

Competences, administrative obstacles and working life – and how VET system in Finland tries to cope with these

31.3.2020

Project Coordinator Erno Hyvönen

Department for VET

erno.hyvonen@minedu.fi

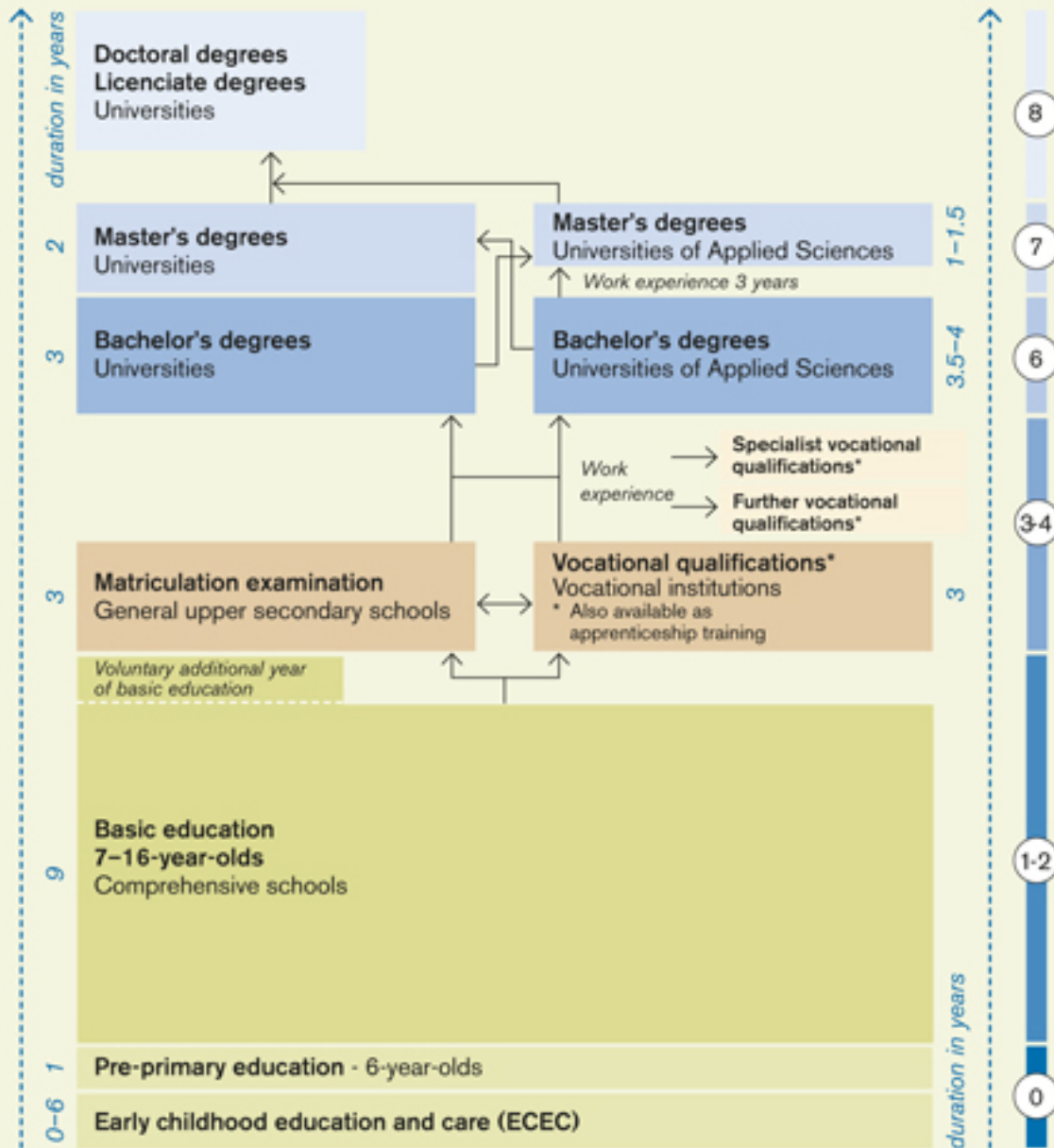
Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö

Undervisnings- och kulturministeriet



Elinikäisen
oppimisen
toimintaohjelma

Education system in Finland



EQF-levels in Finland

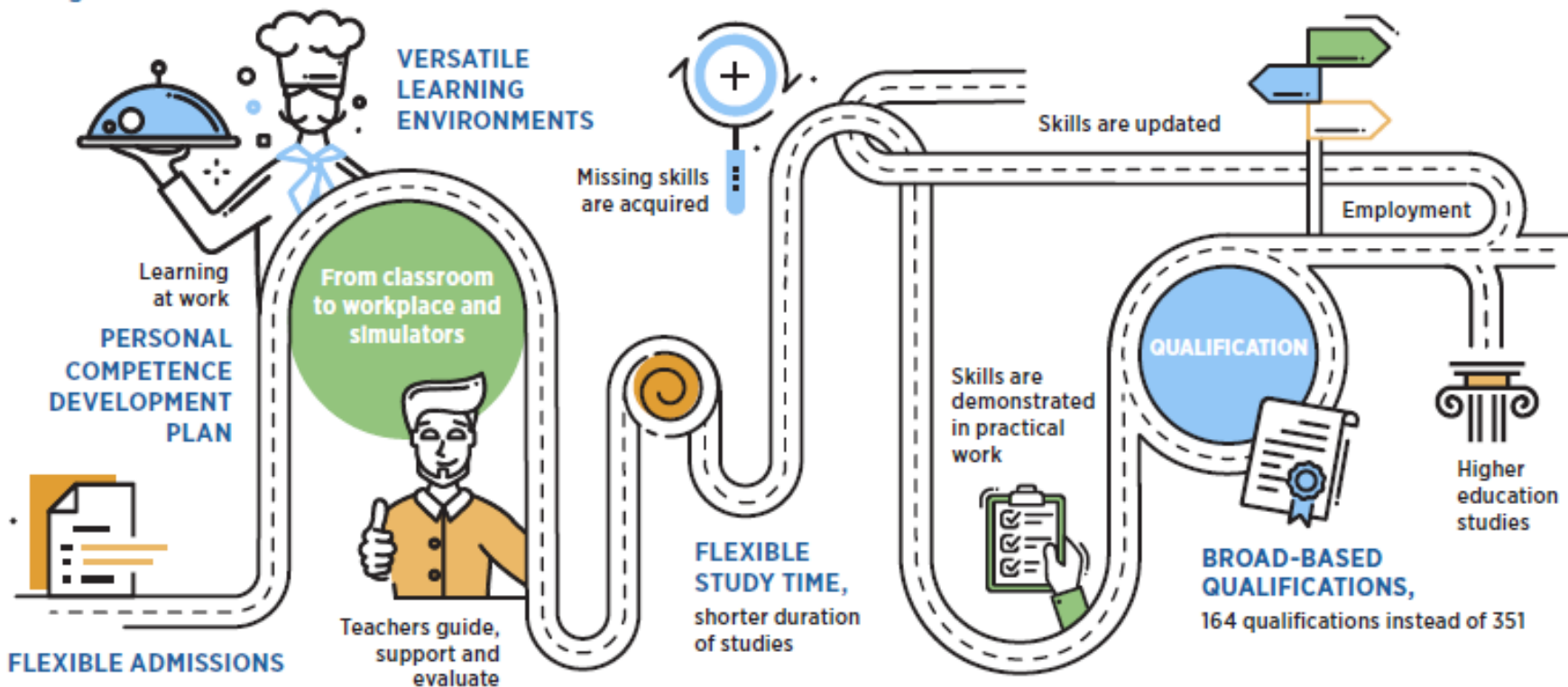
- Basic education syllabus at **level 2**
- The Matriculation Examination and the general upper secondary school syllabus at **level 4**
- Upper secondary vocational qualifications and further vocational qualifications, Qualification at **level 4**
- Specialist vocational qualifications at **level 5**

Finnish VET in the Spotlight

- VET comprises initial and further training (IVET & CVET)
- VET has many target groups: young people, **adults and people in working life who need upskilling or reskilling, unemployed** -> VET is lifelong learning
- About 280 000 students annually – (200 000 in IVET and 80 000 in CVET)
- VET is available in institutions (contact, distance, multiform teaching) or as apprenticeship training
- VET is attractive: 44% of comprehensive school-leavers continue in IVET
- In 2018, total operating costs of vocational institutions amounted to 1.700 million € (average funding/student/year is approximately 9 500 €)
- National-level evaluations with no inspectorate
- 165 VET-providers: municipalities, joint federations of municipalities and private organisations
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzRklnHP5iU> Finland's VET reform in less than 3 minutes
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuOKaNmHz00> VET in Finland by Cedefop

NEW VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING as of 1 January 2018

Working life is undergoing changes. New occupations keep on emerging and old ones disappear. Technology advances. Revenue models are renewed. Students' needs are becoming more and more individualistic. Skills need to be updated throughout careers.



