Arts and Cultural Education at School in Europe

Finland

2007/08
1. Responsibility and purpose

In Finland, the educational legislation defines the general aims for education. The Government Decree on the General National Objectives and Distribution of lesson hours in Basic Education Referred to in the Basic Education Act (1435/2001) states the following about necessary knowledge and skills:

*The instruction must give the pupils a grounding for a broad general education and ingredients and stimuli for broadening and deepening their world-views. This requires knowledge of human feelings and needs, religions and different views of life, history, culture and literature, nature and health, and economics and technology. The instruction must offer aesthetic experiences in different aspects of culture and opportunities to develop manual skills, creativity and sport skills.*

Ministry of Education is responsible for setting the aims for cultural and creative dimensions of education.

The Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) draws up in a broad consultation process and approves the national core curriculum for basic education. The general approach to arts and culture is outlined in the national core curriculum, which also defines the core contents and learning objectives for different subjects, including arts.

The education provider takes responsibility for the preparation and development of the local curriculum on the basis of the core curriculum. The local curriculum specifies the contents and objectives of education, its underlying values, issues relating to the implementation of instruction etc.

The curriculum may be formulated so as to include a segment specific to the municipality, or segments specific to the region or school, as decided by the education provider. The coherence of the curriculum for basic education requires cooperation among different teacher groups in drafting the curriculum. In particular, the pupils’ parents and guardians must be able to influence the definition of the curriculum’s educational objectives. The pupils may also be involved in the curriculum work.

2. Organisation and aims of arts education

2.1 Aims and separate or integrated subjects

In the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (2004), the FNBE determines the objectives and core contents of different subjects and cross-curricular themes, guidance counselling and other education and the basic principles of home-school cooperation and pupil welfare under the purview of the local education authority. The current national core curriculum for basic education was confirmed in 2004 and has been implemented nationally by August 2006.

In addition to separate subjects, the national core curriculum includes seven cross-curricular themes. They represent central emphases of the educational and teaching work. Their objectives and contents are incorporated into numerous subjects; they integrate the education and instruction.
The cross-curricular themes are implemented in the various subjects, from the perspectives characteristic of those subjects, and in a manner required by the pupil's developmental phase. The cross-curricular themes are cultural identity and internationalism; media skills and communication; growth as a person; responsibility for the environment, well-being and a sustainable future; participatory citizenship and entrepreneurship; technology; and individual safety and traffic.

Finland's arts curriculum is mainly organised as separate subjects and includes the following subjects:

- **Visual arts – kuvataide (FI) – bildkonst (SE)**
- **Music – musiikki (FI) – musik (SE)**
- **Crafts – käsityö (FI) – slöjd (SE)**

Arts are also taught as part of other compulsory subjects: Dance is included in the curriculum of physical education, and drama in that of mother tongue and literature.

The national core curriculum defines the objectives, core contents, descriptions of good performance, and criteria for final assessment. They have been formulated for the minimum numbers of lessons on a subject-by-subject basis. The relevant paragraphs of the national core curriculum are presented below.

### 2.1.1 Visual arts (kuvataide -bildkonst)

The tasks of visual arts instruction in comprehensive school are to support the development of the pupils' visual thinking and aesthetic and ethical awareness, and to make pupils capable of their own visual expression. In visual arts instruction, the key concern is understanding the manifestation of visual culture in society – art, the media and the environment. The objective of the instruction is that the pupils develop a personal relationship with art. Visual arts instruction creates a foundation for appreciating and understanding the visual world of Finnish culture, the pupils’ own cultures, and cultures foreign to them. Visual arts instruction develops skills needed in building a sustainable future.

The starting points for artistic expression and activity are the visual world of the environment, sensory observations, mental images, and experiences. The objectives of the instruction are to develop the imagination and promote the pupil's skills in creative problem-solving and investigative learning. The subject areas are linked to experiences that are meaningful to the pupil. Visual arts instruction must take into account the internal integration of the subject, so that objectives for expression, skills, and knowledge are realized simultaneously in visual exercises. Art's central content areas can be treated in one and the same assignment. A thematic quality that allows for an unhurried atmosphere and sustained work characterizes the subject.

### GRADES 1-4

In visual arts instruction in the first through fourth grades, the pupils are to practise the use of imagination and the making of sensory observations in diverse ways. The approach is playful. The basic content of the instruction encompasses fundamental skills in visual expression, as well as materials and working approaches characteristic of art. The instruction emphasizes the artistic process, whose parts are planning, making a sketch, completing the work, and evaluation. The pupils are encouraged to polish their works, and to keep them afterwards.

### OBJECTIVES

The pupils will

- learn the skills and knowledge necessary in visual expression: making observations, processing ideas, imagining, invention, and creative problem-solving; making and justifying aesthetic choices; and setting one's objectives
• learn skills in making a picture and constructing a space, and gain a knowledge of materials
• learn to examine and discuss their own and others' pictures, practising the use of basic concepts of art, and to appreciate various viewpoints on art and visual communication
• get to know the visual traditions of their own cultures and foreign cultures within their sphere of experience, the Finnish building tradition, modern art, the important buildings and natural environments in their home communities, architecture, and design
• learn to evaluate the aesthetic values, pleasantness, and functionality of their environment
• learn to examine the meaning of different media in their own lives
• learn to use the tools of visual communication, and to understand the differences between the real and imaginary worlds.

