



Curriculum Reform in Finland: Meaningful Learning and Cross-Curricular Competencies



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Councillor of Education
Finnish National Board of Education
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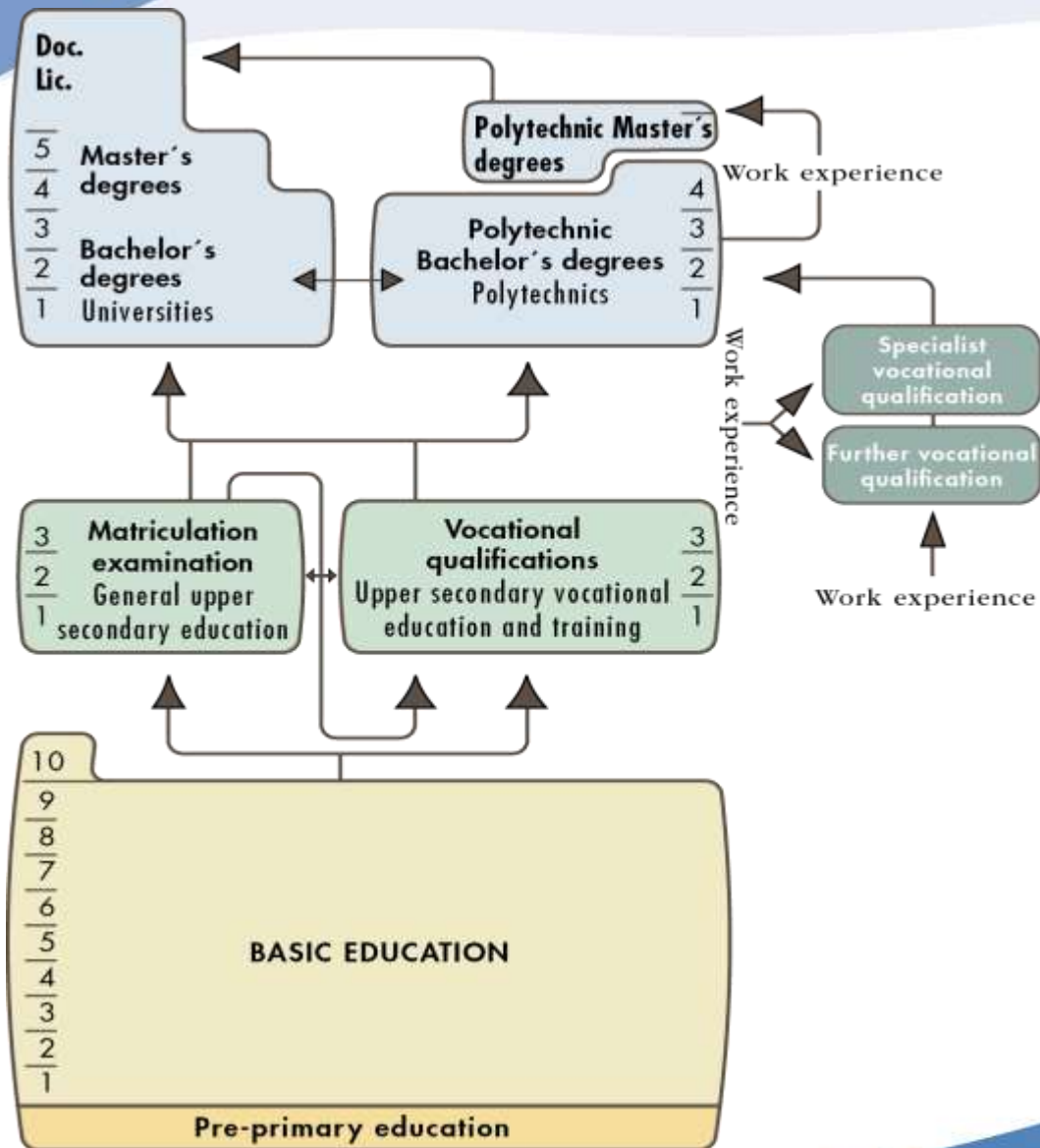


