

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

FINLAND 2014



<http://keyconet.eun.org>



SHORT SUMMARY

Providing a national description contextualizing key competence development in your country [rationale, objectives etc.]:

Work towards new core curricula is in progress and should come into effect in August 2016. The new core curricula build on key competence development (KCD), an approach that can be seen in many areas of the curricula. The approach to KCD is holistic and should occur through the study of individual subjects. Some competences, such as digital literacy and collaborative skills, are presented in a much more thorough way than in the existing national core curricula. The first draft of the core curricula presents seven dimensions of a broad-based competence that have a close connection to the key competences:

- 1 - Thinking and learning to learn
- 2 - Cultural competence; interaction and expression
- 3 - Looking after oneself; managing daily activities and safety
- 4 - Multiliteracy
- 5 - ICT competence
- 6 - Competence required for working life and entrepreneurship
- 7 - Participation, empowerment and responsibility

KCD INITIATIVES:

What relevant key competence related initiatives (e.g. curricular reform/national strategy/pilot project/public consultation etc. in relation to students' curricula and assessment, teacher training, school organisation, and learning resources) have taken place in your country over the past five years, and which are planned in the future? You may also refer here to the 2012 case notes produced for your country, and any other initiatives which will be the focus of the 2013 case notes.

The Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) presented the Basic Education 2020 strategy document to the Finnish Minister of Education on 1 June 2010 and the Government of Finland made a legislative decision based on the document on 28 June 2012. The Governmental Decree defines the aims for basic (compulsory) education and the distribution of lesson hours. Based on this, the National Board of Education has started to prepare the new national core curricula for basic education. Municipalities create their own curricula based on these national core curricula and the new curricula should come into effect in August 2016.

The aims and lesson distribution in basic education and the national core curricula both emphasise the importance of key competences.



In addition to the FNBE, there has been a focus on KCD in individual schools. The ICT in Everyday School Life project and the OPTEK project (coordinated by the Cicero Learning Network of the University of Helsinki) aim to develop the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in normal school life. ICT in Everyday School Life is a national project coordinated by the Finnish Ministry of Transport and Communications, involving the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Finnish National Board of Education in co-operation with industry and commerce. The project was also included in the Finnish Government Programme and the National Information Society Policy of Finland. The OPTEK project was funded by Tekes (Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation) and private companies.

The Committee for the Future of the Parliament of Finland has realised a project 'New learning' that focused on future aspects of learning in the Finnish schools, and supported the reform work of the national core curricula for basic education. In the project, many views related to the aims of the KeyCoNet project were discussed. For example, contents of key competences such as Digital competence, Cultural awareness and expression and Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship in future Finnish school were analysed in the report (2013).

Tekes is also currently funding the Learning Solutions Programme, launched in February 2011. The objective of this programme is to develop internationally important learning solutions, in cooperation with participants from relevant sectors, to develop new operating approaches, to create new skills and to develop products, services and comprehensive packages for international markets. Learning Solutions will run from 2011 to 2015 and has an estimated budget of €52 million, of which €30 million is provided by Tekes.

The Academy of Finland has launched a new research programme on The Future of Learning, Knowledge and Skills. The aim of the research programme is to gain more in-depth and up-to-date research data about the mechanisms, preconditions, opportunities and threats to knowledge, skills and competences in the global world. The funded projects will start in 2014.

Every year the Finnish National Board of Education gives financial support to many school development projects and these projects could also be said to focus on KCD. As an example of such a project, the innolukio (innovation high school) is a project funded by the Finnish National Board of Education with the aim of developing a learning environment that encourages creative thinking among upper secondary students and provides them with the knowledge and skills that will be required in their future working life. The essential goal of the project is to create a connection between upper secondary students and businesses and universities, while making use of the students' creativity as a national resource.



OVERALL KCD APPROACH:

How would you characterise the overall approach to key competence development in your country? Is it a holistic approach characterised by an overarching strategy, or rather a targeted approach focusing on one or more specific dimension of the education system (student curriculum, assessment, teacher training, school organisation, learning resources etc.)? Does it cover formal and non-formal learning, both primary and secondary school levels?

KCD has had an important influence on preparatory work for the national core curricula. This work is on-going, but it seems that KCD will be integrated into all subjects in a holistic way. For example, the core curricula define what students are learning, and competences such as collaborative skills, thinking skills and learning to learn can be seen in the definition of learning. The new core curricula mention the importance of non-formal learning and try to build bridges between formal and non-formal learning. There will also be a greater focus on digital literacy in the new national core curricula.



