

Guidance



NEW EDITION
2006

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL

GUIDANCE IN FINLAND

The operating environment

OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN FIGURES

Population and age structure:

The population of Finland is expected to grow until the year 2020.

The age structure will change drastically.

The number of children in compulsory education will decrease by almost 10 % between 2000 and 2010 after which it will start to level off.

The number of young people will grow until 2010, after which it will gradually start to go down.

The number of people aged over 55 years will increase.

Level of education of population:

Finns are better educated than ever before.

The level of education has risen by 30 % over the past thirty years.

85 % of people between 25 and 34 years of age have a post-compulsory school degree or qualification.

More than 50 % of the working-age population participate in adult education.

Labour market:

Turning point: In 2004, for the first time more people exited the labour market than entered it.

On average, 46% of the population is employed, 48 % of the employed are women.

The employment rate is on average 68 %.

The unemployment rate is about 8.4 %.

More than 50 % of unemployed job-seekers are regarded as difficult to place.

Long-term unemployment particularly affects the aging population.

Further information:

- MINISTRY OF EDUCATION – EDUCATION – EDUCATION SYSTEM – STATISTICS

http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/koulutusjaerjestelmae/koulutuksen_tilastoja/?lang=en

- MINISTRY OF LABOUR - PUBLICATIONS

http://www.mol.fi/mol/en/01_ministry/08_publications/index.jsp

- MINISTRY OF LABOUR – AN OVERVIEW OF VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (PDF)

http://www.mol.fi/mol/en/99_pdf/en/90_publications/amke2005english.pdf

- STATISTICS FINLAND – FINLAND IN FIGURES – EDUCATION

http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_koulutus_en.html

- STATISTICS FINLAND – FINLAND IN FIGURES

– LABOUR MARKET

http://www.tilastokeskus.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_tyolama_en.html



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To the reader

Dear reader,

This brochure presents the vocational, educational and career guidance and counselling services available in Finland. Furthermore, the operating environment in guidance and counselling and cooperation between different guidance and counselling actors will be described. An overview of current challenges to guidance and counselling is also included.

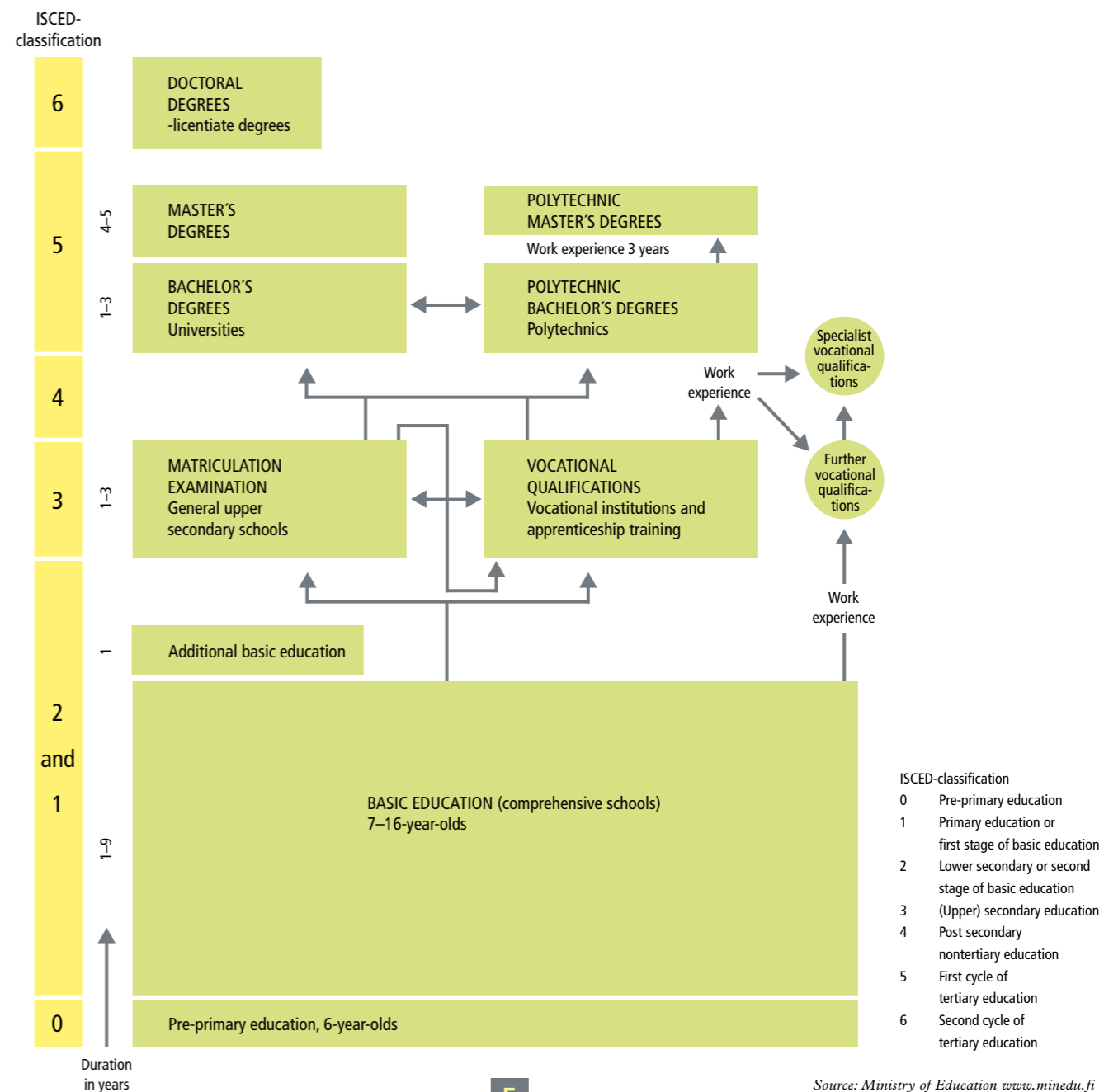
There are two established guidance and counselling systems in Finland, the functions and goals of which are mutually complementary: 1) guidance and counselling provided by education and training institutions, and 2) vocational guidance and career planning services, and educational and vocational information services, provided by employment administration.

