

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND KARELIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES FOR 2025–2028

1. Common objectives of higher education institutions

The Ministry of Education and Culture and the Karelia University of Applied Sciences have agreed, pursuant to section 42, subsection 1 of the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014), on the objectives for the operation of the University of Applied Sciences. The objectives set in this Agreement are derived from the Government Programme, the implementation of the Act on Research and Development Funding, the vision for higher education and research 2030, and the strategy of the higher education institution concerned.

Through its activities, the higher education institution shall promote the following objectives based on the Government Programme and on the relevant ministry-specific and sector-specific strategies:

The level and impact of Finnish science and Finnish research, development and innovation shall be raised. Universities shall increase their provision of doctoral education and reform it to make the completion times of degrees shorter, improve the quality of the education provided and ensure that the world of work will benefit from the knowledge and skills of doctoral graduates earlier than at present. Higher education institutions shall step up their collaboration with domestic and international institutions through research, development and innovation ecosystems.

The number of young adults with higher education degrees shall be raised towards the target of 50% by 2030 and, in the longer term, up to the level of top OECD countries. At the same time, Finnish higher education institutions shall ensure the quality of the higher education provided. The opportunities for continuous learning shall be strengthened by reforming the provision of higher education institutions and by expanding their funding base. The number of international degree students and researchers shall be raised, while improving their chances to find employment in Finland after graduation.

Higher education institutions shall profile themselves and sharpen their strengths in the field of education and in their research, development and innovation activities.

By their activities, higher education institutions shall contribute to solving societal challenges and promote sustainable development and the twin transitions.

Higher education institutions shall be well managed; they shall invest in employee and student wellbeing and ensure staff competence development in a systematic way.

2. Profile and strengths of the higher education institution

The key objective of Karelia University of Applied Sciences is to contribute new vitality to the working life through knowledge and skills and to increase education-based immigration and international connections. In the coming decade, Karelia will focus on improving its completion rates and on promoting education-based immigration.

The strengths of Karelia University of Applied Sciences include:

- Sustainable wellbeing services
- Smart production and services
- Solutions for green transition

The new emerging fields of study at Karelia include knowledge and skills on ageing, intelligent automation and climate-smart construction.

Karelia University of Applied Sciences, Savonia University of Applied Sciences and the University of Eastern Finland will strengthen their practical cooperation in education activities and their efforts to enhance social impact, notably to bolster competence and regional vitality in Eastern Finland. Their cooperation has a focus

on the following: promoting education-based and work-based migration; dividing tasks in the creation of common study paths; increasing the relevance of studies regarding working life; and stepping up the commercialisation of research and encouraging student entrepreneurship. Karelia University of Applied Sciences will deepen its strategic and long-term international university partnerships, especially as part of the INVEST European University Alliance.

Karelia University of Applied Sciences will be carbon neutral by 2030.

3. Strategic objectives of the University of Applied Sciences and its targets for the number of degrees to be completed in 2025–2028

3.1 Strategic objectives of the University of Applied Sciences

Educating experts for the future world of work

- The share of students who manage to complete their degree programmes within the prescribed time limit will be raised and the general completion rate will be improved by strengthening the sense of community, by improving the thesis process and by utilising new tools for learning analytics.
 - peer-learning and peer group activities by students will be enhanced.
 - wellbeing services, extracurricular activities and sports services for students will be improved following the annual cycle for student wellbeing.
- The aim is to maintain at over 90 per cent the share of respondents who have rated their student satisfaction as good (4 and over) in the feedback questionnaire for university of applied sciences graduands (AVOP).
- Active implementation of the digitalisation vision with the help of strategic networking and the division of responsibilities between higher education institutions.

Education-based immigration and international dimension

- The volume of foreign-language degree programmes which meet job market needs will be increased.
- Guidance and support services for international students will be improved.
- Integration and employment of students with foreign background in Eastern Finland will be encouraged. The University of Applied Sciences will pursue its role as one of the national higher education institutions responsible for SIMHE (Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland) services.
- A partnership for training and RDI is being built within the INVEST alliance.
- Competence related to international RDI funding programmes will be reinforced.
- Karelia University of Applied Sciences shall promote broad-based student and traineeship mobility, observing different student profiles.

Sustainable wellbeing

- New training solutions and contents will be developed to improve the availability of nurses throughout the region.
- Several universities of applied sciences (Karelia, XAMK, Lapland University of Applied Sciences, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences) make up a cooperation network to enhance the knowledge and skills on ageing. The aim of the network, coordinated by Karelia University of Applied Sciences, is to ensure the availability of personnel with knowledge and skills on ageing and to bring synergy benefits into degree programmes, into continuous learning and RDI activities and in the creation of an age-friendly society.
- Services and digital solutions in support of sustainable wellbeing will be developed in collaboration with the wellbeing services counties.
- Staff competence and their wellbeing at work will be sustained and enhanced by ensuring a smoother flow of their daily tasks, by stepping up process automation, by strengthening team activities and by investing in community-based activities and sports opportunities.

