



Antibullying Actions in Finnish Schools

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Finland fact file



5.5 million inhabitants



GDP 237 billion \$



43k \$ per person



**87 % hold at least an upper
secondary education degree
42 % hold a higher education
degree**



**88% speak Finnish
5.2% speak Swedish
0.04% speak Sámi**



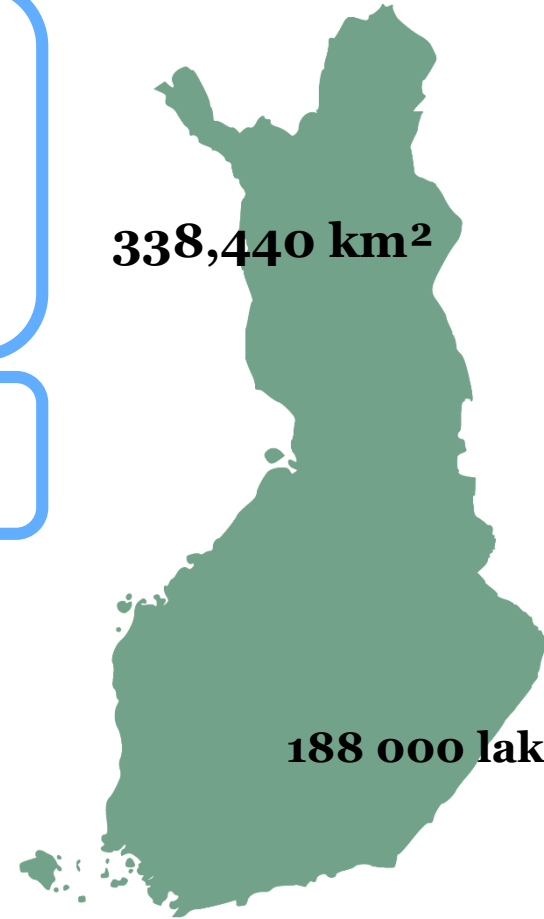
**71% Lutheran
1.1% Orthodox**



**100.0 %
Literacy rate**

338,440 km²

188 000 lakes



The social architecture of bullying



- Bullying can be a strategy to gain status and power in the peer group...
- ...and it is often succesful
 - bullies are perceived as popular (Caravita, DiBlasio, & Salmivalli, 2008)
 - bullying helps to maintain status (Juvonen & Galvan, 2008)...
 - ...and to increase status over time (Cillessen & Borch, 2004)

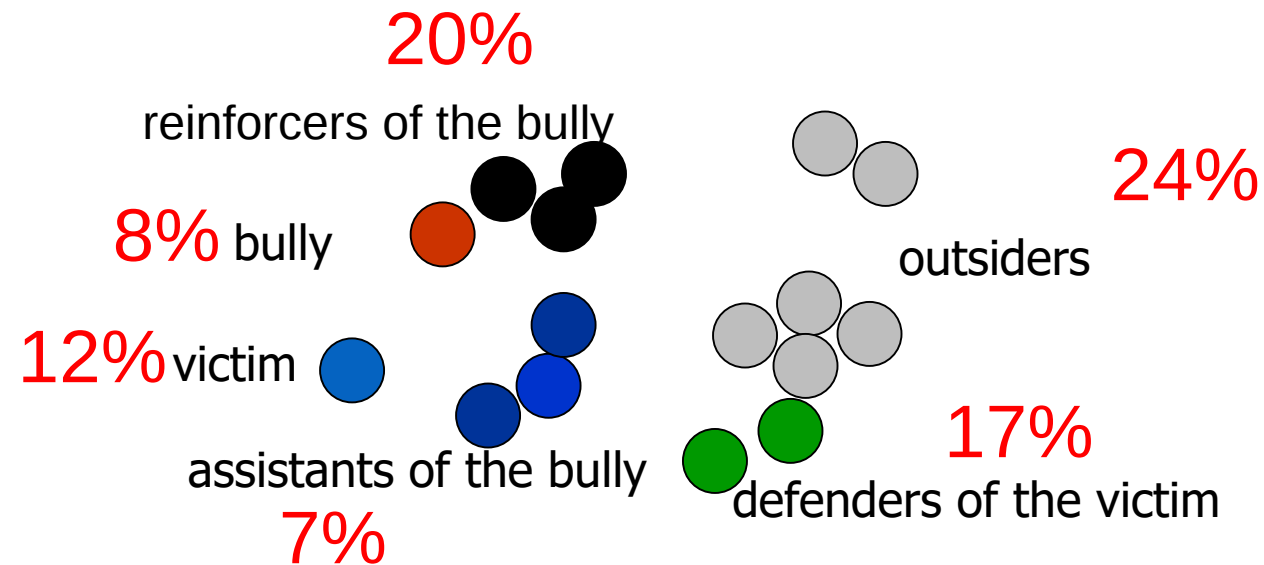


The social architecture of bullying

- In order to demonstrate their power and renew their high-status position in the group, bullies need to choose...
- targets who are submissive, insecure, physically weak and/or in a low-power position in the group...
- optimal time and place for their attacks (peer witnesses present)

