

Costs of vocational education and training (VET) vary based on VET fields

The average costs per student for vocational upper secondary education and training were EUR 11,503.

There was considerable variation in the costs based on the field of vocational education and training. The costs per student were the highest at EUR 15,160 in the field of natural resources and the environment. The education in this field requires expensive machines and equipment. The costs per student were lowest at EUR 7,920 in social sciences, business and administration, where there are no similar equipment costs.

Majority of the funding, or 57 per cent, was spent on teaching. There was a 1.5-per-cent decrease in the costs per student for vocational education and training from 2014.

Significant cost differences between levels of education

In 2015:

- When comparing the different levels of education, the average cost per pupil or student varied from the EUR 5,848 of pre-primary education to the EUR 11,679 of vocational education and training.
- The higher costs of basic education compared with general upper secondary education can be primarily attributed to the costs of learning material and school transport.
- The total costs of general upper secondary education are lower than those of basic education due to larger group sizes and a sparser school network.
- The higher costs of vocational education and training compared with other forms of education can be explained, for example by the expensive equipment procurements in certain VET fields.
- Teaching was the largest expenditure in all levels of education, amounting to 53–65 per cent of the costs.

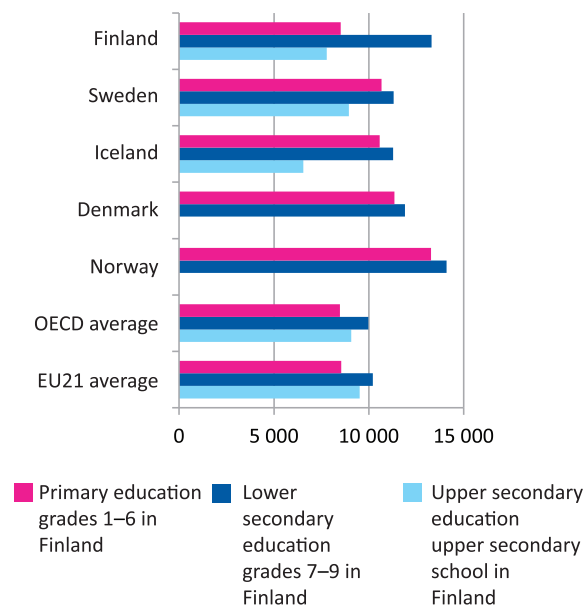
Compared to 2014, on average, the costs per pupil or student

- increased by 1.0 % in basic education
0.2 % in general upper secondary education
- decreased by 1.0 % in pre-primary education
1.5 % in VET

Costs of education and training in Finland near international averages

In an international comparison, the average costs per pupil or student are below the average rates in the EU as well as OECD. However, grades 7–9 are an exception to this as their education puts Finland among the five "most expensive" OECD countries. In 2013, the average cost per pupil in grades 7–9 in Finland was USD 13,312 whereas the OECD average on the equivalent secondary education was USD 9,980 and the EU average was USD 10,210 per pupil.

The average cost per pupil for basic and secondary education 2013, OECD, EU21 and the Nordic countries



Source: OECD Education at a Glance 2016. Currency conversion has been used to equalise the purchasing power of different countries. Data on upper secondary schools in Denmark and Norway is not available.

The higher costs of grades 7–9 in Finland compared with other countries can be mostly attributed to the smaller schools and group sizes as well as the denser school network.

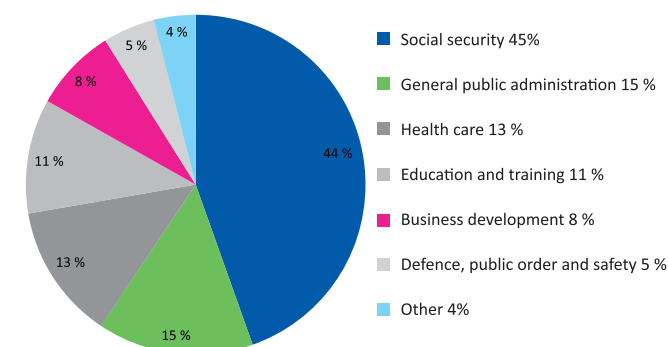
The differences in the costs between the countries can be partly explained by the number of lesson hours. For example, there is a dramatic difference between Finland and Denmark: In Denmark, where basic education takes 10 years, pupils are provided with over 3,000 hours more instruction than Finnish pupils during their nine years of basic education.

The costs of pre-primary, basic and upper secondary education 2015

Education and training is the fourth largest public expenditure

In Finland, the total costs of education and training were around EUR 12.2 billion in 2015. The share of education of the total public sector expenditure was 11 per cent and it accounted for 5.8 per cent of the gross domestic product (Statistics Finland).

Public sector expenditure by position 2015



Source: Statistics Finland

Most of the total costs of education, just over EUR 4.6 million, or around 38 per cent, were spent on basic education.