Outline

- ◆ Short introduction to the Finnish school system and national curricula
- ◆ Main ideas and principles of the current reform
- ◆ Rethinking the school culture: using a variety of creative methods for learning
- ◆ Interdisciplinary modules every school year
- ◆ Transversal competences in focus: how every subject can help the student to develop 21st century skills

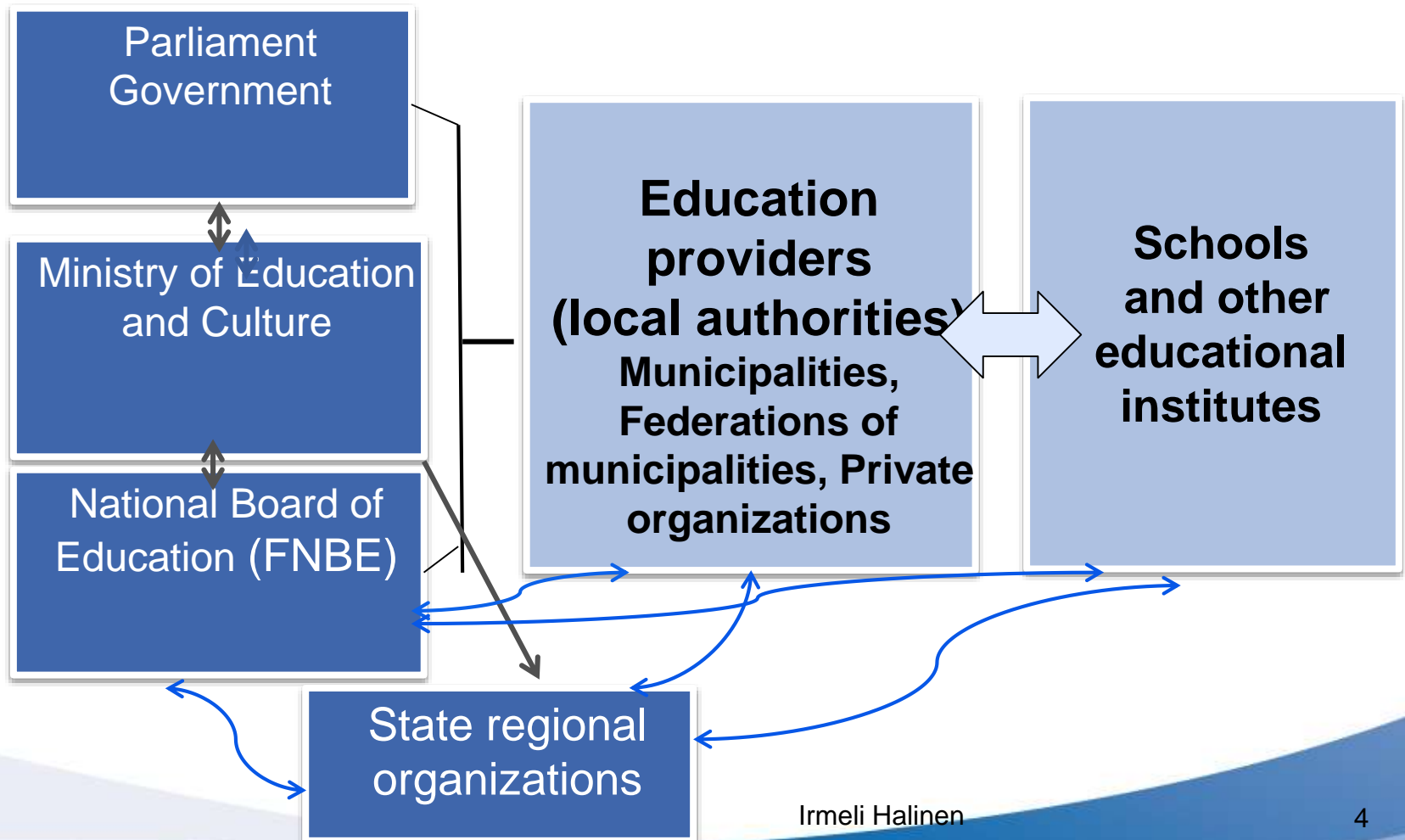


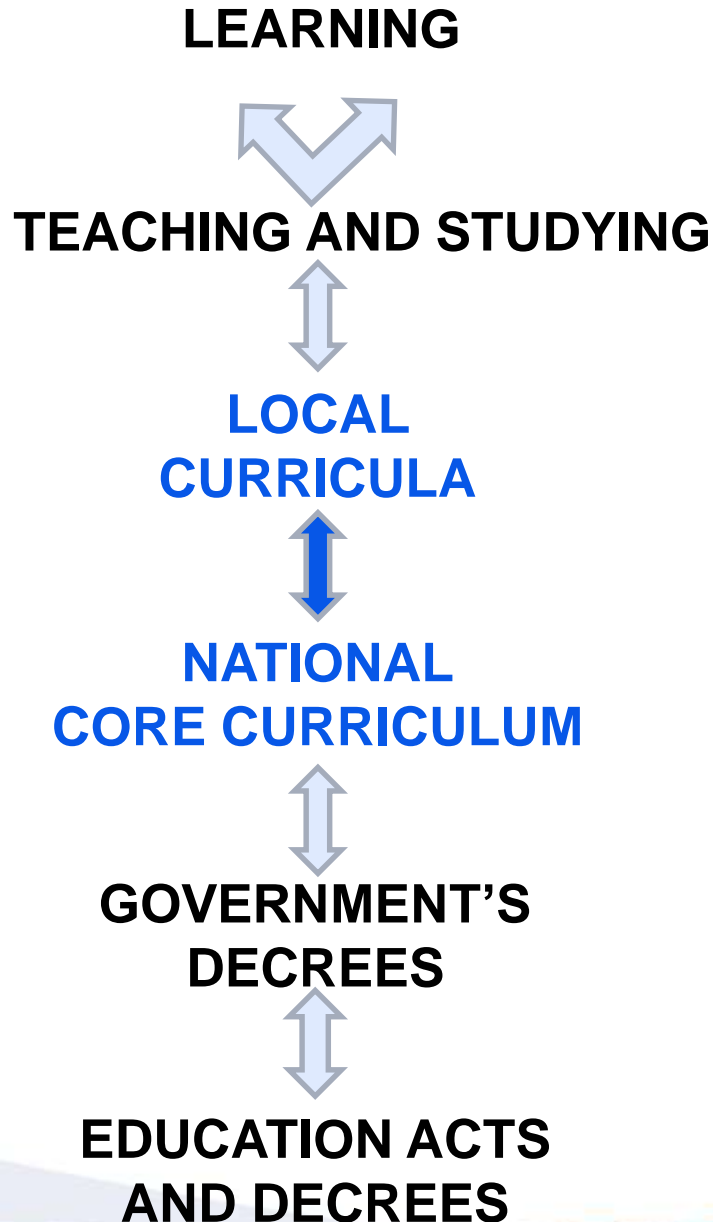
EDUCATION IN FINLAND





The administration of education in Finland





Local curricula are renewed on the basis of the national core curriculum. School work based on the renewed curricula from August 2016



TEACHING AND LEARNING

POSSIBLE SCHOOL-SPECIFIC CURRICULUM and AN ANNUAL PLAN

LOCAL CURRICULUM 2016

Local needs

Quality criteria

and policies

Teacher education

Learning materials

National Core Curriculum (Basic Education) 2014

Government Decree 28.6.2012 defining the general national objectives and distribution of lesson hours in basic education

Basic Education Act and Decree



Basis for the School Reform

Changing role of students

- Working together, participation
- Exploratory and creative learning

World of change

- Environment, globalization, economy, world of work, technology, diversity and digitalization of society
- Impact on children's environment



Changing role of teachers and teaching

- Learning concept
- Working together, creating wholeness in learning

Changing concepts of learning and competence

- Key competences, ethical, sustainable
- Interaction, learning to learn, working with knowledge

Irmeli Halinen, Gun Oker-Blom



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Main principles 1

- ◆ Enhancing the joy and meaningfulness of learning and the active role of students
- ◆ Challenges of the future will be tackled by strengthening seven areas of transversal /cross-curricular competencies which are implemented through the individual subjects



