

European Migration Network
ANNUAL REPORT ON ASYLUM AND MIGRATION STATISTICS
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1. INTRODUCTION

This report aims to give an overview of the migration and asylum statistics in Finland in 2006. The first section gives short introduction and outlines the methodology used for preparing the report. In Section 2 “Asylum” an overview of the numbers of asylum applications and decisions is given. Comprehensive tables on asylum issues have been added to Annexes at the end of the report. Section 3 “Migration” analyses the trends of migration to and from Finland as well as outlines the legal, political and procedural developments in this area during 2006. Section 4 “Refused, Apprehended and Removed” gives a brief overview on illegal immigration to Finland.

In year 2006, the number of asylum seekers declined over one third from previous year. Also the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors declined with half. In all, 38 persons received asylum (Convention status) in Finland. Most of these persons were citizens of Russia originating from Chechnya and citizens of Iraq. In all, 580 asylum seekers received residence permit, thus over half of these permits were only temporary. Majority of the negative asylum decisions were based on Dublin II Regulation.

As in previous years, immigration to Finland was higher than emigration from Finland in 2006. Total number of foreigners in Finland has grown steadily and in 2006 there were over 120 000 foreigners living in Finland of which over 80 000 were third-country nationals. Russians formed the largest group of foreigners in Finland in 2006. Number of residence permits issued in 2006 increased slightly from 2005.

Illegal immigration is still only a minor problem in Finland if compared to many other EU-countries. Number of refusals at border was, however, increasing in 2006, due to the increasing traffic from third countries to Finland. Numbers of apprehended aliens illegally present in Finland and numbers of removed aliens were both decreasing in 2006. This correlates with the decrease in the number of asylum seekers and negative asylum decisions in 2006.

1.1 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 format for studies of EMN. The starting point for this report was the statistical data provided by Eurostat. However, during the analysis of the data it

was noticed that there are some differences between Finland's national, official statistics and figures given by Eurostat. Therefore, the source of data is indicated separately for each table or figure. For different sections of this report, sources used for data are as follows:

Section 2. Asylum: Finnish Immigration Service

Section 3. Migration: Statistics Finland, Finnish Immigration Service and Eurostat

Section 4. Refusals, Apprehensions and Removals: Border Guard Headquarters (refusals) and Eurostat (apprehensions, removals)

Throughout the report, the figures for 2006 are as a general rule compared to the figures of 2005 only. This is due to the fact that in May 2004 new Aliens Act came into effect.¹ Therefore, the figures for decisions made in 2004 are not entirely comparable with the figures for 2005 and 2006.

Please note that Directorate of Immigration has changed its name from the beginning of 2008 and is now called Finnish Immigration Service.

¹ Aliens Act is available in English at <http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2004/en20040301.pdf>

2. ASYLUM

NB! The statistics for asylum decisions include all first instance (Finnish Immigration Service, in 2006 Directorate of Immigration) decisions. First instance decisions can be appealed to the Administrative Court of Helsinki and the Supreme Administrative Court. The decisions annulled by court are sent back to the Finnish Immigration Service for reprocessing. It is to be noted that the total number of asylum decisions includes also the decisions made after reprocessing.

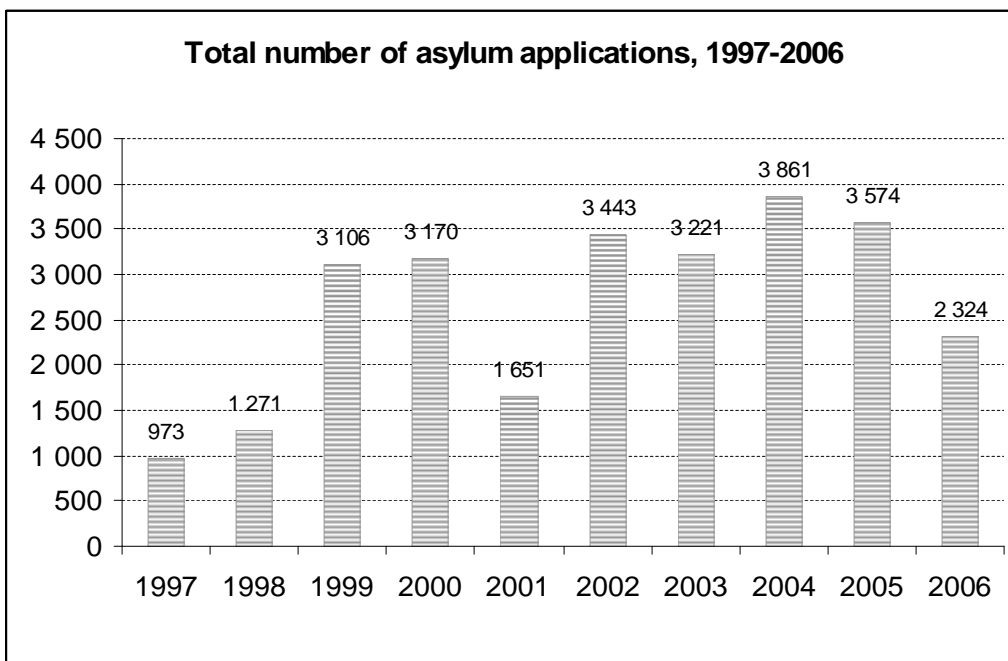
2.1 Analysis and interpretation of asylum statistics

2.1.1 Trends in asylum applications

Trends in first-time asylum applications (on the basis of persons) in 2006 compared to the previous year. Are these trends related to legislative or administrative developments/ changes?

Altogether 2 324 people from 75 different countries sought asylum in Finland during 2006. This number showed a decline of over one-third when compared to the previous year and nearly 40 % when compared to 2004.

