

Annual Report on Migration and Asylum

FINLAND 2021



Maahanmuuttovirasto
Migrationsverket
Finnish Immigration Service



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Annual Report on Migration and Asylum

Finland 2021

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Senior Specialist Tuukka Lampi (National Contact Point of Finland)
National Coordinator Rafael Bärlund (National Contact Point Finland)

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Executive summary

A number of significant initiatives were made in immigration policy in 2021. The Ministry of the Interior called for the development of a comprehensive migration policy for Finland. The policy will bring together the responsibilities of different stakeholders and set uniform long-term objectives for them. As the first step in immigration policy reform, the Ministry of the Interior set up a project to conduct a preliminary study concerning the needs for amendments to the Aliens Act and how the reforms should be implemented. The Government found that the structure of the Aliens Act has suffered from the large number of amendments and it has become confusing and difficult to understand.

One prominent topic in the media coverage related to migration in 2021 was international protection. This was due to the quick change in the situation in Afghanistan and the growing number of migrants on the Belarusian borders with Latvia and Poland, which was suspected to be a hybrid operation by Belarus. The amount of media articles related to labour migration increased compared to 2020, and labour migration was discussed as a solution to the labour shortages in the nursing profession and the funding of the pension system.

Indeed, labour migration to Finland did increase: In 2021, a first residence permit for Finland on the grounds of employment was issued to 11,428 individuals, representing a significant increase compared to 2020 (8,508). The figure for 2020 was clearly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, but the rising trend resumed in 2021. In spite of the impacts of the pandemic, employment was the most common grounds of application for a first residence permit, as was the case in the previous year.

Labour migration was also a prominent item on the Finnish Government's agenda in 2021. The Government's roadmap for education-based and work-based immigration 2035 was published in 2021. It is a long-term action plan for promoting the immigration of specialists, entrepreneurs, researchers and students. At the same time, the rights of seasonal workers were improved by legislative amendments, and the Government set up a project to accelerate the processing of work permits and students' residence permits.

In 2021, a first residence permit on the grounds of family ties was issued to 9,821 foreign nationals. In the longer term, the number of permits issued on the grounds of family ties have increased slightly, and 2021 was a continuation of the trend. Due to the rapid deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan and the COVID-19 pandemic, the Finnish Immigration Service applied flexibility regarding its policy concerning family reunification applications by Afghan nationals in 2021.

The number of asylum seekers who entered Finland in 2021 was remarkably low, and the relative proportion of quota refugees increased further. A total of 2,545 asylum applications were submitted during the year. Of these, 45% were subsequent applications. A total of 4,086 applications were processed, with 52% receiving a positive decision. On the legislative front, Finnish society's preparedness for the large-scale immigration of asylum seekers was promoted, and the rights of asylum seekers were improved. In 2021, Finland committed to receiving 1,050 quota refugees, which represents an increase compared to 2020 (850). The number of unaccompanied minors who entered Finland was 136, which is close to the figure seen in 2020 (141).

With respect to integration, one significant development was the publication of the Finnish Government's report on integration, which proposes a comprehensive action plan of measures to support integration even more effectively. Also published in 2021 were the Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups, and a Working Life Diversity Programme, both of which are aimed at increasing the receptiveness of Finnish society and preventing discrimination.

In border control, internal border controls were maintained and stricter external border control was implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, among other factors. According to the Finnish Border Guard, the European border security situation also deteriorated significantly in 2021, especially on the external borders of Poland and the Baltic countries.

The number of irregular entries increased slightly from 2020, and the number of illegal border cross-

ings detected on the external EU borders increased to some extent. At the same time, 1,092 irregular migrants were found in Finland during the year, which represents a slight decrease compared to 2020. The period of the pandemic has been characterised by an exceptionally high number of violations related to travel documents and residence permits. One significant political measure was the updating of the Action Plan for the Prevention of Illegal Entry and Stay for the period 2021–2024. The main theme of the action plan is the prevention of the emergence of a parallel society outside the Finnish society.

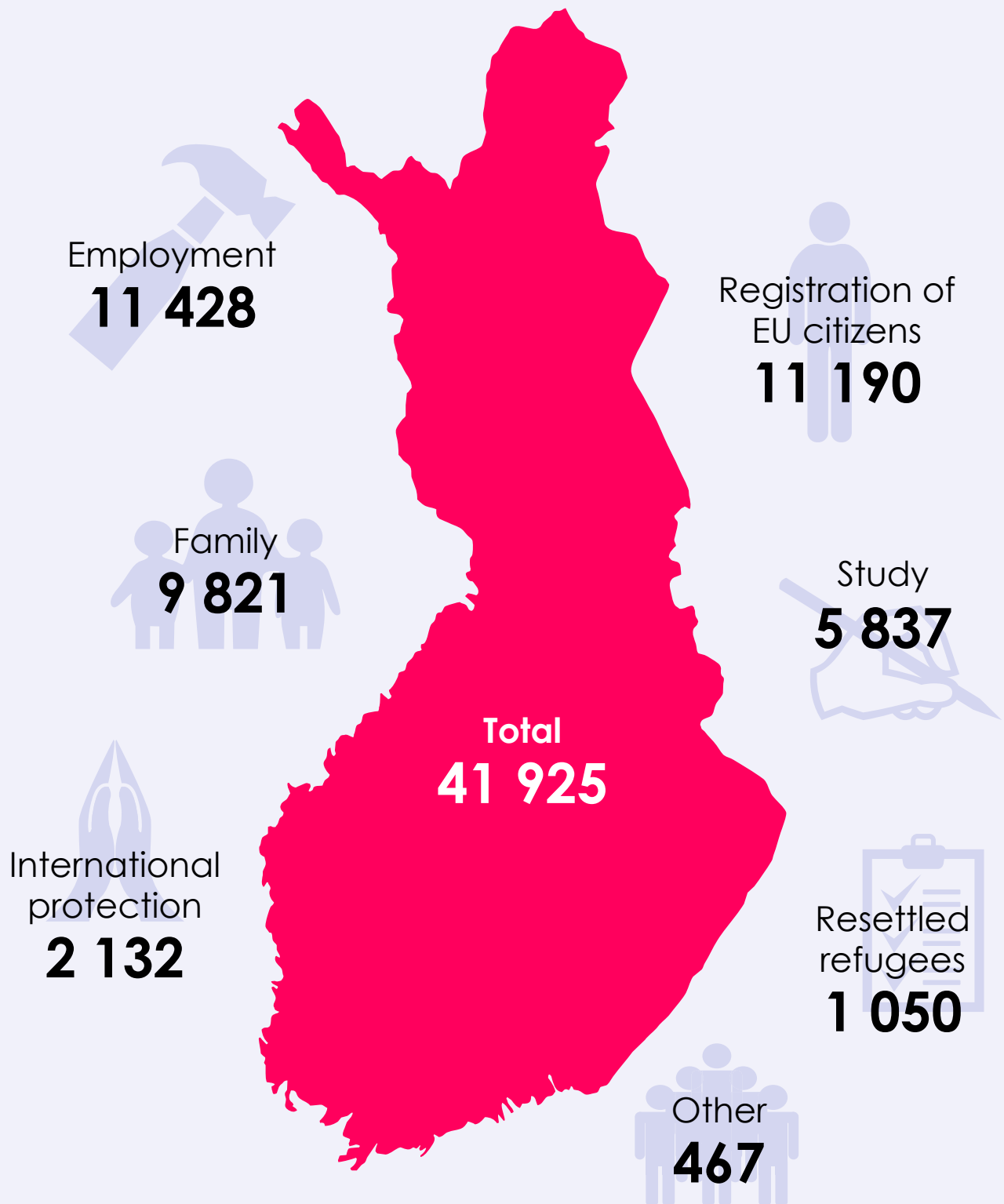
A total of 243 new clients were included in the Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking, which is close to being on a par with the figure for 2020. Most of the victims were victims of forced labour, but forced marriages also continued to emerge as a growing phenomenon. In 2021, the Government also published the Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings, which is intended to promote the detection of human trafficking, enhance the establishment of criminal liability and improve the standing of victims. The Government also proposed amendments

to the Aliens Act to prevent the exploitation of foreign workers and improve the legal status of victims of exploitation. In addition, the special police unit on human trafficking started its operations in 2021. The situation in Afghanistan also affected returns: On 9 July 2021, the Finnish Immigration Service paused the issuing of negative decisions involving removal from the country to Afghanistan. The decision-making was paused because the security situation in Afghanistan deteriorated considerably. A total of 148 persons returned from Finland to their country of origin through voluntary return. The most common country of return was Iraq.

Migration-related issues were also indirectly highlighted in development policy in Finland's Africa Strategy, which was published in 2021. Migration is addressed in the Africa Strategy as a cross-cutting theme that mainly involves cooperation with EU Member States. According to the strategy, Finland believes that the EU should strengthen the dialogue and cooperation on migration with the AU and African countries as part of broader relations and partnerships between the EU and African countries.

Overview 2021

The figure includes the first residence permits issued by the Finnish Immigration Service to third-country nationals as well as the registration of the right of residence of EU citizens and their family members.



1. Introduction

The 2021 Annual Policy Report of the Finnish National Contact Point for the European Migration Network (EMN) presents the key developments in migration in 2021 in Finland. The reference period of this report is from 1 January to 31 December 2021.

The National Contact Points for the European Migration Network produce annual reports on migration and asylum that describe the development of migration and asylum policy and present annual statistics.¹ The reporting process has two stages. In the first stage of reporting, the National Contact Points collect monitoring information on migration and asylum matters for the European Commission. The Commission uses the data in compiling an annual report on migration and asylum for the EU as a whole, as well as Norway. The Finnish National Contact Point collected the monitoring information from official resources and by allocating the responsibility for reporting to the relevant authorities responsible for each area. The participants in the reporting included the Finnish Immigration Service, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Justice, the National Police Board, the Finnish National Agency for Education, the National Bureau of Investigation, the Finnish Border Guard, the Office of the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. The Finnish National Contact Point for the European Migration Network was responsible for collecting statistical information.

This Annual Report on Migration and Asylum is the second part of reporting. It is primarily aimed at the national audience. It is the only document that an-

nually reports compiled information on development trends in migration-related matters in Finland. The key findings of the first part of the reporting process are included in this report. In addition, the report describes public debate on immigration in 2021 and presents key trends in immigration and asylum statistics. The media analysis concerning public debate in 2021 was conducted by Retriever in cooperation with the European Migration Network. The European Migration Network also publishes a separate statistical review, *Key figures on immigration 2021*.

The sources used in the report include various Internet-based reports by authorities in the field of migration, studies, statements and press releases. Pending legislative projects have been monitored using the Government Project Register and Parliamentary documents. In 2021, the National Contact Point also participated in various seminars related to migration in Finland and in other EU Member States in order to network with various producers of immigration research and to gather information on current national projects and international trends.

The Finnish National Contact Point of the European Migration Network produced this report in accordance with the network's general research guidelines. The terminology used in the report is based on the EMN Glossary published and maintained by the European Migration Network, the updated Finnish edition of which was created in February 2019.² The structure and headings of the report are based on a model jointly agreed on by the European Migration Network. The division into topics follows the structure used by the European Commission, which has also been adopted by the European Migration Network.

¹ The reporting duty is stipulated by Council Regulation 2008/381/EC, which was also the basis for establishing the European Migration Network.

² European Migration Network (2019), *Asylum and Migration Glossary 6.0: Finnish edition*. Helsinki: European Migration Network (EMN).

1.1. Structure of the immigration administration

The Finnish Government directs migration policy and its administration following the targets set in the Government Programme and the policies approved by the Government. The Prime Minister's Office is in charge of the coordination of EU issues in general.

The Ministerial Working Group on Internal Security and Strengthening the Rule of Law discusses matters relating to the development of judicial administration, prevention of exclusion, prevention of over-indebtedness, and realisation of fundamental rights. It also discusses matters of internal security and asylum and refugee policy. The ministerial working group is chaired by Minister of Justice Anna-Maja Henriksson. The other members are Minister of Local Government and Ownership Steering Sirpa Paatero, Minister of the Interior Maria Ohisalo, Minister of Social Affairs and Health Aino-Kaisa Pekonen and Minister of Defence Antti Kaikkonen.

The Ministry of the Interior, through the Migration Department, is in charge of immigration issues. Its tasks include the formulation of migration policy and the drafting of legislation on immigration and Finnish citizenship. The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for the performance guidance of the Finnish Immigration Service. Appropriations for the immigration administration are included in the Ministry of the Interior's budget proposal. In addition, the Ministry of the Interior coordinates activities related to migration between various branches of administration and represents Finland in migration issues in the European Union and on other international forums.

The Finnish Immigration Service (Migri) processes applications for residence permits, asylum and citizenship. The Finnish Immigration Service also guides the operations of reception centres, decides on refusals of entry and deportation, and is in charge of the granting of alien's passports. The Finnish Immigration Service operates under the Ministry of the Interior.

The Police monitor compliance with the Aliens Act, accept asylum applications and serve decisions. The Police also enforce decisions on deportation and refusal of entry. **The Ministry of the Interior's Police Department** is in charge of the strategic guidance and supervision of the police sector. **The National Police Board** plans, leads, develops and su-

pervises practical police operations carried out at **police departments**.

The Finnish Border Guard monitors entry into and departure from the country and carries out passport control. The Border Guard makes visa decisions at the border, if necessary, and receives applications for asylum. **The Headquarters of the Finnish Border Guard** operates under the Chief of the Finnish Border Guard and also acts as **the Ministry of the Interior's Border Guard Department**.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for visa policy. Finnish missions abroad grant visas and accept citizenship declarations and residence permit applications.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is responsible for directing integration matters. Together with the Ministry of the Interior, it monitors the volume and structure of labour migration and develops monitoring tools. Effective from the beginning of 2020, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is also responsible for policy, legislation and the development of permit processes related to the migration of workers, students and researchers. The responsibility for legislative projects related to the migration of workers, students and researchers was transferred from the Ministry of the Interior to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in 2020. Legislative drafting processes are carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is responsible for performance guidance pertaining to labour migration in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior.

The Centre of Expertise in Integration operates as part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. Its tasks include the creation of cooperation networks among the actors involved in integration across occupational and geographical boundaries. In order to lay a foundation for the planning and execution of integration activities, the Centre of Expertise compiles research, statistical and monitoring information, with the aim of enabling the development of integration effectiveness evaluation.

The administrative sector of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment encompasses **the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres)** that handle tasks related to immigration, integration and good ethnic relations on a regional basis as well as the Employ-

ment and Economic Development Offices the work permit units of which make preliminary decisions on applications for a residence permit for an employed person before the Finnish Immigration Service processes and makes decisions on the applications.

Municipalities are responsible for integration at the local level. For instance, municipalities create, together with other parties in their area, an integration programme to promote integration and solidify cooperation. Municipalities provide basic services to immigrants living there permanently, in the same manner as to other residents of the municipality. In addition, municipalities decide independently on the reception of quota refugees and asylum seekers who have been granted a residence permit.

The Regional State Administrative Agencies (AVI) are responsible for the planning, steering and supervision of the services promoting immigrant integration in matters coming under their authority. The Regional State Administrative Agencies steer municipal operations in various sectors, such as social and health care services, education and other cultural services. The Regional State Administrative Agencies operate under the steering of eight different ministries. Administratively, the operations of the Agencies are steered by the Ministry of Finance.

The Ministry of Education and Culture is tasked with the development of education provided to immigrants at different levels. The ministry's field of operation also includes matters related to immigrants' culture, sports activities, youth work and religion. **The Finnish National Agency for Education**, operating under the Ministry of Education and Culture, is responsible for immigrants' education issues and the recognition of foreign degrees.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is tasked with the promotion of immigrants' health and well-being. Issues related to immigrants' means of support fall within the responsibilities of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health supports the integration of immigrants into Finnish society e.g. by developing social and health services so that the needs of immigrants are taken into account in them.

The duties of the Unit for Democracy, Language Affairs and Fundamental Rights, operating under **the Ministry of Justice**, include the promotion of equal-

ity and non-discrimination, among other things. Organisationally, **the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO)** has been placed under this Unit. ETNO is a broad-based expert body established by the government whose goal is to develop interaction between different groups and to assist ministries in developing a pluralistic society with ethnic equality.

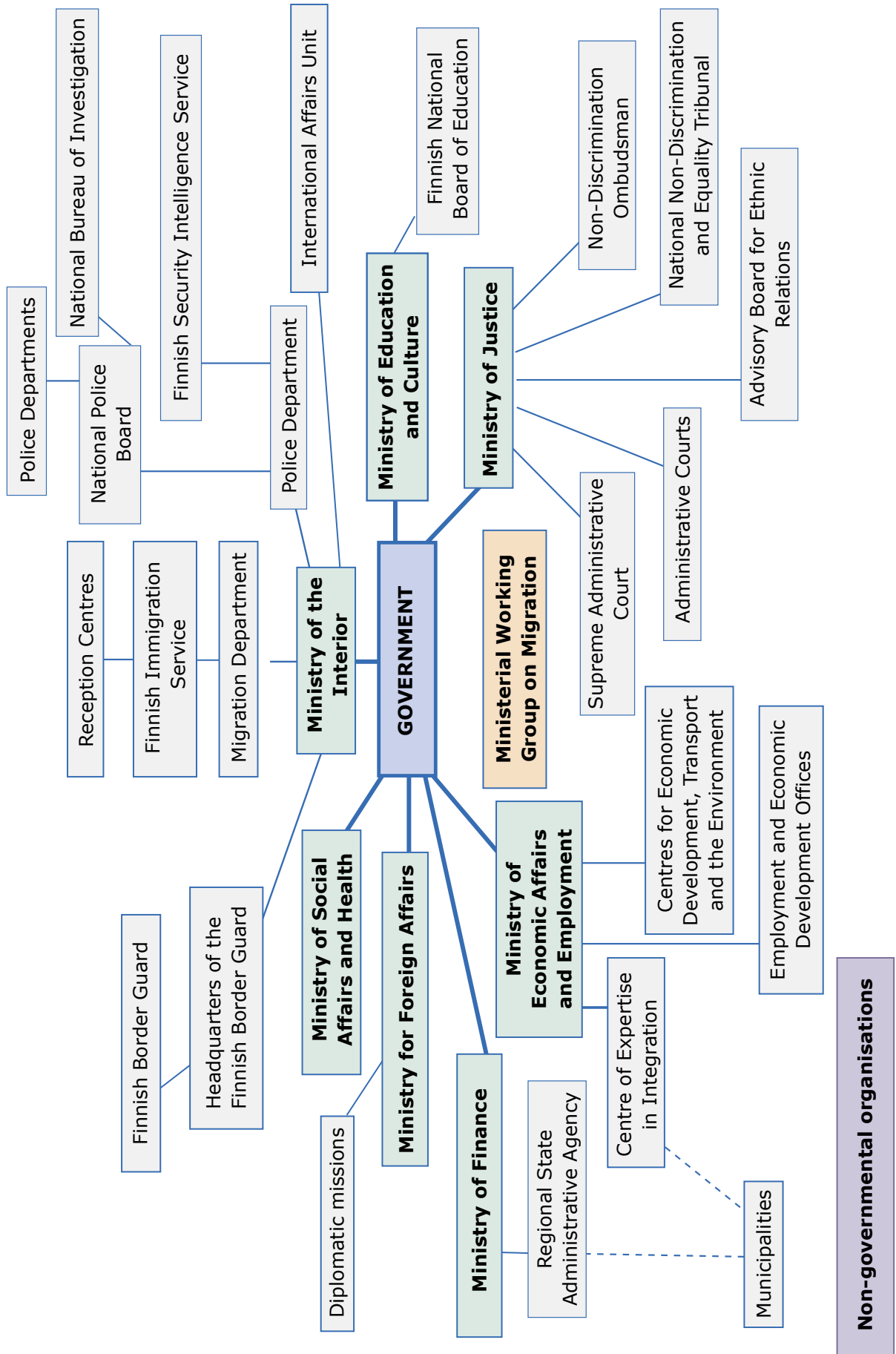
The Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, operating under the Ministry of Justice, promotes equal treatment and takes action to intervene in cases of discrimination. The Non-Discrimination Ombudsman is also responsible for promoting the rights and position of foreign nationals. In addition, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman has a special task of monitoring the enforcement of removal decisions concerning foreign nationals and acting as the national rapporteur on trafficking in human beings.

The administrative sector of the Ministry of Justice also includes **the administrative courts**, which are responsible for processing appeals against the Finnish Immigration Service's decisions. The processing of asylum-related appeals has been concentrated in the Administrative Court of Helsinki and the Administrative Courts of Eastern Finland, Northern Finland and Turku. In asylum-related matters, the competent Administrative Court is determined on the basis of the Finnish Immigration Service's operating area (Southern, Northern, Western or Eastern). In other appeals against the Finnish Immigration Service's decisions, the competent Administrative Court is the one in whose judicial district the person concerned lives. A decision of an Administrative Court may be appealed to the Supreme Administrative Court, provided that the Supreme Administrative Court gives leave to appeal.

The National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal is an autonomous and independent legal protection body appointed by the Government. It monitors compliance with the Non-Discrimination Act and the Act on Equality both in private activities and in public administrative and business operations.

Non-governmental organisations produce various services, offer help and counselling to asylum seekers and contribute to integration activities. The immigration expertise of non-governmental organisations is needed in the development of legislative drafting and immigration policy.

Structure of the migration administration in Finland



KEY ACTS AND DECREES CONCERNING IMMIGRATION IN FINLAND

- [Aliens Act \(301/2004\)](#)
- [Nationality Act \(359/2003\)](#)
- [Act on the Reception of Persons Applying for International Protection and on the Identification of and Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings \(746/2011\)](#)
- [Act on the Treatment of Aliens Placed in Detention and Detention Units \(116/2002\)](#)
- [Act on the Register of Aliens \(1270/1997\)](#)
- [Administrative Procedure Act \(434/2003\)](#)
- [Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration \(1386/2010\)](#)
- [Act on the Finnish Immigration Service \(156/1995\)](#)
- [Act on Security Measures in the Finnish Immigration Service \(717/2018\)](#)
- [Act on the Conditions of Entry and Stay of Third-country Nationals on the Grounds of Research, Studies, Training and Voluntary Service \(719/2018\)](#)
- [Act on the Conditions of Entry and Stay of Third-country Nationals for the Purpose of Employment as Seasonal Workers \(907/2017\)](#)
- [Act on the Conditions of Entry and Residence of Third-country Nationals in the Framework of an Intra-corporate Transfer \(908/2017\)](#)
- [Non-Discrimination Act \(1325/2014\)](#)
- [Act on the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman \(1326/2014\)](#)
- [Act on the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal \(1327/2014\)](#)
- [Act on Home Affairs Funds \(903/2014\)](#)
- [Government Decree on Nationality \(293/2013\)](#)
- [Government Decree on the Finnish Immigration Service \(193/2002\)](#)
- [Government Decree on Fees and Compensations for the Representatives of Unaccompanied Children \(1394/2014\)](#)
- [Ministry of the Interior Decree on Fees for Services Provided by the Finnish Immigration Service in 2019 \(1256/2018\)](#)

KEY INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION AND INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

- [Dublin III Regulation \(EU No 604/2013\)](#)
- [Schengen Agreement and Convention \(23/2001\)](#)
- [European Convention on Human Rights](#)
- [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [The Refugee Convention](#)
- [Convention against Torture](#)

WEBSITES OF THE KEY IMMIGRATION ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITIES

- Prime Minister's Office
www.vnk.fi/en
 - Ministry of the Interior
www.intermin.fi/en
 - Finnish Immigration Service
www.migri.fi/en
 - The Police
www.poliisi.fi/en
 - The Finnish Border Guard
www.raja.fi/en
 - Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
www.tem.fi/en
 - Centre of Expertise in Integration
www.kotouttaminen.fi/en
 - Ministry for Foreign Affairs
www.formin.fi/english
 - Ministry of Education and Culture
www.minedu.fi/en
 - Finnish National Agency for Education
www.oph.fi/english
 - Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
www.stm.fi/en
 - Ministry of Justice
www.om.fi/en
 - Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations
<https://oikeusministerio.fi/en/the-advisory-board-for-ethnic-relations>
 - Non-Discrimination Ombudsman
www.syrjinta.fi/web/EN/frontpage
 - National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal
www.yvtltk.fi/en
 - Supreme Administrative Court
www.kho.fi/en
 - Administrative Courts
www.oikeus.fi/tuomioistuimet/hallintooikeudet/en
-

2. Overview of migration and asylum policy developments in 2021

2.1. Immigration policy

Significant initiatives were made in 2021 in immigration policy at the general level. In the summer of 2021, the Ministry of the Interior assessed that immigration to Finland has increased significantly during the past decades, and immigration has become a permanent part of Finland's development. Immigration is expected to increase in the coming years, and foreign workers, researchers, students and their family members are seen as playing an increasingly important role in Finland's vitality, economic growth and future. The Ministry of the Interior also assessed that refugees will continue to seek asylum in Europe and Finland in the future, which creates a growing need for the resettlement of quota refugees and the development of complementary pathways for legal migration.

Consequently, the Ministry of the Interior called for the development of a **comprehensive migration policy** for Finland. The policy would bring together the responsibilities of different operators and set uniform long-term objectives for them. The comprehensive migration policy would consider changes in migration and society, and address the needs of both Finland and migrants.³

In June 2021, the Ministry of the Interior set up a project⁴ to define long-term objectives for Finland's comprehensive migration policy.

The project aims at:

- comprehensively examining expectations concerning migration and areas for development in migration policy
- establishing an overall assessment to increase Finland's attractiveness as a country for employment, studying and remigration, and assessing the impacts of immigration in different sectors of society

- creating new opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the preparation of immigration policy
- creating the conditions for open and fact-based societal discussion that takes the various dimensions of migration into account
- increasing trust in decision-making concerning migration
- preparing a framework for Finland's migration policy to serve as a foundation for political debate and decision-making

In October 2021, the Ministry of the Interior set up a project⁵ to conduct a preliminary study concerning the needs for amendments to the Aliens Act and how the reforms should be implemented. The Government found that the structure of the Aliens Act has suffered from the large number of amendments and it has become confusing and difficult to understand. The current Aliens Act entered into force in 2004. The extensive Act contains approximately 300 sections and more than 1,000 provisions. The Aliens Act has been amended approximately 90 times since it entered into force. Provisions in the Aliens Act have also been used to implement over 20 EU Directives.

The legislative amendments are related to the previously mentioned reform of immigration policy: the Aliens Act is an immigration policy instrument that helps to support the objectives of a clear, consistent and comprehensive immigration policy. The Government made the decision on the preliminary study in the spending limits discussion in May 2021.

The preliminary study will comprise an assessment of the current structure and content of the Aliens Act and identification of the development needs arising from the changes in the case law and operating environment. The key factors influencing the operating environment include technological advances such as the introduction of digital services and biometric identifiers.

³ Ministry of the Interior 30 June 2021, Sisäministeriö selvittää tavoitteita Suomen kokonaisvaltaiselle maahanmuuttopolitiikalle, <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/1410869/sisaministerio-selvittaa-tavoitteita-suomen-kokonaisvaltaiselle-maahanmuuttopolitiikalle> (Cited 1 April 2022)

⁴ Sisäministeriön asettamispäätös N/14726/2021-SM-1 13.6.2021 Vaikuttavan ja kokonaisvaltaisen maahanmuutto-politiikan pitkän aikavälin tavoitteita koskeva hanke, available from: https://api.hankeikkuna.fi/asiakirjat/d9f3bee6-4b03-4228-aa8d-a7f127a26e70/d8838071-b8c0-4731-88f6-3018f7c4cf05/ASETTAMISPAATOS_20210630122337.PDF (Cited 23 February 2022)

⁵ Ministry of the Interior 28 October 2021, Ulkomaalaislain uudistaminen käynnistyy esiselvityksellä, <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/1410869/ulkomaalaislain-uudistaminen-kaynnistyy-esiselvityksella> (Cited 23 February 2022)

2.2. Migration in public dialogue and the media

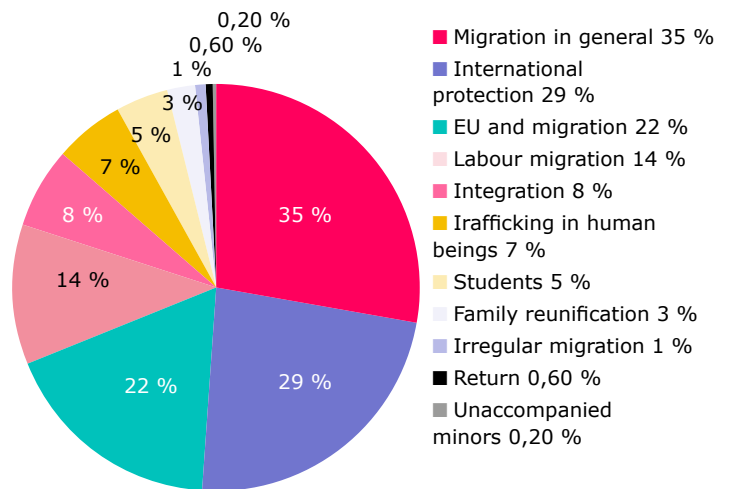
One prominent topic in the media coverage related to migration in 2021 was international protection. This was due to the quick change in the situation in Afghanistan and the growing number of migrants on the Belarusian borders with Latvia and Poland, for example, which was suspected to be a hybrid operation by Belarus. These events were also closely linked to the European Union, and they increased the news coverage concerning family reunification and returns of migrants who have received a negative asylum decision.

The general discussion around migration was influenced by statements made by political parties as well as a number of court cases related to the far right and hate speech. As in the previous years, coverage of this theme was also increased by cases related to racism and the social inequality of people with migrant backgrounds.

The amount of news coverage related to labour migration increased compared to 2020. Labour migration was discussed as a solution to the labour shortages in the nursing profession and the funding of the pension system, for example. The role of international students engaged in degree studies in Finland was also regularly discussed in the media.

