



**GOVERNMENT  
KEY PROJECT**

# **TEACHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

# THE WORLD'S MOST COMPETENT TEACHERS

Finland has competent teachers. Teacher education is of high quality and attractive. We can be proud about this.

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However, future challenges and rapid changes in the society have presented the competent teachers and the teacher education with new challenges.

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The Teacher Education Development Programme responds to these challenges. The programme outlines the objectives and measures that ensure that Finnish teacher education will remain strong, attractive and internationally appreciated.

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Valuing the teacher education and teachers as well as a teacher identity that creates new outcomes are important for the future of Finland.

#opettajankoulutusfoorumi





## OBJECTIVES

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*Finnish teachers are future-oriented and broad-based experts who create new pedagogical innovations and diversely utilise new learning environments. They are constantly developing their own competence and their working community.*

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*Teachers have in-depth knowledge of their field, pedagogical aptitude and knowledge of values. Teachers have courage to develop and experiment with things. They have the ability to apply new teaching innovations and skill to change their own actions.*

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*Teachers use the latest research and evaluations in developing themselves, their working community and their educational institution.*

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*Teachers' work is supported by an extensive network, which the teachers can use to seek help from others as well as share and combine their competence at the national and international level.*

# VISION: CREATING THE BEST COMPETENCE FOR THE WORLD TOGETHER

A number of significant changes have occurred in the operating environment of educational institutions, demanding and encouraging developing teacher education.

In January 2016, the Ministry of Education and Culture appointed the Teacher Education Forum to reform the basic, introductory and continuing training of teachers. Nearly 100 members and experts of the Teacher Education Forum and its divisions have participated in working on the Teacher Education Development Programme. In addition, nearly two thousand experts in the education sector, as well as students and teachers participated in preparing the development programme through an online think tank.

The results of the forum and the think tank, expert consultations as well as topical research on teachers and teacher education were utilised in preparing the development programme.

The development programme answers the following questions: What kind of education and competence is needed in the future and how is this learned? How does change influence the teacher education? What is the common core of the teacher identity? What do all teachers have in common across different ages, education levels and subject boundaries?

The strategic guidelines of the Teacher Education Development Programme determine the direction of teacher education in Finland and development of competence during the teaching career. The guidelines apply to all teachers, including early childhood education and kindergarten, pre-primary, primary, subject and special needs teachers, guidance counsellors as well as teachers in vocational education and training, adult education, higher education institutions and liberal adult education.

**THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC GUIDELINES DETERMINE THE DIRECTION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER TRAINING:**



## 1. TEACHER'S COMPETENCE INTO AN ENTITY

**Teacher's competence will be compiled into a systematic entity by reforming the structures, objectives and operating methods of teacher education.**

**The development of competence will be led with a goal-oriented approach, utilising development plans.**

- **TEACHER** educators will renew the structures, objectives and operating methods of teacher education in collaboration. Activities supporting the development of teachers' competence form a needs-based and goal-oriented entity. This entity includes admissions, basic education and introductory training as well as development of professional competence and learning during the career.
- **TEACHER** educators collaborate in order to crystallise the shared pedagogical competence of teachers from early childhood education, basic and upper secondary education and vocational education and training all the way to adult education, liberal adult education and higher education. Subject-specific and special professional and other necessary competence will be defined separately for each sector.
- **EDUCATORS** in higher education institutions and all vocational teachers will strengthen their pedagogical competence. Liberal adult education teachers are encouraged to obtain pedagogical qualifications.
- **MENTORING** and peer support models will be established as a systematic part of teacher education as a whole.

- **TEACHER** students begin building the paths of continuous learning during their studies. Teacher students will participate in developing and renewing their education at all levels.
- **COMPETENCE** management will be goal-oriented. Higher education institutions and educational institutions will prepare competence development plans in collaboration with their staff. The plans will be founded on the vision, needs and estimate of competence of the education providers and educational institutions.

## 2. ATTRACTIVE TEACHER EDUCATION WITH WELL-FUNCTIONING STRUCTURES, ANTICIPATION AND SUCCESSFUL STUDENT ADMISSIONS

**Successful student admissions will result in the best future teachers. It will be ensured that the demand for teachers and competence needs is anticipated. The attractiveness of teacher education will be ascertained with inspirational and topical education.**

- **HIGHER** education institutions will develop the student admissions of teacher education in cooperation. Students with the best capacity for acting as teachers will be selected in teacher training. The aptitude of applicants to teacher education will be taken into account in the student admissions.
- **TEACHER** educators will recognise teacher students' previously acquired knowledge and skills and acknowledge credits based on demonstrated skills. Higher education institutions will develop new methods for assessing competence.

