

---

ANNUAL REPORT ON MIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL  
PROTECTION STATISTICS 2008

Finland

---



---

**EUROOPAN MUUTTOLIIKEVERKOSTO**

Maahanmuuttovirasto  
PL 18,00581 Helsinki  
puh. 071 873 0431  
faksi 071 873 0730  
[www.emn.fi](http://www.emn.fi)

**EUROPEISKA MIGRATIONSNÄTVERKET**

Migrationsverket  
PB 18, 00581 Helsingfors  
tfn 071 873 0431  
fax 071 873 0730  
[www.emn.fi](http://www.emn.fi)

**EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK**

Finnish immigration service  
P.O.Box, FI-00581 Helsinki, Finland  
tel. +358 71 873 0431  
fax +358 71 873 0730  
EMN <http://emn.sarenet.es/>

**Table of Contents**

**1. INTRODUCTION .....3**

**2. METHODOLOGY .....3**

**3. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION, USUALLY RESIDENT POPULATION AND ACQUISITION OF CITIZENSHIP (ARTICLE 3).....4**

3.1 International Migration Flows.....4

3.2 Usual Residence .....7

3.3 Acquisition of citizenship .....9

**4. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (ARTICLE 4).....12**

4.1 Applications for International Protection.....12

4.2 Decisions on International Protection.....14

4.3 Unaccompanied Minors .....16

4.4 Dublin Transfers .....17

**5. PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL ENTRY AND STAY (ARTICLE 5) .....18**

5.1 Refusals.....18

5.2 Apprehensions.....18

**6. RESIDENCE PERMITS AND RESIDENCE OF THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS (ARTICLE 6).....19**

**7. RETURNS (ARTICLE 7) .....22**

7.1 Relationship between refusals, apprehensions and returns .....22

**8. OPTIONAL DATA .....24**

8.1 Families by country of birth of spouses / parents .....24

8.2 Assisted Voluntary Return .....24

**9 LITERATURE .....24**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report aims to give an overview of the migration and asylum statistics in Finland in 2008. The first section gives a short introduction and the second section outlines the methodology used for preparing the report. The subsequent sections follow the articles of the

Migratory Statistics Regulation 862/2007:

Section 3 – International Migration, Usually Resident Population, Acquisition of Citizenship

Section 4 – International Protection

Section 5 – Prevention of Illegal Entry and Stay

Section 6 – Residence Permits and Residence of Third Country Nationals

Section 7 – Returns

Section 8 – Optional Data

In 2008, Finland experienced a marked increase in the number of asylum seekers, it was 2,5 times higher compared to 2007.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This report has been prepared by the European Migration Network (EMN) national contact point for Finland. It has been compiled on the basis of the common specifications agreed upon among the EU Member States. For the 2008 reference year, for the first time, data collected by Eurostat, mandated by the Migratory Statistics Regulation 862/2007 are used as the main source of data.

Please note that the data used in this report is mainly based on figures delivered to Eurostat, although comparisons made in the text are in most cases done by comparing data from the Finnish Immigration Service or from Statistics Finland. The graphs or tables of national figures (provided by Statistics Finland or the Finnish Immigration Service) presented in the text can exhibit differences compared to the Eurostat data.

One of the main reasons for this is that, as the Regulation came in to force in 2007, the 2008 reference year is the first year for this type of data collection. It is therefore in many cases difficult to compare 2007 or older data directly with the data from 2008 collected under the Regulation.

Finland has taken necessary steps in order to meet all the requirements of the Migratory Statistics Regulation 862/2007, although regarding data for the reference year 2008 it has to be taken into account that as it is the first data collection under the Regulation.

### **3. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION, USUALLY RESIDENT POPULATION AND ACQUISITION OF CITIZENSHIP (ARTICLE 3)**

#### **3.1 International Migration Flows**

According to Statistics Finland, 29,114 persons immigrated to Finland from foreign countries during 2008. The number is approximately 3,100 higher than in the previous year and the highest during Finnish independence. Emigration from Finland increased slightly and was 13,657 persons. During 2008, net migration totalled 15,450 persons, which is the highest number in the post-war period<sup>1</sup>.

*Table 1 Immigration, Emigration and Net Migration 2007 and 2008*

	Immigration to Finland			Emigration from Finland			Net migration		
	2007	2008	change %	2007	2008	change %	2007	2008	change %
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,029</b>	<b>29,114</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>12,443</b>	<b>13,657</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>13,586</b>	<b>15,457</b>	<b>13.8</b>
Finnish citizens	8,525	9,208	<b>8.0</b>	9,330	9,161	<b>-1.8</b>	-805	47	<b>-105.8</b>
<b>Foreign citizens:</b>	<b>17,504</b>	<b>19,906</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>3,113</b>	<b>4,496</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>14,391</b>	<b>15,410</b>	<b>7.1</b>
EU countries	6,803	7,468	<b>9.8</b>	1,866	2,402	<b>28.7</b>	<b>4,937</b>	5,066	<b>2.6</b>
Non-EU countries	10,701	12,438	<b>16.2</b>	1,247	2,094	<b>67.9</b>	9,454	10,344	<b>9.4</b>
OECD countries	4,502	5,024	<b>11.6</b>	1,631	2,326	<b>42.6</b>	2,871	2,698	<b>-6.0</b>
Non-OECD countries	13,002	14,882	<b>14.5</b>	1,482	2,170	<b>46.4</b>	11,520	12,712	<b>10.3</b>
Nordic countries	897	1035	<b>15.4</b>	553	572	<b>3.4</b>	344	463	<b>34.6</b>

