

These general objectives were developed to:

- provide all citizens with an opportunity for training for one to two weeks each year and for more thorough upgrading of their competence every 10 to 15 years;
- provide adults with sufficient educational opportunities at all levels, organising education and training with due consideration given to the pedagogical and other learning conditions of adults who were often gainfully employed;
- promote equality in adult learning, in particular, through the action programme for adults with a low level of initial education;
- reinforce teaching methods and counselling and develop new learning environments and virtual education, develop recognition of learning and investment in the competences of teachers and trainers;
- develop social benefits for adult students and retention of fees charged for adult education and training at a reasonable level.

5.1.3. The Noste programme

The Noste programme is a five-year (2003-07) action programme for education and training targeted at adults aged 30-59 who have only completed basic level education. The programme provides an opportunity to complete initial vocational qualifications and further or specialist vocational qualifications or specific modules of these free of charge. Funds may also be used for instruction in information society skills required in working life, such as training for computer driving licences, and for completion of basic education of those aged 25-54.

The general objectives of the Noste programme are to improve career development for people who have not completed any education and/or training beyond a basic level, to mitigate labour shortages caused by early retirement and to increase employment. The name *Noste (Lyftet)* in Finnish refers to upgrading adult skills.

5.2. Continuing vocational education and training

Publicly provided adult education and training is available for anyone and is mostly funded by the Ministry of Education. Different options are available; the main types are listed below. Training is provided by vocational adult education centres, vocational institutions and folk high schools. Non-vocational education is provided by folk high schools and adult education centres.

5.2.1. Upper secondary and post-secondary vocational education and training

Initial vocational education and training

Initial VET is primarily targeted at young people at upper secondary level but there is a specific form designed for adults which leads to the same set of vocational qualifications.

Qualifications are competence-based qualifications, irrespective of the method of acquiring the skills, and the completion period is usually shorter than the standard period set for young people. The qualifications can also be completed following apprenticeship training. Providers are funded in the same way for adult participants as for young people.

Vocational further education and training

Vocational further education and training caters specifically for adults. It is designed ‘to maintain and enhance the vocational competence of the adult population, to provide students with opportunities for independent self-employment, to develop working life and promote employment and to support lifelong learning’. It provides an opportunity to complete further or specialist vocational qualifications or individual modules of these qualifications. It can be undertaken at school or as apprenticeship.

All qualifications are competence-based (see 8.2.1.). The purpose of further and specialist vocational qualifications is to provide a study track for adults already in command of their occupation and wanting to obtain formal recognition. Adults may complete further and specialist vocational qualifications either by demonstrating their vocational skills through competence tests without any preparatory training or at the end of their training. However, most candidates have taken part in some preparatory training. Vocational further education and training does not necessarily lead to a formal qualification. Students can demonstrate their skills also in parts of the qualification tests without achieving the full formal qualification.

The State funds 90 % of the costs of certificate-oriented vocational further education and training. Where training is organised as in-service training, the State covers 50 % of the costs. The State funds 100 % of the theoretical part of apprenticeship training. Employers pay salaries which correspond to the collective agreement but get a subsidy for workplace training (see Chapter 10).

About 40 vocational adult education centres provide vocational further education and training.

5.2.2. Higher education

Polytechnics

Adult education is one of the basic tasks of polytechnics and adults can complete exactly the same bachelor’s degrees as young people. The only differences are pedagogical approach, which is more tailored to adults, and course organisation, to reflect that adults cannot always study full-time.

In 2002, Finland launched a trial project for postgraduate polytechnic degrees (polytechnic master’s degrees) based on requirements set by polytechnic degrees and development of working life. These aim to provide basic knowledge and skills and the abilities to function in working-life development and other assignments requiring special expertise, as in the statute. The programmes are open to those who have completed an appropriate polytechnic degree or

some other appropriate higher education degree and who have at least three years of post-degree work experience in the relevant field. In 2005 the degrees became an official part of the degree system (see 4.6.1.).

Polytechnics also provide adult education that does not lead to degrees. The Open Polytechnic provides individual courses which are part of polytechnic degrees. Polytechnics also provide professional specialisation studies (*erikoistumisopinnot, specialiserade studier*) mainly for those who have already completed a polytechnic degree. The scope of the studies is 20-60 credits and they last for one to two years.