CORE CONTENTS

Visual expression and thinking
• visual techniques, ways of expression, and materials: painting, drawing, graphics, design, and building
• fundamentals of visual composition: balance, tension, rhythm, colour, form, space, movement, time, and line
• study and evaluation of visual images and practice with using correct terminology when discussing them

Artistic knowledge and cultural expertise
• visits to local museums or art exhibitions and introduction to an artist's work
• studying artistic images by creating one's own images and discussing them
• masters of Finland's golden era; examples of contemporary art and art from different eras

Environmental aesthetics, architecture, and design
• introduction to and depiction of nature, buildings, and the building heritage; recognition of changes in the environment
• examining, designing, and making objects; three-dimensional construction; making environmental plans and miniature models

The media and visual communication
• fundamentals of visual narration: from story to picture, close-up and overview, combining image and text
• illustration, comic strips, advertising images, photography, video, and the digital image
• critical study and investigation of visual communication in television, computer games, films, comic strips, and advertising

DESCRIPTION OF GOOD PERFORMANCE AT THE END OF THE FOURTH GRADE

The pupils will
• know how to give visual form to their thoughts, feelings, and ideas, and to transform their observations into images
• know the fundamentals of composition in creating an image and constructing a space, and understand the properties of materials
• know how to use key tools and techniques in their own image-making, and to use a sketch as an aid to their work
• know how to care for artistic tools and materials
• know how to keep a record of their work processes and to use it in self-evaluation
• know how to discuss works they and others have made, to justify their artistic preferences, and to use basic concepts of art
• know what artists do and know about the works of some Finnish artists as well as visual expression in foreign cultures within their personal spheres of experience
• know how to act at museums and art shows, and with art in different contexts
• know how, with guidance, to use works of art, images from the environment, nature and the built environment, books, newspapers, museums, galleries, and the internet as sources of information
• recognize and assess aesthetic and ethical values in their school and immediate environment
• know what architects and designers do, and know some works of architects and designers
• know how to evaluate their use of the media, to make their own choices, and to justify their viewpoints
• know how to observe and evaluate the differences between the real and imaginary worlds
• know how to use some of the tools of visual communication
• know how to work alone and in interaction with others.

GRADES 5-9

Visual arts instruction in the fifth through ninth grades stresses a command of media technology and the fundamentals and techniques in visual expression, and the importance of the image as an instrument of expression and communication. With the aid of visual exercises, the instruction enhances the pupils' knowledge of art and art history and their skills in interpreting visual images. The objective is to improve the pupils' comprehension of different cultures and the interaction between them.

The learning situations must provide opportunities for the pupils to interact, and to work and experience art together. The objective of instruction is that the pupil's personal work, the recording of the work process, and group assessment develop the pupil's understanding of artistic processes and aid artistic learning and the development of visual thinking.

OBJECTIVES

The pupils will

• get to know the primary materials, techniques, tools, and ways of expression used in art and visual communication
• learn to enjoy expressing their own thoughts, observations, ideas, and feelings in a visual form, and come to understand art's ways of treating various phenomena of life
• come to understand the distinctive nature of the artistic process while recording the course of their own work
learn to evaluate their own and others’ visual expression and working approaches, such as visual, content, and technical solutions, and to employ the key concepts of art

make good use of cultural services and electronic communication as sources for their work, information acquisition, and experiences

get to know techniques of visual communication and impact and learn to use key tools of visual communication to express one’s own thoughts in the media

study and evaluate art, visual communication, and the environment from the aesthetic and ethical perspective

work independently and as a community member in art projects.

CORE CONTENTS

Visual expression and thinking

- drawing, graphics, painting, ceramics, sculpture, spatial art, and art in the environment; deepening of visual thinking
- fundamentals of visual composition: balance, tension, rhythm, form, colour, space, movement, time, and line
- styles of art and visual symbolism in one’s own visual expression
- expressing one’s own observations, thoughts, and ideas by visual means

Artistic knowledge and cultural expertise

- central features of contemporary art, art history, and the visual world of different cultures
- guided visits to shows and museums, introduction to an artist’s work, and making use of internet cultural services
- analysis of images: studying the structure of an artistic image, content interpretation, and art criticism

Environmental aesthetics, architecture, and design

- examining the interaction of nature and the built environment, studying the building heritage, and examining and evaluating various environments from the aesthetic, ethical, ecological, and planning perspectives
- introduction to the means of expression, stylistic features, and traditions of architecture and design
- introduction to the most important representatives of Finnish architecture and design
- observation, planning, and construction of a space; introduction to the design process; examination of the connection between material and intended use

The media and visual communication

- examining the intended use of an image in the media; structural and content analysis of media presentations
- photography or digital and video photography
- forms of visual narration: special features of illustration, comic strips, and the moving image
• graphic design: combining image and word, fundamentals of typography and make-up
• advertising channels and means of expression
• analysis of films and television programmes

FINAL-ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR A GRADE OF 8

The pupils will

• know how to express themselves visually
• know how to use means of constructing an image and the main materials and working techniques of the arts and media
• know how to choose the techniques and materials most appropriate to the objectives of their work
• be able to explain the image-creation process, from sketches to completed works
• recognize some key phenomena of the arts and place them in their temporal and cultural contexts
• be able to examine and interpret images in art and communication
• know how to make good use of artist's visits, visits to exhibitions and museums, and the internet's cultural services
• be able to distinguish among, assign value to, and assess the aesthetic and ecological features of various environments and objects
• know the different phases of the planning and design processes and know how to apply them in their work
• recognize cultural and stylistic features in architecture and objects
• know the fundamentals of visual communication and media technology: photography or video photography, the processing of digital images, and graphic design
• be able to analyse the contents, structure, and visual realization of media presentations
• know how to observe and evaluate their own learning, and to benefit in their work from feedback supplied by others
• know how to record their work processes and make use of that record in self-evaluation
• be capable of independent work and interactive cooperation with others, in accordance with the assignment
• know how, with guidance, to use works of art, images of the environment, the natural and built environment, books, newspapers, magazines, museums, galleries and the internet as sources of information and experiences.