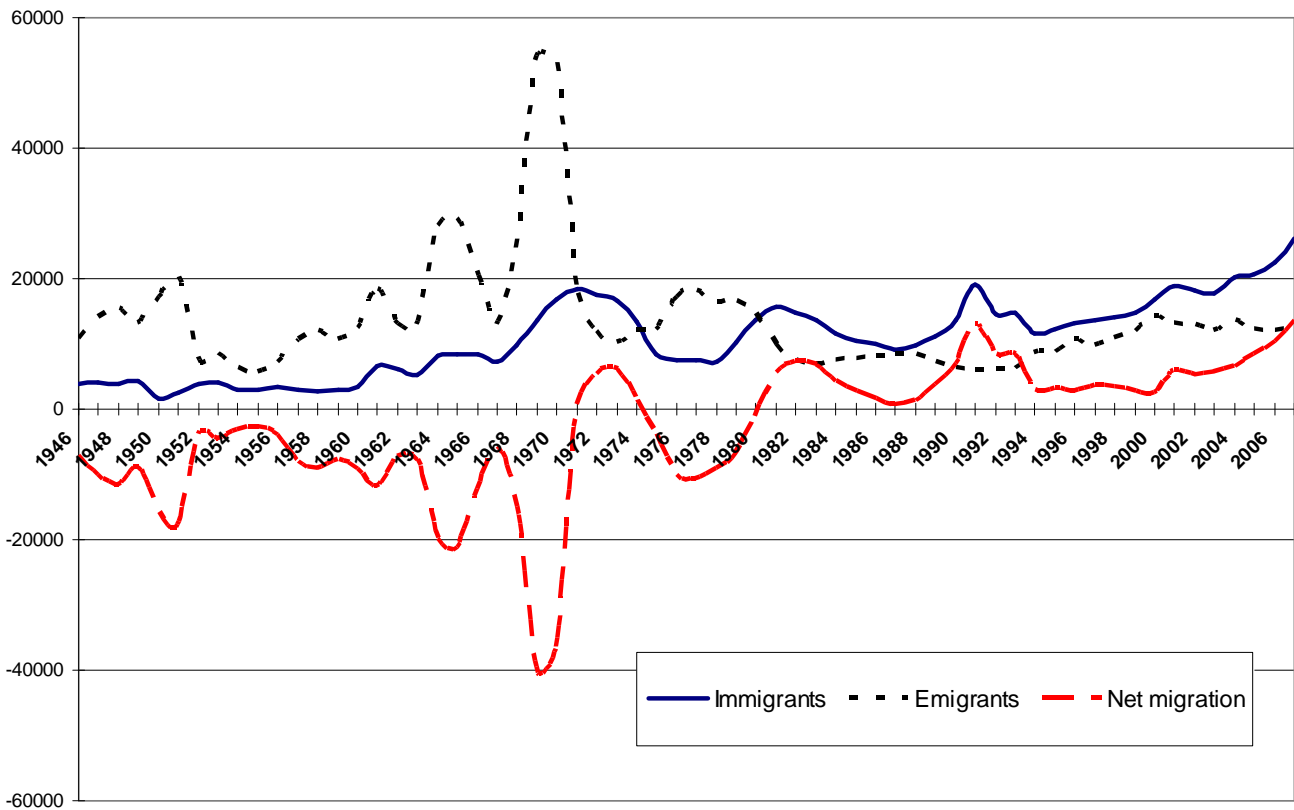
Source: Statistics Finland

Historically looking, Finland has been a source of emigration. Migrants have left Finland to seek employment in countries like Sweden, North America and Australia. The graph below illustrates the development from 1945 onwards. In the 1960s, there was substantial emigration from Finland, mainly people leaving for Sweden to find employment. In fact, because of migration the Finnish population decreased during 1969–1970, when over 80 000 people moved to Sweden. Even in the 1970s, migration followed the employment trends in Sweden. In the 1980s, the direction of migration changed: Finland had more immigrants than emigrants.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Statistics Finland 2009

<sup>2</sup> OECD SOPEMI Finland 2009, p.12

Figure 1 Immigration, Emigration and Net Migration 1945 - 2008



Source: Statistics Finland.

The immigration to Finland has increased steadily during the last decade. The top three immigrating nationalities have remained the same. Russians, Estonians and Swedes constitute approximately 40% of the yearly foreign inflow to Finland (Table 2). Over the past fifteen years, the largest immigrating group on a yearly basis has been the Russians. From year 2006 the Estonians have risen to become the largest group. Over 3,000 Estonians moved to Finland in 2008.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> OECD SOPEMI Finland 2009 p.12

Table 2 Foreign citizens immigrating to Finland 1999–2008, by nationality

Nationality	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total 1999–2008
Russia	2,180	2,516	2,539	2,039	1,665	1,939	2,081	2,146	2,488	2,950	<b>22,543</b>
Estonia	587	655	1,090	1,163	1,102	1,699	1,852	2,468	2,896	3,038	<b>16,550</b>
Sweden	678	701	676	642	682	678	728	749	741	884	<b>7,159</b>
China	170	230	331	356	423	433	596	512	727	963	<b>4,741</b>
Thailand	144	169	290	320	358	393	414	443	569	562	<b>3,662</b>
Somalia	110	171	278	291	201	196	359	287	583	601	<b>3,077</b>
India	112	158	186	188	195	315	381	504	534	623	<b>3,196</b>
Germany	188	204	244	242	234	312	312	353	504	447	<b>3,040</b>
UK	196	246	270	315	265	296	308	285	367	327	<b>2,875</b>
Turkey	131	140	243	269	271	249	337	358	349	439	<b>2,786</b>
Iraq	330	248	263	326	136	277	127	129	358	520	<b>2,714</b>
Serbia	352	304	619	197	151	219	183	169	219	226	<b>2,639</b>
USA	218	247	242	235	240	247	273	273	289	301	<b>2,565</b>
Afghanistan	65	238	327	354	234	284	264	261	242	219	<b>2,488</b>
Iran	319	160	256	237	257	232	215	221	189	231	<b>2,317</b>
France	106	143	139	121	134	120	212	201	234	223	<b>1,633</b>
Ukraine	75	143	156	139	125	121	127	141	196	249	<b>1,472</b>
Vietnam	46	85	71	93	47	80	180	209	262	317	<b>1,390</b>
Italy	74	94	97	91	110	134	148	155	175	199	<b>1,277</b>
Others	1,856	2,258	2,720	2,354	2,602	3,287	3,647	4,004	5,582	6,587	<b>34,897</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,937</b>	<b>9,110</b>	<b>11,037</b>	<b>9,972</b>	<b>9,432</b>	<b>11,511</b>	<b>12,744</b>	<b>13,868</b>	<b>17,504</b>	<b>19,906</b>	<b>123,021</b>

Source: Statistics Finland

In 2008 4,500 foreign citizens moved from Finland. The biggest emigrating groups were the citizens of the neighbouring countries, Sweden, Estonia and Russia.

