



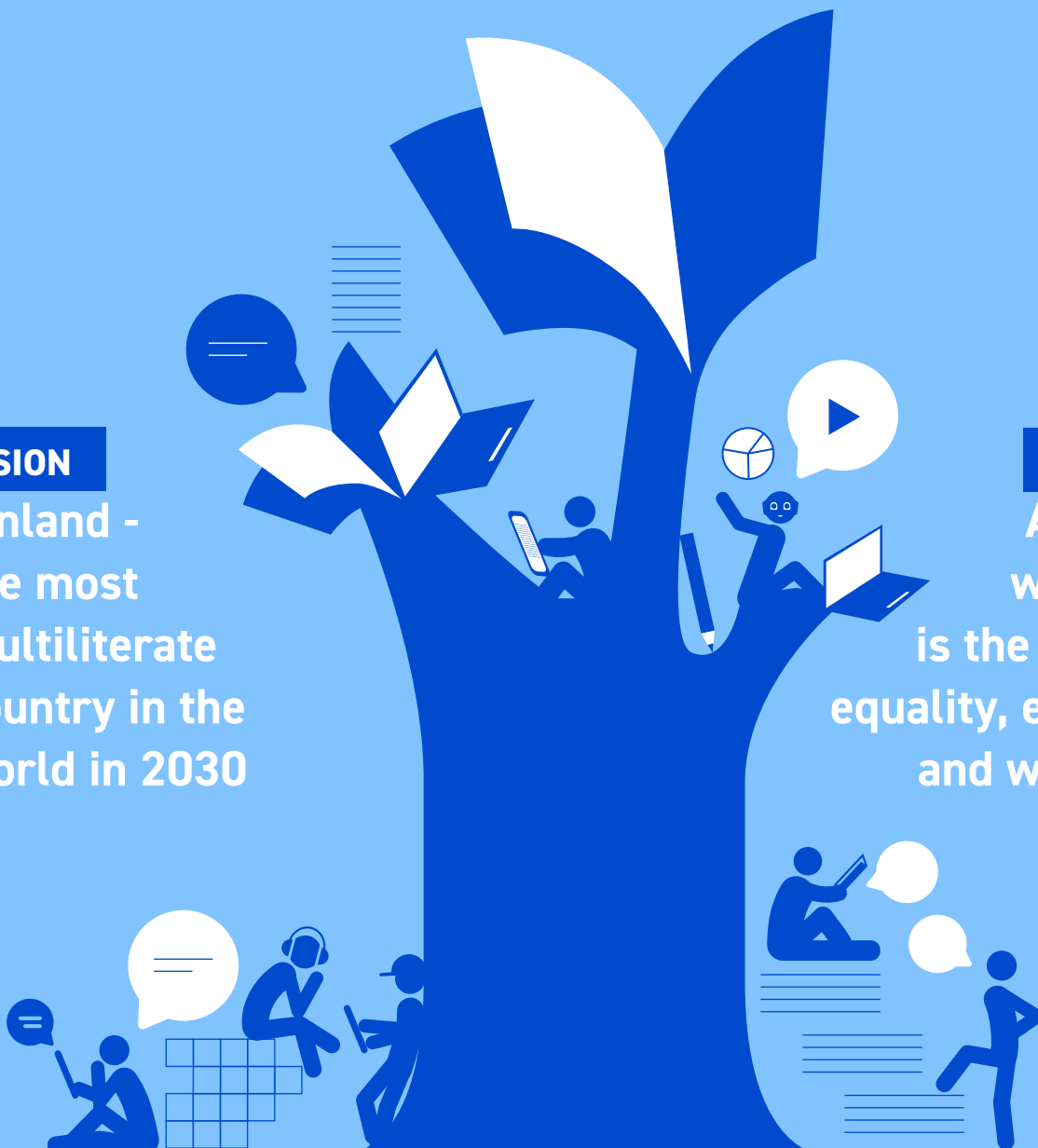
NATIONAL LITERACY STRATEGY 2030

VISION

Finland -
the most
multiliterate
country in the
world in 2030

MISSION

A literary
way of life
is the basis for
equality, education
and well-being



Education

Equity
and equality

Well-being

Education

Everyone has the right to literacy and continuous learning

Equity and equality

The right to learn, practice and develop multiliteracy regardless of one's language, family background, gender, learning difficulty, disability, wealth and place of residence.

Well-being

A diverse linguistic and cultural environment and strong multiliteracy building well-being and a sense of community.



FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION

National Literacy Strategy 2030:

Finland - the most multiliterate country in the world in 2030

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Foreword

The preparation of the National Literacy Strategy began in autumn 2020 on the initiative of Parliament's Education and Culture Committee. The aim is to support the long-term development of literacy with a literacy strategy and a literacy programme. The National Literacy Strategy 2030 expands the guidelines drawn up by the National Literacy Forum (2018) set up by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Work on the Literacy Strategy has been carried out in cooperation with a multiprofessional steering group and project team. The activities have been coordinated by the Literacy Movement of the Finnish National Agency for Education. Recent research on multiliteracy and factors associated with it have been used in the Strategy. The draft of the National Literacy Strategy was available for comments in the Lausuntopalvelu service. The service allows all organisations and members of the public to submit statements in response to statement requests published by public administration authorities. The wealth of feedback and the proposed corrections and supplements were considered diversely when the strategy was finalised.

The National Literacy Strategy includes concrete objectives and measures for strengthening the diverse literacy skills of people of all ages. A number of measures and support services are needed to improve literacy skills and these measures and services must be developed both

nationally and locally. In addition, sufficient tools must be developed for the assessment of literacy skills and literacy work. The aim of the National Literacy Strategy is a strong, diverse and inclusive reading culture which reinforces the success of Finland and the good life of its citizens.

In the Strategy, literacy is defined as *multiliteracy*, which includes the skills of reading and producing all kinds of texts from traditional written texts to, for example, audiovisual presentations.

From the point of view of the implementation of the Strategy, both the resources and the attitude to doing literacy work are important. The work must be persevering and goal-oriented development, which requires systematic planning and cooperation across the administrative boundaries. When implementing the Literacy Strategy, it is necessary to take into account the development programmes and policies recorded in the Government Programme. At best, they support national and local literacy work. These include, for example, the Right to Learn development programmes, the New Literacies Programme and Media literacy in Finland – National media education policy (2019).

The National Literacy Programme 2030 defining the parties responsible for the measures and a timetable for their implementation will be drawn up to support the implementation of the Literacy Strategy. In addition, the programme will include subprogrammes, such as the *Literate School*, *Literate Municipality* and *Literate Early Childhood Education and Care* programmes, which will be used to introduce literacy work into practice together with local actors.

