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**Government Integration Programme
for 2016-2019 and
Government Resolution on a Government
Integration Programme**

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

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Description sheet

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Abstract			
<p>The major conflicts of recent years are creating new types of migration pressures in Europe. This is also felt in Finland. For an extended period, the main reasons for migrating to Finland were family ties, work and studies. This situation changed in 2015, however, as the annual number of asylum seekers increased from approximately 3,000 to over 32,000. This change has necessitated a reassessment of the Finnish integration policy, legislation on integration and its implementation practices as well as resource allocations and official processes.</p> <p>The Government Integration Programme for 2016–2019 (VALKO II) takes into account the policies set out in Prime Minister Sipilä's strategic Government Programme, the immigration policy measures adopted by the Government on 11 September 2015 as a consequence of the increased number of asylum seekers, the Action Plan on Asylum Policy published by the Government on 8 December 2015, the Action Plan on Integration published by the Government on 3 May 2016 as well as the policies formulated by the Ministerial working group on migration. The programme contains the focus areas, objectives, measures and responsibilities related to integration for the current government term and the resources for promoting integration specified in the General Government Fiscal Plan 2016–2019, including EU funding. The programme measures will be implemented within the framework of the state budget, central government spending limits and local government spending restrictions.</p> <p>The Government Integration Programme was prepared in cross-administrative cooperation. At public servant level, the preparation work was led by a cooperation group on integration, which had representatives from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Environment.</p>			
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Tiivistelmä	<p>Viime vuosien suuret konfliktit luovat uudenlaista muuttopainetta Eurooppaan. Tämä heijastuu myös Suomeen. Pääasialliset muuttosyyt Suomeen olivat pitkään perheside, työ ja opiskelu. Tilanne kuitenkin muuttui vuonna 2015, kun turvapaikanhakijoiden määrän kasvoi noin 3 000 hakijan vuositasaasta yli 32 000 hakijaan. Muutoksen vuoksi myös kotouttamispolitiikkaa, kotoutumista säätelevää lainsäädäntöä ja toimeenpanokäytäntöjä sekä resurssikohdennuksia ja viranomaisprosesseja on arvioitu uudelleen. Valtion kotouttamisohjelmassa vuosille 2016–2019 (VALKO II) otetaan huomioon pääministeri Sipilän strategisen hallitusohjelman kirjaukset, hallituksen turvapaikanhakijoiden kasvun seurauksena 11.9.2015 antamat linjaukset maahanmuuttopoliittisiksi toimenpiteiksi, hallituksen 8.12.2015 julkaisema turvapaikkapoliittinen toimenpideohjelma, hallituksen 3.5.2016 julkaisema kotouttamista koskeva toimintasuunnitelma sekä maahanmuuton ministerityöryhmän linjaukset. Ohjelma sisältää hallituskauden kotouttamisen painopisteet, tavoitteet, toimenpiteet, vastuut ja julkisen talouden suunnitelmassa 2017–2020 määritellyt kotoutumisen edistämisen resurssit, mukaan lukien EU-rahoitus. Ohjelman toimenpiteitä toteutetaan valtion talousarvion, valtiontalouden menokehysten ja kuntatalouden menorajoitteen puitteissa. Valtion kotouttamisohjelmaa on valmisteltu poikkihallinnollisena yhteistyönä. Valmistelua on virkamiestasolla ohjannut kotouttamisen yhteistyöryhmä, jossa ovat edustettuina työ- ja elinkeino-, maa- ja metsätalous-, oikeus-, opetus- ja kulttuuri-, sisä-, sosiaali- ja terveys-, ulkoasian-, valtionvarain- sekä ympäristöministeriön edustajat.</p>		
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Sidantal	91	Språk	Engelska
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Referat	<p>De senaste årens stora konflikter skapar ett nytt slags migrationstryck i Europa. Detta återspeglar sig också till Finland. De huvudsakliga orsakerna till invandring till Finland var länge familjeband, arbete och studier. Situationen förändrades dock år 2015, då antalet asylsökande ökade från årsnivån på cirka 3 000 till mer än 32 000 sökande. På grund av förändringen har också integrationspolitiken, den lagstiftning som reglerar integration och genomförandepraxis samt anslagsallokeringar och myndighetsprocesser omvärderats. I statens program för integrationsfrämjande för åren 2016–2019 (VALKO II) beaktas föresatserna i det strategiska regeringsprogrammet för statsminister Sipiläs regering, de riktlinjer för migrationspolitiska åtgärder som regeringen utfärdade den 11 september 2015 till följd av det ökade antalet asylsökande, regeringens asylpolitiska åtgärdsprogram som utgavs den 8 december 2015, handlingsplanen för integrationsfrämjande som regeringen gav ut den 3 maj 2016 samt riktlinjerna av ministerarbetsgruppen för migration. I programmet ingår regeringsperiodens prioriteringar, mål, åtgärder och ansvarsfördelning när det gäller integrationsfrämjande samt de resurser för integrationsfrämjande som fastställs i planen för de offentliga finanserna 2017–2020, inklusive EU-finansiering. Åtgärderna i programmet genomförs inom statsbudgeten, statens anslagsram och utgiftsgränsen för den kommunala ekonomin.</p> <p>Statens program för integrationsfrämjande har beretts som sektorsövergripande samarbete. Beredningen har på tjänstemannanivå styrts av samarbetsgruppen för integrationsfrämjande med representation från arbets- och näringsministeriet, jord- och skogsbruksministeriet, justitieministeriet, undervisnings- och kulturministeriet, inrikesministeriet, social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, utrikesministeriet, finansministeriet samt miljöministeriet.</p>		
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FOREWORD

The promotion of integration is a horizontal policy area that concerns a number of sectors, the most central ones of which are labour, education, housing, early childhood education and care, cultural, sports, youth and social and health policies. The preconditions for good integration are based on the immigrants' rights and duties laid down in the Constitution and sector-specific legislation, the suitability of services for immigrants' needs as well as the integration services specified in the Integration Act. Integration of immigrants is also part of implementing Finland's human rights obligations. Additionally, the aliens legislation and its implementation have a significant impact on integration.