Table 3 Foreign citizens emigrating from Finland 1999–2008, by nationality

Nationality	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total 1999– 2008
Sweden	440	457	420	417	376	376	449	449	392	444	<b>4,220</b>
Estonia	152	337	131	209	171	584	272	380	585	548	<b>3,369</b>
Russia	127	241	148	240	184	293	180	159	147	301	<b>2,020</b>
USA	124	303	141	196	184	263	153	119	151	245	<b>1,879</b>
UK	126	209	127	168	123	268	167	132	110	217	<b>1,647</b>
Germany	138	175	127	102	118	211	131	145	142	221	<b>1,510</b>
China	72	212	48	113	38	131	96	85	83	278	<b>1,156</b>
France	44	123	63	105	57	166	75	79	96	122	<b>930</b>
India	9	59	45	51	42	112	83	158	211	269	<b>1,039</b>
Japan	36	74	40	65	50	86	42	51	59	130	<b>633</b>
Hungary	22	82	61	95	53	115	19	37	38	94	<b>616</b>
Denmark	32	73	60	65	60	68	53	63	69	65	<b>608</b>
Former Soviet Union	71	264	40	48	87	60	9	1	1	11	<b>592</b>
Somalia	56	187	39	38	19	96	40	34	16	48	<b>573</b>
Norway	44	37	62	50	62	72	61	56	75	50	<b>569</b>
Italy	26	72	48	46	39	73	41	64	55	80	<b>544</b>
Spain	40	56	27	39	53	105	50	33	37	62	<b>502</b>
Canada	33	76	34	57	38	55	40	31	34	66	<b>464</b>

Australia	25	47	42	65	40	63	41	26	29	54	<b>432</b>
Others	383	1,044	454	588	484	989	630	611	783	1,191	<b>7,157</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>4,128</b>	<b>2,157</b>	<b>2,757</b>	<b>2,278</b>	<b>4,186</b>	<b>2,632</b>	<b>2,713</b>	<b>3,113</b>	<b>4,496</b>	<b>30,460</b>

Source: Statistics Finland

2008 saw a considerable growth in immigration as well as a rise in emigration. There were no significant changes in national legislation to further this development, although it can be argued that the general economic and policy climate favoured migration.

The Government Programme of Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's second Cabinet (of 19 April 2007) designed migration policy guidelines in its Programme. The goal is to develop active, comprehensive and logical policies, which fully take into consideration labour needs, the wide-ranging circumstances of immigrants, and international obligations.<sup>4</sup> The content of the government programme regarding migration was also described in more detail in the Finnish Annual EMN Policy Report of 2008. The main institutional outcomes were that the migration administration was regrouped under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior and that the first minister of migration affairs, Astrid Thors, was appointed.<sup>5</sup>

### 3.2 Usual Residence

The countries of usual residence, especially the top-3 consisting of the Russian Federation, Somalia and China did not change compared to 2007, which can be seen in tables 4 and 5. The main change in the top-10 list is the absence of Serbia-Montenegro in 2008, as the nationals of Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo were counted separately from 2008 onwards.

*Table 4 Usual Residence by Country of Citizenship 2008*

<b>Top 10 Citizenship from third countries</b>	
1. Russian Federation	26 909
2. Somalia	4 919
3. China	4 620
4. Thailand	3 932
5. Turkey	3 429
6. Iraq	3 238
7. India	2 736
8. Iran	2 508
9. United States	2 282
10. Afghanistan	2 189

Source: Eurostat

<sup>4</sup> OECD SOPEMI Finland 2009 p.8

<sup>5</sup> FI Annual Policy Report 2008 p4-7

*Table 5 Usual Residence by Country of Citizenship 2007*

<b>Top 10 Citizenship from third countries</b>	
Russian Federation	25 326
Somalia	4 623
China	3 382
Serbia and Montenegro	3 340
Iraq	3 045
Thailand	2 994
Turkey	2 886
Islamic Republic of Iran	2 602
United States of America	2 199
Afganistan	2 011

Source: Statistics Finland

Regarding the breakdown by sex it can be noted that approximately 60% of the Russian nationals and 86% of the Thai nationals are female. In the cases of Turkey, Iraq, India and Iran males outnumber the females by a certain margin.

Table 6 shows the country of birth of the usual residents, where it can be noted that a significant number of Russian nationals residing in Finland are either born here or elsewhere, but not in their country of citizenship.

*Table 6 Usual Residence by Country of Birth 2008*

<b>Top 10 Countries of birth (third countries)</b>	
Russian Federation	6 702
Somalia	6 352
China	5 982
Thailand	5 394
Iraq	5 294
Turkey	4 470
Vietnam	3 969
Iran	3 803
United States	3 761
Afghanistan	2 154

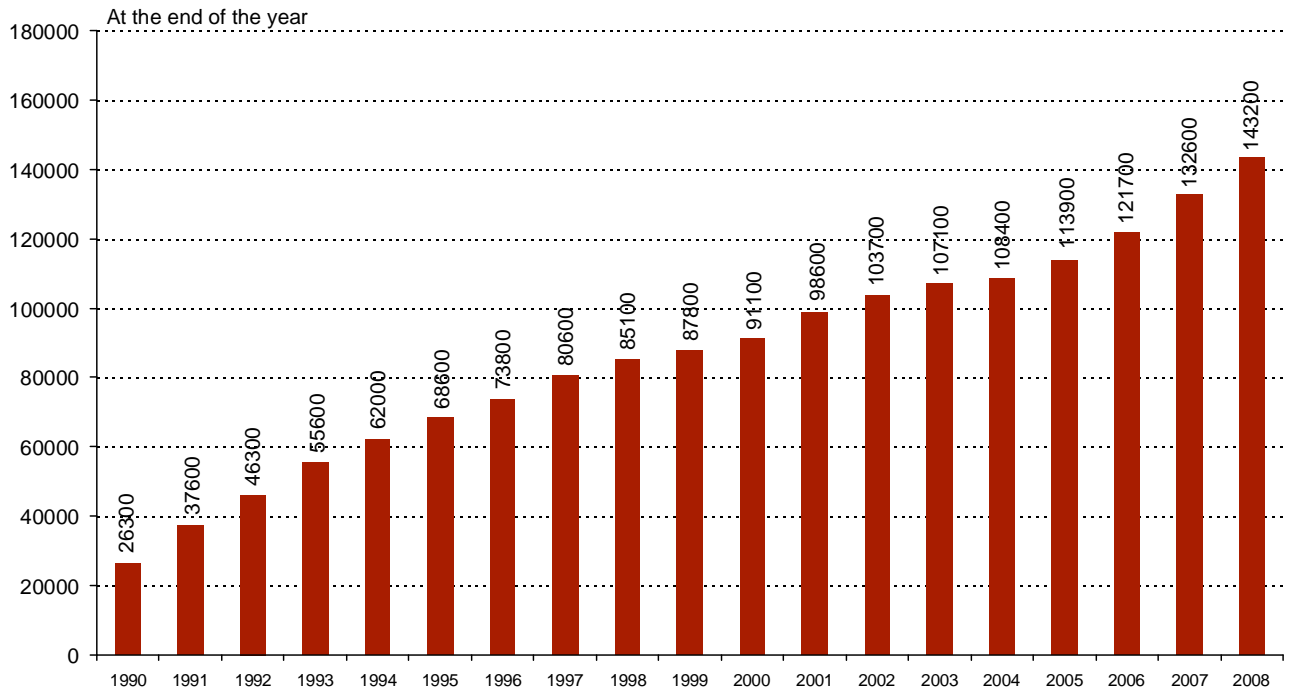
Source: Eurostat

Figure 2 below shows the steady increase in the number of foreign citizens in Finland, which is set to continue even in the coming years.