FUNDING THAT ENCOURAGES EFFECTIVENESS

Students do not drop out, they complete their studies, obtain a vocational qualification, access employment or continue studying



A SINGLE ACT, A SINGLE AUTHORISATION TO PROVIDE EDUCATION

No boundaries between young people and adults



LESS BUREAUCRACY AND MORE AUTHORITY

for education providers

Upskilling Pathways in three **key steps**.

Step 1 – Skills assessment

- This is to enable adults to identify their existing skills and any needs for upskilling. It may take the form of a "skills audit": a statement of the individual's skills that can be the basis for planning a tailored offer of learning.

Step 2 – Learning offer

- The beneficiary will receive an offer of education and training meeting the needs identified by the skills assessment. The offer should aim to boost literacy, numeracy or digital skills or allow progress towards higher qualifications aligned to labour market needs.

Step 3 – Validation and recognition

- The beneficiary will have the opportunity to have the skills she or he has acquired validated and recognised.

VET reform: objectives

- Stronger capability to respond to the changing skills needs of both individuals and world of work - flexibility and agility
- Quicker access to employment or further studies
- Focus to customers and learning outcomes : From supply-oriented approach to demand-driven VET
- Enhancing possibilities to life-long (or life-wide) learning
- Effective, high-quality and efficient VET
- Clear and more easily approached VET-system
- Stronger cooperation between VET and world of work
- Easier access to the VET-system

Individual study path for all

- Objectives for competence development will be written down in a **personal competence development plan. UP Step 1 – Skills assessment**
- A teacher will draw up the plan together with a student.
- An employer or another representative of a workplace or other cooperation partners may also participate in the preparation of the personal competence development plan, where needed.
- The plan will include information on, for example, identification and recognition of prior learning, acquisition of missing skills, competence tests and other demonstration of skills, and the necessary guidance and support.
- Duration of studies will be shortened through focusing on the acquisition of missing skills in a manner most suitable for the student.
- Education providers will have an obligation to recognise prior learning.
- Studies and the related guidance and support will correspond to the objectives, needs, life situation and skills of the student.

Qualifications are completed through competence demonstrations

- Vocational skills are primarily demonstrated in practical work situations at workplaces (=competence demonstrations) **UP Step 3 – Validation and recognition**
- Competences are assessed as per module of a qualification or preparatory education.
- In a competence demonstrations, the student's competence is assessed by a teacher and a representative of working life together.
- Competence and skills matter – the time used for studies does not.
- Working and business life will be given a strong role in assuring the quality of skills: a representative of working life is one of the two assessors, and working life committees will ensure the quality of vocational skills at national level.

More versatile learning environments

- Education providers will be responsible for and decide on the contents of education and the manner in which it is provided.
- Education providers will have versatile possibilities to make use of different learning environments and pedagogical solutions (such as traditional contact teaching, simulators and other digital learning environments, and workplaces).
- The contents of education must comply with the national qualification requirements or the core curriculum for preparatory education.
- If a student pursuing vocational upper secondary qualification does not have any experience or competence in the practical work tasks related to the qualification, such training must be arranged at the workplace in connection with the practical work tasks.

More guided learning at workplaces

- Training at workplaces in connection with the practical work tasks will be arranged as apprenticeship training or training based on a training agreement.
- **Apprenticeship training:**
 - Based on a fixed-term employment relationship or public-service relationship (status: employed person)
 - Students are paid salary and employers are paid training compensation.
 - May apply to the entire qualification or to an individual module.
- **Training agreement:**
 - Students are not in an employment relationship (status: student).
 - Students receive no salary and employers receive no training compensation.
 - Is made as per module.
- A student may flexibly transfer from a training agreement to apprenticeship training, when the prerequisites for concluding an apprenticeship agreement are met.