The amount of news coverage related to trafficking in human beings decreased but was more focused than before on the various forms of exploitation of foreign workers as well as forced marriage. In addition to these topics, the media published articles on the new police unit specialising in the investigation of trafficking in human beings. Following an article published by Helsingin Sanomat⁶, the difficulties of the police to detect indications of human trafficking in preliminary investigations led to criticism and an inquiry by the Deputy Chancellor of Justice.

Migration in public dialogue in 2021



Source: Retriever⁷

LABOUR MIGRATION

In week 16, news broke of the Government's spending limits discussion leading to higher targets for labour migration⁸, and it was mentioned that Service Sector Employers Palta, for example, was satisfied with this move. The issue was commented on by Minister Ohisalo.

In week 21, the media published articles on Halla-Aho from the Finns Party calling for the restriction of labour migration⁹ and the Finnish Immigration Service's release¹⁰ on the number of seasonal work certificates and residence permits issued for summer 2021.

In week 28, news articles noted that, according to the Pension Barometer, half of Finns are in favour of increased labour migration¹¹.

In week 36, there was media coverage of the government proposal to accelerate labour migration being submitted to the Parliament¹². In the same week, Technology Industries of Finland estimated the industry would need 130,000 new workers over the next 10 years¹³.

⁶ HS 30 December 2021, Ihmiskaupan tutkinnan ongelmat herättävät huolen poliisin koko laillisuusvalvonnan toimivuudesta

⁷ The chart shows the percentage shares of all media hits concerning immigration (38,203 in total). One article may fall under multiple topics.

⁸ YLE 21 April 2021, Pitkäksi venynyt kehysriihi maaliin – Hallitus tavoittelee työperäisen maahanmuuton kaksinkertaistamista, kotitalousvähennykseen korotus

⁹ YLE 29 May 2021, Perussuomalaisten Halla-aho korjaisi Suomen työllisyystilannetta työperäistä maahanmuuttoa rajoittamalla ja paikallista sopimista lisäämällä

¹⁰ Finnish Immigration Service 24 May 2021, Kesäsesonki mansikkamailla lähestyy - yli 10 000 päätöstä tehty kausi-työntekijöille

¹¹ MTV 13 July 2021, Eläkebarometri: Puolet suomalaisista lisäisi työperäistä maahanmuuttoa eläkejärjestelmän rahoittamiseksi

¹² MTV 16 September 2021, Esitys työperäisen maahanmuuton nopeuttamisesta eduskuntaan

¹³ HS September 2021, Teknolohiteollisuus arvioi tarvitsevansa 130 000 uutta työntekijää kymmenen vuoden kuluessa: työhön johtavaa maahanmuuttoa on edistettävä nopeasti

In week 40, headlines were made by the Finns Party and Liike Nyt filing an interpellation motion regarding immigration¹⁴. It was stated that the municipalities that responded to an Uutissuomalainen survey on the shortage of nurses suggested solutions including apprenticeship training and labour migration.

STUDENTS

In weeks 4–6, there was media coverage of an initiative by Finest Future Oy, which is financed by Peter Vesterbacka, to bring international students to upper secondary schools in municipalities with declining student populations¹⁵. Headlines were also made around the same time by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's recommendation concerning the suspension of short-term student exchanges due to the growing number of COVID-19 infections¹⁶.

In week 11, national headlines were made by the spread of COVID-19 amongst international students in Turku¹⁷.

In week 37, the media wrote articles on the number of international students turning to growth again¹⁸ and, in week 38, headlines were made by the Technology Industries of Finland's proposal¹⁹ that labour migration and attracting international students should be a key solution to the shortage of labour in the technology sector. A representative of universities of applied sciences noted that it is difficult to get companies to take in foreign trainees.

In week 43, headlines were made by a survey conducted by the Foundation for Municipal Development²⁰, according to which 44% of Finns are in fa-

vour of bringing in more foreign students.

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

In week 4, media outlets noted that Iraqi nationals had surpassed Russians in the number of citizenship applications submitted to the Finnish Immigration Service. The increase was attributed to asylum seekers who arrived in 2015 applying for citizenship²¹.

In week 12, it was noted in the media that the Chancellor of Justice had criticised two employees of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in connection with a human resource issue related to the al-Hol case²².

In week 28, headlines were made by the Finnish Immigration Service suspending returns to Afghanistan²³. The European Court of Human Rights revised its judgment concerning the case of an Iraqi man who had faked his death.²⁴ In week 32, Latvia was reported to have declared a state of emergency at the country's border with Belarus in response to the growing number of migrants.²⁵ In week 33, the situation in Afghanistan came to a head and Finland decided on evacuations.²⁶ The Supreme Administrative Court issued a decision prohibiting refusal of entry decisions concerning Afghan nationals.²⁷ The Finnish Immigration Service issued a release concerning applications submitted by persons who entered Finland on the evacuation flight.²⁸

Suspected hybrid operations by Belarus received widespread media coverage in week 45.²⁹ The Finnish Immigration Service stated that about twenty asylum seekers had entered Finland from Belarus.³⁰ Minister Ohisalo told media outlets that the European Com-

¹⁴ [YLE](#) 7 October 2021, Liike Nyt liittyi perussuomalaisten välikysymykseen hallituksen maahanmuuttopolitiikasta

¹⁵ [HS](#) 29 January 2021, Peter Vesterbackan yritys aikoo värvätä kutistuviiin suomalaislukioihin opiskelijoita Vietnamista ja Uzbekistanista

¹⁶ [Iltä-Sanomat](#), 2 February 2021, THL suosittelee lyhytaikaisten opiskelijavaihtojen keskeyttämistä

¹⁷ [Uusi Suomi](#) 24 March 2021, Korona leviää nyt Turussa ja tilanne "voi pahentua hetkessä" – 70 vaihto-oppilaan ryppäästä osa kävi kotimaassa ja palasi Suomeen

¹⁸ [Finnish Immigration Service](#) 17 September 2021, Kansainvälisten opiskelijoiden määrä kääntyi jälleen kasvuun

¹⁹ [Uusimaa](#), 21 September 2021, Teknologiateollisuus kaipaa apua osaajapulaan ulkomailta – ammattikorkeakoulujen mukaan yrityksiä on vaikea saada ottamaan ulkomaisia harjoittelijoita

²⁰ [TS](#) 30 October 2021, Kysely: Maahanmuuttomyönteisyys lisääntynyt Suomessa

²¹ [Verkkouutiset](#) 20 January 2021, Irakilaiset jättivät eniten hakemuksia kansalaiseksi

²² [YLE](#) 22 March 2021, Oikeuskanslerilta moitteet ulkoministeriön virkamiesjohdolle al-Holin tapaukseen liittyen – rikosepäilyyn ei kuitenkaan ole aihetta

²³ [HS](#) 12 July 2021, Maahanmuuttovirasto arvioi uudelleen Afganistanin turvallisuustilannetta, kielteisten turvapaikkapäätösten tekeminen keskeytetään

²⁴ [YLE](#) 13 July 2021, Euroopan ihmisoikeustuomioistuimien kumosi Suomen saaman tuomion vakuuolle tapauksessa – asiantuntija: "Ei saa jäädä tähän"

²⁵ [HS](#) 10 August 2021, Latvia julistaa Valko-Venäjän-rajalle poikkeustilan, Liettua rakentaa metalliain rajalle – Maat yrittävät estää laittomat rajanylitykset

²⁶ [HS](#) 13 August 2021, Suomi evakuoiti Afganistanista enintään 130 paikalta palkattua työntekijää ja heidän perheenjäsenensä, tulijat saavat oleskeluluvan

²⁷ [TS](#) 20 August 2021, KHO kielsi 12 afganistanilaisen turvapaikanhakijan kääntymisen Afganistaniin

²⁸ [Iltä-Sanomat](#) 25 August 2021, Migri: Viitisenkymmentä evakuoitilentoilla Suomeen saapunutta jättänyt turvapaikkahakemuksen

²⁹ [HS](#) 12 November 2021, Valko-Venäjän hybridivaikuttaminen tunnustetaan, mutta Puola saa oman propagandansa läpi 6–0

³⁰ [YLE](#) 9 November 2021, Suomeen tullut parikymmentä turvapaikanhakijaa Valko-Venäjän reittiä, Maahanmuuttovirasto ei odota kovaa ryntäystä

mission had urged Member States to assess whether persons requiring protection could enter the country on the grounds of work or studying.³¹ In week 48, news broke of the opposition filing an interpellation motion regarding Finland's preparation for hybrid operations.³² The Government proposed that the refugee quota be increased.³³

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

In week 10, news about the fire at the Moria camp mentioned that Finland had received 11 asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors from the camp.³⁴ In week 11, the media noted that the reception of 175 vulnerable asylum seekers decided on in 2020 would be completed.³⁵

In week 33, the Finnish Immigration Service's Director General Jari Kähkönen commented on the reduction of the capacity of the Joutseno reception centre. Kähkönen said the capacity of the reception system would be sufficient even if a large number of asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors were to enter Finland.³⁶

RETURN

In week 21, the Ministry of the Interior published a report on asylum seekers who have been issued a negative decision but found employment in Finland. News articles noted that, according to the police, there are 220–900 persons staying in Finland who are subject to a removal decision.³⁷ In weeks 28–31, headlines were made by Finland's decision to suspend returns to Afghanistan.³⁸ In week 39, there was media coverage of an Amnesty report, according to which asylum seekers returned to Syria have become victims of police violence and torture. It was

mentioned that Sweden, among other countries, is returning asylum seekers to Syria.³⁹

IRREGULAR MIGRATION

In week 8, the Ministry of the Interior issued a release indicating that the COVID-19 pandemic had created new phenomena related to irregular entry, such as falsified work histories and employment contracts. It was noted that the level of irregular entry and stay in Finland is nevertheless low.⁴⁰

In week 32, there was extensive media coverage of the Coast Guard's tweet regarding an operation related to irregular entry.⁴¹

In week 50, the Finns Party criticised the Government's report on issuing a residence permit to migrants who have received a negative asylum decision but have stayed in the country for an extended period of time due to a subsequent application.⁴²

FAMILY REUNIFICATION

In week 14, there was media coverage of an Amnesty report, according to the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the human rights situation in Finland. News articles related to the issue noted that the rights of the child are not sufficiently taken into account in family reunification decisions.⁴³

In week 31, following the crisis in Afghanistan, news broke of Finland also evacuating local employees of the Finnish Embassy. In connection with the news, Prime Minister Sanna Marin said the Ministry of the Interior is considering making the family reunification process easier for Afghan nationals⁴⁴. Minister Ohisalo later said the Ministry intends to expedite the

³¹ [HS](#) 12 November 2021, Sisäministeri Ohisalo: On pohdittava, voisiko suojelua tarvitseva tulla Suomeen suoraan työn tai opiskelun perusteella

³² [YLE](#) 16 November 2021, Opposition mielestä Suomi on varautunut huonosti siirtolaisten käyttämiseen painostuskeinona – jättivät yhteisen välikysymyksen hybridiuhkista

³³ [Iltä-Sanomat](#) 18 November 2021, Hallitus ehdottaa ensi vuoden pakolaiskiintiön nostoa 1 500 henkilöön

³⁴ [MTV](#) 10 March 2021, Afgaaninuurille viiden vuoden vankeustuomio Lesboksen saaren leiripalosta – olivat tekohetkellä vain 17-vuotiaita

³⁵ [Finnish Immigration Service](#) 25 May 2021, Turvapaikanhakijoiden siirrot Välimeren alueelta pian päätökseen

³⁶ [Etelä-Saimaa](#) 18 August 2021, Migrin ylijohtaja Kähkönen: Joutsenon vastaanottokeskuksen supistuksia ei olla perumassa aina-kaan vielä, vaikka Suomeen on odotettavissa turvapaikanhakijoita Afganistanista

³⁷ [Uusimaa](#) 30 May 2021, Kielteisen turvapaikkapäätöksen saanut, mutta työpaikan löytänyt turvapaikanhakija voi jatkossa saada helpommin oleskeluluvan työn perusteella – asia on sisäministeriön selvityksessä

³⁸ [Iltalehti](#) 12 July 2021, Suomi keskeyttänyt palautukset Afganistaniin – mahdollinen lopputulos: Kaikki saavat jäädä maahan

³⁹ [YLE](#) 7 September 2021, Amnesty: Poliisi kiduttanut ja raiskannut Syyriaan palaamaan joutuneita turvapaikanhakijoita

⁴⁰ [Maaseudun Tulevaisuus](#) 5 May 2021, Sisäministeriö: Koronapandemia luonut uudenlaisia laittoman maahantulon ilmiöitä, laiton maassa oleskelu kuitenkin vähäistä

⁴¹ [Helsingin Uutiset](#) 9 August 2021, Rajavartiostolla operaatio Länsisatamassa, epäilyinä laiton maahantulo

⁴² [Iltä-Sanomat](#) 15 December 2021, Kielteisen turvapaikkapäätöksen saaneille oleskelulupa? Sisäministeri Mikkoselta tivattiin vas-tausta: "Olette tekemässä laittomasti maassa olosta laillista"

⁴³ [MTV](#) 7 April 2021, Amnesty: Koronapandemia heikensi Suomen ihmisoikeustilannetta

⁴⁴ [Salon Seudun Sanomat](#) 18 August 2021, Suomi pyrkii evakuoimaan Kabulista noin 240 Suomen kansalaista ja lähetystön työntekijää per-heineen – Ulkoministeriö: Useita suomalaisia evakuoitu Kabulista myös keski-ikäkköinä

processes that are currently under way.⁴⁵ The last evacuation flights from Afghanistan arrived in week 34. Minister Haavisto told the media that hundreds of people had contacted the Ministry for Foreign Affairs regarding family reunification.⁴⁶

In week 42, following the interpellation motion filed by the Finns Party and Liike Nyt, politicians – especially those from the Greens – expressed opinions on family reunification⁴⁷. In connection with the crisis in Afghanistan, Minister Haavisto has spoken in favour of making the processes easier and proposed the use of mobile consular services, for example.

INTEGRATION

In week 6, an economist from the Finnish Business and Policy Forum EVA suggested that the “unemployment security system leading to increased passivity”, and the home care allowance in particular, were the reasons for the low employment rate among migrant women.⁴⁸

In week 21, the media noted that the Ministry of the Interior would assess how asylum seekers who have received a negative decision but have found employment could be issued with a residence permit more easily than before.⁴⁹

In week 23, in a media conference, Minister of Employment Haatainen suggested that the Finnish national football team qualifying for the European Championships was an example of the integration work done by sports clubs.⁵⁰

In week 30, an integration programme published by the National Coalition Party made headlines, particularly due to the use of the term “kantasuomalain-

en” in reference to the members of the original population.⁵¹

In week 46, the Government proposed that the refugee quota be increased and additional funding be allocated to integration.⁵² The Finnish National Board of Education published a report on literacy in Finland. The news articles on the subject pointed out that literacy should be focused on particularly in integration training and in language education for students with immigrant backgrounds.⁵³

TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

In week 4, it was reported that the number of victims of trafficking in human beings in Finland had reached an all-time high in 2020, and the number of victims of forced labour had increased in particular.⁵⁴ In the same week, media outlets published articles on the new national police unit specialising in the prevention of trafficking in human beings.⁵⁵

In week 16, Helsingin Sanomat published an article revealing alarming deficiencies in police investigations of trafficking in human beings.⁵⁶

The Ministry of the Interior published a release on new irregular entry phenomena that are potentially linked to trafficking in human beings.⁵⁷ The Government’s Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings was published.⁵⁸

In week 31, it was reported that the number of victims of forced marriage referred to the assistance system had increased.⁵⁹

In week 39, it was reported that the police were investigating suspected trafficking in human beings in-

⁴⁵ [HS](#) 21 August 2021, Sisäministeri Ohisalon mukaan tavoitteena on nopeuttaa afganistanilaisten perheenyhdistämissä – “On selvää, että Euroopan unioni tulee jonkun verran näkemään ihmisiä”

⁴⁶ [TS](#) 26 August 2021, Niinistö: Ulkoministeriön ja Puolustusvoimien suojajoukon työ Afganistanissa erinomaista

⁴⁷ [Iltalehti](#) 20 October 2021, “Kuinka te kehtaatte!”, “haloo” – hallitus tyrmäsi PS:n väitteet maahanmuutosta

⁴⁸ [Iltä-Sanomat](#), 6 February 2021, Eva: Maahanmuuttajanaisten heikko työllisyys periytyy lapsille – “Suomen passivoiva työttömyysturva ja kotihoidontuki näyttäisivät olevan syitä”

⁴⁹ [Maaseudun Tulevaisuus](#), 30 May 2021, Kielteisen turvapaikkapäätöksen saanut, mutta työpaikan löytänyt turvapaikanhakija voi jatkossa saada helpommin oleskeluluvan työn perusteella – asia on sisäministeriön selvityksessä

⁵⁰ [Uusimaa](#), 17 June 2021, Työministeri Haatainen: Huuhkajien EM-pelit tuskin mahdollisia ilman urheiluseurojen tekemää kotoutumistyötä

⁵¹ [HS](#) 28 July 2021, Kokoomuksen Mykkänen ja Kauma avaavat keskustelua herättänyttä kotouttamisohjelmaa: Tarkoituksena ei ollut erotella ihmisiä etnisen taustan perusteella

⁵² [Keski-Uusimaa](#) 18 November 2021, Hallitus ehdottaa ensi vuoden pakolaiskiintiön nostoa 1 500 henkilöön

⁵³ [YLE](#) 16 November 2021, Lasten ja nuorten lukutaito on eriytynyt – eroja yritetään kaventaa uudella strategialla

⁵⁴ [YLE](#) 27 January 2021, Ihmiskaupan uhreiksi Suomessa joutuneita ohjattiin avun piiriin ennätysmäärä viime vuonna – prostituutioon ja rikollisuuteen pakotetut jäivät katveeseen

⁵⁵ [Iltä-Sanomat](#) 30 January 2021, Poliisin uudella ihmiskauppaa torjuvalla iskuryhmällä on jo tiedossa tutkittavia rikosvyyhtejä

⁵⁶ [HS](#) 25 April 2021, Tutkinta lopetettu

⁵⁷ [MTV](#) 5 May 2021, Koronapandemia luonut uudenlaisia laittoman maahantulon ilmiöitä – yhä useampi hakenut apua ihmiskaupan vastaisista palveluista

⁵⁸ [MTV](#) 7 May 2021, Hallitus aikoo kitkeä ihmiskauppaa kymmenillä toimenpiteillä – ohjelmalle rahoitusta 630 000 euroa

⁵⁹ [Iltä-Sanomat](#) 3 August 2021, Pakkoavioliiton uhreja tullut Suomessa tietoon aiempaa enemmän – väkivalta tuo tapaukset ilmi

volving a restaurant in Tampere.⁶⁰ Statutory employer–employee negotiations in the Finnish Police also received widespread media attention. It was reported that the unit investigating trafficking in human beings would continue its operations as planned in spite of the negotiations.⁶¹

In week 52, the Deputy Chancellor of Justice published an assessment finding that the police have difficulties in identifying potential human trafficking offences in preliminary investigations.⁶²

EU AND MIGRATION

Tensions increased on the border between Belarus and the EU in week 32. Minister Haavisto noted that the EU has a limited ability to influence the situation.⁶³

In weeks 32–34, the crisis in Afghanistan was discussed in the media, mainly from the Finnish perspective, but the role of the EU was also highlighted. Uutissuomalainen, for example, published an article stating that the President of Turkey had reminded the EU about the migrant deal⁶⁴, and the news outlet also noted that the senior EU official Josep Borrell had expressed a wish for dialogue between the EU and the Taliban.⁶⁵

In his speech at the Ambassadors’ Conference, President Niinistö expressed his concerns about how invisible the EU has been during the crisis in Afghanistan.⁶⁶

According to a researcher from the Finnish Insti-

tute of International Affairs interviewed by Uutissuomalainen, negotiating with third countries is the EU’s primary solution to migrant issues.⁶⁷ Minister Haavisto noted that there may be Finnish-speaking human traffickers at the border between Belarus and the EU⁶⁸, and Minister Ohisalo underscored Finland’s obligation to defend the EU’s external border, which could be done by closing border crossing points.⁶⁹

In weeks 47–48, news broke of the opposition filing an interpellation motion regarding Finland’s preparations for potential hybrid operations at the borders⁷⁰ and the EU’s new sanctions against Belarus.⁷¹

MIGRATION IN GENERAL

In week 3, Statistics Finland reported that the population of Finland had increased due to positive net migration.⁷² In week 11, it was reported in the media that non-Finnish speakers had represented a disproportionate share of COVID-19 infections in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area previously and that their share had increased further.⁷³ The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health addressed the issue in a media conference in week 12.

In the run-up to the municipal elections, in week 22, news broke of a study that found that voter turnout has been low, especially among young people with a migrant background.⁷⁴

In week 23, JCDecaux and Helsinki City Transport removed election advertisements by the Finns Party from public transport stops due to the advertise-

⁶⁰ [MTV](#) 1 October 2021, Poliisi tutkii ihmiskauppaa Tampereella – toinen vangituista istuu nepalilaisravintolan hallituksessa

⁶¹ [YLE](#) 4 October 2021, Poliisi välttää yt-neuvottelut: hallitus esittää poliisille 30 miljoonaa euroa lisärahaa – poliisien määrä ensi vuonna 7 500

⁶² [MTV](#) 28 December 2021, Poliisilla on vaikeuksia tunnistaa ihmiskaupparikokset, arvioi apulaisoikeuskansleri

⁶³ [Iltä-Sanomat](#) 14 August 2021, Valko-Venäjän masinoimat pakolaiset aiheuttavat painetta nyt myös Latvian ja Puolan rajoilla – Haavisto näkee tilanteen ”äärimmäisen huolestuttavana”

⁶⁴ [Itä-Häme](#) 21 August 2021, Turkin presidentti Erdogan näkee, että afganistanilaissiirtolaisten määrä voi koitua haasteelliseksi – muistuttaa EU:ta siirtolaissopimuksesta

⁶⁵ [Keski-Uusimaa](#) 17 August 2021, EU:n Borrell: Taleban voitti sodan, meidän on keskusteltava heidän kanssaan

⁶⁶ [Iltalehti](#) 24 August 2021, Sauli Niinistö: Muuttoliikkeestä pakko puhua – ”Viime kädessä meidän kaikkien on puolustettava suomalaista yhteiskuntaa”

⁶⁷ [Itä-Savo](#) 12 November 2021, EU neuvottelee siirtolaiskysymyksistä ulkovaltojen kanssa, koska se on sille poliittisesti helpompi vaihtoehto

⁶⁸ [YLE](#) 12 November 2021, Suomi vahvisti jo ulkomaalaisvalvontaansa – ulkoministerin mukaan Valko-Venäjän rajalla sattaa olla suomalaisia ihmissalakuljettajia

⁶⁹ [Itä-Häme](#) 9 November 2021, Ohisalo: Rajavartiolaki mahdollistaa rajanylityspaikkojen sulkemisen – ”Yhden ylityspaikan täytyy kansainvälisten sopimusten mukaisesti olla auki”

⁷⁰ [Etelä-Saimaa](#) 16 November 2021, Oppositio jätti välikysymyksen Suomen varautumisesta mahdolliseen hybridivaikuttamiseen rajoilla

⁷¹ [YLE](#) 15 November 2021, EU laajentaa Valko-Venäjän vastaisia pakotteita

⁷² [Statistics Finland](#) 21 January 2021, Syntyvyys kääntyi lievään nousuun vuonna 2020

⁷³ [YLE](#) 16 March 2021, Korkeat vieraskielisten koronaluvut nousseet entistä suuremmiksi – ”Meillä on ollut nuorempia maahanmuuttajataustaisia teho- ja hoivakotia”

⁷⁴ [Kaleva](#) 5 June 2021, Maahanmuuttajanuorten ääni ei kuulu kuntavaaleissa – ehdokkuus hirvittää, kun pitäisi ymmärtää politiikan kieltä ja vastata kaikista ”oman yhteisön” ihmisistä

ments suggesting that immigrants were given preferential treatment with regard to rental housing owned by the City of Helsinki.⁷⁵

In week 27, Kirsi Piha withdrew her nomination as the National Coalition Party's candidate for the position of Mayor of Helsinki, comparing the immigration-critical wing of the party to an embarrassing guest at a family party.⁷⁶

In week 32, a news article interviewed researcher Tuomas Kosonen from the VATT Institute for Economic Research, who said that two-year pre-primary education would reduce inequality for children from low-income families and with migrant backgrounds.⁷⁷ Riikka Purra's election as the chair of the Finns Party was reported to indicate that the party would maintain its current views concerning immigration policy.⁷⁸

In week 41, YLE and MTV Uutiset published articles on the rise of street gangs in Finland.⁷⁹ In week 42, the Government responded to the interpellation motion filed by the Finns Party and Liike Nyt regarding immigration policy.⁸⁰

2.3. Research on migration

A significant amount of research on migration was again published in 2021. The following is an illustrative – but not exhaustive – list of significant publications by the public authorities as well as academic studies on the subject.

On 13 April 2021, the Ministry of the Interior published its **Migration Review 1/2021**⁸², according to which migration is a more complex phenomenon than the public debate suggests, and essential for Finland's dependency ratio. Through the provision of integration services, municipalities play an important role in promoting Finland's vitality and equality. At present, there are significant differences between regions and municipalities in terms of the distribution of the population with a foreign origin. The Ministry of the Interior's Migration Review sheds light on current topics and phenomena related to migration. The Migration Review was previously published as a comprehensive publication 1–2 times per year but, going forward, the reviews will be focused on a special theme and they will be published approximately four times per year as online releases.

Muuttoliike murroksessa⁸² is a collection of articles on how impressions and notions related to migration and asylum seekers are created. The book sheds light on established ways of speaking, rhetorical and metaphorical frames of reference, polarisation on society and ways of giving meaning that feed prejudice. The book consists of 11 research articles and 16 short-form expert articles. The aim is to promote better and more humane debate on migration, based on facts and reliable information.

The book **Arjen turvallisuus ja muuttoliikkeet**⁸³ approaches the current migration to Finland from the perspective of security in daily life, providing an alternative view to theories that examine the connections between migration and security from the

⁷⁵ [Iltä-Sanomat](#) 7 June 2021, Ulkomainosyhtiö ja HKL poistavat perussuomalaisten rasistisiksi tulkitut kohumainokset – kaupungin yhtiö pyysi poistoa jo viime viikolla

⁷⁶ [MTV](#) 3 July 2021, Kirsi Piha kertoo HS:lle päätöksestään vetäytyä pormestarikisasta – kokoomuksen raju sisäinen peli yllätti: "Se on vähän niin kuin se eno, joka tulee sukujuhlisiin aina kännissä"

⁷⁷ [Iltä-Sanomat](#) 14 March 2021, Tutkija puolustaa 5-vuotiaiden esiopetusta: "Varmistaisi, että kaikki ovat paremmin samalla lähtöviivalla"

⁷⁸ [Iltä-Sanomat](#) 15 August 2021, "Tavoitteemme on nolla turvapaikanhakijaa" – Riikka Purra ottaa tiukan maahanmuuttolinjan puoleensa hallitusyhteistyöindikaattoriksi

⁷⁹ [Iltalehti](#) 14 October 2021, Pk-seudun katujengien otteet koventuneet – poliisi: "On syntynyt väkivallan kierre"

⁸⁰ [HS](#) 20 October 2021, Hallitus vastasi välikysymykseen maahanmuuttopolitiikasta – Ohisalo: Suomi ei ole irtautumassa yleiseurooppalaisesta trendistä

⁸¹ Ministry of the Interior, Maahanmuuton Tilannekatsaus 1/2021, available from <https://intermin.fi/-/suomen-vaesto-monimuotoistuu-vaihtelua-on-alueittain> (Cited 23 February 2022)

⁸² Kotilainen, N., Laine, J. (eds.) (2021), *Muuttoliike murroksessa: metaforat, mielikuvat, merkitykset*, Helsinki, Into

⁸³ Assmuth, L., Haverinen, V.-S., Prokkola, E.-K., Pöllänen, P., Rannikko, A. and Sotkasiira, T. (2021), *Arjen turvallisuus ja muuttoliikkeet*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society.

perspective of securitisation. By treating security in daily life as a theoretical concept and empirical lived reality, the book highlights immigrants' experiences of (in)security and perceptions of individuals and groups whose lives are affected by migration. The book looks at how security in daily life is built between interdependent parties at the personal level, community level and societal level, and concludes that creating security in daily life is a mutually beneficial – but occasionally arduous – process for all of the parties involved.

The book **Migration and Media in Finland**⁸⁴ combines different theoretical approaches to assess how Finland and people in Finland react to the EU refugee crisis. By combining interviews with Finns, immigrants who have voluntarily come to Finland and refugees in Finland, the text presents different perspectives on immigration in Finland. The key themes addressed in the book include the extent to which different groups consider each other to be economic, political and cultural threats to Finnishness. In addition, the cultural fusion of Finnish culture and immigrant culture is presented as a threat and an opportunity for Finland and the country's future.

The collection of articles **Vähemmistöt muuttajina**⁸⁵ provides a fresh perspective on the history of migration and otherness by discussing minorities' experiences related to migration from the late 1800s to the present day. The book consists of 11 research articles on topics including the cross-border history of Finnish Tatars, Sami migrants in North America, the evacuation plans of Finnish Jews during the Continuation War, and the migration of hearing-impaired Swedish-speaking Finns to Sweden. Collectively, the chapters of the book shed light on the silent and blind spots related to migration and expatriate Finns, challenging the national view on migration.

Maahanmuuton lait ja menettelyt – käytännön käsikirja⁸⁶ is a compilation of current legal information concerning migration: legislation, case law and international conventions. As access to legal information concerning migration is challenging due to

the fragmented nature of the information, the book responds to the need to have all of the relevant information in one publication.