The purpose of all guidance and counselling is to support individuals in making educational choices and

career plans based on the principle of lifelong learning. Everybody in Finland is entitled to guidance and counselling services regardless of whether they are studying, working, unemployed or outside the labour market.

The public sector education and employment authorities and the education providers, normally municipalities, are the main actors responsible for guidance and counselling services. The division of duties between them is clear. Education and training institutions bear the main responsibility for guidance and counselling of pupils and students. The vocational guidance and career planning and educational and vocational information services available at employment offices are primarily intended for those outside education and training. All guidance and counselling services of employment offices, however, are also available for students.

THE FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM



The education system

THE MAIN GOAL of the Finnish education policy is to guarantee a high level of education to all citizens, to promote their well-being and to ensure that the skills required by a changing operating environment are available in the society.

In Finland, all citizens are entitled to a basic education. The age group completing its basic education is guaranteed a place in secondary education. Young people who have passed the examinations at the end of upper secondary or basic vocational training are offered the opportunity of obtaining either a vocationally or scientifically oriented education at polytechnics or universities. Tuition is given in the two official languages of Finland: Finnish and Swedish, but also in sign language, Sámi and Romany.

During the 2000s, student welfare and support services for students have been emphasised in the development of education and training. Comprehensive welfare services are available in primary and secondary schools and are provided in cooperation with schools and social and health care authorities. Pupils with learning and study difficulties, for example, can receive special needs instruction. Special needs instruction is available in both basic education and vocational training as well as in some upper secondary general schools. All schools have an action plan to help them deal with problems and accidents that might occur.

Pre-school education

All children are entitled to pre-school education one year before they start their compulsory education. Pre-school education is given either in day care centres or in connection with comprehensive schools and participation is voluntary. The goal of pre-school education is to improve children's learning abilities in an environment which encourages independence. Pre-school and compulsory education together should form a coherent whole.

Basic education

Compulsory education in Finland begins in the year during which a child turns seven. Compulsory education is provided by comprehensive schools and lasts nine years. The goal of basic education is to support children's all-round growth and learning, to help them develop a healthy self-esteem and grow into responsible members of society, and to support them in obtaining the skills and knowledge necessary in life. Instruction should also promote social equality and reinforce pupils' predisposition to lifelong learning.

Pupils need support in varying degrees and their individual needs define the extent and quality of support measures, guidance and counselling. Pedagogical support measures in basic education include remedial education and special needs education. In addition to the entitlement to receive education

based on individual needs, there are also other support measures available to enable pupils to participate fully in education, such as interpreters and teaching assistants, and special support tools.

The integration of immigrants is supported by the provision of preparatory training for basic education. If children with an immigrant background do not have sufficient Finnish skills to enable them to follow instructions in class, they can attend preparatory classes for basic education. The goal of preparatory training is to support the balanced development of children and to help them integrate into the Finnish society, as well as to give them the necessary skills to follow the basic education.

The majority of pupils completing their compulsory basic education will continue to upper secondary education: more than half of any particular age-group will take up general upper secondary education and almost 40 % initial vocational training.

Before and after school groups

Supervised group activities before and after school hours are offered to pupils in their first or second year at school and to all pupils with special needs. The activities are guided by specifications as defined by the Finnish National Board of Education, emphasising the importance of play, creativity and positive experiences.

Transition from basic to upper secondary education

According to the Basic Education Act, young people who have completed their compulsory basic education can receive additional basic education for one year. No national subject allocation or syllabus has been determined for additional edu-

cation. However, a minimum of 1,100 hours of teaching and instruction must be provided. Those young people who did not manage to secure a study place in further education, can opt for additional basic education. The goal of instruction and guidance is to help young people plan their careers and improve their chances of entering further education. Additional basic education can be arranged in a separate additional basic education group in comprehensive schools, or as guided learning in other educational institutions, at work, work-shops or non-governmental organisations. The goals and contents of the work-based training are decided jointly by the training provider and the employer.

In cooperation with students, an individual study plan is drawn up which includes studies at their home school, other educational institutions, at work or elsewhere. In addition, the hours of study of the curriculum subjects and other studies are agreed, and the individual goals of students, individual guidance and counselling and other possible support measures, as well as the system of evaluation, are defined.

A pilot project concerning the preparatory training for vocational training was started in 2006. The goal of the project is to encourage young people to enter vocational training by developing individualised paths and new models. The idea is to support young people both in their studies and other areas of life in a practical way. They can raise their grades from basic education, improve basic life skills, complete vocational courses, go on work placements, plan further education and get help in career planning. Another goal is to improve cooperation and the exchange of information between different professionals in the field to help prevent the social exclusion of young people.

Preparatory training for basic vocational training and vocational rehabilitation is available for young people with special needs. The goal of these measures is to help students obtain

the necessary skills, enabling them to participate in suitable initial vocational training or to retrain them in another vocation.