The Literacy Programme will create a concrete map, a literacy ecosystem, to describe the basic work and cooperation of the different actors. It is also important to include research and impact assessment in the programme. The abundant feedback received in the Lausuntopalvelu service will also be used in the implementation of the Literacy Programme.

Groups preparing the Literacy Strategy

Steering group

CHAIR:

Kelhä Minna, Director General, Finnish National Agency for Education

DEPUTY CHAIR:

Lassila Juhana, Director of Cultural Affairs, Finnish Cultural Foundation

OTHER MEMBERS:

Aaltonen Leena, Senior Ministerial Adviser, Cultural Affairs, Department for Art and Cultural Policy, Ministry of Education and Culture

Castrén Minna, Literary Director, Finnish Publishers Association

Costiander Kati, Counsellor of Education, Finnish National Agency for Education

Hautala Jarkko, Academy Research Fellow, Niilo Mäki Institute

Itkonen Juha, Chair, author, The Finnish Reading Centre

Jokinen Sari, Special Advisor, Trade Union of Education in Finland, OAJ

Nalbantoglu Ilmari, acting Executive Director, The Finnish National Youth Council Allianssi

Nederström Heli, Counsellor of Education, Department for Early Childhood Education, Comprehensive School Education and Liberal Adult Education, Ministry of Education and Culture

Rutanen Anne, Communications Manager, Association of Finnish Nonfiction Writers

Salomaa Saara, Senior Specialist, National Audiovisual Institute

Salusjärvi Aleksis, Literary art instructor, textbook writer

Sivelä Jonas, Senior Researcher, Finnish National Institute of Health and Welfare (THL)

von Numers-Ekman Katarina, Director, The Swedish Cultural Foundation in Finland

von Zansen Minna, The Finnish Library Association

Project group

CHAIR:

Villacís Ilmi, Executive Director, The Finnish Reading Centre

OTHER MEMBERS:

Granskog Pamela, Counsellor of Education, Finnish National Agency for Education

Grünthal Satu, University Lecturer, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Helsinki

Harmanen Minna, Counsellor of Education, Finnish National Agency for Education

Heikkilä Mervi, Development Manager, national special task concerning library services for the promotion of reading among children and young people, Seinäjoki Public Library

Hyttiäinen Sari, Executive Director, Äidinkielen opettajain liitto ry

Järvenpää Mari, Literacy Movement Assistant, Finnish National Agency for Education

Kardén Belinda, Literacy Movement Coordinator, Finnish National Agency for Education

Krutsin Pia, Literary Art Educator, Finnish Association of Literary Art Education

Lumme Pia, Literacy Movement Coordinator, Finnish National Agency for Education

Sulkunen Sari, Associate Professor, Department of Language and Communication Studies, University of Jyväskylä

Literacy is the concern of all of society

What is the work in the National Literacy Strategy based on?

Finland has a strong educational base formed by education, research and culture, in which learning and knowledge are based on literacy and its continuous development. Diverse literacy skills are the foundation of a safe society, functioning democracy and equality. Every child, young person and adult has a right to diverse literacy skills and the strengthening of them. Because some differentiation already takes place during primary and lower secondary education and the number of persons with ineffective reading skills has increased especially among young people, concrete measures are required at the national, regional and local levels to reverse the direction. The vision of the Literacy Strategy – Finland – the most multiliterate country in the world in 2030 aims for society in which the importance of literacy is acknowledged widely in all sectors and everyone's literacy skills will be supported and strengthened throughout their life. Literacy is the foundation of well-being and all learning.

What kind of practices, procedures and literacy work are aimed at by 2030?

The literacy of people of all ages is strengthened through long-term national, regional and local cooperation. Cooperation helps to increase a positive attitude to reading and improves people's understanding of the importance of literacy. The National Literacy Strategy describes the work done to promote the literacy of children and young people and opens up new opportunities for also supporting the literacy of adults and older people. More measures are needed for the development of the literacy of different linguistic and minority groups and the literacy of persons needing support. To support literacy work and promote reading, diverse research on literacy is needed.

For the time being, those whose first language is

Finnish or Swedish, two of Finland's official languages, have the best opportunities to develop their literacy skills. It must be ensured that also the speakers of the Sámi languages, the Finnish Roma language, sign languages and the Karelian language can equally develop their literacy skills in their own languages. Support for the literacy of immigrants and people with an immigration background must be ensured.

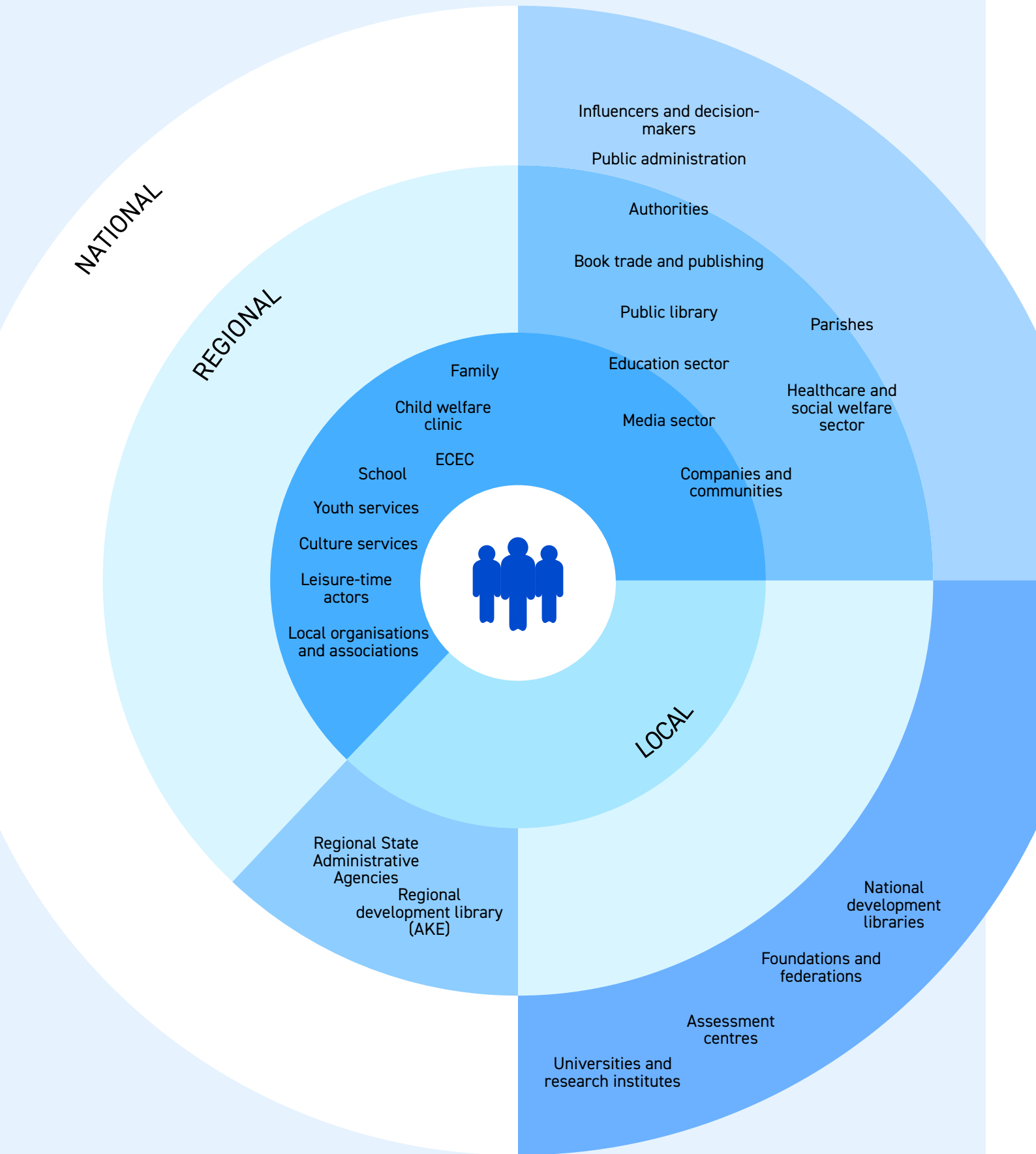
What are the guidelines for literacy work towards 2030?

