



# The Finnish Delegation

## Access to Education



<b>Civic Action Group, Finland</b>			
<b>Ms Hani Forsell</b>	Disability activist, unemployed		
<b>Ms Jaana Saikkonen</b>	Poverty activist, unemployed		
<b>Ms Lea Korja</b>	NGO activist		
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EAPN-Fin is a partnership network of organisations, associations and action groups. The aims of EAPN-Fin are to improve the situation of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and to promote social rights, basic security, welfare and independent life.

We strive to get the voices of people experiencing poverty more heard, and to make the causes and effects of poverty more visible and better understood in Finnish society.

EAPN-Fin was founded on the 27th October 1994. Today the network consists of 48 member organisations with thousands of members, working mostly around issues such as poverty, public health, unemployment, disability, alcohol and drug policy, social welfare, health policy, child welfare, mental illness and protection of patients at law.

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## The Finnish delegation 2018



I am **Lea Korja** from Helsinki, Finland. I am an NGO activist, educated as sales secretary and a mother of one. The reason I became involved with the European Anti-Poverty Network is that I want to encourage my peers, in other words, people who are facing unemployment, like I do. I believe there is power in togetherness.



My name is **Jaana Saikkonen**. I believe that civic activity is the only way to influence decision makers at EU level and Finnish politics. Hope that no one would ever get into "the tooth of the machine" without being able to adjust to his situation. I have been unemployed for almost two years. As a result I think this is the reason I have fallen into poverty.



My name is **Hani Forsell**. I'm from Finland, Helsinki. I belong to EapnFin, because I think that I can have an influence on things. People hear my voice and I meet people who are in power to change politics. I am a single mother for three children. Unemployed at the moment. Waiting for assessment for my working ability. Forwarding agent and Cidesco-beautician. Have three rare/uncommon diseases. Waiting for my first grandchild's birth in April 2019. :-)

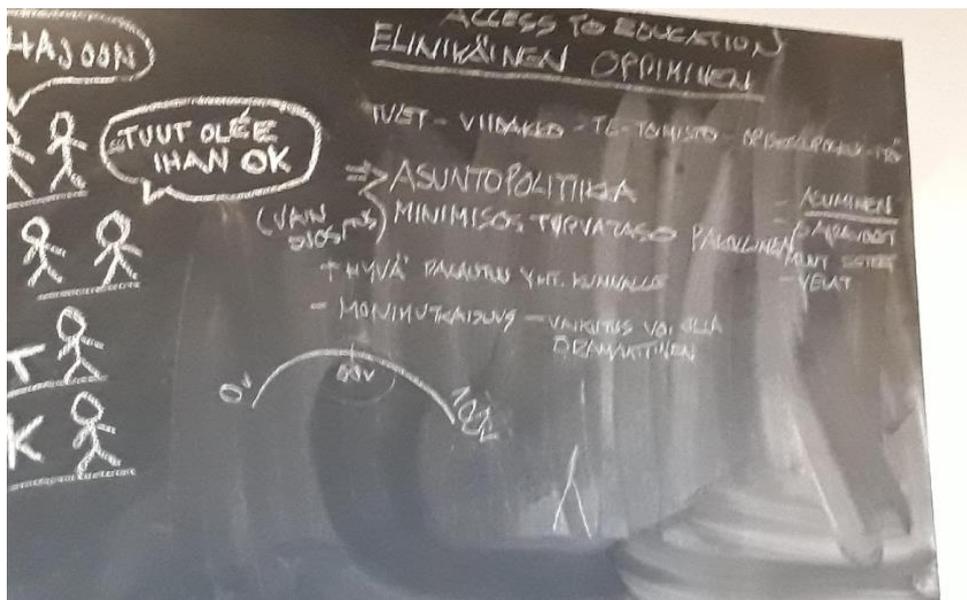


**Martin-Éric Racine** received strong media attention in 2018, thanks to his massively popular Citizen's Initiative to repeal recent tightenings to the Unemployment Benefits legislation. He approaches any issue from the perspective of systematically eliminating the strongest bottlenecks. He is a big believer in empowering the individual to make their own decisions in choosing the educational path that is best for themselves.



My name is Mikko Siltanen from Finland. I'm a new PeP-coordinator in EAPN-Fin, part-time teacher and a man who trust you must create your own rules against a superior opponent!

Under the process, in Finnish.