General upper secondary education

General upper secondary schools ('lukio') in Finland provide general education that continues the teaching function of comprehensive schools, lead to a matriculation examination and qualify students for further studies. Studies are not restricted to year classes, so students can draw up an individual study plan according to the course provision available at their school and the maximum time allowed for the completion of studies. The final national matriculation examination is a general eligibility criterion for all post-secondary educational institutions.

The curriculum of general upper secondary schools comprises a minimum of 75 courses, each consisting of 38 lessons. The curriculum comprises 45 to 49 compulsory courses and students can then choose the remaining courses from a selection of optional specialisation or applied courses, the availability of which may vary from school to school. Students can also include courses from other upper secondary schools or vocational schools. On average, the total study course takes three years to complete.

Almost 50 % of students completing the matriculation examination continue their studies in higher education. Others opt for other further training or work.

Vocational training

The goal of vocational training is to continue the teaching function of comprehensive schools, to provide students with sufficient vocational skills required at work and the necessary

skills enabling them to further continue their studies. Vocational schools offer training in practically all vocational sectors.

A three-year vocational qualification completed in a vocational school gives students general eligibility to higher education. Students are also entitled to take the national matriculation examination under certain conditions. Students may receive credit for previous studies or work experience to count towards their qualification.

Vocational training is structured in modules and offers a wide range of alternatives for individual choice. Training is developed and delivered in close cooperation with employers. All qualifications include at least a six-month work placement, during which students can learn a part of their vocational skills in real working environments. Students' skills will be assessed through skills demonstrations during work placements.

All qualifications provide instruction in topics such as entrepreneurship, global environmental awareness, internationalisation and the use of information and communication technology. Besides vocational skills, the purpose of training is also to support the individual development of young people and their growth towards adulthood and citizenship.

In accordance with the equality principle, training for those with special educational needs is in the first instance offered in mainstream classes, or in special needs groups, or in a combination of both. Special vocational schools primarily take care of the training of people with severe disabilities, preparatory training and guidance for initial vocational training, and vocational rehabilitation. In addition, they provide expertise to other education and training institutions. Special vocational training is also available as apprenticeship training.



■ The Youth Information Centre provides information and counselling for young people aged 13–25.

Apprenticeship training

Both young people and adults can acquire a vocational qualification through apprenticeship training. In apprenticeship training vocational skills are learned while working, complemented by theoretical studies. Apprenticeship training is offered in the form of initial vocational training, preparatory training for skills demonstrations, and further vocational training.

Admission to upper secondary and higher education institutions

The national, joint application system is the primary way to apply for admission to upper secondary education institutions, such as general upper secondary schools, vocational schools and folk high schools, and to polytechnics in the higher education sector. The majority of students are selected on the basis of their school certificates and grades, but in some cases work experience or individual factors can be taken into account. A variety of entrance examinations and aptitude tests can also be used.

It is possible to apply to higher education after completing an upper secondary education qualification. The national matriculation examination, a three-year vocational qualification and comparable qualifications from abroad give a general eligibility for higher education studies. Universities select their own students and there is no common, centralised selection system.

Adult education system

The Finnish adult education system can be divided into two main sectors:

- liberal and general adult education, and
- vocational training for adults.

Liberal and general adult education

In liberal education, students set their own educational and training goals. Education and training is provided by folk high schools, study centres, summer universities and physical education centres. The range of courses on offer gives plenty of opportunities to develop oneself professionally or just for pleasure.

It is also possible to have language skills recognised through general language examinations.

General upper secondary education designed specifically for adults is also available. Students can either complete the whole qualification when certain subjects will be optional, or they can select subject combinations to suit individual needs.

Vocational training for adults

Vocational training for adults is primarily intended for those who are or have been employed before. It comprises self-motivated training, labour market training, in-service and apprenticeship training.

Education and training that has been specifically developed and organised for adults, is available at all levels. Preparatory training for a skills demonstration is particularly suited for adults, because participants can acquire a qualification only on the basis of their work experience or after completing the preparatory training. Adults can also attain further and specialist vocational qualifications (continuing vocational training), which are upper secondary qualifications acquired through a skills demonstration. It is also possible to acquire the basic, further and specialist vocational qualifications through apprenticeship training. Individual study plans, including individual curricula and plans for skills demonstrations, are de-

signed for those participating in preparatory training for skills demonstrations.

Specific paths have been designed for adults to acquire a polytechnic bachelor's degree. Nowadays, it is also possible to complete post-graduate studies in polytechnics. Universities offer so-called transference training, specifically designed for adults, which means that it is possible to obtain a new higher education degree in addition to the existing one after only two years of study. Polytechnics and universities also offer specialisation courses for those who already have a higher education degree. Both also offer higher education courses through the open university.

Self-motivated training gives adults an opportunity to develop their professional skills independent of their employer. It is planned to serve long-term educational needs. Studies can be funded, for example, by an adult study grant. Unemployed people with a sufficient work history can receive a training grant equalling their unemployment benefit.

The biggest number of adult students participate in in-service training, serving the needs of employers. Training is usually of short duration and principally funded by employers.

Labour market training

The principal tool of employment authorities to develop skills is the labour market training. Its goal is to achieve and maintain a balance in the demand and supply of the work-force, and to prevent unemployment in general, long-term unemployment and work-force shortages. The planning of labour market training takes place regionally and is based on skills needs analyses made in cooperation with employers and different stake-holders. Employment authorities buy training from, for example, vocational adult education centres, higher education institutions and other training providers.

