

# Historical introduction into Finnish higher education



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15/12/2020



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# Based on this book



# Main aim of the lecture

- Introduction into main historical traditions of Finnish higher education and society
- Main concepts:
- Higher Education Institution (HEI) = a University (*yliopisto*) or a Polytechnic / University of Applied Sciences (UAS), (*ammattikorkeakoulu*), tertiary level institution
- Higher education = all activities related to and taken care of by universities & HEIs (*teaching, learning, studying, research, administration & management, 'third mission' etc.*)

# Historical contexts

## Geo-political context: culturally East ⇔ West

One of the core areas of the Swedish Kingdom (1155 – 1809) as **Eastern provinces**, later **Grand Duchy of Finland**; Swedish Kingdom connected Finland to

1) **Western juridical tradition** (rule of the law)

2) **Western cultural sphere** (Catholic Church) => Finnish students were sent abroad: Paris 13<sup>th</sup> century=>, Wittenberg 16<sup>th</sup>

-Vocational training by guilds



# The Expansion of the Kingdom of Sweden





# Academic tradition: The Inauguration of the Royal Academy in Åbo in 1640 by Albert Edelfelt (1902) (wikipedia)



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# Universities as uniforming instrument

- New universities established: **Tartto** (Dorpat ,1632), **Turku** (Åbo, 1640), **Lund** (1664) & renewed old ones: **Uppsala** (1477) **Greifswald** (1520)
- Turku Cathedral School (est. 13<sup>th</sup> century) was promoted to **the University of Turku in 1640**
- *We Christina, the Queen of Sweden, etc. etc. ... decree the founding and establishment of the Academy, University of Åbo (Turku) ... to better cultivate and exercise free literary knowledge and skills and to honour and adorn our Grand Duchy of Finland...*

*(Charter of the Royal Academy in Turku)*



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# Swedish Kingdom & the university

- All Swedish universities were aimed to **train clergy for the Lutheran Church & civil servants for the King / State** (this functions still continue)
- Royal Academy in Åbo (1640):
  - 1) to defend the 'right Christian Belief' = political & dynastic issue
  - 2) to strengthen social ties & values / Lutheran Church responsible for local administration (=>1870s)
- Channel for upward **social mobility** for lower Nobility
- Professors were nominated by the ruler (1640-1997) & paid by the revenues from the farms