The social architecture of bullying

- Participant roles in bullying (Salmivalli et al., 1996)



Finland and bullying

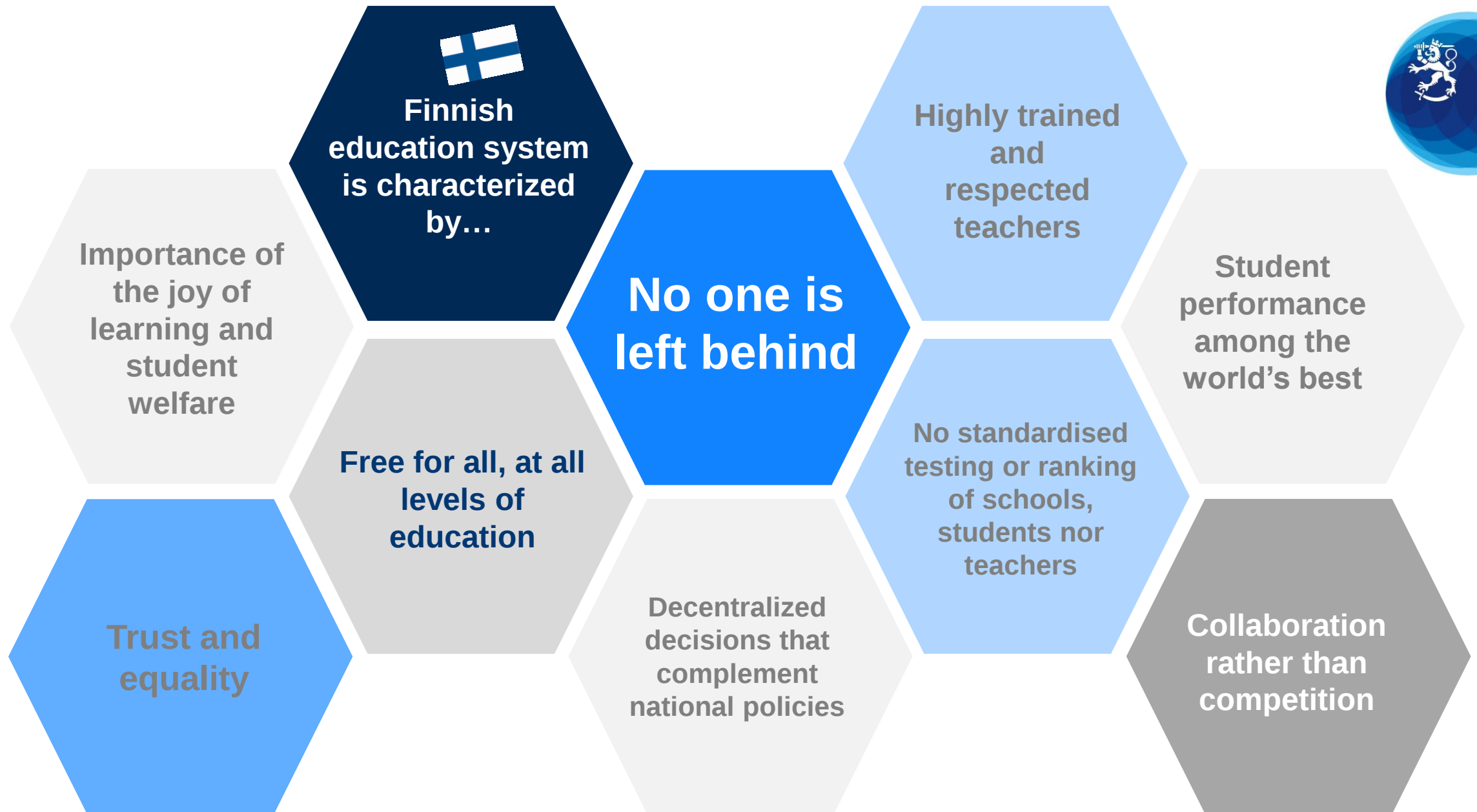


Situation at the moment

- Finland's prevalence of bullies and victims slightly below 'average'
- Bullying a big concern in society since 1990's
 - Changes in legislation
 - 'Right for a safe school environment' (1999)
 - 'Each school should have their own policy' (2003)
 - New curriculum 2004 and 2014
- National trend data: **No changes** in ten years in the annual prevalence survey (School Health Promotion Study)