Labour market training is primarily designed for unemployed people, but others, such as those outside the labour market or those working can also be offered labour market training. Training is free of charge to participants and they can receive a training allowance equal to unemployment benefit during their training, or a labour market subsidy and a subsistence allowance.

Labour market training consists mainly of initial vocational training, vocational re-training, further or continuing training. Training covers over 200 occupations. Furthermore, on certain conditions, it is possible also to complete studies aiming at a higher education degree.

The preparatory labour market training is designed to help adults or young people in transitional periods in their working lives plan their careers. The preparatory training can include guidance and counselling, training for immigrants, language training or training in basic information technology. General education, including the completion of basic education courses and general upper secondary education courses, can also be offered as preparatory labour market training when a lack of a grade or low grades prevent a person from finding employment or participating in vocational training.

To guarantee that clients/learners receive the training they need in order to become employed, close cooperation between employment authorities, training providers and employers is essential in labour market training provision. Methods and tools for cooperation in student guidance have been developed e.g. in a project coordinated by the Ministry of Labour.

The labour administration



■ Labour market training promotes professional skills development.

THE LABOUR POLICY STRATEGY for 2003 - 2007 - 2010 forms the basis for the operation of employment authorities.

The goals of the strategy are:

- to reduce structural unemployment
- to ensure availability of skilled labour
- to enhance labour productivity in a manner that is sustainable in terms of quality
- to form a basis for an active labour immigration policy
- to promote entrepreneurship and self-employment

The labour market departments of regional Employment and Economic Development Centres (“TE-keskus”) implement regional employment policies.

Local employment offices across Finland offer services both to employers and individuals. The services available for job seekers include job exchange, recruitment, temporary placements, integration plans for immigrants, EURES employment exchange and international trainee placements. Vocational development services include vocational guidance and career planning services, educational and vocational information services, vocational rehabilitation and labour market training. The support measures to encourage employment of clients include training in job-search, subsidised employment, work placements or work and training try-outs.

Profiling of services has taken place through the reform of employment services. In addition to employment offices, client services are provided by ‘labour force service centres’ and ‘job-search centres’. In 2006, there were a total of 38 labour force service centres where municipalities, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland and employment offices offer services to unemployed people difficult to place. Job-search centres have been established in connection with the 16 larger employment offices to help clients search independently for jobs and opportunities in training and education.

Organisation of the labour administration:



Guidance

COUNSELLOR TRAINING

THE UNIVERSITIES OF Joensuu and Jyväskylä and the vocational teacher education colleges of the HAMK and Jyväskylä Universities of Applied Sciences offer guidance counsellor training in Finnish. Guidance counsellor training in Swedish is offered by the Faculty of Education of the Åbo Akademi University in Vaasa.

It is possible to acquire a qualification in guidance counselling in multiform training, (60 credits). A prerequisite for this training is a Master's degree and a teacher qualification from a university. The admission requirement for the course in vocational teacher education colleges is a vocational teacher qualification and one year of work experience either from a vocational school or a polytechnic.

The universities of Joensuu and Jyväskylä both offer different options to obtain the qualification of a guidance counsellor, for example by completing a Master's degree in guidance counselling. At the University of Joensuu it is also possible to get a Master's degree in guidance counselling by completing 60 credits of guidance counselling studies as your secondary subject. Further information about guidance counsellor qualifications is available on the internet.

HAMK University of Applied Sciences ■
Vocational Teacher Education College
<http://www.aokk.fi>

Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences ■
Vocational Teacher Education College
<http://www.jamk.fi>

University of Jyväskylä ■ Department of Teacher Education
<http://ohjausala.jyu.fi/>

University of Joensuu ■ Faculty of Education
Department of Education
Career Counsellor Education
<http://ohjaus.joensuu.fi/>

Åbo Akademi University, Vaasa ■ Faculty of Education
<http://www.vasa.abo.fi/pf/soktillpf/behorighet/studiehandledare.htm>

Vocational guidance psychologists in employment offices are always required to have a Master's degree that includes the highest possible grade in psychology. There are no formal qualification requirements for the positions of education and training advisors, employment consultants and counsellors.

Staff in labour administration develop their professional skills through in-service training provided by the employer, more extensive external training programmes and through independent study. Basic training in guidance and counselling is given to customer service personnel and skills can later be developed by participating in advanced study programmes.



■ EURES
advisers provide
information on
working in differ-
ent countries.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SERVICES

Comprehensive schools

(grades 1 to 9)

Guidance personnel:

- school counsellors
- class teachers
- subject teachers

Methods:

- guidance and counselling in classes
- study visits
- visits to work places
- individual counselling
- guidance and counselling in small groups
- web-based guidance and counselling

General upper secondary schools

Guidance personnel:

- school counsellors
- group advisors, other teachers

Methods:

- guidance and counselling in classes
(1 compulsory and 1 specialisation course, 1 course = 38 lessons)
- study visits
- visits to work places
- individual counselling
- guidance and counselling in small groups
- web-based guidance and counselling

Vocational schools

Guidance personnel:

- school counsellors
- all teachers

Methods:

- separate lessons (20–40 hours)
- integrated into other lessons
- individual counselling
- on-the-job training

Polytechnics

Guidance personnel:

- specialised counsellors

Methods:

- individual counselling
- integrated into other lessons
- careers and recruitment services
- student affairs counselling

Universities

Guidance personnel:

- specialised counsellors

Methods:

- individual counselling
- integrated into other lessons
- careers and recruitment services
- student affairs counselling

Employment offices

Vocational guidance and career planning

Guidance personnel:

- vocational guidance psychologists
(degree in psychology)

Methods:

- individual counselling
- guidance in groups
- psychological assessment
- work and study try-outs

Educational and vocational information services

Guidance personnel:

- educational advisors

Methods:

- individual educational counselling
- group information and guidance sessions
- self-study facilities: printed materials and videos

Vocational rehabilitation

Guidance personnel:

- specialist employment advisors - rehabilitation advisors (to serve disabled job-seekers)
- vocational guidance psychologists (to serve all clients)

Methods:

- individual employment and rehabilitation counselling
- individual vocational and career planning
- health checks and aptitude tests
- specialist consultations
- work and study try-outs

Employment services

Guidance personnel:

- employment consultants and counsellors

Methods:

- individual job-seeking services
- informative job-seeking services

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING:

National Centre for Lifelong
Guidance Expertise
Centre for International Mobility
CIMO

Guidance and counselling

AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Basic education

Pupils can receive guidance and counselling all through their basic education. The goals of guidance and counselling in year classes 1 to 2, 3 to 6 and 7 to 9 are set in the national curriculum. A part of guidance and counselling is given in class and each pupil is entitled to a minimum of 2 hours a week (the study year is 38 weeks). This class-based guidance and counselling normally takes place during the last three years of basic education. Guidance and counselling covers study skills, self-knowledge, further education and training options, occupations, occupational sectors and the world of work.

If needed, all pupils are entitled to receive individual and small-group guidance and counselling. Pupils are also advised on how to use different tools to search for information and the guidance and counselling services provided by the society. Towards the end of their basic education, pupils spend periods of one to two weeks on work experience, which can also cover learning about vocational training.

After completing compulsory basic education, young people normally choose between general upper secondary education ('lukio') or vocational training. In the past few years, the range of educational opportunities has increased: the elimination of year classes in general upper secondary schools, more flexible systems in vocational training and an obligation of upper sec-

ondary schools to cooperate have given pupils more flexibility in planning their upper secondary education.

School counsellors have the main responsibility for guidance and counselling at comprehensive schools. Most of them are trained school teachers who have completed an extra specialisation module of 35 study weeks (currently 60 credits) in guidance and counselling. All teachers counsel pupils in study matters but pupils usually turn to their own class teacher (group advisor) in general school matters.

Counsellors divide their time between individual, small group and classroom guidance and counselling. Work also involves cooperation with parents/guardians, teachers and counsellors of other schools and different authorities. Cooperation with employers and employment authorities is also a part of the counsellors' work.

Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with an immigrant background receive more individualised guidance and counselling in further education and training opportunities. School counsellors may need to consult different experts in these areas.

General upper secondary schools

More than 50 % of school-leavers go on to study in general upper secondary schools. A large number of them still do not have clear career plans and need guidance in planning their further education and career. They receive tutoring and guidance in their studies, in choice of subjects, study skills and future plans. The upper secondary school curriculum includes one compulsory course and one specialisation course (optional) devoted to guidance and counselling. Both courses consist of 38 lessons.

Guidance and counselling cover issues relating to the planning of a study programme, learning techniques, self-knowledge, further education, occupations and work. School counsellors instruct new students in the study methods, techniques and requirements of upper secondary schools.

Students can choose courses from other schools, too, so guidance counsellors need to be familiar with courses available elsewhere and to be able to help students draw up their individual curriculum in such a way that they can benefit from these opportunities. The counsellor helps students understand how their course choices will affect their further education opportunities.

The educational and career opportunities for those who have completed the general upper secondary school are extensive. Students should be able to learn about all these opportunities during their studies. With the help of guidance and counselling, students will learn about education and training opportunities available for them after general upper secondary education, learn to use different information sources, and, in particular, learn about the guidance and counselling services offered by employment offices.

A guidance counsellor usually has the main responsibility for guidance and counselling in general upper secondary schools. Group advisors are responsible for tutoring their own designated group of students. Furthermore, each teacher has a particular responsibility for instructing their students in study skills. Student counsellors in general upper secondary schools are usually trained teachers who have received supplementary training in guidance and counselling.

Vocational training

The goal of guidance and counselling at vocational schools is to provide students with individual support in their studies, career planning and in finding employment. Students are encouraged to make their own independent choices regarding their education and training. In order to be able to do this, they need information not only about different study opportunities but also about how their choices affect their qualifications, further education and work opportunities.

The goal of guidance and counselling is to help students commit to their studies and to encourage them in continuing and independent learning. It also aims to encourage students to keep abreast with developments in their own occupational sector, and to constantly develop and market their skills. Guidance and counselling is also needed to improve study skills and to address learning difficulties. The different abilities of students are also taken into account in guidance and counselling.

Preparatory training and guidance as well as vocational rehabilitation can be arranged for disabled students. The goal of these are to help those with special educational needs due to a disability, illness, late development, emotional problems, etc to enter vocational training and employment.

School counsellors are responsible for guidance and counselling at vocational schools. They are usually trained teachers who have acquired a guidance counsellor qualification. All teachers participate in guidance and counselling. Students and teachers can also act as tutors, helping students in dealing with practical study-related matters. Guidance and counselling is normally integrated in other instruction but students are entitled to individual guidance and counselling sessions if needed. In addition, schools offer their students group guidance and counselling, support their move to the labour market, and monitor the employment rate of their students.