Universities

Education leading to bachelor's and master's academic degrees is not provided separately for young people and adults; people of all ages study the same degree programmes. Nevertheless, universities organise separate master's programmes mainly intended for those who have already completed a higher education degree. These programmes give credit for previous higher education level studies, allowing a new degree to be taken in less time than normal.

Universities also provide specialisation studies to promote professional development. Universities offer other forms of continuing education, which are usually implemented by continuing education centres (*täydennyskoulutuskeskukset, fortbildningscentralen*) operating in conjunction with them. Every university has its own continuing education centre.

Open University studies are open to all participants irrespective of their educational background. Subject to certain conditions, Open University students are also entitled to apply for full-degree studies.

5.2.3. Participants

The tables below show participation in adult education and training. It should be noted that data include all types of adult education whether formal or non-formal, vocational or non-vocational. The figures include both the employed and unemployed. The age structure of participants varies according to the type of education.

Table 6: *Number of participants in certificate-oriented education and training in educational institutions in 2000, 2002 and 2004*

	2000	2002	2004
General upper secondary education	15 455	13 951	12 068
Competence-based qualifications	35 190	44 307	60 152
Polytechnics	20 527	20 922	22 083

Source: Statistics Finland, Educational institutions, 2005.

Table 7: *Participation in non-certificate-oriented education and training in educational institutions in 2004*

	Number of participants (*)	Females (%)
Vocational further education and training, not apprenticeship training	79 935	55
Vocational further education and training, apprenticeship training	2 961	73
Labour market training	51 955	52
Courses ordered by employers	298 839	43
Courses organised as liberal education	1 649 692	72
Open polytechnics education	13 560	66
Open university education	57 986	80
Other education	91 568	55
Total	2 246 496	66

(*) The number of participants is counted as participants in individual courses, which means that a person taking several courses can be counted into the number of participants several times.

Source: Statistics Finland, Educational institutions, 2005.

In 2005, Finland was among the four best performing countries for participation by adults in lifelong learning (with Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom). The participation rate was high (15 % or more) in all the regions ⁽⁶⁾.

5.3. Labour market training

Administrative and funding responsibility for training unemployed people (and those at risk of unemployment) rests with the Ministry of Labour. Participation by unemployed people in education and training organised by the educational administration is often difficult as full-time students cannot receive unemployment benefits.

Labour market training is part of active labour policy and is divided into two main parts: vocational training, and career guidance and preparatory training. The former develops the vocational skills of participants, with about half acquiring a formal educational qualification. Certificate-oriented studies provided as labour market training include training for initial, further or specialist vocational qualifications and, subject to certain conditions, upper secondary school studies and education leading to polytechnic and university degrees. The objective of career guidance and preparatory training is to find appropriate employment and educational options for each individual (see 9.1.).

Labour market training may be purchased from a licensed organisation such as a university, a polytechnic or another appropriate education provider. In other words, training is mostly

⁽⁶⁾ Eurostat. EU Labour Force Survey, Eurostat database, 2006. Lifelong learning participation is considered as the percentage of those aged 25-64 participating in education and training during the four weeks preceding the survey.

purchased from the education providers receiving state subsidies granted by the educational administration. This includes publicly supervised private institutions, since private institutions providing certificate-oriented training get the same state subsidies as public institutions. Training is funded through procurement, where a representative of the labour administration, most typically a regional Employment and Economic Development Centre (see 3.1.2.) purchases training from a provider of educational services.

Labour market training is governed by Act 1295/2002 on the public employment service (see Annex 3) which states that each registered job-seeker is to have an individual job-seeking plan within five months, which outlines the person’s competences and possible vocational further education and training needs. The plans provide as individually tailored a service as possible and refer each client to the type of education or training that is best suited to him or her.

Different groups apply for labour market training based on their own needs and on negotiations with employment officials. Extensive provision makes it possible to offer customised educational services to different target groups. In 2005, vocational initial and continuing training and retraining were provided for more than 200 occupations. The majority of labour market training is purchased from publicly supervised educational institutions, which are required to evaluate their operations. In addition, the labour administration started to collect electronic feedback from students in 2001, to assure quality and improve development conditions for training.