Mikko Leino's doctoral dissertation **Among friends and strangers: The influence of residential context on attitudes and deliberation on immigration**⁸⁷ analyses how the living environment influences the majority population's attitudes toward immigration and the way they deliberate on the issue in small groups. It examines the potential of established theories of inter-group threat and inter-group contact in explaining individuals' attitudes. It also looks at whether theories based on in-group consolidation and group polarisation could explain differences in attitudes toward immigration in different districts of the same city. The dissertation also maps the central themes and arguments people bring forth when asked to discuss immigration in small group deliberations, where both proponents and opponents of immigration are present.

Josefina Sipinen wrote a doctoral dissertation on the **recruitment of immigrant-origin candidates in Finnish municipal elections**⁸⁸. The dissertation aims to further the discussion of factors that facilitate and hinder immigrants' political representation. The study draws on empirical evidence from the 2017 municipal elections and answers three main questions: (1) What were the key differences in electoral engagement between different ethnic groups? (2) What influenced political parties' demand for immigrant-origin candidates, i.e. motivated parties to recruit immigrants to their candidate lists? (3) What role did immigrant-origin candidates' supply factors, i.e. their socioeconomic backgrounds, resources, and motivations, play in their decision to stand as candidates and in their selection to candidate lists? The findings show, first, that the level of electoral engagement varies significantly between ethnic minority groups due to factors related to their countries of origin, reasons for migrating, and the level of integration in Finland.

⁸⁴ Croucher, S.M., Galy-Badenas, F., Condon, S.M., Sharapan, M. & Salonen, M. (2021), *Migration and Media in Finland*. Springer International Publishing.

⁸⁵ Tervonen, M & Leinonen, J (eds.) (2021), *Vähemmistöt muuttajina: näkökulmia suomalaisen muuttoliikehistorian moninaisuuteen*, Tutkimus Nro 6, Migration Institute of Finland, Turku, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-7399-10-1> (Cited 17 March 2022)

⁸⁶ Juvonen, Anna-Maija (2021), *Maahanmuuton lait ja menettelyt: käytännön käsikirja* / Anna-Maija Juvonen. Helsinki: Edita

⁸⁷ Leino, Mikko, (2021) *Among friends and strangers: The influence of residential context on attitudes and deliberation on immigration*, Publications of the University of Turku 566, dissertation, University of Turku, Faculty of Social Sciences, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-29-8701-6> (Cited 17 March 2022)

⁸⁸ Sipinen, Josefina (2021) *Recruitment of immigrant-origin candidates in Finnish municipal elections*, dissertation, University of Tampere, Faculty of Management and Business, Tampere, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-03-1910-6> (Cited 18 March 2022)

Research related to the health and well-being of migrants was also published in 2021:

The City of Helsinki's research publication **Ulkomaalaistaustaisten lasten ja nuorten hyvinvointi Helsingissä**⁸⁹ examines the well-being of children and young people of foreign origin in Helsinki. Primarily, children and young people with Finnish background are compared with children and young people of foreign background, but the publication also includes comparisons among those with a foreign background between those who have moved to Finland and those who have been born in Finland. The situation and experiences of boys and girls are also compared. The publication finds that although the majority of children and young people with a foreign background in Helsinki are doing very well, some are facing a wide range of challenges. For example, a clearly larger proportion of children and young people with a foreign background live in a low-income family than do others. Child poverty is still alarmingly common, although the proportion of children and young people with a foreign background living in low-income families has decreased somewhat.

Esther Idehen's doctoral dissertation **Cervical cancer screening participation among women of migrant origin in Finland**⁹⁰ investigated cervical cancer screening (Pap test) participation rates and factors associated with screening participation among women of foreign origin, aged 25–64, in Finland. The study comprised four sub-studies and adopted quantitative (sub-studies I–III) and qualitative (sub-study IV) research methods. The study examined the migrant women populations of Russian, Somali and Kurdish of Iraq/Iran origin (sub-studies I–III) The general Finnish population was used as the reference population (sub-studies II–III). The study also examined African migrants of Nigerian, Ghanaian, Cameroonian, and Kenyan origins in Finland (sub-study IV). Despite Finland's provision of universal cervical cancer screening services, the study demonstrated that, compared with the general Finnish population, some migrant-origin women have a lower likelihood of screening participation. The study

also indicated that some migrant groups are unaware of the screening programmes in Finland and that disparity in screening participation exists across the populations studied.

The book **Tutkien ja tarinoiden kohti pakolaistaustaisten nuorten kestävää hyvinvointia**⁹¹ describes studies that young adults who originally came to Finland as refugees have participated in as equal partners with researchers. The aim has been to support young people in recognising their strengths and capabilities and inspire them to pursue their goals and dreams in life. The book also discusses how the well-being and engagement in society of young people from refugee backgrounds could be supported through art. Empirical observations indicate that being seen and heard through the public presentation of stories has significance to the well-being of young people from refugee backgrounds.

The study **Ulkomaalaistaustaiset pääkaupunkiseudulla: asuminen, työllisyys ja tulot**⁹² focuses on three dimensions of integration, namely housing, employment and income. The statistics have been provided by Statistics Finland on request of the cities of Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa, and Uusimaa Regional Council. The study primarily concerned the present situation and its underlying development of foreign-born residents, i.e. immigrants. Those born in Finland, i.e. second-generation immigrants, have been analysed as to data on their education, employment and income. Most of the analysed data is from 2018. Immigrants are a heterogeneous group, and their living conditions vary substantially in all of the respects analysed. Differences between country-of-origin categories reflect differences in, for example, the cause of immigration and in the education level of immigrants. Between genders, too, there may partly be large differences, especially among those arriving from non-Western countries. In the Helsinki metropolitan region, there are many immigrants who have been successful in life and who have brought vitality and tax revenue to the community.

⁸⁹ Ahtiainen, H. et al (2021) *Ulkomaalaistaustaisten lasten ja nuorten hyvinvointi Helsingissä*, Helsinki: City of Helsinki, City Executive Office, kaupunkitieto, Tutkimuksia 5:2021, available from https://www.hel.fi/hel2/tietokeskus/julkaisut/pdf/21_02_04_Tutkimuksia_5_Ahtiainen_Maki_Maatta_Saukkonen_Yijala.pdf (Cited 16 March 2022)

⁹⁰ Idehen, Esther E. (2021), *Cervical cancer screening participation among women of migrant origin in Finland: disparities, challenges, and opportunities for improvement* / Esther E. Idehen. - dissertation: Kuopio: University of Eastern Finland, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-61-4306-4> (Cited 17 March 2022)

⁹¹ Rättilä, T., Honkatukia, P., (2021), *Tutkien ja tarinoiden kohti pakolaistaustaisten nuorten kestävää hyvinvointia*, Tiina Rättilä & Päivi Honkatukia (eds.), Helsinki, Julkaisuja, Nuorisotutkimusverkosto & Nuorisotutkimusseura

⁹² Saukkonen, P. (2021), *Ulkomaalaistaustaiset pääkaupunkiseudulla: asuminen, työllisyys ja tulot*, Tutkimuksia 2021:1, City of Helsinki, City Executive Office, kaupunkitieto, Helsinki, https://www.hel.fi/hel2/tietokeskus/julkaisut/pdf/21_03_10_Tutkimuksia_1_Saukkonen.pdf (Cited 17 March 2021)

Sanju Silwal's doctoral dissertation **Post-traumatic stress among adolescents surviving Nepalese earthquake and children of immigrants in Finland** aims to identify risk factors associated with post-traumatic stress symptoms (PTSS) using two study designs: a longitudinal post-earthquake survey and a Finnish population-based study. The study examined the prevalence of psychiatric symptoms, namely PTSS and depressive symptoms, 18 and 31 months after the 2015 Nepal earthquake among 893 adolescents aged 11–17 years, together with potential risk factors associated with their psychiatric symptoms. In Study I, the prevalence of PTSS and depressive symptoms among adolescents was higher in the severely affected area. The factors associated with psychiatric symptoms were being female, pre-earthquake trauma exposure and being trapped and/or wounded.

The aim of the **MigCOVID Survey 2020–2021 report**⁹³ published by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare was to examine the impact of Covid-19 on daily life, health, functioning, mental wellbeing, and quality of life among persons who have migrated to Finland. Data from the Impact of the Coronavirus on the Wellbeing of the Foreign Born Population (MigCOVID Survey)⁹⁴, conducted by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, was used for the report. The survey was conducted between October 2020 and February 2021 and coincided with the second wave of the COVID-19 epidemic in Finland. Altogether 3,668 persons between 20 and 66 years of age participated in the MigCOVID Survey. The participation rate was 60%. Statistically significant differences compared with persons in the general population were observed, with a significantly higher proportion of persons who have migrated to Finland reporting concerns related to COVID-19. The concerns included getting infected with COVID-19, infecting others, a close one becoming infected, being discriminated or avoided because of having COVID-19, continuation of employment, the government's ability to deal with the crisis, and the healthcare system's ability to treat all patients.

2.4. Other general developments related to immigration

Finland opened **embassies in Dakar, Senegal and Doha, Qatar** on 10 December 2021⁹⁵. Both embassies started their operations on a small scale and in temporary office premises. Consular services for Dakar and Doha will be provided in the Embassy of Finland in Abuja and in the Embassy of Finland in Abu Dhabi respectively until the premises of the new missions are ready to provide those services. However, starting from 10 December, both embassies provided services for people in distress as well as other urgent consular services requiring immediate action on site.

The amendment to the Decree also applied to the **Embassy of Finland in Tehran**, which in future will have the authority to provide residence permit services to Afghans residing legally in Iran. Previously, these services were only provided by the Embassy of Finland in New Delhi.

The Finnish Immigration Service of the Future⁹⁶ project was concluded at the end of 2021. The aim of the project was to create established operating practices to support planning and management and produce reliable foresight information on migration and the related needs in society. The project also assessed the productivity and impact of the immigration administration, i.e. the impact on society that is achieved through the funds invested in the immigration administration. The project was led by the Immigration Unit of the Ministry of the Interior. Representatives from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Finance and the Finnish Immigration Service were invited to participate in the project working group. To ensure access to extensive expertise, the project also heard various stakeholders, such as researchers and representatives of the business sector.

Master's degree students from Laurea University of Applied Sciences participated in the development of more participatory and inclusive preparation of immigration policy in a joint project with the Ministry of the Interior.⁹⁷ The project sought answers for engaging immigrants in Finland more clo-

⁹³ Skogberg, N., Koponen, P., Lilja, E., Austero, S., Prinkey, T., Castaneda A. (2021), Impact of Covid-19 on the health and wellbeing of persons who migrated to Finland: the MigCOVID Survey 2020–2021, Report 2021:8, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-683-1> (Cited 18 March 2022)

⁹⁴ Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare, Impact of coronavirus epidemic on wellbeing among foreign born population (MigCOVID), <https://thl.fi/en/web/thlfi-en/research-and-development/research-and-projects/impact-of-coronavirus-epidemic-on-wellbeing-among-foreign-born-population-migcovid-> (Accessed 18.3.2022)

⁹⁵ Ministry for Foreign Affairs 3 December 2021, Suomi avaa suurlähetystöt Dakariin ja Dohaan <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/suomi-avaa-suurlahetystot-dakariin-ja-dohaan> (Cited 17 March 2022)

⁹⁶ Ministry of the Interior, Tulevaisuuden Maahanmuuttovirasto, <https://intermin.fi/hankkeet/hankesivu?tunnus=SM037:00/2020> (Cited 23 February 2022)

⁹⁷ Laurea 15 December 2021, YAMK-opiskelijat kehittämässä entistä osallistavampaa maahanmuuttopolitiikan valmistelua, <https://www.laurea.fi/ajankohtaista/opiskelijaprojektit/yamk-opiskelijat-kehittamassa-entista-osallistavampaa-maahanmuuttopolitiikan-valmistelua/> (Viitattu 23 February 2022)

sely in the preparation of new Finnish immigration policy. Master's degree students in service design at Laurea were given the opportunity to come up with ideas during a study period in the autumn. The project was carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior's project to prepare Finnish immigration policy. As Finland has not previously had a comprehensive immigration policy, the project aimed to put together shared goals and solutions for creating effective immigration policy.

On 29 April 2021, the Finnish Government discussed **the general government fiscal plan 2022–2025**⁹⁸, with population policy highlighted as an important item on the agenda. On the same date, the Finnish Government published the **Government's Sustainability Roadmap**⁹⁹, according to which Finland has not been able to attract production-related investments or work-based immigration to the desired extent. In spite of net immigration, the working age population in Finland is shrinking because the retiring generations are significantly larger than the generations reaching working age. According to the current population projection, the population of Finland will begin to decline at the beginning of the 2030s. Consequently, the decision to increase immigration was added to the Government's agenda: the goal is to increase work-based and education-based immigration by at least 10,000 persons per year by 2030.

The City of Helsinki's project **International House Helsinki: digitaalisen kehittämisen selvitys** is conducting a study to support the digital development of International House Helsinki with the aim of promoting a customer-driven, proactive and efficient approach to the provision of early-stage public services for migrants. The study will assess the needs and conditions related to the development of digital services, build deeper customer insight (third-count-

ry nationals) and prepare action proposals to support the development effort. The long-term goal is for customers to be able to manage their affairs quickly and easily in one go, either online or at a physical service location. The term of the project is from 1 November 2021 to 30 June 2022.

The Finnish Immigration Service's **LYRIA – uniform induction and self-study project for immigration-related permit processes** project aims to streamline the operating practices of the authorities through the creation of digital self-study materials concerning work-based and entrepreneurship-based permit processes to make decision-making on such permit applications faster and related advisory services more consistent. The project will clarify immigration procedures and streamline the operating practices of the authorities through the adoption of a new induction training method. Uniform induction training materials will improve the openness, transparency and legal certainty of processes. The term of the project is from 1 November 2021 to 31 December 2022.

The Finnish Immigration Service's **SEER project on foresight and resource planning** is developing immigration-related analysis activities to support the Future of Migration 2020 Strategy goals of smooth, flexible and high-quality decision-making. The project focuses on combining and refining statistical data and expert knowledge to create an analysis tool that supports the achievement of the strategic goals through foresight and various scenario calculations. The objective is to promote legal migration through a streamlined permit process and facilitate the cost-effective allocation of resources through long-term resource planning. This will make it possible to identify potential needs for system improvements and legislative amendments. The term of the project is from 1 June 2021 to 31 December 2022.

⁹⁸ Government Communications Department, Ministry of Finance 29 April 2021, Hallitus päätti vaalikauden lopun linjauksista ja vuosien 2022–2025 julkisen talouden suunnitelmasta <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/10616/hallitus-paatti-vaalikauden-lopun-linjauksista-ja-vuosien-2022-2025-julkisen-talouden-suunnitelmasta> (Cited 23 February 2022)

⁹⁹ Finnish Government (2021), Hallituksen kestävyystiekartta, Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:43, available from <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-682-2> (Cited 17 March 2022)

3. Legal migration

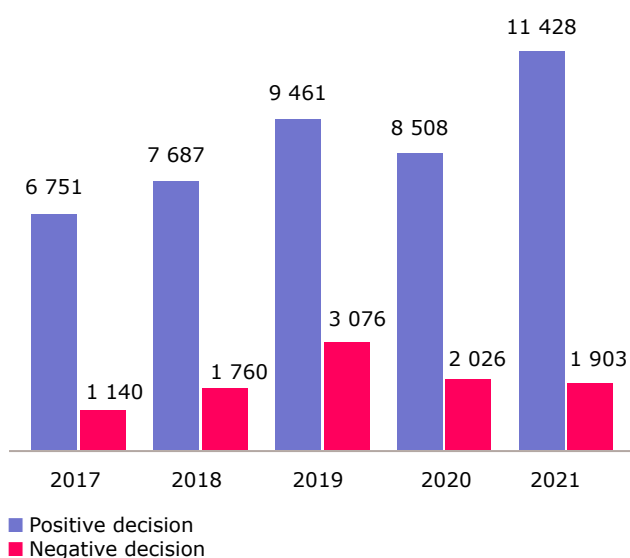
3.1. Labour migration¹⁰⁰

DECISIONS

In 2021, a first residence permit for Finland on the grounds of employment was issued to 11,428 individuals, representing a significant increase compared to 2020 (8,508). The number of employment-based residence permits has generally increased for the past several years. The situation in 2020 was clearly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, **but the rising trend resumed in 2021.**

The Finnish Immigration Service issued decisions on a total of 13,775 applications for a residence permit on the grounds of employment. Of the decisions given, 83 per cent were positive and 13.8 per cent were negative (3.2% expired). There were also changes in the top nationalities in 2021: the top three nationalities for first residence permits issued on the grounds of employment were citizens of Ukraine (3,660), Russia (1,312) and the Philippines (865).

First residence permit decisions on the grounds of employment 2017–2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Residence permits issued on the grounds of employment are divided into subcategories according to the chart below. As in the previous years, the most common case was that a first residence permit on the grounds of employment was issued for employment requiring a preliminary decision, that is: it was a so-called residence permit for an employed person.¹⁰¹

Most of the applicants for a residence permit for an employed person are manual labourers. Sectors for which such residence permits are issued include the following, for instance: agriculture, catering, construction, cleaning and transport.¹⁰² A total of 5,929 seasonal work certificates were issued in 2021. The largest group by citizenship was Ukrainians (1,835 residence permits).

After the lower figure (864) seen in 2020, the number of permits issued for specialists again began to rise in 2021, amounting to 1,293 permits.

Again in 2021, Indian nationals represented the largest group of specialists who entered Finland during the year (459). Most of them came to work in the IT sector, as in the previous years.

Many seasonal workers also entered Finland during the year: There were 2,022 residence permits issued, including both 3–6-month seasonal work and 6–9-month seasonal work requiring a preliminary decision. Seasonal workers in Finland are particularly employed by gardens, greenhouses, berry farms and forest berry picking companies.

The number of residence permits for startup entrepreneurs issued in 2021 was 155, which represents a significant increase from the approximately 50 permits issued annually in the preceding years.

A total of 12,992 extended permits were issued on the grounds of employment, representing a significant increase from the previous year, when the corresponding figure was 10,461. Extending the right of residence on the grounds of employment was the most common among citizens of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and India.

¹⁰⁰ The residence permit statistics are from the Finnish Immigration Service unless otherwise mentioned.

¹⁰¹ A decision on an application for a residence permit for an employed person is made in a two-step process that includes a preliminary decision by an Employment and Economic Development Office. For this reason, a residence permit for an employed person is also called employment requiring a preliminary decision. The preliminary decision by the Employment and Economic Development Office is an overall consideration that takes into account labour availability and an assessment of the conditions of employment as well as the employer's and employee's conditions. After the preliminary decision by the Employment and Economic Development Office, the final decision on the residence permit application is made by the Finnish Immigration Service, which determines whether the general requirements for issuing a residence permit are met.

Decisions on first applications for a residence permit on the grounds of employment in 2021

	Positive	Negative	Total
Self-employment	110	279	389
Work requiring a partial decision	5 929	1 439	7 368
Scientific research	964	6	970
Internship	91	7	98
Sports and coaching	296	64	360
Specialist	1 293	21	1 314
Other work	334	22	356
Specialist, Blue Card	191	0	191
Seasonal work	1 619	47	1 666
Seasonal work, preliminary decision	403	10	413
Intra-corporate transfer	15	0	15
Startup entrepreneur	155	7	162
Volunteering	28	1	29
Total	11 428	1 903	13 331

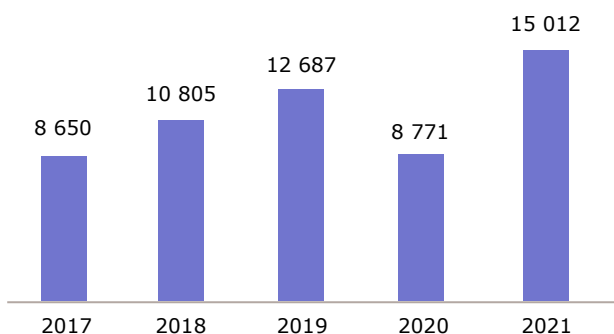
Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Of those who were issued a residence permit on the grounds of employment, 29 per cent were women and 71 per cent were men.¹⁰³

APPLICATIONS

In spite of the impacts of the pandemic, employment was the most common grounds of application for a first residence permit, as was the case in the previous year. A total of 15,012 first applications for a residence permit were

First applications for a residence permit on the grounds of employment 2017–2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

filed on the grounds of employment, which not only represented a significant increase from the previous year but also a new record in the number of such applications (compared with 12,687 in the previous record year, 2019).

The number of residence permits issued on the grounds of employment does not, however, give a complete picture of foreign labour in Finland, as not all foreign nationals coming to work in Finland need to obtain residence permits. Some foreign employees enter Finland from the EU and EEA under the principle of free movement. EU citizens may freely reside and work in Finland for three months without registering their right of residence. Those EU citizens who stay in Finland for more than three months are required to register their right of residence.

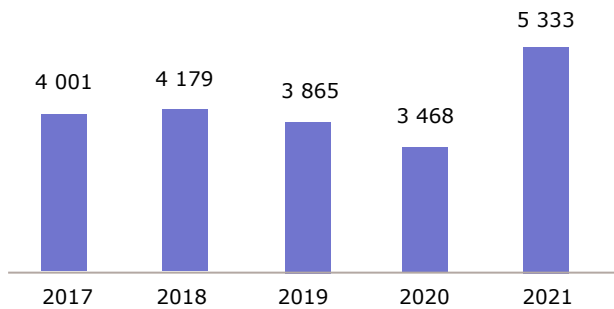
The number of EU citizens who registered their right of residence on the grounds of employment increased significantly, as was the case with other work permits. In 2021, a total of 5,333 EU citizens registered their right of residence in Finland on the grounds of employment. This figure includes both employed and self-employed EU citizens who received a positive registration decision. The Finnish Immigration Service believes that the increase was likely related to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Ministry of the Interior (2018), Töihin Suomeen - Hallituksen maahanmuuttopoliittinen ohjelma työperusteisen maahanmuuton vahvistamiseksi, Publications of the Ministry of the Interior 1/2018, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-324-176-3> (Cited 16 April 2020)

¹⁰³ This includes both first residence permits and extended permits.

¹⁰⁴ Finnish Immigration Service 26 January 2022, Maahanmuuton tilastot 2021: Ennätysmäärä haki oleskelulupaa työn perusteella <https://migri.fi/-/maahanmuuton-tilastot-2021-ennatysmaara-haki-oleskelulupaa-tyon-perusteella> (Cited 4 March 2022)

EU citizens who registered their right of residence on the grounds of employment



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Over one-third (37%) of the EU citizens who registered their right of residence on the grounds of employment were Estonians (1,989 persons). Other nationalities of employment-based EU migration included citizens of Romania and Latvia, for example.

In addition to EU and EEA citizens, **some of the third-country seasonal workers are not included if the focus is only on residence permits issued.** Pursuant to the act that entered into force in 2018, people who enter the country for more than three months of seasonal work must apply for a residence permit for a seasonal worker so they are included in residence permit statistics.

However, people who enter the country for less than three months of seasonal work are still not included in residence permit statistics. People who come from a visa-exempt country for less than three months of seasonal work must obtain **a seasonal work certificate.** A total of 13,870 seasonal work certificates were issued in 2021.

People who come from non-visa-exempt countries for less than three months of seasonal work must obtain **a visa.** The number of visas issued for seasonal work was approximately 1,920. Seasonal work visas were mostly issued to citizens of Russia (1,469) and Thailand (246).¹⁰⁵ It is noteworthy that Ukrainians did not rank very high in the visa statistics in 2021, as they had in the previous years. This is mainly due to the fact that Ukrainians can also enter Finland without a visa by using a biometric passport. In this case, they are required to apply for a seasonal work certificate from the Finnish Immigration Service.

Seasonal work in 2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

BREXIT

Effective from 1 October 2020, citizens of the United Kingdom and their family members have had the opportunity to apply for the right of residence in accordance with the withdrawal agreement. Last year, UK citizens and their family members submitted 2,894 applications for the right of residence in accordance with the withdrawal agreement. In 2020, the corresponding figure was 1,737. The number of positive decisions in 2021 was 3,288.

UK citizens and their family members were eligible to apply for the right of residence in accordance with the withdrawal agreement until 30 September 2021 if they had registered their right of residence as an EU citizen or as the family of an EU citizen. Starting from 2021, UK citizens moving to Finland were required to have a residence permit.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Source: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the figure also includes wild berry pickers who do not apply for a seasonal work visa but a normal Schengen visa.

¹⁰⁶ Finnish Immigration Service 20 January 2021, Immigration statistics 2020: Suomeen muutetaan useimmiten työn takia, korona vaikutti hakemusten määrään, <https://migri.fi/-/maahanmuuton-tilastot-2020-suomeen-muutetaan-useimmiten-tyon-takia-korona-vaikutti-hakemusten-maaraan> (Cited 23 March 2022)

3.2. Research on labour migration

The National Audit Office of Finland report **Työperäisen maahanmuuton kannustimet ja esteet**¹⁰⁷ discusses the labour migration system and recent developments in Finland and internationally. According to the report, slow, complex and unpredictable administrative processes are a hindrance to immigration. Labour migration is an area that involves various branches of administration, and there is room for improvement in inter-agency cooperation in certain respects. Finland has a lot of work to do to improve the country's standing in the international competition for labour. Finland's pull factors are safety, a clean environment and highly functional systems in society. Nevertheless, in terms of many criteria of attractiveness, Finland's performance is rather modest. Finland is fairly highly ranked in terms of attracting international students, but the poor career prospects make it less likely that students remain in the country permanently. Statistical data on immigrants who migrate to Finland for work and subsequently remain in Finland is not yet available. As the most important solutions for promoting labour migration, the report highlights comprehensive reforms of legislation and the operating practices of the authorities, along with a desire to improve Finland's attractiveness. The need for reforms particularly concerns the practical processes related to immigration, and such reforms would improve the availability of workers to fulfil local labour needs.

The Finnish Government's report on fast-acting measures to ensure the availability of skilled labour¹⁰⁸ analyses the causes and distribution of the problems related to the availability of labour and mismatches in the labour market both between sectors and from the regional perspective. The report also provides information on how the measures already outlined by the Government will improve the availability of skilled labour and analyses means by which the impact of these measures could be further strengthened. In addition, the report introduces other potential means by which mismatches in the labour market could be reduced in a cost-efficient way.

The report **Tervetuloa töihin**¹⁰⁹ by the Finnish Business and Policy Forum EVA discusses attitudes among Finns towards labour migration. According to the report, nearly half of Finns believe that, due to the ageing of the Finnish population and the country's potential population decline, it is necessary to make it easier to migrate to Finland. Finnish attitudes towards immigration have become significantly more favourable. This is a major change, as traditionally attitudes towards immigration have been less favourable. Labour migration, in particular, is believed to have a positive impact on Finland. This is highly significant, as Finland needs labour migration to fund the welfare state, improve the population structure and address the increasing labour shortages after the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment announced it is participating in an E2 research project¹¹⁰ that aims to find out how Finland's attractiveness among international experts and expatriates returning to Finland can be strengthened. In the project, the views of expatriate Finns, foreigners living in Finland and international digital nomads will be heard. The shortage of skilled labour is already an obstacle to growth in many sectors. This means that, besides measures to improve the labour market match, Finland also needs work-based immigration. The project seeks answers to the following questions, for example: How can Finland be turned into an appealing and attractive country that people are willing to commit to and where it is easy for expatriate Finns to return or for foreigners to come to work? How can people from outside Finland also participate in building our country?

The SIMHE project evaluation report¹¹¹ describes how the project expanded the target group of SIMHE activities to include international degree students in higher education institutions. Elements of the model were also adapted to other student groups of an immigrant background and to other immigrants. Studies show that, despite their interest in working in Finland, becoming employed is challenging for international degree students. Progressing in studies can also be challenging for international students espe-

¹⁰⁷ National Audit Office of Finland (2021), Työperäisen maahanmuuton kannustimet ja esteet – katsaus kirjallisuuteen ja politiikkatoimiin, National Audit Office of Finland publications 1/2021, <https://www.vtv.fi/app/uploads/2021/12/VTV-Selvitys-1-2021-Tyoperaisen-maahanmuuton-kannustimet-ja-esteet.pdf> (Cited 18 March 2022)

¹⁰⁸ Majanen, J. (2021), Selvitystyö nopeavaihteisista toimista osaavan työvoiman saatavuuden varmistamiseksi, Ministry of Finance publications 2021:48, Ministry of Finance, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-367-518-6> (Cited 18 March 2022)

¹⁰⁹ Kurronen, S. (2021), Tervetuloa töihin, EVA arvio 32 - 29 June 2021, EVA, <https://www.eva.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/eva-arvio-032.pdf> (Cited 18 March 2022)

¹¹⁰ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 3 November 2021, TEM rahoittaa E2:n tutkimushanketta, joka selvittää miten Suomeen saadaan lisää kansainvälisiä osaajia, <https://tem.fi/-/tem-rahoittaa-e2-n-tutkimushanketta-joka-selvittaa-miten-suomeen-saadaan-lisaa-kansainvalisia-osaajia-> (Cited 18 March 2022)

¹¹¹ Stenberg, H., Antikainen, M., Lintala, E., Roivas, M. (eds.) (2021) Towards a Finland of talents together: Insights on the SIMHE operations, collection of articles, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences publications, TAITO series 70, Metropolia, Helsinki, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-328-264-3> (Cited 18 March 2022)

cially due to the lack of language skills. It is therefore necessary to develop a comprehensive model, which takes into account both language learning and professional development as well as networking activities. Targeted support is needed starting from the beginning of studies. At present, the impact of the measures taken by higher education institutions responsible for SIMHE activities has mainly been evaluated on the basis of numbers of participants and customer feedback. SIMHE activities should be evaluated from the perspective of Finnish higher education policy and immigrant integration. The project compiled an evaluation report on the impact of SIMHE activities to support the development of the activities in Finland.