Figure 1



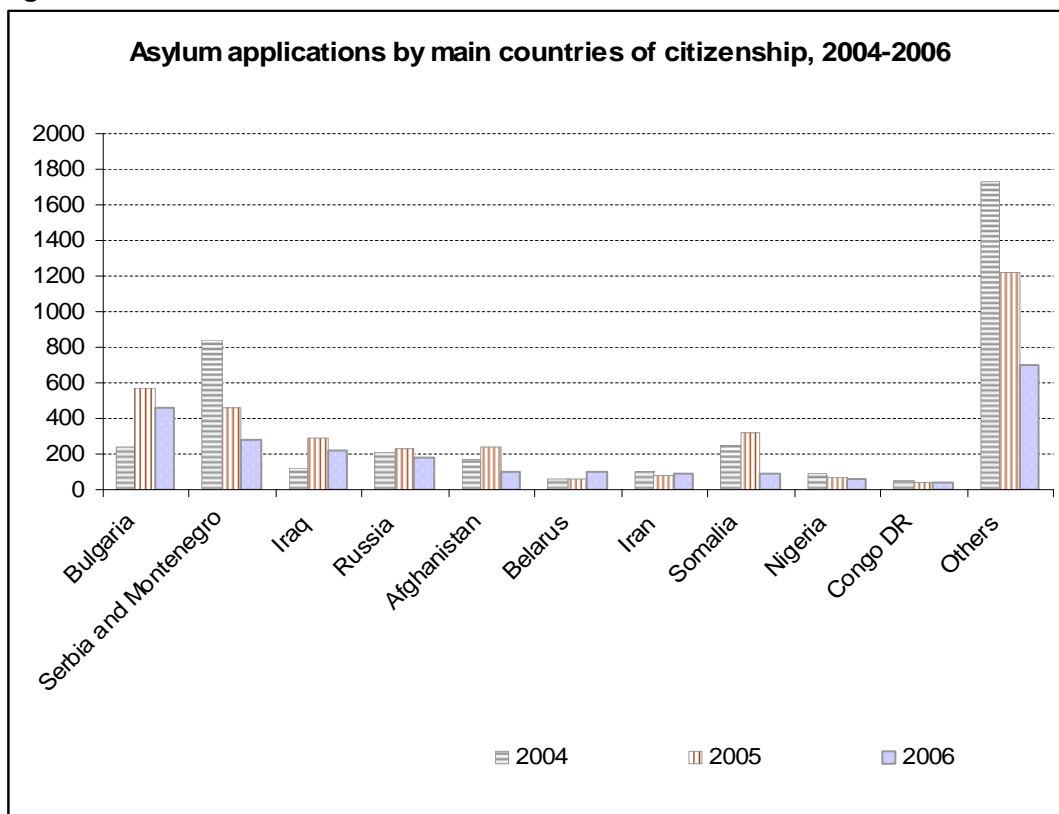
Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Approximately 35 % of all asylum applicants were female and 65 % male. Majority of asylum seekers belonged to age group 18-35 years.

Number of asylum applications by unaccompanied minors declined by half from 2005. Altogether 112 unaccompanied minors sought asylum in Finland during 2006, compared to the 220 in 2005. Majority of these unaccompanied minors were 16-17 years old boys (see Annex 1).

In 2006, the largest numbers of asylum-seekers came from Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, Iraq, Russia and Afghanistan. Figure below shows the ten nationalities with the highest numbers of asylum applications in 2006 compared with the two previous years. In 2006, nearly 70 % (1620 persons) of all asylum seekers came from these top ten countries. In 2005, this ratio was 72 % (2567 persons).

Figure 2



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Seven of the ten nationalities with the highest numbers of applications in 2006 belonged to the top ten list also in 2005 (Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Iran, Iraq, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Somalia). For most of the countries, number of asylum seekers declined from 2005. Among top ten countries the only significant exception on this was Belarus (2005: 57 applicants; 2006: 97 applicants).

As in 2005, the largest numbers of asylum applications were made by the citizens of Bulgaria. In 2006, altogether 463 persons from Bulgaria sought asylum in Finland. Most of these people belonged to Roma minority. The second highest number of applications came from the citizens of Serbia and Montenegro. Almost all of these applicants originated from the (then) province of Kosovo. Third, fourth and fifth largest number of asylum seekers were from Iraq (225 persons), Russia (176) and Afghanistan and Belarus (97 persons from both countries).

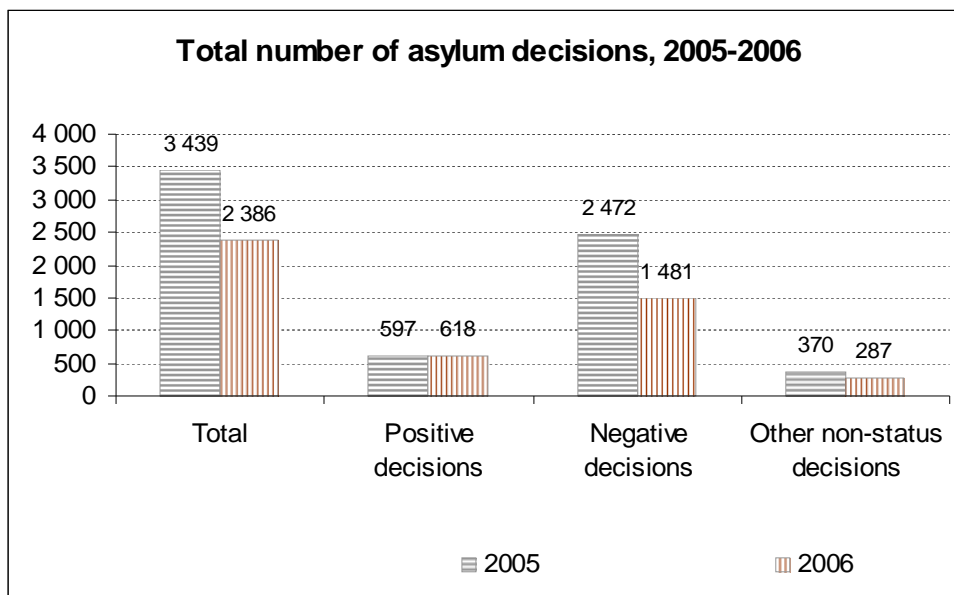
For more detailed information, please see Annex 2 for total figures of asylum applications by nationality.

2.1.2 Positive decisions

What is the total number of first and final positive decisions (again on the basis of persons) in 2006, disaggregated by the citizenship of the person concerned? Please explain changes in the total number of positive decisions in comparison to the previous year.

Total number of asylum decisions declined 30 % from 2005 to 2006. As illustrated in Figure 3, the number of negative decisions declined quite significantly whereas number of positive decisions increased slightly from 2005 to 2006.

