

AI in the Nordic HE: Teacher AI Literacy as the Key to Shaping Student AI Usage

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping higher education worldwide, yet its impact is not evenly distributed. In the Nordic countries, high levels of digital literacy and strong traditions of technological trust have created fertile ground for AI integration. Finland, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway consistently lead Europe in digital skills, with policy frameworks and initiatives already in place to promote equitable and responsible digital adoption. However, despite this political will and structural readiness, a critical challenge persists: the preparedness of teachers themselves. Findings from the 2025 NORDTEK Teacher Survey indicate that many educators, particularly those with 10–20 years of experience, struggle to keep pace with the swift evolution of AI tools. This skill gap not only risks isolating teachers but also limits students' opportunities to develop the critical, responsible, and creative AI literacies that will shape their futures. This presentation examines the intersection of AI policy, digital culture, and classroom practice in the Nordic context. It argues that teachers remain the decisive factor in bridging the gap between policy ambitions and student engagement. Without adequate teacher AI literacy, even the most advanced national initiatives will fail to realize their transformative potential. Combining recent survey data, regional policy analysis, and lived experience from the classroom, the presentation highlights both the risks and opportunities that AI brings to higher education. It concludes by outlining practical strategies to support teachers in developing stronger AI literacy, ensuring that Nordic higher education continues to foster innovation, inclusion, and equity in the digital era.