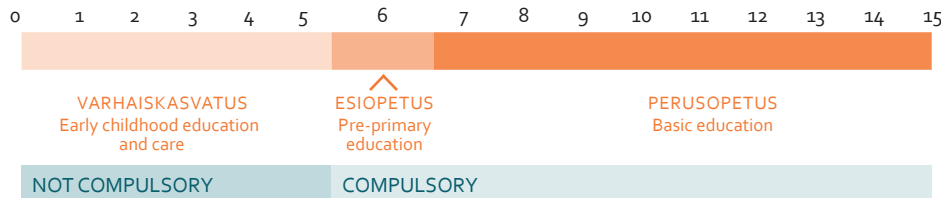
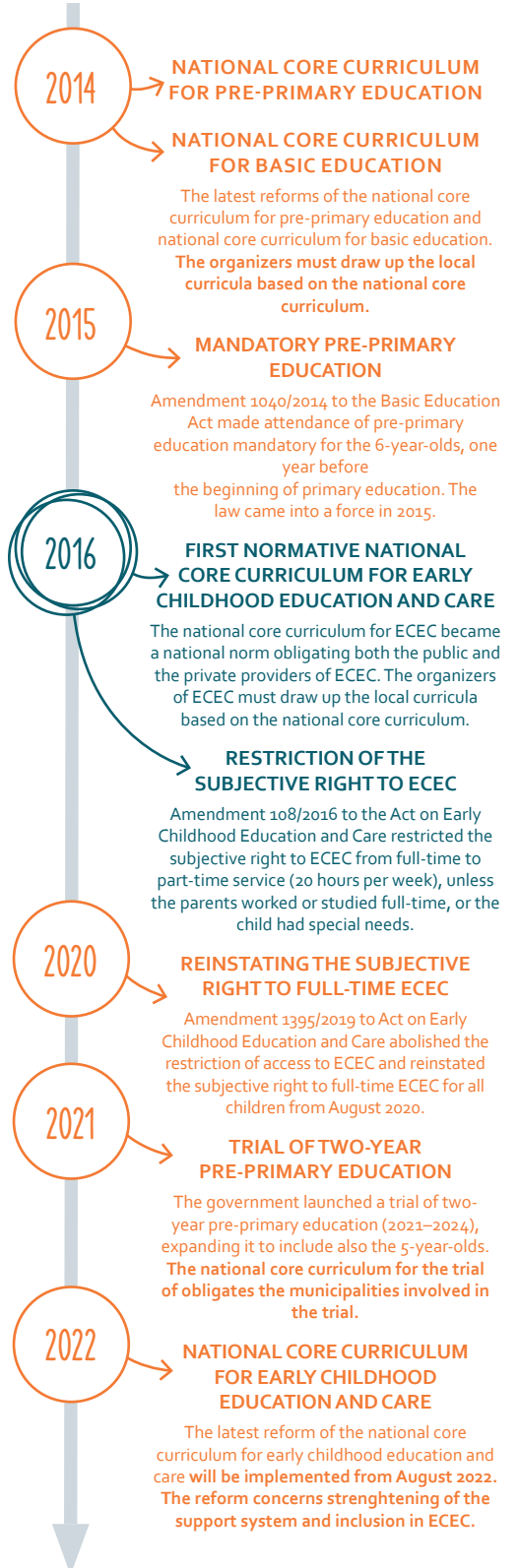


FINLAND

STRUCTURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND BASIC EDUCATION



TIMELINE OF RECENT POLICY MEASURES



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE



ATTENDANCE

In 2019 attendance rate of early childhood education and care (ECEC) was 35% among under 3-year-olds and 85% among 3-5-year-olds. The percentages include both center-based ECEC and family day care.



PROVISION

Municipalities are responsible of organizing the ECEC services for all 0-6-year-old children. In 2019, 76% of the provision was publicly provided center-based ECEC, 6% publicly provided family day care, and 18% private provision. Private provision is publicly subsidized.