Figure 2 Foreign Citizens in Finland

## Foreign Citizens in Finland 1990–2008



Source: Population Information System

### 3.3 Acquisition of citizenship

A person can automatically acquire Finnish citizenship on the basis of birth, marriage of parents, adoption, or place of birth. In addition, Finnish citizenship can be acquired by application or by declaration to the authorities.

A reform of the Nationality Act is underway. The aim of the reform is to enhance social belonging and integration of those residing permanently in Finland by making acquiring Finnish nationality more flexible. One of the planned changes is to shorten the time the applicant has had to live in Finland in order to be eligible for citizenship. At the moment, the applicant has to be permanently resident and domiciled in Finland for the last six years prior to application. In some cases, the period of residence may be shorter; e.g. for persons with a Finnish spouse (the last four years), and for former Finnish citizens or citizens of another Nordic country the requirement is the last two years without interruption. For persons having a refugee status in Finland or a residence permit based on need for protection or stateless persons the required period of residence is the last four years with-

out interruption. Furthermore, the reform aims to make acquiring of citizenship easier for students who have completed their studies in Finland. This will be done by taking half of temporary residence into account when counting the period of residence. Also other requirements for naturalisation will be evaluated, particularly the language skills requirement along with the integrity requirement.

According to Statistics Finland 6,700 foreign nationals permanently residing in Finland were granted Finnish citizenship in 2008, which is 38% more than in 2007. The number of women receiving Finnish citizenship was 3,778 and men 2,904. In 2008, 5,900 citizens of non-EU countries received Finnish citizenship. Finnish citizenship was granted mostly to Russians (2,211), Somalis (595), Iraqis (379) and Serbians (370). Citizenship was granted to 800 EU-citizens.<sup>6</sup>

Table 7 above gives a comparative look at naturalized foreigners from 1999 onwards. Even here Russians form the largest group; regarding citizens of other EU Member States, Estonians and Swedes are the most frequently naturalized. Compared to 2007 there was a marked increase in naturalisations.

In 2008, 75 persons without citizenship, i.e. stateless, were naturalized. During the last couple of years this number has been quite steady; in the first part of the decade the figure was higher.

*Table 7 Naturalized foreigners (permanent residents) in 1999 – 2008, by former citizenship*

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total 1999– 2008
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,730</b>	<b>2,977</b>	<b>2,720</b>	<b>3,049</b>	<b>4,526</b>	<b>6,880</b>	<b>5,683</b>	<b>4,433</b>	<b>4,824</b>	<b>6,682</b>	<b>46,504</b>
<b>Europe, total</b>	<b>1,727</b>	<b>1,472</b>	<b>1,277</b>	<b>1419</b>	<b>3037</b>	<b>4447</b>	<b>3,693</b>	<b>2,553</b>	<b>2,779</b>	<b>3,943</b>	<b>26,347</b>
- EU-total (27)	614	541	489	481	741	1,108	684	498	508	795	<b>6,459</b>
- Europe, others	1,113	931	788	938	2,296	3,339	3,009	2,055	2,271	3,148	<b>19,888</b>
Russia	800	666	533	418	1,682	2,313	2,094	1,399	1,665	2,211	<b>13,781</b>
Somalia	1,208	346	222	204	209	165	414	445	464	595	<b>4,272</b>
Estonia	379	353	295	319	468	690	291	176	182	262	<b>3,415</b>
Iraq	140	185	224	217	165	447	346	405	443	379	<b>2,951</b>
Vietnam	71	155	164	205	133	209	82	64	79	78	<b>1,240</b>
without citizenship	227	149	174	204	76	163	89	53	62	75	<b>1,272</b>
Iran	53	102	58	68	124	225	233	213	218	329	<b>1,623</b>
Unknown	784	35	24	19	22	54	21	31	23	38	<b>1,051</b>
Serbia	0	4	14	41	32	338	346	248	232	370	<b>1,625</b>
Sweden	84	44	57	61	94	149	198	178	163	274	<b>1,302</b>
Turkey	115	85	82	112	141	171	128	110	102	195	<b>1,241</b>
China	123	92	106	136	126	95	60	57	68	84	<b>947</b>

Source: Statistics Finland

The Nationality Act of 2003 enabled persons who had lost Finnish citizenship or who are descendants of Finnish or former Finnish citizens to acquire Finnish citizenship by a procedure of declara-

<sup>6</sup> OECD Sopemi Finland 2009 p. 34 and FI Annual Policy Report 2008 p 20-21

tion, if the application was posted before June 2008. When the transition provisions of the Finnish Nationality Act were in force from 1 June 2003 to 31 May 2008, a total of 19.264 declarations for Finnish citizenship were introduced. The declarations were lodged by former Finnish citizens or their descendants. The declarations applied to a total of 21.841 persons. The applicant may in one declaration for citizenship apply for citizenship to minor children who are in his or her custody. It may be noted that 47.3 per cent of the declarations filed during the five-year period when the transition provision was in force were initiated during the last five months of the period of validity.<sup>7</sup>

Regarding the breakdown by sex table 8 below shows the trend from 1999 to 2008; it can be noted that a shift towards more women are being naturalized than men has occurred during the last decade. Regarding the figures for 2008 for the different nationalities, they can be found in the annex, although it can be mentioned that Russian and Estonian women outnumber men by over 2-to-1 in granted citizenships. In contrast Turkish men, outnumber women in the same fashion. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that e.g. marriage patterns between Finnish citizens and foreign citizens explain some of these figures.