Table 8: Number of persons attending labour market training from 2001 to 2005 (reference date: end of January)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
On labour market training	29 300	25 800	33 300	33 500	33 000

Source: Ministry of Labour, 2005.

5.4. Continuing vocational education and training at the initiative of enterprises or social partners

In principle there is no government regulation on in-service-training; this is viewed as an enterprise responsibility. Enterprises tend to purchase certificated and non-certificated training from formal education institutions.

In-service training is promoted both in legislation and through general incomes policy agreements. The law encourages the use of in-service training in situations where an enterprise’s production structure changes so that staff competences no longer match the enterprise’s operational models. Act 725/1978 on Cooperation within Undertakings (see Annex 3) requires enterprises with at least 30 employees to draw up annual training plans and to update them where the number of employees is reduced.

The Employment Contracts Act 55/2001 (see Annex 3) imposes an obligation on employers to provide training in situations where termination of employment can be prevented by means of vocational further education and training. In-service training is required to be considered as feasible and reasonable from the point of view of both contracting parties.

Adult education and training also play a role in collective agreements: the most recent national collective agreement between the central organisations of the social partners for 2005-07 (see Annex 3, Incomes policy settlement for 2005-07) contains a proposal for government to increase allowances targeted at higher vocational adult training and adult education.

5.5. Quality assurance and evaluation

In certificate-oriented vocational further education and training (and in initial training preparing for competence-based qualifications), the key quality assurance mechanism comprises the respective qualification requirements themselves and whether they are met. Responsibility for organising and supervising competence tests rests with qualification committees which include social partner representatives to ensure that qualifications are designed in accordance with working life needs. Their primary task is to steer the organisation of competence-based tests and award examination certificates.

Act 630/1998 on Vocational Education and Act 631/1998 on Adult Vocational Education (see Annex 3) require education providers to evaluate their educational provision and its effectiveness and to participate in external evaluations of their operations. Responsibility for external evaluations rests with the national Evaluation Council for Education and Training.

The Polytechnics Act 351/2003 (see Annex 3) also includes provisions on evaluation: the polytechnic shall be responsible for the standard of quality and continuous development of its educational provision and other operations and shall participate in external quality assessment on a regular basis. Polytechnics are also required to publish the results of evaluations.

The Universities Act 645/1997 (see Annex 3) determines an equivalent obligation for universities. They are required to evaluate their education, research and artistic activities and the effectiveness of these operations and to participate in external evaluations. Similarly, universities are also required to publish evaluation results.

Two independent expert bodies are responsible for evaluating education and training: the Evaluation Council for Education and Training and the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council. The role of the former is to support education providers in evaluation matters, organise external evaluations relating to education policy, make proposals to develop evaluation and promote research into evaluation. The role of the latter is to assist higher education institutions and the Ministry of Education with their evaluations. Both councils are appointed by the Ministry of Education and they also have duties concerning adult education and training.

6. Training of VET teachers and trainers

6.1. Types of VET teachers and trainers

The qualification requirements for VET teaching personnel, i.e. in vocational institutions (see 4.3.1.), vocational adult education centres (see Glossary) and polytechnics (see 4.6.1.), are mostly defined by law (see Annex 3, Decree 986/1998 on Teaching Qualifications and Polytechnics Act 351/2003).

Teaching staff whose qualification requirements are regulated include:

- polytechnic VET teachers,
- polytechnic senior lecturers,
- vocational subject teachers,
- core subject teachers,
- teachers providing special needs education,
- guidance counsellors,
- principals, who are also members of the teaching staff.

Qualifications and training of both trainers in apprenticeship training and workplace instructors (see 6.2.) are not regulated.

Teacher qualifications for general and vocational institutions were harmonised at the beginning of 1999 (see Annex 3, Decree on Teaching Qualifications). Teachers within all types of formal educational institution (basic education; general upper secondary schools; vocational institutions; and liberal adult education institutions)⁽⁷⁾, must have pedagogical studies worth a minimum of 60 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits. The principle is that student teachers are to achieve a core knowledge of teaching and learning that can be generalised to all forms of education and training.

