



FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION

Education and Training of Migrants in Finland

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Migrant Education in Numbers

- The population of Finland 5,5 million, of which over 330,000 (6.2 %) of foreign background (2015)
- Biggest background groups: Russians, Estonians and Somalis
- About 39,000 foreign-language pupils and students in general education (6 %)
- Municipalities (over 300) are responsible for providing pre-school, basic education (or preparatory instruction for basic education) also to migrant pupils – autonomous as long as they follow the law and the national core curricula



Mainly Mainstreaming

- Migrants and pupils/students of migrant background attend the same mainstream education according to their age, except
 - Finnish/Swedish as a second language and literature instruction
 - The instruction in his/her mother tongue complementing basic education, and the support in learning in his/her mother tongue
 - The instruction in his/her own religion
 - Support in learning
- Additional forms of education: Instruction preparing for basic education, and preparatory education for general upper secondary education
- Attempts towards even more inclusive direction

Instruction preparing for basic education

1. Local authorities can provide instruction that prepares for basic education
2. EDUFI has drawn up the national core curriculum
3. State finances this instruction for one year with a double state grant per pupil
4. Target groups are children arriving in Finland at pre-primary age (6 yrs) or at basic education age (7-16 yrs) – they should start the instruction as soon as possible on arriving in the country
5. Each pupil has an individual study plan to follow →
6. Integration to mainstream education (e.g. art, physical education)



Preparatory Education

1. Pupils study Finnish or Swedish, the main basic education subjects, and, if possible, their mother tongue
2. Studying is organised in groups, no minimum size
3. A group is taught by one teacher who is helped by an assistant
4. The possibility to study inclusively, i.e. in a general basic education class
5. Heterogenous groups (knowledge, age and educational history) provide challenge for the teacher



Instruction of Finnish or Swedish as a second language (L2)

1. EDUFI has drawn up a national core curriculum for L2
2. Local authorities are responsible for the instruction
3. Instruction is given partly in a separate group and partly together with L1 pupils
4. The extra state funding covers a maximum of 3 lessons per week per group (of a minimum of 4 pupils) up to six years after entering Finnish school system
5. L2 teachers are mainly the same teachers who teach Finnish language and literature, but they may have an extra degree in L2 studies

Challenge: the timetable of lessons



Mother tongue instruction

1. Over 18,000 pupils and students, 55 languages in 77 municipalities
2. Biggest groups Russian, Somali, Arabic, and Estonian
3. Arranging mother tongue instruction is mandatory for the education providers
4. The extra state funding: max 2 hours a week for a group of min 4 pupils

Challenge: small migrant groups and rare mother tongues: difficult to find competent teachers



Instruction of Religion

- Basic Education Act guarantees the instruction of different religions in schools financed by municipalities
- Parents may request the instruction of their religion for a minimum of 3 pupils



New National Core Curriculum for Basic Education

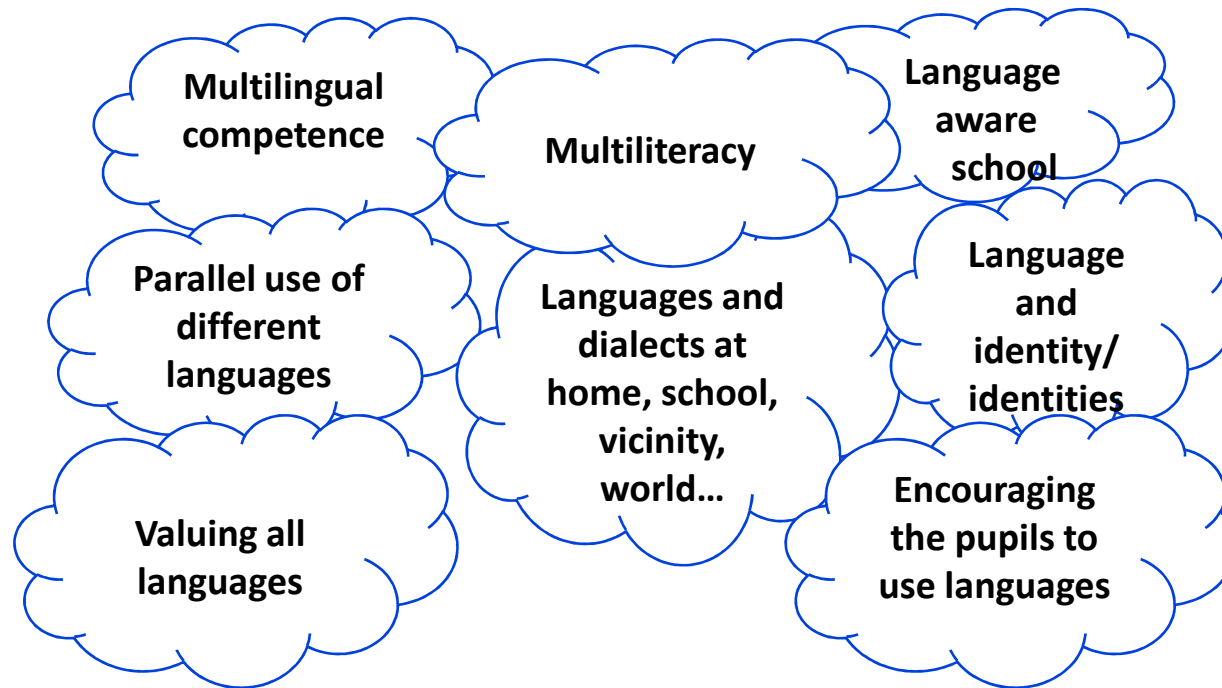
Chapter 9 Special questions of language and culture