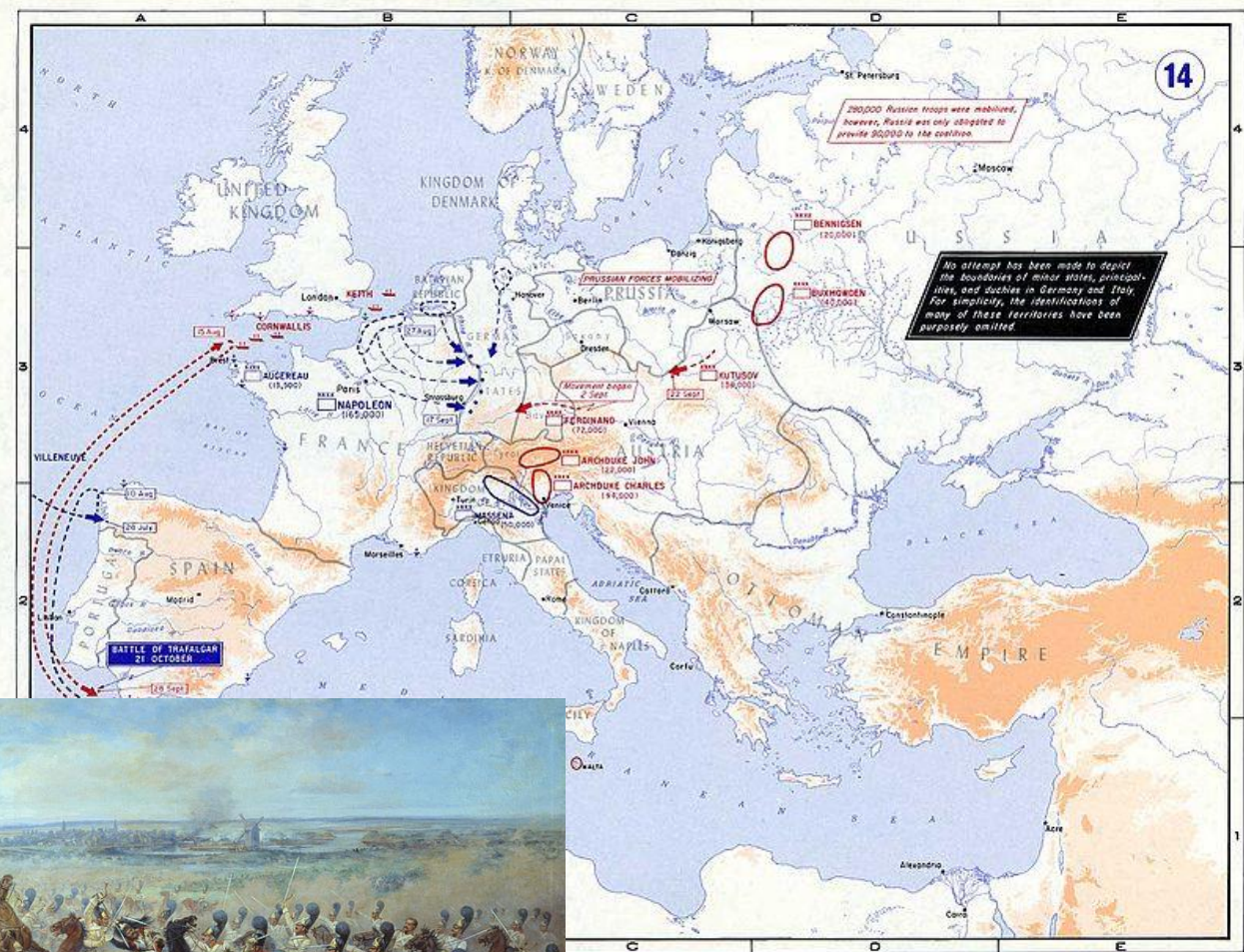


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# Napoleonic Wars (1803-15)



(FIER)



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# Part of Russian Empire (1809-1917)



- **Autonomous Grand Duchy:** all institutions continued: 1) **University** (=> Imperial Alexander University), 2) **Swedish laws** & juridical system & legislation; 3) **Lutheran Church & system of education**
- **Own government & internal administration** ⇔ civil servants, training monopoly to university
- **Own currency & central bank** (1860s=>) => development of national economies

Russian emperor Alexander the First, Grand Duchy of Finland; source: wikipedia



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# Changes in higher education during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (1)

- Imperial Alexander University rooted in the **Humboldtian ideals**: 1) Institutional autonomy (self-governance); 2) Freedom of study & teaching; 3) Academic freedom for professors
- Professors became civil servants; regular salaries
- **Nationalism** developed & implemented by some university professors & students (*fennomans*): “education of the nation & nationalisation of educated”
- **Finnish language & culture developed** => University understood as a **national cultural institution**

# Changes in higher education during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (2)

- **Debates on the need of practical & useful fields** (forestry & agriculture, technical, commercial education) **1840/50s=>**
- **Technical education schools & commercial schools established** (=> HEIs / 20<sup>th</sup> century)
- **Agriculture & forestry => faculty in university**
- **Professionalisation of university degrees** (medicine, law) => humanities focused on Finnish culture & history ⇔ nationalism



# Establishment of *Volksschule* (*kansakoulu*) 1870s =>



School children in Finland in the 1920s; source: wikipedia



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# Teacher training seminars, 1863=>

**Volksschule schools 1870s=> needs for teacher education => teacher training seminars (4-year institutions), Seminar students** mainly sons of farmers; female students mainly from upper/middle class families



Female students in sports suits, male students in their best suits in the 1890s, wikipedia



# Higher education during 1920s-1930s



13-year old child soldier of the 'whites', killed in combat 1918,  
source: wikipedia

- Independence through a bloody **Civil War (1918) => Republic of Finland (1917-> )**
- Education as a tool for national integration: compulsory education (1921), gymnaniums expanded, 6% / age cohort => increase of university students
- **Elite system of higher education: University of Helsinki** (former Imperial Alexander University) + **University of Åbo & University of Turku in Turku; Technical university & two business schools in Helsinki, one in Turku**



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# Higher education in the making of Welfare Society

- 'Defensive Victory' in WW II (1940-45) => *social change*
- Rapid industrialization 1950s => 1980s,
- Nordic Welfare state from the 1960s:
- => **equal educational opportunities** as the **main goal & an instrument** in making a fair society
- Expansion of HE in the 1950s -1960: 6 new universities & 2 technical universities est. all over the country
- Expansion supported by regional development (*policy mechanism*), manpower planning (*rationale*) => mass higher ed. in the 1970s (over 15% of age cohort to HE)