The National Literacy Strategy has three guidelines for the development of literacy: 1) Creating and strengthening structures for literacy work 2) Strengthening multiliteracy competence 3) Encouraging reading and diversifying literacy. At different ages, different measures are needed to support the literacy of people. The Literacy Programme based on the National Literacy Strategy specifies the parties responsible for the measures recorded in the guidelines and the implementation timetable until 2030. It is important to continue the developmental dialogue and cooperation that were started between actors during the strategy process.

With whom will Finland be developed into the most multiliterate country in the world by 2030?

Literacy work is the concern of all of society. Legislation and long-term measures recorded in government programmes are important in the promotion of literacy work. The key literacy actors from childhood to adult age include child welfare clinics, early childhood education and care (ECEC), primary and lower secondary education, general and vocational upper secondary education, higher education, basic education in the arts and liberal adult education. Libraries support literacy during the person's entire lifecycle. In addition, families, friends at school, and hobby and work communities provide important support for the literacy of individuals.

Literacy work is also promoted by actors in the field of media, actors in the publication and book sector, authors, literature foundations, organisations and associations, interest groups, foundations, sponsors and decision-makers. It is also possible for these parties to contribute to positive communications, cooperation and attitudes to literacy and promote the multiliteracy work carried out in networks.



Premise of the Literacy Strategy

By international standards, Finland is a leading country in terms of literacy. However, the decline in literacy at the national level in the 21st century has caused concern about the future of literacy in Finland. The main aim of the National Literacy Strategy is to find ways to strengthen especially the literacy of children, young people and adults with ineffective reading skills. It is important to do literacy work together nationally, regionally and locally.

Individual factors and starting points as well as societal phenomena and megatrends are linked with literacy. At the level of the individual, factors linked to literacy include identity, values, home background, cognitive skills, culture, learning difficulties, disabilities, leisure reading, education, age, motivation and attitude to learning. In addition, the opportunities to use and develop literacy skills in everyday life, studies and work improve literacy. Globalisation, digitalisation, the ageing of the population, sustainable development and many other megatrends guiding human activities require continuous strengthening of multiliteracy and the development of a new kind of competence. At the level of individuals and society, literacy creates security and strengthens democracy, inclusion and culture. Furthermore, reading and literacy have been shown to have specific impacts that promote well-being.

The development of literacy requires a variety of measures from childhood to adult age. In ECEC and education, it is important to strengthen and support multiliteracy in cooperation with the guardians systematically and in the long term. Guardians and families can support the literacy of children and young people with positive attitudes and activities. Regardless of the family background, society's task is to ensure that all children and young people have access to non-fiction and literature and diverse texts in ECEC and at school.

The literacy of adults is linked particularly with the level of education and age: adults with only basic or upper secondary education and the oldest adults of working age face challenges in reading more often than other adults. In addition, there are groups of adults who cannot be reached by means of adult education. One of the focus areas in the reform of continuous learning is indeed the creation of learning opportunities also for people with a lower level of education and those unemployed.

