

Asia: VN/33945/2023

## **Luonnos hallituksen esitykseksi eduskunnalle lukiolain ja eräiden siihen liittyvien lakien muuttamisesta**

### Lausunnonantajan lausunto

#### **1. Yleisiä huomioita esitysluonnoksesta**

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#### **2. Oppimisen tukea ja erityisopetusta koskevat säädösehdotukset**

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#### **3. Lukiokoulutuksen rahoitusperusteita koskevat säädösehdotukset**

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#### **4. Englanninkielistä lukiokoulutusta, opiskelijavalintaa ja ylioppilastutkintoa koskevat säädösehdotukset**

AFIB appreciates the opportunity to comment on the suggested changes to the General Upper Secondary Education Act and certain related Acts and sees the reform as a good opportunity to strengthen the educational field in Finland. The proposal supports a multicultural and international Finland and the strong established presence of English-speaking International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Upper Secondary schools active today in Finland.

Accessibility to secondary school education must be developed so that education in the national language is guaranteed in the future. English-language secondary education cannot replace education in any of the national languages. Finland's attractiveness among international actors and returnees, as regards to education in foreign languages, is maintained by the existing network of schools. Their position should also be strengthened.

However, the English language medium Matriculation Examination can provide an alternative to the IB DP. As it is proposed, the right to organize education based on permits issued and consequently students' acceptance based on strictly limited grounds ensure that English-language upper

secondary education does not necessarily jeopardize the status of national upper secondary education and the matriculation examination nor the IB DP.

Therefore, AFIB supports correspondence between the content of the English-language medium upper secondary school curriculum and that of the national language curriculum. At the same time, the English-language curriculum should also include the possibility of locally determined elements, as is the case with the current Finnish and Swedish-language curriculum.

It is important that the Acts ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate and succeed in the Upper Secondary education, regardless of their language background. Biased treatment should be avoided, and equality and equivalence given top priority, regardless of languages of instruction. Put another way, all nationwide documentation needs to be available also in English. And AFIB appreciates that for reasons of equality these materials need to be produced as soon as possible in order to ensure related pedagogical materials are available in good time.

It must be noted, AFIB is concerned about the cost associated with the proposed changes. But at the same time believe the amendment of additional conditions for admission to secondary education given in English supports the appropriate use of public funds. Similarly, we believe the exclusion of educational exports or similar activities from the scope of the amendment is justified.

The amendment on Act on the Matriculation Examination § 5 a should be altered so that students who sit an examination according to section 1 and 2 may also sit the examination during their ongoing studies according to prevailing conditions. This possibility exists for IB DP students today and when introducing the national program in English it is important to maintain equal opportunity within the English language medium Matriculation Examination.

With regards to the amendment of the Ministry of Education and Culture's Regulation on the basis for admission of students in upper secondary education (838/2021) § 10, the possibility for the provider of said education to, through an aptitude test, determine whether the applicants have sufficient knowledge of the language of instruction should remain unchanged.

In determining the aptitude of applying students, clear criteria for selection are required, as admissions based solely on educational background can be an inadequate measure of a young person's language skills. The European Framework of Reference for Languages would be the most natural measure of proficiency when it comes to providing a basis for standardizing testing of the English language and the creation of standards according to the framework should be prioritized. In its current form, the proposal could undermine equal opportunities for foreign-language applicants to apply for upper secondary education.

**5. Taito- ja taideaineiden ylioppilaskoetta koskevat säädösehdotukset**

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**6. Tilauskoulutusta koskevat säädösehdotukset**

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**7. Muut kommentit**

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