### EAPN-Finland reflections

- The high cost of housing removes many educational options.
- Social Security's complicated rules also hamper access to education.
- Unemployment Benefits' requirement to receive prior approval for pursuing any education discourages acquiring new skills.
- Unemployment Benefits' low amount (below EC recommendations) prevents making own educational decisions, even for something as simple as acquiring a few Skill Certification Cards towards a new job.

The European Commission should mandate that all EU member states meet the requirement for Social Security (especially Unemployment Benefits) to equal half of the median income level.

→ from recommendation to obligation.

# PeP/Access to education in Finland

- Education is free of charge at all levels from pre-primary to higher education.
- No dead-ends in the education system.
  - Learners can always continue their studies on an upper level of education.
- School lunch:
  - free from pre-primary to upper secondary level.
  - subsidised by the state in higher education.
- Transportation to and from school:
  - free for those learners in basic education who live farther away from school.
  - school transport subsidy available for studies in upper secondary education.
  - students discount on public transportation (e.g. HSL, VR).
- Additional education (so-called tenth grade, kymppiluokka)
  - [https://www.oph.fi/koulutus\\_ja\\_tutkinnot/perusopetus/lisaopetus](https://www.oph.fi/koulutus_ja_tutkinnot/perusopetus/lisaopetus)
- Educational support:
  - guidance and counselling for decision-making concerning education and careers
  - support in basic education:
    - general support for everyone: quality education as well as guidance and support.
    - intensified support for pupils who need regular support measures or several forms of support at the same time.
    - special support provides pupils with broadly based and systematic help so that they can complete compulsory education and be eligible for upper secondary education.
    - [https://www.oph.fi/english/education\\_system/support\\_for\\_pupils\\_and\\_students/support\\_in\\_basic\\_education](https://www.oph.fi/english/education_system/support_for_pupils_and_students/support_in_basic_education)
  - support in upper secondary education and training:
    - [https://www.oph.fi/english/education\\_system/support\\_for\\_pupils\\_and\\_students/support\\_in\\_upper\\_secondary\\_education\\_and\\_training](https://www.oph.fi/english/education_system/support_for_pupils_and_students/support_in_upper_secondary_education_and_training)
- Fees in early childhood education and care smaller for families with a smaller income

- Financial aid can be awarded for full-time study in an upper secondary school, vocational institution or institution of higher education
  - o study grant and student loan
  - o housing supplement
  - o new: subsidy for study materials on upper secondary level
  - o on financial support for the disabled, THL (in Finnish):  
<https://thl.fi/fi/web/vammaispalvelujen-kasikirja/itsenaisen-elamantuki/opiskelu/opiskelun-tukitoimet>
- Positive discrimination funding, for specific schools to eliminate social exclusion
  - o <https://dev.hel.fi/maatokset/asia/hel-2016-005978/olk-2016-7/>
  - o [https://vatt.fi/en/article/-/asset\\_publisher/helsinkilaisnuoret-hyotyvat-positiivisen-diskriminaation-rahoituksesta](https://vatt.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/helsinkilaisnuoret-hyotyvat-positiivisen-diskriminaation-rahoituksesta)
- VALMA (Ammatilliseen koulutukseen valmentava koulutus)
  - o Preparatory vocational education
  - o [https://www.oph.fi/saadokset\\_ja\\_ohjeet/opetussuunnitelmien\\_ja\\_tutkintojen\\_perusteet/valmentavat\\_koulutus](https://www.oph.fi/saadokset_ja_ohjeet/opetussuunnitelmien_ja_tutkintojen_perusteet/valmentavat_koulutus)
- Support for language minorities and migrants
  - o instruction in mother tongue: Sami, Roma language, sign language, instruction in mother tongue for migrants:  
[https://www.oph.fi/saadokset\\_ja\\_ohjeet/koululainsaadannon\\_soveltaminen/vastaukset/muun\\_kuin\\_kansalliskielen\\_opettaminen\\_aidinkielen](https://www.oph.fi/saadokset_ja_ohjeet/koululainsaadannon_soveltaminen/vastaukset/muun_kuin_kansalliskielen_opettaminen_aidinkielen)
  - o National Core Curricula for Immigrant Education:  
[https://www.oph.fi/english/curricula\\_and\\_qualifications/education\\_for\\_immigrants](https://www.oph.fi/english/curricula_and_qualifications/education_for_immigrants)
  - o LUVA (Lukiokoulutukseen valmistava koulutus)
    - Preparatory studies for general upper secondary) for immigrants and other foreign-language students
    - [https://www.oph.fi/saadokset\\_ja\\_ohjeet/opetussuunnitelmien\\_ja\\_tutkintojen\\_perusteet/lukiokoulutus/lukiokoulutukseen\\_valmistava\\_koulutus](https://www.oph.fi/saadokset_ja_ohjeet/opetussuunnitelmien_ja_tutkintojen_perusteet/lukiokoulutus/lukiokoulutukseen_valmistava_koulutus)
- Government subsidies granted by the Finnish National Agency for Education for projects on different topics
  - o e.g. right now the application period is open for: Valtion erityisavustus esi- ja perusopetuksen sekä varhaiskasvatuksen koulutuksellisen tasarvon edistämiseen sekä siihen liittyviin kokeiluihin vuosille 2019–2020