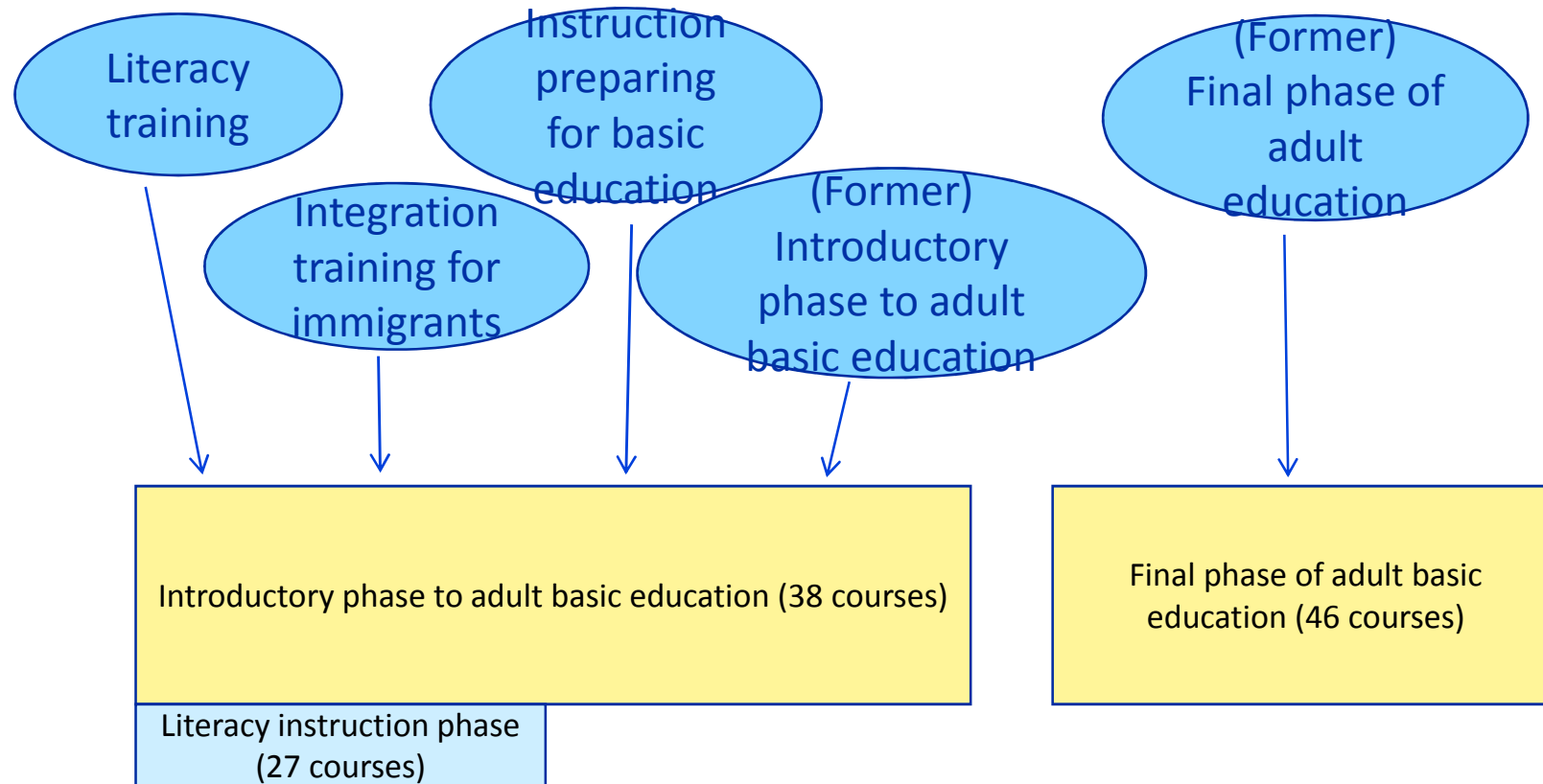
- Common goals and principles laid down in the core curriculum for basic education are complied with in the instruction of all pupils
- The pupil's cultural background and linguistic capabilities are taken into account in basic education.
- 9.1. The Sámi and Sámi language speakers
- 9.2. The Roma
- 9.3 Sign language users
- 9.4. Other plurilingual pupils
 - Supporting the pupils' plurilingualism
 - The pupils' backgrounds and initial situations, including their mother tongue and culture and the length of their stay in Finland, are taken into account in the instruction
 - An effort is made to offer the pupils instruction of their mother tongue.
 - The pupils are also given support in other aspects of learning to allow them to achieve equal learning capabilities

Developing multiliteracy with language aware teaching

- Multiliteracy is one of the 7 transversal competence areas, and the joint responsibility of the whole school, including all subjects and fields of knowledge
- Language awareness is one of the principles that guide the development of the school culture
- Each subject conveys its own language, textual practices and concepts
- Each teacher is a teacher of the language (use) typical to the subject he or she teaches

Language education brings new concepts for learning





The reform of Adult basic education

- The objective was to form a complete structure which meets the demands of increased immigration and removes the overlaps between different forms of training currently organised separately
 - teaching in reading and writing, previously organised as separate labour market training is now a part of adult basic education
 - the student's personal educational tracks will be built to be efficient and to meet the demands through recognition of prior learning
 - the distribution of lesson hours, the national core curriculum and the funding have been reformed
- The new national core curriculum for adult basic education provided in 2017
- The structure will be adopted in 2018

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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