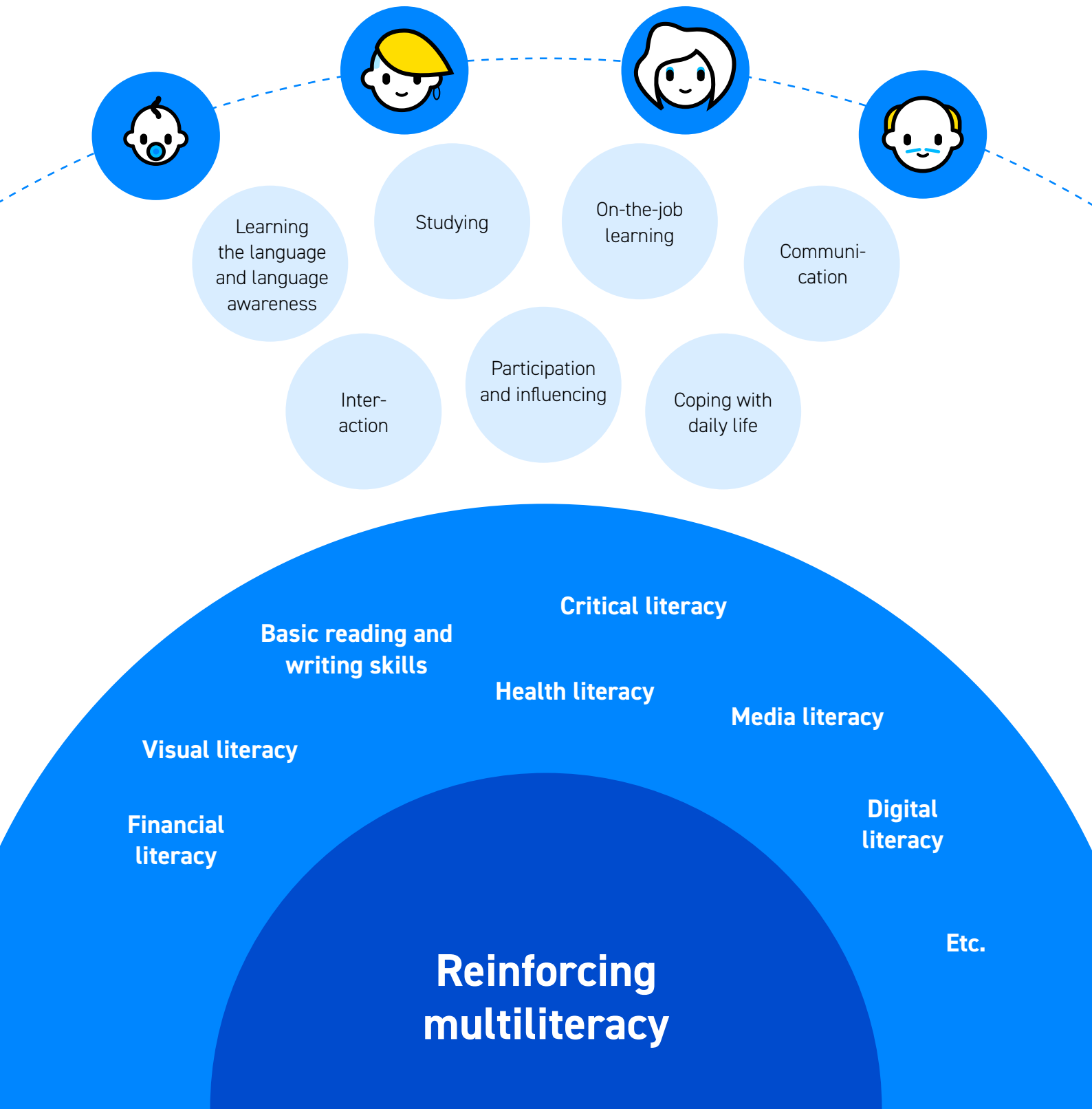
The development of diverse literacy also supports active ageing. Older people are the most active readers of the traditional media, such as newspapers and magazines, but there may be room for improvement in their digital skills.

For example, there may be dyslexia or memory disorders behind difficulties in reading. In 2019, it was estimated that up to 14 per cent of Finns would benefit from Easy Finnish.

To change the direction of the development in literacy skills, all actors and the entire society must be encouraged to join literacy work. Literacy is continuous, lifelong learning and practising of literacy skills.

Literacy is continuous learning

When we read actively and bravely take up new kinds of texts, we practise, maintain and develop our literacy skills. The significance of daily reading can be seen in writing, the smoothness of reading, vocabulary or, for example, the media skills in the different situations in everyday life. Many different literacy skills are linked to multiliteracy, and one makes use of some literacy skills more than others at the different ages and stages of life. At best, diverse reading and literacy are a natural and positive part of each day.



Multiliteracy as an objective

Each of us interprets and produces different texts on a daily basis in everyday situations at school, at work and in hobbies. We engage with the texts in different ways when we read or watch the news, listen to audio books or podcasts, write or record instant messages.

Reading and producing texts requires **multiliteracy**, that is the ability to **read, understand, interpret, write and produce multimodal texts** in different environments and by using different tools and media.

Multiliteracy means a capacity to work with texts in different situations and to use ways of reading suitable for different situations. Multiliteracy is learnt in communities and in interaction with others.

The concept of multiliteracy covers all the different literacy skills from the traditional reading and writing skills to skills such as media literacy, visual literacy and data literacy. The concept of multiliteracy includes the idea that all literacy skills are equally valuable and needed. Multiliteracy lays a foundation for the ability to function in modern society and prevents social exclusion.

In our society, written texts have a special role, for example, in the fields of education, public administration, law and health care. For this reason, good skills in writing and reading written texts are a precondition for societal participation, and enabling everyone to achieve them is a key task of society. Good basic reading and writing skills are key competences in many situations in everyday life, learning and work alike. The ability to read long texts and literature is linked with individual well-being and, according to studies, reading fiction in particular correlates with good learning outcomes.

Multiliteracy includes the ability to examine the contents of texts **critically, evaluating** their reliability, origin and methods of expression. Understanding **the context** of the text is part of multiliteracy: a text has always been written by someone and has an environment where it has been published and objectives that affect

Multiliteracy means

- capacities to engage with multimodal texts depending on the situation
- an ability to interpret, produce and critically evaluate texts on different platforms and in ways suitable for different situations
- an awareness that texts manifest the culture, values, intentions and points of view of the contexts in which they have been drawn up
- capacities to develop the different areas of one's literacy.



its content and methods of expression. The premise in multiliteracy is the idea that texts and working with them is communal and **multilingual**. Multilingualism can be understood in two ways: On the one hand, it is about separate languages such as Finnish, English or Arabic, which many people use side by side and which overlap in their everyday life. On the other hand, multilingualism means the different forms of the same language, such as dialects, the forms of language used in different situations or learning field-specific languages.

Multiliteracy is based on a **broad definition of text**. According to the definition, texts are not only written but also spoken language and sounds, images and graphic elements, video image and motion are used in texts. They can also be combinations of different modes of expression. An increasing number of texts are published and read in digital environments in which multiliteracy develops side by side with ICT skills.

Multiliteracy can be improved throughout the person's life in different everyday situations and communities. The areas of multiliteracy develop side by side and their relationship may vary in people of different ages: children's visual literacy develops early and young people may be good at reading games, but interpreting and producing written texts requires long-term practice. It is possible to have an evaluative discussion about the objectives and methods of expression of

multimodal texts even with small children. ECEC and education therefore play a key role in teaching and deepening multiliteracy, especially the reading and writing skills. **Language awareness**, in other words, the understanding of how languages and different forms of expression contribute to how meanings in texts form, supports the development of multiliteracy. At school, learning the languages of different disciplines is at the heart of language awareness.. This means understanding that reading and writing texts about history set different requirements to literacy than physics, for example. This also lays the foundation for language awareness in other language use situations. In a broader sense, language awareness also means understanding the importance of language and different forms of expression in all human and societal activities.

Education lays the basis for practising the multiliteracy required in society and studies and for continuous learning. The aim is to enable people to cope in everyday situations, studies and working life with the help of multiliteracy. Multiliteracy also provides capacities for self-development, enjoying culture, art and literary art, and empowering experiences of togetherness.

The day of an HVAC technician



Multiliteracy is needed in everyday life on a daily basis. For example, the day at work of an HVAC technician (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment installer) may include a sewer video inspection and reporting on it. The work task is agreed by writing group messages and it is planned at the site of the video inspection by negotiating with the representative of the housing company. At the end of the day, a report is drawn up in which the findings are recorded clearly, their location is marked in the plan of the building and the video recorded by the sewer inspection camera is attached to the report. The content of the report is negotiated together and it is agreed who will compile the report and send it further.