- [https://www.oph.fi/rahoitus/valtionavustukset/103/0/valtion\\_erityisavustus\\_esi- ja\\_perusopetuksen\\_seka\\_varhaiskasvatuksen\\_koulutuksellisen\\_tasa-arvon\\_edistamiseen\\_seka\\_siihen\\_liittyviin\\_kokeiluihin\\_vuosille\\_2019\\_2020](https://www.oph.fi/rahoitus/valtionavustukset/103/0/valtion_erityisavustus_esi- ja_perusopetuksen_seka_varhaiskasvatuksen_koulutuksellisen_tasa-arvon_edistamiseen_seka_siihen_liittyviin_kokeiluihin_vuosille_2019_2020)
- High-level library services free of charge
- Youth Guarantee (European Commission) to help young people gain access to education and employment: <https://nuorisotakuu.fi/etusivu>

## General information on the Finnish education system

- Finnish education in a nutshell  
[https://www.oph.fi/download/146428\\_Finnish\\_Education\\_in\\_a\\_Nutshell.pdf](https://www.oph.fi/download/146428_Finnish_Education_in_a_Nutshell.pdf)
- Education in Finland (slide presentation)  
[https://www.oph.fi/download/175015\\_education\\_in\\_Finland.pdf](https://www.oph.fi/download/175015_education_in_Finland.pdf)

# New national core curriculum for basic education



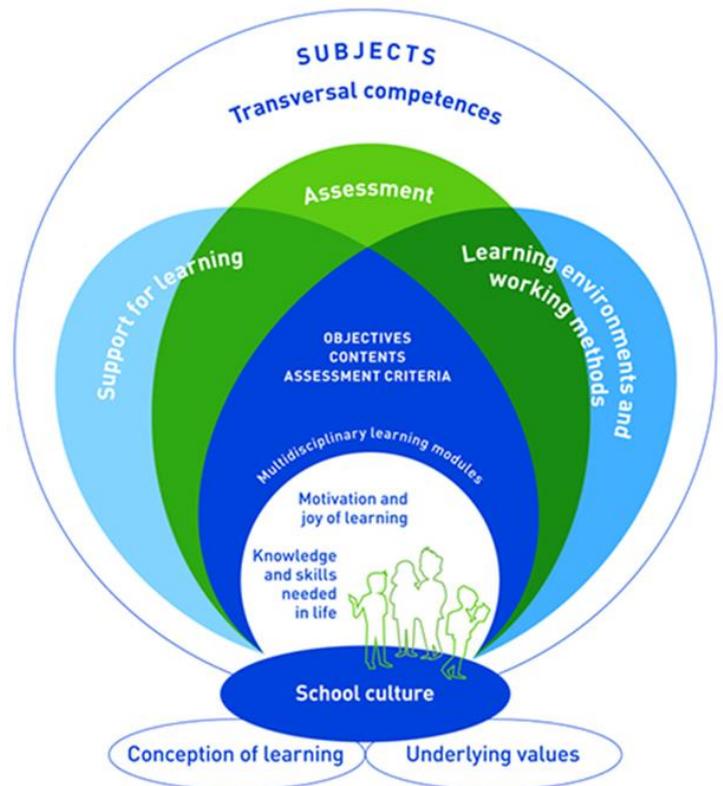
Ministry of  
Education  
and Culture

The Finnish National Agency for Education introduced the National core curriculum for basic education in 2014. Education providers have drawn up their own local curricula based on the national core curriculum.