School counsellors coordinate guidance and counselling at schools and are the contact point between the school and the outside world in guidance and counselling matters. Cooperation with guidance counsellors of other upper secondary edu-

cation institutions is increasingly important as the freedom of students to choose courses from other than their home institution has increased.

The careers and recruitment services of vocational schools form a part of their guidance and counselling services. Their goal is to help students in their transition from school to work or on to further education. The employment path of those who have completed a vocational qualification is monitored systematically.

Basic and general upper secondary education of adults

The goal of basic and general upper secondary education of adults is to give them a varied general education and an op-

portunity to complete their unfinished education. A key goal is to improve students' lifelong learning skills and consequently their further education opportunities.

Guidance and counselling of adults focuses on designing individual curricula, developing study skills and helping adults to select relevant subjects. Guidance and counselling also support them in making education, training and career choices. Career counsellors are responsible for the guidance and counselling of adults. Group advisors are responsible for supervising the studies and guidance of their own designated group. Guidance and counselling can be individual or take place in small groups; web-based tutoring is also used, particularly in the guidance and counselling of distance learners.

Polytechnics

The Finnish polytechnics* aim to offer their students comprehensive guidance and counselling services, covering questions from the planning of studies, to career planning, work placements and international exchange opportunities. Guidance counsellors are responsible for offering and organising guidance and counselling services. The careers and recruitment services have established themselves in all polytechnics, offering services to students and their potential employers.

*The majority of Finnish polytechnics use the term *University of Applied Sciences*.

■ 15 year olds learn about the world of work as part of guidance and counselling.

Universities

Universities provide general student counselling for their students and those seeking admittance to them. The organisation of these services varies somewhat in different universities. Usually there is a student guidance office, which offers information about studies, work placements, and open university courses. A financial aid office deals with student welfare services.

Faculties and/or institutes usually have a student affairs secretary who is responsible for the planning, coordination and development of guidance and counselling services, editing of study guides and training of tutors. Academic and other staff members of different departments provide tutoring in their own subjects. New students also receive tutoring in small groups to help them get acquainted with studying and life at university.

The two most important client groups of the careers and recruitment services of universities are students soon to graduate or those recently graduated, and employers. The aim is to help students enter the labour market and to offer employers information and concrete help in recruiting new employees.

The careers and recruitment services of universities offer students a wide range of services, such as information about career planning, vacancies, employers and continuing training opportunities, and training in applying for jobs. Higher education advisors of employment offices operating in Finnish university towns, work in cooperation with the personnel of local careers and recruitment services of universities.



Guidance and counselling

AT EMPLOYMENT OFFICES

Vocational guidance and career planning services

Vocational guidance and career planning services help clients solve questions related to career choice, professional development and employment. In discussions with vocational guidance psychologists they can analyse their life situation, their interests, expectations relating to work, their educational background and work experience. Psychological assessments methods can be used if needed. Other tests, such as general and occupational health checks and study and work try-outs can also be used to determine clients' aptitude to different jobs or education and work options available for them. There are more and more adult clients requesting personal guidance and this demand has increased the most over the past few years.

Educational and vocational information services

The educational and vocational services of employment offices are open to all citizens and the educational advisors have an in-depth knowledge of training opportunities and suitable alternatives. Development of the client's skills and competences are assessed relative to educational opportunities available. Library-like facilities are available where clients can independently search for information about education and training opportunities, different occupations and the funding of

studies by studying publications, watching videos or accessing relevant services on the Internet. Some of the material can be borrowed. Information is also available about studying abroad. Clients can participate in group information events organised by educational advisors. As a part of the services there is also a national telephone information helpline, Koulutuslinja.

Vocational rehabilitation

The vocational rehabilitation services of employment authorities for people with disabilities include vocational guidance and career planning services; guidance in employment and rehabilitation; health and aptitude tests; expert consultations; work and study trials; other employment support measures; and labour market training.

A person whose chances of finding suitable work, retaining their job or advancing in work are significantly diminished due to an injury, illness or disability is regarded as disabled.

Vocational rehabilitation services are provided by, among others, specialist employment advisors and vocational guidance psychologists. Vocational rehabilitation always includes individual guidance and counselling.

Employment services

The purpose of the employment exchange is to help job-seekers find suitable work and employers to find employees. The tasks of employment consultants working in customer services vary according to whether they work at the information desk, the job-centre; in a basic services team or within so-called specialised services.

During a basic services job-search interview, the client and employment advisor discuss the former's wishes regarding jobs, skills demands and labour market requirements, and agree on the services required. Employment advisors and counsellors also arrange group training in job-seeking skills. The strengths and skills of job-seekers and ways of finding jobs are covered during the training.

Labour force service centres serve long-term unemployed people who are difficult to place. Customer service is provided by employment counsellors in cooperation with local social services and the Social Insurance Institution of Finland.

Guidance and counselling of immigrants

All employment offices also serve immigrants permanently resident in Finland and the larger employment offices have employment consultants who are specialised in immigrant services.

An immigrant who is registered as a permanent resident in a municipality in Finland and unemployed is entitled by law to an integration plan and the specified services agreed therein. The aim of the plan is to ensure that the immigrant acquires sufficient command of Finnish or Swedish and the necessary skills required to be able to gain employment, e.g. through vocational and preparatory training.

Studies leading to the completion of basic, general upper secondary or vocational qualifications can also be accepted as a part of the integration plan. On certain conditions, higher education courses can also be included.