There are many different situations in the day of the work community in which texts and the methods of expressing meanings used in them vary appropriately according to who the person communicates with and what channel is used. All this is part of multiliteracy.

The results of literacy studies underlying the strategy

A great deal of research is conducted on literacy and studies approach it from different perspectives. International studies, such as PISA¹ assessing the competence of 15-year-olds or PIAAC² focusing on the basic skills of adults, provide information on the general level of reading literacy among Finnish people of different ages and on factors linked to reading literacy. Based on these studies, it is known that the literacy of Finnish people is on average good, but especially the reading literacy skills of young people have clearly declined in the 21st century.

Research on literacy is also conducted constantly in Finland and for example the evaluation studies of the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC) on the implementation of the objectives of the curricula have revealed shortcomings and worrying development in pupils' reading and writing skills. According to the latest assessment of learning outcomes in Finnish language and literature, the interpretation of literature and command of concepts among ninth-graders have slightly declined from 2014. On the other hand, the attitude to writing has become slightly more positive.

The level of reading literacy varies in all age groups and each age group has people whose reading literacy skills are not sufficient for coping in everyday situations: they account for almost 14 per cent of pupils completing comprehensive school, and for 11 per cent of working-age adults. In the ICILS study³ examining multiliteracy, especially the search and evaluation of information and the production of information, more than one quarter of Finnish eight-graders were at the lowest proficiency level or below it. Young adults

¹ Programme for International Student Assessment ² Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies

³ International Computer and Information Literacy Study

Factors affecting literacy



studying in higher education also have difficulties in skills such as critical reading literacy skills and argumentative writing: up to 37 per cent of university students finishing their bachelor's studies manage such situations only poorly or satisfactorily, and the figure among students of universities of applied sciences is even higher (62%). The reading literacy, including critical literacy skills, of Finnish children and young people has differentiated: some primary school children can already fluently read even longer texts and, for example, evaluate the reliability of online sources well, while some others still find reading difficult in secondary school.

Literacy and its development are linked with many individual factors (e.g., cognitive, motivational and emotional factors) and socio-economic, social and cultural factors. Possible disabilities and learning difficulties such as dyslexia also affect the development of literacy. Based on international studies, it is known that especially the home background, leisure reading, age and the level of education are linked with literacy. To some extent, these factors are intertwined and linked with other literacy-related factors.

Families' and guardians' capacities to support the reading and literacy of the child and young person are different, and their appreciation of reading also varies. Guardians' level of education and appreciations affect their capacity to support the literacy of children and young people. The average literacy of young Finnish people has weakened especially in those groups in which the guardians have only completed basic education or in which the appreciation of culture is low.

Home background, especially the socio-economic factors, largely explain the regional variation in multiliteracy and other learning outcomes, which has also been observed in the ICILS and PISA studies. When literacy is examined, the mother tongue of the research participant also plays a role. If the mother tongue is a language other than the language used in the study, this may result in less effective average reading skills among primary school pupils, pupils completing primary and lower secondary education and adults alike. The linguistic background is also intertwined with the socio-economic background. Among other things, these results indicate that learners need more support for mastering both their mother tongue and the language of the school or educational institution.

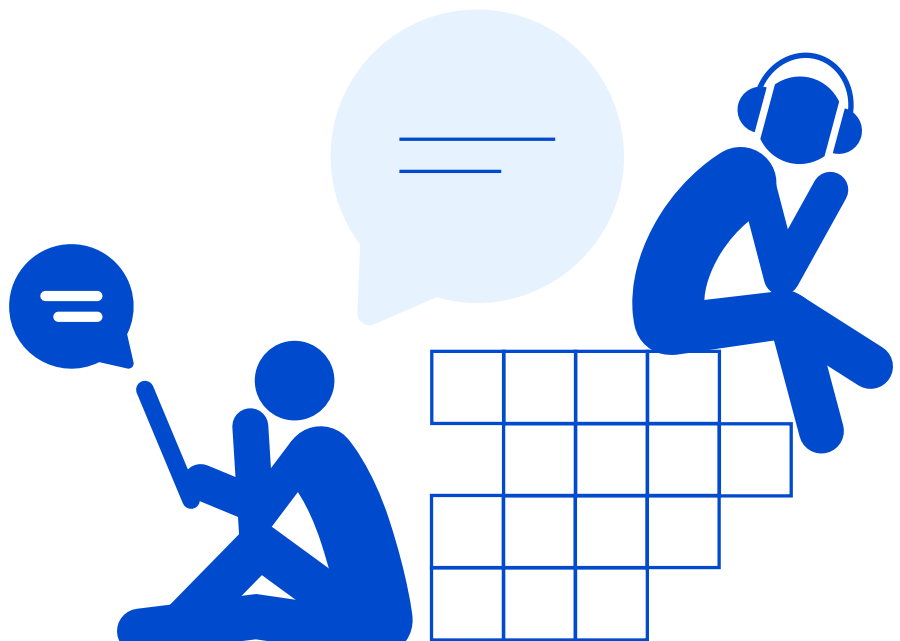
Diverse and abundant leisure reading has a positive connection with literacy in all age groups. There is a two-way relationship between **leisure reading** and literacy. The reading literacy of those reading a lot improves because they read more than others, whereas people who find reading difficult do not read as much and their literacy does not improve. Among young people, leisure reading has differentiated according to their background: in the lowest social class, leisure reading has declined clearly, while it has declined only slightly in the highest social class. A similar phenomenon can also be seen in adults: leisure reading has differentiated according to the level of education, and reading at work according to the type of occupation.

What explains the variation in adults' literacy is **the educational level**. The literacy of those who

have completed general upper secondary school or have a higher education degree is better than the literacy of others. On the one hand, the reading literacy skills of those who apply to these types of education are relatively good. Different levels and forms of education place different requirements on literacy, and invest in the education in different ways. **Age** is also linked to reading literacy: the older the group of adults, the weaker their average reading literacy. Among working-age adults, the most competent age group is those between 25 and 34 years of age, which is explained by factors related to education and work. When these factors are controlled for, it is 16–24-year-olds who have the best reading literacy skills. This means that literacy develops in studies and work after basic education. The differences between age groups remain even if older adults have a more recent qualification or degree than younger adults.

In many reading literacy studies on children and young people, gender has been highlighted clearly, but gender differences in reading literacy are minor among adults. When the other factors linked with reading literacy are considered, gender no longer plays a central role in young people, either. Instead, factors such as the lower level of leisure reading among boys when compared to girls are more significant. Both of these factors are also related to the home background.