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Main principles 2

- ◆ Focus on team work, communication skills, critical thinking, sustainability and health and other transversal competences
- ◆ Multidisciplinary learning modules (LM) will be used as new obligatory tools for teaching and learning
- ◆ Schools are expected to renew their pedagogics to become learning communities



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Basic concepts

Inclusive
School

Multifaceted
and deep
learning

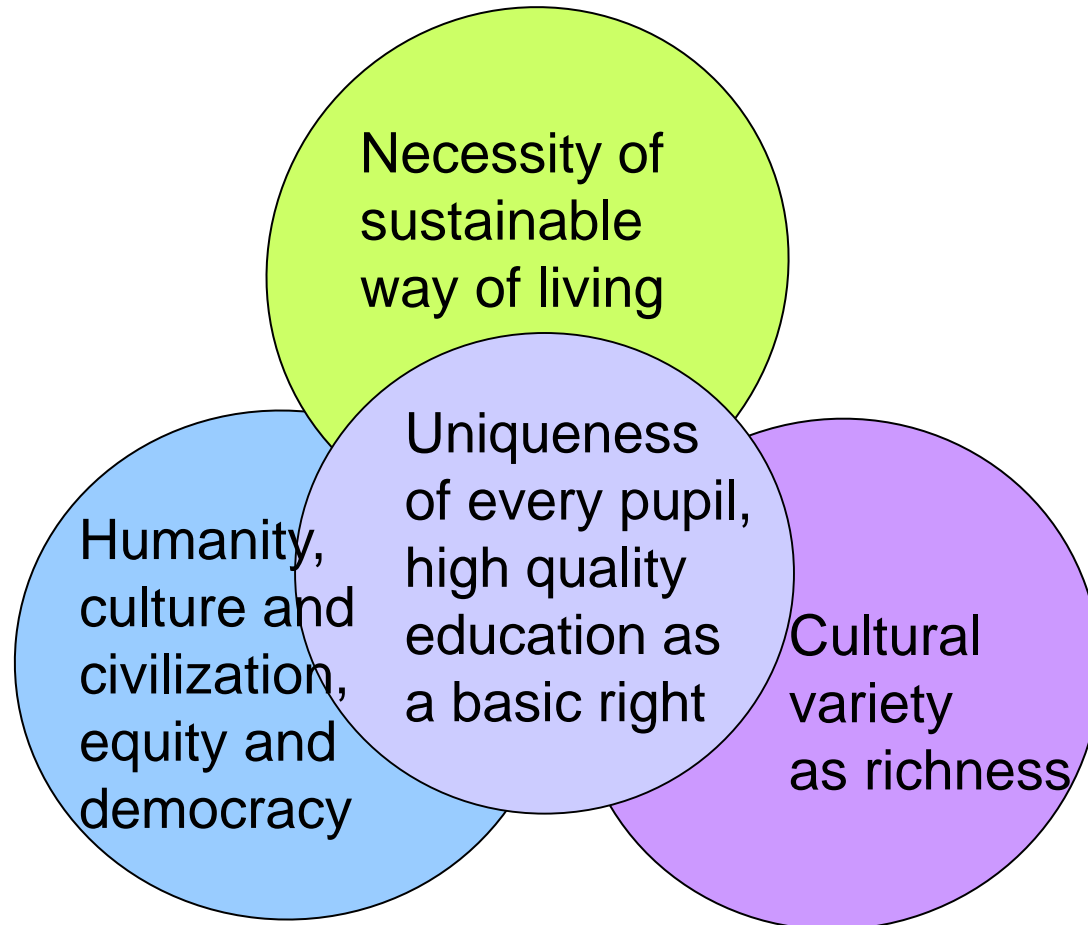
Transversal
and subject
competences

Sustainable
way of
living

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Rethinking the value basis of education



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Focus of the curriculum reform: Rethinking Basic Education

- ◆ Rethinking the underlying values and the mission of basic education
- ◆ Rethinking the learning concepts, and the roles of pupils and teachers
- ◆ Renewing the idea of learning environment
- ◆ Rethinking the school culture and the class room
- ◆ School as a learning community
 - Diverse and open cooperation
- ◆ Rethinking the roles, goals and content of school subjects, and their influence on the acquisition of transversal competences



Rethinking the school culture





And what does that mean in practice?