3.3. Legislative amendments and other developments related to labour migration

Labour migration was a prominent topic in 2021 in both the public debate and immigration policy. The shortage of skilled workers in Finland and other labour market deficiencies made the need for foreign labour a central topic of discussion and also put the issue on the Finnish Government's agenda. Several action plans, initiatives, projects and reports were published in 2021. Under the cross-sectoral **Talent Boost project**¹¹² coordinated by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, initiatives were promoted to increase labour migration to Finland.

Published in 2021, the **roadmap for education-based and work-based immigration 2035**¹¹³ is a long-term action plan to achieve the objectives set for the immigration of specialists, entrepreneurs, researchers and students. The roadmap adopted by the Government in its budget session compiles measures to make Finland an attractive country to work and study, where the immigration process is easy and seamless. The aim is to significantly improve Finland's position in the global competition for international talents and students. In particular, responding to the labour shortage in the leading high-tech growth sectors requires that experts are sought beyond the Finnish borders. The Government's objective is to at least double work-based immigration from its current level by 2030. At the same time, the number of new foreign students should triple to 15,000 students a year, with the aim that 75% of them stay in Finland for work after graduation.

On 1 February 2021, the Finnish Immigration Service launched a project¹¹⁴ to **speed up and streamline the processing of work-based permits and residence permits for international students**. The aim is to issue customers with a work permit on average within a month by 2023. Another goal was to achieve a processing time of two weeks for permits for specialists, startup entrepreneurs and their family members during the year 2021.

The status of seasonal workers improved significantly in 2021 following legislative reforms. The Act on the legal status of foreigners picking natural products¹¹⁵ entered into force on 14 June. Leg-

¹¹² Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Talent Boost -toimenpideohjelma, <https://tem.fi/talent-boost> (Cited 24 April 2022)

¹¹³ Finnish Government (2021), Koulutus- ja työperusteisen maahanmuuton tiekartta 2035, Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:74, <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/163408> (Cited 24 February 2022)

¹¹⁴ Finnish Immigration Service 1 February 2021, Maahanmuuttoviraston hanke sujuvoittaa työlupien ja opiskelijoiden lupakäsittelyä, <https://migri.fi/-/maahanmuuttoviraston-hanke-sujuvoittaa-tyolupien-ja-opiskelijoiden-lupakäsittelya> (Cited 23 February 2022)

¹¹⁵ Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 3 June 2021, Ulkomaalaisten marjanpoimijoiden asema paranee, <https://stm.fi/-/1410877/ulkomaalaisten-marjanpoimijoiden-asema-paranee> (Cited 24 February 2022)

islative amendments¹¹⁶ that entered into force on 17 June 2021 made it easier for seasonal workers arriving in Finland from third countries to change employers and made it possible for employers to notify the Finnish Immigration Service of more than one employee at a time. The amendments relate to seasonal work carried out in an employment relationship within agriculture or tourism. The amendment also reduces the risk of exploitation of seasonal workers from abroad as they will be able to change employers more easily.

In 2021, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy also published a booklet for workers arriving in Finland on employees' rights and who to contact for help while also launching a **multilingual advisory service** for seasonal workers arriving from abroad¹¹⁷. The "Working in Finland" booklet explains the terms of employment observed in Finland and advises employees on what to do if they are exploited at work. The booklet also includes links to organisations that provide help to workers. Designed in collaboration with Victim Support Finland (RIKU) and other stakeholders, the booklet is written in plain language and published in Finnish, Swedish and English as well as Russian, Ukrainian, Nepalese and Thai. RIKU is also responsible for operating the telephone advisory service.

Progress was also made in 2021 on the government proposal on the introduction of a **national D visa**¹¹⁸. On 16 September 2021, the Government submitted its proposal on the amendment of the Aliens Act and sections 3 and 5 of the Act on the Processing of Personal Data by Migration Authorities to the Parliament. The legislation is scheduled to enter into force in spring 2022. The government proposal on the introduction of a national D visa is related to the entry made in the government budget session in September 2020, according to which the preconditions for an accelerated residence permit process, known as a fast track service for specialists, growth entrepreneurs and their family members, should be examined. The fast track will be completed in June 2022. A national D visa allows people to stay in the territory of the issuing country for up to one year. It enables longer stays in the country than the stan-

dard short-term Schengen visa. According to the proposal, the national D visa would first cover specialists, startup entrepreneurs and their family members. It can later be extended to cover researchers and students.

The development of permit processes was also a prominent topic in relation to labour migration. In connection with this, on 1 February 2021, the Finnish Immigration Service launched the **Lupa22 project**¹¹⁹ to speed up and streamline the processing of work-based permits and residence permits for international students. The aim of the project is for customers to be issued with a work permit on average within a month by 2023. Another goal was to achieve a processing time of two weeks for permits for specialists, startup entrepreneurs and their family members during the year 2021. The Lupa22 project is related to an ongoing project led by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment to develop legislation concerning foreign nationals as well as permit processes (see above), where the Finnish Immigration Service has a central role as the authority responsible for issuing the permits.

The current state of labour migration was also discussed at the **EMN Finland conference "Is Finland ready for increased labour immigration?"**¹²⁰ held in Helsinki on 30 November 2021. At the conference, international experts and representatives of the Finnish labour market discussed the challenges related to increasing labour migration. The opening remarks were delivered by Minister of Employment Tuula Haatainen and Akseli Koskela, State Secretary to the Minister of the Interior. The opening remarks were followed by two panel discussions that addressed the subject at hand from two different perspectives. In the first panel discussion, international experts discussed labour migration based on research data and international examples. The second panel discussion focused particularly on the preparedness of the Finnish labour market and Finnish society to increase labour migration. The conference was concluded by a presentation focused on the sustainable implementation of international recruitment under the Triple Win programme created in Germany.

¹¹⁶ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 8 April 2021, Kausityöntekijän mahdollisuus vaihtaa työnantajaa paranee ja työnantajan hallinnollinen taakka kevenee, <https://tem.fi/-/kausityontekijan-mahdollisuus-vaihtaa-tyonantajaa-paranee-ja-tyonantajan-hallinnollinen-taakka-kevenee> (Cited 24 February 2022)

¹¹⁷ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 15 June 2021, Tuore esite ja neuvontapalvelu ehkäisevät kausityöläisten ja muiden Suomeen töihin tulevien hyväksikäyttöä, https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/-/1410877/new-booklet-and-telephone-advisory-service-to-prevent-abuse-of-seasonal-workers-and-other-persons-arriving-in-finland-for-work?languageId=fi_FI (Cited 24 February 2022)

¹¹⁸ Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 16 September 2021, Lakiesitys pitkäaikaisesta D-viisumista helpottaa työvoiman maahanmuuttoa, <https://intermin.fi/-/lakiesitys-pitkaaikaisesta-d-viisumista-helpottaa-tyovoiman-maahanmuuttoa> (Cited 24 February 2022)

¹¹⁹ Finnish Immigration Service 1 February 2021, Maahanmuuttoviraston hanke sujuvoittaa työlupien ja opiskelijoiden lupakäsittelyä, <https://migri.fi/-/maahanmuuttoviraston-hanke-sujuvoittaa-tyolupien-ja-opiskelijoiden-lupakasittelya> (Cited 23 February 2022)

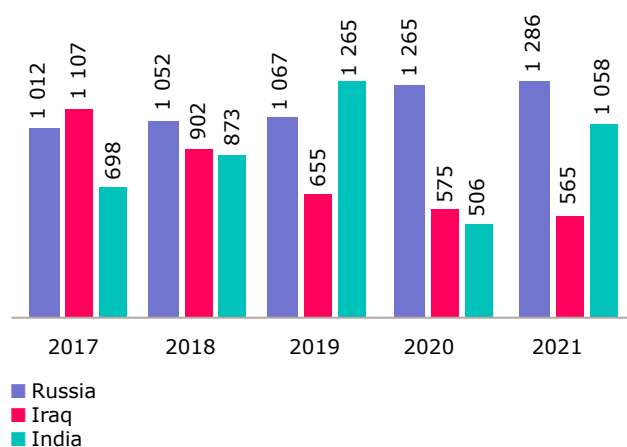
¹²⁰ European Migration Network, EMN Finland National Conference 30 November 2021 - Onko Suomi valmis työperusteisen maahanmuuton lisäämiseen? Yhteenveto, videolinkki ja esitykset, <http://www.emn.fi/ajankohtaista/30.11.emn-suomen-kansallisen-konferenssin-yhteenveto-videolinkki-ja-esitykset> (Cited 24 February 2022)

3.4. Family reunification

In 2021, a first residence permit on the grounds of family ties was issued to 9,821 foreign nationals. This represents a slight increase compared to 2020, when the number was lower due to the COVID-19 pandemic (8,592). However, in the longer term, the number of permits issued on the grounds of family ties have increased slightly, which means that 2021 was a continuation of the trend.

Traditionally, nationals of the Russian Federation have topped the list of nationalities in the residence permits issued on the grounds of family ties. However, the year 2017 was an exception to the rule, with Iraq being ahead of Russia. In 2019, India surpassed Russia as the most common nationality among those who received a residence permit on the grounds of family ties. However, in 2021, Russia returned to the top of the list, and India regained second spot after the decline seen in 2020.

Residence permits issued on the grounds of family ties, three largest groups by nationality 2017–2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

The Finnish Immigration Service made a total of 11,282 decisions on first applications for a residence permit on the grounds of family ties. **Of these, 87.1 per cent were positive and 10.2 per cent were negative.**

The number of first applications for a residence permit on the grounds of family ties was 13,764. The corresponding figure in the previous year was 8,369 applications, which means there was a significant increase in the number of applications, marking a return to the level seen before the COVID-19 pandemic. As with decisions, Russian nationals accounted for the highest number of applications.

Residence permits issued on the grounds of family ties can be categorised based on the sponsor.

Of those who were issued a first residence permit on the grounds of family ties, 19% were family members of Finnish citizens.

Family members of beneficiaries of international protection accounted for 12% of all people who were issued a residence permit on the grounds of family ties.

However, as in the previous year, **the most common scenario was the granting of a residence permit on the grounds of family ties to a family member of other foreign national, such as a foreign national who had been issued a residence permit on the grounds of employment: 64 per cent of all cases were like this.**¹²¹

The picture is slightly different when examined in terms of the recipient of the residence permit: In the case of beneficiaries of international protection, the family member arriving in Finland was most often their minor child. Minor children were the majority

¹²¹ The term "other foreign national" refers to a foreign national who has been issued with a residence permit on the grounds of employment, for instance.

Decisions on first applications for a residence permit on the grounds of family ties 2021

	Positive	Negative	Total
Guardian of a beneficiary of intl. protection	27	14	41
Child of a beneficiary of intl. protection	983	64	1 047
Other family member of a beneficiary of intl. protection	67	53	120
Spouse of a beneficiary of intl. protection	137	90	227
Guardian of a third country national	10	27	37
Child of a third country national	3714	350	4 064
Other family member of a third country national	1	6	7
Spouse of a third country national	2 590	233	2 823
Guardian of a Finnish citizen	55	34	89
Child of a Finnish citizen	306	34	340
Other family member of a Finnish citizen	17	47	64
Spouse of a Finnish citizen	1 914	194	2 108
Total	9 821	1 146	10 967

Source: Finnish Immigration Service

also among other foreign nationals' family members arriving in Finland, although fairly often the arriving person was their spouse. In cases involving Finnish citizens, the family member arriving in Finland was most often their spouse. The trend was the same as in the previous years.

A total of 12,121 extended permits were issued on the grounds of family ties. Their number decreased only slightly from the previous year, when the corresponding figure was 12,346. The most common nationalities among people who were issued with an extended permit on the grounds of family ties were the Russian Federation (1,687), India (1,115) and Iraq (883).

Of those who were issued with a residence permit on the grounds of family ties, 60% were women and 40% were men.¹²²

Apart from third-country nationals, family reasons also brought EU citizens to Finland. **In 2021, a total of 1,922 EU citizens registered their right of residence in Finland on the grounds of family ties.** Their number increased somewhat from the

previous year: in 2020, the corresponding figure was 1,621. As in the previous years, the most common nationality among these registrations was Estonian (423) by a clear margin.

In addition, the Finnish Immigration Service granted a residence card for a family member to 728 individuals. A residence card for a family member of an EU citizen can be granted to an individual who is a family member of a citizen of the European Union but who themselves is not an EU citizen. The most common nationality among people who were issued with a residence card for a family member of an EU citizen was that of the Russian Federation (133).

¹²⁴ This includes both first residence permits and extended permits.

3.5. Legislative amendments and other developments related to family reunification

The Ministry of the Interior sent out for comments a **draft government proposal on amending the Aliens Act**¹²³. The aim of the proposal is to ensure that people who receive international protection can exercise their right to family life as fully as possible. A further aim is to make sure that the best interests of the child are upheld in family reunification cases involving minor children who receive international protection.

The amendment of the Aliens Act would mean that family members of persons receiving international or temporary protection would not need to fulfil the requirement for sufficient financial resources to receive a residence permit in situations where the family was formed before the sponsor's arrival in Finland.

The proposal also aims to specify that, in accordance with the recently adopted ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union, the minor status of the child should be the time when the residence permit application of the family member was submitted. It is important to safeguard an equal right to family life for the child both nationally and among the EU Member States rather than at random depending on the date of the residence permit application decision.

The draft proposal is based on the Government Programme, according to which problems relating to family reunification and the reasonable income limits applied to family reunification sponsors who have been granted international protection will be examined, having regard to the protection of family life, the best interests of the child and the standards and practices governing the requirement for sufficient financial resources that are applied in other Nordic countries. The Government Programme also states that the application of the requirement for sufficient financial resources to minor family reunification sponsors who have been granted a residence permit due to a need for international protection will be discontinued.

Due to the rapid deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan and the COVID-19 pandemic, **the Finnish Immigration Service applied flexibility regarding its policy concerning family reunification applications by Afghan nationals in 2021**. In-person interviews were replaced by written interviews and additional time was given for applicants to provide supporting documentation for their applications. Family reunification applications by Afghan nationals were also given priority in application queues.¹²⁴

¹²³ Ministry of the Interior 13 August 2021, Oikeus perhe-elämään ja lapsen etu lähtökohtana perheenyhdistämistä koskevassa lakihankkeessa, <https://intermin.fi/-/oikeus-perhe-elamaan-ja-lapsen-etu-lahtokohtana-perheenyhdistamista-koskevassa-lakihankkeessa> (Cited 2 March 2022)

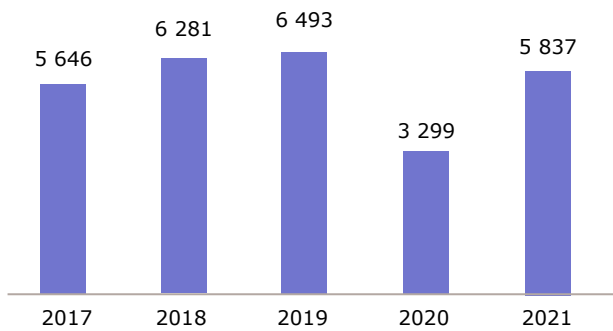
¹²⁴ Finnish Immigration Service, Asylum Unit, e-mail interview 25 January 2022

3.6. Students

In 2021, a first residence permit on the grounds of studies was issued to 5,837 foreign nationals, which marked a clear return to the pre-2020 level.

The total number of residence permit applications on the grounds of studies also returned to the pre-2020 level (6,711 applications). The lower number of applications in 2020 was attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Finland's diplomatic missions to suspend or restrict the receiving of applications. However, students returned to Finland in the usual numbers the following year.

First residence permit applications on the grounds of studies 2017–2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

As in the previous year, the largest nationality group among students migrating to Finland in 2021 was Russians (1,091). Students also entered Finland from China, India and Vietnam, for example.

In 92.3% of the cases, the decision on a student's residence permit was positive.

When the decisions are broken down by nationality, it can be seen that there were differences in the ratio of positive and negative decisions depending on the country of origin: although the greater part of the decisions were positive, negative decisions were more common with certain nationalities.

The number of new fixed-term residence permits, i.e. extended permits, issued on the grounds of studies was 2,943. The number was close to the previous year's level, when 2,838 extended permits were issued. The number was still low compared to 2019, when 4,829 extended permits were issued to students. The most common nationalities among people who were issued with an extended permit on the grounds of studies were the Russian Federation, Vietnam, China, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Of those who were issued with a residence permit on the grounds of studies, 48% were women and 52% were men.¹²⁵

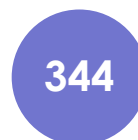
Decisions on first residence permit applications based on studies in 2021 – top 10 nationalities



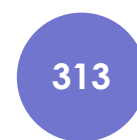
Russia Federation



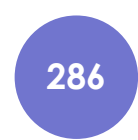
China



India



Vietnam



Bangladesh

¹²⁵ This includes both first residence permits and extended permits for students.

3.7. Legislative amendments and other developments related to student migration

In December 2021, the Finnish Government issued a proposal (HE 232/2021)¹²⁶ to the Parliament concerning legislative amendments¹²⁷ to make it easier for international students to remain in Finland. The legislative amendments would make it possible for foreign students to obtain a residence permit for the entire duration of their studies. The new legislation would also provide improved opportunities for seeking employment after studies.

The Government's proposed amendments to student residence permits would make it easier for international students to complete their studies, because they would obtain a permit for their entire studies. The right of foreign students to work during their studies would also be improved.

Under the new act, the type of permit for students studying for a higher education degree would change from temporary (B) to continuous (A), which would make it easier to obtain a permanent residence permit. The family members of the student would also receive a type A permit.

In the legislative reform, the so-called jobseeker's permit, which is granted to students who have completed a degree and to researchers who have completed their research, would be extended to two years. Students would still be required to provide proof of a secure means of subsistence, but only for one year. In its session on 16 December, the Finnish Government discussed a proposal on the changes to residence permits. The objective is for the legislation to enter into force on 1 April 2022.

The Roadmap for Education-based and Work-based Immigration 2035¹²⁸ published by the Finnish Government in 2021 represents a significant initiative also with respect to international students. One of the goals of the roadmap is that high-quality education programmes focusing on working life and mentoring programmes offered by higher education institutions will help foreign researchers and students to establish themselves in Finland and will open doors to Finnish networks for them. The target is for foreign students who have completed a higher education degree at a Finnish higher education institution to be employed within one year after graduation.

¹²⁶ [HE 232/2021](#) vp, Government proposal to the Parliament on the amendment of the Act on the Conditions of Entry and Stay of Third-country Nationals on the Grounds of Research, Studies, Training and Voluntary Service and related legislation (Cited 18 March 2022)

¹²⁷ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 16 December 2021, Kansainvälisten opiskelijoiden jäämistä Suomeen halutaan helpottaa – hallitus esittää lakimuutoksia, <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/1410877/kansainvalisten-opiskelijoiden-jaamista-suomeen-halutaan-helpottaa-hallitus-esittaa-lakimuutoksia> (Cited 18 March 2022)

¹²⁸ Finnish Government (2021), Koulutus- ja työperusteisen maahanmuuton tiekartta 2035, Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:74, <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/163408> (Cited 2 March 2022)

4. International protection

4.1. Asylum seekers

The number of asylum seekers who entered Finland in 2021 was remarkably low, and the relative proportion of quota refugees increased further.

A total of 2,545 asylum applications were submitted during the year. Of the asylum applications submitted in 2021, **45% were subsequent applications** (1,166 applications), which was attributable to a general decrease in the number of subsequent applications (1,934 subsequent applications were submitted in 2020).¹²⁹ The number of first asylum applications was slightly higher than in 2020 (2021: 1,383 applications, 2020: 1,275 applications).

As in the previous years, the most common countries of origin of asylum seekers were Iraq (612), Afghanistan (403) and Somalia (316), but the Russian Federation and Turkey were also still fairly high on the list.

As in previous years, most of the asylum seekers were young adults: approximately half of them were 18–34 years old. Approximately 30% of asylum seekers were women and 70% were men.

The Finnish Immigration Service believes that the low number of asylum applications was due to the fact that only a small proportion of the world's refugees manage to migrate away from conflict areas.¹³⁰

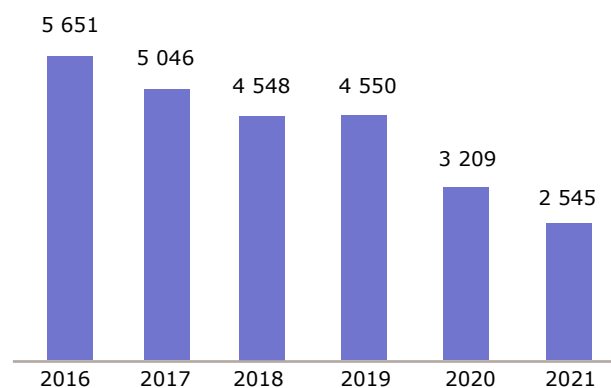
The escalation of the situation on the border of Belarus in 2021 was also not significantly reflected in the number of asylum seekers in Finland. Only some 40 asylum applications involved indications of the use of the Belarus route.

The security situation in Afghanistan deteriorated significantly last year as the Taliban took power in the country. The Finnish Immigration Service coordinated the reception in Finland of people evacuated from Afghanistan. The Finnish Government decided that residence permits would be issued on compassionate rounds to 236 Afghan nationals. This figure is not included in the asylum statistics. Also on the

evacuation flights were 88 Afghan nationals who applied for asylum in Finland. They were mostly family members of people who had received consular assistance. The instability in Afghanistan was not otherwise reflected in a noticeable increase in the number of asylum applications in 2021.

The number of cases under the EU Regulation on determining the State responsible for examining an asylum application was on a par with the previous year. It is believed that the COVID-19 situation again affected migrant mobility in the EU, which was reflected in the number of such cases.

Asylum applications 2015–2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

In February 2020, the Finnish Government decided to receive 175 vulnerable asylum seekers from the Mediterranean. The final 41 relocations were completed in 2021.

In 2020, the Finnish Immigration Service made a total of 4,086 decisions on asylum applications.

Of these decisions, 52.2% were positive. In absolute numbers, this corresponds to 2,132 positive decisions, most of which granted asylum. Subsidiary protection was granted to 167 individuals and a residence permit on other grounds, such as compassionate grounds, to 213 individuals. A negative deci-

¹²⁹ A subsequent application is an application for international protection that a foreign national files after receiving a final decision on a previously submitted application (Section 102 of the Aliens Act).

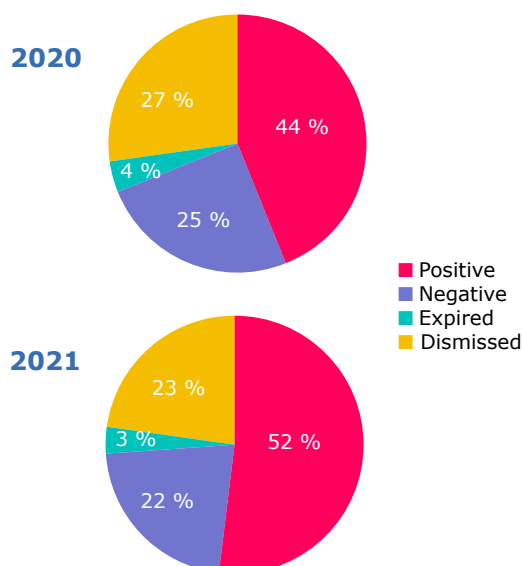
¹³⁰ Finnish Immigration Service 26 January 2022, Maahanmuuton tilastot 2021: Ennätysmäärä haki oleskelulupaa työn perusteella <https://migri.fi/-/maahanmuuton-tilastot-2021-ennatysmaara-haki-oleskelulupaa-tyon-perusteella> (Cited 4 March 2022)

sion was issued for 21.9% of the applications (893). Of the applications, 22.6% (922 applications) were dismissed, and in 3.4% of the cases (139 applications), the application expired.

Comparing the distribution of decisions with the previous years, it can be noted that the share of negative decisions relative to positive decisions decreased somewhat compared to the previous year.

According to the Finnish Immigration Service¹³¹, the extent to which asylum decisions were upheld in appeal procedures was fairly stable in the categories that reflect the quality of decision-making, i.e. categories in which the reason for an application being returned to be processed again was attributable to the decision-making of the Finnish Immigration Service. Less than 1% of applications were returned due to mistakes in interpreting the law and procedural errors, and less than 3% of applications were returned to a different consideration of the facts of the matter. However, the administrative courts returned a substantial number of applications submitted by Afghan nationals to be processed again, particularly in autumn 2021. This was due to the change in the situation in Afghanistan in the late summer of 2021, after the decisions were made in the cases in question.

Distribution of asylum decisions made by the Finnish Immigration Service in 2021 and 2020



4.2. Legislative amendments related to international protection

The Act on the Reception of Persons Applying for International Protection was amended so that the Finnish Immigration Service takes on central responsibility for preparedness planning concerning the organisation of reception services in the event of a mass influx of migrants. The President of the Republic approved the bill for the Act on 16 December 2021 and the Act subsequently entered into force on 1 January 2022.¹³² A mass influx of migrants is a situation in which reception centres for asylum seekers, including additional accommodation, are reaching maximum capacity and the capacity needs to be further expanded, as there is a constant influx of new migrants. Such a situation may arise gradually or abruptly, because of the massive displacement of people from a country towards Finland, for example.

The amendment improves preparedness for large numbers of migrants and clarifies the division of duties between the authorities. The overall responsibility for preparedness planning and measures is transferred to the Finnish Immigration Service, which has the lead in operational responsibility in the event of a mass influx of migrants and also the highest level of expertise in organising reception services.

The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres) have previously maintained regional cooperation groups, whose members include not only authorities but also municipalities, organisations and parishes. However, dividing preparedness planning between several parties has been considered difficult. As a result of the amendment, the responsibility for regional cooperation is transferred to the Finnish Immigration Service.

In November 2021, the Ministry of the Interior also set up a project to assess the possible needs for legislative amendments to **prepare for hybrid influencing that exploits migration**¹³⁵. The project will assess the means of the current legislation that can be used to prepare for and respond to such hybrid influencing, as well as possible needs to amend the legislation in the administrative branch of the Ministry of the Interior. The project will focus partic-

¹³¹ Finnish Immigration Service (2021), Finnish Immigration Service's financial statements and report on operations 2021, <https://migri.fi/-/maahanmuuttoviraston-toimintakertomus-2021-on-julkaistu> (Cited 6 April 2022)

¹³² Ministry of the Interior 16 December 2021, Vastaanottolain muutos selkeyttää vastuita laajamittaiseen maahan-tuloon varautumisessa, https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/1410869/vastaanottolain-muutos-selkeyttaa-vastuita-laajamittaiseen-maahantuloon-varautumisessa?languageId=fi_FI

¹³³ Ministry of the Interior 24 November 2021, Muuttoliikettä hyväksi käyttävään hybridivaikuttamiseen varaudutaan kartoittamalla lainsäädännön muutostarpeita, <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/1410869/muuttoliiketta-hyvaksi-kayttavaan-hybridivaikuttamiseen-varaudutaan-kartoittamalla-lainsaadannon-muutostarpeita>

ularly on the Aliens Act, the Act on the Reception of Persons Applying for International Protection and on the Identification of and Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings, and the Border Guard Act.

Legal aid and appeal periods for asylum seekers were changed following a legislative amendment¹³⁴ that entered into force in August 2021. The legislative amendment improved the legal protection of asylum seekers in accordance with the Government Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government. The President of the Republic signed the legislation on 15 July 2021.

Under the amendments made to the Aliens Act and the Legal Aid Act, legal aid paid out of State funds for asylum seekers include assistance in the asylum interview, and the provision of such assistance is no longer subject to the asylum applicant having a weighty reason for requiring assistance. In addition, the appeal period for asylum decisions was extended to 30 days, in line with other matters falling within the purview of the administrative courts. The availability of competent counsel is ensured by paying private counsels hourly compensation instead of the previous case-specific compensation.

In addition to strengthening the legal protection, fundamental rights and human rights of applicants for international protection, the amendments aim to make the asylum process more efficient.

4.3. Case law related to international protection

The yearbook decisions of the Supreme Administrative Court (KHO) again dealt with various themes related to international protection in 2021.

The interpretation of the exclusion clause was addressed in two cases, where active membership of an organisation classified as a terrorist organisation was seen as sufficient grounds for refusing asylum pursuant to section 87(2) of the Aliens Act, known as the exclusion clause: In one case concerning a Turkish¹³⁵ national, the Supreme Administrative Court found that A could be considered to have held a relatively high position in the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Due to A's position, A could be assumed to have been personally responsible for the terrorist actions taken by the organisation during the assessed period. In another case, concerning an Iranian¹³⁶ national, A had been a member of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and organisations affiliated with the PKK for several years. It could be considered evident that A had been aware of the PKK's operating practices and, consequently, of the terrorist activities associated with the organisation's operations.

The quality of interpreter services was highlighted in one case¹³⁷: A, an Iraqi national, had appealed to their conversion to Christianity as grounds for asylum. The Finnish Immigration Service had rejected the appellant's asylum and residence permit application in July 2018 and returned the appellant to Iraq, and the appellant had subsequently applied for asylum again in 2019 on the same grounds. The Finnish Immigration Service dismissed the application. In the Administrative Court, the appellant pointed out that the circumstances presented in the new application had been assessed purely based on the previous erroneous decisions. The appellant, whose native language is Behdini, could only partially understand the Kurdish Sorani dialect used as the language of interpretation in the oral hearing previously carried out by the Administrative Court. The Administrative Court dismissed the appeal and the appellant subsequently filed an appeal with the Supreme Administrative Court. According to a statement by a Behdini language interpreter, which the appellant submitted to the Supreme Administrative Court, the interpreter used in the oral hearing in the Administrative Court did not speak Behdini at all. Based on

¹³⁴ Ministry of Justice 15 July 2021, Turvapaikanhakijoiden oikeusturva vahvistuu, <https://oikeusministerio.fi/-/turvapaikanhakijoiden-oikeusturva-vahvistuu>

¹³⁵ KHO:2021:5 – Supreme Administrative Court (Cited 21 March 2022)

¹³⁶ KHO:2021:6 – Supreme Administrative Court (Cited 21 March 2022)

¹³⁷ KHO:2021:165 – Supreme Administrative Court (Cited 21 March 2022)

their accent, the interpreter was apparently an Iranian Kurd who spoke the Kurdish Sorani dialect. According to the statement, there were deficiencies in the interpreting from Finnish to Behdini and from Behdini to Finnish. The interpreter had made additions, left parts of the statements uninterpreted, or interpreted parts incorrectly. According to the statement, the consistency of the appellant's answers had suffered significantly from the quality of the interpreting. The Supreme Administrative Court granted leave to appeal in the matter. The Supreme Administrative Court stated that, in a case of assessing a person's religious beliefs based on their personal account, the accuracy of the person's expression and correctly communicating the individual details of the matter was very important. Consequently, it was necessary for the court to ensure that the interpreter was sufficiently competent so that the expressions used by the person would be understood correctly. It was also important that the person being heard could understand the questions presented to them.