Most of the research on literacy has so far focused especially on the ability to read written texts and on writing. More research information on the other areas of multiliteracy is constantly accumulated, but so far there is not much long-term research especially on entire age groups or research on the multiliteracy of adults and older people. Research on multiliteracy should therefore be strengthened, for example, to reach the objectives set for the reform of continuous learning.



Guidelines

The guidelines of the National Literacy Strategy aim at long-term and systematic national, regional and local literacy work, which will help to develop Finland into the most multiliterate country in the world by 2030. The Strategy will help to promote and strengthen the culture of reading.

The key values governing the guidelines are education, equity, equality and well-being: everyone has the right to literacy and continuous learning and the right to practise and develop literacy skills regardless of their language, family background, gender, learning difficulties, disabilities, wealth and place of residence.

A diverse linguistic and cultural environment and strong multiliteracy are the foundation of well-being and a sense of community. With the guideline-specific objectives for literacy and the proposed measures, efforts are made to safeguard everyone's right to reach sufficient multiliteracy.

1 Creating and strengthening structures for literacy work

2 Strengthening multiliteracy competence

3 Encouraging reading and diversifying literacy



**A literate way of life is the foundation of
equality,
education, and well-being**

Creating and strengthening structures for literacy work

LITERACY WORK AND its STRUCTURES mean all measures taken by different organisations and literacy professionals to promote literacy. The most important foundation and basis for literacy are laid in ECEC, at the different educational levels and in libraries. In addition, media and literature are at the heart of literacy work. It is strengthened by national and regional networks of literacy work, cooperation between different administrative sectors, the resources allocated for the work, and continuing education, as well as research and training of professionals that support them. Several organisations carry out important literacy work. It is important to manage and coordinate this system of literacy work at both the national and the local level.

The National Literacy Strategy enables the visibility of the existing structures of literacy work and makes it possible to strengthen them. The Strategy helps to support the multiliteracy of people of all ages. The Strategy helps to create new experimentations and practices to promote literacy nationally and locally by taking into account different languages, minorities and particularly those needing support for literacy.

GUIDELINE 1

Creating and strengthening structures for literacy work

KEY OBJECTIVES UNTIL 2030

Literacy work will be developed and managed nationally, regionally and locally.

Literacy work and the literacy of people of all ages will be assessed and developed systematically.

A permanent national literacy programme will be drawn up to promote the implementation of the Literacy Strategy.

MEASURES

Systematic and long-term **management and the coordination of programmes** at the national and local levels will be made visible. The national, regional and local actors, the key focus areas and measures for promoting literacy work will be surveyed.

It will be ensured that **legislation and other obligating official guidelines support the national, regional and local literacy work.**

National indicators will be prepared for assessing the effectiveness of literacy work. The indicators will provide information on factors such as the extent of, need for and the implementation of the literacy work at regional and municipal levels. The indicators for assessing literacy will be surveyed and developed.

Literacy work will be combined with structures supporting the **family's** well-being from the child's birth. Families will be supported in promoting reading, for example, through cooperation between the library and the family centre.

Information about the ways an adult and a child can read together will be disseminated. **Early reading in families** will be strengthened by familiarising the guardian with reading and diverse literacy skills, for example, by continuing the Book Bag programme (Lukulahja lapselle) as part of child welfare clinic activities.

Communication about literacy and literacy work will be strengthened: people will be told about literacy diversely and a wide variety of people with a wide range of reading will be shown.

It will be ensured that **professionally produced library services** are accessible to all residents of the municipality.

Municipalities will be encouraged to cooperation in creating an e-library, and cooperation between library professionals and professionals of ECEC and education **will be strengthened.** Opportunities to use library services as part of education and working life will be generated.

Research and results related to the methods used in literacy work will be made use of. They will be integrated into the development and evaluation of the literacy work of schools, educational institutions and ECEC.

Multiliteracy and language awareness will be considered more widely **in the preparation of the national core curricula and qualification requirements,** in the support material, and when the local curricula are drawn up and implemented.

The structures and contents of **teacher education will be developed** to ensure that teacher students are provided with sufficient skills for teaching literacy skills at different levels of education.

The availability and accessibility of **easy language** materials, **digital services** and **support tools** in everyday life, work and education will be promoted. For example, a possible disability or learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, will be taken into account by means of multi-channel communications.

A transition will be made from project-based activities to more systematic and long-term work in networks. It will be ensured that the annual

MEASURES

campaigns supporting literacy work continue and reinforce the message about the importance of literacy.

The operation of the **Literary Municipality** networks will be continued and the **Literary School** programme will be extended to all schools in basic education, also those using the Swedish and Sámi languages.

The participation of municipal **officeholders and municipal decision-makers** in the development of the local and national literacy programme and the building of municipal literacy models will be strengthened. Literacy work will be combined with existing structures, such as ECEC, education and well-being services, and the guiding strategic management tools of municipalities.

A model for outreach literacy work will be developed using the model for outreach youth work in municipalities.

Methods for strengthening literacy from ECEC to educational institutions in upper secondary education will be developed and mapped, and an effort will be made to better identify obstacles related to learning and developing literacy skills.

Different language groups and multilingual services will be taken into account in literacy work. Attention will be paid to the availability of multilingual material in libraries.

The instruction of Finnish and Swedish to immigrants and people with an immigrant background, learners' skills in reading and writing in **their mother tongue** and their multilingualism will be strengthened as part of ECEC, education, integration and the National core curriculum for integration training for immigrants.

The activities of literature organisations and different fields of art will be strengthened as part of ECEC, basic education, upper secondary education, basic education in the arts, and recreational activities in schools and educational institutions.

The role of journalism and the book and media sector as a promoter of multiliteracy and as part of literacy work will be strengthened. Diverse visibility of different readers and books will be supported.

Scientific research and reports on multiliteracy will be increased.

The UN's International **Literacy Day** will be proposed as **an official flag-flying day**.



GUIDELINE 2

Strengthening multiliteracy competence



THE MULTILITERACY COMPETENCE of professionals enables the development of the multiliteracy of children, young people and adults, and ensuring the quality of teaching and support for learning. In addition, the multiliteracy competence of professionals helps to maintain sufficient multiliteracy for everyone in everyday life and work and to increase language awareness and cultural awareness. Developing the competence of multiliteracy professionals supports the multiliteracy of every individual, which is the foundation of education, well-being and equality in society.

Literacy professionals include education professionals, library professionals, actors from organisations, associations or institutions specialising in literacy skills or support for literacy. Many officeholders, media actors, authors and publishers also promote reading, multiliteracy and learning a language in their work.