2.1.2 Music (musiikki-musik)

The tasks of music instruction are to help the pupils find their objects of interest in music, to encourage them to engage in musical activity, to give them means of expressing themselves musically, and to support their overall growth. It is also the task of the instruction to help the pupil understand that music is tied to the time and situation. It is different at different times, and in different cultures and societies, and has a different sort of meaning for different people. The instruction must take into account that the meaningful experiences gained through making and listening to music constitute a foundation for understanding and conceptualizing music. Instruction in music provides tools for the pupils to form
their own musical identities in a process whose objective is to develop an appreciative, inquisitive attitude towards different types of music. Musical skills are developed through long-term practice based on repetition. Making music together develops social skills such as responsibility, constructive criticism, and the acceptance and appreciation of a diversity of cultures and skills. The development of the pupil’s overall expression must be bolstered by seeking connections with other subjects, too. Music instruction utilizes possibilities offered by technology and the media.

**GRADES 1-4**

In the first through fourth grades, development of the pupils’ musical expression through playful and integrating activity is central. The instruction has to give the pupils experiences with a variety of sound worlds and music, and encourage them to express themselves and give real form to their own ideas.

**OBJECTIVES**

The pupils will learn to

- use their voices naturally and express themselves by singing, playing instruments and moving, both in a group and alone
- listen to and observe the sound environment and music actively and intently
- use different elements of music as ingredients of composing
- understand the diversity of the musical world
- act responsibly as members of a music-making group and as music listeners.

**CORE CONTENTS**

- exercises using the voice by speaking, talking nonsense, and singing; age-appropriate song games
- repertoire of songs; singing exercises that prepare the pupils for singing in parts
- instrumental repertoire and exercises that prepare the pupils for playing together, using rhythm, melodic and harmonic instruments, and their bodies as instruments, with exercises that develop a basic sense of beat serving as the starting point
- listening to a variety of music, using various means of activation; describing one’s own experiences and ideas
- composing, using sound repetition, small-scale sound compositions, and improvisation
- basic concepts related to elements of music – rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamics, tonal colour and form – in conjunction with music-making, listening, movement, and composing
- vocal and instrumental repertoires and listening selections that introduce the pupil to the music of Finland and other countries and cultures, and contain examples from different eras and musical genres

**DESCRIPTION OF GOOD PERFORMANCE AT THE END OF THE FOURTH GRADE**

The pupils will

- know how to use their voices so that they can sing in unison with others
- make out the basic beat of a piece of music so that they are able to participate in instrumental practice and play their instruments together
- master a repertoire of songs, some of them by heart
know how, as individuals and group members, to invent their own musical solutions, for example in echo, question/response and solo/tutti exercises, using sound, movement, rhythm, or melody

recognize the music they hear and be able to express their listening experiences using words, images, or movement

know how to act as members of a music-making group, taking the group’s other members into account.

GRADES 5-9

In music instruction in the fifth through ninth grades, the musical world and musical experiences are analysed and the pupils learn to use musical concepts and notation in conjunction with listening to and playing music.

OBJECTIVES

The pupils will

- maintain and improve their abilities in different areas of musical expression, acting as members of a music-making group
- learn to examine and evaluate various sound environments critically, and to broaden and deepen their knowledge of different genres and styles of music
- learn to understand the tasks of music's elements – rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamics, tonal colour, and form – in the formulation of music; and to use the concepts and notations that express these elements
- build their creative relationship with music and its expressive possibilities, by means of composing.

CORE CONTENTS

- exercises that develop voice control and vocal expression; single- and multiple-voiced repertoire representing different styles and genres, with part of the repertoire learned by heart
- exercises that develop skills for playing instruments together; instrumental repertoire representing different musical cultures and styles in a varied way
- diverse listening selections and their analysis in terms of time, locale, and culture
- experimenting with one’s own musical ideas by improvising, composing, and arranging, using sound, song, instruments, movement, and musical technology, for example

FINAL-ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR A GRADE OF 8

The pupils will

- participate in group singing and know how to sing, following a melody line and with the correct rhythm
- master, as individuals, the basic technique of some rhythm, melody, or harmony instrument so as to be able to play in an ensemble
- know how to listen to music and make observations about it, and present justified opinions about what they have heard
- know how to listen to both their own music and music produced by others, so as to be able to make music together with others
Country description Finland

- recognize, and know how to distinguish between, different genres of music and music of different eras and cultures
- know the most important Finnish music and musical life
- know how to use musical concepts in conjunction with making and listening to music
- know how to use the elements of music as building materials in the development and realization of their own musical ideas and thoughts.

2.1.3 Crafts (käsityö – slöjd)

The task of instruction in crafts is to develop the pupils' skills with crafts so that their self-esteem grows on that basis and they derive joy and satisfaction from their work. In addition, their sense of responsibility for the work and the use of the material increases, and they learn to appreciate the quality of the material and work, and to take a critical, evaluative stance towards their own choices and the ideas, products and services offered.