- ◆ Digital tools used in a pedagogical way
- ◆ Broadening of the learning environment: The whole world becomes a "text book" and the "class room" is redefined
- ◆ Creative teaching methods where the whole pupil is involved, all senses, the whole brain
- ◆ Multimodal ways of working with different subjects
- ◆ Focus on transversal competences like: digital competence, communication, multiliteracies

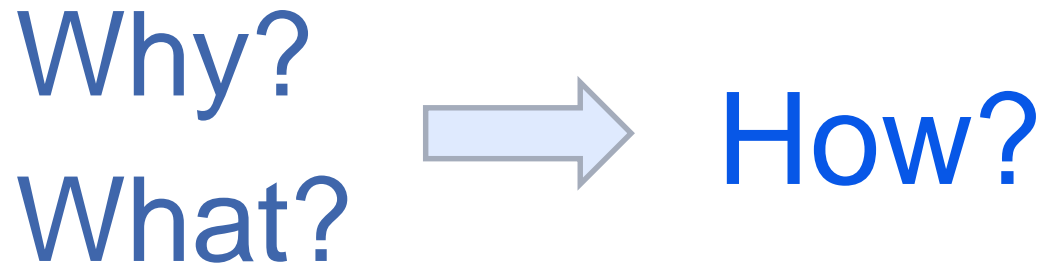


Modern brain research on how children learn show that

- ◆ variable activities (movement, pictures, play, linguistic inspiration) activate brain development
- ◆ a good education comprises the whole brain- not only the front part
- ◆ the learning set-up and the environment have a crucial effect on the learning results
- ◆ live confrontations and communication between real human beings activate the brain
- ◆ the will and engagement of the teacher are crucial factors in the learning process



Essential in the reform



How our school could be a better and encouraging learning environment which

- enhances the meaningfulness of studying
- strengthens the identity of every student and the ability to work with others
- enhances the capacity for learning to learn and the development of other transversal competences, and similarly ensures the high quality of learning results
- supports the development of sustainable way of living



Drama and story-telling in teaching of all subjects is emphasized

- ◆ Drama is a multimodal way of telling a story
- ◆ Drama is about constructive problem solving together in a group
- ◆ Drama teaches us about the responsibility and decision-making essential for all human beings



”The story makes us human”

Björn Larsson in the book *Minnen, myter, mening* (UBS, 2007)



26.8.2015

Gun Oker-Blom



Space as a learning environment

1. **Architecture** – the school facilities should function as support for the pedagogical activities in the school
2. **To be oriented in the space-** to find one 's place in the world
 - Different spaces for different purposes, for example library, dance, drama, handiwork requires special spaces.
 - Light and pleasant spaces with clean air - and working with outdoor pedagogics as well
3. **Digital tools** – an important part of the learning environment



A new awareness of learning environment- creative solutions

- Example of open space with quiet corner for contemplation or reading



Interdisciplinarity in teaching and learning

- ◆ Main goals
 - Enhance students' ability to understand relationships and interconnectivity between various phenomena.
 - Help students to combine contents and phenomenon from different subjects, and to organize things they have learned about into larger entities.
 - Guide students to implement their knowledge and skills in examining various phenomena and topics
 - Support students to notice connections between issues they study at school and issues of their own life, their community, and of the whole society and humanity.