Provisions on promoting integration, immigrants' duties and rights as well as the authorities' obligations and the coordination of measures are contained in the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010; the Integration Act). The scope of this Act covers all persons immigrating to Finland who have a valid residence permit referred to in the Aliens Act (301/2004) in Finland, whose right of residence has been registered, or to whom a residence permit card has been granted in compliance with the Aliens Act. In the Integration Act, integration is defined as interactive development involving immigrants and society at large, the aim of which is to provide immigrants with the knowledge and skills required in society and working life and to provide them with support, so that they can maintain their culture and language. Other purposes of the act include promoting gender equality and non-discrimination. In other words, integration consists of two-directional dialogue and cooperation between people and population groups in daily life.

In 2015, the number of asylum seekers in Finland grew approximately ten-fold compared to the years before. Such significant growth was unexpected and posed a challenge to the asylum seeker reception system. Challenges related to settling

immigrants who have been granted a residence permit in municipalities were also identified, and earlier integration policy, integration legislation and its implementing practices as well as resource allocations and official processes had to be reassessed. Immigration will unquestionably continue to change and internationalise Finnish society. It is the duty of the authorities to constantly assess and develop our service system so that it optimally enables those with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds to have equal opportunities in Finnish society. At the same time, NGOs and working life, educational and other organisations are increasingly expected to have competence related to immigrant integration.

Immigrants also play a key role in various innovation communities and the internationalisation of the growth enterprise sector. Diversity has featured in the strategic thinking of many companies for an extended period from the perspective of both customer and personnel strategies. In the future, a more strategic vision will be needed of how immigrants will find their place in the objectives and measures of educational, business and innovation policies as well as development cooperation.

Numerous companies depend on immigrants' work inputs for their operating pre-conditions. However, the employment of immigrants is associated with development needs, which pertain to measures that promote employment, the identification and recognition of competence acquired before migrating to Finland, recruitment practices that exclude immigrants, attitudes and diversity management alike. The pathways to employment should also be accelerated and made more efficient and flexible, and they should respond to needs better than today.

The fact that some immigrants have special needs should be accounted for: in the case of adults, these needs may be related to complementing basic education, learning literacy skills, language learning while on parental leave, or receiving psychosocial support in processing traumatic experiences.

Pursuant to section 34 of the Integration Act, the ministries have jointly prepared a Government Integration Programme, in which the different ministries' targets, measures and resources related to integration are specified for the years 2016–2019. Simultaneously with the drafting of the Government Integration Programme, an Integration Partnership Programme was prepared in cooperation with a number of other actors. This programme highlights the work promoting immigrants'

integration carried out not only by the public administration but also NGOs and labour market organisations, educational organisations, companies etc. Within the framework of the Integration Partnership Programme, different organisations have submitted initiatives aiming to promote integration and given concrete pledges to participate in integration measures. The dialogue on immigrant integration will continue between various actors in keeping with the policies set out in the Partnership Programme.

Helsinki, 8 September 2016

TUIJA OIVO

Director General
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

1. Background

1.1. Starting points of the Government Integration Programme for 2016–2019

Pursuant to section 34 of Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010; the Immigrant Integration Act), the government decides on the development of integration at national level by drawing up a government integration programme containing the integration objectives for four years at a time. The first Government Resolution on a Government Integration Programme (VALKO I) was made on 7 June 2012. This programme described the cross-administrative policy package aiming to promote immigrant integration and good ethnic relations. Funding allocations in budget planning period 2012–2015 were an object of particular scrutiny.

Government Integration Programme for 2016–2019 (VALKO II) takes into account the policies set out in Prime Minister Sipilä's strategic Government Programme, the immigration policy measures adopted by the Government on 11 September 2015 as a consequence of the increased number of asylum seekers, the Action Plan on Asylum Policy published by the Government on 8 December 2015, and the policies formulated by the Ministerial working group on migration. When making decisions on Integration Programme measures, monitoring data on the implementation and impacts of VALKO I programme was available. The programme contains the focus areas, objectives, measures and responsibilities related to integration for the current government term and the resources for promoting integration specified in the General Government Fiscal Plan 2017–2020, including EU funding. The programme

measures will be implemented within the framework of the state budget, central government spending limits and local government spending restrictions.

In addition to immigration policy outlines, Prime Minister Sipilä's Government Programme contains many other reforms that will have an impact on the administration and implementation of integration policy. In particular, these include reforms that affect the division of tasks and responsibilities between the central government and municipalities, such as the reform aiming to coordinate regional government and regional state administration (in which a key part is played by the closure of the ELY Centres and the TE Offices and transfer of the services which they are responsible for organising, including integration tasks, to the counties), the social and health care reform, the Municipality of the Future project, and the programme aiming to reduce the tasks and duties of the municipalities.

As a consequence of the change that took place in the asylum seeker situation in 2015, the Government launched a review of integration and employment measures for immigrants. A total of 32,476 asylum seekers arrived in Finland in 2015, and the Government wishes to speed up the process of placing those who have been granted a residence permit in municipalities, education and the labour market.

The objective of actions aiming to develop integration is to create more flexible systems and increase individualisation. To achieve this goal, integration policies will be updated with a cross-administrative approach so that they combine seamlessly with the Action Plan on Asylum Policy adopted on 8 December 2015.

Of the asylum seekers who arrived in Finland, 8,500 were minors, and 3,024 of these were unaccompanied. 84% of all asylum seekers who entered the country were aged under 34 years. The age structure of those who will remain in Finland is likely to be similar. In principle, immigrants in this age group have good possibilities of being successfully integrated in Finnish society, studying and finding jobs.

In proportion to our population, the number of asylum seekers received by Finland was the fourth greatest in all EU countries in 2015. The Finnish policy is that immigration and its costs must be kept under control. The current situation features many factors that slow down immigrants' education, training and employment. The placement of asylum seekers who have been granted residence permits in mu-

nicipalities is slow. Their pathways to education, training and working life are long and may contain waiting time, overlaps and inappropriate studies. Creating a more flexible and effective system will serve the interests of entire society, especially in the new situation, as the alternative is that immigrants are trapped in a life on social security with no work and no education.

The government has been planning measures that can accelerate asylum seekers' transition to municipalities, the launching of integration measures and access to education and working life. The objectives of these measures include improving immigrants' possibilities of obtaining Finnish or Swedish skills and improving their language proficiency as well as providing them with capabilities for progressing on their educational pathways through basic education. The current forms of multi-professional support and student welfare services will improve the preconditions for learning, and the special needs of immigrants will be addressed in teacher education. Immigrants' inclusion in leisure time and NGO activities will be promoted. Workfare aspects of the social security system will be made more prominent, and participation in integration measures will be required.

