

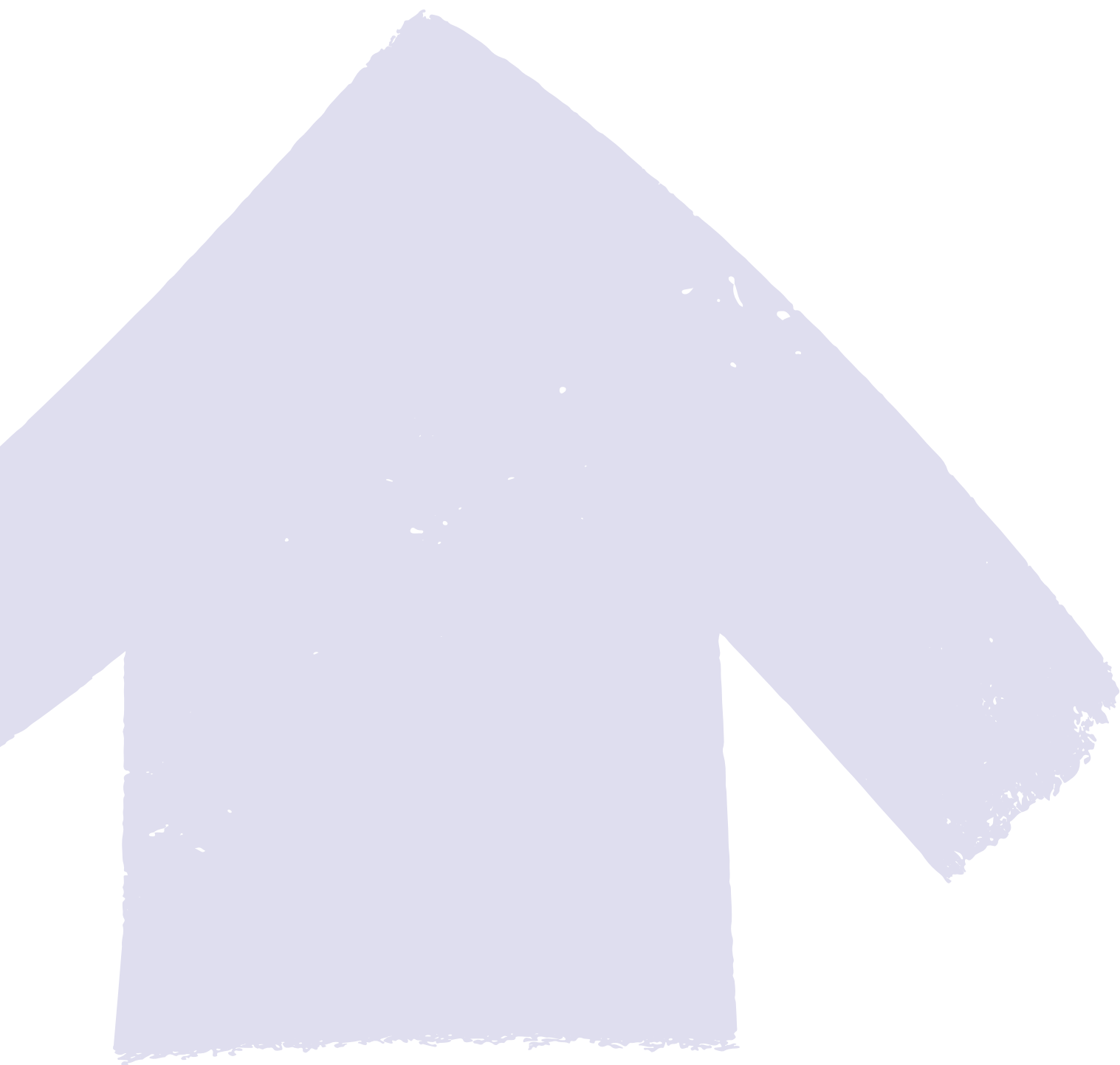


OAJ'S GOALS FOR
EUROPEAN POLICY IN 2019



SOLUTIONS FOR EUROPE





Europe is united by education, equality and democracy

FINLAND HAS BEEN A MEMBER of the EU for 23 years. Our country is part of the Western community of values. The EU is an important reference group for us, not least because half of our exports go to the euro area. Through its EU membership, Finland seeks security, prosperity and stability. Our goal is for Finland to be actively involved in the EU as a strong proponent of multiculturalism, openness and diversity.

