



World TVET Database Finland

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Abbreviations

CBOs	Competence-Based Qualifications
ECVET	European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training
EP	European Parliament
EQARF	European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ESF	European Social Fund
FEEC	Finnish Education Evaluation Council
FNBE	Finnish National Board of Education
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
NETCs	National Education and Training Committees
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NQMS	National Quality Management System
QCs	Qualification Committees
QRs	Qualification Requirements
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
VSE	Vocational Special Education

TVETipedia Glossary

Below are listed TVET terms mentioned in this report. Click on a term to read its definitions on the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVETipedia glossary.

Adult education

Assessment

Assessment guideline

Certificate

Competence

Competency-based qualifications

Continuing Education

Curriculum

Demand-driven TVET

Dropout

European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training

European qualifications framework for lifelong learning

Evaluation

Further Training

Guidance & Counselling

Higher Education

In-company training

Informal Learning

In-service training

Knowledge

Learning Outcomes

National Qualifications Framework

Non-formal education

On-The-Job Training(learning)

Open learning(education)

Prior Learning

Qualification

Quality

Quality Assurance

School-based programmes(training)

Self-assessment

Skill needs

Skills

Teacher

Teacher In Vet

Trainer

TVET

Upper secondary education

Vocational qualification

Work-based training (learning)

Finland

Population:	5,503,000 (2015)
Youth population ¹ :	653,000 (2015)
Median population age:	42.5 (2015)
Annual population growth (2010-2015) ² :	0.50%



Data © OpenStreetMap Design © Mapbox

1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation

TVET strategy

The Finnish government affirms that TVET has a key role to play in promoting economic competitiveness and prosperity in Finland. Since 2008, the government has implemented a strategy that aims at strengthening the network of TVET providers who have been encouraged to merge into regional entities to enhance the service capacity.

TVET is offered both to young people and adults already active in working life. TVET institutions are requested to develop their own provision in cooperation with the world of work, and to support competence development within small and medium-sized enterprises.

TVET national policies are designed based on quantitative and qualitative anticipations; quantitative anticipation of long-term demand for labour and educational needs and qualitative anticipation of skills needs. The government, through anticipation efforts, works to produce information about the types of skills and skilled people required in the future world of work and the ways in which this demand can be fulfilled through education and training provision. The government's objective is to match fully the quantitative demand for and supply of labour as closely as possible. In addition, anticipation data is used to develop qualifications frameworks, vocational skills requirements and instruction to better meet the skills needs of the future world of work.

TVET legislation

- TVET is regulated by the Vocational Education and Training Act No. 630/1998, which came into effect on 1 January 1999, and the Government Decree No. 811/1998. The Act concerns initial TVET to young and adult students and other available qualifications. The purpose of this legislation was to raise vocational skills and competences and meet the skill needs at the workplace by improving links between schools and employers.
- The Vocational Adult Education Act No. 631/1998 and subsequent amendments provide for the upper secondary vocational qualifications, further vocational qualifications and specialist vocational qualifications taken as competence tests irrespective of the

¹ Population aged 14-25

² All statistics compiled from the United Nation's Population Division's *World Population Prospects, the 2015 Revision* (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/>)