Successful integration in Finnish society always starts from the individual and requires an active and responsible attitude on the part of the participant. Support provided by society may serve this individually oriented learning process, once it is ensured that the system provides incentives, is fair and works effectively. Successful integration and employment may offer possibilities for responding to the challenges of the Finnish dependency ratio and labour market mismatches. The Government is aware of the fact that the earlier integration policy has not produced the desired results in all cases. The integration systems and policy will undergo a comprehensive reform, in which mechanisms of privilege that undermine equality will be eliminated.

Finland's weak economic outlook and need to balance the public economy set stringent economic marginal conditions on measures that promote integration. The new measures have little room for manoeuvre in the economic sense. The government policy is to reinforce cross-administrative cooperation and to reform services for immigrants, aiming for more effective services with a higher impact. The potential of digital services will be utilised in all measures. Learning a national language, respect for the Finnish culture and customs as well as access to work as fast as possible are in a key role.

1.2. Focus areas and implementation of the Government Integration Programme

The Government Integration Programme directs Integration Act implementation and makes it more efficient. The objectives set in the programme create preconditions for implementing equal opportunities for immigrants and the remainder of the population and for utilising immigrants' knowledge and skills for the benefit of Finnish society. The focus areas are based on the migration policies of Prime Minister Sipilä's Government Programme. The measures are particularly relevant to the initial stage of entry in the country.

The four focus areas of the Government Integration Programme based on Prime Minister Sipilä's Government Programme are:

1. Using immigrants' cultural strengths to enhance Finnish innovation capacity;
2. Enhancing integration through cross-sectoral measures;
3. Increasing cooperation between the State and municipalities in the reception of beneficiaries of international protection;
4. Promoting a humane national discussion culture that will not tolerate racism.

Measures that respond to the challenges of integrating the larger group of refugees resulting from the increased number of asylum seekers have been included in the programme under each focus area. The initial assumption is that in 2016–2019, approximately 10,000 asylum seekers a year will arrive in the country. Some 35% of them will receive a residence permit, and their transition from the reception centre to a municipality will on average take place within nine months of the date on which the asylum application was submitted.

When defining the measures to be included in the Government Integration Programme, the challenges to integration brought up by the integration monitoring system, monitoring data related to the first Government Integration Programme, and the results of recent studies and reports, consultations and statements issued were taken into account. Indicators of the integration monitoring system produce information on the impact of the programme. The programme contains key indica-

tors that measure the achievement of each target, and its implementation will be monitored by each specific measure.

Government Integration Programme implementation will be promoted by means of guidance by resources and information. The evaluation of monitoring data will be coordinated with the mid-term review of the Government Programme.

As integration often comprises every-day interaction based on encounters, not only authorities but also multiprofessional cooperation with different actors will be needed in the efforts to support integration. This is why an Integration Partnership Programme was prepared in connection with the drafting of the Government Integration Programme. The Partnership Programme's objective is to support integration by bringing together different actors and by recognising and defining possibilities for cooperation that supports integration work. The core idea of the programme is to offer opportunities for new, innovative ideas and initiatives generated in the course of practical-level work.

The Partnership Programme was prepared in close cooperation with municipalities, immigrants' associations and NGOs, business and labour market organisations, religious communities, educational institutions and other actors. The first Partnership Programme publication contains a compilation of the actors' joint view of the current situation of integration work based on five themes selected from the Government Programme, as well as areas of potential cooperation suggested by the partners that can, relying on partnerships, help to respond to development needs in integration work.

Supporting partnerships is a viewpoint that can also be applied to Government Integration Programme implementation in a cross-cutting manner. New operating models can be produced, new actors can be involved in integration, and the impact of integration work can be enhanced through partnerships.

In the event that significant changes take place in the operating environment that could not be anticipated in the programme period 2016–2019, the programme will be reviewed.

1.3. Integration work is guided by the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration

The promotion of integration is a horizontal policy area that concerns a number of sectors, the most central ones of which are early childhood education and care, education, cultural, sports, youth, housing, labour and social and health policies. The preconditions for good integration are based on the immigrants' rights and duties laid down in the Constitution and sector-specific legislation, the suitability of services for immigrants' needs as well as the integration services specified in the Integration Act. Integration of immigrants is also part of implementing Finland's human rights obligations. The aliens legislation and its implementation have a significant impact on integration.

Provisions on promoting integration, immigrants' duties and rights, the authorities' obligations and the coordination of measures are contained in the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010; the Integration Act). The scope of this act covers all persons immigrating to Finland who have a valid residence permit referred to in the Aliens Act (301/2004) in Finland, whose right of residence has been registered, or to whom a residence permit card has been granted in compliance with the Aliens Act. In the Integration Act, integration is defined as interactive development involving immigrants and society at large, the aim of which is to provide immigrants with the knowledge and skills required in society and working life and to provide them with support, so that they can maintain their culture and language. Other purposes of the act include promoting gender equality and non-discrimination. In other words, integration consists of two-directional dialogue and cooperation between people and population groups in daily life.

Services that promote integration are produced as part of public services and by private service providers and NGOs. Utilising the joint customer service points of the public administration and Public Service Info in integration should also be possible. Immigrants' needs should also be accounted for when planning public services, including e-service development programmes, an example of which is the programme implementing the National Architecture for Digital Services.

Voluntary work makes an important contribution to the offer of services ranging from language instruction to sports activities, and it brings immigrants and the

rest of the population into closer interaction. Immigrants' organisations, including religious communities, serve as important informal promoters of integration and communicators of information, especially in the initial stage of immigration. The role of voluntary work and its coordination have been emphasised, especially as the number of asylum seekers increases. NGOs also play an invaluable part in influencing attitudes.

As the number of asylum seekers grows, it has been necessary to review earlier policies, legislation on integration, its implementation practices, resource allocations and the authorities' processes, especially in case of those asylum seekers who are granted a residence permit.

1.4. Integration in the central government budget

In the central government budget, the appropriations for promoting immigrant integration are found under the main titles of several ministries. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is responsible for the general development, planning and steering of integration policy and for the coordination, national evaluation and monitoring of integration policy and good ethnic relations, and it directs the ELY Centres in performing tasks related to these aspects. Appropriations under its main title are allocated to the municipalities' expenditure on receiving refugees reimbursed by the central government (item 32.70.30, budget proposal EUR 162.23 million in 2016), procurement of integration training and costs incurred for competence assessments and initial language proficiency assessments (item 32.30.51, budget proposal EUR 83.25 million in 2016) as well as the promotion of immigrants' integration and employment (item 32.70.03, budget proposal EUR 2.25 million in 2016). The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment also directs ESF projects that promote integration. A Centre of Excellence in Integration operates within the Ministry. The particular task of the Centre is supporting competence in and the monitoring and mainstreaming of good practices of work related to promoting integration through guidance by information.