Teaching was the largest expenditure in basic and secondary education, amounting to 53–65 per cent of the total costs of each level of education.

When comparing the real change in the costs of education from 2010 to 2015, i.e. taking into account the impact of price increases, costs have increased in pre-primary education, remained nearly at the same level in basic education, and decreased in upper secondary education as well as vocational education and training.

The data of the costs of pre-primary, basic and upper secondary education are based on the information submitted by education and training providers to the Finnish National Agency for Education. The examined upper secondary education includes the forms of education with the largest numbers of students, i.e. general upper secondary education for young people and vocational upper secondary education and training. The most recent data available for the international comparison are from 2013.

Pre-primary education is most affordable when organised by a municipality and in an urban municipality

The average cost per pupil in pre-primary education was EUR 5,859 in 2015. There is considerable variation in the cost of education based on the education provider.

At the lowest, the costs were around EUR 3,000 per pupil.

Arrangement of pre-primary education is the most expensive in small rural and remote municipalities, where, e.g. arrangements for pupil transport carried out by the municipality and group sizes smaller than in urban municipalities result in higher costs. At the highest, the cost per pupil for pre-primary education arranged by a municipality was over EUR 30,000.

Teaching was the largest cost item, accounting for 53 per cent of the costs of pre-primary education. In addition to teachers' salaries, the costs of teaching included the expenses related to learning material. There was a one-per-cent decrease in the costs per pupil from 2014.

Basic education most affordable in urban municipalities

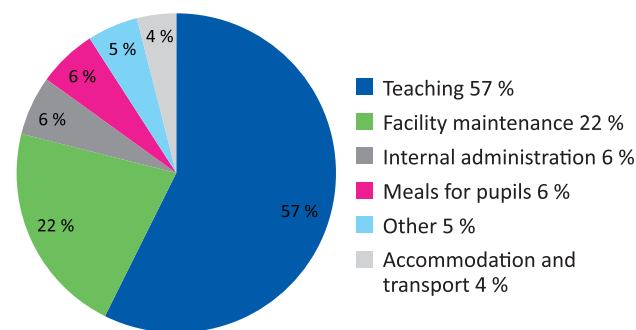
The costs of basic education vary considerably based on the education provider, region and type of municipality. In 2015, the average cost per pupil for basic education was EUR 8,955.

Urban municipalities and private education providers produced basic education at the lowest cost. At the lowest, the cost of basic education was around EUR 6,000 per pupil.

Provision of education was most expensive in sparsely populated areas in Eastern and Northern Finland. In these regions, the schools tend to be small or pupils are transported to larger schools in more densely populated areas, which results in higher total costs due to transport expenses. At the highest, the cost per pupil for basic education arranged by the municipality was nearly EUR 25,000.

A clear majority, or 57 per cent, of the costs of basic education were spent on teaching. In addition to teachers' salaries, the costs of teaching include learning material, which is provided free of charge for the pupils.

Distribution of costs, basic education 2015



Source: Finnish National Agency for Education

There was a one-per-cent increase in the costs per pupil for basic education from 2014.

The costs of general upper secondary education vary based on the size of the upper secondary school

The average cost per student for general upper secondary education was EUR 7,747 in 2015. There is significant variation in the costs based on the education provider.

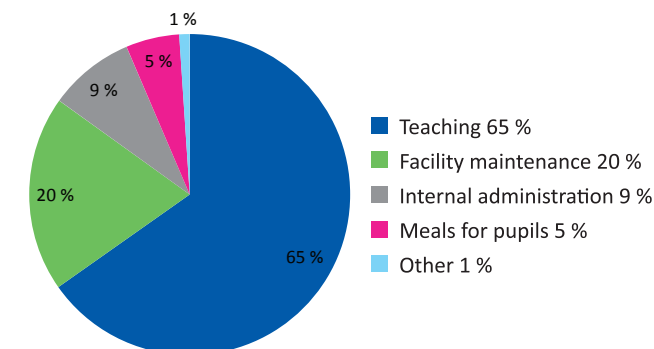
The costs were lowest among private education providers, where the average cost per student was EUR 6,512. This was clearly lower than in municipal upper secondary schools, where the cost per student was EUR 7,864.

The costs were highest in small upper secondary schools with less than one hundred students.

At the level of counties, the costs were highest in the counties of Lapland, Ostrobothnia and Kainuu, regions with few inhabitants of upper secondary school age and small upper secondary schools. Costs were lower in the Kanta-Häme and Päijät-Häme regions due to a higher number of upper secondary school aged population and larger upper secondary schools in the areas.

A clear majority of the costs of general upper secondary education, 65 per cent, was spent on teaching. The share of teaching of the total costs is more substantial than in basic education as upper secondary schools are not responsible for covering the costs of learning material or transport and as teachers' salaries are higher in upper secondary schools.

Distribution of costs, general upper secondary education 2015



Source: Finnish National Agency for Education

There was a 0.2-per-cent increase in the costs per student for upper secondary education from 2014.