OAJ has a positive attitude towards EU membership, but that does not mean it is without criticism. OAJ wants to play an active role in influencing Europe's development by collaborating with members of the European parliament, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Finnish Government and Parliament. We are also actively involved through the European organisation of teacher trade unions, ETUCE.

According to the principle of sovereignty, education falls under the mandate of national government. This should remain so also in the future. The EU is nevertheless an important influencer of education policy, as it sets common goals and objectives for member states and influences the development of education systems.

Finland will assume the presidency of the Council of the European Union for the third time when the new government begins its term in summer 2019. Finland's presidency will begin on 1 July, prior to which Finland is a part of the presidency trio for six months. In OAJ's opinion, Finland must, during its presidency, highlight competence, availability of skilled workforce and training, all areas in which we have something to offer Europe.

OAJ's goal is to reinforce a Europe whose success is based on:

- education, art and culture
- strong competence, research and science
- tolerance and equality, as well as respect for human rights and dignity

It is only by investing in education, training, research, development and innovations that Europe will remain competitive. Education and training can also help reinforce the sustainable development of democracy and inclusion, as well as safety. Quality education and training promote European unity, the availability of workforce and the integration of immigrants into society and labour market, as well as contribute to building a sustainable future. The simultaneous lack of jobs and employees is a Europe-wide problem. There are as many as 18 million unemployed people in the EU area and, at the same time, two million vacant jobs that are difficult to fill. Unemployment is high especially in southern Europe and among young people.

The situation demands the development of the single market, better recognition of competence and the development and dissemination of effective practices at all levels of education and training. High-quality and accessible early childhood education and teaching must be the priorities of European education policy also going forward.

OAJ's parliamentary election theme of **#koulutusratkaisee** (i.e. **#educationisthesolution**) therefore applies to all of Europe. Only an EU of skilled citizens can succeed in global competition. The transformation of work, digitalisation, the free movement of workers, climate change and immigration are all challenges that are being resolved by investing in education, training, science and research.

#koulutusratkaisee



**KOULUTUS
RATKAISEE**

EU must promote education, free movement and collaboration in education and training

OAJ ADVOCATES public and equal education and training for everyone, regardless of their ethnic origin or family background. Every EU country must ensure that it has a publicly financed and effective education, training and early childhood education system in place that can be supplemented by the private sector.

The EU must provide its member states with financial and political support to ensure that they can safeguard the euro area's competitiveness and job creation, as well as education, training and research collaboration between member states. The EU is in need of an education, training, innovation and research commissioner, whose task would be to merge the responsibility areas of education, training, early childhood education, and research to support Europe's growth and competitiveness. The European Parliament must establish a competence, innovation and research commission, and the Commission must establish a corresponding directorate-general.

Education policy also covers vocational education and adult education and training. These must not be separated from the sphere of education and training policy, as was done during the current term, when they were narrowly incorporated as a part of labour policy.

EU nationals must have the opportunity to move freely across the continent and work anywhere in the union. Free movement within the union's labour market requires common ground rules. The free movement of teachers, students and researchers must, in future, be viewed as an element that strengthens collaboration, education, training, competence and research. In addition, the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme to increase free movement must be expanded.



SOLUTION 1

A publicly funded education and training system offers everyone equal opportunities to receive education and training throughout Europe. Education and training foster common European values: tolerance, equality, and respect for human rights and dignity.



SOLUTION 2

The EU's upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework must focus on long-term funding for research, education, training, early childhood education and lifelong learning.



SOLUTION 3

Establish an education, training, innovation and research commissioner position, whose tasks include all levels of education.



SOLUTION 4

The free movement of employees and students within the EU must be significantly improved.



SOLUTION 5

Vocational education and adult education and training must be treated as part of education and training policy.

Competence and the ability to innovate lay the foundation for Europe's competitiveness and well-being

COMPETENCE AND THE ABILITY to innovate lay the foundation for Europe's competitiveness, and they are prerequisites for employment, productivity growth, education and well-being. There are, however, major differences in the participation rates for lifelong learning between EU countries. The EU must aim for more ambitious targets, such that the annual target for participation in lifelong learning among those aged between 25 and 64 is raised from the current 15% to 30% by the year 2025. (The participation rate in Finland was 26.4% in 2016). The opportunities of those in working life to increase their competence must be improved, for instance, by increasing high-quality retraining and refresher training, which will make it possible to rapidly respond to the need for renewed competence.