Appropriations under the main title of the Ministry of Education and Culture are allocated to instruction preparing immigrants for basic education, instruction of

Finnish/Swedish as the second language, remedial teaching and instruction of the pupils' mother tongues in basic education (item 29.10.30), preparatory training for vocational upper secondary education and training (item 29.20.30), training preparing immigrants for general upper secondary education (item 29.10.30) and preparatory training for immigrants provided by universities of applied sciences (29.40.55). The appropriations under the main title of the Ministry of Education and Culture are also used to fund grants for the instruction, continuing education and training that improves the study and language skills of foreigners living in Finland at folk high schools and adult education centres, subsidies for promoting multiculturalism and combat against racism, grants for professional artists to promote multiculturalism, and grants for promoting equality and integration through sports and exercise.

Under the main titles of other ministries, promotion of integration is financed as part of other funding; for example, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health takes immigrants' needs into account when developing the social and health care service system, the Ministry of Justice funds the activities of the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO), and the Ministry of the Environment funds housing construction and projects that support housing. The Ministry of the Interior administers the EU's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), which also finances the promotion of integration on the basis of a national programme. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry administers the Rural Development Programme for Mainland Finland, under which projects promoting integration may also be funded.

1.5. Anticipated trends in immigration and in the number of persons to be integrated and their profile in 2016–2019

Immigrants and immigration are continuously increasing in significance in Finland. The number of people registering a language other than a national language as their mother tongue has tripled in the 2000s, and the increase in the number of asylum seekers that began in autumn 2015 has further increased the importance of immigration issues in societal debate. The effects of globalisation, wars and other crises are felt in different parts of Europe, and Finland must also prepare for an increase in refugee numbers.

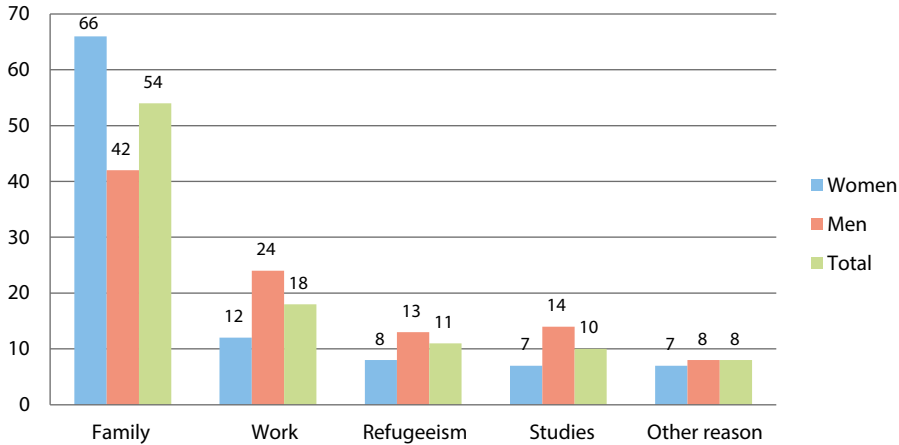
Finland joined the ranks of countries receiving immigrants at the beginning of the 1990s as a consequence of the fall of the Soviet Union and the wars that resulted in the dissolution of Somalia and former Yugoslavia. Both refugees and immigrants of a Finnish origin from the ex-Soviet area arrived in the country. The migration of Somalian refugees has continued for as long as 25 years, and the Somali-speaking population has grown to almost 17,000 people. As a result of the policy on return migration from ex-Soviet Union, the Russian-speaking minority in Finland has grown. These examples describe a guiding principle of international migration: chain migration. The factor that predicts the migration of a certain group most strongly is the earlier arrival of migrants representing the same ethnic group.

As Finland only became a destination for migrants in the early 1990s, the number and share of immigrants remains small here by EU comparisons, regardless of the fact that the immigrant population has been growing fast in recent years. At its current levels, the number of asylum seekers will not change this situation significantly. The short history of immigration also explains why so-called second-generation immigrants – those who were under school age when they migrated and children born in Finland to parents who were born abroad – are a small group in this country. Return migration of Finnish citizens accounts for one third of immigration. Similarly, one third of foreign citizens migrating to Finland move out of the country during their first year of living in Finland, and some of those later return to Finland.

Migrants have different reasons for moving to Finland. The most common reason is family ties, typically a spouse who is Finnish or permanently resident in Finland. At minimum, one third of all residence permits have been granted on the basis of family ties each year, while the share of permits issued for work and studies has been less than a third. The share of quota refugees or asylum seekers who have been granted international protection has in most years been some 10%. However, this situation changed both in Finland and at the global level in autumn 2015.

Key reason for immigrating by gender, share of population with a foreign background aged 15–64 in 2014, %

Figure 1. Reasons for immigrating reported by persons with a foreign background



Source: Survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin

Foreign citizens migrating to Finland and the birth rate cover some 80–90% of the population increase. The increase in working age population is totally dependent on immigrants. Different linguistic, cultural and competence backgrounds represent opportunities for Finland, provided that the newcomers are integrated and find jobs. The number of registered mother tongues already is some 170. If integration is successful, immigrants can bring extensive benefits to Finnish society, both over the short and the long term.

From the perspective of Finland's economic growth and welfare, adequate and long-term immigration and investments in immigrant integration play a key role. Refugees are slower to find jobs than other immigrant groups, although the differences level out over time. This means that higher costs of integration and employment in the initial stage of the stay in the country are incurred for refugees than for other groups. On the other hand, the typically young age structure of refugees means that the investment may pay itself back in the form of longer careers, should they be successful in finding jobs.

The demographic profile of different immigrant groups affects not only the need for services but also the way interaction between the newcomers and the receiving society shapes up. Those who settle in Finland permanently bring along the following generations. This naturally also applies to those who move permanently out of the country: they bring their existing and future children with them. In this sense, the structure of the immigrant population is a significant factor for demographic development. 25–39-year-olds are the largest age group of foreigners in all EU countries. An interesting feature in terms of the foreign citizens' age structure is that the share of age groups younger and older than 25–39 years has been declining in almost all EU countries.