The education of core subject teachers, e.g. mathematics and language teachers, is the same for basic as for general upper secondary education, and pedagogical studies are usually taken alongside subject-specific ones (see Annex 3, Decree 576/1995 on the Degrees in Education and Teacher Training). Vocational teacher education is always consecutive. It builds on two basic requirements: the degree and work experience. When student teachers apply to study, they are already professionals with experience (of a career) in a certain field. Special needs teachers and guidance counsellors can either have the same training as core subject teachers or as vocational subject teachers before their specialisation.

⁽⁷⁾ Folk high schools, adult education centres, etc.

The quality of teacher education is monitored through the self-evaluation of each university or polytechnic and external evaluations conducted by The Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (see 5.5.).

There are no formal qualification requirements for trainers/workplace instructors. These posts tend not to exist in school-based VET as schools and adult education centres have teachers who are responsible for all training, including student supervision during periods of on-the-job learning in enterprises. In apprenticeship training, apprentices work in enterprises under the guidance of a trainer (an older, experienced worker or foreman). As on-the-job learning periods and skills demonstrations are included in upper secondary qualifications, the workplace instructor's role has become more important.

VET teachers have opportunities to influence their work through their involvement in curricula and requirements for competence-based qualifications as well as in training committees (see Table 9). They also have influence at institutional level where they can take their own decisions regarding pedagogy, learning materials and student assessment. Finnish teachers can also participate in making decisions on the school budget and, in particular, on the allocation of resources within the school.

Table 9: Roles and tasks of VET teachers and trainers (in addition to instructing students)

Roles and tasks	Teachers	Trainers
Curriculum development	x	
Supporting students in preparing their individual study plans	x	x
Evaluation of education	x	
Student assessment	x	x
Cooperation between school and enterprise	x	x

Source: Finnish National Board of Education, 2006.

VET providers are responsible for recruiting and employing their teaching staff and determine the types and number of posts needed. As a general rule, posts should be filled permanently wherever possible.

Universities and polytechnics enjoy a degree of autonomy which allows each university pedagogical faculty and vocational teacher education college (see Glossary) to draw up their own education programmes within the limits of legislation and agreements made with the Ministry of Education.

6.2. Preservice training for IVET teachers

6.2.1. Core subject teachers

Teachers of core subjects at vocational institutions and polytechnics have the same education as subject teachers working in general education. They have a master's degree with a scope of 300 ECTS credits. Subject teacher education includes 60 pedagogical studies ECTS credits.

They apply to the respective university faculties and departments of their main subject, following the usual procedure. Those admitted to a degree programme and aiming to be subject teachers will then apply separately for subject teacher education. Admission to subject teacher education is based either on aptitude tests alone, or on aptitude tests and the applicant's study record. Several universities have programmes where students apply directly for subject teacher education. The education of subject teachers is the same regardless of the subject taught.

Polytechnic lecturers are required to have a master's degree and senior lecturers a postgraduate licentiate or doctorate. Part-time and temporary teachers are officially required to hold a full teaching qualification but many lack pedagogical studies as part-time or temporary posts are not attractive to fully qualified teachers.

6.2.2. Vocational subject teachers

Teachers of vocational subjects are required to have an appropriate master's degree or a polytechnic degree or, if such do not exist, the highest possible qualification in their own occupational field. In addition, they must complete pedagogical studies amounting to 60 ECTS credits and have at least three years of work experience in the field. Polytechnic lecturers are required to have a master's degree and three years' relevant work experience and senior lecturers a licentiate or doctorate and the same work experience.

Students applying for teacher education at vocational teacher education colleges must have the required degrees and work experience. The colleges are autonomous and can thus decide on further selection criteria. Very commonly the following criteria are taken into account when selecting the students:

- degrees,
- basic studies in education,
- work experience (non-teaching),
- teaching experience,
- special activities.

In vocational teacher education colleges (*ammattilliset opettajakorkeakoulut, yrkespedagogiska lärarhögskolorna*) education is similar for all students regardless of their field or subject specialisation. The studies include basic studies in education, vocational

subject pedagogic studies, teaching practice and other studies. Students may complete the education in one academic year by studying full-time or flexibly as multiform education in one to three years and link their studies to the development of their own teaching methods and the working environment of the institution.

Vocational teacher education is provided at five teacher education colleges, which are affiliated to five polytechnics. Teacher education for Swedish-speaking teachers is provided by the faculty of pedagogy of the Swedish-language university, *Åbo Akademi*.