*Table 8 Naturalized foreigners (permanent residents) in 1999– 2008, by gender*

Year	TOTAL	Males, %	Females, %
1999	<b>4,730</b>	52	48
2000	<b>2,977</b>	49	51
2001	<b>2,720</b>	50	50
2002	<b>3,049</b>	48	52
2003	<b>4,526</b>	43	57
2004	<b>6,880</b>	42	58
2005	<b>5,683</b>	42	58
2006	<b>4,433</b>	43	57
2007	<b>4,824</b>	43	57
2008	<b>6,682</b>	43	57

Source: Statistics Finland

<sup>7</sup> OECD Sopemi Finland 2009 p. 34

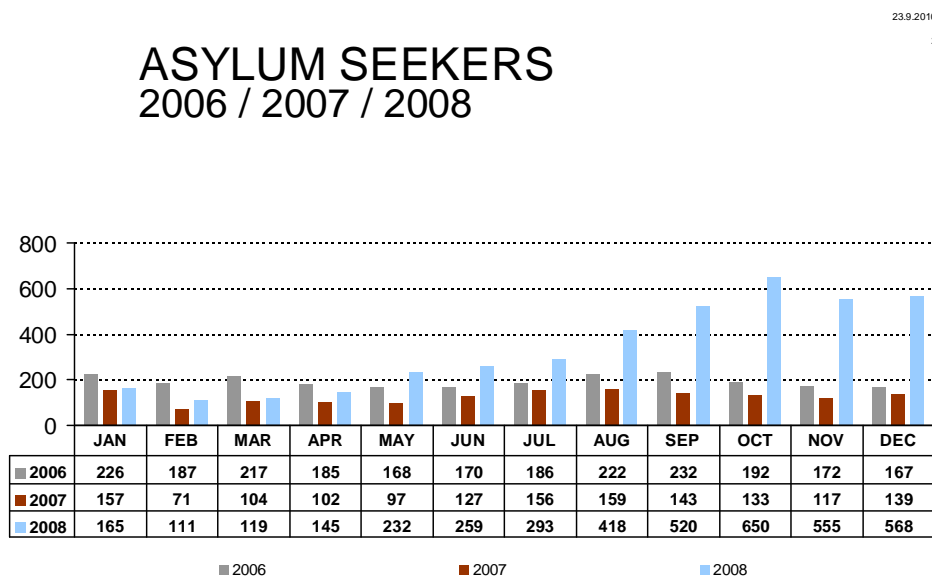
#### 4. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (ARTICLE 4)

##### 4.1 Applications for International Protection

As an introduction to the section on international protection it is especially worth repeating the issues mentioned in the section 2 regarding the differences in national and Eurostat data. The discrepancy between the figures most often is a result of the point in time when the data is extracted from the database. In the case of Eurostat e.g. the data on international protection decisions is sent to Eurostat on a quarterly basis, and Eurostat then adds the quarters together to produce a yearly figure. This figure is lower than the official national figure, which is validated in the spring of the following year (usually in mid-February). In the absence of comparable data according to the 862/2007 regulation from 2007 and before, the data presented in this section and also in others is national data in order to provide an overview of the trends.

In 2008, the number of asylum-seekers was 2,5 times higher compared to the year 2007: the total number of asylum-seekers was 4035. Table 9 below shows the monthly spread of the asylum applications, and it can be noted that Finland experienced a large increase from May onwards and peaking with 650 applicants in October.

Table 9 Asylum seekers 2006-2008 by month



Altogether 4035 asylum seekers in 2008

MIGRATIONSVÄRKET

FINNISH IMMIGRATION SERVICE

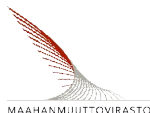
Table 10 below shows a comparison between the top-10 countries of origin of asylum seekers. The top five countries of origin for the asylum seekers in 2008 were Iraq (1255), Somalia (1181), Afghanistan (254), Russia (209) and Iran (144).

Table 10 Asylum Seekers 2006-2008 Nationalities

23.9.2010  
3

### ASYLUM SEEKERS Top 10 nationalities

2006		2007		2008	
2324 applicants, 75 different nationalities.		1505 applicants, 72 different nationalities.		4035 applicants, 78 different nationalities.	
• Bulgaria	463	• Iraq	327	• Iraq	1255
• * Serbia	286	• Russia	172	• Somalia	1181
• Iraq	225	• * Serbia	151	• Afghanistan	254
• Russia	176	• Afghanistan	96	• Russia	209
• Afghanistan	97	• Somalia	82	• Serbia*	172
• Belarus	97	• Iran	79	• Iran	144
• Somalia	92	• Turkey	73	• Bulgaria	82
• Iran	91	• Belarus	48	• Nigeria	77
• Nigeria	64	• Nigeria	41	• Belarus	68
• Turkey	41	• Congo Rep.	36	• Turkey	65



\*) Incl. asylum seekers from Serbia, former Yugoslavia, Serbia Montenegro and Kosovo

MAAHANMUUTTOVIRASTO

MIGRATIONSVERKET

FINNISH IMMIGRATION SERVICE

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Regarding the breakdown by sex in 2008, 77% of the asylum seekers were men and 23% women. A more detailed break-down regarding sex and nationality can be found in the annex. The age bracket of 18-34-year-olds, exhibits the highest number of asylum seekers, which has not changed compared to previous years.

The total number of withdrawn asylum applications in 2008 was 235 according to Eurostat data.<sup>8</sup>

No significant changes occurred regarding legislative or procedural issues in 2008; some initiatives and co-operation projects have been mentioned in the Annual Policy Report 2008.<sup>9</sup>

The asylum unit of the Finnish Immigration Service has in its annual statistical analysis given certain indications that the decisions on asylum given in Norway and especially, in Sweden might have had

<sup>8</sup> See annex for a more detailed break-down

<sup>9</sup> FI Annual Policy Report 2008 p. 13-15

an effect on the number of asylum seekers in Finland. This regards especially Iraqi and Somali asylum seekers.<sup>10</sup>

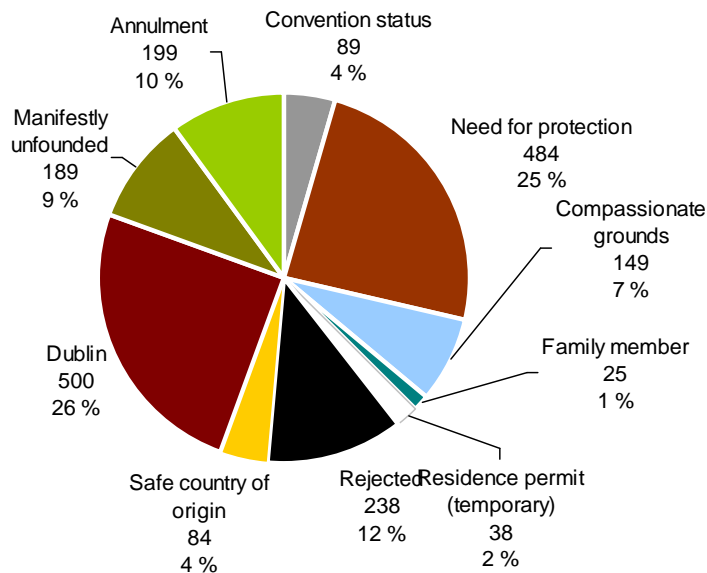
#### 4.2 Decisions on International Protection

Compared to 2007 the total amount of decisions made is almost the same in 2008. Figure 3 shows the outcome of the decisions according to the different categories.