**The new national core curriculum** for basic education was introduced for grades 1–6 in all schools beginning on 1 August 2016. The curriculum will be introduced for the higher grades of basic education in steps: the new curriculum will be adapted by grades 7 on 1 August 2017, by grades 8 in 2018 and by grades 9 in 2019.

The national core curriculum provides a uniform foundation for local curricula, thus enhancing equality in education throughout the country. The curricula of each municipality and school steer instruction and schoolwork in more detail, taking local needs and perspectives into consideration. If necessary, the local curriculum may also be revised later. The aim is that the curriculum serves as an active and flexible support for teaching and school activities.

The national core curriculum is mostly comprised of the objectives and contents described for different subjects which are connected to the description of the policies on underlying values, conception of learning and school culture. The purpose of the curriculum is to enable a reform of school culture and school pedagogy which will improve the quality of the learning process and enhance learning outcomes.



## Goal: to secure the necessary knowledge and skills as well as encourage learning

Curriculum reform is intended to ensure that the knowledge and skills of Finnish children and youths will remain strong in the future, both nationally and internationally. In addition, pedagogical guidelines are defined to help schools develop their operating methods in order to increase the pupils' interest in and motivation for learning.

Some of the key goals of the reform include enhancing pupil participation, increasing the meaningfulness of learning and enable every pupil to feel successful. Children and young people are encouraged to take more responsibility for their schoolwork and are given more support in their studies. The pupils set goals, solve problems and assess their learning based on set targets. The pupils' experiences, feelings, areas of interest and interaction with others lay the foundation for learning. The teacher's task is to instruct and guide the pupils into becoming lifelong learners, by taking the individual learning approaches of each pupil into consideration.

## Renewing subjects

The national core curriculum is still based on the subjects specified in the Basic Education Act for all grades. The subjects studied in basic education are

- mother tongue and literature
- second national language
- foreign languages
- mathematics
- environmental studies
- biology
- geography
- physics
- chemistry
- health education
- religion
- ethics
- history
- social studies
- music
- visual arts
- crafts
- physical education
- home economics
- guidance counselling.

The objectives and content of the subjects have been updated to reflect today's society as well as the knowledge and skills needed in future. Subjects are taught and studied based on the number of lessons specified in the distribution of lesson hours and the objectives set in the curriculum in all grades, and. Each subject is assessed every school year.

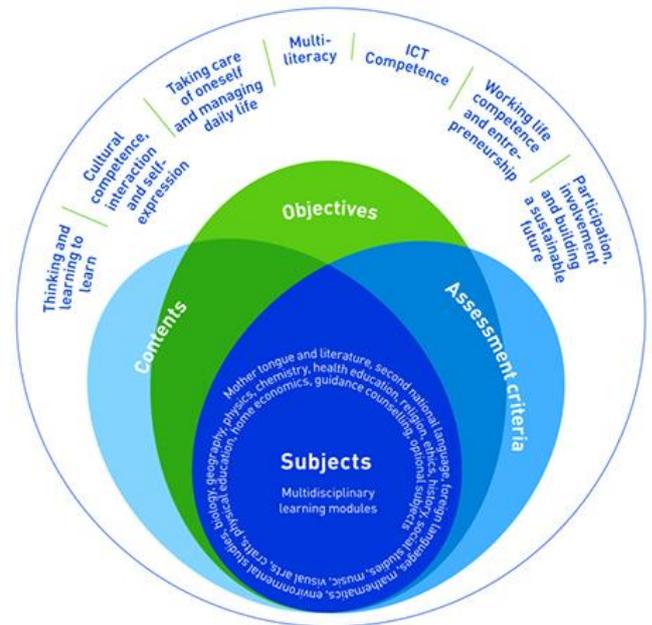
The grades in which the instruction of certain subjects were also changed. For example, social studies and second national language are introduced earlier. The freedom to choose optional lessons in artistic and practical subjects is expanded to lower grades. There is also more focus on ICT skills, well-being and daily life management in all subjects.

## Transversal competences as part of every subject

The new core curriculum places an emphasis on transversal competences in instruction. A changing society demands more and more transversal skills and competences. Therefore it is important that each subject promotes transversal competences

## The aims set for transversal competences include

- thinking and learning to learn
- cultural competence, interaction and self-expression
- taking care of oneself and managing daily life
- multiliteracy
- ICT competence
- working life competence and entrepreneurship
- participation, involvement and building a sustainable future



### The aims of transversal

competences are specified in the national core curriculum. Education providers are able to further define them according to their individual areas of emphasis. Transversal competences are always taught, studied and assessed as part of the different subjects.