In Europe, life expectancy is increasing and people are working longer, which further highlights the importance of continuous learning. Liberal adult education services are needed all over Europe, including as a means for improving pensioners' well-being and functional ability. Finland's model of basic art education must also be introduced in other European countries.

The EU must also take better care of its weakest members. Opportunities for individuals to improve their status in society and in the labour market must be improved by increasing funding for advisory and career services, as well as for education and training. The implementation of a competence guarantee in member countries must be supported. Strengthening competence and investing in education and training must be established as a cross-cutting theme of EU policy. The goal must be to transform the EU into a global competency hub together with member states.

The European Education Area and the ET 2020 strategy must be continued and steered in an even more ambitious direction. The European-level benchmarks that are targeted by 2020 must be set higher. Member states must be supported in reaching these targets, both financially and in terms of sharing good practices.

SOLUTION 6

In spring 2018, the European Commission prepared an initiative to create a European Education Area by 2025. Efforts to implement the initiative must continue. The

EU needs more ambitious education and training targets

Indicator	EU's current target	OAJ's proposed target
Children enrolled in early childhood education	95 %	95 %
Share of 15-year olds performing poorly in reading, mathematics and natural sciences	less than 15 %	less than 10 %
Early leavers from education and training aged 18–24	less than 10 %	less than 5 %
30–34-year-olds with higher education	40 %	50 %
Adults in education and training	15 %	30 %
Those who have completed a study or training period abroad	20 % of those with a higher-education degree	30 % of those with a higher-education degree
	6 % of 18–34-year-olds with a vocational qualification	18 % of 18–34-year-olds with a vocational qualification
Employed 20–34-year-olds who have completed a degree or qualification	82 %	85 %

EU countries must together set concrete and more ambitious targets for education and training.

SOLUTION 7

Raise the lifelong learning target on the EU level and focus on continuous learning throughout Europe to ensure that the competence guarantee is truly implemented.

RATKAISU 8

Focus on advisory and career services on the European level.

6

7

8

Teacher competence is the foundation for quality education and training

TEACHERS MUST BE ABLE TO respond to society's changing challenges, which include digitalisation, immigration and students' growing need for support and guidance. Attention must be focussed on developing teacher competence in both basic and supplementary teacher training.

Those who work in the education and training sector, as well as their trade unions, are a major resource for developing education and training in all EU countries. It is essential to include them in the development of the education system and education services. Finland has excellent practices and experiences in this area. ETUCE must be given more weight in EU collaboration. EU bodies must listen to ETUCE in matters related to education and training and the education sector more often and at an earlier stage than they currently do. Collaboration between teachers, teacher training and teacher trainers on the European level benefits everyone.



SOLUTION 9

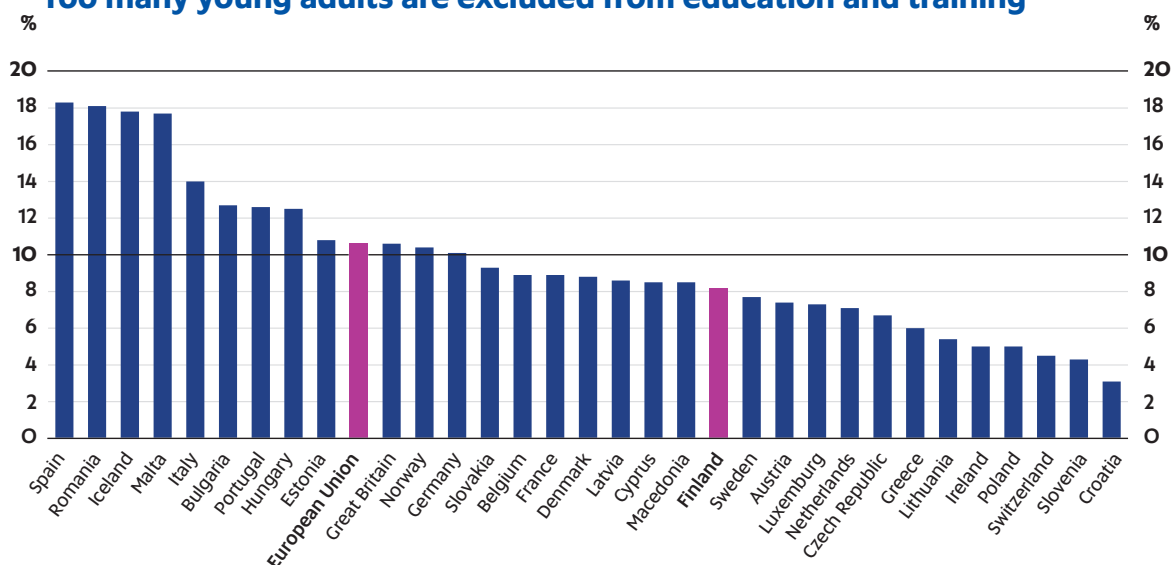
Collaboration between teachers and teacher training, and free movement between European countries must be strengthened. This must be implemented in a way that ensures that teachers' qualification requirements in Finland are not lowered.