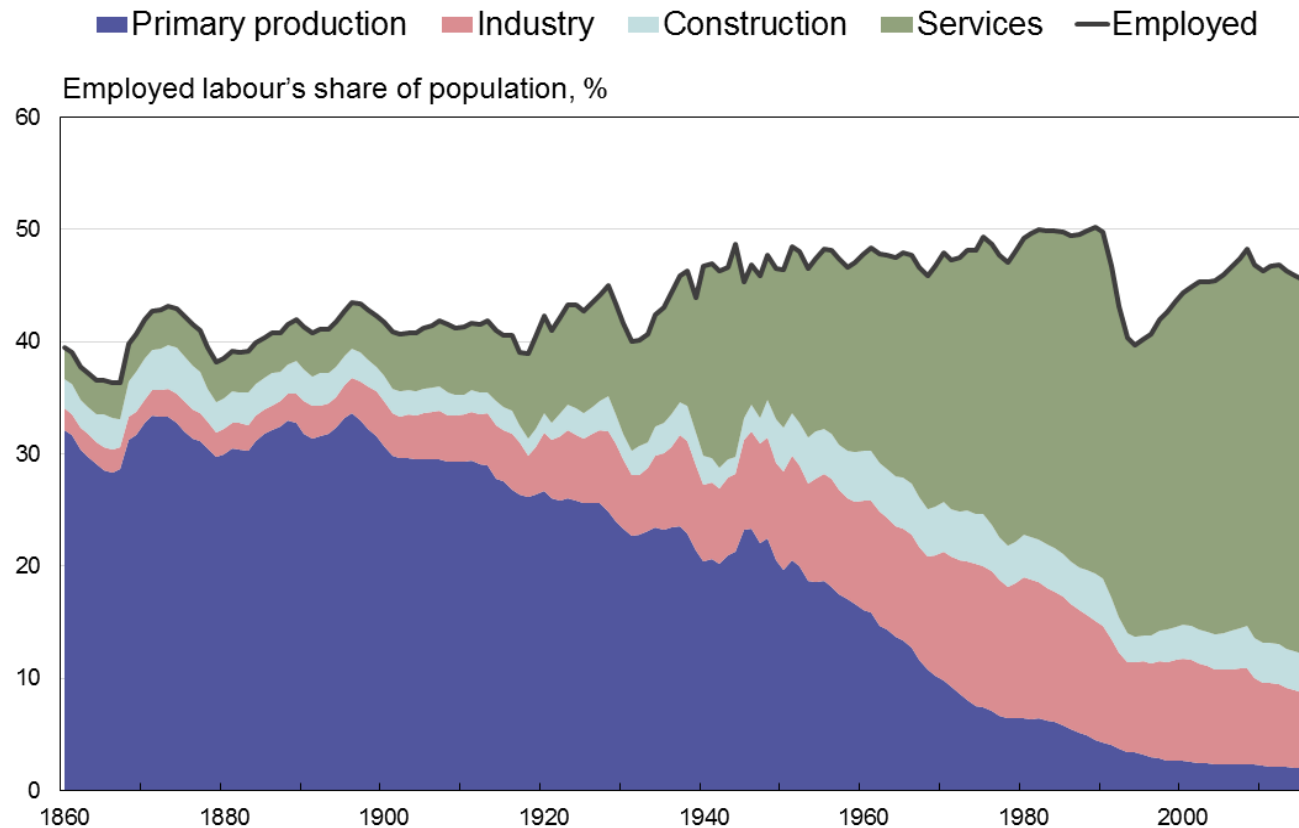
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# The Change of Finnish Economy 1860-2015

## Structure of employment by sector in Finland in 1860–2015



Merged from historical series of national accounts

Sources: Statistics Finland and Bank of Finland calculations.