As in previous years, **conversion to Christianity** was again addressed by the Supreme Administrative Court in 2021. A, an Iraqi national¹³⁸, had received a negative decision from the Finnish Immigration Service on their asylum application. After receiving the decision, A had stated their conversion to Christianity as new grounds for asylum. A was subsequently heard with regard to the new grounds for asylum in an asylum interview conducted by the Finnish Immigration Service and in an oral hearing by the Administrative Court. The Finnish Immigration Service and the Administrative Court were not convinced of the sincerity of A's convictions or the claim that A would be at risk of persecution in their home country due to their Christian faith. The Supreme Administrative Court had to decide on how the beliefs of A, who had stated their conversion to Christianity as grounds for asylum, should be evaluated in circumstances where they had participated in religious activities in Finland for an extended period of time, and how the risk of persecution faced by A in their home country should be assessed if A were to be returned. When assessing the existence of religious beliefs, the applicant's own statements play a key role. The key is to assess the applicant's motivation for conversion and the impact their conversion has had on their life. In this case, it had been determined that A had participated in the activities of their parish for approximately four years by the time the oral hearing was carried

out by the Administrative Court. The Supreme Administrative Court noted that participation in parish activities is one of the basic elements of the Christian faith, but does not, in itself, prove the existence of Christian beliefs. However, A's statements regarding their Christian beliefs were supported by their long-term and active participation in parish activities on their own initiative and the statements of the witnesses heard in the case. The Supreme Administrative Court found that A's conversion to Christianity may have been formal to begin with, and its purpose may have been to gain an advantage with regard to asylum but, since A had subsequently actively practised the Christian faith for several years, it was not deemed appropriate to assign more than a minor significance to the circumstances around the early stages of A's conversion, and the matter should primarily be resolved by assessing the current state of A's religious beliefs. The Supreme Administrative Court found that A's statement of their personal beliefs and their significance to them were sufficiently personal and consistent.

The cessation of refugee status was also addressed by the Supreme Administrative Court during the year. The Finnish Immigration Service had decided on the cessation of an Iraqi national's¹³⁹ refugee status after the appellant had applied for, and received, an Iraqi passport, with Iraq being their country of nationality. The Administrative Court had rejected the appeal. The Supreme Administrative Court found that, taking into account the country information concerning applying for an Iraqi passport that was mentioned in the Finnish Immigration Service's decision, it was not credible that the appellant was issued with an Iraqi passport purely based on the fact that they had applied for passports for their family members as the head of the family. The Finnish Immigration Service had stated that there was no information in the registers of the appellant having been instructed to apply for an Iraqi passport. The appellant had stated that they had been instructed to do so. The Supreme Administrative Court accepted the Finnish Immigration Service's explanation of the matter and, based on the information obtained, obtaining a passport for the purpose of international travel had not been necessary, and the appellant should have understood this. Consequently, the appellant's application for a passport was deemed to constitute re-availment of the protection of the Iraqi administration when necessary. Based on this, the

¹³⁸ [KHO:2021:195 - Supreme Administrative Court](#) (Cited 21 March 2022)

¹³⁹ [KHO:2021:101 - Supreme Administrative Court](#) (Cited 21 March 2022)

Supreme Administrative Court found that the appellant had voluntarily re-availed of the protection of their country of nationality by obtaining an Iraqi passport. Consequently, the case did not fall under Article 120 of the UNHCR Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status, where applying for a passport of the country of nationality is not relevant to the consideration of the cessation of refugee status.

The internal flight alternative was considered in a case¹⁴⁰ in which the Finnish Immigration Service had deemed that A, in their home region of Ingushetia, had a well-founded fear of being persecuted, as defined in Section 87(1) of the Aliens Act, by the local Ingush authorities. The Finnish Immigration Service had rejected A's application for international protection due to the view that A had the alternative of internal flight to Moscow. The Administrative Court had rejected the appeal. The Supreme Administrative Court agreed with the view of the Finnish Immigration Service and the Administrative Court in finding that A, in their home country, was not at risk of persecution by Russian special troops, as the matter was a question of persecution by the local authorities in Ingushetia. Consequently, the internal flight alternative had to be assessed from that premise. The Supreme Administrative Court found that a sufficient risk analysis had not been carried out in the case regarding A being subject to the risk of persecution by the Ingush authorities in Moscow. The Supreme Administrative Court assessed the general circumstances of the country of origin as presented in the case and the appellant's personal circumstances and found that A did not have the alternative of internal flight to Moscow, as referred to in section 88e of the Aliens Act, and consequently, A should be granted asylum. The Supreme Administrative Court overturned the decisions of the Finnish Immigration Service and the Administrative Court and the matter was returned to the Finnish Immigration Service for asylum to be granted.

The issue of **forced marriage** was addressed in a case¹⁴¹ involving A, a minor from Somalia, applying for asylum in Finland on the grounds of being under the threat of forced marriage. The Finnish Immigration Service had rejected A's application for asylum and issued a continuous residence permit on the grounds of subsidiary protection for a period of four years. In rejecting the application for asy-

lum, the Finnish Immigration Service had noted A's superficial and scant statement in the asylum interview. In the appeal document submitted to the Administrative Court, A had added more detail to their statement compared to the statement given in the asylum interview. The Administrative Court had dismissed A's appeal and request for an oral hearing. As the court of first instance, the Supreme Administrative Court had assessed the credibility of the more detailed statement relative to the statement given by A in the asylum interview. The Supreme Administrative Court noted that, based on general and current country information, women who refuse a forced marriage in Somalia are at risk of violence. Taking this into consideration, along with the more detailed statements given by the minor asylum seeker compared to the previous statements made in the asylum interview, and further taking into consideration the obligations concerning the interest of a child, the Supreme Administrative Court found that the decisions of the Administrative Court and the Finnish Immigration Service must be overturned and the case must be returned to the Finnish Immigration Service to be processed again.

The child's best interests¹⁴² were assessed in a case in which the appellants had applied for international protection and a residence permit on the grounds of violations of their rights in their home country due to their being Jehovah's Witnesses. The Finnish Immigration Service had rejected the application. The Administrative Court had dismissed the appeal concerning the Finnish Immigration Service's decision. When the case was processed by the Finnish Immigration Service, the family's eldest child had already turned 12 years of age. The Finnish Immigration Service had not arranged an asylum interview for the child in question, which meant that the child was not heard in the manner referred to in Section 6(2) of the Aliens Act. The Supreme Administrative Court found that the Finnish Immigration Service had had the obligation to assess the matter, and the applicant who was a child who had turned 12 years of age should have been given the opportunity to be heard before a decision was made on their case. In this respect, there had been a procedural error by the Finnish Immigration Service in this case. The Supreme Administrative Court found that the Finnish Immigration Service had assessed the conditions for international protection consistently in light of the appellants' accounts, current country in-

¹⁴⁰ [KHO:2021:184 - Supreme Administrative Court](#) (Cited 21 March 2022)

¹⁴¹ [KHO:2021:187 - Supreme Administrative Court](#) (Cited 21 March 2022)

¹⁴² [KHO:2021:190 - Supreme Administrative Court](#) (Cited 21 March 2022)

formation and previous case law established in similar cases. Taking the circumstances of the case into consideration, the fact that the child had not been heard had not played a deciding role in assessing the conditions for international protection to the extent that the decision should be returned to the Finnish Immigration Service purely due to the procedural error concerning the hearing of the child so that the child who had not been heard – or the family’s other children – could be heard.

In the same case, it was also necessary to assess the family’s conditions for being issued with a residence

permit on compassionate grounds pursuant to Section 52 of the Aliens Act. The Supreme Administrative Court found that the family’s perception of the weaknesses of the school system in their home country and their wish to have their children go to school in Finland did not constitute grounds for a residence permit on compassionate grounds. Consequently, the Finnish Immigration Service was found to have acted in line with the legal provisions by not issuing a residence permit to the appellants based on the reasoning behind the decision. The Supreme Administrative Court dismissed the appeal. The outcome of the decision of the Administrative Court was not changed.

4.4. Research on international protection

A research project commissioned by the Finnish Government evaluated the complementary immigration pathways available for people in need of international protection. Labour-based and study-based pathways were a particular focus area. The number of complementary pathway programmes is growing quickly, and they hold potential for responding to the needs of people in need of protection as well as the needs of host societies. As part of the project, a report was published entitled **Student, Worker or Refugee? How complementary pathways for people in need of international protection work in practice**¹⁴³. An international comparison carried out as part of the study indicated that, globally, labour-based and study-based complementary pathways are not yet clearly established practices, but rather a group of various programmes that are still in the pilot phase. The study found that the labour market, higher education institutions and NGOs play a key role in the existing pathways. At this time, there are more study-based programmes than labour-based programmes in use. The number of complementary pathway programmes is growing quickly, but their capacity is still fairly modest. The programmes hold significant potential for responding to the needs of people in need of protection as well as the needs of host societies. They cannot, however, replace quota refugee programmes, as the peo-

ple who migrate through complementary pathways are not primarily selected based on vulnerability.¹⁴⁴

The Finnish Government's study **Ulkomaalaislain ja sen soveltamiskäytännön muutosten yhteisvaikutukset kansainvälistä suojelua hakeneiden ja saaneiden asemaan**¹⁴⁵ analyses the combined effects of the amendments to the Aliens Act and the practice of applying the Act between 29 May 2015 and 6 June 2019 with regard to the status of asylum seekers. The report notes that the focus has been on making the asylum process efficient, rather than protecting the applicants' human rights. There has been an increase in cases where applicants have not been granted residence permits and, at the same time, it has not been possible to remove them from the country. The study recommends the following measures: 1) to consider whether persons without a residence permit could be granted a permit on some grounds; 2) to review the criteria for issuing an alien's passport; 3) to secure stability in the child's life when assessing applications for extended permits; 4) to secure family reunification on equal grounds for those who have been granted international protection; 5) to secure the child's best interest in family reunification; 6) to pay more attention to the vulnerable status of asylum seekers; 7) to improve human and child rights impact assessments; 8) to secure financing for the central actors; 9) to increase training in the field and 10) to assess the need for a reform of the Aliens Act.

¹⁴³ Varjonen, S., et al (2021), Student, Worker or Refugee? How complementary pathways for people in need of international protection work in practice, Publications Of The Government's Analysis, Assessment And Research Activities 2021:60, available from: <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-225-1> (Cited 23 February 2022)

¹⁴⁴ Kuntoutussäätiö, Tutkimus: Täydentävät maahanmuuton väylät ovat keino yhdistää humanitaarista ja osaamisperusteista maahanmuuttoa, <https://kuntoutussaatio.fi/2021/11/15/tutkimus-taydentavat-maahanmuuton-vaylat-ovat-keino-yhdistaa-humanitaarista-ja-osaamisperusteista-maahanmuuttoa/> (Cited 21 March 2022)

¹⁴⁵ Pirjatanniemi, P., Lilja, I., Helminen, M., Vainio, K., Lepola, O., Alvesalo-Kuusi, A. (2021), Ulkomaalaislain ja sen soveltamiskäytännön muutosten yhteisvaikutukset kansainvälistä suojelua hakeneiden ja saaneiden asemaan, Prime Minister's Office, Publications of the Government's analysis, assessment and research activities 2021:10, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-009-7> (Cited 21 March 2022)

4.5. Quota (resettled) refugees

Quota refugees to be resettled in Finland are persons whom the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has designated as refugees or other foreign nationals in need of international protection. The UNHCR designates for resettlement persons who have fled from their home country to another country, usually in nearby regions, in which they are unable to settle and reside on a permanent basis. Quota refugees are accommodated in refugee camps, for instance. The Parliament confirms Finland's refugee quota for the coming year annually in the State budget. The ministerial working group on migration prepares a proposal to the Government on the regional allocation of the refugee quota, and the proposal is approved by the Minister of the Interior.

In 2021, Finland committed to receiving 1,050 quota refugees.¹⁴⁶ The quota for 2021 consisted of 550 Syrian refugees from Lebanon and Turkey, and 250 Congolese refugees from Zambia. The quota also included 130 refugees evacuated from Libya to Niger or Rwanda. Finland also prepared to receive 120 refugees without area or nationality restrictions, including emergency cases.

During the year, a total of 1,091 quota refugees were selected to enter Finland, some of whom were part of the quota for 2020. The schedule of the selection process depends on proposals made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the selections were made by means of remote interviews or based on documents.

In 2021, a total of 891 quota refugees arrived in Finland. Refugees usually move to Finland in the year they are selected or in the following year. Not all of the quota refugees selected by Finland arrive in the country at all, or their arrival can be delayed due to various reasons. Finland granted residence permits and the required travel documents to the selected persons before their arrival in the country.

In February 2020, the Finnish Government decided to receive 175 vulnerable asylum seekers from the Mediterranean. The relocations from the Mediterranean were completed in 2021.

4.6. Development projects related to quota refugees

AMIF funded development projects related to the resettlement of quota refugees¹⁴⁷ were launched in 2021.

The Finnish Immigration Service project **Kiintiöpa-kolais- ja kuntaansijoittamishanke III** will implement changes to UMA information system functions and tools related to filing, decision-making and municipal placement in quota refugee cases. The development measures will enable filing and decision-making procedures for multiple cases simultaneously while also reducing the number of manual work stages in the planning and monitoring of municipal placement. The changes will ensure more streamlined and high-quality processing of quota refugee cases, which in turn will expedite the entry into Finland of quota refugees. Through training and the distribution of information, the project will enhance the cooperating authorities' preparedness for receiving quota refugees, prepare for changes in the operating environment in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, and further specify the procedures involved in selection and municipal placement processes as necessary. The term of the project is from 1 March 2021 to 31 December 2022.

The Finnish Immigration Service project **Kulttuuriorientaatiokoulutus Suomeen valituille kiintiöpa-kolaisille 2021–2022** will improve the integration and municipal placement preparedness of quota refugees selected for Finland by increasing their awareness of Finnish culture and society, as well as their language-related preparedness, before moving to Finland. The project aims to provide training to as many quota refugees selected to enter Finland as possible. The teaching methods are learner-oriented, participatory and they take the participants' special needs into consideration. In addition to periods of in-person teaching, the participating quota refugees' awareness of Finnish culture and society is improved by means of the MOF.fi website, which will be developed under the project to better meet the needs of vulnerable groups (for example, illiterate persons, children, young people, persons who have suffered trauma, persons with disabilities). The project is a follow-up to the Finnish Immigration Service's previous pre-departure cultural orientation projects. The project is part of the arc of the reset-

¹⁴⁶ Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior 5 November 2020, ministerial working group: Suomi vastaanottaa vuoden 2021 pakolaiskiintiössä syyrialaisia, kongolaisia sekä Libyasta evakuoituja pakolaisia, <https://oikeusministerio.fi/-/ministeriyoryhma-suomi-vastaanottaa-vuoden-2021-pakolaiskiintiössä-syyrialaisia-kongolaisia-seka-libyasta-evakuoituja-pakolaisia> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁴⁷ European Union Home Affairs Fund, Suomen uudelleensijoittamisohjelman jatkuvuuden ja toimivuuden turvaaminen, <https://eusa-rahastot.fi/toimintaa-ja-tuloksia/rahoitetut-amif-hankkeet/erityistavoite-5> (Cited 21 March 2022)

tlement process and aims to strengthen continuation with the quota refugee selection procedure administered by the Finnish Immigration Service. IOM provides pre-departure cultural orientation training abroad to as many quota refugees as possible. The term of the project is from 1 September 2021 to 31 December 2022.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment project **Sylvia5 – Pakolaisten kuntiin sijoittamisen tehostaminen** promoted the provision of municipal places for refugees through additional financial support for municipalities and by increasing competence regarding issues related to reception and integration. The additional imputed reimbursement component supported the development of support for reception and refugee integration and the continuity of reception services. Additional support for the reception of emergency cases helped maintain a network of receiving municipalities so that emergency cases could be received according to the urgency of the situation. The project also included the digitalisation of additional financial support. The project supported refugee-related competence, the strengthening of the knowledge base and the dissemination of best practices through events, training and communication. The project participated in the implementation of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment partnership programme by supporting the cross-sectoral cooperation of reception and integration support participants in municipalities and developed the refugee-related content of the kotoutuminen.fi website maintained by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. The project communications supported a knowledge-based approach to reception and open attitudes. The project took place from 1 February 2021 to 31 December 2021.

The Finnish Refugee Council project **Navigaattori 2.0** strengthens the reception-related capabilities of public sector employees and the integration preparedness of adult refugees in their new municipality of residence. The project utilises a dialogue-driven approach as well as assessment data from the previous project regarding the quota refugee process and the information and training needs of municipal employees. A municipal employee training model that supports bidirectional integration is developed further under the project and offered for use by new and old municipalities that receive quo-

ta refugees. Civic orientation requires more instructors proficient in the refugees' own language in order for the course to be implemented in various regions of Finland as part of the early-stage municipal integration process for refugees. The concept needs to be developed further with regard to its content, networks, cooperation, modelling, coordination and assessment. The project will continue the development and digitalisation of training as well as the implementation and further development of civic orientation courses. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the project functions are carried out both in person and remotely. The term of the project: 1 April 2021–30 June 2022.

The target groups of the Helsinki Deaconess Institute Foundation project **Sotatraumatisoituneiden kuntoutus** include adult refugees who have entered Finland as quota refugees and are traumatised by war and being a refugee, as well as municipal workers who work in the fields of social services, health care, education and employment services. In the project, a multidisciplinary team provides refugees with a period of assessing the need for treatment and, on a national basis, training, supervision and consultation for professionals who come into contact with traumatised quota refugees in their work. The aim of the project activities is to strengthen competence and expertise in municipalities in mental health work related to refugees. This promotes the integration of refugees in Finland and supports municipalities in the reception of quota refugees. In addition to work with patients, the project produces psychoeducational materials that help municipal workers pay attention to, and treat, post-traumatic symptoms among refugees. The term of the project: 1 October 2021–31 December 2022.

The Spring House Oy project **Avoin työelämä – Pakolaisen ja työyhteisön vastavuoroinen työelämäpolku** aims to promote equal opportunities and paths to working life for quota refugees. The project will develop a flexible working life driven model that increases the receptiveness of working life along with competencies related to diversity and inclusion and the ability to recognise the employment potential of persons with refugee backgrounds. Mutually beneficial solutions will be developed in cooperation with employers. The model will assess and identify the diverse competencies of quota refugees and take into account the special needs associated

with their initial status and life circumstances (for example, stay-at-home mothers). Based on the assessment, the project will support subsequent employment through career planning and the development of working life competencies, taking into account the participants' work ability, well-being and life circumstances. The working life competencies of quota refugees will be developed in cooperation with representatives of working life so that the content of career development and competencies are realistic and support subsequent transition to working life. The term of the project: 1 November 2021–31 December 2022.

The national **Osallisena** project coordinated by the Uusimaa Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment aims to create a systematic model for engaging customers with refugee backgrounds in designing services that support integration. The project will also create a model for competence development in customer work and increase the connectedness of processes related to municipal services for immigrants. Six specialists will be recruited for employment services to engage in customer work and development. A close connection between the development efforts and customers – and work with customers – will ensure that the development effort is driven by actual needs and the results will be put into action effectively and become established practices. One specialist will be recruited to work in the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities to work together with the project staff and partners on the development of a competence development model for integration specialists. As part of the model, the dialogic client work approach

developed in the project "Pakolaistaustaisten ohjaus" will be applied in employment services and other municipal services. The project is coordinated by the Uusimaa Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, where the Project Manager and Project Secretary are posted. The term of the project: 1 April 2021–31 December 2022.

The Sininauhasäätiö project **Sanastotyö kiintiöpakolaisten kotoutumisen edistämiseksi** developed glossaries featuring key terms related to the Finnish social security system and housing in Finland in the native languages of quota refugees. To support the development effort, a steering group that met four times was established, including representatives of public services, NGOs, interpreting service providers and educational institutions. An expert team was also established, consisting of interpreters who work in the languages in question, and language experts, to work on the glossaries, and an illustrator was used to illustrate the glossaries. The outcome of the project was a list of illustrated explanations of important terms to be distributed newly arrived immigrants, along with a list of recommended words for terms related to the social security system for use by interpreters. Providing explanations of the key terms and harmonising the translations used by interpreters make it easier for refugees to understand the practical aspects of housing and the social security system as well as manage their finances, which promotes better housing outcomes and prevents problems with rent payment and other financial problems. The term of the project: 1 February 2021–31 January 2022.

4.7. Reception¹⁴⁸

For the Reception Unit and the reception system, 2021 was the second consecutive year that was largely characterised by the COVID-19 pandemic. Pandemic management measures continued in reception centres and detention units based on the practices, guidelines and lessons established in 2020, and these measures were further refined during the year under review. Extensive guidelines were issued for COVID-19-related activities in reception centres and detention units, and the Finnish Immigration Service's own units and outsourced units both took responsibility for local pandemic management in cooperation with local parties.

The lower number of asylum seekers was also reflected in the number of customers of reception services. **The number of people covered by the reception system decreased in 2021. There were approximately 6,350 people in the reception system at the beginning of the year and approximately 5,100 at the end of the year.**

Reception capacity was adapted in a controlled manner to correspond to the current need. In 2021, the customer capacity of the reception system was reduced by 1,436, and the number of reception centres was reduced from 31 to 27 during the year. There were 7 special units for minors throughout the year. The average utilisation rate of reception centres for adults and families was 64% for the year, while the corresponding figure for the special units for minors was 81%.

At the beginning of the year, customers in private accommodation represented 48% of the total number of customers in the reception system. At the end of December, their share was 52%.

The largest nationality groups were **Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia**.

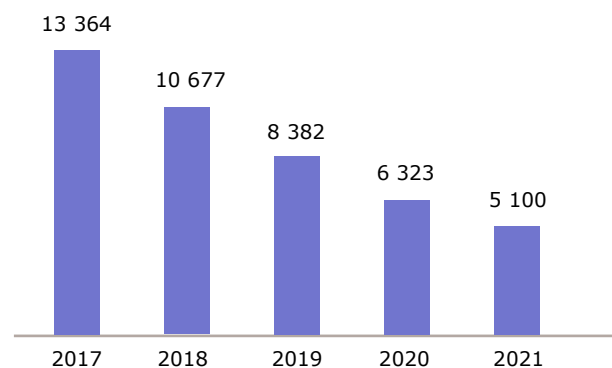
Iraqi nationals accounted for 32.5% of the customers registered in the reception system. The customers represented 93 different nationalities in total. **Men accounted for 69% of the customers and women for 31%**. (as at 31 December 2021)

Some 23% of the customers were minors. The average age of the adult customers was 33 years and the average age of the minors was 8 years. (as at 31 December 2021)

The utilisation rate of detention capacity (with places for 109 detainees) was also low due to the pandemic and its cascade effects.

A total of 2,287 people were transferred from reception centres to municipalities. Of these, 994 moved independently, 577 were transferred from private accommodation, 359 were assigned to a municipality by an ELY Centre (Center for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment), and 357 moved with assistance from reception centres.

Persons covered by reception services 2017–2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

¹⁴⁸ Figures from the Reception Unit of the Finnish Immigration Service

5. Unaccompanied minors¹⁴⁹ and other vulnerable groups

5.1. Unaccompanied minors

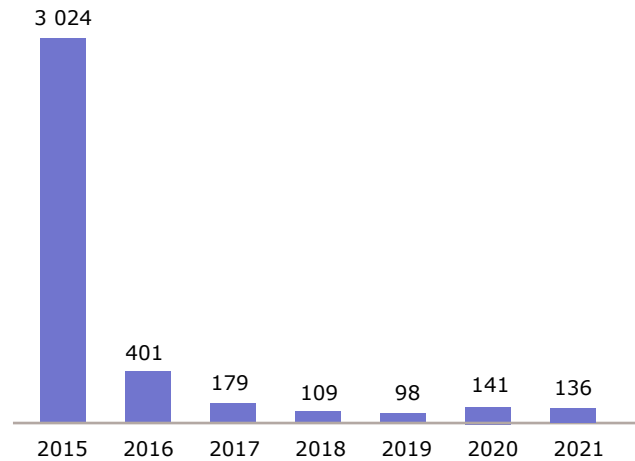
A total of 136 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum in Finland in 2021. The applicants represented 17 different nationalities in total (including “unknown”). The nationality groups with the most applicants were Afghanistan (57), Somalia (42) and Syria (8).

A total of 145 decisions were made on asylum applications submitted by unaccompanied minors. **Positive decisions accounted for 93 per cent of all decisions.** This corresponds to 135 positive residence permit decisions, 1 negative decision and 9 expired applications.

Of the positive decisions, 109 cases involved the granting of asylum, 12 cases involved the granting of subsidiary protection and 14 cases involved the granting of a residence permit on grounds other than international protection.

For unaccompanied minors, a residence permit granted on grounds other than international protection usually means a residence permit on compassionate grounds. A residence permit is granted on compassionate grounds when there are no grounds for granting international protection but returning the person to his or her home country would be otherwise unreasonable from a humane point of view. For unaccompanied minors, this is often associated with a case in which it is not clear who would take care of the minor when he or she returns to the home country.

Asylum-seeking unaccompanied minors 2015–2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

¹⁴⁹ There are two Finnish equivalents for the term: “yksin tullut alaikäinen” (a minor who has entered the country alone) and “ilman huoltajaa oleva alaikäinen” (a minor without a guardian). The latest EMN Glossary, Asylum and Migration Glossary 6.0: Finnish edition, includes both terms. The terms are used synonymously. By using the term “yksin tullut alaikäinen”, one can emphasise the fact that the minor has entered Finland alone and, as a result, his/her asylum application is processed independently of any adult’s application, and by using the term “ilman huoltajaa oleva alaikäinen”, one can emphasise the fact that the minor is in Finland without a guardian at that particular moment.

5.2. Legislative amendments and other developments related to unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups

A working group set up by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment¹⁵⁰ began on 4 November 2021 to **prepare reforms concerning the provision of services to young people and children who have entered Finland as an unaccompanied minor and been issued with a residence permit**. The aim is to ensure that such young people have equal access to services compared to other groups that require special support. The working group also evaluates the state's compensation concerning the related services. The members of the working group include specialists from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment as well as representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of the Interior, the ELY Centres for Uusimaa, Pirkanmaa and North Ostrobothnia, the cities of Espoo and Tampere, and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. The working group will complete its work in autumn 2022.

The **National Child Strategy** published by the Finnish Government in 2021 strengthens the realisation of the rights of vulnerable children and children who have experienced violence, and it takes into account the work carried out to combat trafficking in children and other trafficking in human beings. The strategy was drafted through a parliamentary committee process and published at the beginning of 2021. Starting from 2021, an implementation plan will be prepared to support the implementation of the strategy in each government term. The implementation plan will detail the measures selected to promote the strategic objectives. The implementation work is closely related to other projects, such as the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's Barnahus project¹⁵¹ and the implementation of the Lanzarote Convention.

In spring 2021, in accordance with the Government Programme, the Ministry of Justice started to **examine the punishability of forced marriage**. A mem-

orandum¹⁵² was produced as part of the examination to assess potential needs to develop and clarify legislation, taking into account the entries in the Government Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government and the assessments concerning Finland by the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)¹⁵³.

The memorandum describes forced marriage as a phenomenon and examines the punishability of forcing a person to enter into marriage under the legislation currently in force. Based on the assessment, it was considered that the current provisions of the Criminal Code on trafficking in human beings, aggravated trafficking in human beings and coercion are rather broadly applicable to the acts of forcing a person to enter into marriage. The conclusion of the memorandum is that the assessed provisions of the Criminal Code are sufficiently comprehensive and there is no need to amend or specify them. However, for example, the possibility of specifying the Criminal Code's provision on trafficking in human beings by adding forcing a person to enter into marriage among the purposes for committing the offence is brought up in the memorandum.

The Ministry of Justice also drafted a **government proposal¹⁵⁴ on the annulment of forced marriage**. The proposal was submitted to the Parliament on 14 October 2021. Under the proposal, the Marriage Act would be amended to include provisions that enable the annulment of a forced marriage. The legal ramifications of the annulled marriage would correspond to the legal ramifications of divorce, except that the annulled marriage would result in the person's previous marital status being restored. The amendments proposed to the Code of Judicial Procedure and the Court Fees Act are related to legal provisions concerning the annulment of marriage.