Due to their younger age structure, immigrants tend to concentrate in the cities, similarly to younger Finnish people. A key reason for urbanisation is the transformation of the production structure towards a service economy; in other words, the proliferation of industries that favour dense population. Immigrants are over-represented in service sectors, and employment opportunities are one reason that draws immigrants to cities. In other words, immigration accelerates the growth of larger urban sub-regions and the differentiation between rural and urban lifestyles. Political measures may be used to control this trend, but regrettably often these solutions are expensive.

The greatest changes take place so slowly that they are difficult to observe. The backgrounds of children and young people are increasingly diverse because their parents have their roots in different countries. Internationalisation of families has been a constant growth trend in population statistics for decades, and the rise of the generation of international Finns who have grown up in these families can easily be overshadowed by sudden phenomena, including the growth in asylum seeker numbers in autumn 2015. In the future, a significant proportion of the population in larger cities will have a foreign background: they have either themselves immigrated to Finland from other countries, or they have grown up in an immediate or extended family whose members are scattered around the world. This will change our society more than immigration itself. The change is taking place slowly, but it has been constant and on-going for several decades.

1.6. Impacts of receiving refugees and asylum seekers

According to the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, the number of people who have had to flee conflicts and persecution was some 59.5 million at the end of 2014. This was 8.3 million more than the year before (51.2 million), and so far, the greatest annual growth in the world's refugee numbers. In its mid-year trends report of 2015, the UNHCR estimated that of this number, 15.1 million had fled outside their countries¹. The unstable situation in areas near Europe has brought the greatest refugee numbers since the Second World War to the area. Syrian refugees numbered 4.2 million in summer 2015. In 2014, 626,000 people sought asylum in Europe and 3,651 in Finland. In 2015, these figures were 1.45 million in Europe, of which 32,476 in Finland.

Before 2015, refugee situations created by wars and other crises were less visible in Finland than, for example, the other Nordic countries, Germany, the Netherlands and many other EU countries. When the situation changed in late summer 2015, Finland became better known as a destination country for people looking for international protection outside their home countries, or asylum seekers. The number of asylum seekers arriving in the country in 2015 was approximately ten-fold compared to previous years. The higher number of asylum seekers in 2015 will increase the relative share and number of those receiving international protection among all immigrants to whom a residence permit was granted to approx. 40% as an estimate in 2016.

1 UNHCR, Mid-Year Trends 2015, <http://www.unhcr.org/56701b969.html>

Figure 2. Asylum seekers arriving in Finland in 2014–2016.

Asylum seekers, Top 10 nationalities

2014		2015		1.1.–30.11.2016	
3 651 applicants, 95 different nationalities		32 476 applicants, 106 different nationalities		5 339 applicants 101 different nationalities	
Iraq	826	Iraq	20 485	Iraq	1 195
Somalia	411	Afghanistan	5 214	Afghanistan	725
Ukraine	302	Somalia	1 981	Syria	582
Afghanistan	205	Syria	877	Somalia	419
Russia	198	Albania	762	Eritrea	245
Nigeria	166	Iran	619	India	180
Syria	149	Unknow	303	Russia	161
Albania	109	Russia	190	Nigeria	151
Iran	95	Nigeria	167	Iran	143
Algeria	91	Kosovo	165	Pakistan	97

The number of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers arriving in the country also increased clearly in 2015. Minors are usually granted a residence permit in Finland, but few family reunifications have gone ahead recently. As they are a small group, few follow-up studies on their integration in Finnish society² have been possible, whereas international research results are available. The initial results of an extensive study being conducted at the University of Stockholm, for example, indicate that unaccompanied minors are more likely than others to aim for working life rather than studies, and they do several jobs at once to support their loved ones in other countries. However, they have a notable risk of being stuck with performing level jobs in low-pay fields. In the future, increasing attention should also be paid to the integration of unaccompanied minors in Finland, as well as monitoring and research related to it.

Of the asylum seekers who arrived in Finland in 2015, some 80% were men and 20% were women. An estimated 10,000 of them will be granted residence permits. The longer the residence permit process, the more ties those who arrived as asylum seekers will have to the country: some find a place of study or a job, some get mar-

2 Source: Aycan Çelikaksoy & Eskil Wadensjö (2015) De ensamkommande flyktingbarnen och den svenska arbetsmarknaden. http://www.su.se/polopoly_fs/1.238803.1433429678!/menu/standard/file/De%20ensamkommande%20flyktingbarnen%20och%20den%20svenska%20arbetsmarknaden%20Aycan%20%C3%87elikaksoy%20och%20Eskil%20Wadensj%C3%B6.pdf (1.4.2016)

ried and have children. The over-representation of young men among asylum seekers means that they will have families with a delay of a few years. This will happen in three ways: 1) their nuclear family members living in another country (wife and/or children) move to Finland when the criteria for family reunification are met; 2) marriage and immigration of the spouse who lives outside Finland when the criteria are met; 3) marriage with a person already living in Finland. It is essential to note that however tight the criteria for the immigration of the spouse and children are, the desire for family life will persist.

1.7. European Union measures to control the asylum seeker situation

As part of its common external border control and asylum policy, the European Union has launched measures aiming to curb trafficking in human beings and uncontrolled immigration. This is an extensive package that includes both border control actions in the Mediterranean, improved asylum procedures, in particular in Greece and Italy, as well as preparation for an agreement with Turkey on returning asylum seekers who try to gain entry to the EU territory. The Union has additionally agreed upon certain burden-sharing mechanisms, in which Finland participates by receiving asylum seekers and refugees to be resettled from Turkey as internal transfers from the Union territory. The first refugees to be resettled arrived in Finland from Turkey on 4 April 2016.