Quicker access to employment

- Students may begin their studies flexibly at any time of the year due to the year-round admission system.
- Access of comprehensive school graduates to education will be secured through the joint application procedure system.
- Studies take better account of students' individual objectives, needs, skills and life situation.
- Duration of studies is shortened and a more rapid access to employment or further studies is enabled as the purpose of studies is to acquire only the missing skills and competences.
- Guided learning at workplaces lowers the threshold for finding employment.
- Students will be provided with guidance and support at different stages of their studies:
 - Instruction and guidance in different learning environments
 - Feedback on their competence development during studies
 - Personal and other necessary study guidance
 - Special support also for students pursuing further and specialist vocational qualifications, where needed
- **All of this is UP Step 2 – Learning offer**

Teachers' job will include more guidance

- Teachers are experts in pedagogy who aim to build well-functioning study paths for students together and in cooperation with the working and business life.
- Individual study paths will increase the importance of the guidance and support provided for students.
- Teachers will assume a guiding and coaching approach in their work and have active cooperation with working life.
- Students' learning objectives will steer the operations towards effective solutions that support learning.
- Skills will be acquired and students guided increasingly also in other learning environments than in educational institutions, especially at workplaces.

1. How VET in Finland deals with future competence needs?

Answer:

- we cannot really predict the competences needed in the future...

That's why...

- We are focusing on giving LLL skills to everyone
- We now have broad based qualifications (164 instead of 351)
- The aim of the VET system is not to produce professionals, but to give students a wide set of skills so they can adapt to changes
- It is easy to take modules from tertiary education as a part of your secondary level vocational qualification
- It is easy to return to VET for upskilling and reskilling

2. How the system tries to cope with adults that have low basic skills?

2.1. VET in Finland – not so good things

Step 2 – Learning offer

- Can VET provider make an honest learning offer in this system to a person who has problems with
 - Learning skills?
 - Basic skills?
 - Language?
- ... or who has not done nine years of compulsory primary school education in Finland?
 - It's possible to take courses from tertiary level, BUT NOT from primary level!
- ... or who is an older adult who needs upskilling, but doesn't want to study general subjects?

2.2. VET in Finland – good things

Step 1 – Skills assessment

- Personal Competence Development Plan
 - Many ways to study

Step 2 – Learning offer

- Good system, if you have nine years of Finnish primary school with decent grades behind you

Step 3 – Validation and recognition

- Skills are demonstrated in Competence Demonstrations
- ... and validated by a representatives from the VET provider and working life together
- Validation of prior learning = Validation of current learning!
- Funding system that guides VET providers to recognize existing skills

2.3. VET in Finland – things in motion

”Archetypes” -study

- Autumn 2019, how VET providers are able to deal with different archetypes

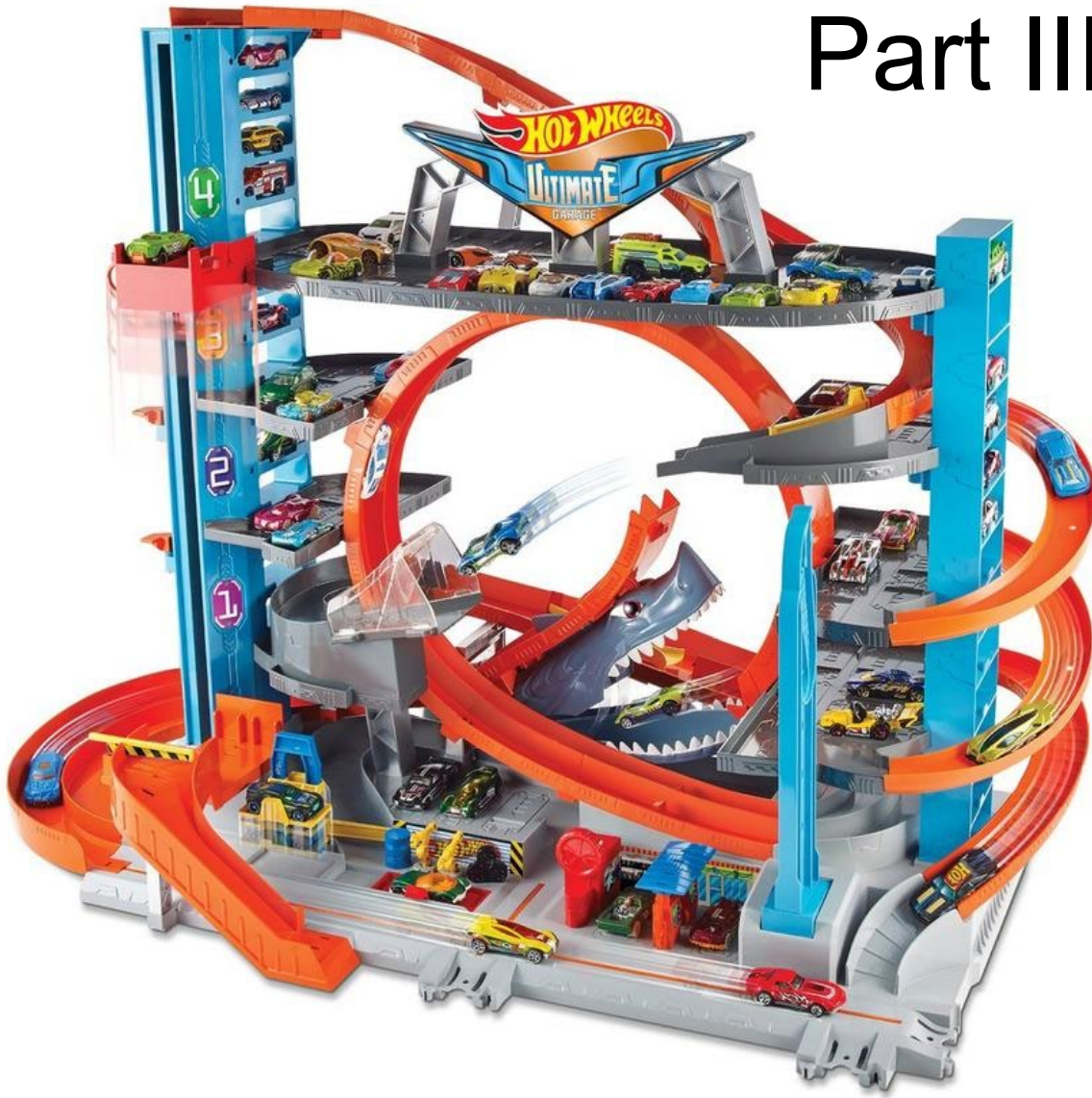
Evaluation of the methods available to VET providers