Figure 3 Decisions on Asylum 2008

### DECISIONS ON ASYLUM 2008

23.9.2010  
6



Decisions for altogether 1995 persons.



MIGRATIONSVERKET

FINNISH IMMIGRATION SERVICE

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Table 11 below provides a comparison with the decisions made in 2006 and 2007. The largest increase compared to 2007 can be seen in Dublin-decisions and the largest decrease in the manifestly unfounded applications. Compared to 2007, there was a slight decrease in the amount of positive decisions in 2008, although Convention status was granted 89 times compared to 68 in 2007. In 2008 51% of the decisions were negative.

When looking at the decisions granted with regards to nationality, it can be seen that Convention status was granted mainly only to Iraqi (2008: 42 2007:18) and Russian nationals (2008: 34 2007:

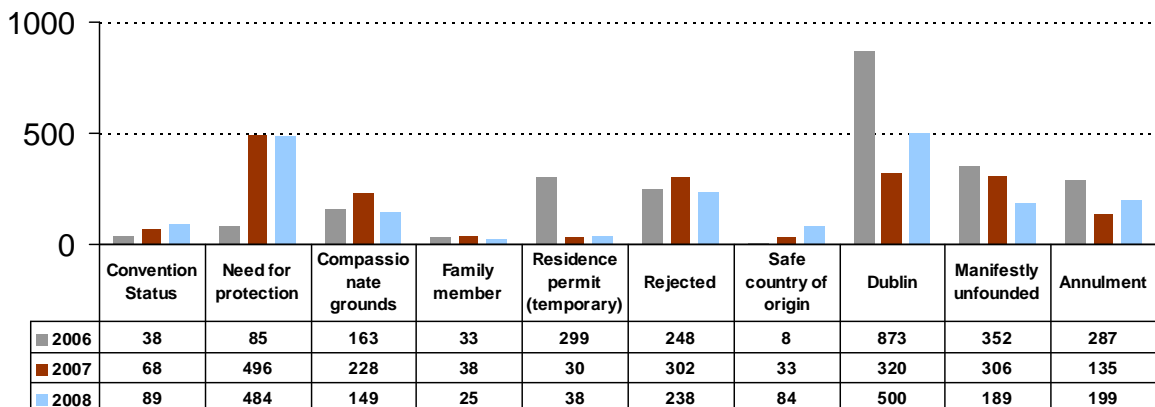
<sup>10</sup> Finnish Immigration Service Turvapaikkayksikön tilastoanalyysi 2008

27), with Iraqi nationals amounting to an increase in the figures for 2008. Concerning subsidiary protection the main nationalities in 2007 and 2008 were Iraq and Somalia, with Iraq being on top in 2008, compared to a reversed situation in 2007.<sup>11</sup>

Table 11 Decisions on asylum 2006-2008

23.9.2010  
8

## DECISIONS ON ASYLUM 2006 / 2007 / 2008



MIGRATIONSVERKET

FINNISH IMMIGRATION SERVICE

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Regarding resettled refugees, Finland has for over twenty years been receiving quota refugees in partnership with UNHCR. A quota refugee is someone whose security is considered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) not to be granted either in the country where he/she is situated, or by return to the country of origin. To receive quota refugees is a voluntary assignment that is principally offered to any country.

The Finnish Aliens Act lays down the definition of 'refugee quota' and the requirements and procedures for admitting aliens to Finland under the refugee quota. Refugees admitted to Finland under the refugee quota on proposal of UNHCR are all granted refugee status which allows them to integrate in the national community. The Finnish authorities interview most of the refugees in their first country of asylum before granting them a residence permit.

<sup>11</sup> Finnish Immigration Service Turvapaikkayksikön tilastoanalyysi p. 6-9

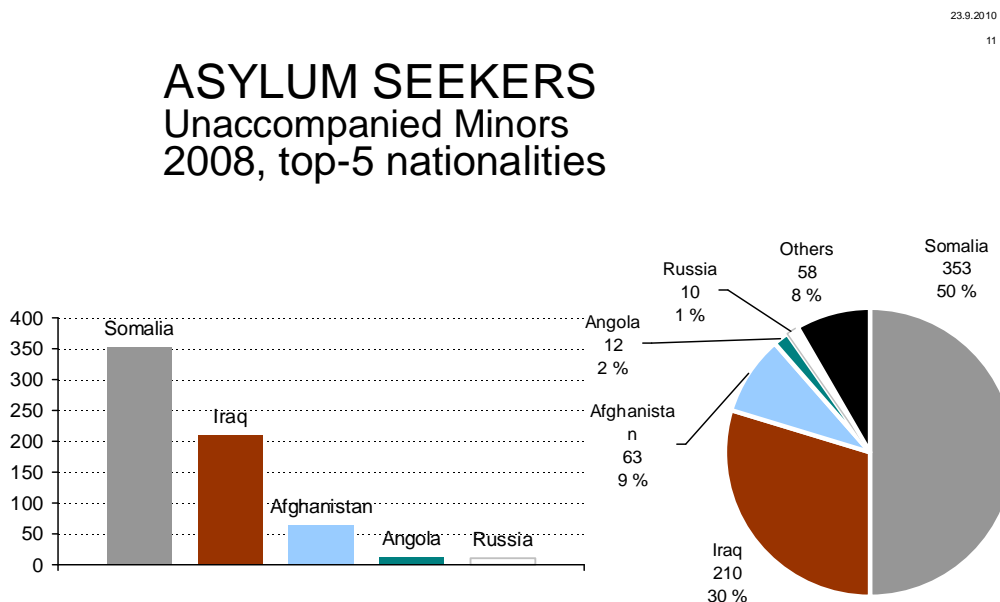
The Finnish Parliament decides the size of the annual resettlement quota. The annual quotas have gradually grown in Finland after the mid-1990:ies. Since 2001 the resettlement quota has been 750 refugees per year. The biggest groups selected in 2008 were from Myanmar, Iraq, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Iran.<sup>12</sup>

A more detailed look at the 2008 decisions on asylum regarding age and sex can be found in the annex, along with data on withdrawals, final decisions and resettled refugees. For the lack of comparability, they are not further elaborated upon here. The decisions regarding unaccompanied minors are presented in the next section.