2. Focus areas of integration

2.1. Focus area I. Using immigrants' cultural strengths to enhance Finnish innovation capacity

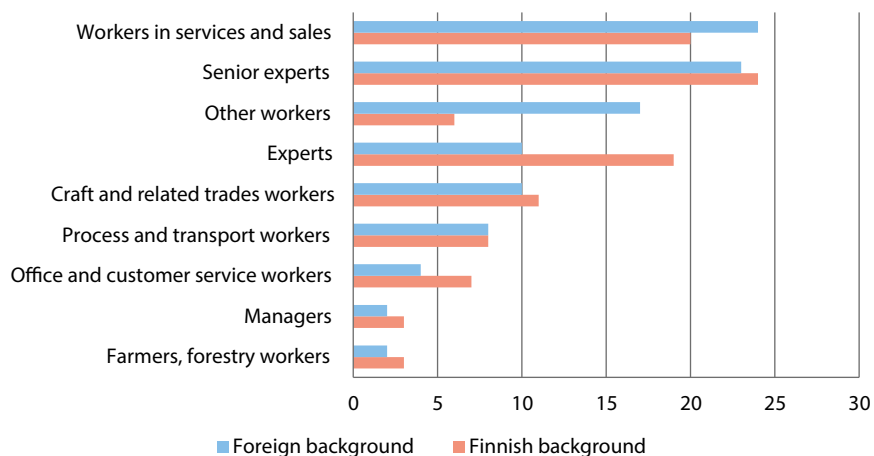
The objective is that actions related to immigrant integration will increasingly be seen as one of the instruments of the Finnish business and innovation policy and development cooperation policy. This includes utilising the knowledge and skills of highly educated immigrants and foreign students graduating from Finnish higher education institutions and promoting their career advancement in the Finnish labour market and in the growth and internationalisation of businesses, which will in turn strengthen Finland's competitiveness and the preconditions for economic growth.

Description of the current situation

Immigrants bring with them new operating methods as well as international competence networks and capital, and they diversify the language resources in Finland. While competent employees will increasingly be recruited directly from abroad in the future, it is also sensible to invest in better utilisation of the knowledge and skills of immigrants living in Finland, including degree students and those having migrated for other reasons, in the labour market and innovation activities.

*Vocational structure of 15–64-year-olds with a foreign or a Finnish background in 2004, %, Statistic Finland's Classification of Occupations 2010, main class level**

Figure 3. Vocational structure of those with a foreign and a Finnish background in 2014



* The main class Armed forces is not shown due to the small number of observations.

Source: Survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin 2014, Statistics Finland

The internationalisation of secondary and tertiary level educational institutions has attracted thousands of foreign students to Finland. Bachelor's and Master's degrees, for example, can be completed in hundreds of programmes taught through English around Finland. The offer of Finnish or Swedish instruction for foreign degree students at higher education institutions has been inadequate, and its contents have not met working life needs. Language proficiency sufficient for working life is acquired before, during and after the studies. It would make sense to attract a greater number of talented young people who have obtained their degrees in Finland to also stay and work in this country. Of foreign citizens who had completed a university of applied sciences degree through English in Finland, for example, about one half were employed a year later, whereas over 80% of Finnish citizens or foreigners who had completed a similar degree in one of the national languages were employed. Learning national languages and gaining Finnish working life contacts and skills has been recognised as a factor that would improve the employment opportunities of foreign students who graduate from educational institutions.

Education, business, innovation and regional policy as well as immigration and integration policy are cross-administrative sectors which increasingly adopt consistent practices and objectives as international mobility increases. Migration brings innovations, international competence networks and investments that have a regional policy dimension. While different policy segments have so far been examined separately in governmental policy steering, in the interest of better coordination of the objectives and measures, the interfaces of immigration and integration policy with the innovation and business policy as well as the segments of regional and educational policy should be examined more comprehensively.

If innovation economy instruments were applied in this area, immigrants' resources could produce more added value and well-being. Immigrants already play a key role in various innovation communities and the internationalisation of the growth enterprise sector. By utilising the instruments of innovation policy, immigrants can be supported more effectively in finding jobs, employing themselves and creating jobs by bringing into play the global network of relationships and international competence of immigrants with different backgrounds, thus benefiting the national economy. In the future, however, a more strategic vision will be needed of how immigrants will find their place in the objectives and measures of business and innovation policy as well as development cooperation. The knowledge of their countries of origin and networks of immigrants living in Finland are currently little used by companies in internationalisation and export promotion. The utilisation of immigrants' competence potential in planning and implementing development cooperation projects is also limited.

The links between immigrants and growth in international trade have been studied in Sweden. A 10% increase in the number of immigrants originating from a certain country leads to an average growth of 3–6% in exports to and 9% in imports from the country in question. At company level, on the other hand, recruiting an immigrant from a certain country to promote the business of an export company has led to a growth of 1–2% in exports.³

3 Strömbäck, J. (2015) I nationens intresse – en översikt av hur invandring bidrar till Sverige. Stockholm: Reforminstitutet.

Hatzigeorgiou, A. & Lodefalk, M. (2012) Utlandsfödda främjar företagets utrikeshandel. Ekonomisk Debatt 40(5).

Hatzigeorgiou, A. & Lodefalk, M. (2014) The Role of Foreign Networks for Trade in Services: Firm-level Evidence. Working Paper 2014:27. Stockholm: Entreprenörskapsforum.

Especially ‘born global’ entrepreneurship that aims for rapid growth and cross-border operations is increasingly significant for improving Finland’s competitiveness and creating new jobs. In recent years, growth enterprise communities have gathered strength, and efforts are now being made to harness the innovation ecosystem relying on this development as a pull factor for attracting foreign startups and funding providers to Finland. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has channelled support to the Slush event, for example, and in the future, the tools offered by immigration and integration policy for attracting companies and investments to Finland should be investigated more systematically.

In the future, the comprehensive and cross-administrative approach should be visible as a) a strategic vision of how immigration and immigrants will be integrated in the education, business and innovation policy, and b) practical measures that support the strategic vision.

Measures

1. A Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment project on rapid employment of immigrants and extensive utilisation of their knowledge and skills will assess various practical measures for recognising immigrants’ **competence** and for establishing closer links between them and the development and implementation of business and innovation policy and development cooperation policy.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
 - *To be implemented partly as official duties and partly on ESF project funding and through projects that promote integration in rural areas under the Rural Development Programme for Mainland Finland.*
 - *Under the ministry’s main title, item 32.70.03, a total of EUR 200,000 will be allocated to this assessment in 2016–2017*
2. Foreign higher education students will be brought into contact with Finnish companies and working life through work placements and theses, thus utilising their competence. Higher education institutions and business life will also be encouraged to establish stronger mutual links.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*