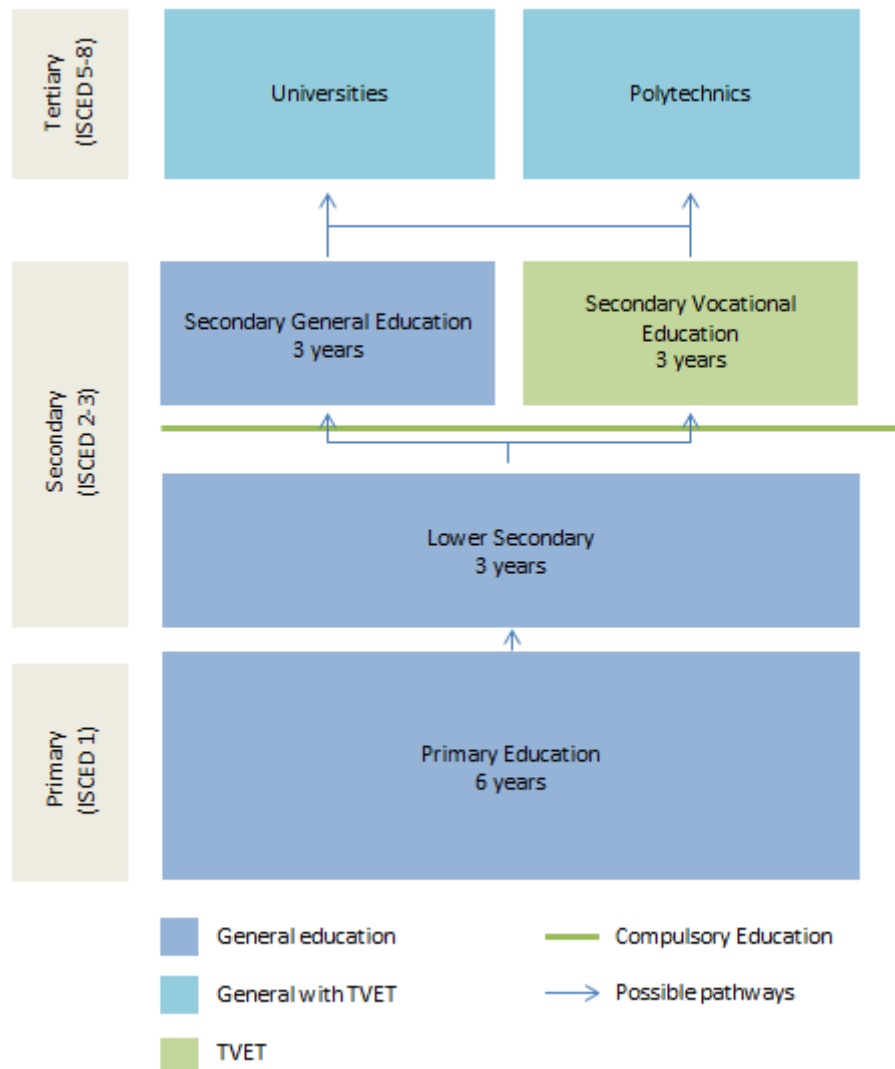
method of acquiring the vocational skills as well as for the preparatory training for these tests. An amendment introduced in 2006 provides for the preparatory training for competence-based qualifications (CBOs), individual plans of students, completing qualifications and contracts for arranging competence tests.

- The Liberal Adult Education Act No. 632/1998 regulates institutions of liberal adult education encompassing adult education centres, folk high schools, study centres, physical education centres, and summer universities.
- The Decree on the Qualifications of Educational Staff No. 986/1998, entered into force on 1 January 1999, determines the qualifications requirements for principals and teachers in TVET.
- The Decree on Vocational Education and Training (603/2005) is issued in order to validate non-formal and informal TVET.
- The new Government Decree on TVET No. 488/2008 came into effect in August 2008 and has been applied from the beginning of August 2009.
- Provisions on financing TVET are defined in the Act on the Financing of the Provision of Education and Culture (1705/2009).

Sources:

- CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Finland VET in Europe – Country report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.
- EURYDICE (2013). Finland Overview, European Encyclopedia on national education systems
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2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems



Scheme compiled by UNESCO-UNEVOC from Finnish Board of Education: Information Material 2010.

Formal TVET system

The education system is highly permeable. There are no dead ends preventing progression to higher levels of education. TVET starts at upper secondary level and more than 40 per cent of the relevant age group starts vocational upper secondary studies immediately after basic education. The Finnish higher education system consists of two complementary sectors: universities and polytechnics in which adults can study on separate adult education programmes.

TVET is available as School-Based Programmes, Apprenticeship Training, Polytechnic Education, Vocational Special Education (VSE), and Competence-Based Qualifications (CBQs):

- **School-based programmes and apprenticeship training**

Those programmes and training comprise upper secondary programmes and further training. The following table illustrates which programmes and training are provided:

	School-based programmes	Apprenticeship training
Upper Secondary Programmes	Pre-vocational programmes, Programmes leading to upper secondary vocational qualifications, Preparatory training for competence-based qualifications (CBQs)	Preparatory training for competence-based qualifications (CBQs), Programmes leading to upper secondary vocational qualifications
Further Training	Preparatory training for competence-based qualifications, Programmes not leading to a qualifications	Preparatory training for competence-based qualifications (CBQs), Programmes not leading to a qualification

Table extracted from Finnish Board of Education: Information Material 2010.

The scope of vocational school-based programmes is three years of study and each programme includes at least half a year of on-the-job learning in workplaces. Programmes and training can be organised diversely both in institutional learning environments and in workplaces as well as using online learning environments.