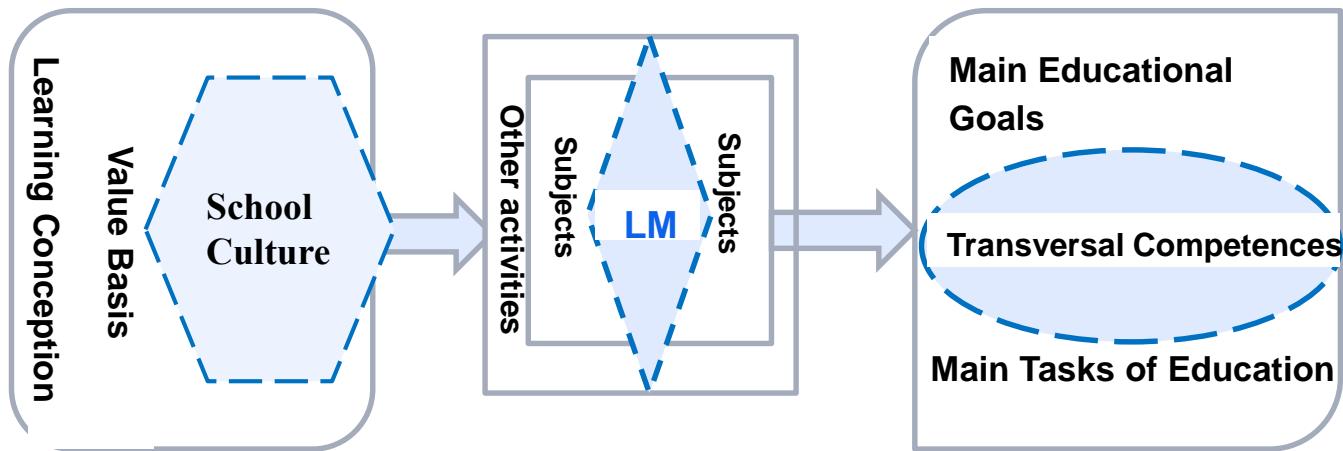
Multidisciplinary learning modules in basic education

- In basic education students are entitled to at least one integrative, multidisciplinary learning module every school year
- Learning modules integrate skills and knowledge of various school subjects, teachers work together
- Students participate in the planning of these modules
- Goals, content and ways of working are planned and decided at the local level
 - *They should be interesting and meaningful from the students point of view*
 - *They realize the principles of the school culture*
 - *They promote the development of transversal competences*

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Main Elements of Basic Education



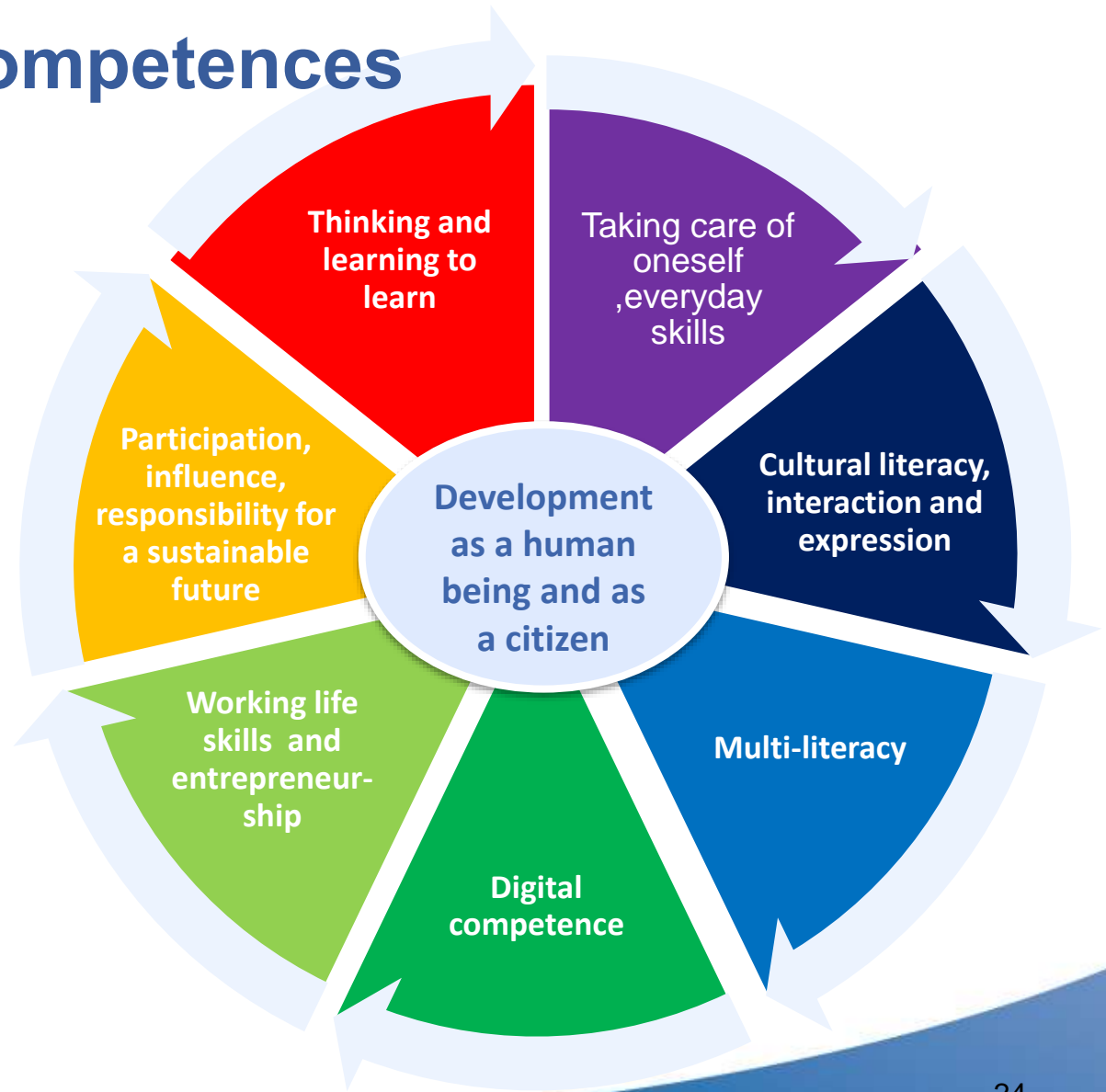
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Transversal competences