### 4.3 Unaccompanied Minors

Unaccompanied minors as asylum seekers made the headlines in 2008 as the number of applicants rose from 165 applicants in 2007 to 706, an increase of nearly 700 percent. The examination of asylum statistics for 2008 reveals that this growth was a natural consequence of the increased number of adult asylum seekers, a group which has witnessed steady growth since May 2008. The typical unaccompanied minor seeking asylum in Finland is a boy of 15 to 17 years from Somalia, Iraq or Afghanistan.<sup>13</sup> Table 12 below shows the top-5 nationalities.

Table 12 Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers 2008 Top-5



<sup>12</sup> OECD Sopemi Finland 2009 p. 18-19

<sup>13</sup> FI Annual Policy Report 2008 p. 16



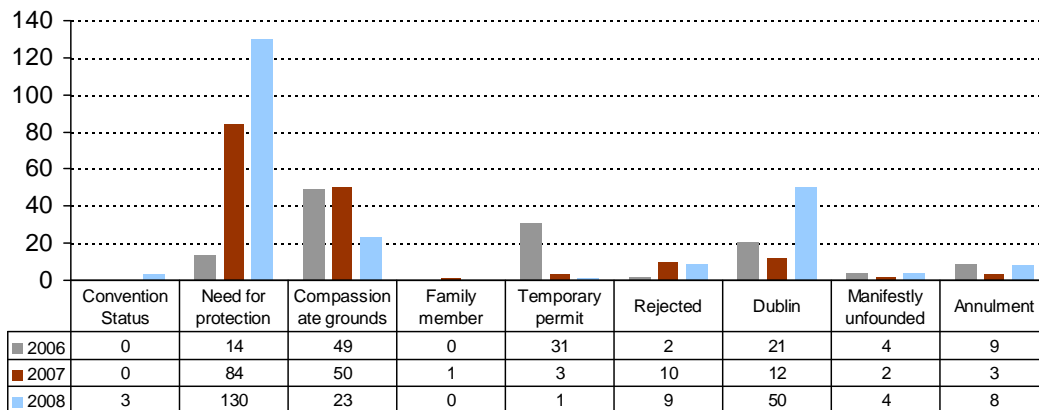
Source Finnish Immigration Service

In 2008 a total of 228 decisions were issued for unaccompanied minors seeking asylum, of which 157 were positive<sup>14</sup>. A total of 50 Dublin decisions were made concerning unaccompanied minors. These Dublin decisions chiefly concerned applicants posing as minors in Finland while they had actually registered as adults in another Member State.<sup>15</sup>

Table 13 Decisions on asylum regarding unaccompanied minors 2006-2008

23.9.2010  
13

## DECISIONS ON ASYLUM Unaccompanied Minors 2006 / 2007 / 2008



Altogether **228** decisions were made in 2008.  
Note! Some of the minors have turned 18 during the process.

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

### 4.4 Dublin Transfers

Finland made 1083 taking back or taking charge requests in 2008, this is almost 2,5 times more than in 2007. As of mid-February 2009, about 60% of the requests have been accepted. Traditionally the destination countries for Finnish requests have been Sweden, Germany, Norway and United Kingdom; in 2008 the order was Italy, Greece, Sweden, Malta and Germany. The magnitude of the shift can best be described by noting that 50% of the requests went to Italy, Greece and Malta in 2008; where as in 2007 the figure was about 17% and in 2006 less than 6%.

<sup>14</sup> Out of the 63 negative decisions 50 were issued within the Dublin procedure. Nine minors seeking asylum were granted a completely negative decision after they were found by age determination to be adults and had no credible grounds for persecution.

<sup>15</sup> FI Annual Policy Report 2008 p.16

The requests to Finland from other member states have decreased in the recent years; in 2008 Finland received 217 requests of which Finland accepted 137. In 2007 Finland received 286 requests, down from 363 in 2006.<sup>16</sup>

Regarding 2008, the detailed data on Dublin transfers can be found in the annex.

## **5. PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL ENTRY AND STAY (ARTICLE 5)**

### **5.1 Refusals**

In 2008, a total number of 1777 persons were refused entry at the external border (land, sea, air) according to Eurostat data. The figure for 2007 was 1424 person based on data from the Finnish Border Guard. However it must be noted that Finnish Border Guard data for 2008 only shows 1355 persons who have been refused entry in 2008 so therefore it is not possible to make exact comparisons to 2008 as the article 5 data differs from the national classifications. Russian nationals are by far the largest group, accounting for 1535 of the 1777 persons in 2008 (1156 of 1355 according to data from the Finnish Border Guard) and 1228 of the 1424 persons in 2007.

In 2008, most persons were refused entry at the land border, with the most common ground for refusal being in 753 cases “No sufficient means for subsistence”. A more detailed breakdown can be found in the annex for 2008.

### **5.2 Apprehensions**

In 2008, the amount of apprehensions exhibited a marked increase compared to 2007, as a total of 5374 persons according to Eurostat data (5404 persons according to National Bureau of Investigation data) were apprehended and found to be illegally present, compared to 1966 persons (National Bureau of Investigation data) in 2007. The main nationalities in 2008 were Iraq (1435 persons), Somalia (1113 persons) and Russian Federation (255 persons). In 2007 Russian Federation (363 persons) and Iraq (305 persons) were the largest nationalities with regard to apprehensions.

The marked rise in the number of apprehensions is also a result of increased surveillance, as well as the fact that Finland received a far larger number of asylum seekers in 2008 compared to 2007.

In 2008 the government also published the “Safety First – Internal Security Programme” which objective, among other things, is to increase co-operation between authorities in order to prevent and detect illegal immigration to Finland. This is further elaborated upon in the Annual Policy Report 2008.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Finnish Immigration Service Turvapaikkayksikön tilastoanalyysi 2008 p.4

<sup>17</sup> FI Annual Policy Report 2008 p.22

## 6. RESIDENCE PERMITS AND RESIDENCE OF THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS (ARTICLE 6)

2008 saw an increase in the number of residence permits issued compared to 2007. For the sake of comparison, data from the Finnish Immigration Service is used in the tables below to illustrate the development. The detailed breakdowns for 2008 according to Article 6 of Regulation 862/2007 can be found in the annex.

Table 14 presents the top-10 nationalities of residence permit applicants; Russian nationals make up for the largest group, followed by China and India.

*Table 14 Applicants for a residence permit*

### Applicants for a residence permit Top ten 2007 - 2008

2007		2008	
Russia	5473	Russia	5 320
India	1316	China	17 51
China	1282	India	1 595
Somalia	1255	Somalia	1 251
Ukraine	1151	Ukraine	922
Turkey	925	Turkey	894
United States	759	United States	690
Serbia	475	Nigeria	522
Afghanistan	410	Iraq	521
Iraq	391	Thailand	500
<b>Applicants total</b>	<b>20371</b>	<b>Applicants total</b>	<b>22 866</b>

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Tables 15 and 16 show the issued residence permits according to the national permit categories for 2007 and 2008. It can be noted that the total amount of residence permits issued exhibits an increase of over 2000 permits in 2008 compared to 2007. Most notably there have been larger increases in the permits issued for employed persons and students, as well as slightly smaller increases in the permits issued for family reasons.