SOLUTION 10

EU countries must work together to strengthen the appeal of teaching work, the value placed on teaching work and the quality of education and training, and they must include teachers and supervisors in developing education and training systems.

Too many young adults are excluded from education and training



18–24-year-old young adults excluded from education and without upper secondary qualification in EU countries 2017. Source: Eurostat

Europe must strongly invest in science and research

THE EU CAN ONLY COMPETE globally if it significantly increases funding for long-term research and development activities and by supporting paths of radically innovative solutions and growth. The goal must be to raise Europe's status to that of a globally appealing competence hub.

EU subsidies must be targeted more broadly to building up the research, development and innovation activities carried out jointly by higher education institutions, research institutions, and companies, as well as to the creation of new markets. Higher education institutions must be able to take better advantage of the EU's research programmes.



SOLUTION 11

The application process for domestic and European research funding must be simplified, and sufficient support for applying for funding must be provided.



SOLUTION 12

The EU's budget structures must be renewed such that future research and innovation investments in the EU area are doubled from the current amount.

Academic freedom in higher education must be reinforced

ACADEMIC FREEDOM and autonomy in higher education have been downright violated in some European countries. Researchers' freedom of speech and thought has also been questioned, threatened and limited. Research results and expertise have been criticised. These basic values – academic freedom, autonomy in higher education and collegial governance – are crucial to the success of higher education, and they also give rise to social, economic and cultural benefits.



SOLUTION 13

Science and research data must be made better use of in decision-making and in working life.



SOLUTION 14

The autonomy of higher education institutions must be promoted, and an inclusive and collective operating culture must be built in higher education institutions, where staff have genuine opportunities to influence decision-making. The current procedures used by the EU to tackle breaches of basic rights and, for example, academic freedom must be stepped up.

Education and training are the best integration policy

IMMIGRATION is a common challenge for European countries. In 2015–2016, there were 2.5 million refugees alone. At the same time, the structure of the population is changing in many European countries, due to the dramatically declining birth rate and the growing number of elderly people. According to estimates, only half of the EU population in 2050 will be of working age. Europe must be able to attract new talents to its labour market from abroad.

Education and training are vitally important in promoting integration. Language and cultural instruction must be guaranteed to immigrants of all ages, from toddlers to the elderly, immediately upon their arrival in the country. Education in one's native language alongside learning the language of the country of arrival have a significant impact on all other learning. The language proficiency of immigrants must be made better use of in integration and working life than it currently is.

Integrating immigrants successfully and as quickly as possible requires that the competencies they enter the country with are recognised and utilised. Immigrants embarking on a path of vocational education and studying towards a profession must simultaneously have access to language education to support their studies. This fosters integration, employment and smooth studies. Permit processes must be relaxed in order to respond to the labour shortage.

The universal right to education and training must also be taken into account. In Finland, just about all children who have come from abroad have been immediately admitted to comprehensive school, but on the European level there are still serious shortcomings.



SOLUTION 15

The European Union draws up a comprehensive immigration policy programme.