The instruction is implemented through projects and subject areas corresponding to the pupils' stage of development, and uses experimentation, investigation, and invention. The instructional tasks in crafts are to guide the pupil in systematic, sustained, independent work, and to develop creativity, problem-solving skills, an understanding of everyday technological phenomena, and aesthetic, technical, and psychomotor skills. The pupil receives an introduction to the cultural traditions of handicrafts among the Finns and other peoples.

GRADES 1-4

In the first through fourth grades, the core tasks of crafts instruction are to teach the pupils handicraft skills and knowledge of crafts, and to awaken their critical faculties, sense of responsibility, and awareness of quality in their work and choices of materials. The pupils get help in assimilating basic design skills and gain basic capabilities for realizing their designs. They are guided in the safe and appropriate use of the various machines and the basic tools needed in crafts. Their perseverance and problem-solving skills are developed both in the group and in independent work. Diversified work, skill development, and the experience of knowing how awaken a joy in the work, and the pupil acquires a positive attitude towards working and studying. The instruction is implemented with the same content for all pupils, and encompasses technical and textile work.

OBJECTIVES

The pupils will

- get to know concepts associated with crafts and learn to use a variety of materials, tools, and methods
- adopt a positive attitude towards occupational safety; learn the safe use of tools, machines, and equipment; and learn to attend to the comfort of their learning environment
- learn about basic crafts techniques and the planning of crafts products, and become practised in the skills required thereby, so as to develop their thinking skills and creativity
- learn spatial perception in designing and making processes
- learn to pay attention to aesthetic properties, colours, and forms of products
- learn to make, take care of, and repair everyday products
- learn to take responsibility for their own environment of objects; they will understand that products have life-cycles
• get an introduction to the use of information technology tools in the different phases of a design and making processes and in a variety of learning environments
• gradually come to master an entire crafts process
• gain an introduction to the technology of day-to-day life
• learn, as individuals, to evaluate and appreciate their own work and the work of others.

CORE CONTENTS
• basic materials, tools, and techniques related to textile and technical work
• safety factors related to working and the work space
• designing of individual craft projects and, in that context, practising and experimenting with the techniques needed to produce designs; various techniques to illustrate designs; production of products
• crafts products, tools, materials, and craft techniques, both traditional and modern, that are characteristic of the pupil's home community; the related personal interests and professional potentials; features of other cultures' crafts traditions that may play a role in the local environment
• phenomena in nature and the built environment that are close to the pupil, and the technological applications of those phenomena
• maintenance, conservation and reparation of materials and products; recycling and reuse

DESCRIPTION OF GOOD PERFORMANCE AT THE END OF THE FOURTH GRADE
The pupils will
• know how to produce creative ideas, with guidance; to experiment with technical solutions; and to design a meaningful product
• work appropriately under guidance, processing their designs and giving consideration to occupational safety
• master basic craft techniques, know basic concepts, and identify basic materials
• work in a sustained fashion both as group members and independently, want to progress as craftsmen, and know their responsibility for shared tools and the order and comfort of work areas
• understand the technological operating principles of the surrounding environment
• evaluate and appreciate, as individuals, their own and others' work, learning, and work results
• take a positive stance towards their own cultural traditions and those of other peoples.

GRADES 5-9
In the fifth through ninth grades, the core task of crafts instruction is to increase and deepen the pupils' knowledge of and skills in crafts, so that they are able to choose materials, craft techniques, and tools appropriately at the different phases of the crafts process more independently than before. The pupils are encouraged to innovative design and to work self-directedly, and are guided in valuing the quality of work and material. The pupils' cooperative skills are developed by carrying out joint projects in pupil groups, with representatives of different school subjects and the local working, industrial, and cultural communities. The instruction encompasses core technical- and textile-work contents. In addition, pupils may be given the chance, in their crafts studies, to emphasize either technical or textile work according to their interests and inclinations.
OBJECTIVES

The objectives from the first through fourth grades will be dealt with greater depth. In addition, the pupils will -

- learn to design and produce high-quality, aesthetically pleasing products suited to their purposes, and to give consideration, when working, to ethical, ecological, and economic values
- familiarize themselves with Finnish and, as applicable, other peoples' technological, design, and crafts cultures, thus acquiring ideas for constructing their own identities and design tasks
- familiarize themselves with skills and knowledge that are associated with traditional and contemporary technology and can be applied in day-to-day life, further studies, future job tasks, and pastimes
- learn to appreciate and examine critically their own work and the work of others, and to find, both as individuals and cooperatively, creative solutions to the problems they perceive, using various information source as an aid
- learn to take a position on technological development and its meaning to the well-being of individuals, the society, and nature
- come to understand entrepreneurship and industrial production processes.

CORE CONTENTS

General contents of crafts instruction

- conceptualizing the product and process
- forms, composition, and colours
- knowledge of materials and the consumer
- appropriate use of the material
- various systems and instructions for working
- connection between applications and problems that appear in crafts, on the one hand, and, on the other, other scholastic subjects such as visual arts, the natural sciences, and mathematics
- various techniques for documenting, reporting, and illustrating designs and outputs
- knowledge of and experiences with Finnish culture, tradition, and design, as well as influences from other cultures
- introduction to entrepreneurship and industrial life in one's own locality
- evaluation of one's own work and its results, and participation in the joint examination of the work of others

Contents: technical work

Visual design and technical planning

- technical drawing, modelling, and information technology applications in planning
- appropriate and creative use of various materials for different purposes, using different techniques
- the built environment and various products, and the message or symbolic meaning that they contain
Arts and Cultural Education at School in Europe

- operating principles of various devices, structures, and technological concepts and systems, and applications of those concepts and systems.