The measures strengthening the multiliteracy competence of different occupational groups will be specified in the Literacy Programme.

GUIDELINE 2

Strengthening multiliteracy competence

KEY OBJECTIVES UNTIL 2030

Multiliteracy competence and cooperation of professionals will be strengthened.

Multiliteracy will be recognised as a working life skill and a continuous learning skill.

The impacts of reading on well-being are recognised as part of the planning and development taking place at different levels of society.

The current literacy work will be made visible and cooperation, tools, services and materials required to support the work will be developed.

MEASURES

The **basic education and in-service training of teachers** will be developed so that the importance of multiliteracy and language awareness in all subjects and teaching will be better understood and all teachers will be better equipped to teach multiliteracy in the fields of knowledge. Topical and new teaching methods that support literacy will be mapped to support basic teacher education and in-service training.

All teachers' pedagogical knowledge of multiliteracy, of the importance of reading, literacy, language, literature and literary art, and of media education and digital environments will be strengthened. It will be ensured that ECEC, schools and educational institutions use high-quality digital environments to promote learners' ICT competence and multiliteracy.

In-service training will be provided to literacy professionals **for the identification and alleviation of obstacles to reading**.

The **competence and expertise of library personnel** will be strengthened and used in literacy work and in understanding the needs of different target groups.

The competence of the staff of child welfare clinics and family services will be strengthened to support reading in families. High-quality operating conditions for the literacy work carried out at child welfare clinics will be safeguarded. Attention will be paid to ensuring that tests related to reading and learning difficulties will also be available in different languages, and material can also be distributed to families in easy language.

The training of **social welfare and health care personnel** will be developed so that the multiliteracy and media literacy skills of older people will strengthen.

All actors for whom it **is important to be able to identify the literacy needs and education of young people and adults with ineffective reading skills** will be engaged in literacy work. Continuing education will be provided, for example, to professionals in the prison service and in substance use and mental health work.

Attention will be paid to strengthening literacy work in the instruction of **Finnish or Swedish as a second language**, integration training for immigrants,

instruction of **the pupils' mother tongue**, basic education for adults, multilingual teaching and vocational education and training. Those needing special support for literacy in all schools and educational institutions will also be paid attention to.

The **availability and accessibility** of teaching materials and digital services will be developed in schools, everyday life and work.

Media and media contents will be used to strengthen literacy competence in people's everyday life, work and studies. Their equitable and equal accessibility and availability will be ensured in all schools and educational institutions.

The development of ICT competence, media literacy and programming competence in ECEC and basic education **will be supported**. The descriptions of competence drawn up in the New Literacies Programme will be used to promote multiliteracy.

It will be ensured that ECEC and basic education have access to **tools for assessing the literacy skills of children and young people** and supporting them. It will be ensured that, to promote multiliteracy, **topical and easy-to-use learning materials are available** in different areas of learning and in all subjects.

Obstacles and support solutions related to learning multiliteracy among children, young people and adults as part of multiprofessional cooperation will be mapped. Consideration will be given to immigrants and persons with an immigrant background and their literacy needs in the cooperation between administrative branches and in the assessment of literacy.

An opportunity to strengthen own multiliteracy skills and competence with the employer's support will be offered to those who work. Employers' possibilities and resources to support the development of employees' literacy as part of continuous learning and careers will be improved. Experiments will be developed to create **reading work communities** and to share peer knowledge.

Critical literacy and the understanding of the importance of literacy **in different occupational fields** will be strengthened. Language and cultural awareness will be increased in work communities and information on multiliteracy will also be expanded and disseminated in international cooperation.

GUIDELINE 3

Encouraging reading and diversifying literacy



INSPIRING TO READ involves encouraging to read, supporting reading and enabling reading. This is an important, concrete way to improve literacy skills at all ages. People can be inspired to read alone or together regardless of time and place. Being inspired to read plays a key role in continuous learning and diversification of literacy skills. Interest in reading may stem from one's own motivation, but sometimes reading or the development of literacy skills requires external encouragement and support.

Reading can be enabled and encouraged by friends, guardians, relatives, role models, leisure time actors, and teachers and library professionals. Books, series, games and films that tempt to read are also important. Offering diverse texts and literature at an appropriate level help everyone to find suitable reading for themselves.

Important work in inspiring people to read and supporting their literacy is also done in liberal adult education, different associations and in the activities of the third sector.

It is important to diversify literacy skills by strengthening the agency and reader identity of people of different ages. Independent reading may vary at different ages, but a reading way of life must be secured for everyone.

GUIDELINE 3

Encouraging reading and diversifying literacy

KEY OBJECTIVES UNTIL 2030

Homes and growth communities will be supported in reading to children and telling young people about the importance of reading and literacy skills.

The role of media education, literature education and leisure reading will be strengthened in encouragement and support for reading.

The importance of multiliteracy in society will be identified – everyone's multiliteracy will be supported and enriched.



MEASURES

People of all ages are inspired and encouraged to read **throughout their life**.

Existing practices and methods will be strengthened to stimulate interest in reading.

Diverse literature as part of the everyday life of people of all ages will be highlighted.

Different national and **local reading campaigns and events** will be organised to widely attract readers of different ages.

Shared **reading sessions** for the family are supported in cooperation with child welfare clinics, libraries, ECEC and basic education.

In ECEC and schools, time will be organised for **creative and free production and reading of diverse texts**.

Each pupil in basic education will be given the opportunity to participate in **a reading event at least twice** during each school year.

A communal culture of reading will be implemented by making reading an integral part of each day in ECEC and schools. Teachers and students in upper secondary education will also be encouraged to allow time for reading alone or together.

Participatory reading and reading together will be made a part of ECEC, the literacy work carried out at different levels of education, the work and operating environments of adults, and the everyday life of older people.

People of all ages will be familiarised with the library: guidance in how to obtain a library card will be provided in different languages.

The **diverse environments** created by libraries and other actors for children, young people and adults to read and produce in different ways and which can be accessed either virtually or physically will be made use of.

Children and young people will be engaged in planning authors' visits, reading circles and literature campaigns. The literacy skills of children

and young people will be strengthened by taking advantage of **tips from peers, the methods of literary art** and other methods of inspiring to read.

The development of **critical literacy** will be supported and encouraged as part of the medial literacy skills and working with different texts as part of the studies, everyday life and work.

Diverse **reading role models** will be used in literacy work.

Room will be provided for texts and the voice of children and young people in the media, enabling them to introduce their own outputs and literacy projects and this way serve as **role models for reading and writing**.