The proposal concerning the annulment of forced marriage was related to the entry in the Government Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government regarding the annulment of forced marriage as part of the development of a safe and secure Finland

¹⁵⁰ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Oleskeluluvan saaneiden alaikäisenä ilman huoltajaa tulleiden palveluiden järjestämisen uudistamista valmisteleva työryhmä, <https://tem.fi/hanke?tunnus=TEM090:00/2021> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁵¹ Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Barnahus project, <https://thl.fi/fi/tutkimus-ja-kehittaminen/tutkimukset-ja-hankkeet/barnahus-hanke> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁵² Ministry of Justice (2021), Arviomuistio avioliittoon pakottamisen rangaistavuudesta, Publications of the Ministry of Justice, Memorandums and statements 2021:29, https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163612/OM_2021_29_ML.pdf (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁵³ Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2 September 2021, Euroopan neuvosto tarkastelee naisiin kohdistuvaa väkivaltaa ja perheväkivaltaa Suomessa, <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/euroopan-neuvosto-tarkastelee-naisiin-kohdistuvaa-vakivaltaa-ja-perhevakivaltaa-suomessa> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁵⁴ HE 172/2021 vp, Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laiksi avioliittolain muuttamisesta ja siihen liittyviksi laeiksi, (Cited 3 March 2022)

built on the rule of law and improving the position of crime victims. It was also proposed that the Marriage Act be amended so that a marriage entered into abroad as a minor would only be recognised for a special reason if at least one of the spouses had residence in Finland at the time of the marriage.

An updated **Action plan for the prevention of female genital mutilation (FGM)**¹⁵⁵ was also published in 2021. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence obligates Finland to pre-

pare guidelines for a system for preventing FGM and to ensure their effective implementation. The action plan aims to continue the practices that Finland has implemented to prevent FGM and to develop new means to help victims of FGM, for example. The main objective of the action plan is to increase healthcare and social welfare professionals' knowledge and competence and disseminate information to groups at risk of being subjected to FGM. The action plan is a follow-on to the action plan for the prevention of FGM for 2012–2016 adopted by Finland.

¹⁵⁵ Koukkula M., Klemetti, R. (2021), Tyttöjen ja naisten sukuelinten silpomisen (FGM) estäminen, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health publications 2021:16, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-9715-8> (Cited 17 March 2022)

6. Integration

6.1. Legislative amendments and other developments related to integration

In 2021, the Finnish Government published a report on integration¹⁵⁶ that proposes a comprehensive action plan of measures to support integration even more effectively. The Government report on the need to reform the integration promotion services was related to a memorandum drawn up by the Parliamentary Audit Committee during the previous government term, according to which integration promotion services need to be reformed.

In order to develop structures and services, the report proposes measures to respond to changes in the operating environment and to strengthen the integration, employment and inclusion of the diverse immigrant population as well as good relations between the population groups. The report proposes a new type of integration programme for the development of early-stage integration. In addition, the report proposes that the general service and education system be developed so that it better applies to immigrants.

The report proposes a wide range of reforms with the following key goals:

- Expediting the path of immigrants to employment and education.
- Promoting the inclusion of immigrants in working life and the broader society.
- Supporting the settling in of immigrant women in Finland, which helps with the settling in of the entire family.
- Increasing the receptiveness of working life and preventing polarisation in society.

The Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations between Population Groups was approved on 28 October 2021 by a Government Resolution. The Action Plan outlines the Government's measures to ensure that Finland

is free of discrimination. Published under the name "An Equal Finland"¹⁵⁷, the Government Action Plan for Combating Racism and Promoting Good Relations Between Population Groups is based on a situation assessment and on facts and evidence about racism and its forms in Finland. The Action Plan includes eight key objectives and 52 measures to be carried out in different branches of government in 2021–2023.

The objectives of the measures outlined in the Action Plan include dismantling the structures in society that contribute to inequality, promoting diversity in Finnish working life, building up the equality-related competence of the authorities, raising awareness of racism and its different forms, developing racism research and clamping down on hate speech with systematic action. The measures also create the conditions for policies to promote good relations between population groups locally and nationally.

On 17 March 2021, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment launched a **working life diversity programme**¹⁵⁸ that is based on the Government Programme and will last until March 2023. The aim of the programme is to ensure that companies and organisations benefit from diversity and that immigrants are able to find employment matching their skills and advance in their careers in both the public and the private sector. The programme includes measures to reduce structural discrimination and racism in the labour market by increasing the awareness of the benefits of diversity in work communities and by improving recruitment and management skills related to diversity and inclusiveness in working life. Measures to combat discrimination in recruitment and to promote anonymous recruitment are also included in the programme. Employers and workplaces are the target group of the working life diversity programme.

The Ministry of Education and Culture and the Finnish National Agency for Education launched an action plan¹⁵⁹ to strengthen **the learning and school attendance capabilities of students with immi-**

¹⁵⁶ Finnish Government (2021), Valtioneuvoston selonteko kotoutumisen edistämisen uudistamistarpeista, Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:62, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-856-7> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁵⁷ Ministry of Justice (2021), Yhdenvertainen Suomi: Valtioneuvoston toimintaohjelma rasismien torjumiseksi ja hyvien väestösuhteiden edistämiseksi, Publications of the Ministry of Justice, Memorandums and statements 2021:34, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-259-808-0> (Cited 4 March 2022)

¹⁵⁸ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (2021), Työelämän monimuotoisuusohjelma: Toimenpideohjelma työelämän monimuotoisuuden edistämiseksi maahanmuuton ja kotoutumisen näkökulmasta, Publications of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 2021:10 – Working life - 2021:10, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-327-663-5> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁵⁹ Ministry of Education and Culture 2 November 2021, Oikeus oppia –ohjelma etenee: Maahanmuuttaneiden oppilaiden perustaitoja vahvistetaan laajalla toimenpideohjelmalla vuosina 2022–2026, <https://okm.fi/-/oikeus-oppia-ohjelma-etenee-maahanmuuttaneiden-oppilaiden-perustaitoja-vahvistetaan-laajalla-toimenpideohjelmalla-vuosina-2022-2026> (Cited 3 March 2022)

grant backgrounds. The action plan will be in effect from 2022 to 2026 and is targeted particularly at students in grades 7–9. The action plan aims to particularly strengthen the basic skills of students who are non-Finnish speakers and have only recently moved to Finland. This includes their language skills and their capabilities related to learning and school attendance. The action plan improves the students' preparedness to move on to secondary education or from preparatory education to general education. The action plan particularly supports students who are in grades 7–9 and who have only been attending school in Finland for a short time.

In line with the Government Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin's Government, **compulsory education was extended in 2021**¹⁶⁰. Consequently, the minimum school leaving age was raised to 18 years, and counselling and student welfare services were enhanced. The extension of compulsory education entered into effect on 1 August 2021. The rules concerning compulsory education apply by age group, with students who were in ninth grade in spring 2021 being the first to be affected. Those who are subject to compulsory education are required to apply for secondary education before they complete their basic education. Going forward, compulsory education ends when a student turns 18 years of age or completes a secondary degree, i.e. a matriculation examination or vocational degree. Students with immigrant backgrounds who are subject to compulsory education can also undertake their compulsory studies in adult basic education or in education provided by folk high schools if their Finnish or Swedish language proficiency is not sufficient for post-basic education.

The Partnership platform, a workspace for integration and refugee reception experts, opened as a beta version for users on 2 December 2021. The Partnership platform is an interactive, digital and communal platform for operators, experts, stakeholders and networks involved in integration, immigration and reception of refugees. The aim of the Partnership platform is to provide a neutral, safe and free space for all those involved in integration and reception of refugees. The platform will facilitate coopera-

tion, exchange of information and networking around a specific topic, region or event. The workspace is a closed extranet site that at the beta stage consists of workspaces, contact person search and user profiles.

On 22 June 2021, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment published a **glossary of integration**¹⁶², which harmonises the use of concepts of the Integration Act and services specified by it. The publication of the glossary is a starting point to a broader evaluation of integration and immigration concepts. The discussions on concepts were to continue at events for different target groups in the autumn and with the reform of the Integration Act.

The work on the glossary has focused on defining concepts related to the Integration Act (Act on the Promotion of Immigration Integration) and key integration services. Concepts related to equality, inclusion and discrimination have also been included in the glossary.

International House Tampere¹⁶³ started its operations in early 2021. It brings together the educational and work-related immigration, multilingual counselling, education and skills development and international recruitment services in Tampere. The collaboration partners in the International House Tampere are the City of Tampere's Employment and Growth Services Multilingual Info Centre Mainio and International HUB Tampere, Tampere Vocational College Tredu, Tampere University community and TE Offices in the Pirkanmaa region.

The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) published information on the municipal elections in seven languages on 6 May 2021¹⁶⁴.

The materials were used to encourage multilingual municipal residents to participate in decision-making and vote in the municipal elections in June 2021. The materials were published in seven languages: Finnish, Swedish, English, Russian, Estonian, Arabic and Somali. The election materials were focused on questions that ETNO has encountered in its work. Examples of the topics addressed in the materials include the right to vote, exercising the right to vote, the municipal elections, the duties of municipalities

¹⁶⁰ Ministry of Education and Culture, Oppivelvollisuuden laajentaminen, <https://okm.fi/oppivelvollisuuden-laajentaminen> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁶¹ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 2 December 2021, Kumppanuusalausta – kotoutumisen ja pakolaisten vastaanoton toimijoiden yhteistyötila avautuu tänään!, https://kotoutuminen.fi/en/-/partnership-platform-a-workspace-for-integration-and-refugee-reception-experts-to-go-online-on-2-december-2021-?languageId=fi_FI (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁶² Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (2021), Kotoutumisen sanasto: 1. edition, Publications of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 2021:54, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-327-931-5> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁶³ City of Tampere 22 December 2020, International House Tampere avaa ovensa alkuvuodesta 2021, https://www.tampere.fi/tampereen-kaupunki/ajankohtaista/tiedotteet/2020/12/22122020_1.html (Cited 4 March 2022)

¹⁶⁴ Ministry of Justice 5 May 2021, Etnisten suhteiden neuvottelukunta tiedottaa Monikieliset vaalimateriaalit kannustavat äänestämään kuntavaaleissa, <https://oikeusministerio.fi/-/monikieliset-vaalimateriaalit-kannustavat-aanestamaan-kuntavaaleissa> (Cited 4 March 2022)

and issues related to safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. The materials were intended for multilingual municipal residents and voters. Organisations, municipalities and influencers can make use of the materials to raise awareness of the municipal elections and other influencing opportunities in municipalities. ETNO encouraged individuals, NGOs and municipalities to distribute the materials and encourage multilingual municipal residents to vote and exercise influence in the elections. The materials support the objectives set out in the National Democracy Programme 2025 to increase voter turnout in municipal elections among immigrants and multilingual municipal residents and to encourage them to stand for election.

6.2. Development projects related to integration

Myötätuulta kotoutumiseen – antirasistisia tekoja nuorisotyöhön (Myötätuuli project) develops youth workers' ability to recognise and take action against racism, improving their capacity to address structural racism. The project's target group is youth workers and its beneficiaries are young people, particularly those with migrant backgrounds. The key project functions include training materials intended for youth workers and anti-racist support materials. They provide tools and support for joint development as well as cooperation across professional and sectoral boundaries. The project strengthens youth workers' ability to recognise and take action against racism and improves their competence with regard to practical work concerning equality and non-discrimination. The project thereby intends to improve the opportunities for participation and engagement among young people with a migrant background and promotes the integration of young people who have moved to Finland from third countries. Structural racism resides in practices and the operating culture, which is why eliminating it requires a long-term effort and the engagement of the entire working community, which is supported by the project. The term of the project: 1 November 2021–31 December 2022.

The project **Vastaanottava AMK - valtakunnallisesti rasismia vastaan (VARAVA)** aims to achieve a change in the operating culture of universities of applied sciences. The project seeks to highlight the role of universities of applied sciences in promoting the integration and employment of third-country nationals, thereby responding to the need for sustainable growth created by the population structure and global responsibility. The project examines structural obstacles and ways to take action against racism. Anti-racist methods and activities are developed through service design and collaborative development processes between students, staff and stakeholders. The outcome will be an action plan aimed at change at the national level and action proposals for Finnish universities of applied sciences. The development process will be documented and the results will be used to create an automated study module: an open MOOC of anti-racist methods will be created to support change.

The term of the project: 1 November 2021–31 December 2022.

The Ministry of Education and Culture authorised **four vocational education and training providers to use English as a language of instruction and qualifications** for five different qualification programmes¹⁶⁵.

The new qualification programmes in English are:

- Further Vocational Qualification in Cleaning and Property Services (AEL-Amiedu Oy)
- Further Vocational Qualification in First-Level Management (Keuda Group)
- Vocational Qualification in Tourism Industry, Vocational Qualification in Restaurant and Catering Services (Educational Consortium OSAO)
- Vocational Qualification in Mechanical Engineering and Production Technology (Riviera Vocational Education and Training Centre)

Decision on using new languages for qualification programmes are based on the regional demand for labour and on education and training needs. The education providers are expected have the competence and capabilities to provide the qualification programmes in English in different learning environments. They must also be able to support the students in learning Finnish or Swedish in the course of the foreign-language programmes. Language skills in Finnish or Swedish make it easier for migrants to find a job, integrate, and settle in Finland.

6.3. Research on integration

Moniheli ry, Sininauhasäätiö and VVA ry, in cooperation with the Finnish Landlord Association, asked private lessors about the factors that influence tenant selection and whether a prospective tenant having a foreign background plays a role in tenant selection. A total of 364 lessors participated in the survey. The report **Vuokralaisvalintaan vaikuttavat tekijät ja ulkomaalaistaustaisten asunnon hakijoiden asema yksityisillä vuokramarkkinoilla**¹⁶⁶ was published on 1 November 2021. The results of the survey indicate that the unequal position of prospective tenants of foreign origin is influenced particularly by three themes: language skills, financial situation, and origin or being part of an ethnic minority. The lack of a common language between the prospective tenant and the lessor has a negative effect in tenant selection. More than half of the lessors indicated that a prospective tenant's origin generally has a slightly negative or negative effect in tenant selection. Approximately one-third of the lessors indicated that a prospective tenant being a member of an ethnic minority has a somewhat negative or very negative effect in tenant selection. Employment, the ability to pay and paying a security deposit in cash were identified as factors that have a positive effect in tenant selection. Half of the respondents indicated that putting up a security deposit in the form of a promissory note from Kela has a slightly negative or very negative effect in tenant selection.

Policy Brief¹⁶⁷ is a series of articles by the Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. It presents integration-related views based on research on topical social issues and supports political decision-making. Three articles were published in the series in 2021.

- Policy Brief 1/2021: Promoting the employment of women with immigrant backgrounds
- Policy Brief 2/2021: How do people with a foreign background born in Finland manage school and working life?
- Policy Brief 3/2021: The impact of immigration on local employment and wages

Moussa Ahmad's dissertation **Developing Integration by evaluating Government Program for 2016–2019**¹⁶⁸ evaluated the Finnish integration pro-

¹⁶⁵ Ministry of Education and Culture 13 December 2021, Ammatillisen koulutuksen englanninkielistä koulutustarjontaa vahvistetaan, https://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/-/1410845/provision-of-vocational-education-and-training-in-english-being-boosted?languageId=fi_FI (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁶⁶ Vilkkama, V., Myllylä, A., Puurunen, H. (2021), Vuokralaisvalintaan vaikuttavat tekijät ja ulkomaalaistaustaisten asunnon hakijoiden asema yksityisillä vuokramarkkinoilla, Moniheli ry, Sininauhasäätiö sr, VVA ry, <https://moniheli.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Ulkomaalaistaustaisten-asunnon-hakijoiden-asema-yksityisella-vuokramarkkinoilla-raportti.pdf> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁶⁷ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration, Policy brief articles, <https://kotoutuminen.fi/policy-brief> (Cited 3 March 2022)

¹⁶⁸ Ahmad, Moussa (2021), Developing integration by evaluating Government Program for 2016-2019: propositions for decision makers, dissertation, University of Vaasa, School of Technology and Innovation, Vaasa, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-476-969-3> (Cited 22 March 2022)

gram from 2016 to 2019, focusing on the perspective of refugees by applying a mixed methodology, service design diamond model with a constructive problem-solving research approach. It is one of the first studies in Finland to deal with the issue by using management science. The study also sought to find out why the Finnish integration programme did not work and what propositions could be offered to Finnish policymakers. Most of the participants in the study strongly agreed with the measures of the Finnish integration programme. The problem is not in the programme itself, but rather in the different priorities between the refugees and the Finnish Government, and in the implementation of the Finnish integration measures.

According to the report **Maahanmuuttajanaisten loukku**¹⁶⁹ published by the Finnish Business and Policy Forum (EVA) in 2021, the low employment rate of migrant women in Finland is also reflected in their children's performance in school and the job market. The report finds that the low unemployment rate of migrant women has a long-term negative impact on society as a whole and weakens integration into society. EVA's report points out that the unemployment security system and child home care allowance lead to increased passivity and subsequently to a low employment rate. The report suggests that the situation could be improved by wage subsidies, the abolition of the child home care allowance and the improvement of services that promote integration and employment.

In 2021, the Finnish Refugee Council published its **final report on the Navigator project**¹⁷⁰, which was aimed at promoting the integration of adult migrants – particularly quota refugees and other beneficiaries of international protection and their families – by developing civic orientation in the migrants' own languages and training native-language civic orientation instructors representing various language groups.

According to the results of the report, early-stage civic integration provided in the participant's own language effectively promotes early-stage integration. Based on this finding, the report makes six recommendations:

- RECOMMENDATION 1. Civic orientation should be provided to all integration participants soon after entry, including those who are not in the labour force.

- RECOMMENDATION 2. Civic orientation should be based on dialogue-based teaching methods.
- RECOMMENDATION 3. Civic orientation should be provided in the integration participant's own language.
- RECOMMENDATION 4. Nationally consistent teaching materials should be created for civic orientation.
- RECOMMENDATION 5. The criteria for civic orientation instructors need to be set sufficiently high and the instructors should be provided with training that is comprehensive in terms of both content and methodology.
- RECOMMENDATION 6. Civic orientation provided in the form of online education should be developed.

The report **Yhteisölähtöisen kotoutumisen mahdollisuudet Suomessa**¹⁷¹ by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment examines the development of community-sponsored integration in cooperation with the State, municipalities, organisations and civil society. The aim was to obtain information on how a community sponsorship model of integration would fit into the refugee resettlement programme in Finland. The respondents included municipalities receiving refugees, organisations, representatives of religious communities, researchers and individual volunteers. A possible programme was positively received. In particular, the respondents hoped that the national programme would make it easier for refugees to settle in early, find social networks and plan their future realistically. Support for language learning and improved employment opportunities were also considered important. If successful, a community-sponsored programme would support integration and prevent marginalisation. The programme could create permanent cooperation structures between authorities and civil society instead of cooperation based on individual projects.

The Finnish Government's study **Maahan muuttaneiden koulutus- ja työllisyyspolut**¹⁷² aimed to produce information that allows developing the training and employment paths of immigrants to improve their employment rate and social inclusion. The methods used were literature review; register research; a survey; expert, focus group and case study interviews; provincial and international review; an open evaluation; and workshops. The study's multifaceted perspectives and multiple methods were im-

¹⁶⁹ Kurronen, S. (2021), Maahanmuuttajanaisten loukku, EVA Arvio No. 30, Finnish Business and Policy Forum, <https://www.eva.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/eva-arvio-030.pdf> (Cited 22 March 2022)

¹⁷⁰ Päällysaho, K. (2021), Arviointiraportti: Omakieliset yhteiskuntaorientaatiot Navigaattori-hankkeessa 2018–2021, The Finnish Refugee Council, <https://yhteiskuntaorientaatio.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Arviointiraportti-Omakieliset-yhteiskuntaorientaatiot-Navigaattori-hankkeessa-1.pdf> (Cited 22 March 2022)

¹⁷¹ Turtiainen, K., Sapir, H. (2021) Yhteisölähtöisen kotoutumisen mahdollisuudet Suomessa, Publications of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment - Integration - 2021:30, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-327-659-8> (Cited 22 March 2022)

¹⁷² Shemeikka R. et al (2021), Maahan muuttaneiden koulutus- ja työllisyyspolut, Publications of the Government's analysis, assessment and research activities 2021:29, Prime Minister's Office, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-358-6> (Cited 22 March 2022)

plemented as analytic integration. Based on the results, the following recommendations were issued:

- Systematising the competence review and improving its coverage.
- Creating a uniform information system that facilitates information exchange between operators.
- Increasing the flexibility of integration training to better suit various life situations and needs.
- Considering the needs of different customer groups better when developing services and improving the operator's overall view of the services.
- Maintaining the regional situational awareness of the selection of and the demand for services and the regional partner forums.
- Improving the utilisation of client feedback and reinforcing the clients' agency as service users and developers.
- Re-organising employment services to better serve immigrants.
- Encouraging and supporting employers to employ immigrants.

The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's study **Suomeen muuttaneiden äänestysaktiivisuus kuntavaaleissa: yhteydet maahanmuuton syyhyn, kielitaitoon ja kuulumisen kokemukseen**¹⁷³ examined voter turnout in municipal elections based on the FinMonik 2018–2019 survey data. The study first compared data from the survey with data from the national registers. The survey data was then used to assess voter turnout against the primary reason for migration, Finnish and/or Swedish language proficiency and the sense of belonging to various groups. According to the survey, approximately one in three migrants in Finland voted in the 2017 municipal elections. Voter turnout was higher among migrants over 40 years of age than in the younger age groups. According to the information obtained from the official registers, the voter turnout of persons of foreign origin was not actually that high. There were regional differences in voter turnout. Voter turnout was higher among migrants who had moved to Finland for family reasons than among those who had moved to Finland for work. Migrants who know Finnish or Swedish had a higher voter turnout than other groups. A sense of belonging to the local population, either the municipality of residence or Finnish society in gener-

al, correlated with a higher voter turnout.

The collection of articles **Aikuiset maahanmuuttajat arjen vuorovaikutustilanteissa**¹⁷⁴ looks at integration from the individual perspective through the lens of everyday encounters and interaction. Interaction is analysed in the book as an activity that emphasises not only language but also gestures and the materiality of the situation. The book focuses on interaction situations outside language classes, which have previously not been given much attention. The book discusses how adult migrants use and learn Finnish in contexts such as integration training focused on the construction industry, appointments with personal coaches and the social circus.

Outi Arvola's doctoral dissertation **Varhaiskasvatus eri kieli- ja kulttuuritaustaisten lasten osallisuuden ja oppimisen mahdollistajana**¹⁷⁵ aimed to assess the extent to which early childhood education in Finland supports the participation and learning of culturally and linguistically diverse children. The research data was based on evaluation data of children's skills, systematic observation data and the learning environment evaluation data collected in the University of Helsinki's Orientation project. The dissertation consists of four different studies (articles I–IV) and a conclusion. The first part (article I) investigates educators' evaluations of children's self-regulation skills, social skills, learning skills and the need of special support. The second article (II) investigates the realisation of children's participation in daily activities in early childhood education. The third part (III) focuses on how children's participation and social interactions are manifested in daily activities. The fourth part (IV) discusses factors that facilitate children's participation in the learning environments of early childhood education. The findings show that culturally and linguistically diverse children need support particularly to increase their participation in the operating culture of early childhood education in social interaction situations and to help them acquire second-language skills and metacognitive skills.

In 2021, the Ministry of the Interior published **Hyvät käytännöt vihatekojen tunnistamisessa ja ennalta estämisessä**¹⁷⁶, a guide for police officers and stakeholders regarding the identification and prevention of acts of hatred, which includes an overview

¹⁷³ Seppänen, A., Sipinen, J., Kuusio, H., Kazi, V. (2021), Suomeen muuttaneiden äänestysaktiivisuus kuntavaaleissa: yhteydet maahanmuuton syyhyn, kielitaitoon ja kuulumisen kokemukseen, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Tutkimuksesta tiiviisti 12/2021, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-637-4> (Cited 22 March 2022)

¹⁷⁴ Lilja, N., Eilola, L., Jokipohja, A., Tapaninen, T. (2021), Aikuiset maahanmuuttajat arjen vuorovaikutustilanteissa, Tampere, Vastapaino

¹⁷⁵ Arvola, O. (2021), Varhaiskasvatus eri kieli- ja kulttuuritaustaisten lasten osallisuuden ja oppimisen mahdollistajana, dissertation, University of Turku, Faculty of Education, Publications of the University of Turku 539, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-29-8468-8> (Cited 22 March 2022)

¹⁷⁶ Hämäläinen, E. (2021), Hyvät käytännöt vihatekojen tunnistamisessa ja ennalta estämisessä: Opas poliisille ja sidosryhmille, Publications of the Ministry of the Interior 2021:7, Ministry of the Interior, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-324-639-3> (Cited 22 March 2022)

of good practices both in Finland and other European countries. Information for the report was collected from police officers engaged in preventive work and from NGOs collaborating with the police. The report finds that good practices are part of preventive actions in Finland. They focus on crime prevention in more general terms and on establishing good relations between population groups. These activities bring the police closer to citizens and lower the threshold for contacting the police. At the international level, the report highlights various examples of the prevention of hate crimes through cooperation with different communities, for example. This makes it possible to expand the expertise of the police in matters that may otherwise not be extensively covered in police training. Information builds trust and increases the credibility of the activities. Expanding understanding also guarantees equal encounters for all.

The Police University College published the report **Poliisin tietoon tullut viharikollisuus Suomessa 2020**¹⁷⁷ on hate crimes reported to the police in Finland in 2020. The police recorded a total of 852 reports of suspected hate crime in 2020. This represents a decrease of five per cent compared to 2019. The majority (75.8%) of the reports concerned suspected crimes that were categorised as being related to the victim's ethnic or national origin. Cases related to the victim's religious background accounted for 12.7 per cent, sexual orientation 5.4 per cent and disability 3.5 per cent. In the majority of the cases, prejudice or hostility was directed towards a member of an ethnic or national minority by a member of the majority population. The most common suspected crimes were assaults. Among non-Finnish citizens, the largest group of suspected victims of crimes related to ethnic or national origin, on relative terms, was Iraqi citizens. Of all reported crimes related to eth-

nic or national origin, 12 per cent targeted persons with Roma backgrounds. The most common criminal offence category in that group was defamation. The number of reported hate crimes related to religious beliefs or convictions decreased by 19 per cent compared to 2019. The largest group of victims of these cases was persons of Muslim faith, and just over a quarter of these were assaults. Criminal offences related to religious beliefs were most frequently committed over the internet.

Mails Malin's study **Välfärd hos personer med utländsk bakgrund i Österbotten och Nyland - inverkar boendekommunens svenskspråkighet?: Ulkomaalaistaustaisten hyvinvointi Pohjanmaalla ja Uudellamaalla - vaikuttaako asuinkunnan ruotsinkielisyys?**¹⁷⁸ focused on whether immigrants have better living conditions, health and well-being in the Swedish-speaking western and southern coastal areas compared to immigrants who reside in Finnish-speaking municipalities. The results were in line with previous studies: the living conditions, health and well-being of people who live in Swedish-speaking areas are better than in Finnish-speaking areas, both among immigrants and the original population. However, there were also substantial differences in health and well-being between the original population and persons with foreign backgrounds. There are differences in health and well-being in the population geographically and depending on the individual's socioeconomic position and origin. The sickness rate is lower in western and southern Finland than in eastern and northern Finland. The population of Swedish-speaking Finns is concentrated on the western and southern coast and their health and well-being are better than among the Finnish-speaking population.

¹⁷⁷ Rauta, J. (2021), Poliisin tietoon tullut viharikollisuus Suomessa 2020, Police University College reviews 19, Police University College, <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe2021110253250> (Cited 1 April 2022)

¹⁷⁸ Malin, M. (2021), Välfärd hos personer med utländsk bakgrund i Österbotten och Nyland - inverkar boendekommunens svenskspråkighet?: Ulkomaalaistaustaisten hyvinvointi Pohjanmaalla ja Uudellamaalla - vaikuttaako asuinkunnan ruotsinkielisyys?, Migration Institute of Finland, Publications 42, <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-7399-12-5> (Cited 22 March 2022)

7. Citizenship and statelessness

In 2021, a total of 7,596 persons acquired Finnish citizenship, which represents a decrease from 2020 (8,759). The number of decisions on citizenship applications and declarations was 10,024. Of these, 75.8 per cent were positive and 8.9 per cent were negative.

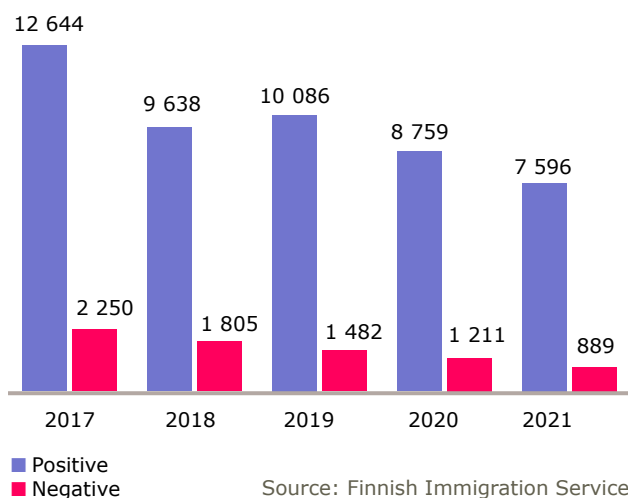
As in previous years, the most common reason for a negative decision was insufficient language skills. Other common reasons were unclear identity, insufficient period of residence and the applicant's failure to satisfy the integrity requirement.

Of those who were granted Finnish citizenship, 52 per cent were women and 48 per cent were men.

In its financial statements for 2021¹⁷⁹, the Finnish Immigration Service reported that the previously established growth rate of 2–3% for citizenship cases turned to faster growth of nearly 20% in 2021. The number of citizenship applications increased by as much as 24%, although this partly compensates for the slight decrease seen in 2020.

