



## Education system & special education system in Finland and other countries which participated in course **FINLAND**

- \* Basic education encompasses nine years and caters for all those between 7 and 16 years. Schools do not select their students. Every student is allocated a place in a nearby school, but they can also choose another school with some restrictions.
- \* All schools follow a national core curriculum, which includes the objectives and core contents of different subjects. The education providers, usually the local education authorities and the schools themselves draw up their own curricula within the framework of the national core curriculum.
- \* In Finland education is free at all levels from pre-primary to higher education
- \* In pre-primary and basic education the books, daily meal and transportation (over 5 km) are free for the parents
- \* At secondary level and in higher education books are not free
- \* At secondary level the students have right to a free meal and in higher education meals are subsidised by the state
- \* Adult education is the only form of education that may require payment, but there is a well-developed system of study grants and loans
- \* The current thinking in Finland is that the potential of each pupil should be maximised
- \* Guidance and counselling aims to support, help and guide pupils and students so they can all perform as well as possible in their studies and be able to make correct decisions concerning their education and careers
- \* Guidance and counselling is seen as the work of all education personnel

### Special needs education in Finland

- \* The ideology is to provide special needs education primarily in mainstream education
- \* If a pupil cannot be taught in a regular teaching group, he or she can have a place in a special education group
- \* This education is provided at regular schools wherever possible
- \* In Finland we have some special education schools (hardly handicaps, visually impaired etc.)
- \* 1. General support
- \* All pupils have the right to have guidance and support from all education personnel (teachers, special education teachers, school assistants)
- \* 2. Intensified support
- \* Must be given to those pupils who need regular several forms of support at the same time
- \* The aim is to prevent existing problems from becoming more serious or expansive



- \* 3. Special support
- \* Systematic help from special education teacher so the pupils can complete compulsory education and be eligible for upper secondary education

### **Systems of education in other European countries worth imitating**

- \* **Belgium**

Belgium has four different genres of secondary schools, namely general secondary schools, technical secondary schools, vocational secondary education schools, and art secondary education institutions. The Fulbright Commission in the US, which organises student exchanges with Belgium and Luxembourg says: "Education enjoys high priority, and the largest share of the regional governments' annual budget in Belgium. Complete systems of public and private schools are available to all children between the ages of 4 and 18, at little or no cost."

- \* **Netherlands**

Dutch children were found to be the happiest in the world in a 2013 Unicef study, leading the way globally educational well-being among others. Schools typically don't give much homework until secondary level and students report little pressure and stress. Schools are divided between faith schools and "neutral" state schools, with only a small number of private schools.

- \* **Estonia**

Estonia spends around 4% of its GDP on education, according to 2015 figures. The country's 1992 Education Act says that the goals of education are "to create favourable conditions for the development of personality, family and the Estonian nation; to promote the development of ethnic minorities, economic, political and cultural life in Estonia and the preservation of nature in the global economic and cultural context; to teach the values of citizenship; and to set up the prerequisites for creating a tradition of lifelong learning nation-wide."

### **Course KA1 Every pupil is important - special education in Finland**

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References:

resources from the course

[www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk)