

SUMMARY

Finland became the „PISA-miracle“ approximately 10 years ago. Different experts on education come to Finland to find out what stands behind this extraordinary success which attracted attention and sparked debate all over Europe, and that is also the main aim of this thesis.

For understanding current situation we need to learn about a great impact of historical factors.

In this thesis I therefore present the development of national educational system from the Middle ages until today. Finland used to be a poor agricultural country which developed very quickly into post-industrial consumer society and high-level knowledge society. It is the educational system, to which is the main impact on such process attributed.

We can say that the history of Finnish national educational system is a story of removal of inequalities. This long process has its roots in eliminating of old parallel educational system and building the ‚new school‘ which is based on the idea that the education belongs to basic rights of all children and young people. The main objective of Finnish education policy is to offer all citizens equal opportunities to receive education, regardless of age, domicile, financial situation, sex or mother tongue. Education is considered to be one of the fundamental rights of all citizens.

The comprehensive primary school which provides basic education for whole age group has a central position in current school system. But still it is only one of many sources of PISA-success. It is necessary to take into consideration also the cultural aspects, which include high estimation of education as a cultural capital as well as the work of teachers.

Keywords: comprehensive education system, PISA, inequalities in education, Finnish comprehensive school, history and development of primary education in Finland