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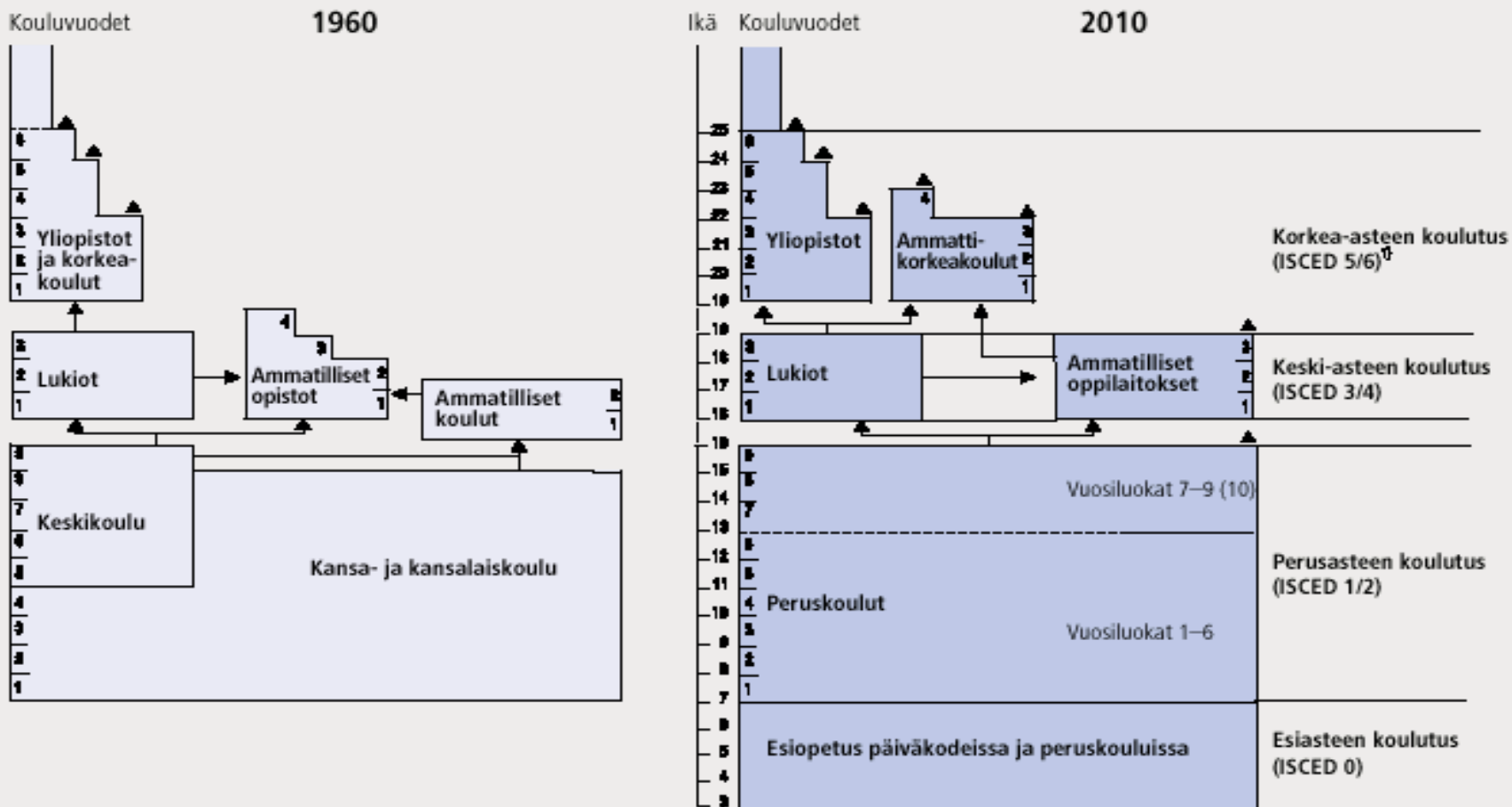


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# The Change of the System of Education 1960s => 2010s