3. Higher education institutions will organise intensive Finnish and Swedish courses for their foreign-language speaking students and asylum seekers. These courses will also be offered outside the semesters, both as day and evening implementations.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
4. The use of new technologies in language learning will be promoted. Information on digital Finnish and Swedish language learning materials that enable independent study will be spread efficiently. Funding will be granted for projects that produce adaptive learning materials and games for language learning.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
5. Utilisation of immigrants' knowledge and skills will be an element of business and innovation policy in growth agreements between the central government and cities.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
6. A network and operating models will be created for efficiently directing immigrants to business life as employees and entrepreneurs, including startup enterprising, in cooperation with regional actors.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
7. An operating model will be created for identifying immigrants' entrepreneurial potential and special competence and utilising it to promote the growth, internationalisation and exports of Finnish companies. The possibilities of utilising immigrants' knowledge of target country markets and their networks in growth programmes will be investigated together with Finpro and other Team Finland actors. The offer of training for immigrants that supports export promotion will be increased, for example as part of integration training, in cooperation with Finnish companies and stakeholders engaged in export promotion.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
8. The best alternatives for facilitating the immigration of foreign growth entrepreneurs, granting residence permits on the basis of investments in companies based in Finland and streamlining the residence permit system for top experts needed by companies will be investigated.
 - *Prepared by the Ministry of the Interior.*
9. The efficiency of international employment services will be improved and the Eures services will be extended.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
 - *To be financed by ESF funding.*

Indicators

Employment rate in Finland of foreign citizens who have obtained their degrees in Finland. Source: Statistics Finland

2.2. Focus area II: Enhancing integration through cross-sectoral measures

2.2.1. Good preconditions for integration through effective initial-stage services

The objective is that integration will take place faster and that the processes of transitioning to services that promote integration and to working life will be improved, efficiently utilising immigrants' previously acquired knowledge and skills.

Description of the current situation

An effort to achieve the objective will be made by offering each immigrant an appropriate initial-stage service package that meets individual needs and initiates the integration process without delay. The basic elements of the integration process are contained in Chapter 2 of the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration. Their core contents comprise strong advisory and guidance services as well as an individual and gender-sensitive integration pathway building on the immigrant's needs and competence. Its key elements for a working-age immigrant are integration training that consists of language studies, civic knowledge and working life capabilities, education and training that complement vocational competence, and services leading to working life, including coaching, work try-outs and work on subsidised pay. The TE Offices currently draw up some 7,000–8,000 integration plans for adult immigrants every year. Due to the increased asylum seeker numbers of 2015, the volume of services that promote immigration needs to be brought up to a new level, while also reviewing the practices of implementing these services.

Well-functioning and efficient services in the early phase of entry and long-term guidance will promote the building of coherent integration pathways. Asylum seekers who have been granted a residence permit are a growing customer group in integration services. The initiation of their integration process can be speeded up by

developing inter-authority cooperation and information exchanges that take place when an immigrant transfers from a reception centre to a municipality and becomes a TE service customer, by strengthening guidance and advisory services, and by conducting the initial assessment to evaluate the immigrant's overall situation and integration capabilities earlier, so that assessments of the situation and competence profile of immigrants who have residence permits are begun without delay, possibly already at the reception centre. The equality-related content and gender perspective of immigrant integration services will also be enhanced to support integration in Finnish society.

Transitions to training that promotes integration and complements competence, other services and working life can also be streamlined further for all immigrants, among other things by drawing more efficiently on the information gathered in the initial and competence assessments to put together an individual integration pathway. Access to working life for those who have completed a foreign degree can be accelerated by developing the identification, recognition and complementation of prior learning, which will make it easier to anticipate the need for additional studies and plan their national offer. The identification and utilisation of informal learning should also be developed to support the integration of immigrants with a weaker educational background in particular. Further development is also needed in reaching those who are excluded from early-stage services, including mothers caring for their children at home, those who migrate to the country as spouses, students and older people, and directing them to appropriate services.

Another precondition for the smooth initiation of the integration process is providing for the housing of the new immigrants. In this area, existing vacant rental housing can be used, especially in areas near the reception centres, however ensuring that the services essential for integration are easily accessible. In order to respond to the growing demand for housing, housing construction needs to be boosted in growth centre areas and, for example, office buildings need to be converted for housing use. The municipalities organise housing for quota refugees and those assigned to a municipality by an ELY Centre. Rental housing subsidised by the central government may be used for those who have been allocated to a municipality in compliance with the resident selection regulations. In applications for government-subsidised housing, the usual resident selection criteria apply to foreign applicants: priority is given to those with the greatest need for housing, the lowest

incomes and least wealth. A third-country citizen who has a residence permit for at least a year is eligible as a resident.

A precondition for directing immigrants to services that efficiently utilise and complement their competence is improving initial-stage services. An initial-stage service package tailored flexibly to individual needs is targeted at all immigrants, including such groups as mothers caring for their children at home. The initial-stage service package may include guidance and advice, an initial assessment, an initial assessment of language proficiency and a more detailed competence assessment, an integration plan if necessary, and training that provides orientation to the Finnish or Swedish language and society. A family integration plan may be prepared to complement individual integration plans. A family plan may address the situation of the family comprehensively, and such measures as the parents taking turns to participate in integration training and child care arrangements while the training is in progress can be planned to support the entire family's integration. When implemented by a broad-based network, the initial-stage integration services will reinforce partnerships and multiprofessional cooperation between the actors, as well as clarifying their responsibilities for different stages of the integration process.

Measures

10. Initial assessments to evaluate immigrants' capabilities for employment, studies and other integration will be conducted in the municipality or the reception centre immediately after the granting of a residence permit. As the target time for the initial assessment will be set two weeks from the granting of the residence permit. Efficient use will be made of the information gathered during the initial assessment in directing immigrants to employment and educational pathways, taking into consideration the existing supply of housing when planning their regional placements.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
 - *The initial assessment and the initial assessments of language proficiency and competence included in it are funded under the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment's main title, item 32.30.51.*
11. Interpretation and translation services will be used more efficiently, for example relying on remote interpretation.