KEY COMPETENCES ADDRESSED:

Is there a focus on any particular EU key competence/s or a combination of them, or perhaps there is more of a focus on alternative/complementary competences defined at national level?

In the new national core curricula, competences such as collaborative skills, thinking skills and learning to learn are mentioned in the definition of how we understand learning. There is also greater focus on digital literacy. Digital literacy should be developed in all subjects, and technology should be used as a tool for learning. The new national core curricula emphasises that future jobs will require broad competences and skills that are developed through school subjects. However, teaching and learning should be more collaborative. Developing competences and skills is influenced by the individual's values and attitudes and by their own goals and ambition.



STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED:

Who are the main stakeholders involved in key competence development in your country?

- The Ministry of Education (legislative role).
- The National Board of Education (preparing the national core curricula, national qualifications, requirements for vocational education and training and competence-based qualifications).
- Teacher training departments (University of Helsinki, University of Turku, University of Jyväskylä, University of Oulu), preparing trainee teachers and providing in-service training to teachers.

- The Finnish Trade Union of Education represents teachers at various school levels and institutes of learning.

KCD IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES:

How does the implementation of key competence development/reform in school education function in your country? (e.g. process followed, political commitment, consultation with stakeholders and their respective roles, incentives for stakeholders, dedicated funding, teaching material, definition of goals and standards, assessment and evaluation mechanisms, impact on teacher training/professional development and school practices/leadership, scaling-up approach, based on research/evidence? etc.)

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Municipalities and schools have quite a lot of freedom in how they implement the core curricula, and teachers also have freedom in their classrooms. Teachers are able to choose their teaching methods and thus have a lot of influence on how KCD is implemented in the classroom.

Teacher education in Finland is of high quality and teachers are highly motivated to develop and improve their teaching. The national core curricula also influence the development of learning materials and books by defining what kind of competences and skills should be gained by students.

OBSTACLES AND FACILITATORS:

What would you identify as obstacles and/or facilitators to developing and implementing a key competence approach in your country's education system, or to more generally introducing any type of educational reform related to the definition of key competences and revision of the curriculum, and to joint collaboration on such issues relying on the input from those working on different dimensions (e.g. teacher training, learning resources etc.)?

In general, the implementation of key competences is a long and slow process. The national core curricula will be in effect for approximately 10 years from 2016, so it is not easy to change it. As has been the case with the current national core curricula, aspects of the curricula can be adjusted and new appendices can be added during the period in which it is effective.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/USEFUL URLs:

-  OPTEK:
<http://blogs.helsinki.fi/oppiailoakouluun/in-english>
-  Innolukio:
<http://innolukio.fi/fi/english>
-  Learning Solutions:
<http://www.tekes.fi/programmes/Oppimisratkaisut>
-  Overview of the Finnish Education System:
<http://www.oph.fi/english/education>
-  Draft for the Finnish Basic Education, autumn 2012:
http://www.oph.fi/download/146131_Luonnos_perusopetuksen_opetussuunnitelman_perusteiksi_VALMIS_14_11_2012.pdf
-  Curriculum Reform in Finland 2016:
http://www.oph.fi/download/151294_ops2016_curriculum_reform_in_finland.pdf
-  CF. (2013). Committee for the Future (2013). Uusi oppiminen [New Learning]. Eduskunnan tulevaisuusvaliokunnan julkaisu 8/2013. Helsinki: Eduskunta.
<http://www.helsinki.fi/behav/uutisarkisto/2013/trip.pdf>

ABOUT EUROPEAN SCHOOLNET

European Schoolnet is the coordinator of the KeyCoNet project.

European Schoolnet is a network of 31 Ministries of Education from across the European member states, leading educational innovation at European level. As a major international think tank, European Schoolnet operates key European services in education on behalf of the European Commission, member Ministries of Education and industry partners.

European Schoolnet's activities are divided among three areas of work:

- Policy, research and innovation: information sharing and evidence building.
- Schools services: enhancing cooperation between schools across Europe.
- Advocacy: how ICT and digital media contribute to transforming teaching and learning processes.

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-  Key Competence Network on School Education – KeyCoNet
-  #21skillscourse  #KeyCoNet
-  <http://www.europeanschoolnetacademy.eu/web/keyconet>

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