SOLUTION 16

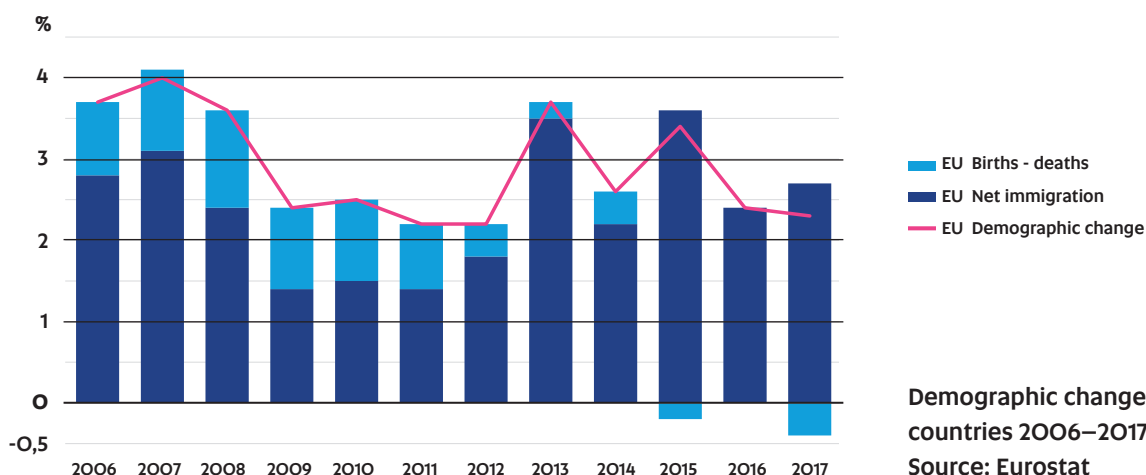
Immigrants' pre-existing competencies are identified and recognised at the start of the integration process to ensure that integration and the related education and training genuinely promote employment.



SOLUTION 17

The learning and teaching of both immigrants' native languages and the language and culture of the country of arrival are promoted in European countries, and better use is made of immigrants' native languages.

Without immigration Europe lacks sufficient amount of working age population



Fairer labour market and better working conditions are required

AN IMPORTANT TOOL in the EU is the Pillar of Social Rights, which is about delivering new and more effective rights for citizens. Taking social issues better into account, for example, in regulation related to labour legislation and in promoting free movement, is important in terms of social justice. It is especially important as digitalisation advances and work becomes increasingly global and less and less dependent on physical location.

The EU's Pillar of Social Rights should lead to practical legislative initiatives in the areas of working life, occupational safety and equal opportunities. For example, sufficiently ambitious minimum requirements must be set for equal parental leave and security for returning to work.

The demands of teaching work have grown considerably due to societal changes and the trend of exclusion. Healthy and safe work spaces and working conditions must be secured for every employee. In the field of education and training that means, for instance, that the EU supports its member countries' projects to modernise their stock of school buildings. This will make access to quality education and training in safe and healthy facilities possible for everyone. The modernisation of the building stock also promotes teachers' well-being and safety at work.



SOLUTION 18

The autonomy and working conditions of employees and employee associations are taken care of in European countries, and their views are broadly heard in societal issues on the EU level.



SOLUTION 19

EU directives on working life take into account digitalisation and the transformation of work.



SOLUTION 20

The same regulations concerning varying working hours (zero-hour contracts) and which improve the employee protections that are written into Finnish labour legislation must be secured on the EU level.



SOLUTION 21

Working conditions and safety are improved in day-care centres, schools and educational institutions on the EU level. Minimum EU-level requirements are set on safe and healthy learning and work environments.



SOLUTION 22

Transforming the EU into an area free of work discrimination is set as a goal.



SOLUTION 23

ETUCE, the organisation for education trade unions at the European level, must be included, to a greater extent and already in the early planning stages of matters, in all social dialogue on the EU level in education and training policy and in matters influencing education policy.

Building a sustainable future through education, training and research

MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE demands measures from all fields of politics, including education politics. Environmental and climate change education as well as knowledge of sustainable choices create a foundation for sustainable lifestyles. The inclusion of young people in sustainable education and in building society must be reinforced. Climate change is also accelerating the necessary structural change in working life, which means sustainable development skills and competence in growing sustainability fields are highlighted in adult education and training, and in the development of competence.

Stopping climate change requires cross-national measures and collaboration, which is also why the EU must play a significant role as a forerunner in that area. Investments in research, development and innovation are needed in order to develop new solutions for mitigating emissions and for promoting sustainable structures and the circular economy.