Production
- crafts tools and machines needed in technical work, and their skilled and safe utilization
- various materials and production techniques for technical work, and their creative selection, combination, and processing
- diversified construction of devices
- maintenance, reparation, and recycling of devices for home and leisure time

Contents: Textile work

Visual design and technical planning
- history of textiles and fashion, as applicable in connection with subject areas relevant to household textiles and clothing
- symbolic meaning, or message, of interior-design textiles, clothes, and textile art
- information technology applications and new technology as aids in design
- construction of the three-dimensional form of textile products – fundamentals of pattern-making, for example
- appropriate and creative use of textile materials for different purposes, using different techniques

Production
- traditional and modern tools and machinery for textile work; their maintenance, operating principles, and safe usage; selecting the right tools and machinery for a task
- different textile materials and craft techniques for textile work; their creative selection, combination and processing
- care, maintenance, and recycling of textile products

FINAL-ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR A GRADE OF 8

Visual design and technical planning
The pupils will -
- observe problems independently, develop ideas creatively, and, with guidance, design products in which attempts have been made to consider the available time, the tools, the materials, the aesthetics of the products, ecological value, durability, economy and suitability for purpose
- understand the products they are designing as a message to the environment, too
- document designs, for example as illustrations, verbally, with samples, with the help of miniature models, or by other means, so as to reveal the nature of the idea and its intended method of production
- know how, in their planning, and with guidance, to use elements from the technological, design, and crafts cultures of the Finns and other peoples.

Production
The pupils will -
- work appropriately and carefully, observing work safety instructions, and attend to the order and comfort of their working environment
- master basic techniques, so that the product is appropriate for its purpose, polished, ecological, and aesthetically pleasing
- know how to work purposefully alone or in teams
- know how to apply advanced technology, with guidance, in their work; they will understand technological concepts and systems, and their applications
- know how to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned in other subjects.

**Self-evaluation and considering of the process**

The pupils will
- be able, with guidance, to examine their personal work and learning
- observe the strengths and weaknesses in a process and results
- demonstrate a tolerance for criticism in the evaluation process, and want to direct their actions in accordance with the feedback
- evaluate their ideas and products by the criteria of aesthetics, economy, ecology, and appropriateness for purpose
- understand the interdependence of technology, culture, society, and nature
- form a realistic picture of their skills and potential for improvement.

### 2.2 Compulsory or optional subjects

Arts subjects are part of the compulsory core curriculum in basic education grades 1-9. Music, visual arts and crafts are taught as separate subjects. Arts are also taught as part of other compulsory subjects: Dance is included in the curriculum of physical education, and drama in that of mother tongue and literature.

The education provider is required to offer the minimum number or lessons in the separate art subjects as specified below. In addition to this, schools may provide optional studies in the arts subjects. Optional courses are organised particularly in grades 8 and 9, but the education provider is free to decide, within the framework of the Government Decree (1435/2001), when to provide optional lessons. The allocation of lesson hours in the Government Decree is flexible so it allows for various arrangements what comes to timetables.

### 2.3 Taught time

The Government Decree (1435/2001) allocates lesson hours in Basic education. Instruction is marked numerically in terms of weekly lesson hours per year. One weekly lesson hour per year indicates 38 lessons. One lesson is minimum 45 minutes of work.

The national distribution of lesson hours gives the total teaching time for the subject group “arts, crafts and physical education” in addition to the separate minima for music, visual arts, crafts and physical education. The national time allocation reserves six lesson hours per year for so-called core instruction in arts, crafts and physical education in grades 1-4 and the same six in grades 5-9. This leaves flexibility to the local level to emphasize either arts or physical education.

Consequently it is only possible to give a **theoretical average teaching time for arts** by dividing the core instruction time equally between all four subjects.
### Arts and Cultural Education at School in Europe

#### 2.4 Use of ICT

The National Core Curriculum expects schools to make use of ICT. The document states that the learning environment must support the pupil’s development into a member of the information society, and provide opportunities for the use of computers, other media technology, and if possible, information networks. The core curriculum also includes a cross-curricular theme “media skills and communication” where ICT is a central element. Moreover the subject-specific chapters for arts make several references to the use of ICT.

In practice, the use of ICT in the arts instruction varies from school to school and even within school depending on the teacher, technical resources, physical facilities etc.

#### Arts subjects in the Distribution of Lesson Hours in Basic Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Grades 1-4 (minimum)</th>
<th>Grades 5-9 (minimum)</th>
<th>Grades 1-9 (minimum)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weekly lessons per year</td>
<td>hours</td>
<td>% of total (84 weekly lessons/year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, crafts and physical education, total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>31 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>min. 4</td>
<td>470.25*</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>min. 4</td>
<td>(270.75*)</td>
<td>(11 %*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crafts</td>
<td>min. 4</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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* Core instruction time included.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All subjects, total number of hours</th>
<th>Arts, number of hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>2394</td>
<td>470.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>3933</td>
<td>527.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Core instruction time included.*
Education providers can apply from the Finnish National Board of Education subsidies for the development of learning environments. The utilisation of ICT in teaching and learning is one of the focus areas in this development funding. In 2009, projects and initiatives in the general education sector are funded by 3.9 million €. Among them may be initiatives using ICT within the Arts curriculum.

3. Special provision on art education

Pupils who are interested to exercise and learn more in arts may, depending on the municipal provision, do that with the help of extracurricular activities or basic education in the arts.