Free, equal
and high
quality
education
for all





The Finnish Core Curriculum (2014)



A pupil shall be entitled to a safe learning environment^[1]. This includes physical, psychological and social safety. The point of departure of organizing education is ensuring the safety of the pupils and staff in all situations.

A calm and peaceful mood promotes a peaceful working atmosphere. School rules improve the safety, comfort and internal order of the school community^[2]. The education provider draws up a plan for safeguarding the pupils against violence, bullying and harassment as part of the school welfare plan.

The teacher or the principal informs the guardians of the pupils involved in the incident of any harassment, bullying or violence in school or on the way to school.^[3]

^[1] Section 29(1) of the Basic Education Act (1267/2013)

^[2] Section 29(4) and (5) of the Basic Education Act (1267/2013)

^[3] Section 13(2) paragraph 4 of the Pupil and Student Welfare Act and Section 29(3) and (7) of the Basic Education Act (1267/2013)

The Finnish Core Curriculum (2014)



Plan for safeguarding the pupils against violence, bullying and harassment^[4]

A plan shall be prepared to safeguard the pupils against violence, bullying and harassment. This plan should take into account the interactive relationships between the pupils as well as between the pupils and the adults in the school.

The plan describes:

- prevention of and intervention in bullying, violence and harassment
- how these issues are handled at the level of the community, group and individual
- individual support, requisite care, other measures and follow-up for both the perpetrator and the victim
- cooperation with the guardians
- cooperation with the relevant authorities
- how familiarisation with the plan is arranged and how the staff, pupils, guardians and partners are informed of it
- updating, monitoring and evaluation of the plan.

^[4] Section 13(2) paragraph 4 of the Pupil and Student Welfare Act and Section 29(3) of the Basic Education Act (1267/2013)

In order to reduce bullying...



- We do not necessarily need to change the victims, making them "less vulnerable"



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- Influencing the behavior of *classmates* can reduce the rewards gained by the bullies and consequently, their motivation to bully in the first place

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- However, *the victims* need to feel that they are heard and helped by the adults at school
- *The bullies* need to be confronted for their unacceptable behavior



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- INDICATED**
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Finnish KiVa antibullying program

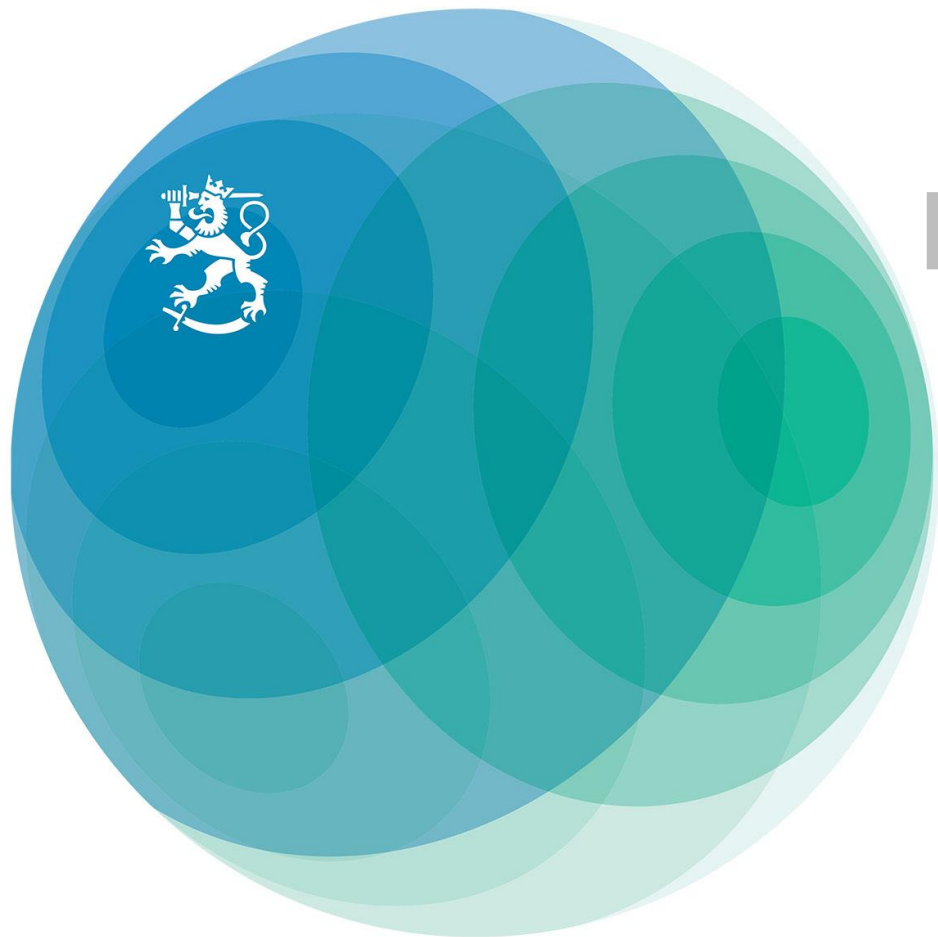
- Special characteristics:
 - Both **universal** and **indicated** actions
 - An exceptionally large amount of materials & concrete tools (not merely a "philosophy")
 - Utilizing ICT: virtual learning environments
- KiVa is **more systematic and structured** than most existing anti-bullying programs
 - What to do, when to do it, how to do it,...