- **Polytechnic education**

Polytechnics offer education for polytechnic degrees and polytechnic master's degrees as well as professional specialisation and other adult education, open polytechnic education and vocational teacher training.

The length of polytechnic degree studies is generally 3.5 - 4 years of full-time study. This education is arranged as degree programmes. The entry requirement is a certificate from an upper secondary school or the matriculation certificate, a vocational qualification or corresponding foreign studies. The requirement for Master's studies in polytechnics is a Bachelors' level polytechnic degree and at least three years of work experience. The polytechnic Master's, which takes 1.5 - 2 years is equivalent to a university master degree.

Polytechnics also arrange adult education and open education geared to maintain and upgrade competencies. The teaching arrangements in adult education are flexible and enable mature students to work alongside their studies.

Polytechnics are whether municipal or private institutions, both are authorised by the government. The authorisation determines their educational mission, fields of

education, student numbers and location. Polytechnics have autonomy in their internal affairs.

- **Vocational Special Education (VSE)**

VSE institutions provide facilities and services for students with severe disabilities or chronic illnesses. Instruction is given in small groups and the main emphasis is on practice rather than theory. Students are also offered individual guidance and support for their studies and everyday lives.

Non-formal and informal TVET systems

- **Competence-Based Qualifications (CBQs)**

This system aims to recognise an individual's vocational competencies regardless of whether they were acquired through work experience, studies or other activities.

People may complete CBQs by demonstrating their vocational skills in competence tests. Preparatory training for CBQs is available, but it is also possible to participate in competence tests without any preparatory training. Nevertheless, the qualifications are mainly completed in connection with preparatory training and often competence test candidates participate in preparatory training. People can also study in further and continuing education without aiming at a qualification.

The CBQs system also offers all candidates an individualised plan at the following three stages: application for CBQs and for preparatory training, acquisition of the required vocational skills, and completion of qualifications. The plan takes into account the candidates' personal circumstances, including relevant learning acquired through informal and non-formal means, such as through work or interests. Training providers are responsible for guiding candidates through this process.

Sources:

- CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Finland VET in Europe – Country report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.
- Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) (2013). Polytechnic education in Finland. Helsinki: MEC <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/ammattikorkeakoulutus/?lang=en>. Accessed: 25.07.2013.
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- UNESCO-IBE (2012). World Data on Education. Finland VII Edition 2010/11. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

3. Governance and financing

Governance

The eight entities of TVET governance with their jurisdictions:

Provisions on TVET are defined in Acts of Parliament. The government defines the national objectives, the qualifications framework and the core subjects of TVET. The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) administers TVET; and decides on the specific details and scopes of qualifications. The MEC is also responsible for specifying education policies and for regulating, steering and financing TVET. Its work is guided by policies determined in the Government Programme, the Government Strategy Document and the Development Plan for Education and Research.



Scheme extracted from Finnish Board of Education: Information Material 2010.

The Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) is an expert and development body, which decides on the national core curricula and the requirements of CBQs, and determines the vocational skills requirements of qualifications and the methods of demonstrating competence. In addition, the FNBE coordinates national projects to develop education, training and teaching, monitors learning outcomes and anticipates changes in educational and skills needs.

The National Education and Training Committees (NETCs) are tripartite advisory bodies appointed by the MEC to ensure effective contacts between the TVET sector and the world of work at a national level. NETCs, as advisory bodies, participate in development and anticipation of TVET.

The Qualification Committees (QCs) are bodies appointed by the FNBE to implement CBQs including; organising and supervising competence tests, monitoring the effectiveness of the CBQs system in their respective TVET fields and, where necessary, making initiatives concerning its development. The QCs prepare contracts for arranging competence tests for different qualifications with the providers of relevant training or other bodies capable of arranging competence tests for the qualifications concerned in keeping with the principles of the CBQs system. QCs ensure the consistent quality of qualifications and award qualification certificates.

TVET providers decide on the provision of TVET in their region within the limits of their authorisation from the MEC. They decide independently on issues such as the kind of education and training provided and the method of completion of these studies as well as making decision regarding organisation of operations and the educational institutions maintained. When planning their operations, TVET providers take into consideration the educational needs of the world of work and the population of the region. TVET providers prepare their vocational education curricula for the fields where education and training is provided based on the national core curricula.