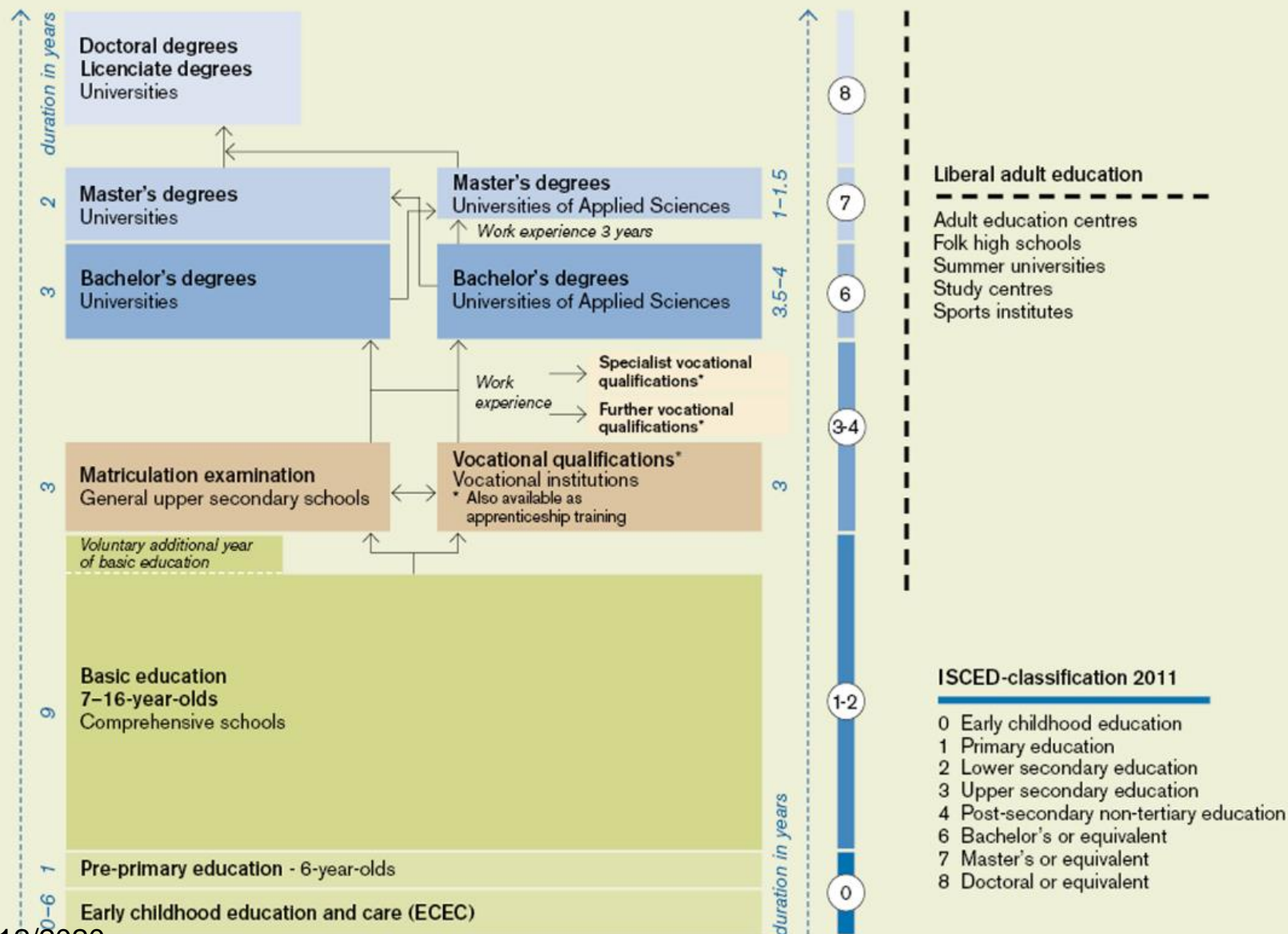
Koulutusjärjestelmä vuonna 1960 ja 2010.



<sup>1)</sup> International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 1977). UNESCO.

# Education system in Finland

5/2016



# Establishment of Polytechnics, the 1990s

- ❏ Problems with vocational / professional education inherited from the 1920s: small institutions, overlapping curricula => **vocational education reform in the 1980s**
- ❏ Economic recession 1991-95 => Polytechnic reform started as an experimentation 1991 (22 Polytechnics) => permanent operating licences in 1990s
- ❏ Universities of Applied Sciences in 2000s  
(*Ammattikorkeakoulu*, in Finnish)
- ❏ **An Example of gradual reform strategy**



# Main Differences Between UASes & Universities

- **General orientation:** 1) universities are research-based HEIs ⇔ UASes are work-based and practice-oriented; 2) Universities responsible for fundamental research ⇔ UAS mainly R&D&I
- **Degrees:** 1) UAS bachelors => to working life ⇔ university bachelors continue their studies; 2) MA is a basic degree in uni ⇔ further education in UAS; 3) PhDs only in universities
- **Governance structures, administration and management:** 1) UAS more managerial than academic (Uni); 2) the role of local authorities is more prominent in UAS than in universities