3.1 Basic Education in the Arts

Basic education in the arts differs from compulsory basic education. Participation is voluntary and the education providers may charge moderate fees.

Basic education in the arts is goal-oriented education primarily given to children and young people which progresses from one level to another and which gives the pupil self-expression skills and enables him/her to apply for vocational and higher education in the art form concerned.

Municipalities provide basic education in the arts. The Ministry of Education can also grant joint municipal authorities, public educational institutions, registered societies or associations the permission to provide this education. In 2007/08, basic education in the arts was provided in 82 % of Finnish municipalities.

A local authority providing basic education in the arts receives government transfers based on the number of inhabitants. Further, public and private education providers receive government grants based on the confirmed number of lesson hours given.

The Finnish National Board of Education decides on the objectives and core contents for nine different art forms, which are: music, literary arts, dance, performing arts (circus and theatre) and visual arts (architecture, audiovisual art, visual arts, craft). The core curricula cover both basic and advanced syllabus in all art forms, except in audiovisual art where it is only possible to take the basic syllabus.

In 2007/08, there were 135 000 students enrolled in basic education in the arts. 50 % of them studied music. Dance was the second most popular art form, learned by 27 % of students.

3.2 Club activities, morning and afternoon provision

Municipalities may organise versatile club activities to support the school’s educational and teaching work. The objectives of club activities as defined by the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education include, among others: to develop creative activity and thinking and to encourage children and young people to produce their own culture. Club activities have been developed actively in the last few years. In 2008/09, 32 % of comprehensive school pupils participated in club activities.

Morning and afternoon activities, on the other hand, are guided recreational activities intended for the first and second year pupils as well as for pupils with SEN in basic education. The provision is at the discretion of municipalities, and participation is voluntary for children. These activities often relate to e.g. sport, practical skills, music or visual arts. In September 2008, the participation rate was 48 % in the first year-class and 27 % in the second year-class.
4. Assessment of pupil's progress and monitoring of standards in the arts

4.1 Pupil assessment

The general guidelines for pupil assessment in basic education (ISCED 1-2) (1) are laid down in the national core curriculum for basic education 2004. According to this document the task of assessment is ‘to guide and encourage studying and to depict how well the pupil has met the objectives established for growth and learning. It is the task of assessment to help the pupil form a realistic image of his or her learning and development, and thus to support the pupil's personality growth, too.’ [p. 260]

In the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004 the evaluation of students was specified. The description of good performance and final assessment criteria and transition points were introduced.

The pupil assessment is divided into assessment during the course of studies (formative assessment) and final assessment. The national core curriculum defines the main objectives and core contents for each subject during each stage. It also gives the description of good performance in each subject at the end of each stage. The number and length of stages depend on the subject; the syllabus in arts subjects is divided in two: years 1-4 and years 5-9. On the basis of the national framework, the local/school curriculum shall define the general and subject-specific objectives of assessment. Teachers assess the pupils’ progress, work skills and behaviour in relation to the curriculum’s objectives and descriptions of good performance (see section 2 for more information).

The assessment in arts does not differ from the general picture as described above. Assessment is internal, as there are no national tests during basic education. Within the national framework, teachers decide freely on methods of assessment in the arts. Pupils are assessed in music, visual arts and crafts. Some topics that are covered by this study are included in the curricula of other subjects, and therefore also assessed in connection with those subjects. An example of this is dance, which is mentioned in the core curriculum of physical education. Arts and culture-related subjects can also be offered as optional subjects.

In all art subjects pupils are assessed on an ongoing basis from the very beginning. A school year report is given at the end of each school year. The school may also issue intermediate reports during the school year. Assessment in the school year reports can be numerical, verbal or combination of these two. In the early years of basic education, assessment is usually verbal. Numerical assessment must be introduced in the core subjects – including music, visual arts, crafts and physical education – by the eighth school year at the latest. When numerical assessment is used, the grading scale is from 10 to 4, 10 standing for excellent and 4 for failed.

In addition to the school year reports, the pupil and his/her guardian are to be given assessment feedback adequately and in a diverse manner.

The outcome of teacher assessment is not reported to regional or national authorities. Municipalities as education providers may keep records concerning pupil assessment, but this is matter at the discretion of individual education providers.

The national core curriculum also emphasises self-assessment by the pupil: ‘The purpose of developing self-assessment skills is to support the growth of the pupil's self-knowledge and the development of his or her study skills. The objective is to reinforce the pupil's self-esteem, favourable self-image as a learner, and sense of involvement. With the development of self-assessment skills, the

(1) In the case of Finland, it is not relevant or even possible to handle the ISCED 1 and ISCED 2 separately as both levels are covered by the nine-year uniform basic education.
pupils also learn to be aware of their own progress and learning objectives, establish objectives for their studies themselves, and regulate their learning processes.‘ [p. 262]

The objectives as defined in the national core curriculum and local curriculum, as well as the description of good performance in each subject in the end of each stage support teachers in their assessment work. In addition to the national core curriculum there is versatile pedagogical literature to support teachers in their assessment work: e.g. teachers’ guides and handbooks in arts subjects and web-based material. Teachers in arts subjects can also participate in in-service training that focus on pupil assessment. E.g. the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) or Art academies organise such seminars. Also teacher associations offer training and support material for teachers.

As regards failing performance in basic education, the relevant paragraphs of the national core curriculum state:

‘A pupil is promoted to the next grade if he or she acceptably completes all studies in the different subjects or subject groups in the syllabus for that grade and specified in the local curriculum.