Regional administration plays an important role in promoting the relevance and demand-driven approach of TVET. Regional authorities implement Government-funded continuing training for teaching staff in their respective regions. In addition, they allocate grants for the purposes of vocational institutions' mission to develop and serve the world of work. They also manage the regional European Social Fund (ESF) which is allocated to develop the work-based learning.

Financing

TVET is mostly financed through the MEC budget. TVET funded by the MEC forms part of the system of central government transfers to local governments. The Ministry of Employment and the Economy also finances labour policy training, which may be upper secondary programmes, further training or higher education. The labour administration purchases labour policy training from education providers in the administrative sector of the MEC and, to some extent, from other education providers as well.

Financing of TVET is based on calculated unit prices and granted directly to authorised TVET providers. The annual funding allocated to a TVET provider is based on the number of students or other financial performance indicator (such as student/year) and the calculated unit price

payable per such indicator. TVET providers can spend the funding granted to them for planning and implementation of their provision as they see fit.

The TVET funding model steers the provision of TVET to meet the needs of different fields in the world of work as unit prices are determined on the basis of the world of work and training costs within different fields. The model takes into consideration educational needs within fields where the costs of education are higher than average as well as paying special attention to fields of particular importance with regard to national economy.

TVET FUNDING MODEL			
	Statutory government transfers + operating costs and investments	Performance-based funding	
		Based on operational outcomes	Based on quality assessment
Vocational upper secondary education and training	unit price / student / year	+ effectiveness + formal teaching qualifications + staff development	+ EFGM excellence model + special themes
Vocational further education and training	unit price / student-year / year	+ qualifications completed	
Apprenticeship training	unit price / student + confirmed apprenticeship agreement / year		+ EFGM excellence model + special themes, when necessary

Scheme extracted from Finnish Board of Education: Information Material 2010.

Performance-based financing system comprises funding based on operational outcomes determined on the basis of quantitative indicators, and funding based on quality assessment. Performance-based funding is designed to motivate TVET providers to continuously work on developing and improving their operational outcomes and the quality of education and training provided.

Upper secondary programmes: are co-financed by the State and municipalities. The statutory government transfer is calculated to cover approximately 42 per cent of operating costs, and some 58 per cent of funding comes from municipalities. Performance-based criteria was introduced as a basis for determining average banding of operating costs in upper secondary programmes in the beginning of 2006. Performance-based funding constitutes 3 per cent of the overall funding for upper secondary programmes. The amount of performance-based funding a TVET provider receives is determined based on indicators used to measure the employment situation of qualification holders, placement in further studies in higher education, drop-out rate, proportion of students passing their qualifications, formal teaching qualifications of the staff and resources allocated towards staff development.

Further training is mainly financed by the state. Part of the education and training is funded by students and employers who may be required to pay certain fees. Statutory government transfers constitute approximately 85 per cent of funding in self-motivated education and training and approximately 47 per cent of in-service training. The municipalities are not under any obligation to contribute to the financing of further TVET. Performance-based funding was introduced in further TVET in 2010. It constitutes 3 per cent of the overall statutory government transfers in further TVET.

Polytechnics: are co-financed by the government and local authorities. The government allocates resources in the form of core funding, which is based on unit costs per student, project funding and performance-based funding. Polytechnics also have external sources of funding.

Sources:

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Finland VET in Europe – Country report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.
Finnish National Board of Education (2010). Vocational education and training in Finland;
Vocational competence, knowledge and skills for working life and further studies.
Helsinki: the Ministry of Education and Culture.

4. TVET teachers and trainers

TVET teachers and trainers are very autonomous in their work. Thus, decisions on learning methods and materials are generally made either by individual teachers and trainers or in collaboration with other teachers or trainers.

The required qualifications for TVET teachers include an appropriate university or polytechnic degree, at least three years of work experience in a field relevant to the position and teachers' pedagogical studies. Some TVET teachers have obtained their teaching competence as part of a university degree by completing a teacher training programme. There is also plenty of autonomy regarding continuing training for TVET teachers. The continuing training obligation of teaching staff is defined partly in legislation and partly in the collective agreement negotiated between the Trade Union of Education in Finland and the employers' organisation. Most continuing training is provided free of charge and teachers enjoy full salary benefits during their participation. Funding responsibility rests with teachers' employers, mainly local authorities. Training content is decided by individual employers and the teachers themselves.

There are no formal required qualifications for TVET trainers. Their continuing professional development is also left completely up to them and their employers. Training programmes are available for in-company trainers that follow national guidelines. Trainers are generally experienced foremen and skilled workers. They frequently have a vocational or professional qualification, but hold no pedagogical qualifications. According to a regional study, 75 per cent of trainers had more than 10 years' experience in their own field.