Figure 3



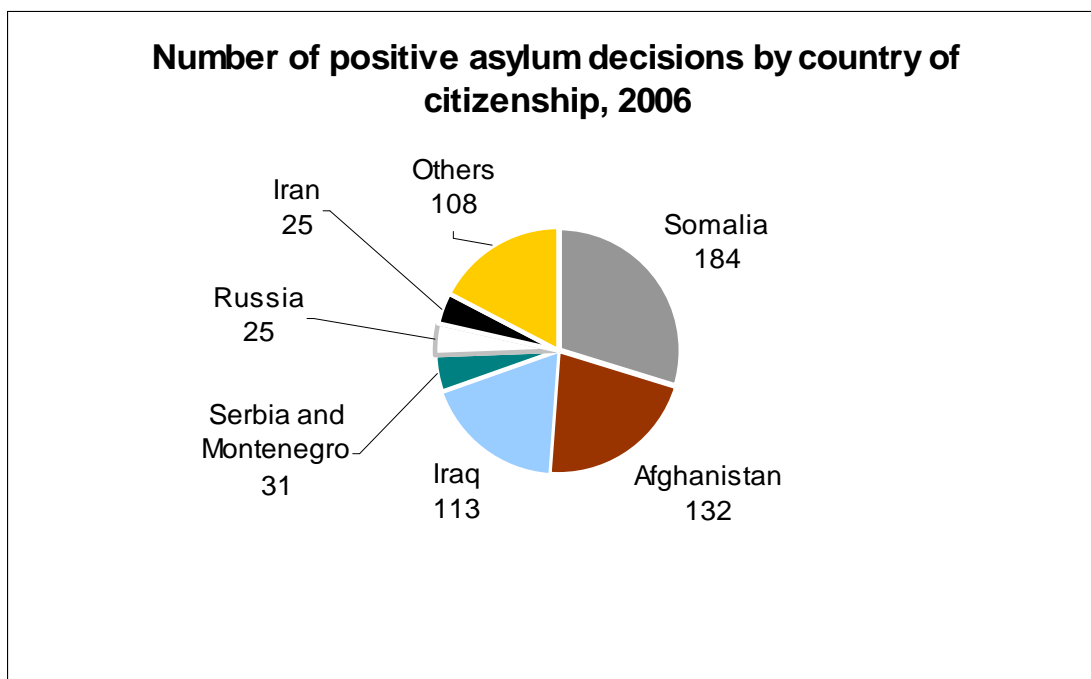
Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Of all decisions given in 2006, positive decisions constitute 26 %, negative decisions 62 % and other non-status decisions 12 %. One reason for high amount of negative decisions in years 2005

and 2006 was the relatively high number of asylum seekers from Bulgaria. None of these applicants received positive decision in 2005-2006.

In 2006, the highest numbers of positive decisions were given to citizens of Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq, followed by Serbia and Montenegro, Russia and Iran.

Figure 4



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Most of the positive decisions given to citizens of Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq were temporary residence permits. For Somalia, this figure was 121, for Afghanistan 92 and for Iraq 81. Most of those asylum applicants from Serbia and Montenegro who received a positive decision, total 24, received residence permit on compassionate grounds. For citizens of Iran, the most common reason for positive decision was need of protection (18 decisions) and for citizens of Russia, asylum (Convention status, 20 decisions). Tables 1 and 2 below show the numbers of positive decisions in 2005 and 2006.

Table 1 Positive asylum decisions, 2005

YEAR 2005	Total	Geneva Conv. Stat. Granted	Humanitarian Status and all other types of subs. protect.	Other
TOTAL	597	12	300	285
Somalia	158	4	47	107
Afghanistan	100	0	33	67
Iraq	95	0	22	73
Serbia and Montenegro	48	0	42	6
Russia	39	3	33	3
Others	157	5	123	29

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Table 2 Positive asylum decisions, 2006

YEAR 2006	Total	Geneva Conv. Stat. Granted	Humanitarian Status and all other types of subs. protect.	Other
TOTAL	618	38	248	332
Somalia	184	0	61	123
Afghanistan	132	0	39	93
Iraq	113	12	19	82
Serbia and Montenegro	31	0	24	7
Russia	25	20	5	0
Iran	25	0	23	2
Others	108	6	77	25

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

For detailed information, please see the Annex 3 for total numbers of asylum decisions by nationality.

2.1.3 Changes in the statuses regularly granted to particular citizenship groups

When compared with the previous year, can you observe changes in the statuses regularly granted to particular citizenship groups? How do you explain these changes or continuity?

The total number of Geneva Convention statuses granted increased from previous year (2005: 12 persons; 2006: 38 persons). Out of the 38 persons who were granted asylum, 20 were citizens of Russia – practically all of them originated from Chechnya – and 12 were from Iraq. In 2005, only three citizens of Russia were granted asylum whereas no asylums were granted to citizens of Iraq.

Even it is not maybe very reasonable to analyse changes in such small numbers, some explanations can be identified. Changes in profiles of asylum seekers explain part of this phenomenon,

particularly for Russian citizens. For citizens of Iraq, the explanation is the worsened security situation in their home country and also changes in profiles of asylum seekers.

There have been some minor changes in other categories of positive decisions. All asylum applications are examined individually and this explains changes in figures to some extent. For citizens of Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq numbers of positive decisions in category "Other" has increased. This indicates the increased number of temporary residence permits granted to these nationals. These temporary residence permits were granted to those asylum seekers who were not entitled to international protection but who could not be returned to their home countries for technical reasons.

2.2 Contextual interpretations (legal, political and international factors)

2.2.1 New or amended laws effective in 2006

Please describe briefly any new or amended laws on asylum and relevant case law effective in 2006. Have there been important changes in comparison with the previous year?

The current Aliens Act came into effect in May 2004. In December 2006 some changes to this Act were introduced concerning some authorities' rights for obtaining information from the reception centres concerning unaccompanied asylum seeking-minors and tracing of parents or other caretakers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors. However, these changes came into effect only in February 2007.

2.2.2 Procedural changes effective in 2006

Please explain briefly administrative or legal changes in the application, decision, or appeals process contributing to any numerical changes. Have there been important changes in comparison with the previous year?

There were no major procedural changes in 2006. Concerning asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Directorate of Immigration started in December 2006 giving negative decisions for those asylum seekers who were not originating from the conflict areas of Afghanistan and did not have any individual reasons entitling them protection. This was due to the improved possibilities for the Finnish Police to implement returns to Afghanistan (please see 2.1.3).

2.2.3 European and international factors

Can you identify European / international factors explaining certain changes regarding asylum trends in 2006 in your Member State? Has the situation changed in comparison with the previous year?

The decline in numbers of asylum seekers in Finland followed the common trend that has been visible also in other western industrialized countries for some years. Possible reasons for this trend are the good functioning of Dublin II Regulation and tightened border control.