Intelligent production and intelligent services

- Co-creation of smart industrial solutions.
- Development of knowledge-based management solutions and training.
- Extensive joint implementation of the ICT education path of higher education institutions in Eastern Finland by promoting education-based and work-based migration; dividing tasks in the creation of common study paths; increasing the relevance of studies regarding the world of work; and stepping up the commercialisation of research and encouraging student entrepreneurship.
- Building up the Karelia smart campus.

Solutions for green transition

- Pioneering climate-smart construction.
- Reform of education and training in energy and environmental technology and of RDI activities to respond to upcoming changes in energy solutions.
- Strengthening knowhow in circular economy and low-carbon economy. In its construction training programmes, Karelia University of Applied Sciences will observe the need to enhance skills in wood construction.

Indicators for monitoring in 2025–2028

	Outturn in 2023	Estimate for 2025	Objective 2026	Objective 2027	Objective 2028
International funding for R&D activities, EUR million	0.76	1.2	1.5	1.6	1.8
Business funding for R&D activities, EUR million	0.28	0.3	0.35	0.4	0.5
Percentage of graduates completing their studies in the normative time	62.4	70	72	73	73
Number of foreign degree students	367	450	550	600	700
Percentage of graduated international students finding employment in Finland	40	70	70	70	75

3.2 Targets for number of degrees to be completed

Targets	Between 2025 and 2028, on average	In 2035
Bachelor's degrees	895	1,020
Education, arts and cultural industries, and social sciences	45	
Humanities, medical science, health and wellbeing	400	
Economics, administration and law, services	180	
Natural sciences, information and communication technologies (ICT), agriculture and forestry	270	
Targets for individual universities of applied sciences		
Master's degrees	130	160

The following are some of the measures that the University of Applied Sciences will employ to respond to the shortage of experts:

Intake in the nursing programme will be maintained at least at the 2022 level.

Through its bachelor's programme in social services, Karelia will assure, for its part, an adequate provision of studies towards the qualification of social pedagogues in early childhood education and care (minimum of 60 credits), making sure that these studies appeal to students.

For students trained abroad for a profession which is regulated in Finland, Karelia provides courses for complementing their competence so that it meets the requirements of the competent Finnish authorities.

Science, mathematics and technology: Karelia promotes the implementation of the National STEM Strategy and Action Plan.

4. Funding

To enable Karelia University of Applied Sciences to execute the duties referred to in Universities of Applied Sciences Act, the Ministry of Education and Culture shall, under Section 43 of the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014), Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the Government Decree on Universities of Applied Sciences (1129/2014), and the Decree of Ministry of Education on imputation criteria for core funding for universities of applied sciences (171/2024), grant to its core funding amounting to a total of EUR 27,074,000 in 2025 and EUR 26,974,000 per year in 2026–2028 from budget item 29.40.55, as follows:

EUR 24,253,000 of core funding determined using imputed criteria.

Karelia University of Applied Sciences will receive strategy-based funding for a total of EUR 1,200,000 in 2025 and EUR 1,100,000 per year in 2026–2028. For the development measures defined in the Karelia University of Applied Sciences strategy and specified in section 3 of this Agreement, strategy-based funding will be allocated as follows:

Reinforcement of the international character of Karelia, including its role as one of the national higher education institutions responsible for SIMHE (Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland) in 2025–2028.

Creation of services and training contents in support of sustainable wellbeing, and the reinforcement of knowledge and skills on ageing: EUR 400,000 in 2025 and EUR 300,000 per year in 2026–2028.

Strengthening of competence related to the green transition: EUR 400,000 per year in 2025–2028.

Measures in support of the wellbeing of the higher education community and the objective of raising the overall level of tertiary education (physical activity, sense of community, and staff competence): EUR 100,000 per year in 2025–2028.

In 2025, central government funding for the University of Applied Sciences shall include an additional EUR 1,621,000 for the value-added tax included in the cost incurred by the universities of applied sciences for providing educational services referred to in sections 39 and 40 of the Value Added Tax Act (1501/1993) and in procurements and facility rent relating to research other than commercial research.

The funding granted is not to be used to support business operations (economic activity). (Commission Notice on the notion of State aid as referred to in Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (2016/C 262/01)).

5. Monitoring

The Ministry shall monitor the activities, liquidity and solvency of higher education institutions through financial statements, statistical monitoring and mid-term reviews during the agreement period. The University of Applied Sciences shall report on its activities in its financial statements and in the related annual report, and annually, in an agreed manner, on the implementation of the key measures relating to the objectives of this agreement and the strategy of the University of Applied Sciences. The level of strategy-based funding may be reviewed if the objectives fail to be achieved as agreed in this Agreement.

Signed

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