

Finland - Future of Education Government Initiative



Background and Purpose

The rapid global and local shifts in technology and economy, as well as profound social and ecological crises are reshaping the world around the field of education at an unprecedented pace. At the same time, educational outcomes and well-being of young people have been declining in several countries, including Finland. In response, Finland has initiated the Future of Education project (2024–2025) to address the pressing need for long-term strategic vision for basic education (*peruskoulu*). The project is a key initiative under the Finnish government's 2023–2027 program. Besides the national goals, participation in international educational networks, such as the OECD's High-Performing Systems for Tomorrow initiative, facilitates the inclusion of global perspectives on the purpose of education, the exchange of innovative solutions and shared future-making.

Project Objectives And Goals

The project will establish an inclusive national vision for the Finnish basic education, setting a direction vector for strategic development for 2045. The goal of the vision is to enable taking action today in order to shape the future, by reiterating the purpose of education and redefining national objectives: to equip students with future competencies and to utilize the transformative power of education to support sustainable future paths for the society. The focus is especially in strengthening pupils' competences, supporting meaningful life and well-being through education, providing hope and agency for the young people and in finding new ways to respect the planetary boundaries and social sustainability.

Implementation Framework

The project is coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Culture in collaboration with the Finnish National Agency for Education, Chaired by Education Minister Anders Adlercreutz and executed under the leadership of Permanent Secretary Anita Lehtikainen. It engages a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including researchers, educators, policymakers, and students. Based on various modes of collaboration and engagement of citizens and stakeholders, the vision is compiled by a delegation, consisting of 46 professionals from different fields. The Future of Education Delegation is led by researcher Katri Saarikivi. A parliamentary monitoring group strengthens the work's alignment with national goals. The Future of Education project is supported by two other shorter term development projects under the Government Programme, and tied to curriculum development process in the National Agency for Education to ensure its ties to practice.

Core Themes

The vision work cooperation in the Delegation is divided in three working groups organised under core themes.

- **Artificial Intelligence and Technology:** Led by Senior Specialist Tarmo Toikkanen (Sitra), this theme explores how technological advancements, especially AI, can revolutionize educational content, delivery, and outcomes, as well as redefine the goals of meaningful education and human development.
- **Competences and Learning:** Under the guidance of Professor Mari-Paullina Vainikainen (Tampere University), this theme focuses on methodologies to improve foundational skills and to develop new competences, address meaningful education for both pupils and teachers and improve equity in education.
- **Ecological and Social Sustainability:** Professor Jukka Käyhkö (University of Turku) leads efforts to rebalance the relationship with planetary boundaries through education, emphasizing resilience and cohesion in diverse societies.

Participatory Approach And Vision Cocreation

The project aims at inclusivity through methods of cocreation and employs collaborative methodologies such as inclusive dialogues (national “Erätauko”-dialogue method), online forums in several languages, seminars and “vision headline” art activities for pupils to gather input from diverse stakeholders. Key activities include:

- **Online Brainstorming Platform:** This allows citizens to contribute ideas and perspectives, and the brainstorming platform in September 2024 collected nearly 4000 responses from teachers, pupils, parents, researchers and citizens.
- **National and Regional Dialogues:** Events across Finland ensure grassroots-level engagement. 6 large dialogue events have been held during autumn 2024, and there are two more to come in spring 2025, including themes such as Sami education and immigrant perspectives to Finnish schools.
- **International Collaboration:** Dialogues with international collaborators and representatives of other education systems enhance the project’s global relevance and exchange of ideas.

Project Timeline

Milestone	Timeframe
Project Launch	January 2024
Delegation Seminars and Workshops	Every 3 months throughout 2024-2025
Online Brainstorming Platform	September 2024
National Dialogues	Autumn 2024/ Spring 2025
Project Collaboration Webpage	December 2024-April 2025
Vision Draft and Cocreation Platforms	Spring 2025
Final Vision Report Publication and Seminar	December 2025

The Finnish Education System in A Nutshell

The Finnish educational system is divided between national governance and local municipal provision. The Ministry of Education and Culture sets the legislation and core policies, and the National Agency for Education sets the national core curriculum and steering agenda for primary and lower secondary education. The national core curriculum contains the objectives and contents of subjects and the principles of pupil assessment, special needs education, pupil welfare and educational guidance. Schools are nationally funded, but local municipalities run schools and receive the funding and

More Information and Web Participation

Info and participation web page (in Finnish/Swedish, please utilize web translation):

<https://okm.fi/tulevaisuusto/osallistu>

Ministry information web page (in Finnish/Swedish, please utilize web translation):

<https://okm.fi/tulevaisuusto>

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