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Customs Competence development and Professional Education recognition

Case: Finnish Customs

PICARD 2012, 26 September, Session 3: Customs Strategic Human Resource Management

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Finnish Customs Training

Key figures of Finnish Customs personnel

- 2348 employees (2011)
- 53 % male, 47 % female
- Average age 45,5 years
- Educational background (2009):
- Basic education or secondary-level education 47,6 %
- Bachelor's degrees (university or polytechnic) 38,1 %
- Higher academic degree 14,3%
- Number of training days per employee per year: 7,3

Customs training connected to the Finnish official education structure

Until September 2012, vocational training in the customs field has been provided in Finland only by the Customs Administration. Training in the customs field was not included in the Finnish official qualification framework. It has not been possible for Customs officers to apply to a polytechnic or to a university if they haven't completed any other qualification after the basic education than the customs training.

The Further Qualification in Customs Operations makes it possible to recognise the vocational skills of Customs experts and gives eligibility for further studies in the polytechnics and universities.

Training developments 2004-2012 in Finnish Customs

(1) New Basic Vocational Training, planning phase 2002-2005, start 11/2005

(2) Further Qualification in Customs Operations, planning phase 2004-2011 start 10 September 2012

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Basic Vocational Training

”Owner”: Finnish Customs

Target group: New employees

- **Blended learning approach**
- **”From teaching to learning” philosophy**
- **Customs processes built in the eLearning environment (3000 pages)**
- **in total 2,5yrs**

Benefits:

Supports the development of multi-skilled employees

Studying (= theory) and working (= practice) hand-in-hand

Can be integrated with the FQ in Customs Operations

Further Qualification in Customs Operations (EQF 4)

“Owner”: National Board of Education

Target group: people who have appr. 3 years working experience in Customs matters

- **Regulated by legislation**
- **Independent of earlier educational background**
- **The vocational skills requirements have been established in cooperation with the working life representatives**
- **Skills are demonstrated in participant’s own work**

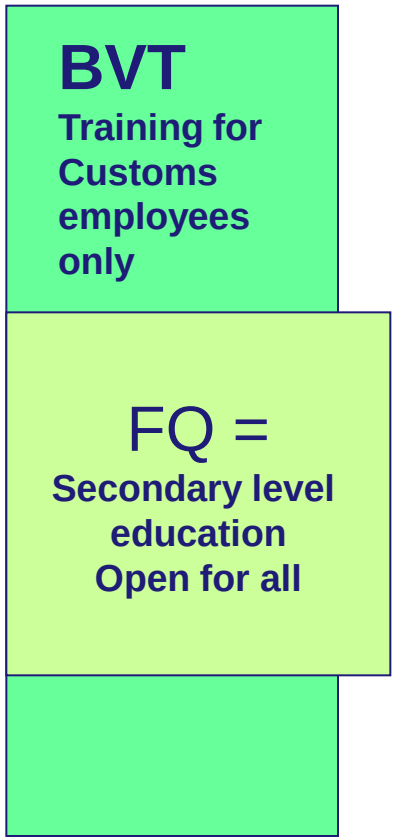
Benefits:

Creates a path for life-long-learning

Makes Customs expertise visible in the society

Connection with the WCO/PICARD and EU Customs training initiatives

FQ in Customs Operations is connected with the Basic Vocational Training



- FQ contents more limited than the Customs BVT. All requirements are common to all participants (both from the Customs or the Business).
- Some FQ requirements are not included in the BVT, e.g. language skills.
- BVT includes in addition requirements that are needed when working inside the Customs administration, e.g confidential issues.

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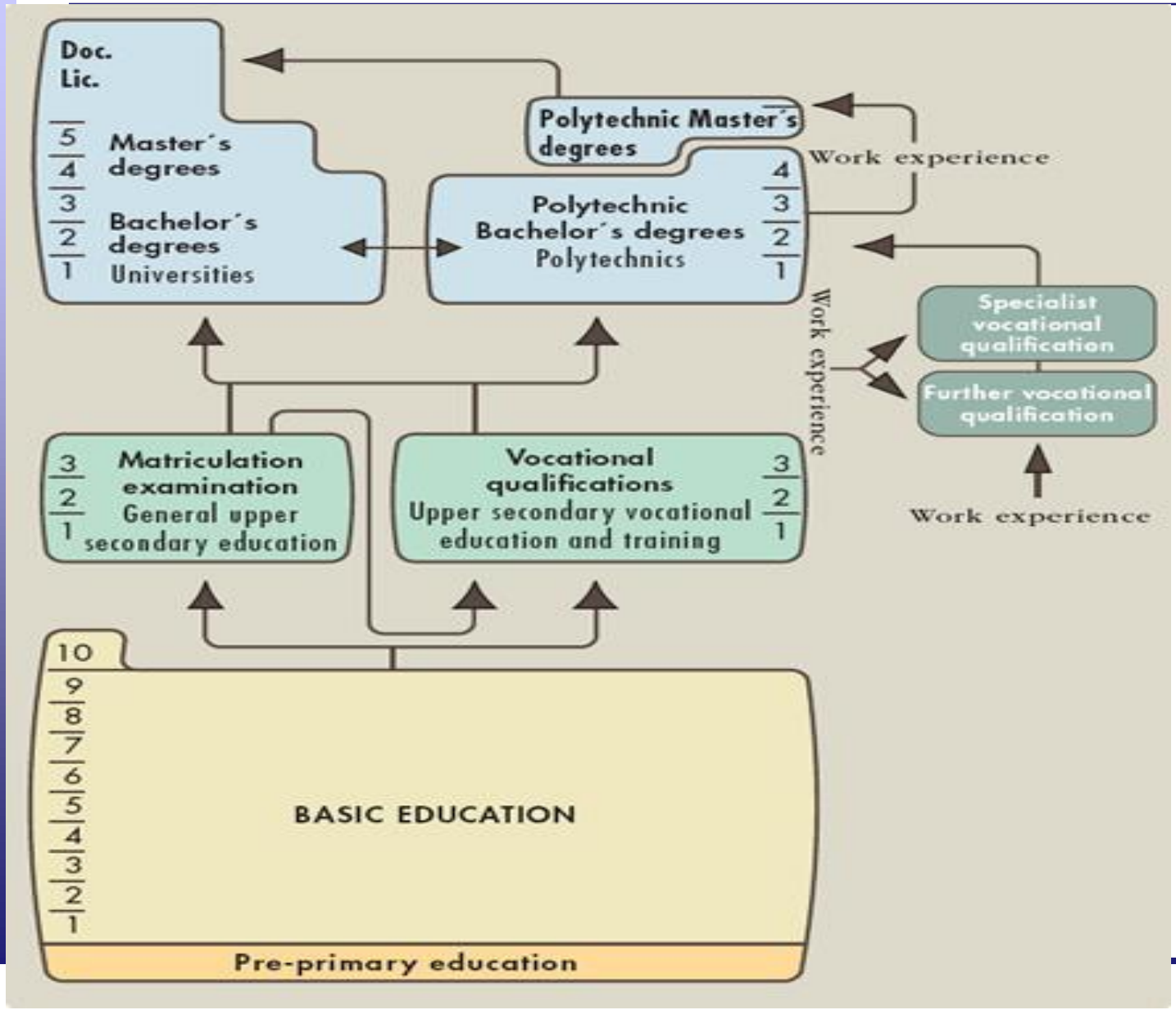
Education structure in Finland



Customs Training Pattern

External Recruitment

Equivalence Qualifications Framework

Top Executive — Level 8

Strategic Managers — Strategic Specialists — Level 7: Masters

Senior/Operational Managers — Senior Specialists — Level 6: Bachelor

Middle Managers — Specialists — Level 5: Higher Diploma

Junior Managers — Senior Customs practitioners — Level 4: Ordinary Diploma

LEADERSHIP TRAINING and/or RETRAINING

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS / SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Junior Customs practitioners — Level 2-3: Basic/ Technical Certificate

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS / SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAMMES

New Entrants — Level 1

GENERIC COMPETENCIES / INDUCTION TRAINING PROGRAMME

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