

National EMN Conference
Labour Migration and its Challenges in the EU –
Perspectives in the EU Member States
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**SKILLED MIGRANT WORKERS IN
FINLAND – POLICY FACES
REALITY**

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Structure of the presentation

- ✧ Finnish immigration/labour migration policy
- ✧ Im/migration workers in figures
- ✧ Where the im/migrants work in Finland?
- ✧ Analysis of the situation – does Finland have the skilled migrants wished by the Government?

Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions SAK

	Total	% Male	Female %
Industry Construction Trade Union, Finnish Electrical Workers' Union, Finnish Foodstuff Workers' Union, Industrial Union TEAM, Metalworkers' Union, Paperworkers' Union The Wood and Allied Workers' Union	478 255		30
Public sector Trade Union for the Public and Welfare Sectors (JHL)	223 073		70
Private services Finnish Musicians' Union, Service Unions United, Theatre and Media Employees in Finland, Union of Formen in Commerce*	22 502		59
Transport Finnish Aviation Union, Finnish Cabin Crew Union, Finnish Locomotivemen's Union, Finnish Post and Logistics Union, Finnish Railwaymen's Union, Finnish Seamen's Union, Finnish Transport Workers' Union, Railway Salaried Staff's Union	117 686		36
Journalists Finnish Social Democratic Journalists' Union, General Union of Journalists	505		33
Total	1 047 021		46

*member only via the Palvelualan Unioni PaU
Members counted in 12/08
Finnish NCOs' Union joined in 05/08

20.1.2010

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Immigrant Members in the Unions of the SAK

App. 17 000 of which most in:

- ✳ Service Union United 5 100
- ✳ Trade Union for the Public and Welfare Sectors 3 200
- ✳ Metal workers 3 000
- ✳ The Wood and Altered workers Union 550
- ✳ Finnish Transport Workers Union 500
- ✳ Construction workers some hundreds

Finnish immigration/labour migration policy

- ✳️ 1st ever im/igration and Asylum policy strategy prepared by Government in 1997

Emphasize on asylum policy

- ✳️ 1st Labour Migration mentioned in the Government im/migration strategy 2006

Emphasize on EU/Neighbouring countries

Main arguments of the needs:

- agening population,
- need to widen the base of **skilled** workers (=osaava= "you are able")

Finnish immigration/labour migration policy

- Government Programme of PM Vanhanen in 2007 "Migrant workers needed to fill in the **knowledge gaps** when there is no local workers available"
- Labour migration promoted keeping in mind the developments of both Finnish and EU population and the demand for labour
- 1st Labour Migration Strategy 2009

Finnish immigration/labour migration policy

- ✧ Government Programme of PM Kiviniemi 6/2010
- ✧ Emphasizes the need for **skilled workers** to enable the future economic growth. In this context also labour migration is mentioned.

Immigration workers in figures (2008)

- ✧ app. 156 000 immigrants lived in FIN – 3% of the total population
- ✧ 79 000 of them worked
- ✧ Besides, there were:
 - ✧ A) 8 900 third country workers who entered via work permit procedure
 - ✧ B) 12 000 -13 000 seasonal workers who entered via visa procedure

Im/migration workers in figures

- ✧ C) some 50 000 workers worked temporarily as posted or hired workers (mostly EU citizens)
- ✧ Group B and C (= 62 000 workers) are **not** counted in to the Finnish workforce and there is no precise statistics about their age, education or occupation, time stayed in FIN etc available.

Where the immigrants work (2008)?

- ✧ 15 000 of the immigrants worked in the cleaning etc services
- ✧ 11 000 for the industry of which 3 300 prepared electronic equipments
- ✧ 8 000 in the shops
- ✧ 7 000 both in the hotels & restaurants and in social and welfare sectors
- ✧ 5000 both in transport and in education sectors

Where the immigrants work (2008)?

- ✧ Relatively compared most immigrants work in cleaning sector, in hotels and restaurants and in the electronic Industry

Where the labour migrants work (2008)?

- ✧ Third country worker permits were granted to (total 8 900) :
- ✧ Cleaning ladies 709, Plumbers 548, Welders 530, Cookers and Cold buffer Managers 523, Gardeners 466, House Builders 461, Platers 409, Agriculture workers 346, Lorry Drivers, Concreate workers 249, Business Leaders 216, Mechanics 161, Kitchen and restaurant workers 102...

Where the labour migrants work (2008)?

- ✘ ... Others /usually **highly skilled** 2 900 (consultants, IT –Engineers, Coaches, Researchers, Athletics etc.)
- ✘ Construction Union estimated that some 20 000 – 30 000 posted/hired construction workers were in Finland.
- ✘ Also, Olkiluoto Nuclear Power Plant and huge Cruisers of CMX were built, so thousands of metal workers were posted too.

Analyses of the situation

- 1) Relatively compared most immigrants work in the cleaning sector, in hotels and restaurants and in electronic industry. Two first categories don't require any special education -) **low-skill work** even workers often are skilled
- 2) The premier reason to hire a migrant is too often poor quality of work which doesn't attract locals: poor salary and working conditions/times , no full-time job etc. NOT the lack of **skilled** labour!

Analyses of the situation

- ✳ 3) Also, too often the reason to hire an im/migrant is to save in salary costs. This happens especially in labour demanding sectors:
- ✳ service sector (Cleaning ladies, Waiters, Cookers, in shops),
- ✳ in Agriculture sector and
- ✳ in Construction sector

Analyses of the situation - Unemployment % in Finland 2008

- Unemployment % of Finns 8,8%
- Unemployment of non-Finns over 20%

<u>Unemployment</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number of open work places</u>
Agriculture	8 469	199,
House building	15 349	347,
Service sector	21 868	3 964

Analyses of the situation

- 4) Especially in Construction, even documented skilled workers, hundreds or even thousands are working without education required for the job.
-) Employer is required to check the education/skills of worker but if hired further they don't always care. And too often the Buyer doesn't care or have time/skills to check the validity of documents.

Analyses of the situation

- 5) Employers' need for skilled labour is often temporary

Note Nuclear Plant in Olkiluoto, Turku Harbour cruisers etc. -) only 5-10% of labour migration has been permanent so far.

Analyses of the situation

- ✦ 6) What about highly skilled workers ?
- ✦ Minority of all im/migrant workers
- ✦ 2 900 work permits were submitted 2008 due to "other reasons" (comp. total 8 900) (IT) Experts, Coaches, Athlets, Researches, au-pairs...
- ✦ There are also hundreds of Doctors, Teachers and Nurses working in FIN from other EU countries

Analyses of the situation

- There is no labour migration strategy targeting specially to (highly) skilled groups in Finland,
(There is no quotas, point systems neither educational requirements to get the work permit)
- Contrary, the strategy is rather general focusing on attracting, easing the access of workers and simplifying procedures

Analyses of the situation

- There is an obligation to prefer recruiting from FIN but a new legislation in the Parliament is to change this to community preference only.
- In practise, the change would ease mostly the access of the non-EU workers not having any specific qualifications (language, professional certificates etc)

The big question

- ✘ What the politicians, immigration administrators and Employers want from the labour migration?
- ✘ So far, there are several aims which do not always match:
- ✘ **Politicians talk about attracting skilled labour, Government/administration mainly focus on generally easing access and on permanent immigration**
- ✘ **So far, labour migration wanted by Employers has been mainly temporary and permanent has focused on low-skilled sectors.**