6.2.3. Special needs teacher education for vocational institutions

Teachers with subject or vocational subject teacher qualifications can specialise in special needs education. Vocational teacher education colleges offer 60 ECTS credits, qualifying for work as special needs teachers at vocational institutions. The aim is to train experts who, in addition to their own educational work, can supervise the special pedagogical work of other teachers and the institution as a whole.

Most special needs teachers work at vocational special institutions. These institutions are responsible for providing education and training for students with the most severe disabilities, as special needs instruction should primarily be provided in connection with regular instruction or in separate groups or both.

6.2.4. Guidance counsellor education for vocational institutions

Guidance counsellors at vocational institutions have the same basic qualification requirements as subject or vocational subject teachers. In addition they are required to undertake 60 ECTS credits organised by vocational teacher education colleges.

The students familiarise themselves with the underlying social factors involved in student counselling as well as with various areas and methods of counselling, both within their own institutions and in cooperation with other organisations.

The admission requirements for vocational special needs teacher education and for vocational guidance counsellor education include teacher qualifications and at least one year of teaching experience at a vocational institution.

6.2.5. Principals

Principals at upper secondary vocational institutions should have a master's or bachelor's degree and the pedagogical qualifications required of teachers. Furthermore, they should have sufficient teaching experience. They are also required to have a certificate of educational administration accredited by the Finnish National Board of Education, or studies in educational administration at a university, or they must have acquired comparable

administrative experience. The administrative studies required of the principal can be taken freely without any entry requirements.

Principals at vocational adult education centres should hold a master's degree and have sufficient work experience in the field. They are also required to have the same administrative studies as principals at vocational upper secondary institutions.

Principals of polytechnics should have a licentiate or doctorate, sufficient knowledge of the educational field and administrative experience.

6.2.6. Trainers or workplace instructors

Trainers or workplace instructors do not have formal qualification requirements: Finnish education has not officially recognised the trainer function. In apprenticeship training (see 4.3.2.), the apprentices work in enterprises under the guidance of an older, experienced worker or foreman but their theory instruction takes place in vocational institutions and is provided by qualified teachers. The same applies to the so-called workplace instructors, the workers in enterprises who are responsible for the students in vocational upper secondary education and training doing their compulsory six-month on-the-job learning period.

6.2.7. Assessment and quality monitoring

Student teachers are assessed at the end of their studies by means of assignments carried out during the studies, a final project (often an independent development project, a kind of thesis), and assessment of teaching practice. Teaching practice is a part of student teachers' pedagogical studies.

There is no formal procedure for assessing teachers; it is the responsibility of the principals. Where performance is substandard, the principal can only try to solve it through discussions. Dismissal is very rare although teachers may be dismissed if they are unable to carry out their duties adequately or if they continuously neglect them.

6.3. In-service, continuing training and development for IVET teachers

Teaching staff are obliged to participate in in-service training. For teachers in vocational institutions this is based on collective agreements for civil servants. The number of days required for in-service training varies from one to five, outside school hours, per school year, depending on the vocational sector. Teachers at vocational adult education centres are not formally required to participate in in-service training, but generally it is promoted as they have to compete with other institutions as training providers.

The Finnish National Board of Education has drawn up two continuing training programmes for vocational teachers, the specialist in competence-based qualifications (*näyttötutkintomestarikoulutus, examensmästare för fristående examina*) and studies for teachers to increase their competence in the world of work (*opettajan työelämäosaamisen opinnot, studier i arbetslivskunskaper för lärare*). Both are worth 23 ECTS credits (see Glossary).

Polytechnic teachers are obliged to participate in training activities to develop their professionalism as a teacher as well as familiarise themselves with the world of work.

Most continuing training is 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.

6.4. Teachers and trainers in continuing vocational education and training

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET) is mainly provided by vocational institutions, particularly adult education centres (see Glossary). In addition, non-certificate-oriented vocational further education and training is given in liberal adult education institutions. These centres are publicly funded and they need permission from the Ministry of Education to provide their services. Their aims and duration vary considerably.

Types of teachers and trainers in CVET, including liberal adult education institutions, are identical to those in IVET. The qualification requirements are mostly defined by law.