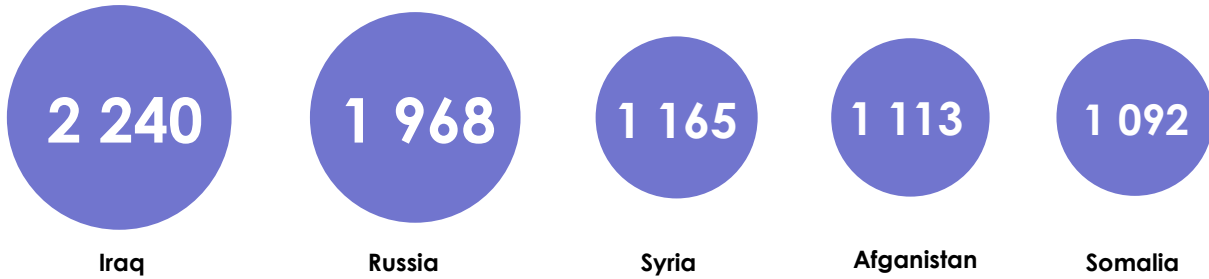
The largest group of applicants in 2021 was again Iraqi nationals, who took the top spot in 2020. Many of the Iraqi and Syrian refugees who arrived in 2015 satisfied the four-year minimum residence requirement in 2019, which was reflected in the applicant statistics. As in previous years, the top nationalities applying for Finnish citizenship also included citizens of the Russian Federation, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia and Estonia.

Citizenship decisions (on citizenship applications and declarations) 2017–2021



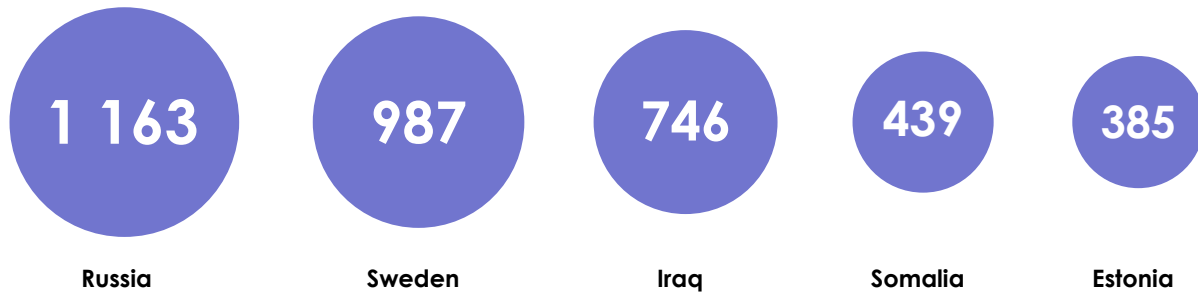
¹⁷⁹ Finnish Immigration Service (2021), Finnish Immigration Service's financial statements and report on operations 2021, <https://migri.fi/-/maahanmuuttoviraston-toimintakertomus-2021-on-julkaistu> (Cited 6 April 2022)

Citizenship applications, Top 5 nationalities in 2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

Persons granted Finnish citizenship in 2021 (by application and declaration) Top 5 groups by former nationality



Source: Finnish Immigration Service

A total of 14,366 citizenship applications and 1,908 citizenship declarations were filed during the year. The numbers increased slightly from the previous year.

In 2021, 80 per cent of those who were granted citizenship acquired it through the application procedure.

Certain groups can also acquire citizenship through the declaration procedure. These groups include former citizens of Finland, 18–22-year-old young persons, citizens of the Nordic countries, foreign nationals whose father is a citizen of Finland and over 12-year-old adopted children of Finnish citizens.

A total of 1,601 decisions were made on citizenship declarations, 95 per cent of which were positive. In the declaration procedure, the most common grounds for granting Finnish citizenship was former Finnish citizenship (64% of cases).

The largest group to acquire citizenship through the declaration procedure was citizens of Sweden (64%). The number of citizenship declarations increased by 66% in 2020. It was suspected that this was due to the COVID-19 pandemic motivating former Finnish citizens residing abroad (especially in Sweden) to apply for citizenship by declaration to make it easier to travel to Finland during the COVID-19 restrictions, for example.

7.1. Legislative amendments and other developments related to citizenship

Progress was made in 2021 with the government proposal on amendments to the Nationality Act. On 1 October 2021, the Ministry of the Interior sent the draft government proposal out for comments¹⁸⁰. The aim of the amendments is to update and clarify the Act. The proposed amendments are based on a preliminary study carried out in 2020 and the comments received on it. The aim is to improve the functioning of the provisions so that they are clearer for both the subject of the provisions and the party applying them.

The definitions of a child and a stateless person contained in the Nationality Act would be updated to correspond to the definitions in international treaties binding on Finland. Thus, a person under 18 years of age would always be regarded as a child, and getting married as a minor would not have an effect on this. Stateless persons would no longer be divided into voluntarily stateless and involuntarily stateless. The acquisition of citizenship for a child would be reformed so that children born to a Finnish parent would always acquire Finnish citizenship directly by law. A child adopted by a Finnish citizen would also always acquire citizenship directly by law. Currently, the acquisition of citizenship for a child requires a declaration to the Finnish Immigration Service in some situations. The amendment would clarify the situation and also streamline the work of the Finnish Immigration Service.

The starting point for acquiring citizenship is that the applicant resides in Finland. The calculation of the re-

quired period of residence would be clarified, for example by laying down simpler provisions on permitted journeys abroad during the period of residence. All in all, the stay abroad could last as long as today. However, it would be easier for a person applying for citizenship to assess themselves when the residence period requirement is met.

The provisions on the demonstration of language proficiency would be specified so that vocational qualifications completed in Åland would also be taken into account. Authorised translators of Finnish or Swedish and registered legal interpreters would also be considered to have the necessary language skills.

On 13 December, the Ministry of the Interior published the new **Strategy on Expatriate Finns 2022–2026**¹⁸¹. The strategy sets objectives and actions to respond to the service needs of expatriate Finns and to make better use of their expertise.

The objectives and actions of the strategy are related to:

- coordinating the affairs of expatriate Finns in central government
- developing communication by public authorities concerning expatriate Finns
- promoting easy access to services provided by authorities for expatriate Finns
- strengthening the Finnish identity, language, culture and nationality of expatriate Finns
- making use of expatriate Finns in support of trade and industry, export promotion, research and sustainable development
- strengthening the social participation of expatriate Finns
- the attractiveness of return migration

¹⁸⁰ Ministry of the Interior 1 October 2021, Kansalaisuuslakia selkeyttävät muutokset lausuntokierrokselle, <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/1410869/kansalaisuuslakia-selkeyttavat-muutokset-lausuntokierrokselle> (Cited 23 March 2022)

¹⁸¹ Ministry of the Interior 13 December 2021, Uusi ulkosuomalaisstrategia huomioi entistä paremmin ulkomailla asuvien suomalaisten tarpeet, <https://intermin.fi/-/uusi-ulkosuomalaisstrategia-huomioi-entista-paremmiin-ulkomailla-asuvien-suomalaisten-tarpeet> (Cited 4 March 2022)

8. Borders, Schengen and visas

8.1. Border control in 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to spread in 2021, which made it necessary to **maintain internal border controls for most of the year. The pandemic also meant that traffic on the external borders was restricted throughout the year.** According to the Finnish Border Guard¹⁸², the European border security situation also deteriorated significantly in 2021, especially on the external borders of Poland and the Baltic countries. State-level hybrid operations were clearly involved in extensive irregular entry and its arrangement. In the latter part of the year, the crisis in Ukraine and Russia's related actions increased military tensions in Northern Europe.

Illegal activities were detected in connection with the monitoring of the internal borders. The total number of decisions on refused entry at all borders in 2021 was 3,181 (2,439 in 2020).

The number of irregular entries increased slightly from 2020. The number of preliminary investigations opened by the Finnish Border Guard regarding the arrangement of illegal immigration in 2021 was 91 (84 in 2020).

The number of detected illegal border crossings on external EU borders was approximately 196,000 (2020: 128,000). This was the highest number since 2015. The busiest route of irregular entry was the central Mediterranean route with approximately 65,000 irregular entries. Approximately 540 people entered Finland irregularly via the internal borders.

A total of 5 irregular entries were detected in air traffic to Finland from non-Schengen areas in 2021. In the cases in question, one person used forged travel documents, three had no travel documents and one used travel documents belonging to someone else.

A total of 1,416 entries to Finland or entries to other Schengen countries using visas granted by Finland were prevented as a result of the efforts of the Finnish Border Guard's liaison officers. The number is high relative to the number of visas issued.

In addition to the illegal entries detected in air traffic at the external border, a total of 44 people were found to misuse legal entry methods in 2021, meaning that they arrived at Helsinki Airport on a transit flight, did not continue on to their connecting flight and applied for asylum.

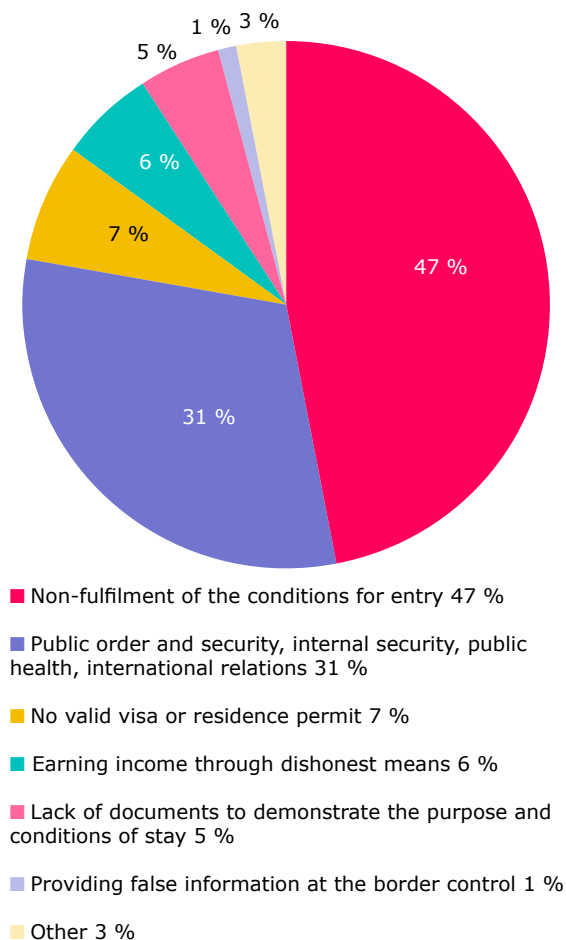
The Russian border authorities prevented hundreds of attempted irregular entries on their side of Finland's eastern border. At the border crossing points on the eastern border, three illegal entries were detected by the end of the year. Of these, one did not have a visa required for entry and two used travel documents belonging to someone else. A total of five crossings of the land border for the purpose of illegal entry from Russia to Finland were detected in 2021.¹⁸³

The most significant project in **EU cooperation** was the deployment of permanent European Border and Coast Guard forces. The Finnish Border Guard's participation in border security operations coordinated by Frontex at the EU's external land and sea borders and airports increased due to the deployment of the permanent forces and the declining border security situation in Europe. Starting from 2021, the Finnish Border Guard will have officers assigned to the permanent Frontex forces throughout the year. Exercises on the use of the permanent forces were also conducted in Finland. Other international cooperation was continued actively, taking the pandemic-related restrictions into account. Dialogue with the Russian border authorities was maintained and the Finnish and Russian border officers in charge met once in 2021. International exercises were partly cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic.

¹⁸² Finnish Border Guard financial statements 2021, <https://raja.fi/strategia-suunnittelu-ja-seuranta> (Cited 24 March 2022)

¹⁸³ Finnish Border Guard, e-mail interview 7 March 2022

Grounds for the refusal of entry in 2021



Source: The Finnish Border Guard

8.2. Legislative amendments and other developments related to border control

The drafting of national legislation concerning the Entry/Exit System (EES) and the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) progressed according to plan in 2021¹⁸⁴. The government proposal¹⁸⁵ for supplementary legislation on the EES and ETIAS was submitted to the Parliament in October 2021.

The Government proposes that the following acts be amended: the Act on the Processing of Personal Data by the Border Guard, the Border Guard Act, the Aliens Act, the Act on the Processing of Personal Data by the Police, the Act on the Processing of Personal Data by Customs, the Act on the Enforcement of Fines, and the Act on the Use of Air Carriers' Passenger Name Record Data in the Prevention of Terrorist Offences and Serious Crime.

The package is referred to as **Smart Borders**. The term refers to automation and new technology to be introduced in border checks. This means, for example, the automation of border crossings, the EU-wide registration of entry and exit data, and the prior registration of visa-free travellers from third countries, namely non-EU countries, on the internet. The amendments do not concern citizens of Finland or other Schengen countries.

The Finnish Border Guard's **ETIAS national implementation project** will implement the technical measures necessary to enable the introduction of the European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) by the national ETIAS unit and at the external borders. The project funding will also be used to equip the national ETIAS unit and start its operations. The project period is 1 June 2021–31 December 2022.

¹⁸⁴ Ministry of the Interior 14 October 2021, Älykkäät rajat -kokonaisuuteen liittyvät lakiehdotukset eduskuntaan, <https://intermin.fi/-/alykkaat-rajat-kokonaisuuteen-liittyvat-lakiehdotukset-eduskuntaan> (Cited 23 March 2022)

¹⁸⁵ HE 173/2021 vp, Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle rajanylitystietojärjestelmää ja Euroopan matkustustieto- ja -lupajärjestelmää koskevaksi täydentäväksi lainsäädännöksi (Cited 23 March 2022)

The project **Renewal of automatic border control equipment II** is a continuation of the project “Renewal of automatic border control equipment”, which involved the acquisition of automated border control equipment at Helsinki Airport. In the follow-up project, purchases will be focused on self-service equipment for passengers to carry out border control preparations independently. The purchases made under the project will particularly ensure smooth passenger traffic when the Entry/Exit System is introduced. The project period is 1 January 2021–30 June 2022.

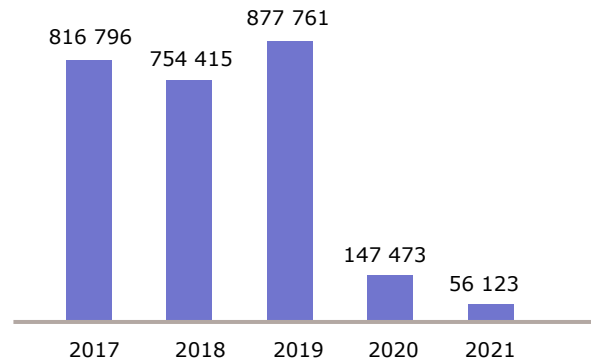
8.3. Visas in 2021

Travel restrictions introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic continued to restrict traffic in 2021, which was reflected in a sharp drop in the number of visas issued. Finnish diplomatic missions issued only 56,123 visas to Finland in 2021. This represents a drastic decline compared to the peak seen in 2019, when the number of visas issued was 877,761. In addition to diplomatic missions, the Finnish Border Guard issued 374 visas in 2021. Of the visas issued in 2021, 55,940 were issued in third countries and 183 in other EU countries. The total number of visa applications submitted was only 59,141.

As in the previous years, **Russia was the leading country in the number of visa applications by a large margin:**

76% of visa applications were submitted in Russia.

Schengen visas issued by Finnish diplomatic missions 2017–2021



Source: Ministry for Foreign Affairs

8.4. Legislative amendments and other developments related to Visa policy

Significant progress was made in 2021 with the government proposal¹⁸⁶ on the introduction of a **national D visa**.¹⁸⁷ On 16 September 2021, the Government submitted its proposal on the amendment of the Aliens Act and sections 3 and 5 of the Act on the Processing of Personal Data by Migration Authorities to the Parliament. The amendments are scheduled to enter into force in 2022.

Under the proposal, the Finnish Immigration Service could issue a national D visa to senior specialists and start-up entrepreneurs, as defined more specifically in the legislative proposal, and their family members who have been issued a residence permit. This means they would not need to wait for their residence permit card to be produced and delivered to them abroad. This first legislative project will also include development work on the national visa system to create the technical capabilities for issuing type D visas.

The government proposal on the introduction of a national D visa is related to the entry made in the

government budget session in September 2020, according to which the preconditions for an accelerated residence permit process, known as a fast track service for specialists, growth entrepreneurs and their family members, should be examined¹⁸⁸. The fast track will be completed in June 2022.

The D visa proposed by the Government supports the implementation of the 14-day fast track service pledge in such a way that senior specialists or start-up entrepreneurs and their family members can travel to Finland immediately after they have been issued a residence permit, which means that they do not need to wait for a residence permit card abroad.

The **MIAMI2** project of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was aimed at the introduction of a new VISA user management solution. The aim was for all of the parties that use the Finnish VISA system – diplomatic missions, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and stakeholders – to start using the new solution. User management, user identification and assigning access rights to roles is a critical aspect of the visa issuing process in Finland, and visa applications cannot be processed in Finland without effective user management. The project period was 1 July 2021–31 December 2021.

¹⁸⁶ [HE 122/2021](#) vp, Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laeiksi ulkomaalaislain ja henkilötietojen käsittelystä maahanmuuttohallinnossa annetun lain 3 ja 5 §:n muuttamisesta (Cited 23 March 2022)

¹⁸⁷ Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 16 September 2021, Lakiesitys pitkäaikaisesta D-viisumista helpottaa työvoiman maahanmuuttoa, <https://intermin.fi/-/lakiesitys-pitkaaikaisesta-d-viisumista-helpottaa-tyovoiman-maahanmuuttoa> (Cited 10 March 2022)

¹⁸⁸ Finnish Immigration Service 16 December 2021, Pikakaistan valmistelu etenee – erityisasiantuntijoiden ja startup-yrittäjien muutto Suomeen nopeutumassa, <https://migri.fi/-/pikakaistan-valmistelu-etenee-erityisasiantuntijoiden-ja-startup-yrittajien-muutto-suomeen-nopeutumassa> (Cited 10 March 2022)

9. Irregular migration¹⁸⁹ and migrant smuggling

In 2021, 1,092 irregular migrants were found in Finland, which represents a slight decrease from the previous year (1,144).¹⁹⁰

The statistics for 2021 include persons who stayed or worked in the country without a valid permit and were found within the country or at an external border as well as those asylum seekers who were found to have stayed in the country without appropriate documents before filing an asylum application. The statistical methods are largely based on the Eurostat's criteria for collecting statistics on irregular stay.

Restrictions and other measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic have had a significant impact on irregular stay since 2020. In Finland, the strictest measures were in place in spring 2020 and 2021, which is also when the impacts were the largest. In 2021, a total of 1,977 cases involving irregular stay by third-country nationals were detected in Finland and at the internal borders, which represents a 25 per cent increase from 2020 and a nine per cent increase compared to 2019.

The number of irregularly staying first-time asylum seekers were still low in early 2021 but subsequently rose to the pre-pandemic level in the latter part of the year. During the year, 629 irregularly staying first-time asylum seekers were detected, which represents a 26 per cent increase from the previous year but a substantial decrease compared to the pre-pandemic period.

The period of the pandemic has been characterised by an exceptionally high number of violations related to travel documents and residence permits. Violations related to travel documents have remained at a high level since autumn 2020. While it has been problematic for citizens of Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq to obtain documents from their country even under normal circumstances, violations related to travel documents increased even more sharply, in relative terms, in other nationality groups during the pandemic. In 2021, the number of violations related to travel documents involving cit-

izens of Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia was slightly over twice as high as in 2019, but more than three times as high as in 2019 in other nationality groups.

In 2021, significant nationalities with regard to irregular stay or illegal employment included Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan. The numbers for these groups increased in all key categories of irregular stay. **The other top nationalities were Ukraine, Russia, Turkey and Nigeria.** In the case of Ukrainians, almost all of the cases involved working without a work permit. One of the most significant changes in the past years with regard to the top nationalities has been the substantial decrease in the number of irregularly staying Turkish citizens. This is likely to be attributable to various factors, including the domestic policy situation in Turkey, the situation on the land border between Greece and Turkey, the travel restrictions introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the lower-than-usual availability of transport connections.

However, it should be noted that, in practice, **a significant proportion of the cases that are recorded in the statistics as irregular stay are minor offences**, such as brief periods without a valid permit, which are detected when a document or permit process becomes pending. Examples include the expiry of a passport or applying for a residence permit after the previous residence permit has expired. Some of the cases of irregular stay are detected as part of the monitoring activities of the authorities, such as responding to emergencies, conducting inspections or as part of the monitoring of foreign nationals. To some extent, criminal investigations also lead to the detection of persons who are not in possession of the documents or permits required for staying in the country. This often involves persons who are trying to hide from the authorities.

Other offences related to irregular stay are usually cases in which the person has not had a legal permit to stay in the country at all, or in which a permit for legal stay has expired. In 2021, a total of 593 cases were detected in which the offence concerned a residence permit or visa. This represents

¹⁸⁹ The Finnish equivalent for the term is "säännösten vastainen maahanmuutto", which is found also in the latest EMN Glossary, Asylum and Migration Glossary 6.0: Finnish edition. Finnish legislation and authorities, however, use terms "laiton maahantulo" (illegal entry in the country) or "laiton maassa oleskelu" (illegal stay in the country).

¹⁹⁰ Source for chapter 9: National Bureau of Investigation

a slight increase from the previous year (565) and a substantial increase from the preceding years. The number of such cases began to increase substantially in autumn 2020 but subsequently fell to close to the pre-pandemic level. Difficulties in using the services of the permit authorities may have been a factor. In general, deficiencies involving travel documents or residence permits were largely detected in permit processes rather than through active monitoring by the authorities.

Irregular migrants, top 10 nationalities in 2021 (includes working without a work permit)

Iraq	153
Ukraine	113
Russia	79
Turkey	78
Somalia	67
Afghanistan	48
Nigeria	46
United States	32
Iran	28
Gambia	27
Top 10 total	671
Total all	1 092

Source: National Bureau of Investigation

The Police compile separate statistics on illegal employment. **In 2021, a total of 362 third-country nationals working without any work permit were found in Finland.**

Illegal employment is part of informal economy, which is connected to irregular stay. For most irregular migrants, undeclared employment is the most

convenient means of livelihood but international supply of cheap labour and undeclared workers is also increasing. The use of undeclared workers distorts competition: the supply of undeclared workers and cheap labour also involves organised crime, for which crime within corporate structures is a growing source of income.

Not nearly all of the persons who work illegally are staying irregularly in the country. In many cases, the movement and employment of undeclared workers and cheap labour is facilitated with forged documents, similarly to irregular migration and cross-border crime. The following statistics include persons working without any work permit regardless of whether they were staying in the country legally or not.

Persons working without any work permit 2021

Ukraine	94
Iraq	39
Nigeria	33
Russia	25
Kyrgyzstan	16
United States	14
Stateless	12
Ghana	11
Philippines	7
Somalia	7
Uzbekistan	7
Vietnam	7
Top 10 (12) total	272
Total all	362

Source: National Bureau of Investigation

9.1. Legislative amendments and other developments related to irregular migration and smuggling in human beings

Significant initiatives were made in 2021 regarding irregular migration and irregular stay. In accordance with the Government Programme of Prime Minister Sanna Marin’s Government, **the Action Plan for the Prevention of Illegal Entry and Stay was updated for the period 2021–2024**¹⁹¹ and published on 5 May 2021. The purpose of the action plan is to comprehensively tackle irregular entry and stay, cross-border crime and the emergence of a parallel society outside the Finnish society. The action plan focuses on the position of third-country nationals who are staying in the country without the right of residence as well as the exploitation phenomena related to them and the position of victims of trafficking in human beings.

The action plan includes a total of 52 actions at the strategic and operational levels. The actions are divided into five different themes:

- actions in the countries of origin and transit
- actions at the border
- actions in Finland
- actions to promote return
- actions concerning those without the right of residence in the country

The action plan emphasises that the actions relating to irregular entry and stay must be both effective and humane. The pervasive principles of the action plan include safeguarding fundamental and human

rights and improving the detection of human trafficking and the identification of vulnerable persons.

The action plan was prepared by a project working group between 10 September 2020 and 15 January 2021. In addition to the Migration, Police and Border Guard Departments and the Administration and Development Department at the Ministry of the Interior, representatives from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Finnish Immigration Service and the National Police Board participated in the work of the project working group. During the preparation of the action plan, the project working group consulted a wide range of stakeholders. The action plan was finalised at the political level.

Action was also taken to improve the situation for migrants staying in the country without the right of residence. As part of the action plan, on 24 May 2021 the Ministry of the Interior set up a project to carry out a study¹⁹² on a legislative amendment that would enable the granting of a temporary residence permit and an alien’s passport for a limited period to asylum seekers who have received a negative decision but who have found work. The purpose of the amendment would be to allow a person to travel to obtain a travel document from the authorities of their own country. In addition, the project will explore possible solutions to the situation of people who have resided in Finland for a long time without the right of residence. The project is based on the Action Plan for the Prevention of Irregular Entry and Stay published earlier in May, which includes a total of 52 actions, 10 of which focus on those without the right of residence in the country.

¹⁹¹ Ministry of the Interior (2021), Laittoman maahantulon ja maassa oleskelun vastainen toimintaohjelma vuosille 2021–2024 – pois varjoyhteiskunnasta, Publications of the Ministry of the Interior 2021:9, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-324-620-1> (Cited 23 March 2022)

¹⁹² Ministry of the Interior 24 May 2021, Ilman oleskeluoikeutta maassa olevien tilanteeseen etsitään ratkaisuja, <https://intermin.fi/-/ilman-oleskeluoikeutta-maassa-olevien-tilanteeseen-etsitaan-ratkaisuja> (Cited 23 March 2022)

9.2. Research on irregular migration

The study **Selvitys tietojenvaihdon ja analyysitoiminnan katvealueista työperäisen maahanmuuton valvonnan moniviranomaisyhteistyössä**¹⁹³ published by the Police University College reviewed the current legislation concerning information sharing between the authorities and examined the challenges associated with the sharing of the analysed official information and potential blind spots pertaining to the prevention of violations related to labour migration. According to the study, the current legislation is rather broad and can be subject to interpretation to some extent. Consequently, the authorities may not have a clear understanding of each other's mandates and rights. The results also show that analyses vary between the authorities, and it can even rely on individual officers' abilities and perceptions. In broad phenomena with national and international connections such as labour exploitation, the analytical data produced by the authorities should be high-quality and carefully managed. Long-term practical supervision, a strategy guiding multi-authority cooperation and an action plan should be established to effectively combat violations related to labour migration.

Jukka Könönen's ethnographic study **The absent presence of the deportation apparatus: methodological challenges in the production of knowledge on immigration detention**¹⁹⁴ on the Finnish detention system for migrants addresses how methodological choices, theoretical presuppositions and circumstantial factors affect the production of knowledge on immigration detention. The study discusses the relevance of the following issues: 1) the case selection among detainees with considerably varying immigration histories, social situations and detention times; 2) a multi-sited research setting to conceive the various processes of immigration enforcement during detention; 3) an engaged research strategy to access detainees' first-hand knowledge of their immigration cases beyond dramatic representations; and 4) the employment of administrative data in contextualising empirical findings. The study underscores the importance of examining detainees' negotiations with the deportation apparatus, which

shapes the available options for detainees and determines the outcome of detention from the 'outside'.

The monograph **Undocumented migrants and their everyday lives – the case of Finland**¹⁹⁵ by Jussi Jauhiainen and Miriam Tedeschi provides an overview of the everyday life of undocumented migrants, focusing on accommodation, employment, social networks, health care and migration as well as their use of the internet and social media. While the empirical context of the book is Finland, the themes connect to a broad geographical scope, ranging from global migration issues to the EU's asylum policy, including the post-2015 period and the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as national, political and social issues related to the local challenges, opportunities and practices of undocumented migrants in municipalities and communities. The book investigates how a person becomes an undocumented migrant, sometimes as a result of the asylum process. The book also addresses research ethics, provides practical instructions and discusses quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research on undocumented migrants. The book concludes with a discussion of emerging research topics related to undocumented migrants.

In 2021, Jauhiainen and Tedeschi published the article **Paperittomat maahanmuuttajat terveydenhuollossa Suomessa**¹⁹⁶, which discusses health services for undocumented migrants in Finland: what is the availability of health services, to what extent do undocumented migrants use them, and what has been the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic? Anxiety is common among undocumented migrants. Their mental health challenges need to be systematically addressed by means of proactive practices and policies. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that providing health services to everyone residing in Finland is important for the population as a whole. Making vaccines available to everyone residing in Finland is important for overcoming the pandemic. Health information and preventive health care practices need to be disseminated clearly and comprehensively – and in the relevant languages.

Marja Katisko's and Maija Kalm-Akubardia's publication **Vallan ulottuvuudet sosiaalialan työssä paperittomien parissa**¹⁹⁷ discusses the use of power

¹⁹³ Kuukasjärvi, K., Rikkilä, S., Kankaanranta, T. (2021), *Selvitys tietojenvaihdon ja analyysitoiminnan katvealueista työperäisen maahanmuuton valvonnan moniviranomaisyhteistyössä*, Police University College reports 139, Police University College, <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe2021110954521> (Cited 1 April 2022)

¹⁹⁴ Könönen, J. (2021), *The absent presence of the deportation apparatus: methodological challenges in the production of knowledge on immigration detention*, *Social anthropology* 29:3, pp. 619–634, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, <http://hdl.handle.net/10138/337710> (Cited 23 March 2022)

¹⁹⁵ Jauhiainen, J., Tedeschi, M. (2021). *Undocumented Migrants and their Everyday Lives*. In IMISCOE Research Series. Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-68414-3> (Cited 23 March 2022)

¹⁹⁶ Jauhiainen J., Tedeschi, M. (2021), *Paperittomat maahanmuuttajat terveydenhuollossa Suomessa*, *Yhteiskunta-politiikka* 86 (2021): 4, pp. 438–445, Helsinki, <https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe2021091546223> (Cited 23 March 2022)

¹⁹⁷ Katisko, M., & Kalm-Akubardia, M. (2021). *Vallan ulottuvuudet sosiaalialan työssä paperittomien parissa*, *Diak Puheenvuoro* 38, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-493-382-7> (Cited 23 February 2022)

in social work in relation to customers who are undocumented migrants. The research data consists of interviews with social workers whose work relates to public social services. The main findings of the study are related to acknowledging the hidden structures of power in accordance with Steven Lukes' theory of power. The different dimensions of power manifest as the ambivalent desire to comply with decisions, even if the decisions and instructions themselves may seem insufficient and contravene with professional ethics. Based on the analysis, it is important to recognise the different levels of structural power in social work. Reflecting on professional agency is essential for training and education in social work and the development of professional practices that are geared towards global and sustainable social work.