- Is the system flexible enough, or should we make structural changes

Supporting network for VET providers

- Who are the actors who can produce basic skills for VET students
- What else is needed

Part III



More or less Flexible solutions – 1: Preparatory education and training for VET (VALMA)

Purpose of the measure:

The purpose of VALMA is to support individual to strengthen student's learning skills and find her own career and getting prepared to start qualification-based VET.

Specific target (sub-) groups:

Training is for young people and adults who need the skills to move to vocational education and training. VALMA is primarily intended for those who have completed basic education and others who are not qualified for post-graduate studies, unemployed jobseekers, people with obsolete and inadequate skills, people with special needs or with immigrant backgrounds.

Stage of recommendation: provision of a tailored, flexible and quality learning offer

Preparatory education and training for VET (VALMA)

What skills does it help adults gain:

Finnish National Agency for Education has set a curricula for VALMA. During preparatory education and training it is also possible to complete basic education studies or upper secondary courses. It can consist also of language training needed in VET. Individual educational needs of every student are taken into account in VALMA.

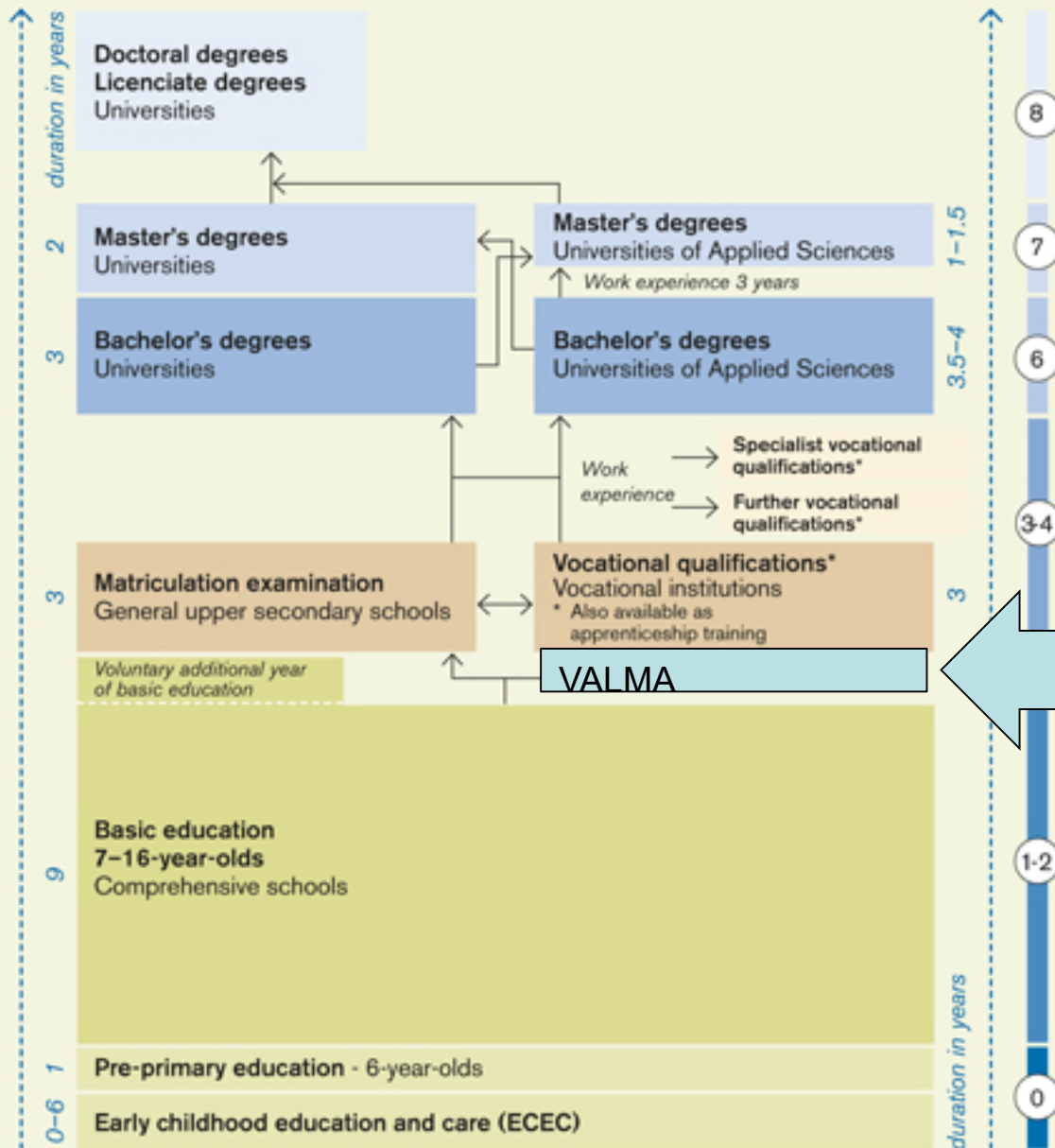
Skill level:

Not defined yet

Expected results:

VALMA help to enter into qualification-based VET. Possibly completed credits for general upper secondary courses will be transferred when the student starts their studies on the general upper secondary level.

Education system in Finland



Implementation schedule

The Preparatory education and training (VALMA) is included in the Act of VET (531/2017) and entered into force on 1st January 2018. The Curricula of training entered into force also on 1st January 2018.

Financial resources allocated to the measure

Included in funding model of VET (national Budget).

Implementing bodies

Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education, Education providers

More or less Flexible solutions – 2: Studies supporting learning abilities (VET) (OPVA)

Purpose of the measure

- Supportive studies are offered in those cases when the student doesn't have enough language, mathematical or ICT skills at the beginning to really be able to get her qualification. Also learning skills or life management skills can be strengthened. Studies supporting learning abilities are organized as part of qualification-based VET. The aim of the studies is to strengthen linguistic, mathematical or computer skills or learning skills. They also provide support in situations related to life management and life situations.

Specific target (sub-) groups

- The student who doesn't have enough language, mathematical or ICT skills at the beginning to really be able to get her qualification or has poor learning of life management skills.

Studies supporting learning abilities (VET) (OPVA)

Stage of recommendation: provision of a tailored, flexible and quality learning offer

What skills does it help adults gain: Skills needed are individual. Linguistic, mathematical or computer skills, learning which are needed in education required for achieving vocational competence. Proper learning or life management skills to be able to commit to studying.