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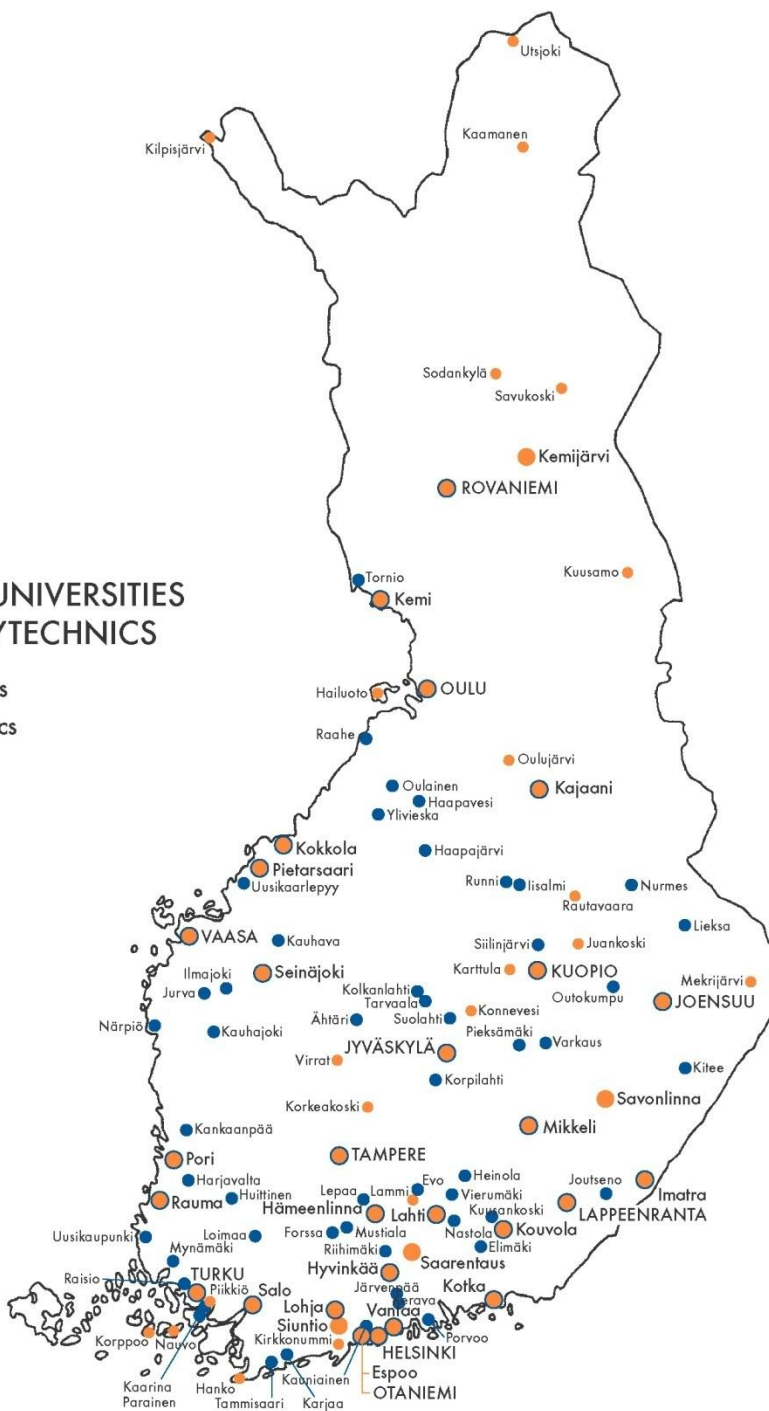
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- Number of HEIs:**
- 1) a regional policy principle &
  - 2) value statement for equality & equity