PERSONNEL

The personnel in center-based ECEC (0-5 years old) consists of *teachers, social pedagogues and childcarers*. Special education teachers work with children either by consulting the other staff members or providing education for the children with special needs.

PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION / BASIC EDUCATION



ATTENDANCE

Attendance of pre-primary education (appr. 20h/week, one year before the beginning of basic education) has been mandatory from 2015. Basic education begins in the year when the child turns 7.



FINANCE

Public ECEC and pre-primary and basic education are funded by the municipalities and supplemented with central government transfers (25% of the expenses). ECEC fees cover 13-14% of the expenses and are regulated by the law. There is no fee for low-income families. Pre-primary and basic education is free of charge.



PERSONNEL

Class teachers, teachers in ECEC and childcarers work in pre-primary education. Class teachers are qualified to work in basic education. Special education teachers work with children either by consulting the other staff members or providing education for the children with special needs.



FINLAND: 6 CURRENT ISSUES FACING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

1. IMPROVING QUALITY AND EQUALITY IN ECEC

CHALLENGE: TO SEEK EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO PROMOTE CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND WELLBEING AND TO REVISE THE RISE OF INEQUALITY

ECEC GOALS

INCREASE EQUALITY IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING PATHS
STRENGTHEN THE SUPPORT OF LEARNING
CREATE A MORE FLEXIBLE START FOR LEARNING
TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF ECEC

ONGOING: FINNISH GOVERNMENT, RIGHT TO LEARN -PROGRAMME (2020-2022) → TARGETED FUNDING FOR THE MUNICIPAL LEVEL PROJECTS

2. INCREASING ENROLLMENT TO ECEC

CHALLENGE: ENROLMENT RATE LOWER THAN OECD AVERAGE

ONGOING: GOVERNMENT NATIONAL POLICIES

LOWERING OF THE FEES

EXPERIMENT FOR FREE OF CHARGE ECEC TO 5-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN (2018- 2021)

TWO-YEAR PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION (TRIAL, 2021-2024)

3. TWO-YEAR PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION (5-6-YEARS OLD)

THE ONGOING TRIAL

→ CHALLENGES

FOCUS ON LEARNING OUTCOMES IN THE FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE TRIAL -MAY STRESS SCHOOL READINESS.

INSTITUTIONAL SPLIT BETWEEN ECEC, PRE-PRIMARY AND BASIC EDUCATION WILL BE MAINTAINED.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO PRESERVE THE TRADITIONAL MISSION OF THE FINNISH ECEC AND PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION IN PROMOTING CHILDREN'S HOLISTIC GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING.

4. SUFFICIENT TIME FOR POLICY REFORMS IMPLEMENTATION AT LOCAL LEVEL

RAPID AND MULTIPLE CHANGES

HAVE BEEN CHALLENGING FOR THE MUNICIPALITIES TO IMPLEMENT

→ RISK

→ EXCELLENT REFORMS MAY REMAIN UNREALIZED

5. SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF THE WORKFORCE IN ECEC

CHALLENGE: LACK OF QUALIFIED STAFF- TEACHERS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

→ RISKS

LOWER QUALITY OF ECEC

OVERLOAD OF EXISTING ECEC PROFESSIONALS

MEASURE IN PLACE: THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALLOCATED ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR PRESERVICE, UNIVERSITY TRAINING OF ECEC TEACHERS TO INCREASE THEIR NUMBER.

6. GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES AND TARGET STATE EXTENDING TO THE 2040s

AIM

→ TO ENSURE EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY AND THE REALISATION OF THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN ECEC, PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION AND BASIC EDUCATION IN ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

→ TO STRENGTHEN THE INTEGRATED LEARNING PATH AND TO ENABLE SMOOTHER TRANSITIONS FROM ECEC TO PRE-PRIMARY AND BASIC EDUCATION.

PREREQUISITE

→ COMPREHENSIVE REFORM OF THE LEGISLATION OF ECEC, PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION AND BASIC EDUCATION.

KEY POLICY DOCUMENT

→ EDUCATION POLICY REPORT OF THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT, 2021.