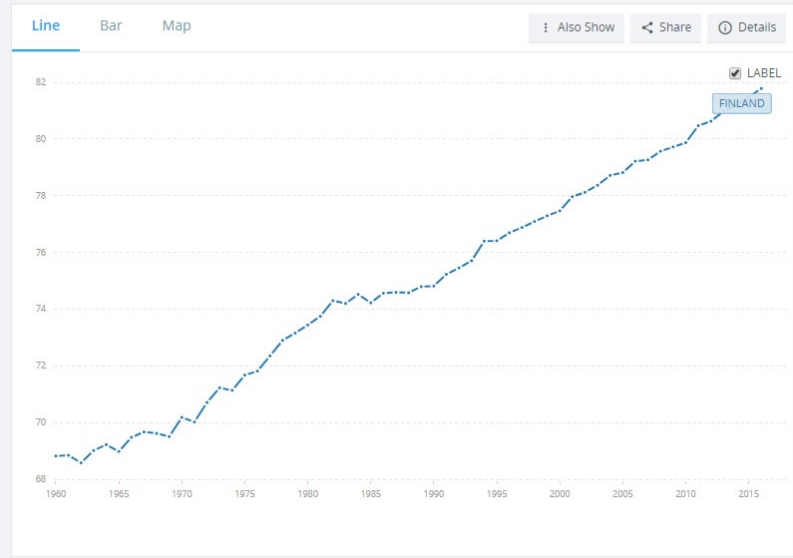


Figure three: World Bank <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?locations=FI>

Population, total

(1) United Nations Population Division. World Population Prospects: 2017 Revision. (2) Census reports and other statistical publications from national statistical offices, (3) Eurostat: Demographic Statistics, (4) United Nations Statistical Division. Population and Vital Statistics Reprint (various years), (5) U.S. Census Bureau: International Database, and (6) Secretariat of the Pacific Community: Statistics and Demography Programme.

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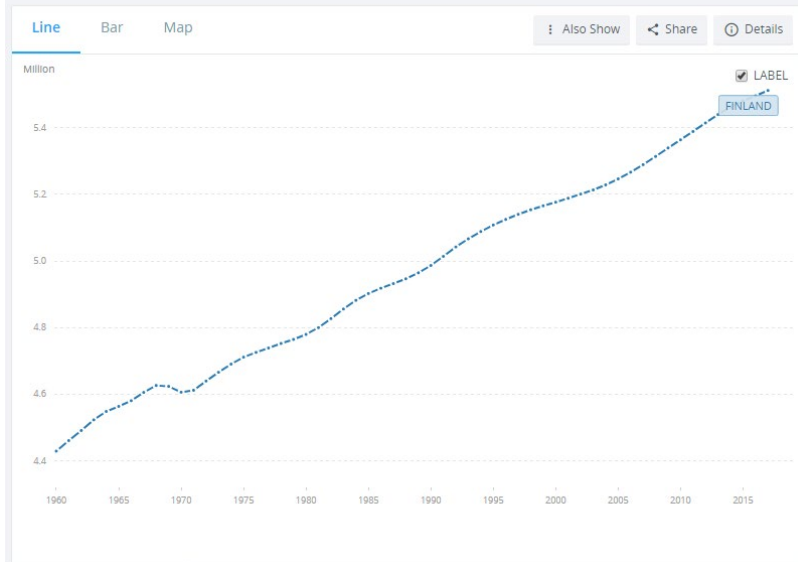


Figure four: World Bank <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=FI>

Table one: Statistics Finland 2018, Educational institutions of the school system and numbers of students by type of educational institution in 2017

http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til/kjarj/2017/kjarj_2017_2018-02-13_tie_001_en.html

Type of educational institution	Number	Students
Comprehensive schools	2 276	539 600
Comprehensive school level special education schools	73	4 400
Upper secondary general schools	340	109 500
Comprehensive and upper secondary general level schools	41	28 100
Vocational institutes	96	179 100
Special needs vocational institutes	6	5 100
Specialised vocational institutes	26	30 500
Vocational adult education centres	20	27 600
Fire, police and security service institutes	1	200
Military vocational institutes	6	..
Universities of applied sciences	25	144 900
Universities	14	157 800
Military academies	1	1 000
Music schools and colleges	84	64 100
Sports institutes	14	9 000
Folk high schools	73	18 100
Adult education centres	181	464 400
Study circle centres	12	30 700
Summer universities	20	31 600
Other educational institutions	6	400
Total	3 315	1 846 100

