

Finnland. Education.

Education in Finland is a fundamental right. The Finnish education system is based on the principle that every single individual – irrespective of their ethnic origin, age, wealth or where they live – must be given equal access to high quality education and training. This is ensured, amongst other things, by education being free for everyone. Even further: already students in secondary school have broad access to financial support.

Education has a high priority for the population. And also the highly qualified teachers enjoy a high standing within the Finnish population and are known as the “anchors of the quality of education”. The targets and most important subjects for school education are stipulated by the national core curriculum; nonetheless the specific topics can be individually structured according to the particular region. In this respect Finnish teachers have the educational freedom to decide for themselves how they wish to structure their lessons and which teaching materials they use to do so. In addition to the transfer of knowledge educational advice is a focus, too. Its aim is to support students in making informed decisions concerning their careers.

Following early childhood care and education as well as preschool education, compulsory education begins at the age of seven in Finland. In the first class, the children are given their own reading primers. Through the use of this reading primer children also learn about different styles of penmanship. In the second year, a further reading book is in general use that is almost without comparison in other cultures. Both the primer and the reading book aim at the practicing and consolidation of reading skills. In many school subjects, workbooks are used in addition to textbooks.

In recent years electronic exercises have been increasingly introduced. How well they will become established depends on the IT devices that the pupils have at their disposal. The equipping of schools is delayed by the high VAT rate that is incurred on electronic equipment. For printed materials it is 10%, for electronic 24%.

Finnish teaching materials are compiled by working groups whose members are mainly in active teaching positions. The publishers undertake product development with textbook authors as well as teachers and the Finnish Government supervises and supports these processes to ensure a continuing flow of information.

Through this it is ensured that the new materials work for different classes and individual teaching methods are supported for individual styles of learning. Furthermore this process maintains the efforts to consider the individual needs of every pupil in the unified classes.

The teaching material product family includes comprehensive ranges of textbooks, workbooks, electronic materials, games, as well as visual and experimental aids that are required for lessons. The product family also contains comprehensive evaluation materials, so that from the annual nationwide comparable evaluation results a better offer can be derived. The main focus is the development of new learning materials that as a result enhance the motivation for learning and teaching.

The Finnish Publishers' Association counts approx. 10 publishing houses that produce teaching materials for different levels of education as members. In Finland this industry directly employs about 500 professionals for the production and sale of teaching materials, dozens of professionals for compilation and printing as well as hundreds of illustrators, graphic designers, translators, programmers etc. Approx. 2,500 teaching material authors receive authors' royalties annually.

Further information about Finland. Education. are offered at the Frankfurt Book Fair in the seminar "Learning Comes from Finland" on Thursday, October 9, 2014 on 10 a.m. at the Hot Spot Education in Hall 4.2 C85.

Keynote speaker: Dr Pasi Sahlberg, a visiting Professor of Practice at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education in Cambridge, MA, USA

Further information:

Press Office Finland. Cool. | c/o WBCO GmbH | Silvia Lenz | Krögerstraße 2 | 60313 Frankfurt | T +49.69.13388037 | F +49.69.13388033 | s.lenz@wbco.de