Universal actions



- Commitment & coordination at the school level
- Signaling that "we are a KiVa school"
 - highly visible vests for teachers supervising recess time
 - posters
- Student online survey
 - Pre-implementation survey
 - Survey repeated annually
 - Automatic feedback to schools
- Also parents are involved





<http://www.kivaprogram.net/>

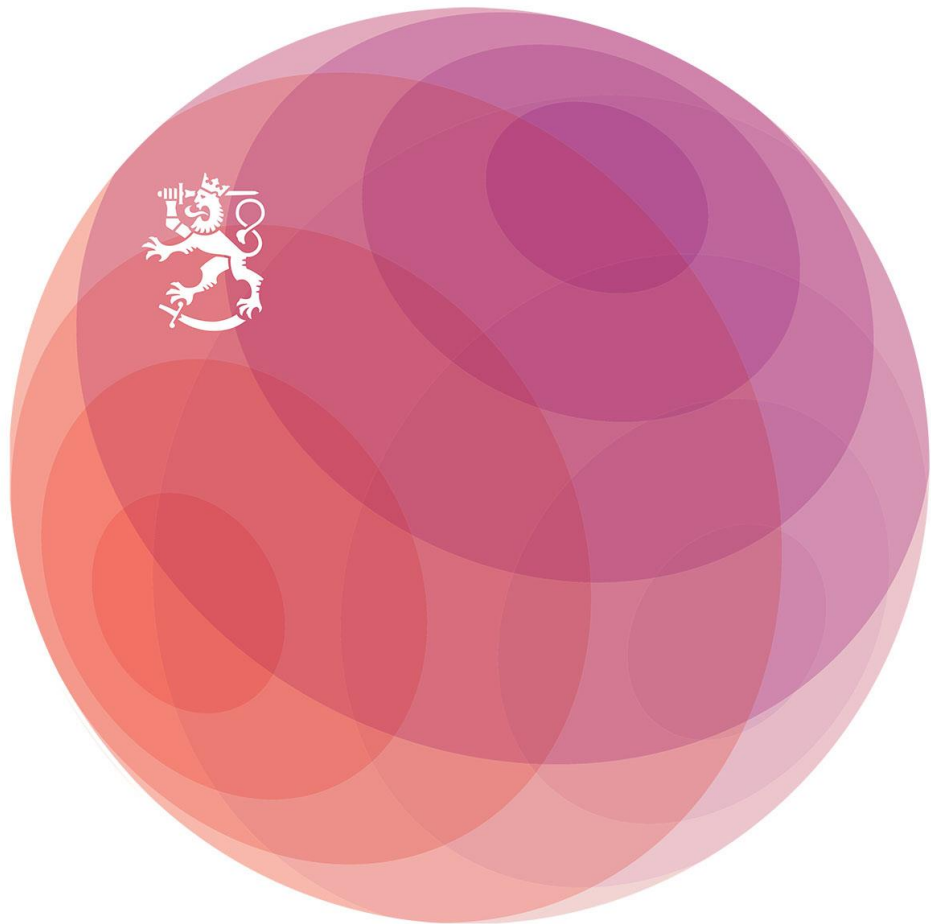


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Thank you!

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