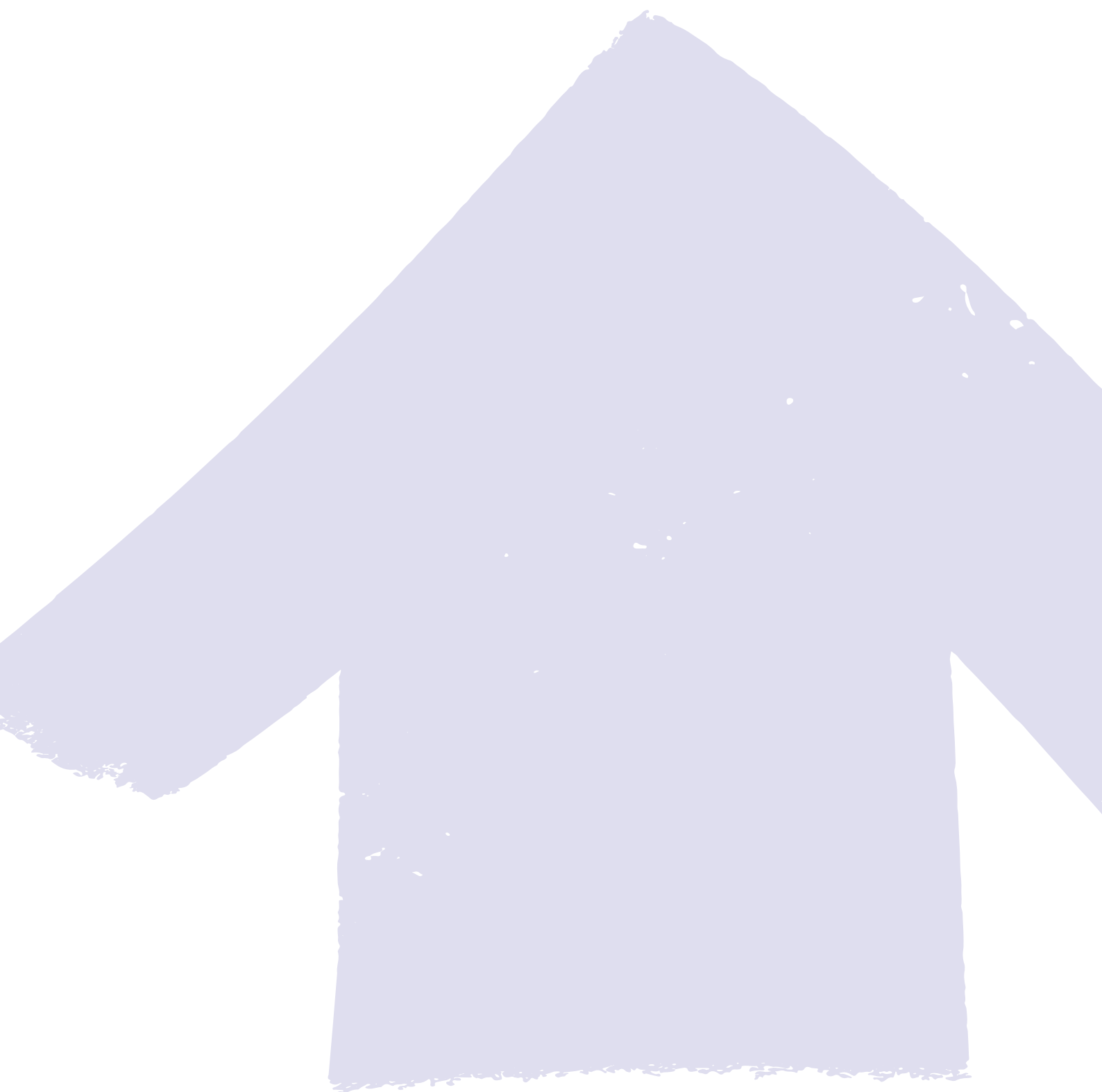
SOLUTION 24

As part of the 'Education and training' collaborative framework, promoting sustainable education and the sharing of good practices between countries is set as a goal for the EU.



SOLUTION 25

The EU supports higher education institutions' research, development and innovation projects that seek solutions for reducing emissions and promoting sustainable lifestyles and structures.



Global problems impend humanity, like climate change, running out of fresh water and constantly increasing energy need.



Inequality, social exclusion or for example unemployment and increasing lack of skilled people in Finland as elsewhere in Europe demands new thinking from us. We easily disregard others and lose the ability to find solutions together, appreciating each other.

When the future seems uncertain and insecure, we need solutions which build a better tomorrow and future.

Fortunately, we already know the answer, don't we?

Education. Training. Science. Research.

#koulutusratkaisee

FIND OUT MORE

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