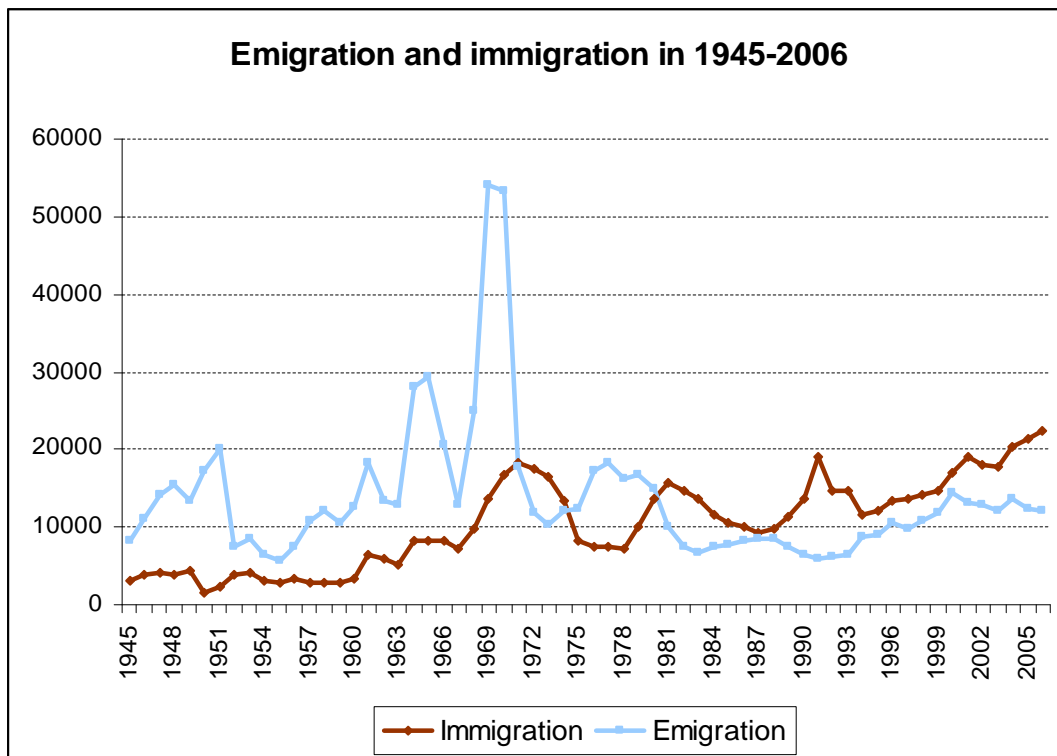
3. MIGRATION

3.1 Analysis and interpretation of migration statistics

3.1.1 Migration Flows

How did migration flows in your Member State change compared to the previous years, from 2002 onwards? Please explain the reasons for changes. Did the migration trends observed in this field reflect immigration policies at the time?

Figure 5



Source: Statistics Finland

Emigration has been common among the Finns almost throughout the 20th century and it is calculated that about a million people have left the country during that time. Many of them have gone to Sweden, especially during 1960's and 1970's, because of the higher wages and standard of living that existed there. Although many of these have since returned, it is estimated that at the moment there are about 300 000 people living abroad who were born in Finland. Positive net migration is a quite recent phenomenon in Finland. Up to the end of the 1980's, most immigrants coming to Finland were return migrants from Sweden. The situation changed radically during the 1990's when the number of foreign citizens residing in Finland quadrupled.²

² NCP Finland, Annual Report on Asylum and Migration for Finland 2004 and 2005, Section A, Migration Issues

Table 3 Migration flows, 2002-2006

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Legally resident population (1st January)	5 194 901	5 206 295	5 219 732	5 236 611	5 255 580
Recorded immigration	18 113	17 838	20 333	21 355	22 451
Recorded emigration	12 891	12 083	13 656	12 369	12 107
Net migration	5 222	5 755	6 677	8 986	10 344

Source: Eurostat

Between 2002 and 2006, as well as between 2005 and 2006, emigration flow from Finland did not significantly change but immigration has increased quite much. As illustrated in Table 3, compared to 2002, approximately 24 % more immigrants moved to Finland in 2006 and compared to 2005 Finland received approximately 5 % more immigrants in 2006. Regarding the number of emigrants, the emigration decreased slightly between 2002 and 2006 as well as between 2005 and 2006. Consequently, Finland's net migration has increased several thousands in the period between 2002 and 2006.

3.1.2 Population by Citizenship in 2006

What were the largest groups (by citizenship) of third-country nationals in 2006? If significant changes occurred in reference to the size of particular groups of third-country nationals in 2006, what were the underlying causes of these changes (e.g. legal, political, economical, other)?

Figure 6

Source: Statistics Finland

A slow increase of the number of foreigners began to take place during the 1980's. This was followed by a "wave of immigration" beginning in 1990, when the Finnish-speaking Ingrians from the former Soviet Union were granted the status of "returning emigrants". This led to an immediate increase in immigration and made a significant contribution to the rise in the numbers of foreigners resident in Finland. The steepest annual rise of all was recorded in 1991, over 11000 persons, the largest groups among whom were the Ingrians and asylum seekers from Somalia.³

Table 4 Population by main groups of citizenship, 2006

		31.12.2006
Total population		5 276 955
Nationals		5 155 216
Other EU-25 nationals (24)		41 373
of which EU-10 nationals		20 838
Total non-EU-25 nationals		80 366
of which EU-2 (BG, RO) nationals		1 089
<i>Most important third-country nationals:</i>		
	Russia	25 326
	Somalia	4 623
	China	3 382
	Serbia and Montenegro	3 340
	Iraq	3 045
	Thailand	2 994
	Turkey	2 886
	Iran	2 602
	United States of America	2 199
	Afghanistan	2 011
Others		27 958