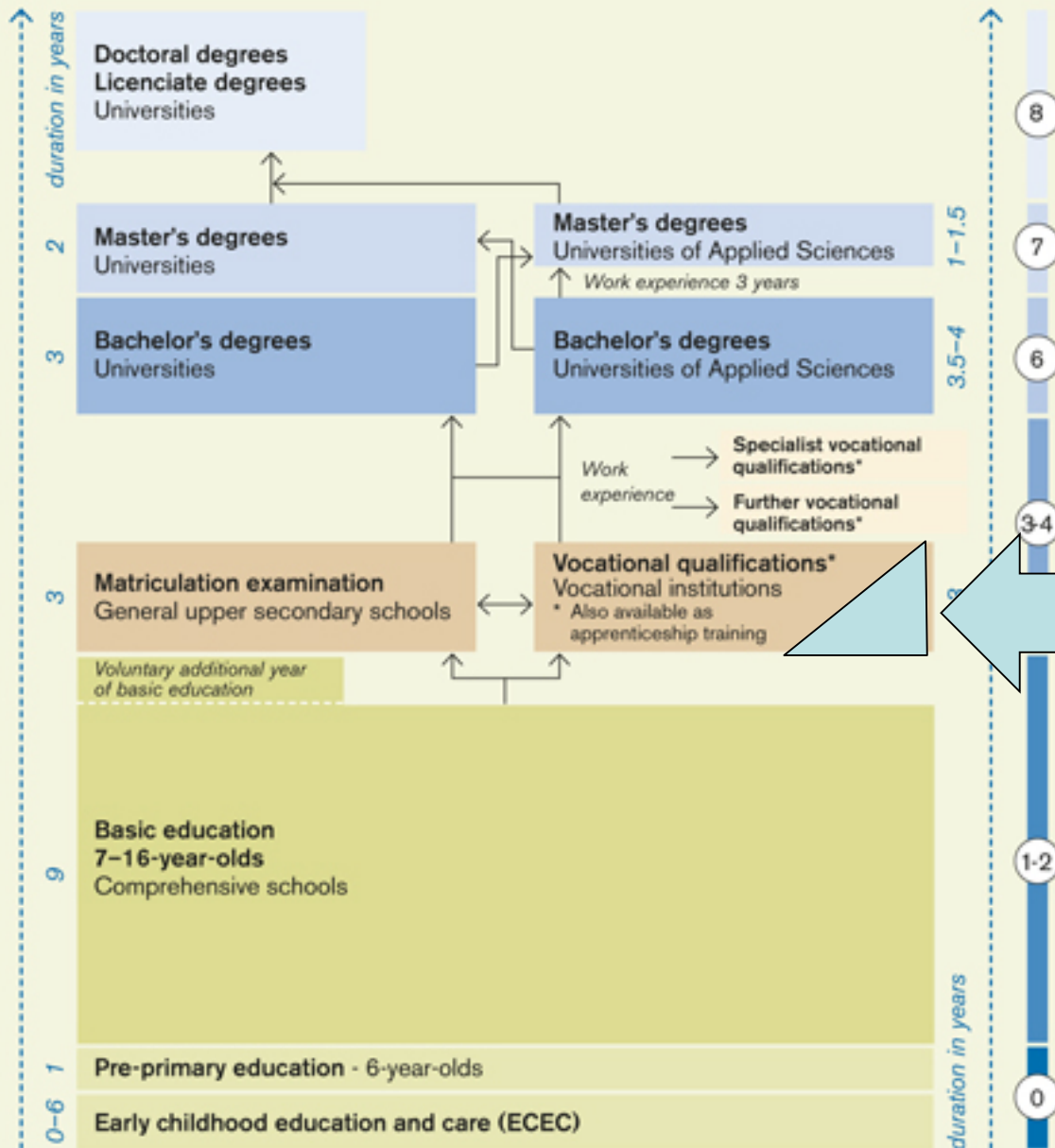
Skill level: Not defined

Expected results

Studies help prevent the suspension and help to succeed in education required for achieving vocational competence.

Guidance and support services: The VET provider decides the means of support individually for each student.

Education system in Finland



Implementation schedule

The studies supporting learning abilities are included in the Act of VET (531/2017) and entered into force on 1st January 2018.

Financial resources allocated to the measure

Included in funding model of VET (national Budget).

Implementing bodies

Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education, Education providers

Assessment

Ministry of Education and Culture monitors the implementation of the reform.

Interesting problems:

- OPVA´s position inside Vocational studies:
 - As "extra studies", or as a part of Optional studies?
 - Who should fund it?
- Student benefits, student loans & Basic skills
 - What is fair?
 - Legal status unclear
 - Who should organize it?
- Labour market training (LMT) and Basic skills
 - OPVA-studies are possible in LMT too - with similar problems
 - General subjects and LMT?

KIITOS!

erno.hyvonen@minedu.fi