It will be ensured that **a reading diploma or a reading challenge** containing learning tasks and reading in many forms is available at all school levels. An opportunity for demonstrating an interest in reading will be provided.

Opportunities for participation in basic art education, especially in literary art, will be increased across the country.

Reading will also be inspired in workplaces and work communities by encouraging employees or colleagues to participate in events and training that develops multiliteracy. At best, **a reading work community** supports the forming of a reading operating culture.

Each reader is provided with a reading experience even if they have a disability or learning difficulty.

Opportunities will be created for hobby clubs, actors, coaches and sports federations **to integrate reading into sports activities**. The importance of hobby groups and reading role models in inspiring reading in society will be identified.

Diverse reading will be displayed in public spaces to tempt and inspire people to read. The digital products available will also be taken into account.

The copyrights of different texts will be identified and their realisation will be ensured.

Development of local literacy work

The Literate Municipality 2030 programme

The objectives recorded in the Literate Municipality 2030 programme are meant to be flexible and encouraging for municipalities and networks of municipalities. It is important that the municipality or the network of municipalities commits itself to developing the literacy of its residents systematically and in the long term. This

development work may be coordinated by libraries and education services, but equally by health and well-being services. The aim is to enable the residents in the municipality to recognise the importance of literacy and have an opportunity to strengthen their multiliteracy skills in their everyday life, studies and work.

PROPOSED MEASURES

- ✓ Reading and literacy work **will be made visible** in activities at the municipal level. It is important to pay attention to children, young people and adults in the work.
- ✓ At best, the promotion of literacy work and literacy is carried out **through municipalities' own strengths and local development**. The work can be managed by the youth services, well-being services, library and cultural services, education services, local NGOs and hobby groups.
- ✓ The promotion of literacy and literacy work will be recorded in the municipality's documents such as the municipal strategy, the well-being report or the cultural education plan.
- ✓ Professionally produced library services will be accessible to all residents in the municipality.
- ✓ The municipality will allocate resources to **work that promotes literacy** and to high-quality, up-to-date and multilingual non-fiction and literature, media texts, audio books and digital services.
- ✓ In the municipality's literacy work, attention will be paid to all residents of the municipality: **different language groups, people of all ages and people in need of special support for literacy**.
- ✓ The cooperation ECEC, pre-primary and basic education, and upper secondary educational institutions carry out with the library will be **systematic**: different parties will have their own responsible persons to promote cooperation. The cooperation will be recorded in the curricula and yearly plans of ECEC, schools and educational institutions.
- ✓ Literacy work will be **managed and evaluated from a multiprofessional point of view**.
- ✓ Literacy work will be conducted among people of all ages. Partners in that work include NGOs, youth centres, leisure-time actors and parishes. For example, **literacy environments that are inspiring, concrete and based on multiple forms of media** can be developed for residents of different ages.
- ✓ Municipalities will be encouraged to participate in the **Literate Municipality network** and implement the **Literate School programme**.
- ✓ Municipalities are encouraged to take advantage of the existing structures such as the basic activities of schools, ECEC and libraries, and projects supporting literacy work.
- ✓ In the municipality, literacy work will be carried out in cooperation between different administrative sectors. Literacy work will be part of the entity formed by municipality's welfare services and possibly the well-being services counties. **A literacy action plan** based on the National Literacy Strategy and multiliteracy can be drawn up to support the municipal literacy work.

These pages introduce the premises of the Literate Municipality 2030 programme and the Literate School programme 2030.

The Literate Municipality 2030 and the Literate School 2030 programmes ensure that literacy work will be carried out everywhere in our country

and everyone will be able to equally participate in it. The Literate Municipality programme challenges all municipal actors to join. The Literate School programme makes learning and teaching multiliteracy a matter that involves the entire school.

The Literate School 2030 programme

The model of the Literate School 2030 programme is aimed at basic education. Its purpose is to inspire and encourage schools to improve literacy systematically with the entire school community. It is important to involve the entire school community in literacy and create structures that will be part of cooperation between school, homes

and libraries. The objectives recorded can be applied locally on the basis of own resources and functioning structures and networks.

The aim is to also extend the Literate School programme to ECEC and upper secondary education.

PROPOSED MEASURES

- ✓ The school will have a long-term literacy programme or plan, which is based on the National Literacy Strategy and the Literate Municipality measures. It will include the content and evaluation of literacy work, and the measures and the responsible persons.
- ✓ Cooperation between schools and public libraries **will be systematic and based on agreements**: different parties will have their own responsible persons to promote cooperation. Cooperation will be recorded in the school-specific curricula and annual plan.
- ✓ The school will have a literacy team consisting of the principal, the person responsible for the library, the teachers representing the different subjects, special needs teachers, the representatives of pupils and parents' associations.
- ✓ The development of multiliteracy, inspiring reading and development of language awareness will be **the responsibility of the entire work community and all subjects**.
- ✓ The school will have **sufficient resources** for planning and implementing literacy work (working hours, materials, literature, digital environments and equipment).
- ✓ The school will invest in **inspiring and diverse learning environments** that promote literacy.
- ✓ The aim will be to create a literary operating culture to the school and make literacy work visible together with the entire school community and stakeholders.
- ✓ The school will have **sufficient technologies and competence** for teaching ICT skills and media skills.



DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS OF DRAWING UP THE LITERACY STRATEGY

THE LITERACY MOVEMENT OF THE FINNISH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR EDUCATION was commissioned by Parliament's Education and Culture Committee to create a National Literacy Strategy for Finland. The Literacy Movement started its operation at the beginning of 2019. The operation of the Literacy Movement and the National Literacy Strategy are based on guidelines that were prepared in the Literacy Forum between 2017 and 2019.

In December 2020, a multiprofessional steering and project group was convened to prepare the National Literacy Strategy. According to the policy outlined by the steering group, the Literacy Strategy has primarily been drawn up to be used by parties carrying out literacy work.

Up-to-date information on the literacy of people of different ages was obtained with an online survey and by organising hearings for different parties. The online surveys and hearings contained questions about the current state and future of literacy and proposed solutions for strengthening

the literacy of people of all ages by 2030. The survey was disseminated in many networks and responses from 89 individuals were received to it. In addition, the members of the working group organised a total of 48 hearings, in which almost 800 adults and 500 children and young people participated.

Feedback on the draft Literacy Strategy could be given in the Lausuntopalvelu service between 27 September and 15 October 2021. The service allows all organisations and members of the public to submit statements in response to statement requests published by public administration authorities. A total of one hundred comments were submitted.

The steering group has been responsible for the main policy outlines of the Literacy Strategy and the project group for the writing and drafting process. The compositions of the working groups are presented at the beginning of the strategy.

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