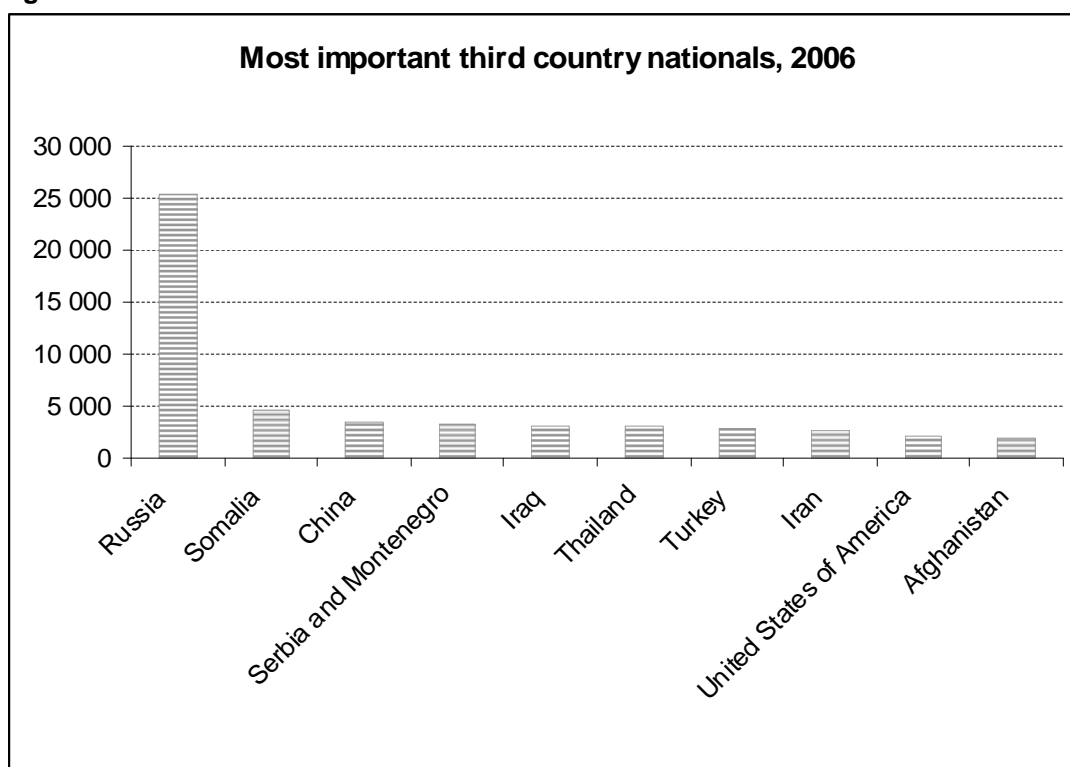
Source: Eurostat/Statistics Finland

The number of foreigners living in Finland at the end of 2006 was 121 739, of which one third was EU-nationals and two thirds non-EU nationals. The foreigner proportion of the resident population was 2,3 percent and the number of foreigners increased 7 887 persons in the course of that year. At the end of 2006 the number of persons born outside Finland was 187 910 and the number of native speakers of other languages (than Finnish, Swedish and Saami) was 156 827.⁴

³ Tilastokeskus (2007) Ulkomaalaiset ja siirtolaisuus 2006, Foreigners and international migration, p. 38

⁴ Tilastokeskus (2007) Ulkomaalaiset ja siirtolaisuus 2006, Foreigners and international migration, p. 38

Figure 7



Source: Eurostat/Statistics Finland

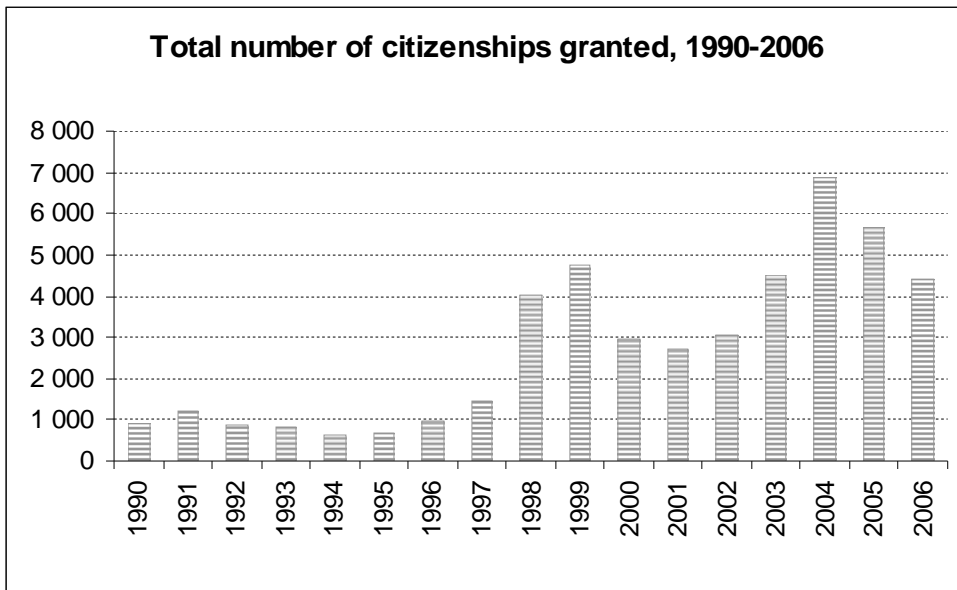
The citizens of Russia have since the beginning of the 1990's formed the largest single nationality group of foreign citizens (third-country nationals) permanently residing in Finland. In 2006 there were 25 326 Russian citizens permanently residing in Finland. The comparably high number of immigrants from Russia may be explained by the emigrating Ingrian Finns who since 1990 have the status of "returning emigrants". Another explanation is the marriage migration of Russian women.⁵ The second largest group of third-country nationals in Finland in 2006 was Somalis and after them citizens of China.

In 2006 there were almost as many women as men among the foreigner population in Finland, men forming the majority of foreigners. However, there were variations between different groups of nationalities. For example significant number of Turks in Finland was men. On the other hand Thais had a female majority. Women were very clearly in the majority also within the groups originating from Russia, Japan, Estonia and Ukraine.⁶

⁵ NCP Finland, Annual Report on Asylum and Migration for Finland 2004 and 2005, Section A, Migration Issues

⁶ Tilastokeskus (2007) Ulkomaalaiset ja siirtolaisuus 2006, Foreigners and international migration, p. 38

Figure 8



Source: Statistics Finland

After 1995 the number of foreigners who have been granted Finnish citizenship turned to increase. In 2004 citizenship was granted to 6 880 persons, which was more than ever before and was mainly due to the decision of the Finnish Immigration Service (former Directorate of Immigration) to process citizenship applications faster. In 2004 more applications were processed and therefore more people gained Finnish citizenship. In 2006 citizenship was granted to 4 433 persons.⁷

⁷ Tilastokeskus (2007) Ulkomaalaiset ja siirtolaisuus 2006, Foreigners and international migration, p.39

3.1.3 Residence Permits: annual total of first issuing in 2006

How did the total number of residence permits issued for the first time in 2006 change in comparison to the previous year? Please explain the reasons for this (legal, political, administrative changes, etc.). Note that this section should refer only to the first issuing of residence permits and not any subsequent extensions to a residence permit issued in previous years.

Table 5 Annual total number of residence permits issued according the main categories for migration (excluding seasonal workers), 2005 and 2006⁸

	2005		2006	
	Pos. decisions		Pos. decisions	
	Total	sub-total	Total	sub-total
Total	13 724		14 252	
Family formation/reunification	5 281		5 573	
- spouse		3 331		3 460
- children < 18 years		1 769		2 018
- other family members		181		95
Study	3 107		3 196	
Employment	3 066		2 929	
- self-employed persons		38		58
- employed persons		3 028		2 871
Other categories	2 270		2 554	

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

There were no major changes in the total number of positive decisions in 2006 compared to previous year. In 2005, 13 724 residence permit decisions were positive. In 2006, 14 252 residence permit decisions were positive. The number of residence permits granted on the basis of family formation/reunification as well as on study increased slightly. According to the Table 5, the number of positive decisions based on employment seems to have decreased slightly which, however, is a misleading conclusion since the decisions marked in “Other categories” mainly consist of residence permits granted on basis of employment as well. In fact, employment-based immigration was increasing.