No specific legal or institutional developments influenced the number of issued residence permits in 2008; it is worth mentioning that one strand in the national political debate, which is presented in more detail in the Annual Policy Report, focused on the need for work-related immigration. The government set up a working group around the issue with the aim of investigating how to improve the entry for foreigners, especially third-country-nationals to the Finnish labour market.<sup>18</sup> The report of the group, with recommendations for specific measures was not due until May of 2009, so it did not influence the figures for 2008. In 2008, the Finnish economy was performing strongly, which in itself attracted more foreigners.

Table 15 Issued residence permits 2008

### Decisions in 2008

Certain groups according to the grounds of application	Positive	Negative	Total
Employed persons	5 924	948	6 872
Self-employed persons	67	10	77
Persons of Finnish origin	396	98	494
Students	4 496	319	4 815
Other grounds	2 917	160	3 077
Family tie, marriage etc.	1 984	268	2 270
Family tie, children	2 759	244	3 003
Family tie, others	323	420	743
Family members to Finnish citizens	714	115	829
<b>Total</b>	<b>19 580</b>	<b>2 600</b>	<b>22 180</b>

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

<sup>18</sup> FI Annual Policy Report 2008 p.18

Table 16 Issued Residence Permits 2007

## Decisions in 2007

Certain groups according to the grounds of application	Positive	Negative	Total
Employed persons	5280	570	5850
Self-employed persons	68	13	81
Persons of Finnish origin	374	33	407
Students	3810	156	3966
Other grounds	2710	155	2865
Family tie, marriage etc.	1731	326	2057
Family tie, children	2359	218	2577
Family tie, others	231	454	685
Family members to Finnish citizens	708	106	814
<b>Total</b>	<b>17271</b>	<b>2031</b>	<b>19302</b>

MAAHANMUUTTOKIRJASTO

MIGRATIONSVERKET

FINNISH IMMIGRATION SERVICE

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

The total number of valid residence permits at the end of 2008 was according to Eurostat data 107 015. The majority of these permits were over 12 months of duration. Table 17 below shows the top-10 nationalities, with Russian nationals again being by far the largest group.

Table 17 Valid residence permits in 2008 by nationality

Top 10 third countries (overall total)	
Russian Federation	34290
China	4957
Somalia	4901
Thailand	4333
Iraq	3621
Turkey	3373
India	3140
United States	3043
Iran	2685
Vietnam	2490

Source: Eurostat

Regarding the number of long-term residents according to the EU-definition, Finland only has a total of 12 persons registered according to that.

More detailed information regarding the changing of immigration status in 2008 can be found in the annex.

## **7. RETURNS (ARTICLE 7)**

Regarding returns, the comparison between 2008 Regulation data and national data from previous years is also complicated. Tables 18 and 19 show the figures from 2008 according to Eurostat data.

*Table 18 Third country nationals order to leave / returned following an order to leave 2008*

	Third country nationals ordered to leave	Third country nationals returned following an order to leave
<b>TOTAL</b>	1 774	912
Stateless	13	8
Unknown	78	28

Source: Eurostat

*Table 19 Top-10 Third Countries 2008*

Top 10 third countries	Third country nationals ordered to leave	(of which) Third country nationals returned following an order to leave
1. Russian Federation	403	265
2. Iraq	200	132
3. Somalia	173	62
4. Serbia	75	37
5. Nigeria	73	32
6. Turkey	69	18
7. China	52	25
8. Iran	48	24
9. Afghanistan	33	6
10. Algeria	29	15

Source: Eurostat

According to data from the National Bureau of Investigation in 2007, 1294 persons were ordered to leave and 1054 were returned; in 2008 1465 persons were ordered to leave and 1094 were returned. These figures do not point to a marked increase. Russian nationals form the largest group, with countries of origin of asylum seekers coming next. Regarding Eurostat data another reference year is needed in order to see how those figures compare to each other and national data.

### **7.1 Relationship between refusals, apprehensions and returns**

Regarding refusals and returns, Russian nationals form the largest group; which can be considered natural with Finland being a Schengen-border country and the large number of Russian nationals

coming and residing in Finland. When it comes to apprehensions, it can clearly be noted that the largest groups are formed by asylum seeking nationalities. These nationalities are also well represented in the returns right after the Russian nationals. Compared to the large number of apprehended Somalis and Iraqis, the numbers who are ordered to leave or have been returned are very low. The most probable explanation is that many of the apprehended or found to be illegally present have either left the country, lodged an asylum application or are awaiting an order to leave.

## **8. OPTIONAL DATA**

### **8.1 Families by country of birth of spouses/parents 2008**

Presented in an annex prepared by Statistics Finland is a table over families by country of birth of spouses/parents. Regarding the foreign nationalities, former USSR i.e. present Russian Federation tops the list, followed by Sweden, Estonia, Thailand and former Yugoslavia.

### **8.2 Assisted Voluntary Return**

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) assists return migration in Finland. According to its statistics, in 2008 IOM Helsinki assisted 37 voluntary returns of refugees from Finland, the main countries being Kosovo, Iraq and Iran. A more detailed look can be found in the data prepared by the IOM in the annex. For further information please consult the FI national report on Programmes and Strategies in the EU Member States Fostering Assisted Return To and Reintegration in Third Countries.

## **9. LITERATURE**

EMN National Contact Point: Finland (2009) Annual Policy Report 2008

EMN National Contact Point: Finland (2009) Annual Report on Asylum Migration Statistics 2007

Finnish Immigration Service (2009): Turvapaikkayksikön tilastoanalyysi 2008 (Statistical analysis of the Asylum Unit)

Finnish Immigration Service (2009): Kansalaisuusyksikön tilastoanalyysi 2008 (Statistical Analysis of the Nationality Unit)

Finnish Immigration Service (2009): Maahanmuuttoyksikön tilastoanalyysi 2008 (Statistical Analysis of the Immigration Unit)

OECD Sopemi International Migration Outlook 2009: Finland

Statistics Finland (2009): Migration 2008

### **ANNEX(ES)**

- FI EMN Template Tables (already provided)
- Families by country of birth of spouses/parents 2008 (Statistics Finland)
- Assisted voluntary return 2008 (International Organization for Migration)