# FINNISH UNIVERSITIES AND POLYTECHNICS

● Universities  
● Polytechnics



- Big dot = main campus
- Small dot = unit or research station

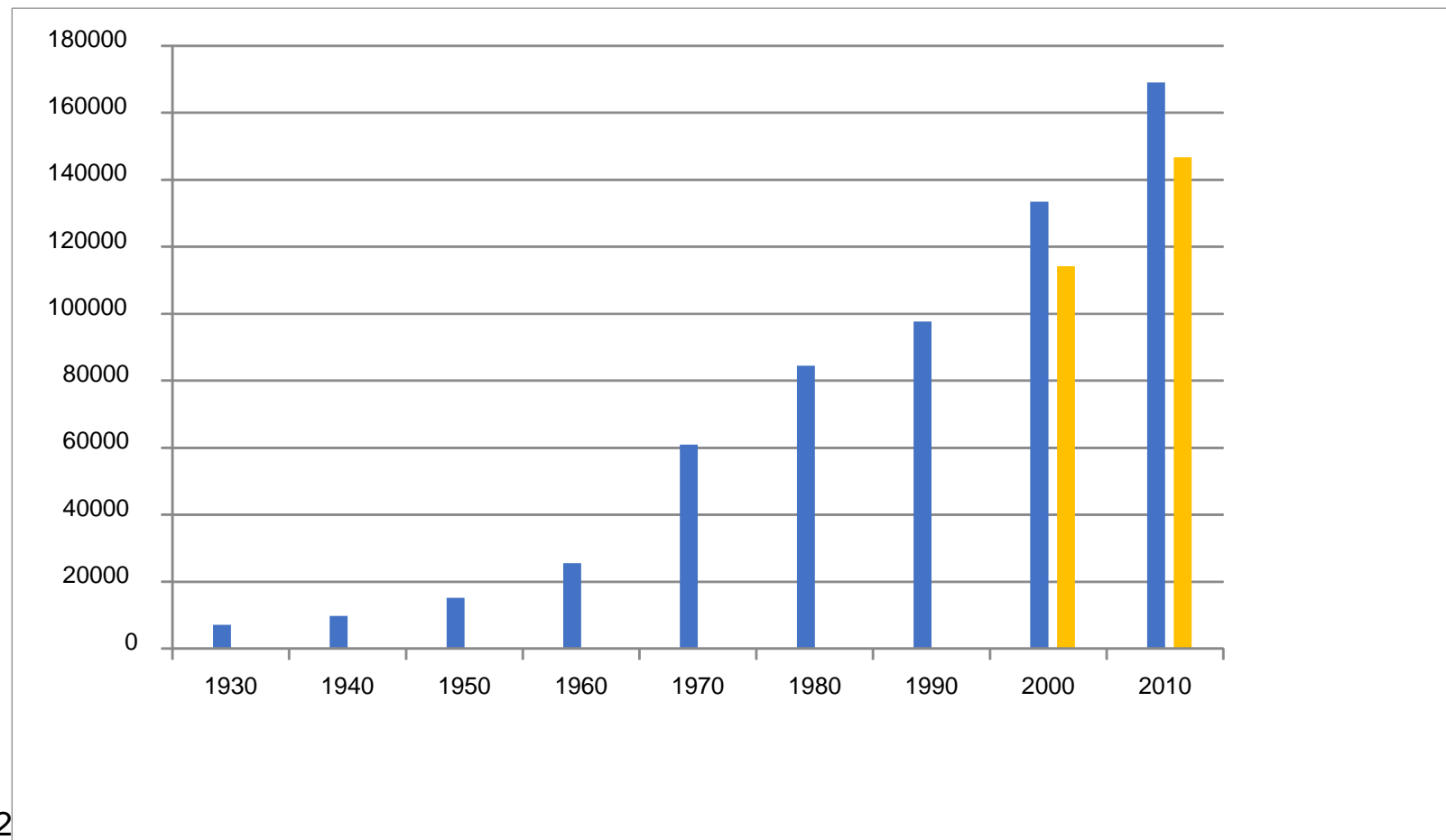
# Expansion of higher education (students) from the 1930s to the 2010s



Blue = university students



Yellow = University of Applied Sciences students



# Finnish higher education today





# Students in universities and UASs 2018

HEIs	New students	Female %	All students	Female %	Degrees	Female %
Uni.	<b>21 759</b>	57,6	<b>152 295</b>	54,0	<b>30 889</b>	58,7
UAS	<b>38 523</b>	56,6	<b>143 958</b>	53,4	<b>29 082</b>	62,5
<b>All</b>	<b>60 282</b>		<b>296 253</b>		<b>59 971</b>	

# Universities Act of 2009:

- 1) Separated universities from state budget -> **independent corporations** (*private law*) or **foundation** (*foundations law*); funding mainly from the MEC.
- 2) 40% external representation to **university boards** elected by the collegium (academics & students).
- 3) Strong power of **the rector**, = > Executive manager of the university
- 4) **line organization**: board -> rector -> dean, aiming for efficient decision-making
- 5) **discontinue civil servant status** (professors, lecturers & administrative staff) => work contract relationship
- 6) **Academic freedom** secured in Constitution & Universities Act



# Current Situation (2020)

**13 Public Universities**, '*independent public personalities*'  
12 universities (public law); 2 foundations (private law))

**24 Publicly funded Universities of Applied Sciences**  
22 under MEC; Ålands Yrkehögskola, Police College,

Between universities & UAS: National Defence College

**6 university centres** (*hybrid organisations*)

**Starting places to over 80%** of the age cohort (41% HEI degree / 25-34 years old; **mass higher education system (1970s->)**)

