



ESPOO
ESBO

Flexible Places for Learning



inspiration for active learning

What is the Flexible Places for Learning project?

Flexible Places for Learning is a project run by Education and Cultural Services of the City of Espoo, the second largest city in Finland. We are developing innovative learning environments together with students, teachers, parents and school personnel.

Our goal is to create and model flexible, sustainable and cost-effective solutions to support renewable learning and well-being at schools.

In this project, school is seen as a service rather than a building. School

buildings are opened up for public use. Local resources are used to benefit schools as learning environments.

Goals will be reached by getting users of the schools, city authorities and local community involved in the process and listening to their needs.

Project is carried out in co-operation with Aalto University and University of Helsinki. It has received funding from Finnish National Board of Education.



Espoo is a young and fast developing city

A map of Europe with a red dot marking the location of Espoo, Finland. Several blue dotted lines radiate from this dot to various text boxes containing statistics and facts about the city. The text boxes are arranged around the map, with some pointing to the city's location and others to specific geographical or demographic features.

Second largest
city in Finland

58 kilometers coastline,
95 lakes and 165 islands

Population
266.000

Languages:

Finnish 83 %,
Swedish 8.3 %,
others 8.7 %

More than half of
the population has
university degree

A great deal of city
services are organized
by partners of the city

One fifth of the
population is
under 15 years old

What are the guiding questions of our project?

- Can we see school as service rather than a building?
- How can the physical, virtual and flexible environment best support learning?
- Can we increase well-being in schools by finding new teaching and learning methods, learning environments and holistically developing school to support learning?
- Can we find ways to make use of the skills and knowledge acquired in non-formal arena?



Many schools in Espoo are currently operating in temporary locations.

Flexible Places for Learning project uses these temporary locations to prototype new school concepts.

What are the benefits of our project?

DEVELOPING SCHOOL CULTURE

- it is based on renewable learning
- it encourages students to take responsibility of their own learning
- it increases joy of learning
- it includes students, teachers, staff, parents and local community in the process

DEVELOPING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- flexibility
- cost-effectiveness
- building foundation for good collaboration both inside the schools and with local community
- results can be used for building both permanent school buildings and temporary locations for learning

What have we discovered so far?

- Students find sense of community, security and school identity more important than school buildings.
- In temporary learning places sense of community of the school is often stronger than usual because of the circumstances.
- Requirements for digitalization in learning environments are particularly important in temporary learning places.
- Results have confirmed that digitalization has an increasingly important role in learning.
- Flexible spaces and new methods support the learning and working of digital natives.

What will happen next?

A new flexible learning environment is currently being planned for Aalto University campus in Otaniemi. It is meant to serve as temporary learning environment for the city of Espoo. The amount of space needed can be altered to fit the growing needs for temporary learning locations along the new west metro. The aim is also to create a nationally and internationally interesting example of efficient learning environments.

Foundations for Finnish Education System

- Equal opportunities, free of charge
- Student centered system
- Competent and committed teachers
- Key concepts: efficiency and quality
- Wide ranging support services
- Decentralized administration
- Significance of education in society



FACTS ABOUT FINLAND

Finland is a land of interesting contrasts, such as the four seasons, the Midnight Sun and the winter darkness, urban and rural, East and West.

Population:
5,485,408

density: **17,9/km²**

Area: total **390.905 km²**
of which water: **22 %**

GDP (nominal) in 2014:
total \$271,2 billion
per capita \$49.497



It's all about learning!



**Contact us! We are happy
to tell you more:**

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