The so called “residence permits for employed persons” are included in the category “Employment”. This means that the permit has been issued in a two-pronged application process: the Finnish Immigration Service only issues a decision after the Employment Agency’s consideration, based on the needs of the labour market. In accordance with the Aliens Act, the

⁸ In category "Family formation/reunification" spouses include residence permits issued for spouses, registered partners and cohabitants of Finnish citizens and non-EU citizens. For 2005-2006, figures of spouses and children have been counted by dividing amount of residence permits issued for family members of Finnish citizens by age so that those under 18 years old have been included in category "children < 18 years" and those over 18 years in category "spouses". Even this is not statistically good practice it gives a rough idea on numbers of positive decisions in these categories.

aliens are in many cases exempted from the requirement of “residence permit for employed persons” and instead allowed to work on ordinary residence permit. In such cases the Finnish Immigration Service is solely responsible for the decision-making and the positive decisions made are included in “Other categories”. The decisions marked in ”Other categories” also contain the residence permits granted for emigrating Ingrian Finns. In 2005, 360 “returning emigrants” received a positive decision and in 2006, 368. Furthermore, residence permits granted to researchers and au pairs are included in “Other categories”.

The Directorate of Immigration (Finnish Immigration Service) received approximately 15 900 residence permit applications during 2006.⁹ The Directorate of Immigration / Finnish Immigration Service is responsible for issuing first residence permits, notwithstanding the applications submitted in Finland by the family members of Finnish citizens in which case the decision will be made by the local police.

A significant segment of residence permit applications are those based on family ties. During 2006 5 440 of these applications were submitted to the Directorate of Immigration (Finnish Immigration Service). Of the decisions granted during 2006, approximately 80% were favourable.¹⁰

The number of student applicants from non-EU-countries increased and comprised approximately 3 500 applications. When disaggregated by nationality, the most residence permits were granted to Russian students (692), followed by students from China (548), the US (233), Turkey (143) and Japan (100). The majority of employment-based residence permit applications came from citizens of Russia, India and Ukraine. In 2006, the Directorate of Immigration (Finnish Immigration Service) received 3 900 applications requiring the two-pronged process (in which the final decision is issued only after the Employment Agency’s consideration, based on the needs of the labour market.) The total number of employment-based residence permits granted for third-country citizens was approximately 5 000.¹¹

⁹ Directorate of Immigration, Annual Report 2006, p. 28

¹⁰ Directorate of Immigration, Annual Report 2006, p. 28

¹¹ Directorate of Immigration, Annual Report 2006, p. 28

3.2 Contextual interpretations (legal, political and international factors)

3.2.1 Main trends and most important developments in the area of migration policy

What have been the main trends and most important developments in the area of migration policy in your Member State since the previous year (political stance; new or amended laws; procedural changes; etc.? Please give a short overview.

Aliens Act

The new Aliens Act came into effect on 1 May 2004. Its main legal implications, (affecting in 2005 and 2006 as well), were the following:

- Competence to issue residence permits to foreigners abroad was transferred from Finnish diplomatic and consular missions to the Directorate of Immigration (Finnish Immigration Service).
- Family members of Finnish citizens were allowed to come to Finland to apply for a residence permit on the basis of family ties. Previously, the residence permit applications were submitted outside Finland, and the applicant had to wait abroad for the decision. The residence permit is issued by the local police in case the application is submitted in Finland. However, if the applicant is not able to travel to Finland visa-free or with a tourist visa (the visa application has been rejected by the embassy) the applicant may still submit an application for a residence permit at the embassy in case of which the decision will be made by the Finnish Immigration Service.
- Foreigners coming to Finland to work in this country now need only a residence permit for an employed person, whereas they previously had to have both a work permit and a residence permit.¹²

The Aliens Act was modified in 2006 when the Council Directive (2003/86/EC) on the right to family reunification was implemented into national law although the amendments were minor as the requirements set forth in the Directive were mostly taken into consideration already in connection with the overall reform in 2004. Aliens who have been issued with a residence permit on the basis of family ties were given unrestricted right to gainful employment. Furthermore, the Aliens Act has been amended based on national policy in order to attract more international students to Finland and to turn them into full-fledged immigrants to be retained as work force and integrated into society. According to the amendment made in 2006, an alien who has been issued with a temporary residence permit for studying is issued with a new temporary residence permit for seeking work

¹² Directorate of Immigration, Annual Report 2004, p. 26

after he or she has received a degree or other qualification. The right to gainful employment in addition to studies was extended with the same amendment.

Ingrian Finns

The administrative responsibility for the application queue consisting of so called Ingrian Finns was transferred from Finnish consulates and missions to the Finnish Immigration Service (former Directorate of Immigration) at the end of 2004. In 2005, the number of Ingrians wishing to return to Finland from the former Soviet Union was brought up to date and returnees were assessed. In Russia, the number of Ingrians wishing to return to Finland was around 15 000 - 16 000 and in Estonia this figure was 800 - 900. (The total figure for Ingrians willing to return from Russia was originally 21 000 and from Estonia 5 000.) In 2006, there were still more than 10 000 Ingrian Finns waiting to immigrate on a returnee status.¹³ The specific requirements for granting a residence permit for an Ingrian Finn concern the registration as a returnee, re-entry orientation, language skills and accommodation in Finland.

Immigration administration and migration policy

In 2006, a working group appointed by the Ministry of the Interior prepared a strategy for the development of immigration administration and legislation in Finland. The most essential proposal was to centralize immigration expertise and policy preparation to one ministry, to the Ministry of the Interior. Regarding immigration legislation, the simplification of the permit system pertaining to labour immigration was listed as one of the most urgent matter.¹⁴

In 2006, the Government Migration Policy Programme was announced. A comprehensive approach is adopted and in all 34 policy guidelines with measures listed in the Programme. The Programme emphasizes particularly the promotion of work-related immigration to prevent the future shortfall in labour force.¹⁵

3.2.2 Existing categories of admission or non-admission in 2006

The main admission categories are family tie, work, self-employment, study and returnee (returnee status refers to former Finnish citizens and their descendants, including also the Ingrian Finns, see above in 3.2.1). Family tie has traditionally been the largest group of all. Students and workers are also big groups.

¹³ Directorate of Immigration, Annual Report 2004, p. 27, Annual Report 2005, p. 29 and Annual Report 2006, p. 28

¹⁴ Sisäasiainministeriön strategia maahanmuuttohallinnon ja ulkomaalaislainsäädännön kehittämiseksi: työryhmän ehdotus. Sisäasiainministeriön julkaisu 30/2006.

Statistics on the grounds for negative decisions are not available. The reasons for refusing a residence permit if the alien in question would otherwise fulfil the requirements (such as requirement for means of support and for a valid travel document) are laid down in section 36 of the Aliens Act. According to the Act, a residence permit may be refused if the alien is considered a danger to public order, security or health or to Finland's international relations. Endangering international relations does not, however, prevent the issuing of a residence permit on the basis of family ties. A residence permit may be refused if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the alien intends to evade the provisions on entry into or residence in the country (false documents being a common example of such intention in connection with the applications based on study and suspicion of marriage of convenience in connection with the applications based on family ties).

