



PRIME MINISTER'S
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Preparation process of the VNR

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How Finland did the VNR:

- Used existing institutional mechanisms and processes and several additional consultations/meetings/hearings
 - Whole GOV/all ministries were involved
 - Used ongoing processes and tools to engage and participate stakeholders
 - The VNR is a place to collect GOV's and stakeholder inputs and findings
- Based the VNR on knowledge, latest evaluations, reports and data
- Invited some most important stakeholders to write parts of the report and assess the progress on SDGs (over 50 NGOs)
- PMO has been responsible of the compilation of the VNR

GOV and Civil society organizations assessed all the 17 SDGs



- Ministries got the **official request to assess** the SDGs
 - **Progress** in every SDG (Goal and targets) – State /Trend
 - Write about the **main challenges and successes**
 - Open Finland's **global responsibilities**
- **Civil society organizations (57)** assessed all the SDGs
 - Overall **trend**
 - Finland's **challenges and successes**
 - Instructions for the future: **Finland must...**

GOV

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Government's assessment

- 4.1 Finland has achieved the targets for completion of primary and secondary education.
- 4.2 The right to early childhood education and care will be extended to cover all children equally.
- 4.3 The reform of vocational education and training has increased flexibility in terms of access and completion.
- 4.4 Increasing attention is being paid to continuing learning.
- 4.5 Gender disparities in learning outcomes are still considerable in Finland.
- 4.6 Literacy is world-class, but the level of skills has declined in both numeracy and literacy.
- 4.7 Sustainable development permeates all levels of education from early childhood education and care through the secondary level (including vocational education and training) and it is also included in the agreement negotiations between the Government and higher education institutions.

Finland's challenge is the recent decline in the traditionally strong reading literacy. In Finland, the skills gap between girls and boys is the largest of all OECD countries. While differences between schools have traditionally been small in Finland, differences between pupils have increased. The impact of socio-economic background on an individual's learning outcomes has grown.

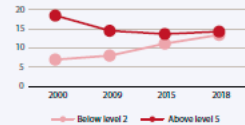
Finland has succeeded in increasing the proportion of people aged 25 to 64 who have completed at least basic (primary and lower secondary) education by two percentage points to 82.5% during the 2010s. The proportion of those who have completed at least a vocational qualification increased by about four percentage points to 78.8% while the increase for those with higher education degrees was about 6.5 points, reaching 28%. Participation in adult education is at a high level: about 50% of people aged 25 to 65 take part in education in Finland. Adult education participation rates have decreased slightly from the peak year of 2012.

As for global responsibility, Finland has contributed to helping thousands of children and young people to learn by supporting the development of education systems in several African and Asian countries. Learning opportunities have also been supported in fragile states and conflict areas.

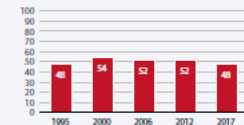
Key national policy initiatives in 2015–2020:

- The new National Core Curricula and their deployment have resulted in building up a phenomenon-based approach in all subjects.
- A vocational education and training forum has increased student orientation, workplace relevance and flexibility.
- The revised Act on Early Childhood Education and Care restores the equal right to early childhood education and care to all children.

THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION in Finland is high. Over the 2010s and the last few years, however, the level of educational attainment among younger age groups has not continued to rise. Finland guarantees all citizens high-quality education free of charge from pre-primary to higher education.



Picture 1. PISA literacy 2000–2015.



Picture 1. Participation in adult education, %

Civil Society

1 Civil society's assessment

Organisations participating in this assessment: Finnish Development NGOs Fingo, the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities, the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions, Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners MTK, Open Knowledge Finland, National Union of University Students in Finland, Plan International Finland, SOSTE Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health, The Trade Union of Education in Finland OAJ, Feln, Finnish Committee for UNICEF

Finland's challenge is that despite emphasis on education in development cooperation, the multi-stakeholder cooperation is not working well enough and despite dialogues, the various parties are operating in silos. Finland is eagerly exporting its expertise and wishes to strengthen the relationship between education export and development cooperation. This relationship is not clear, though, and its priorities and premises should be clarified. Ethical ground rules should be put in place in the discussion on export of education.

The elegant phrases on sustainable development in the new early childhood education and national core curricula are put at risk as the workload of teaching staff and expectations increase. Attaining the education target both in Finland and globally requires a high level of education among teachers, safe and sound working conditions and appropriate pay. This has not been taken into account sufficiently in development cooperation.