EURES – the European Employment Services

Finnish employment offices are part of the EURES employment exchange network of the European Commission. In addition to the European Union Member States, Norway and Iceland are also part of the network. EURES provides guidance, information and employment exchange services for those who seek work in another European country. It is also a forum for employers to advertise vacancies and to recruit employees.



Web-based services

TO SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER CHOICES

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT AUTHORITIES provide on-line educational and vocational information. National and local portals make it easier to find information from the broad spectrum of source material and databases. There are also web-based career planning tools to aid and support choices. The Ministry of Education, the Finnish National Board of Education and practically all education and training providers have their own web sites that provide information about education and training. The extensive on-line services of the employment authorities are available on the web site of the Ministry of Labour.

Web-based services of the educational administration

Koulutusnetti ■ <http://www.koulutusnetti.fi>

The Finnish National Board of Education's Koulutusnetti offers information about education and training for young people and adults in general upper secondary schools, vocational schools, vocational adult education centres, polytechnics, universities, folk high schools, community colleges and comprehensive schools.

Opintoluotsi ■ <http://www.opintoluotsi.fi>

The Ministry of Education's Opintoluotsi service is a portal for education and training information. Its aim is to help citizens find information about education and training and to present an overall picture of what is available at different life

situations. The services of Opintoluotsi are intended for all Finns and everybody living in Finland.

Aarresaari ■ <http://www.aarresaari.net>

Aarresaari is the network of the Academic Careers and Recruitment Services that consists of the careers and recruitment services of universities and other higher education institutions in Finland. The network, a link between students and employers, serves employers, participating universities, students and recent graduates.

Jobstep ■ <http://www.jobstep.net>

Jobstep.net offers information about studying in polytechnics, career planning, job-search, entrepreneurship etc. The recruitment services offer training and information in career planning and job-search. Students of 30 polytechnics benefit from the employment exchange service of the Jobstep.net. Each polytechnic also has their own web sites giving information about their course provision.

OVI –

Ohjausta Virtuaalisesti ■ <http://optek.joensuu.fi/ovi>

(only in Finnish)

A web-based guidance and evaluation environment for university studies has been developed in the OVI project. The service is meant for all university students and those providing student guidance.

Web-based services of employment authorities

Ministry of Labour website ■ <http://www.mol.fi>

(Most of the services below are only available in Finnish and/or Swedish.)

Apart from a job-search facility, the web site of the Ministry of Labour has information about working life, education and training, and services to help clients analyse their own situation, assisting them in making career decisions.

Services to those looking for education or training are found on the *web site of the educational and vocational information services*. Publications used in educational guidance and counselling can be accessed through the publications database. Labour market training courses are also on the web site and people can submit their applications on-line.

The *AVO career choice programme* includes information about almost 300 different occupations and the education and training needed to qualify. With the help of exercises, users can analyse their own vocational goals and compare how different occupations match their wishes and where they can get trained for them. The *A-URA* is a career planning service for adults. Its exercises help adults analyse their life situation and to plan their careers step by step.

The *Ammattinetti* provides comprehensive information about work life, including descriptions of occupational sectors and occupations, interviews with professionals, different career case studies, articles about working life and references to other relevant material.

Vacancies can be found at the *Avoimet työpaikat* page. You can have suitable job vacancies sent to you by email by subscrib-

ing to the *Paikkavahti* service. It is also possible to register as a job-seeker and send your job-search profile through the *CV-netti*.

European web-based services

EURES ■ <http://ec.europa.eu/eures>

EURES is the European Commission portal of European occupational mobility. As well as providing information on job vacancies, it contains information on working, living and studying in different European countries.

PLOTEUS ■ <http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus>

PLOTEUS is a European Commission portal providing information on opportunities for lifelong learning in Europe.



Support services

FOR GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

National Centre for Lifelong Guidance Expertise

National Centre for Lifelong Guidance Expertise operates at the University of Jyväskylä. The Centre is equivalent to a multidisciplinary research unit, with a remit of collecting and producing research for the evidence base required for the organisation of national comprehensive lifelong guidance and counselling services and guidance policy development. A further goal, by means of partnership projects and networks, is development of counsellor training, various service delivery modes and their quality assurance. The Centre focuses on the following functional areas: guidance and counselling services for young people and adults, improving access to guidance, and development of systems that support career guidance.

The Centre gathers together guidance and counselling expert organisations and coordinates their collaboration, which is targeted at their internal, regional, national and international development. In addition, the Centre produces and maintains databases for communal use of stakeholder organisations. The first operational term covers the years 2006–2011.

Centre for International Mobility CIMO

CIMO promotes the internationalisation of Finnish society in the areas of education, employment and culture, as well as among young people in general.

CIMO acts as the national centre in the Euroguidance network operating in the EU and EEA countries, and in those seeking EU membership. The centres belonging to the network offer services to support international guidance and counselling work, and promote information exchange on good guidance practices in Europe. The network maintains the European Commission's PLOTEUS Portal.

CIMO offers services to personnel of employment offices, school counsellors working in educational institutions, and guidance and counselling training units in polytechnics and universities. Services include web sites and information services, publications, in-service training, research-based information on international mobility, and supporting international cooperation of guidance and counselling professionals.

Maailmalle.net ■ <http://www.maailmalle.net>

The maailmalle.net service, maintained by CIMO, is targeted at young people and those working among them in Finland. It contains information on opportunities for internationalisation at different stages in life.

Discover Finland ■ <http://finland.cimo.fi>

The service, available in English, is targeted at foreign clientele. It offers information on education and training and student, trainee and youth exchange opportunities in Finland.