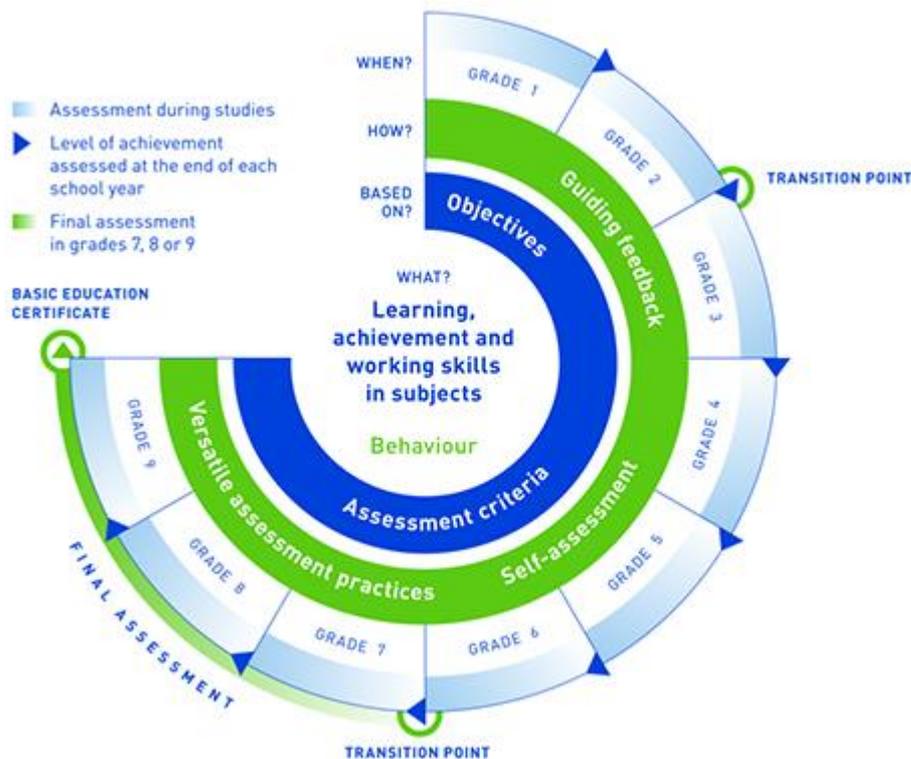
## Changing the ways schools operate

The guidelines for developing school culture are specified in the national core curriculum. The goal is to build a school culture that promotes learning, interaction, participation, well-being and a sustainable way of living. The principles that guide the development of the school culture emphasise the school as a learning community. In addition, an aim to ensure the well-being and safety of every pupil.

Schools must provide opportunities for experimentation, exploration, active learning, physical activity and play. Cultural diversity and language awareness are also key principles that guide the development of the school culture. The use of various languages in the school's daily life is seen as natural, and languages are appreciated.

## At least one multidisciplinary learning module a year

Each school year every school must have at least one clearly-defined theme, project or course that combines the content of different subjects and deals with the selected theme from the perspective of several subjects. These are called multidisciplinary learning modules. Schools plan and implement the multidisciplinary learning modules and the topics and duration may vary based on local needs and interests. Pupils participate in planning the modules. The assessment of learning is based on the objectives of the different subjects.



## Diversity in pupil assessment

The new curriculum emphasises diversity in assessment methods as well as assessment that guides and promotes learning. Information on each pupil's study progress must be given to the pupil and guardians on a sufficiently frequent basis. Feedback is also given in ways other than reports or certificates.

At the end of each school year pupils receive a school year report that gives a numerical grade for each subject on how well the pupil has achieved the targets set for the school year. To ensure fair assessment, national assessment criteria for the numerical grade eight ("good") have been defined in every subject for grades 6 and 9.

## Universal access to education (Wikipedia)

Universal access to education is the ability of all people to have equal opportunity in education, regardless of their social class, gender, ethnicity background or physical and mental disabilities. The term is used both in college admission for the middle and lower classes, and in assistive technology for the disabled. In order to facilitate the access of education to all, countries have right to education.