10. Actions addressing trafficking in human beings

10.1. Residence permits issued to victims of trafficking in human beings¹⁹⁸

When processing applications, the Finnish Immigration Service may observe indications of trafficking in human beings. This does not necessarily mean that the applicant is a victim of trafficking in human beings. Rather, it means that the authorities suspect this could have happened. The grounds for a residence permit can include international protection, compassionate grounds or being a victim of trafficking in human beings.

A residence permit on the grounds of being a victim of trafficking in human beings can, under certain conditions, be issued to a victim of trafficking in human beings who is currently in Finland. In 2021, first residence permits for victims of trafficking in human beings were issued to 14 persons. The number of new fixed-term residence permits, i.e. extended permits, for victims of trafficking in human beings were issued to 15 persons.

10.2. Victims of trafficking in human beings included in the assistance system¹⁹⁹

The number of victims of trafficking in human beings, or related offences, has increased from one year to the next in Finland. In 2021, the number decreased slightly from the record figure seen in the previous year. In the previous year, the authorities detected several groups of 3–11 people who had become victims of forced labour in Finland. In 2021, the authorities mainly detected individual victims rather than groups.

A total of 300 proposals for referring a person to the assistance system were made in 2021. Presumed victims of trafficking in human beings were most commonly referred to the assistance system by the Finnish Immigration Service and by reception centres for asylum seekers. In 40 cases, the presumed victims of trafficking in human beings sought help from the assistance system themselves. A significant number are also referred to the assistance system through their legal aid officer, Victim Support Finland, mother and child homes and shelters. Seven people were referred to the assistance system by the police authorities, whereas in the previous year the figure was much higher (25). Social services referred 11 people to the assistance system.

A total of 243 customers were admitted to the assistance system²⁰⁰: 215 adults and 28 minors. In addition, 48 minor children of customers were admitted to the assistance system. The number of minors admitted as customers of the assistance system was higher than in the previous years. A third of the new customers, approximately 80 persons, said they became victims of trafficking in human beings when they were a minor.

Among the customers admitted into the Assistance System, the proportion of customers who became victims abroad has typically been higher (66–70%) than the proportion of customers who became victims of human trafficking in Finland (34–30%). Of the new customers in 2021, (243) **97 indicated they became a victim of trafficking in human beings in Finland, while 146 customers said the**

¹⁹⁸ Source: Finnish Immigration Service

¹⁹⁹ Ihmiskaupan uhrien auttamisjärjestelmän vuosikatsaus 2021 https://www.ihmiskauppa.fi/materiaalipankki/tilastot_ja_tilannekatsaukset/ihmiskaupan_uhrien_auttamisjarjestelman_vuosikatsaus_2021/tilastot_uudet_asiakkaat_2021 (Cited 10 March 2022)

²⁰⁰ Inclusion in the Assistance System does not mean that the person in question would have been officially identified as a victim of trafficking in human beings. The person included in the Assistance System is only considered a potential victim of trafficking in human beings. After this, the person may be officially identified as a victim of trafficking in human beings. An officially identified victim of trafficking in human beings may continue using the services of the Assistance System until they do not need these services any more. If the client cannot be officially identified as a victim of trafficking in human beings, the services of the Assistance System will no longer be available to them.

exploitation occurred outside Finland.

At the end of 2021, the Assistance System included 1,132 persons, 880 of whom were potential victims of trafficking in human beings and 252 were minor children of adult victims of trafficking in human beings.

Of the new customers, those exploited in Finland represented several different nationalities. The largest nationality groups among those had been exploited were Iraqi (23), Finnish (16), Nepali (5) and Thai (5). Almost half (46%) of them were in Finland with a residence permit which, in most cases, was granted on the grounds of employment or family ties. The number of Finnish citizens exploited in Finland was 16, while 3 persons originated from a different EU country or from a country whose citizens are not required to have a visa to reside in Finland. Of the exploited persons, 20 were asylum seekers.

Undocumented migrants, i.e. people staying in Finland without the legal right of residence, are estimated to be particularly vulnerable to various forms of exploitation.

In 2021, a total of 13 undocumented migrants were admitted to the Assistance System based on the assessment that they had become victims of exploitation related to human trafficking in Finland.

People can be referred to the Assistance System by various parties. In most cases, victims are referred to the system by the Finnish Immigration Service or reception centres. In 2021, the Finnish Immigration Service referred 77 people to the assistance system, while reception centres referred 58 people to the system. The third largest category was persons who sought help from the assistance system themselves (40).

The customers of the assistance system include Finnish citizens, EU citizens, people who entered Finland on a visa-exempt basis, third-country nationals working legally in Finland and people with an asylum seeker background.

Some 61% of the new customers were asylum seekers. Asylum seekers represented only 21% of those who became victims in Finland. Typically, those who become victims of exploitation in Finland are

people residing in Finland with some other residence status, such as on the grounds of family ties, as an EU citizen (including Finnish citizens) or a residence permit issued on the grounds of employment. They may also be irregular migrants.

There are many types of trafficking in human beings and new forms are continuously being identified. Nevertheless, forced labour and sexual exploitation are still the most common types. In addition to these, cases have been observed in Finland, for example, involving forced begging, forced criminal activity and forced marriage.

As in the previous year, the persons victimised in 2021 were mostly victims of forced labour (105 persons). Labour exploitation was still detected particularly in the cleaning, restaurant and construction industries and, to some extent, in the beauty care industry and farm work. The victims of forced labour are usually non-Finnish nationals, but the employers also include Finnish citizens. The second-largest group among victims of exploitation were victims of sexual exploitation (68).

The number of detected victims of forced labour in Finland was lower in 2021 than in the previous year. The number of victims of forced labour was 78 in 2020 and 48 in 2021. A total of 21 suspected victims of trafficking in human beings related to sexual exploitation in Finland that were referred to the assistance system was 21, representing an increase compared to 2020 (15). The detected cases mostly involved exploitation in the context of prostitution. The majority of the victims of sexual exploitation had been victimised outside Finland (47).

Male victims of exploitation were most typically victims of forced labour. However, there were also male victims of sexual exploitation as well as forced marriage. The largest category among female victims were victims of trafficking in human beings related to forced marriage. The next most common categories were sexual exploitation and forced labour.

The number of victims of forced marriage referred to the assistance system increased substantially compared to the previous years. In total, **63 victims of trafficking in human beings related to forced marriage** were included in the assistance system. Such marriages usually start in the victim's home

country and subsequently continue in Finland in circumstances that violate human dignity. In most cases, the victim was a minor when the marriage began. Some victims had been brought to Finland as a new wife for a person residing in Finland, or the marriage began in Finland. Many of the cases are detected when the authorities intervene in domestic violence. The police, reception centres and shelters play a key role in identifying victims of forced marriage.

10.3. Legislative amendments and other developments related to trafficking in human beings

On 7 May 2021, the Finnish Government approved the **Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings**²⁰¹, which is intended to promote the detection of human trafficking, enhance the establishment of criminal liability and improve the standing of victims. Based on five strategic objectives, the action plan is comprised of 55 actions. The plan will promote the detection of human trafficking, improve the standing of victims and enhance the establishment of criminal liability. The plan will also strengthen the mainstreaming of anti-trafficking into the wider activities of the Government and intensify cooperation with civil society. The plan links anti-trafficking closely with analysis, assessment and research activities. The action plan seeks to prevent and reduce trafficking in human beings. The Finnish Government stated that it is necessary to develop the detection of trafficking in human beings throughout the criminal process. The competence of the preliminary investigation authorities, especially the police, related to human trafficking crimes will be improved and the prevention and investigation of human trafficking crimes will be enhanced. The action plan also includes measures for the prosecution authorities, courts of law and the Criminal Sanctions Agency.

The special police unit on human trafficking started its operations in 2021. The decision was made to establish a group at the Helsinki Police Department focused on detecting and investigating human trafficking offences. The unit will work in close cooperation with the National Bureau of Investigation, the national expert network on the prevention of human trafficking as well as other authorities and cooperation partners. The national investigation team will obtain information, detect and investigate national crimes, support other units and prevent cross-border crime in cooperation with the National Bureau of Investigation. The Police will also have two assigned human trafficking investigators at each police department.²⁰²

On 17 June 2021, the Government proposed **amendments to the Aliens Act to prevent the exploitation of foreign labour**. New provisions of the Aliens Act will prevent exploitation of foreign labour and improve the legal status of victims. The legislative

²⁰¹ Finnish Government (2021) Suomi torjuu ihmiskauppaa: Ihmiskaupan vastainen toimintaohjelma, Publications of the Ministry of Justice 2021:15, <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/163078> (Cited 10 March 2022).

²⁰² Finnish Government 5 November 2020, Ihmiskaupan torjuntaa tehostetaan viranomaisten ja järjestöjen yhteistyöllä, <https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/1410869/ihmiskaupan-torjuntaa-tehostetaan-viranomaisten-ja-jarjestojen-yhteistyolla> (Cited 15 April 2021)

amendments aim to make it easier to detect cases of exploitation and to protect victims of exploitation.²⁰³

As a result of the amendments, a worker's residence permit may be refused if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the employer intends to circumvent the provisions on entry or residence. However, a foreign jobseeker may obtain a residence permit for another employer. These changes will help the authorities prevent recruitment by employers who have exploited their staff in the past.

If there is a reason to suspect that a person is a victim of exploitation, he or she will not lose their right to reside or work in Finland. Employees may continue to work for another employer or apply for a new residence permit to seek employment. This improves the victims' legal status and helps the authorities to intervene in the exploitation.

The legislative amendments, which are part of the Government's efforts to combat the exploitation of foreign labour, have been prepared by a working group on the prevention of the exploitation of foreign labour under the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.

In addition to the legislative reforms, the working group has prepared a **Working in Finland information package**²⁰⁴ and launched a **multilingual counselling service for seasonal workers**²⁰⁵.

The "Working in Finland" booklet explains the terms of employment observed in Finland and advises employees on what to do if they are exploited at work. The booklet also includes links to organisations that provide help to workers. Designed in collaboration with Victim Support Finland (RIKU) and other stakeholders, the booklet is published in Finnish, Swedish and English as well as Russian, Ukrainian, Nepalese and Thai. RIKU is also responsible for operating the telephone advisory service.

The service is intended especially for foreign workers who suspect that they have been exploited at work. Workers are advised on matters such as lawful terms of employment, living conditions and hygiene standards, and the available legal remedies.

10.4. Research on trafficking in human beings

Published in October by the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI) and the National Assistance System for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings, the report **Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään. Selvitys ulkomaalaistaustaisten ihmiskaupan uhrien työllisyyspalveluiden järjestämisestä Suomessa**²⁰⁶ sheds light on employment services and integration of victims of trafficking in human beings and exploitation of foreign origin in Finland. The report finds that, for example, more flexible employment and integration services, training for professionals and taking customers' individual needs into consideration would improve the employment and integration of the victims. The publication aims to identify the challenges and structural deficiencies that victims of trafficking in human beings of foreign origin encounter with regard to employment. The report also discusses the services and employment-supporting measures that the victims would benefit from. The report sheds light on Finnish legislation and services, as well as previous research on the subject.

In 2021, the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control (HEUNI) also published a **report²⁰⁷ on the methods of preventing the exploitation of migrant labour in different countries**. The report sheds light on inter-authority collaboration models and legislation. Divided into three parts, the report discusses the phenomenon of labour exploitation, the current situation in Finland and the actions taken internationally to combat exploitation. In addition to presenting conclusions, the report discusses whether the methods and practices developed in other countries could also be utilised in Finland. The report describes particularly the inter-authority collaboration models developed in Norway, Belgium and the United Kingdom. The report also examines legislation that intends to stop the exploitation of migrant labour in the Netherlands, Belgium and the United Kingdom. In addition, the report describes Estonia's labour dispute committee and the Swedish legislation on exploitation of human beings.

²⁰³ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration 18 June 2021, Ulkomaisen työvoiman hyväksikäyttöä ehkäistään ulkomaalaislain uudistuksilla, <https://kotoutuminen.fi/-/ulkomaalaisen-tyovoiman-hyvakskayttoa-ehkaistaan-ulkomaalaislain-uudistuksilla> (Cited 10 March 2022)

²⁰⁴ Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Työskentely Suomessa, <https://tem.fi/tyoskentely-suomessa> (Cited 10 March 2022)

²⁰⁵ Victim Support Finland, Advisory service for seasonal workers, <https://www.riku.fi/seasonalwork/> (Cited 10 March 2022)

²⁰⁶ Jokinen A. et al (2021), Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään. Selvitys ulkomaalaistaustaisten ihmiskaupan uhrien työllisyyspalveluiden järjestämisestä Suomessa, HEUNI Report Series No 96a, The European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations (HEUNI), Helsinki, <https://heuni.fi/-/report-series-96a> (Cited 3 March 2022)

²⁰⁷ Pekkarinen A. et al (2021), Selvitys ulkomaisen työvoiman hyväksikäytön torjunnan menettelyistä eri maissa, Publications of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment - Working life - 2021:55, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-327-947-6> (Cited 3 March 2022)

The report shows that combating exploitation of migrant labour requires good structural cooperation from occupational safety and health authorities, the police, tax authorities and other key operators. Regular meetings of key authorities and organic exchange of information enable and facilitate common practices and an operating culture at a regional level.

In 2021, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman examined **residence permit practices concerning victims of trafficking in human beings**²⁰⁸. One of the key aspects of the study commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment was to investigate how the vulnerability of victims of trafficking in human beings is assessed. The study shows that the assessment of vulnerability of victims of trafficking in human beings was diverse but varied significantly. In the positive decisions on residence permit applications, trafficking in human beings was not necessarily the primary reason for granting international protection or a residence permit.

The research material consisted of decisions made by the Finnish Immigration Service in 2018–2020 in cases that involved indications of possible victims of trafficking in human beings. The material included a total of 461 decisions. Approximately 67% of the applicants received a positive decision, whereas approximately 33% received a negative decision. The most common grounds for issuing a positive decision was international protection, but trafficking in human beings was not necessarily the primary reason for granting protection.

The study showed that many victims of trafficking in human beings primarily applied for international protection and also presented other grounds for their application. Compassionate grounds was the second most common grounds for positive residence permit decisions. The Aliens Act provision on issuing residence permits to victims of trafficking in human beings, which became possible under an amendment introduced in 2006, was applied infrequently. There were 29 such positive decisions. This means that victims of trafficking in human beings were issued with a residence permit on the grounds of vulnerability more often than on the basis of the special provision concerning victims of trafficking in human beings. According to the study, the threshold for deeming that a victim of trafficking in human beings is vulnerable is remarkably high.

The assessment of vulnerability was found to be a matter of case-specific consideration where some factors speak in favour of vulnerability and some factors against it. According to the study, the assessment of vulnerability was diverse but inconsistent, and in some very similar cases, some applicants received a positive decision while others received a negative decision.

In most cases, the victim of trafficking in human beings had been subjected to forced labour, sexual exploitation or forced marriage. Some victims had also been subjected to multiple forms of exploitation.

²⁰⁸ Kainulainen, H. and Valovirta, A. (2021), *Ihmiskaupan uhrien oleskelulupakäytäntö*, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Helsinki, available from <https://syrjinta.fi/julkaisut> (Cited 23 March 2022)

11. Return and readmissions

11.1. Removal decisions

A removal decision is an administrative decision by which a foreign person is ordered to leave Finland. There are two types of removal decisions: refusal of entry and deportation.²⁰⁹

Refusal of entry concerns persons who have not had a residence permit for Finland and who do not fulfil the requirements for residence.²¹⁰

Deportation concerns persons who have had a residence permit for Finland but who no longer fulfil the requirements for residence.

In 2021, the number of refusal of entry and prohibition of entry decisions was 5,854.²¹¹ The majority of the removal decisions were refusal of entry decisions by the Finnish Immigration Service and the Finnish Border Guard, with decisions by the Police being in the minority.

In 2021, the Finnish Immigration Service made a total of 2,437 refusal of entry decisions and the Police made 236 such decisions²¹². The Finnish Border Guard refused entry to 3,181²¹³ persons (2,498 refusal of entry decisions and 683 prohibition of entry decisions), representing a substantial increase compared to 2020 (2,439). The figures indicate that **the refusal of entry and the prohibition of entry moved increasingly to the borders in 2021.**

The fluctuation of the number of the refusal of entry decisions by the Finnish Immigration Service is connected with the number of negative asylum decisions: a negative asylum decision entails a removal decision. Consequently, the number of removal decisions correlates somewhat with the number of asylum seekers entering the country. The refusal of entry figures for the Finnish Immigration Service include refusal of entry decisions made in connection with negative asylum decisions as well as other residence permit decisions.

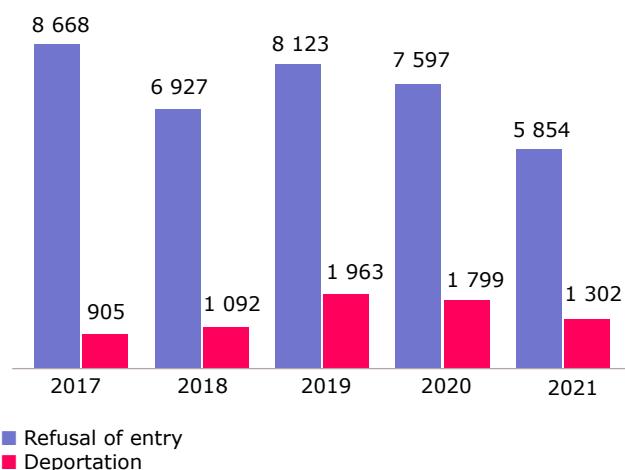
A total of 1,302 deportation decisions were made in 2021, which is a decrease compared to the previous year, when the corresponding figure was 1,799.

The majority (1,201) of the deportation decisions were related to irregular stay.

The number of deportation decisions based on criminal offences was 101. A foreign national may be deported on the basis of criminal offences if he or she is found guilty of an offence carrying a maximum sentence of imprisonment for a year or more or if he or she is found guilty of repeated offences.

These decisions are always based on an overall consideration that also considers factors such as the seriousness of the crime, the person's ties to Finland, the person's health and the non-refoulement principle, according to which no one should be returned to a country where they would face persecution, other inhuman treatment, torture, treatment violating human dignity or the death penalty.

Refusal of entry and deportation decisions 2017–2021



Source: Finnish Immigration Service, Police, Finnish Border Guard

²⁰⁹ In addition, there is **prohibition of entry**, which means prohibiting the entry of a third-country national at the border in the manner provided in Article 13 of the Schengen Borders Code. (Section 142, Subsection 1 of the Aliens Act)

²¹⁰ The most common scenario for refusal of entry is removing a person who has already entered the country (Section 142, Subsection 2 (4) of the Aliens Act). In certain situations, refusal of entry also means preventing a person from entering the country at the border. These cases are, however, less common. (Section 142, Subsection 2 (1–3) of the Aliens Act).

²¹¹ The total number of refusal of entry and prohibition of entry decisions made by the Finnish Immigration Service, the Police and the Finnish Border Guard.

²¹² Source: National Police Board (includes EU citizens and third-country nationals)

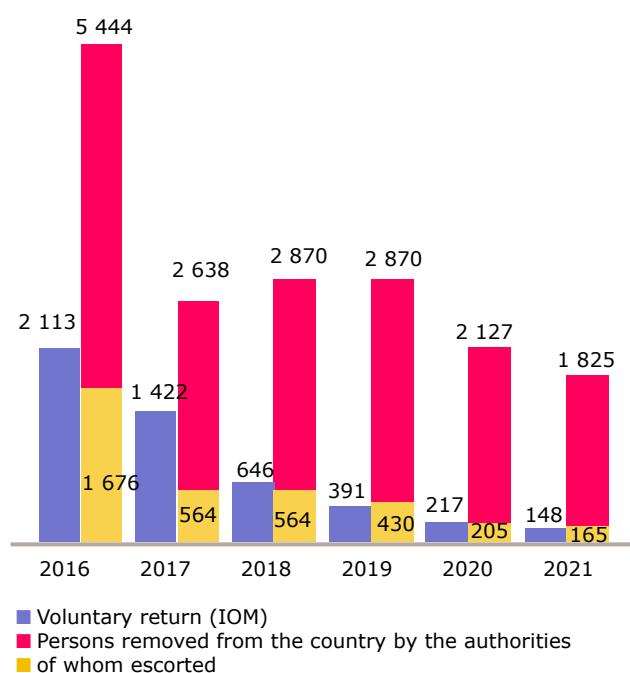
²¹³ Finnish Border Guard (2021), Finnish Border Guard financial statements 2021, <https://raja.fi/strategia-suunnittelu-ja-seurantaa> (Cited 24 March 2022)

11.2. Voluntary return

In 2021, the number of people returning to their countries of origin through the voluntary return programme was 148, which represents a decrease from 2020 (217). There were altogether 24 countries of return. Most returnees returned to Iraq (50). Of voluntary returnees, 68 per cent were men and 20 per cent were women. When it comes to age and marital status, the returnees are mostly unmarried young adults.²¹⁴

The number of voluntary returnees has decreased steadily every year since the record-breaking year of 2016, and the same trend continued in 2021. There was a significant decline compared to the previous years, mainly due to the pandemic.

Returnees through the voluntary return programme and persons removed from the country by the authorities 2016–2021



Source: IOM, National Police Board

11.3. Legislative amendments and other developments related to return and readmissions

The situation in Afghanistan also affected returns: **On 9 July 2021, the Finnish Immigration Service paused the issuing of negative decisions involving removal from the country to Afghanistan**²¹⁵. The decision-making was paused because the security situation in Afghanistan deteriorated considerably.

In connection with this, the Finnish Immigration Service issued new guidelines concerning decision-making on Afghan citizens' asylum and residence permit applications; Afghan citizens were not issued with negative decisions that would lead to removal from the country.

The Finnish Immigration Service also stated that the situation of each asylum seeker would be assessed individually. If the asylum seeker could not be granted refugee status, subsidiary protection could also be considered on the basis of the security situation in Afghanistan.

Certain groups, such as children and women without a safety network, sexual minorities, journalists and employees of human rights organisations were considered, as a rule, to be in need of international protection. Those who have worked with opponents of the Taliban, international troops or the former Afghan government and those who have renounced Islam were also deemed to need international protection as a rule.

A precedent concerning return affected future decisions of similar nature: **On 4 February 2021, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted its Views on the primacy of the best interests of the child in a matter concerning asylum**²¹⁶. The Committee found that there had been violation of Articles 3 (primacy of the best interests of the child), 19 (protection of the child from violence) and 22 (right of the child to protection and humanitarian assistance; refugees and asylum seekers) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The case concerned the expulsion of a same-sex parent family to Russia, where they had returned through voluntary return in August 2017 following a

²¹⁴ Source: International Organization for Migration IOM, Helsinki office.

²¹⁵ Finnish Immigration Service 11 November 2021, Uusi soveltamisohje Afganistanista – turvallisuustilanteen laajempi arviointi jatkuu, <https://migri.fi/-/uusi-soveltamisohje-afganistanista-turvallisuustilanteen-laajempi-arviointi-jatkuu> (Cited 14 March 2022)

²¹⁶ Ministry for Foreign Affairs 9 February 2021, YK:n lapsen oikeuksien komitealta ratkaisu lapsen edun ensisijaisuuden merkityksestä turvapaikka-asiassa, https://um.fi/tiedotteet/-/asset_publisher/ued5t2wDmr1C/content/yk-n-lapsen-oikeuksien-komitealta-ratkaisu-lapsen-edun-ensisijaisuuden-merkityksest-c3-a4-turvapaikka-asiassa (14 March 2022)

negative asylum decision. The appellant is the child of the family. The Committee found that the State party had neglected its obligation to take sufficient account of the primacy of the best interests of the child when assessing the appellant's asylum appeal. The Committee recalled that the primacy of the best interests of the child must be assessed and justified in decisions concerning the child.

The Committee decided that the Finnish Government must provide an effective reparation for the infringement, including adequate compensation for the appellant. The Finnish Government is also obliged to take all necessary measures to prevent similar violations in the future, in particular by ensuring that the primacy of the best interests of the child will be taken into account effectively and systematically in asylum procedures and that children will systematically be heard.

In 2021, **Finland's national views on the EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration**²¹⁷ were prepared, and a plan for the national implementation of the strategy was drafted. The aim was to draft a plan for the national implementation of the strategy published by the EU in spring 2021 and to specify measures to be taken during the current government term.

In 2021, **legislative amendments related to return** also entered into force, based on the government proposal (HE 141/2020 vp²¹⁸) on supplementary legislation concerning the European Border and Coast Guard. The purpose of the proposal was the national implementation of the amendments required by the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Border and Coast Guard. The proposed amendments are mainly related to the competence of the authorities, de-

cision-making and the inter-authority disclosure of information.

On 1 January 2021, **an amendment (1252/2020)**²¹⁹ to the Act on the Processing of Personal Data in Immigration Administration (615/2020) entered into force to amend the Act with a new section, 14a, regarding the right of the Finnish Immigration Service to disclose certain information collected by means of a voluntary return support application to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency for the implementation of voluntary return.

These legislative amendments concerning the national implementation of the EU Regulation on the European Border and Coast Guard make it possible for the standing corps of the European Border and Coast Guard to assist the Police and the Finnish Border Guard in the registration of applications for international protection and in the mass influx of migrants, as well as the obligation of the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman to participate in the reserve of monitors of forced returns.

Also on 1 January 2021, **amendments to section 131 of the Aliens Act (301/2004) and section 31 of the Act on the Processing of Personal Data by the Police (616/2019)** entered into force regarding the right of the police to disclose a foreign national's personal identifying characteristics pursuant to section 131 of the Aliens Act to the European Border and Coast Guard to facilitate the identification of persons and enable compliance with Regulation 2019/1896 (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council.²²⁰

²¹⁷ European Commission, 27 April 2021, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: The EU strategy on voluntary return and reintegration COM/2021/120, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021DC0120> (Cited 14 March 2022)

²¹⁸ HE 141/2020 vp, Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle eurooppalaista raja- ja merivartiostoa koskevaksi täydentäväksi lainsäädännöksi (Cited 14 March 2022)

²¹⁹ Laki henkilötietojen käsittelystä maahanmuuttohallinnossa annetun lain muuttamisesta 1252/2020, <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/2020/20201252> (Cited 14 March 2022)

²²⁰ Ministry of the Interior, e-mail interview, 21 January 2022

12. Migration and development

Finland's development policy emphasises coherence across the various policy areas so as to ensure favourable conditions for sustainable development in developing countries. In addition to food security, trade, taxation and security, the priorities have also included migration. Concrete national-level measures have included deeper cooperation among various central government actors and closer coordination of EU affairs²²¹.

A broader initiative in development policy in 2021 was **Finland's Africa Strategy**²²², which was approved by the Finnish Government on 18 March 2021. The aim of the strategy is to diversify and deepen Finland's relations with African countries, the African Union (AU) and regional organisations, focusing particularly on political and economic relations.

Migration is addressed in the Africa Strategy as a cross-cutting theme that mainly involves cooperation with EU Member States. According to the strategy, Finland believes that the EU should strengthen the dialogue and cooperation on migration with the AU and African countries as part of broader relations and partnerships between the EU and African countries. EU support and action should be used to reduce irregular migration and to tackle its underlying causes proactively. Finland also suggests that the EU must create better opportunities for legal migration and support internal mobility in Africa.

In the strategy, it is stated that Finland will build dialogue and cooperation on migration as part of a broader political dialogue, especially with the African countries from which there is migration to Finland.

According to the strategy, the Finnish Government will promote opportunities for legal migration: in addition to the resettlement of refugees, pathways based on work and study should also be made more

accessible. Parallel to this, the Finnish Government points out that it is essential to ensure the effective and fair return of people without the right to stay to their home countries in accordance with universal human rights, and to promote the reintegration of the returnees. In the long term, the development cooperation funding provided by Finland and its participation in crisis management will have an impact on the underlying causes of forced migration. Finland will contribute to the efforts to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

In 2021, **the Ministry for Foreign Affairs again engaged in migration-related communications**²²³ aimed at influencing the root causes of irregular migration. Migration-related communications refer to communications directed at countries of origin, transit and destination in migration and/or on-site communications aimed at influencing migration in one way or another.

A workshop to promote peace and young people's engagement in society was organised with support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Finnish Embassy participated in the workshop for the first time. The four-day workshop was part of a broader communication project that began in 2019. A similar project has also been implemented in Afghanistan, but the workshop planned for 2021 had to be cancelled at the last minute due to the situation in Afghanistan. One of the aims of the communication effort is to influence the underlying causes behind irregular migration by promoting peace and the positive development of the target country. In a country such as Iraq, examples of these underlying causes include internal tensions, unemployment and the marginalisation of young people. These were the topics the young participants wanted to discuss in the workshops.

²²¹ Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Goals and principles of Finland's development policy, <https://um.fi/goals-and-principles-of-finland-s-development-policy> (Cited 17 April 2020)

²²² Finnish Government (2021), Suomen Afrikka-strategia: Kohti vahvempaa poliittista ja taloudellista kumppanuutta, Publications of the Finnish Government 2021:19, <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-951-9> (Cited 14 March 2022)

²²³ Ministry for Foreign Affairs, e-mail interview 28 December 2021

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Euroopan muuttoliikeverkosto (EMN)

Maahanmuuttovirasto
PL 10
00086 Maahanmuuttovirasto

0295 430 431
emn@migri.fi

www.emn.fi
ec.europa.eu/emn

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European Migration Network (EMN)

Finnish Immigration Service
P.O. BOX 10
FIN-00086 Finnish Immigration Service

+358 (0) 295 430 431
emn@migri.fi

www.emn.fi
ec.europa.eu/emn

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