In the case of TVET principals, it has also been proposed to make entry to the profession more flexible. This would mean that the teacher training required today could be completed within three years of being appointed as a principal.

Sources:

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Finland VET in Europe – Country report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.
Finnish National Board of Education (2010). Vocational education and training in Finland;
Vocational competence, knowledge and skills for working life and further studies.
Helsinki: the Ministry of Education and Culture.

5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks

A Qualification Requirements (QRs) document is drawn up separately for each vocational qualification. The qualifications are based on competencies required in working life and consist of qualification units in keeping with the work and functional units of the world of work. The QRs determine: the units included in each qualification, any possible study programmes or competence areas made up of different units, the composition of the qualification, vocational skills required for each qualification unit, guidelines for assessment (targets and criteria of

assessment), and methods of demonstrating vocational skills. The vocational skills requirements of qualifications and units are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences.

Finnish vocational qualifications:

- Upper secondary vocational qualifications;
- Further and specialist qualifications; and
- Polytechnic degrees and master's degrees.

Secondary vocational education

In completing upper secondary vocational qualifications, students acquire and demonstrate the skills and knowledge required to achieve vocational proficiency and find employment in their chosen field while obtaining extensive basic skills needed in different positions within the field and more specialised skills and professional competence in one sector of the study programme. In 2010, there were 52 upper secondary vocational qualifications including a total of 120 different study programmes.

The further and specialist qualifications consist of compulsory or optional qualification units. Key lifelong learning skills are included in qualification modules as applicable. In 2010, there were 187 further qualifications and 129 specialist qualifications.

Post-secondary vocational education

Polytechnic degrees and master's degrees are available for those who hold upper secondary vocational qualifications or further and specialist qualifications in polytechnics and universities. At present, university entrants mainly come from general upper secondary schools but the vocational track is another possibility. Polytechnics award over 20,000 polytechnic degrees and 200 polytechnic Master's degrees annually. The system of higher degrees was put in place after a trial period in 2005 and the number of polytechnic Master's programmes is expected to grow in the coming years.

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The legislation on the NQF is yet to be finalised, as it is being discussed in Parliament. However, the FNBE defined national qualifications in conjunction with European Qualifications Framework (EQF). According to the Development Plan for Education and Research for 2011–2016, the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) system will be put into practice in Finland in 2014.

Quality assurance

Quality assurance in TVET is a tool for the providers to assure and improve the quality of provision. The National Quality Management System (NQMS) in TVET comprises: national steering, quality management of TVET providers and external evaluation. International quality assurance policies such as the recommendation of the European Parliament (EP) and of the Council on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for

Vocational Education and Training (EQARF) are taken into account in developing national and provider-level quality management.

The Finnish Education Evaluation Council (FEEC) has been established for the purpose of external evaluation of education. The FNBE maintains a national monitoring system of learning outcomes based on vocational skills demonstrations for the purposes of national follow-up assessments on learning outcomes. Decisions on other types of external evaluation of education and training are made by the MEC and carried out by the FEEC or some other auditor appointed by the Ministry. In addition to these, another widely used method is based on peer assessments, which are carried out both nationally and internationally.

The following scheme displays The NQMS in TVET:



Scheme extracted from Finnish Board of Education: Information Material 2010.

TVET providers are obliged by law to carry out self-assessment of their own operations. They are also required to make the key results of these assessments public. The quality of TVET provision is also assessed by means of external evaluations, in which TVET providers are obligated to participate. On the other hand, TVET providers are encouraged to manage and improve the quality of their operations through the National Quality Management Recommendations for Vocational Education and Training and the Quality Awards for TVET granted annually as part of performance-based funding. The assessment criteria used for Quality Awards are based on the European Quality Award Excellence Model.

Sources:

- CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Finland VET in Europe – Country report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.
- Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) (2013). Polytechnic education in Finland. Helsinki: MEC <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/ammattikorkeakoulutus/?lang=en>. Accessed : 25.07.2013.
- Finnish National Board of Education (2010). Vocational education and training in Finland; Vocational competence, knowledge and skills for working life and further studies. Helsinki: the Ministry of Education and Culture.