Table two: Current expenditure on regular education system by type of expenditure 2016, Statistics Finland (http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til/kotal/2016/kotal_2016_2018-05-09_tie_001_en.html)

Type of expenditure	EUR million	%
Pre-primary education ¹⁾	361	3,0
Comprehensive school education	4 691	38,4
Upper secondary general education	730	6,0
Vocational education	1 749	14,3
Apprenticeship training	142	1,2
University of applied sciences education	916	7,5
University education and research ²⁾	2 284	18,7
Other education	474	3,9
Financial aid for students	866	7,1
Total	12 213	100,0

1) Pre-primary education for 6-year-old children (pre-school education) in daycare centres and comprehensive schools.

2) Includes universities' external financing for research.

Table three, Statistics Finland 2018, Population with educational qualification by level of education, field of education and gender 2017, http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/til/vkour/2017/vkour_2017_2018-11-02_tie_001_en.html

Field of education	Level of education							
	Tota	Upper	Post-	Terti	Short-	Bachel	Master	Doctor

Gender		l	second ary educat ion	second ary non- tertiar y educat ion	ary level total	cycle tertiar y educat ion	or's or equival ent level	's or equiva lent level	al or equiva lent level
Total	Total	3 334 648	1 863 943	38 429	1 432 276	436 426	518 969	431 146	45 735
	Wo men	1 726 666	885 689	17 929	823 048	268 435	292 374	241 915	20 324
Generic programm es and qualificati ons	Total	307 607	307 60 7	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wom en	147 687	147 68 7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	Total	102 110	1 750	591	99 76 9	11 191	40 128	46 231	2 219
	Wom en	79 7 64	643	113	79 00 8	10 081	30 628	36 787	1 512
Arts and humanities	Total	187 143	58 133	913	128 0 97	6 642	43 083	72 945	5 427
	Wom en	126 499	33 039	474	92 98 6	4 213	31 413	54 523	2 837
Social sciences, journalism and informatio n	Total	75 9 98	517	-	75 48 1	3 827	15 389	51 038	5 227
	Wom en	49 8 09	394	-	49 41 5	2 276	9 983	34 307	2 849
Business, administra tion and law	Total	545 948	177 01 9	16 212	352 7 17	190 00 9	91 014	68 879	2 815
	Wom en	368 232	125 55 3	6 195	236 4 84	137 36 5	61 154	36 787	1 178
Natural sciences, mathemati cs and statistics	Total	51 9 80	2 666	56	49 25 8	-	7 699	32 734	8 825
	Wom en	27 1 20	1 272	28	25 82 0	-	4 171	18 084	3 565
Informatio n and Communi cation Technolog ies (ICT)	Total	116 985	37 692	595	78 69 8	14 530	39 549	22 381	2 238
	Wom en	23 4 22	5 209	107	18 10 6	5 652	7 534	4 519	401
Engineerin g,	Total	903 014	622 48 5	6 242	274 2 87	75 486	121 52 5	69 717	7 559

manufacturing and construction	Women	146 621	104 777	1 307	40 537	5 599	18 018	15 162	1 758
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	Total	136 701	95 238	796	40 667	14 007	13 910	11 351	1 399
	Women	47 636	32 054	245	15 337	3 370	5 460	5 793	714
Health and welfare	Total	494 223	225 667	2 991	265 565	95 334	116 174	44 461	9 596
	Women	431 416	199 503	2 669	229 244	88 021	103 668	32 223	5 332
Services	Total	408 048	333 328	10 033	64 687	24 892	29 464	10 075	256
	Women	275 909	234 685	6 791	34 433	11 586	19 763	2 982	102
Unknown	Total	4 891	1 841	-	3 050	508	1 034	1 334	174
	Women	2 551	873	-	1 678	272	582	748	76

Country profile:

http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=FIN

Regional Editor

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Jaakko Kauko, PhD, MSocSc, is Professor in Education Policy at the Faculty of Education and Culture, Tampere University, Finland. His research focuses on politics and policymaking in education and questions related to comparative education. His latest publications include a final report, edited together with Risto Rinne and Tuomas Takala, from a comparative research project *Politics of Quality in Education: A Comparative Study of Brazil, China, and Russia* (Routledge 2018), and from 2017 a Routledge monograph together with Hannu Simola, Janne Varjo, Mira Kalalahti, and Fritjof Sahlström titled *Dynamics in Education Politics: Understanding and Explaining the Finnish Case*.