Cooperation

IN THE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING SECTOR

THE MOST IMPORTANT strategic goal of guidance cooperation in general is the improvement of guidance services targeted at both young people and the adult population.

Furthering the employment and education of young people is one of the aims of the Government's Cross-sectoral Employment Programme. Improvements in guidance and counselling and cross-sectoral cooperation are intended to prevent marginalisation and to support the transition from the world of education to that of employment.

Cooperation in the sectors of guidance in educational institutions and employment services has been improved through cross-sectoral guidance and counselling working groups set up by the Ministry of Education. The remit of the present working group includes reinforcing good regional operational models and practices in guidance and counselling cooperation.

Cooperation between educational and employment administrations is also targeted at developing the knowledge and skills of the adult population. One of the primary strategic goals of the employment administration services is guiding adults into education and training. The Noste Programme, coordinated by the Ministry of Education, works to increase the educational level of adults. Guidance and counselling of the long-term unemployed has been improved by setting up regional service centres. The Ministries of Education and Labour have

jointly prepared proposals for developing adult education information and advisory services and guidance in 2006–2008.

There are local and regional variations regarding the extent and depth of cross-sectoral guidance cooperation. The guiding principle is that employment office guidance and counselling services should complement the guidance services of educational institutions, as required. For example, educational counsellors of vocational and training information services might co-arrange events with study counsellors in their operational region, such as joint informative events at educational institutions, or student visits to the employment office.

The educational institutions carry the main responsibility for careers and recruitment services in vocational and higher education. Nevertheless, employment offices play an important role as partners of educational institutions and providers of services for students completing their education.

Current challenges

IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL operational environment of guidance and counselling changes at an ever-accelerating pace. Individualisation of lives and increased choices, ageing of the population, concentration of skills capital in large cities, structural changes in the labour markets, globalisation and increasing multiculturalism constantly present new challenges in the field of guidance and counselling. Responding to challenges requires determined cooperation between various actors at national, regional and local levels.

Participation in both the OECD guidance and counselling review project and the national review in the early 2000s produced information on the targets for development and the strengths and challenges of guidance and counselling in Finland. The inclusion of guidance in the curricula of both basic and secondary education, and the diverse guidance methods on offer in educational institutions and employment offices are examples of the strong points of the Finnish guidance and counselling system.

In common with many other EU countries, the challenge in Finland is the development of citizens' career management skills. Further challenges are to increase accessibility of the services, the development of career guidance quality assurance systems and basic and continuing training of guidance and counselling professionals. The demands for cost-effectiveness across all public administration sectors also concern guidance services. Implementing national and regional strate-

gies for developing and producing guidance services in practice is a challenge as well as the evaluation of the guidance services.

One of the aims of the Development Plan for Education and Research (2003–2008) is the so-called education guarantee, which secures a post-basic education place in further education for the whole age group leaving comprehensive school. The main aim of the youth guarantee scheme, which is part of the Government's Cross-sectoral Employment Programme, is to prevent youth unemployment from becoming long term or repeated unemployment. Thus, the function of guidance services for young people is to support and guide all youngsters through the transition period on to further education and to the world of work.

At the higher education level, guidance is included in the new legislation covering polytechnics and universities. Higher educational institutions are duty-bound to organise their teaching and study guidance in such a way that the full-time student is able to pass his examination within the target time. As well as speeding up the completion of studies, a further challenge at the higher level is the adoption of personal study plans within a two-tier examination structure.

The provision and development of services aimed at the adult population is a growing challenge for the education and employment administrations. By 2008, citizens should have ver-

satile and client-led information and guidance services at their disposal that cover the entire range of education and training on offer. Furthermore, all educational institutions organising adult education should have in place guidance arrangements suitable for mature students. The goals set for development

work are that services are easy to use and accessible, and to create new tools and methods of recognition of knowledge and skills acquired by the adult population. A further goal is the consolidation of the strategic position of guidance and counselling and all related research.



■ Some of the employment advisors are specialised in immigrant services.

FINLAND IN 5 SECONDS

Official name: Republic of Finland

Official languages: Finnish (92%), Swedish (5.5%)

Finland in Finnish: Suomi

Finland in Swedish: Finland

Independence day: 6th of December

■ Independent republic since 1917

■ Capital Helsinki (population 560,000)

Population: 5.2 million

Foreigners in Finland: About 108,300

Total area: 338,145 km²

■ 70% forest

■ 10% water

■ 187,888 lakes, 5,100 rapids, 179,584 islands
and Europe's largest archipelago

Distances:

■ north–south 1,160 km

■ west–east 540 km

■ coastline 1,100 km

Climate: Distinctive seasonal variations

(cold winters and relatively warm summers)

Local time: +2 hrs GMT

Head of State: The President of the Republic is
Mrs. Tarja Halonen.

Parliament: One chamber with 200 members.

■ The next parliamentary elections will be held in 2007.

Member of the European Union: Since 1995

Religion: 83.8% Lutherans and about 1% Orthodox.

Monetary unit: The Euro (EUR, €)

GNP per capita: 27,020 USD (in 2003)

Sources:

Statistics Finland (<http://www.stat.fi>)

Virtual Finland by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

(<http://virtual.finland.fi>)



Editorial board:

■ Centre for International Mobility CIMO

■ Institute for Educational Research

■ Finnish National Board of Education

■ Ministry of Education

■ Ministry of Labour

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**MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION**



**FINNISH NATIONAL
BOARD OF EDUCATION**



CIMO

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