6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges

Current reforms and major projects

TVET is continuously improved in Finland by means of national development projects. In recent years, key development areas have included; meeting the changing skills needs of the world of work, cooperation between TVET providers and the world of work, the quality of TVET, recognition of prior learning, diversification of learning environments, enhancing efficient application procedures, reducing drop-out rates, and increasing the attractiveness and appreciation of TVET.

The numbers of completed qualifications have increased regularly. In 2010, a significant portion of Finns completed upper secondary vocational qualifications as competence-based qualifications (CBQs) (14,000), while 13,900 and 5,300 people took further qualifications and specialist qualifications respectively. In practical terms, all qualification-holders had acquired some type of preparatory training for their qualification.

A programme was set up in 2012 to develop anticipatory and individualised procedures in guidance and counselling and to create pedagogical solutions and practices supporting completion of studies as well as work-centred learning environments and opportunities. There is also an emphasis on creating practices to recognise effectively prior learning more.

Challenges

In the coming years, it is expected that Finland will face problems with a diminishing labour force owing to demographic changes, changes in competence requirements and challenges in terms of the sustainability of the national economy.

One specific challenge is the marked difference in the regional accessibility of TVET. Another challenge is related to the fact that there is more than one age group competing for the same study places. Many of the places are taken by those who already have a qualification, while many school-leavers and other unqualified people remain outside education and training. Consequently, the government will take into account educational guarantee in the size and regional targeting of student intake as well as in the revision of student admission principles.

Other challenges include recruiting qualified teachers in some fields as well as teachers with shop-floor experience who hold a university degree. The government therefore works to make possible the acquisition of teaching qualifications by completing a specialist vocational qualification or some other qualification or training that provides solid competence in the field concerned.

Sources:

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Finland VET in Europe – Country report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.

7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions

UNEVOC Centres

- [<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=UNEVOC+Network+-+Centre&tid=496> EVTEK University of Applied Sciences (EVTEK-AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU)]
- [<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=UNEVOC+Network+-+Centre&tid=2533> The School of Education (EDU) University of Tampere]
- [<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=UNEVOC+Network+-+Centre&tid=3041> Omnia - The Joint Authority of Education in the Espoo Region (OMNIA)]

TVET Institutions

- [<http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/?lang=en> The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC)]
- [<http://www.oph.fi/english> The Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE)]
- [<http://www.oph.fi/koulutustoimikunnat> The National Education and Training Committees (NETCs)]
- [<http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/ammattikorkeakoulutus/ammattikorkeakoulut/?lang=en> Polytechnics (Universities of Applied Sciences)]
- [<http://themesta.net/koulutus/ammattioppilaitokset/> Vocational Schools and Centres]

8. References and further reading

References

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- EURYDICE (2013). Finland Overview, European Encyclopedia on National Education Systems
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Further reading

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http://www.oph.fi/english/education/vocational_upper_secondary_education_and_training.

About Finnish National Board of Education
http://www.oph.fi/english/sources_of_information/core_curricula_and_qualification_requirements/vocational_education_and_training.

Asetus koulutuksen ja yliopistoissa harjoitettavan tutkimuksen kehittämissuunnitelmasta (Decree on the Development Plans) (987/1998).

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Financial aid for students
<http://www.kela.fi/in/internet/english.nsf/NET/081001132858L?OpenDocument>.

Flexible basic education – Impact analysis
http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2008/JOPO_toiminnan_vaikuttavuuden_arviointi.html?lang=en.

Job alternation leave and study leave <https://www.tem.fi/index.phtml?l=en&ts=2314>.

Laki ammatillisesta koulutuksesta (Act on vocational education and training) (630/1998).

Lifelong guidance in Finland. Ministry of Employment and Economy, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Board of Education, CIMO.
http://www.cimo.fi/instancedata/prime_product_julkaisu/cimo/embeds/cimowwwstructure/25493_Lifelong_guidance_in_Finland.pdf.

National Qualification Requirements for Vocational Education and Training
http://www.oph.fi/english/sources_of_information/core_curricula_and_qualification_requirements/vocational_education_and_training.

Performance-based funding
http://www.oph.fi/english/publications/2011/performance_indicator_for_initial_vocational_education_and_training_in_finland_2011.

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Qualitative foresight, The National Project on Anticipation of Competences and Skills Needs (VOSE) http://www.oph.fi/english/sources_of_information/projects/vose.

The Education fund <http://www.koulutusrahasto.fi/?3>.

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Valtioneuvoston asetus koulutustoimikuntajärjestelmästä (Government decree on the Education Committees) (882/2010).

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