3.2.3 European and international factors

Could you identify European / international factors explaining certain changes/continuity regarding migration in your Member State in comparison to the previous year?

The application of the transitional period rules for the nationals of EU-10 -countries was ended in end of April 2006. This, however, did not have any effect on the numbers of migrants coming from these countries to Finland.

¹⁵ Hallituksen maahanmuuttopoliittinen ohjelma 19.10.2006 = Government migration policy programme - government resolution 19.10.2006.

4. REFUSALS, APPREHENSIONS AND REMOVALS

4.1 Analysis and interpretation of statistics

4.1.1 Developments and trends in numbers of refusals

Please describe developments/trends pertaining to the number of refusals¹⁶ in 2006 in comparison to the previous year. Have there been changes in the main countries of citizenship of refused migrants since the previous year? If possible, give reasons for these changes/continuity.

Number of third-country nationals refused entry at border increased from previous year:

Table 6 Number of third-country nationals refused at border, 2005 and 2006

	2005		2006
TOTAL	1 185	TOTAL	1 407
Russia	918	Russia	1051
Georgia	53	China	77
China	47	Ukraine	30
Romania	16	Romania	22
Kazakhstan	11	Iraq	18
Iraq	10	India	16
Ukraine	10	Kazakhstan	16
Somalia	8	Belarus	16
Croatia	7	Armenia	15
Iran	7	Somalia	15
Peru	7	Others	131
Others	91		

Source: Border Guard Headquarters

Overwhelming majority of the persons refused at border were nationals of Russia. This correlates with the fact that majority of refusals is made at border crossing points on Finland's border towards Russia. The main reasons for refusal of entry of third-country nationals were alien's failure to produce the correct documentation at border (visas and/or travel documents) and reasonable grounds to suspect that the alien may earn income through dishonest means while staying in Finland.

The traffic over Finnish-Russian border has increased continuously for many years. In 2006, there were 6,8 million border crossings on this border. Also traffic from third countries to Finland via Helsinki-Vantaa airport has increased. In 2006, there were 3,7 million border crossings at this airport.¹⁷

¹⁶ A "Third-country national refused entry" means a third-country national who is refused entry at the external border because they do not fulfil all the entry conditions laid down in Article 5(1) of Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 and do not belong to the categories of persons referred to in Article 5(4) of that Regulation.

¹⁷ Border Guard Headquarters

Still, compared to other countries, attempts to cross border illegally are only a small problem in Finland. Most people caught while attempting illegal border crossing were caught at Helsinki-Vantaa airport. Most usually they were trying to cross border with false documents or they had deliberately given false information in order to obtain the visa.¹⁸

4.1.2 Developments and trends in numbers of apprehensions

Please describe developments/trends pertaining to the number of apprehensions of illegally-resident third-country nationals in 2006 in comparison to the previous year. Have there been changes in the main countries of citizenship of those apprehended in 2006? If possible, give reasons for these changes/continuity.

The number of apprehended aliens includes persons from three different groups. The largest group is formed by the asylum seekers whose application is filed only inside the country and travel route can not be established due to the lack of documents. It also includes aliens sentenced for violation of the Aliens Act (the alien resides in the country without the required travel document, visa or residence permit). Furthermore, also aliens whose immigration has been illegally arranged is included in the statistics (if not already covered by the previous numbers/categories).

Table 7 Apprehended aliens illegally present by main countries of citizenship, 2005-2006

	2005		2006
TOTAL	2 757	TOTAL	1 689
Bulgaria	413	Bulgaria	309
Somalia	295	Iraq	207
Serbia and Montenegro	291	Serbia and Montenegro	184
Iraq	247	Afghanistan	84
Afghanistan	222	Russia	76
FYR of Macedonia	150	Somalia	69
Unknown	109	Belarus	63
Russia	106	Nigeria	54
Turkey	78	Iran	54
Azerbaijan	77	Unknown	51
Others	769	Others	538

Source: Eurostat

The number of apprehended aliens decreased from 2005 to 2006 approximately 39 % as a result of simultaneous fall in the number of asylum seekers (approximately 33 %). All the countries on the

¹⁸ Border Guard Headquarters

top ten -list for apprehended citizens are also on the top ten -list for asylum seekers in 2006 (please see Figure 2 in Section 2 for Asylum).

4.1.3 Developments and trends in numbers of removals

Please describe developments/trends pertaining to the number of removals in 2006 in comparison to the previous year. Have there been changes in the main countries of citizenship of removed migrants? If possible, explain the underlying factors for these changes/continuity.

Table 8 Removed aliens by main countries of citizenship, 2005 and 2006

	2005		2006
TOTAL	1 900	TOTAL	1 410
Russia	421	Russia	287
Bulgaria	235	Bulgaria	183
Serbia and Montenegro	153	Romania	77
China	105	Serbia and Montenegro	72
Romania	90	Belarus	61
Estonia	66	Iraq	60
Somalia	66	China	56
Iraq	59	Turkey	45
Turkey	56	Nigeria	43
Georgia	46	Afghanistan	35
Others	603	Others	491

Source: Eurostat

In 2006, the majority of removed aliens (approximately 67 %) ¹⁹ were refused asylum seekers (those who received negative decisions for their asylum applications). Apart from refused asylum seekers, also aliens who had been found guilty of crimes were among those removed from Finland.

The total number of removed aliens decreased by 25 % from 2005 to 2006 (2005: 1900 persons, 2006: 1420 persons). This can be explained by decline of number of asylum seekers from previous year by approximately 35 %. At the same time the number of negative asylum decisions has decreased 40 % (please see part 2.1.2 of the Report for further information). Consequently, there have been less refused asylum seekers to be removed in year 2006 than in year 2005.

The citizens of Russia still formed the largest group of removed aliens, although the number has decreased significantly (2005: 421 persons, 2006: 287 persons). In 2006, 20 % of all removed aliens were citizens of Russia as the proportion in 2005 was 22 %.

In 2006, on the list of top-10 countries for removed aliens were many countries whose citizens applied for asylum in Finland. These countries include for example Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, Iraq, Nigeria and Afghanistan. Some of the removed aliens who were refused asylum seekers were removed to their home countries and some of them to the Member States responsible in handling their asylum application according to Dublin II Regulation.

4.1.4 Comparing cases of refused, apprehended and removed

In cases of refused, apprehended, and removed migrants in 2006, are these from the same countries in all categories, or are particular citizenship groups more common in a particular category? If possible, explain the underlying causes.

In all three categories citizens of Russia form a large group, for refused and removed they are even the largest citizenship group. This can be explained by geographical factor – Finland’s long border with Russia – as well as the fact that Russians form the majority of third-country nationals residing in Finland.

The similarities between the top ten -country lists for apprehended and removed can be explained by the fact that asylum seekers and failed asylum seekers form a large part of both those categories.