**Funding:** 64% (MEC); 36% (external to MEC)

**No tuition fees & state support of studies**

**National steering of the system: management by results; performance agreements & funding model**



# Socio-cultural context of Finnish HE

## Equality in the traditions & ideals of Finnish society:

- ***socially*** (no manifested class differences)
- ***politically*** ('socialdemocratization' after WWII)
- ***economically*** (social support policies)
- ***educationally*** (comprehensive schools & mass HE)
- **Homogenous population genetically & culturally;**  
***Welfare society ideals widely accepted***
- **Social trust** –also in higher education: 1) continuity in HE policies; 2) national monitoring system (Vipunen); 3) FEEC: evaluation & audit aiming for enhancement
- **nation state as the regulator & the source of resources**





# Steering of Finnish HE

- **Strong national steering of higher education by MEC & institutional autonomy**
- **1) Legislation** (Acts & decrees)
- **2) Ministerial steering** based on Performance Agreements (3-years)
- **3) Funding model** based on the idea of rewarding performance, quality & efficiency
- Funding covers 64% of the total costs of universities: ~ 90-95% teaching; ~50% research
- => research funding based on competition in universities

# Trends & traditions

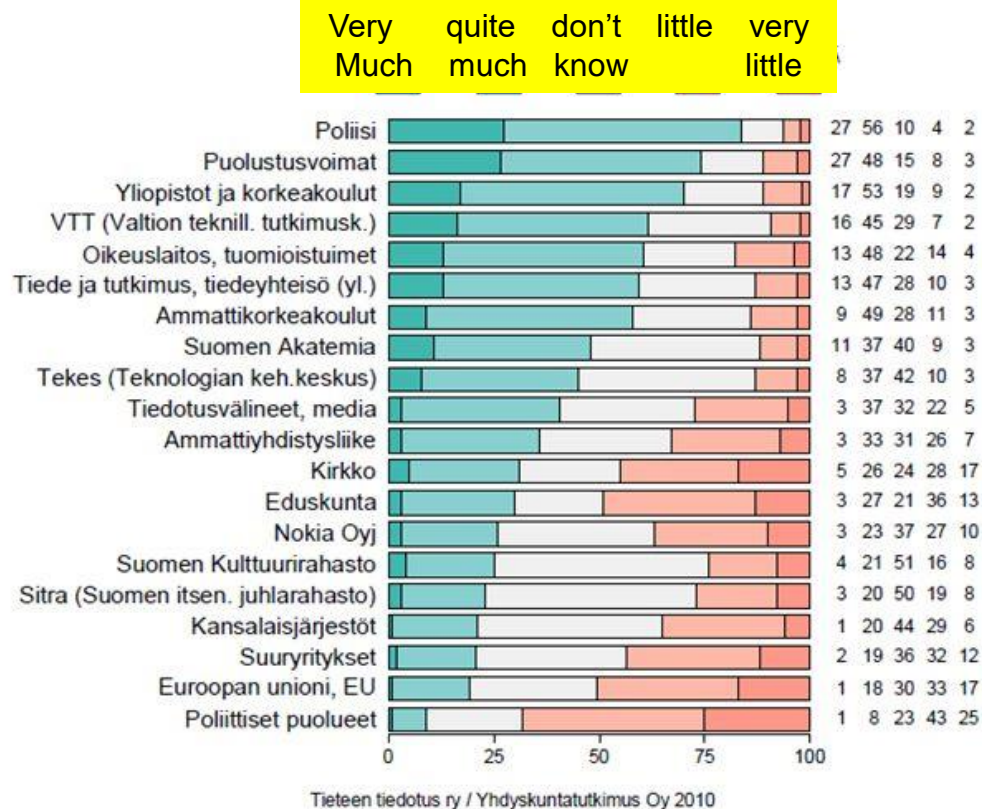
- Expansion of universities 1950s => all parts of the country (mass HE); **equality** as the main value & goal
- Establishment of polytechnics as "**equal but different**" in the 1990s, starting with 22 temporary HEIs => 29 polytechnics => 22 UAS governed by the MEC
- Decentralization of management authority ⇔ New Public Management / **procedural autonomy**
- International trends ⇔ **The Bologna Process** & homogenization of degree structures by 2005/6
- Changes in University UAS sectors 2011-2014: mergers & reducing student intakes (UAS), new legislation
- High social status of science & universities



# How much do you trust in the institutions of society? (Finnish Science Barometer 2010)

Tiedebarometri 2010

How much do you trust in the institutions of society?



# Thank you!