- **STRUCTURAL** obstacles for flexible mobility and studying dual qualifications will be eliminated. Pedagogical studies will be developed so that they will provide qualifications to all levels of education.
- **TEACHER** education will increase the possibilities for education among people with an immigrant background. Teacher education providers will promote the qualification of those who have completed teacher education abroad by organising aptitude tests and complementary studies according to the decisions on recognition of qualifications of the Finnish National Board of Education. Cultural diversity of teacher education will be strengthened.
- **STUDIES** providing students with teacher qualifications are free-of-charge to the student.
- **STUDENTS** will be ensured an opportunity to apply for separate pedagogical studies after graduating with a master's degree. The pedagogical studies will be integrated in the study units in the degree programmes.
- **PROFESSIONAL** teacher education providers will collaborate to update the curricula of the pedagogical education of teachers. In connection to the reform of vocational education and training and other reforms, it will be ensured that the competence of teachers is in line with the new system.
- **THE** teacher education units update the available opportunities for developing competence during the career and evaluator training so that they correspond with the changed practices. The changes allow securing an opportunity for teachers to bring their competence up to date.
- **THE** availability of qualified teachers at all levels of education and all over the country will



be ensured. Demand for teachers as well as the needs of teachers for competence and training will be anticipated by regularly following the teacher situation. The volumes of students in teacher education must follow the demand for teachers and the competence required in the country. The education is targeted at different education sectors based on the actual demand for teachers.

### 3. TEACHERS AS EXPERTS CREATING NEW PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATIONS - FOCUS ON THE LEARNERS

**The programmes, learning environments and working methods of teacher education will be improved to strengthen the development of expertise creating new outcomes.**

**The working methods used in the teacher education and educational institutions will emphasise a learner-oriented, research-based and communal approach.**

- **THE** working methods of teacher education and educational institutions are strongly research-based. The working methods are learner-oriented and communal and support the needs of diverse learners.

- **TEACHER** educators develop the programmes, learning environments and working methods of teacher education to enable students to acquire broad-based basic competence and expertise creating new knowledge as well as to obtain capabilities to develop their personal competence and the educational institution.

- **TEACHER** education and educational institutions will renew assessment to support learning.

- **TEACHER** education and educational institutions will strengthen co-design and teaching in teams in cooperation between different fields of science. The teacher's work will be developed to guide the learning process and become more communal.

- **TEACHER** education, educational institutions, education providers and stakeholders will create physical, digital and social learning environments. Teacher education and education providers will strengthen the competence related to utilising different learning environments pedagogically.

- **STUDENTS**, teaching staff, teacher education providers and working life representatives will develop models and methods for workplace learning and its supervision in networks.

### 4. STRENGTHENING TEACHER EDUCATION THROUGH COLLABORATION

**Teacher education will be strengthened by increasingly close collaboration, networking and building a culture of doing things together. Different models of peer support and collaboration will be utilised more effectively.**

- **TEACHER** education units and education providers will collaborate to promote communality, networking as well as operations across subjects, educational sectors and fields of science. The operators will systematically construct a culture of creating things together, cooperation models for teacher education and functional practices.

- **TEACHER** education and education providers will improve the objectives and implementa-

tions of the development of teachers' competence in networks. Multiprofessional cooperation with the labour market will be strengthened by building networks at the regional, national and global levels as well as between cultures.

- **IN** their teaching and development of competence, educational institutions and teacher education units will utilise peer support models, such as tutor teacher and mentor models as well as strengthen teacher networks and cooperation with working life. The development of professional competence will be realised in cooperation with workplaces. The students will be provided with experiences of working in a multiprofessional network and a communal learning organisation.

- **EDUCATION** providers will use regional or other coordinated network cooperation to enable the development of professional competence of teaching staff so that education services will be equally accessible, have appropriate structures and be correctly scaled.

- **THE** Teacher Education Forum will be established as a shared, permanent operating model for bringing together the cooperation and competence of teacher education providers.