Pupils may also be promoted to the next grade level, even when they have failing grades, if they are judged to be able to cope with the next school year’s studies acceptably.

A pupil may be retained in a grade if he or she has had a failing performance in one or more subjects or subject groups in the syllabus for that grade. The pupil is to be reserved an opportunity, without participating in instruction, to demonstrate that he or she has achieved an acceptable level of knowledge and skills. One or more such opportunities may be provided during the school year or when the year’s schoolwork is completed, in a manner to be decided upon in the curriculum.’ [p. 261]

The above concerns all core subjects, including arts, in basic education. In practice, repeating a class is marginal.

4.2 Monitoring of standards

In Finland, there is neither inspection nor national testing in basic education. The education providers (mainly municipalities) have a statutory duty to evaluate the education they provide and its effectiveness. Moreover, the national authorities carry out national evaluations of learning outcomes on a sample basis. Some core subjects, such as mother tongue, are evaluated regularly, but the latest evaluation in arts education dates back to 1998. A new evaluation of learning outcomes in the arts will take place in 2009-2010.

5. Teacher education in the arts

The nine-year basic education is not divided into primary and lower secondary education. According to the Basic Education Decree (1998), ‘In year-classes 1-6, the teaching shall primarily be class teaching and in year-classes 7-9 primarily subject teaching unless otherwise provided in the curriculum.’ The legislation thus gives a lot of flexibility for the education providers to decide how to organise teaching and when to introduce subject teachers.

In practice, arts are usually taught by class teachers during the first six years. The instruction is given either by the pupil’s own class teacher or the responsibility for arts lessons of several classes is given to a class teacher who has completed subsidiary studies in the arts. A recent evaluation shows that in particular in the teaching of music, the role of semi-specialist or specialist teachers is strong already during the first years, and by the fifth year, less than half of teachers are generalists (for definitions, see 5.1)
5.1 Initial teacher education

In Finland, class teachers are generalists who hold a Master’s degree in Education. They may specialise in teaching one or several subjects in their subsidiary subject studies. For the purpose of this study, class teachers who have completed subsidiary subject studies in one or more arts subjects are called semi-specialists. Completion of an extensive course in a subsidiary subject (studies in the teaching subject of at least 60 ECTS credits included in subject teacher education) will also give eligibility for functioning as a subject teacher in forms 1-9 of basic education.

According to legislation (Government Decree on University Degrees), the class teacher education (general teacher) shall comprise studies in the core subjects and cross-curricular themes of basic education. The universities have autonomy to draw up their own curricula based on the national statutes. Thus all class teachers have received some minimum amount of training in the arts subjects during their initial education, but the exact amount depends both on the university department and on the student’s individual study plan.

Based on an overview of several teacher education departments, visual arts, crafts and music are explicitly mentioned among the compulsory core studies of degree programs. Dance is not necessarily specifically mentioned among compulsory courses. However, as studies in physical education are to give readiness to teach PE during in grades 1-6 of basic education, and dance is one of the topics included in the basic education core curriculum, it can be assumed, that the studies also give some kind of introduction to dance.

The approach to drama also varies depending on the teacher education department. It can be taught in connection with e.g. mother tongue, communication or literature, or separately, or it may not be mentioned explicitly at all. As drama is included in the national core curriculum of basic education, it is safe to assume that in practice it is included in the teacher training even in the last mentioned case. In addition to the courses that are compulsory to all students, training in arts subjects also offered in the form of optional courses and subsidiary subject studies.

Due to the autonomy of universities, the detailed contents of courses are at the discretion of individual teacher education departments and not defined by any national curriculum. Usually during the compulsory courses in the core subjects and core curricular themes, the emphasis is on didactics. With the help of optional courses and subsidiary studies it is then possible to go deeper into the subject matter.

Subject teachers have usually graduated with a Master’s degree from the university faculty/department of the subject that they are going to teach + completed teacher’s pedagogical studies (min. 60 ECTS). Studies in the main subject and pedagogy can be completed either according to the consecutive model, or at the same time and in interaction with each other. Education for teachers of art subjects is provided by art academies (universities of the arts), while pedagogical studies are jointly organised by university faculties of education and art academies. Craft teachers, however, are admitted to university faculties of education, where the education mainly takes place.

The detailed contents of degree programs are at the discretion of teacher training departments. Schools are encouraged to network with the surrounding community and – in the case of arts and cultural education – to cooperate with professional artists. Professional artists cannot, however, gain a permanent post as a teacher without completing the required education, incl. teacher’s pedagogical studies. Without the required qualification, they can only act as part-time teachers (and this often happens) or substitute teachers or instructors of extracurricular activities. For instance the University of Art and Design offers for professional artists and designers pedagogical studies (60 ECTS) that will qualify them to become teachers.
Professional artists are naturally represented in the teaching staff of Art universities where subject teachers in the arts are educated. It can be assumed that teacher education departments also cooperate with professional artists, but there is no official information about that at national level.

5.2 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

There is no specific legislation governing continuing teacher education and training. The obligation to participate in in-service training is partly defined in various statutes and partly in collective agreements. Teachers are obligated to participate in in-service training and/or collective planning and development work for three or five days a year according to the relevant statutes and collective agreements. Teachers have the right to participate in this obligatory training with full salary benefits. On the other hand, employers have the right to assign all full-time teachers to training. Employers also decide which training programmes and forms of education can be accepted as in-service training conforming to the collective agreement. Moreover teachers may, and many do, participate in self-motivated in-service training at leisure time.