National Goals for Basic Education and Transversal Competences

- knowledge
- skills
- values
- attitudes
- will





Transversal competences - definition

- ◆ Various terminologies are used, for example:
- ◆ UNESCO has established the term "transversal competencies", whereas OECD uses "key competencies"
- ◆ All terms refer to a category of "non-academic" knowledge, skills, competencies, values and attitudes necessary and integral to life in the 21st century
- ◆ Finnish curriculum: "Laaja-alainen osaaminen", in Swedish "Mångsidiga kompetenser"



Multi-literacy – a broad key competence of the 21st century

Multi-reading and -writing

Multi-literacy **Monilukutaito**
Multilitteracitet

Every act of meaning
Can be "read" interpreted and
understood





Multiliteracies (The New London Group)

- ◆ Linguistic literacy: understanding language as a meaning-making system
- ◆ Visual literacies: images, page layouts, screen formats
- ◆ Audio literacies: music, sound effects
- ◆ Gestural literacies: body language, sensuality
- ◆ Spatial literacies: environmental and architectural spaces
- ◆ Multimodal literacies: a combination of two or more of the first five



Transversal competencies in structure of the subject syllabus

- ◆ **Purpose of the subject**
- ◆ **Objectives of the subject**
- ◆ **Main content areas in relation to each objective**
- ◆ **Reference to one or several transversal competences in relation to each objective**
- ◆ **Assessment in subject supported through special objectives for assessment**



No	Objectives SCIENCE/ ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES	Connections to content areas	Connections to trans-versal competences
	Meaning, values and attitudes		
O1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer opportunities for the pupil to use his or her natural curiosity and give him/her a chance to experience the importance of science/ environmental studies	CA1-S6	
O2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage the pupil to enjoy studying science, to find pleasure in his/her own competence in science, in new challenges and learning, and to get used to long-term work	CA1-S6	TC1 TC6
O3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the pupil in developing a sensitivity towards the environment, and to help the pupil to function in a sustainable way in the immediate surroundings as well as in the school environment	CA1-S6	TC3 TC7



Structure of a subject (science, 1–2 grades)

No	Objectives	Connections to content areas	Connections to trans-versal competences
	Skills in acting and doing research		
O4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Guide the pupil to do research and to act, and also to move and take excursions in the near surroundings	CA2-S4	TC3
O5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Encourage the pupil to reflect on things and ask questions and to use mutual reflections as a basis for small investigation projects and other ventures	CA1-S6	TC1 TC7
			TC3 TC7



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Thank
you!

Källa: Johannes Jansson/norden.org



LP 2016/ OPS 2016 links

- ◆ <http://www.oph.fi/ops2016>
- ◆ http://www.oph.fi/download/166434_grunderna_for_laroplanen_verkkojulkaisu.pdf



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