

## Chilean school leaders explored Finnish education model in intensive period at TAMK

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**The AntofaEDUCA project brought a group of 38 Chilean principals and school leaders to TAMK for a two-week intensive period. The two-year development project started in northern Chile in summer 2023, and rectors have also been trained last autumn in Chile and online. During the intensive period, they got to know Finnish schools, presented their development projects and familiarised themselves with leadership in the school world.**

During the two weeks, Chileans were able to visit different schools from preschool to vocational schools. They got to know the operations of Etelä Hervanta's school, Kalkunvuori Daycare Centre, Tampere Technical Upper Secondary School and Tredu's two different locations. For the group, the visit to schools provided a valuable opportunity to observe the Finnish education system in action.

– During this intensive period, we want the principals to see how the things previously discussed in the project are put into practice, says **Kenneth Gent**, co-founder of the AntofaEDUCA project.

Various innovative teaching facilities such as TLC (Teaching and Learning Center), Proakatemia, HUBS, Yrityskylä and Sandkvik's Test Mine were also pleasant and interesting destinations for the group arriving from Antofagasta.

– For principals, this is a great opportunity to see that such a system is possible. It will take several years to implement, but it is important to experience it firsthand. Another important part of this visit is to understand how the principals implement changes in themselves and their institutions when they return to Chile, Gent continues.

The project has brought Chileans to learn about the Finnish education system in order to improve the quality of education in the Antofagasta region. However, there are already many similarities between the two systems, one of which stands above the others.

– Chilean and Finnish teachers are united by their commitment to their work and its significance to students. In both education systems, the student is at the centre of everything, and the teachers' goal is to do their best for them, says **Francisco Marin**, who participated in the intensive period.

**Jiri Vilppola** and **Ville Palkinen** from TAMK's Professional Teacher Education, who trained the group in Chile in October, agree. For them, the education systems of Chile and Finland have more in common than differences. The motivation of local leaders and teachers is very high and at the same time inspiring.

– The opportunity offered by the AntofaEDUCA project to consult local experts and get to know local schools is an excellent opportunity for professional growth, says Francisco Marin. He expresses gratitude for the experience and looks forward to the impact of the project on the Chilean education system.

The intensive period was very successful and the feedback from the group was amazing.

– 100 % of the participants would recommend the training and the assessment of the success of the training was 4.9 (1–5). In terms of arrangements, the group size, which was a staggering 38 people, is challenging from the point of view of organisation and logistics, but rewarding at the same time, says Key Account Manager **Virpi Heinonen**.

[Video about the launch of the AntofaEDUCA program](#) (subtitles in English)