In Finland, continuing education and training for teaching staff are considered as being the responsibility of education providers and of individual teachers themselves. The State, primarily the Ministry of Education, is responsible for controlling and financing education that is considered important in terms of education policy.

Continuing teacher education is largely based on the logic of supply and demand. It is organised by the Finnish National Board of Education, state-owned training centres, university continuing education units, vocational teacher education colleges, university departments of teacher education, teacher training schools, summer universities, teacher associations, and various private organisations.

The above information concerns all teachers, not just teachers in the arts. Consequently, there isn't any difference between general/specialist teachers either in this regard.

Based on a quick and limited overview of the supply of CPD for teachers in the arts it can be said that professional artists, graphic designers etc. are involved in the continuous professional development of teachers in Finland. This is not to say that they would be involved in all courses, but in some of them. The role of professional artists is strong particularly in courses that familiarise teachers with the use of new techniques of expression, new materials or new technologies.

A national evaluation study of CPD was carried out in 2005. The study looked into the in-service training among subject teachers in different school forms and it was based on a national sample. According to the evaluation report (2007 (2)), the situation was interesting with regard teachers in arts. Participation in in-service in general had decreased between 1998 and 2005, but the number of in-service training days for teachers in arts had almost doubled in the same time period. This positive development hides considerable polarisation. 24 % of teachers in arts subjects in basic and general upper secondary education did not participate in in-service training at all, whereas the overall rate of non-participation was 13 %. This means that some teachers in arts were really actively developing themselves professionally, while others were not doing it at all due to lack of opportunities, of support by school management, of personal interest or alike.

See ongoing and planned reforms in this field in the section 7.

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6. Initiatives

In 2008, the Finnish National Board of Education launched a new national development project for arts and skill subjects, TaiTai. The project seeks to promote innovative and diverse ways to organise the teaching of arts and practical subjects in different school forms. The action plan of TaiTai includes following measures:

1) Monitoring and evaluation
   In the first stage the aim is to find out how much teaching time schools allocate to arts subjects.

2) TaiTai Portal
   A website will be developed to provide teachers with online pedagogical resources and to promote networking, cooperation, information sharing and interactive development work.

3) TaiTai report
   A report that looks into the teaching of arts from various angles will be published.

4) Seminars
   Annual seminars will be organised to gather different stakeholders to discuss current topics and development needs in the field of arts education.

Perusopetus paremaksi (POP), is a large-scale national program to improve basic education. The Government offers municipalities special state subsidies (funding to be applied for separately) to improve the quality of basic education with the help of e.g. in-service training of teachers, school club activities, enhanced special support or reduction of group-size. Also arts education will benefit of these overall development efforts.

Kulttuurin laajakaista is a project of nine national cultural institutions together and the Finnish National Board of Education. It aims to provide an inspiring learning environment and authentic learning materials for the teaching of culture and to strengthen the knowledge of Finnish cultural heritage.

The Oak of Finland (Suomen Tammi) started as a project in 2004-2008 and continued as a network in 2005-2008. Its goal was to increase the awareness of the Finnish cultural heritage and to reinforce the role of cultural heritage in education. The activities included e.g. production of multidisciplinary teaching materials and cooperation between museums and schools.

Creativity and cultural education project named Lähde (Fountain) was ran by the FNBE in 2004-2007. Based on innovation in all subjects and teaching, its purpose was to promote creativity and cultural awareness in education, to come up with new approaches to the arts curriculum and to support cooperation between teachers and professionals in the cultural field.

The predecessor of Lähde was Koku (1998-2001), a national development project to promote cooperation between school and culture.

7. Ongoing reforms and proposals

According to the National Development Plan for Education and Research 2007-2012, municipalities will be encouraged to increase the number of arts and crafts lessons and to provide them as optional subjects.

The Ministry of Education also outlines in the Development plan that the effectiveness of the national core curricula will be examined. Preparatory actions are taken to reform the national objectives of education and the allocation of lesson hours. In April 2009, the Ministry of Education appointed a working group to prepare proposals for general national goals and the distribution of lesson hours in
basic education. One of the mentioned aims in the reform is to reinforce the status of arts subjects in the curriculum.

There are some changes and reforms concerning continuing professional development. The following information concerns all teachers, not just teachers in arts and skill subjects.

In 2008, the Ministry of Education appointed a broad-based advisory council for the development of continuing training for teaching staff. The council’s task is to anticipate the changes in the learning needs of teaching staff, to follow up on the status of continuing training and its development needs. It also proposes initiatives for the development of continuing training.

The concerns relating to the differences and inequalities in the field of teachers’ CPD are reflected in the Government’s Development Plan for Education and Research 2007-2012. The document mentions the aim to introduce an obligation for the education providers to ensure that their staffs receive continuing education. It also envisages an increase in the government funding for teaching staff training.

In the autumn of 2008, the MoE appointed a working group to look into the matter. In 2009, the working group proposed a national programme for ensuring professional competence in education and among teaching staff and school leaders. According to the proposal, the OSAAVA programme, planned for years 2010-2016, will legally bind education providers to systematically and continually train their teaching, management and support staff according to the professional competences needed. In the 2010 Budget Proposal, Ministry of Education proposes EUR 8 million funding for OSAAVA.

8. Existing national surveys and reports on practice

Sources

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Unrevised English

The content is under the responsibility of the Eurydice National Unit

Author: Counsellor of Education Mikko Hartikainen and the Eurydice National Unit

For detailed information on the educational system and teacher education, please see Eurybase on www.eurydice.org