### 5. DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AND COMMUNITY WITH PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

**The strategic leadership and management systems of educational institutions will be strengthened by developing management training. It will be ensured that teacher edu-**



**Education prepares teachers with capabilities for taking responsibility and participating in leadership processes.**

- **THE** broad-based management skills of managers in the teaching sector are developed by strengthening management education and systematic approach to management training. Teacher education plays an important role in this alongside other management training.
- **EDUCATION** providers and managers of educational institutions will reinforce their professional networks and introduce peer support models and mentoring activities in developing competence. Participatory and team management as well as the skills of immediate supervisors at educational institutions will be improved. At the same time, teachers' professional competence, development of expertise and well-being will be promoted.
- **EDUCATION** providers will develop the management of the educational institution in the municipality, region or their networks in cooperation so that the managers will have time to lead and also develop their own competence with a long-term perspective.
- **THE** basic and introductory training of teachers will be made to include enough information about educational institutions, teaching administration as well as the statutes and principles concerned with the work of teachers. A teacher is a societal actor who sees himself or herself as a part of the major strategic guidelines of education. The teacher is willing to take responsibility and, if necessary, participate in leadership processes at the level of his or her educational institution.

## 6. STRENGTHENING THE RESEARCH-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION

**The utilisation of the latest research data on teaching and learning in teacher education will be strengthened. Teacher education will be developed so that the students learn an exploratory approach that creates new outcomes to be used in their work as teachers.**

- **THE** programmes and operating approaches of teacher education are based on the research in educational sciences and other essential fields of knowledge. The education supports the development of the teachers' professional identity towards a research-based direction.
- **THE** teacher training educates pedagogically apt educators and teachers who study and develop their own work. The teachers will apply current scientific research in their work. Teachers and teacher education providers will participate in national and international research and development projects.
- **HIGHER** education institutions will enhance their research on the admissions, introductory stage and continuing training of teacher education as well as the development of teachers' career-long competence.
- **HIGHER** education institutions support the competence and interest in research among teacher education providers as well as the operations in the research networks between the institutions.

Practical examples of the strategy on the website (only in Finnish)

# CHALLENGES

*Transfer of research findings and new pedagogical practices into all teaching education and educational institutions.*

*Teachers' capability to teach diverse learners. The competence of children and youths has deteriorated, the gap between girls and boys has become wider and differences between educational institutions have grown.*

*Understanding the educational institution widely as a learning organisation and a communal operating environment.*

*Inadequate use of a goal-oriented and systematic approach in developing the competence of teachers after basic training.*

*Regional differences in developing teachers' competence.*

**WWW.MINEDU.FI/**  
OSAAMINENJAKOULUTUS/  
PERUSKOULUUUDISTUS/  
OPETTAJANKOULUTUS-  
FOORUMI

# FINLAND'S SUCCESS IS BASED ON COMPETENCE

In a world where change is the only thing that is certain, the significance of competence is greater than ever.

The objective of the key project of knowledge and education of the Strategic Programme of Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's Government is to reform Finnish education from daycare to higher education institutions. The common objective is to raise the level of competence, increase equality and decrease drop-out rates and the number of socially excluded youths.

Competence acquired once during studies is not enough for the entire teaching career, as the work of teachers changes constantly. Teachers' capabilities, personal willingness and possibilities for doing things together, networking, constant development of personal competence and learning are key to change. It is essential to have flexibility and ability to apply one's competence to a changing and renewing operating environment.

The aim is that the learners, teachers and managers of educational institutions develop their competence together in learning communities. Learning, teaching and management are increasingly realised in teams. At the same time, finding the strengths of each individual is highlighted. Pedagogy is renewed by experimenting and innovating together.

Teacher education is an entity comprising of anticipation of the demand for teachers, admissions, basic, introductory and continuing training of teachers and developing competence during the career. Fragmented models for continuing training will not accomplish the desired change. Activities supporting teachers' professional development must be managed, effective, systematic and long-lasting. This activates teachers to engage in collaboration and networking.

Succeeding in developing teacher education requires reforming the operating environments and culture of educational institutions in collaboration. The development work is based on competent, goal-oriented and interactive management of educational institutions. Teachers' activity in networks and partnerships is essential. The aim is to make the learning of teachers and learners inspire them throughout their lives.

*Further information:*

[WWW.MINEDU.FI](http://WWW.MINEDU.FI)



Ministry of  
Education  
and Culture

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