4.2 Contextual interpretations (legal, political and international factors)

4.2.1 New or amended laws influencing illegal immigration in 2006

Please explain the most important changes in policies regarding refusal of entry or return from the previous year.

The current Aliens Act came into effect in May 2004. Aliens Act includes also provisions on violation of the Aliens Act and employer’s violation of the Aliens Act (Sections 185 and 186). Provisions for work permit offence and facilitation of illegal entry are included in the Penal Code. No changes in these laws were made in 2006.

¹⁹ Source: Helsinki Police Department, Immigration Police

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ANNEXES

Annex 1 Asylum applications by unaccompanied minors, 2006

Age groups	Male	Female	TOTAL
Total	81	30	111
0-13	6	8	14
14	7	1	8
15	6	5	11
16	22	9	31
17	38	7	45
Age unknown	2	0	2

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Annex 2 Total numbers of asylum applications by nationality, 2006

Country of citizenship	TOTAL
(Blank)	1
Afghanistan	97
Albania	21
Algeria	25
Angola	33
Armenia	35
Azerbaijan	22
Bangladesh	29
Belarus	97
Bosnia and Herzegovina	24
Bulgaria	463
Burkina Faso	1
Burundi	1
Cameroon	29
China	8
Congo, the Democratic Republic of the	38
Côte d'Ivoire	1
Croatia	4
Egypt	4
Eritrea	3
Ethiopia	20
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	5
Gambia	17
Georgia	35
Ghana	6
Guinea	4
Guinea-Bissau	1
Honduras	1
Hungary	2
India	34
Iran, Islamic Republic of	91
Iraq	225
Israel	6
Jordan	7
Kazakhstan	8

Country of citizenship	TOTAL
Kuwait	1
Kyrgyzstan	17
Latvia	2
Lebanon	9
Liberia	1
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	16
Lithuania	3
Macedonia, The former Yugoslav Republic of	28
Malawi	2
Mali	5
Mauritania	1
Moldova, Republic of	10
Myanmar	3
Nepal	4
Niger	2
Nigeria	64
Not known	11
Pakistan	4
Romania	20
Russian Federation	176
Rwanda	8
Senegal	2
Serbia	68
Serbia and Montenegro	209
Sierra Leone	3
Slovakia	5
Somalia	92
Sri Lanka	32
Stateless	18
Sudan	3
Syrian Arab Republic	17
Tajikistan	7
Tanzania, United Republic of	1
Togo	2
Tunisia	3
Turkey	41
Ukraine	9
United States	6
Uzbekistan	14
Yugoslavia	4
Zimbabwe	3
TOTAL	2324

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Annex 3 Total numbers of asylum decisions by nationality, 2006

	POSITIVE					TOTAL POSITIVE	NEGATIVE				TOTAL NEGATIVE	Annulment	TOTAL
	Convention status	Rp. need for protection	Rp. other grounds	Rp. family member	Residence permit		Rejected	Safe country of origin	Dublin	Manifestly unfounded			
(Blank)		1				1							1
Afghanistan		10	29	1	92	132	13		34	4	51	3	186
Albania								13	1		14	2	16
Algeria			1	1		2	2	13	9		24	1	27
Angola		6	4			10	9	14			23	1	34
Armenia							1	17	10		28	7	35
Azerbaijan	2					2	2	17	1		20	1	23
Bangladesh							6	1	12		19	13	32
Belarus							32	19	13		64	23	87
Bosnia and Herzegovina			9			9		14	3		17	3	29
Bulgaria								1	321	77	399	58	457
Cambodia		1				1							1
Cameroon		2	3			5	14	1	8		23	4	32
China		4	1			5			2		2	4	11
Colombia		1				1							1
Congo							1				1		1
Congo, the Democratic Republic of the		1	7	2	1	11	14	9	4		27	1	39
Côte d'Ivoire							1				1	1	2
Croatia							8	4			12		12
Cuba							2		1		3		3
Egypt								1	3		4		4
Eritrea								1			1		1
Ethiopia		4	1	1		6	3		2		5		11
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia									2		2		2

	POSITIVE					TOTAL POSITIVE	NEGATIVE				TOTAL NEGATIVE	Annulment	TOTAL
	Convention status	Rp. need for protection	Rp. other grounds	Rp. family member	Residence permit		Rejected	Safe country of origin	Dublin	Manifestly unfounded			
Gambia				1		1	3		1	4	8	2	11
Georgia									23	8	31	2	33
Ghana									3	3	6	3	9
Guinea			1	1		2	1		1		2		4
Guinea-Bissau									1		1		1
Hungary								2			2		2
India							2		1	12	15	11	26
Kyrgyzstan							5		3	4	12		12
Latvia												7	7
Lebanon			1			1			1		1	1	3
Liberia							1		1	1	3		3
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya				1		1			7	2	9	4	14
Lithuania												1	1
Macedonia, The former Yugoslav Republic of			1			1			16	3	19	7	27
Mali									1	1	2		2
Mauritania	1					1	2		1	1	4		5
Moldova, Republic of							1		7	2	10	4	14
Mongolia												3	3
Morocco										2	2		2
Myanmar		2				2			1		1		3
Nepal				1		1	2		1	1	4		5
Niger									1		1		1
Nigeria		1	2	4		7	32		16	13	61	8	76
Not known			1			1			3		3	2	6
Pakistan	1		1	1		3	3		1		4	1	8
Romania									6	4	10	8	18
Russian Federation	20		5			25	16		26	47	89	21	135
Rwanda			1			1	3		1		4		5
Serbia							1		16	2	19	1	20

	POSITIVE					TOTAL POSITIVE	NEGATIVE				TOTAL NEGATIVE	Annulment	TOTAL
	Convention status	Rp. need for protection	Rp. other grounds	Rp. family member	Residence permit		Rejected	Safe country of origin	Dublin	Manifestly unfounded			
Serbia and Montenegro			24	5	2	31	10	1	104	47	162	12	205
Sierra Leone							1		1		2		2
Slovakia								4		1	5		5
Somalia		22	39	2	121	184	2		17		19	7	210
Sri Lanka				1		1	11		2	2	15		16
Stateless			2	4		6	13		11	4	28		34
Sudan							1		2	4	7		7
Syrian Arab Republic			2	1		3	1		4	2	7	1	11
Tajikistan												1	1
Tanzania,				1		1	1				1		2
United Republic of													
Togo		1				1	1				1		2
Tunisia									1	3	4		4
United States									2	1	3		3
Uzbekistan	1	1	5			7	1		1	1	3	2	12
Viet Nam							1				1		1
Yugoslavia										2	2		2
Zimbabwe									1		1		1
TOTAL	38	85	163	33	299	618	248	8	873	352	1481	287	2386

Source: Finnish Immigration Service