In Finland a key issue requiring improvement is equality in education. Parental education level and socio-economic status are strongly associated with children's school achievement and continued interest in studying. In educational achievement between genders, girls have a clear advantage, and young people with disabilities experience discrimination and inequality. Regional equality has also been endangered as education is increasingly concentrated in larger units and population centres.

There is fairly limited selection of adult-education opportunities promoting competencies for sustainable development and global civic skills, although these competencies are sorely needed amidst the structural changes in society. Opportunities for continuous learning should be developed both in Finland and globally.

Finland has succeeded in responding to the globally acknowledged crisis of learning and has actively striven to have an out-sized role in finding solutions. Education is one of the priorities in Finland's development cooperation. Equal, high-quality education is actively addressed in bilateral and multilateral development cooperation as well as in CSO work.

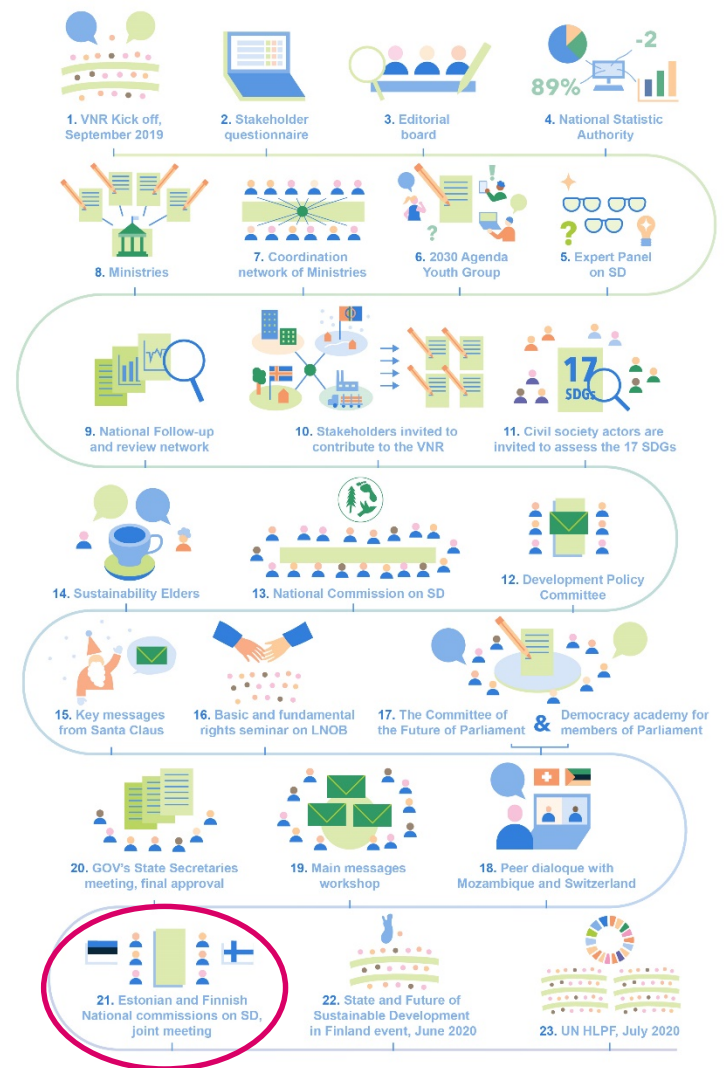
In Finland, sustainable development and global civic skills feature prominently in the national curricula and in qualifications from early childhood education to primary and secondary education. Transversal competences support active global citizenship, and value systems feature values that promote a sustainable future. In the public funding for the continuing professional development of teachers, the sustainable development perspective has been emphasised. The premises of the new Youth Act also include principles that point the way to active global citizenship.

The objectives of free upper secondary education and raising the compulsory school age stated in the Government Programme promote equal opportunity to attain at least an upper secondary level qualification and provide students with sufficient educational skills for higher education. The changes enable an increase in educational level and employment. Alongside these, it is important to maintain existing success factors, such as sufficient student counselling and opportunity for flexible study paths and continuous learning.

Finland must

- in all the educational cooperation that it finances, require the improvement of educational opportunities of those in a disadvantaged situation and enhancement of the quality of teaching
- systematically work to promote equality in education in Finland and globally
- bring into focus global civic skills and competencies for sustainable development also in adult education, and reinforce non-formal and informal learning opportunities side by side with formal training
- pay attention to regional differences, teacher resources and support for pupils to secure access to high-quality education throughout the country.

**We had fruitful journey!
Thank you!**



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