12. A model for an initial-stage integration service package suitable for all immigrant groups will be developed and implemented in broad-based cooperation between national actors.*
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (ELY Centre for Uusimaa/At home in Finland coordination project).*
 - *Development work will be financed from ESF funding (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, priority axis 3).*
13. Boundaries between integration training and subsequent other forms of education and training will be lowered, by means of experiments if necessary. Immigrants who have completed higher education or vocational studies will be directed to complementary education and training that is appropriate for them on a faster schedule. The expertise of educational organisations will be used better in guidance.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
14. Knowledge, skills and qualifications will be recognised more efficiently, drawing on the best international and, in particular, Nordic practices. National operating methods will be created for the identification and recognition of vocational competence acquired abroad.** Particular attention will be paid to the organisation of additional studies that are a precondition for recognising qualifications and vocational competence (including language studies). Pilot projects of the Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education programme launched in spring 2016 will help to accelerate and streamline access to higher education studies for newly arrived immigrants and those already living in the country.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
15. Project actors will be encouraged to apply funding for and implement Rural Development Programme projects that promote immigrants' integration in the countryside.
- *Funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.*
 - *The projects will be funded under the Ministry's main title item 30.10.64.*

* Development work is being carried out in pilot projects implemented around Finland in the ESF programme Sustainable growth and jobs under the national package of measures titled At home in Finland (priority axis 3, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment). If necessary, the initial-stage service package may also be offered to TE Service customers who have been granted a residence permit as an orientation module to the integration training to be used, for example, while waiting for transition to a municipality and access to integration training.

** To be developed as part of the ESF programme Sustainable growth and jobs under the national package of measures titled At home in Finland (priority axis 4, Ministry of Education and Culture).

Indicators

Smoothness of the service process: where applicable, gender-disaggregated indicators relevant to integration training and improving immigrants' labour market position will be used in gender-specific monitoring.

2.2.2. Capabilities for pursuing further studies and accessing the labour market through integration training

The objective is that the initial language proficiency assessment will be improved and that immigrants will have access to integration training at the latest two months after the initial language proficiency test.

Description of the current situation

After the initial-stage services, labour market integration training or independent studies are often used to promote immigrants' integration and access to labour market. The student volume of integration training implemented as labour force training has in recent years been some 13,000–14,000 students a year⁴, and decisions on supporting integration training implemented as independent study have been made for some 6,000 people annually⁵. As immigrant numbers have grown, the offer of integration training has not been able to meet the demand regardless of increases in appropriations, and the extended waiting times for integration training remain a critical point in the integration process, especially in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and other growth centres. The average waiting times vary by region from a few months to up to six months in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The demand for integration training is expected to increase further in the next few years as the number of asylum seekers arriving in Finland grows and once these immigrants are granted residence permits and they transfer to services that promote integration.

4 The number of students taking part in integration training was a total of 14,742 in 2015, 14,474 in 2014, 13,595 in 2013 and 13,393 in 2012. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Employment Service Statistics)

5 Decisions on independent study as part of integration training supported with unemployment benefits were issued to a total of 6,260 students in 2014, 6,040 in 2013 and 5,530 in 2012. (Batch run of the TE administration's URA system)

The estimated increase in the demand for integration training and the identified needs to develop immigrants' educational and employment pathways⁶ bring pressures to re-think the contents, implementation forms and duration of the training. New models are also needed for implementing integration training for those outside the labour market, including mothers caring for their children at home, and organising basic education for immigrants who are over the age of compulsory education, especially young adults.

Systematisation of the initial language proficiency assessment conducted in the initial stage of entry into the country, competence assessments, and drafting of national principles for the identification and recognition of competence will create better preconditions for directing immigrants to integration training and education and training meeting their needs that complement their competence and improve the relevance of services that promote employment. In 2016, the target is introducing more flexible, working life oriented integration training models that link vocationally oriented content to instruction of language and civic skills already in an early phase, and accelerating transition to further studies, services that promote employment and working life. At the same time, the possibilities for distance learning, online studies and part-time teaching arrangements will be developed. They will improve the efficiency of education and training provision and afford opportunities for a larger target group, including parents caring for their children at home, to participate in training. New solutions must also be developed for supporting the development of language proficiency when immigrants transition to working life, and proven models must be mainstreamed.

⁶ The educational tracks and integration of immigrants – problematic areas and proposals for actions; Publications of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2016:1

Measures

16. In 2016, new integration training models with more versatile implementation methods will be introduced that are working life oriented and develop vocational capabilities. They will be based on identified development needs and take into account the anticipated increase in demand for integration training in the years to come.* Integration training with a vocational orientation will be focused on sectors with the greatest labour shortages. At the same time, the direction of immigrants to education, training and other services that meet their individual needs based on the information gathered in the initial and competence assessments will be developed, and the guidance personnel's competence related to this aspect will be built up.
- *Responsibility for development work will be assumed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the National Board of Education.*
 - *Labour force integration training will be funded under the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment's main title, item 32.30.51, where EUR 83 million was allocated to expenditure on purchasing integration training in the 2016 budget.*
17. As a particular target will be set accelerating access to integration training so that the training will start **at the latest within two months** after the assessment of initial language proficiency.
- *Implemented and monitored by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
 - *The measure will be funded under the Ministry's main title, item 32.30.51.*
18. Language instruction will be integrated in other studies, on-the-job learning and work practice.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
19. The language proficiency requirements of instruction preparing immigrants for vocational education and training will be relaxed, and more language instruction will be provided during the studies.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
20. Preparations will be made for transferring the responsibility for literacy training to the administrative branch of the Ministry of Education and Culture, where it will be part of the system for basic education for adults from 1 January 2018.
- *Drafted by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*

* The possible new implementation models of integration training for immigrants are described in the annex to the National core curriculum for integration training for adult migrants (Finnish National Board of Education 1/011/2012): http://oph.fi/saadokset_ja_ohjeet/opetusuunnitelmien_ja_tutkintojen_perusteet/maahanmuuttajien_koulutus

Indicators

Waiting times for integration training. Source: Koulutusportti system.

Placement after labour force integration training (follow-up at 3 months). Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Employment Service Statistics

2.2.3. Improving immigrants' labour market position

The objective is improving foreigners' employment rate from 59.4% in 2014 to 62% in 2016 and decreasing their unemployment rate from 29% in 2015 to 27% in 2016. The objectives also include increasing the number of those who become entrepreneurs supported by a start-up grant from 699 in 2014 to 750 in 2016.

Description of the current situation

Measured by a number of indicators, immigrants are in a weaker labour market position than the rest of the population. Their unemployment rate is 2.5-fold, their access to the labour market is slower, and they experience more frequent periods of extended unemployment. Waiting times for integration training are long, the service pathway following the training is often intermittent, and immigrants use the services offered by the TE Offices less than the mainstream population. Finnish/Swedish language skills, lack of networks and the attitudes of employers and society also emerge as obstacles. The fact that young immigrants run a many-fold risk of being excluded from studies and work compared to the main population is particularly alarming.

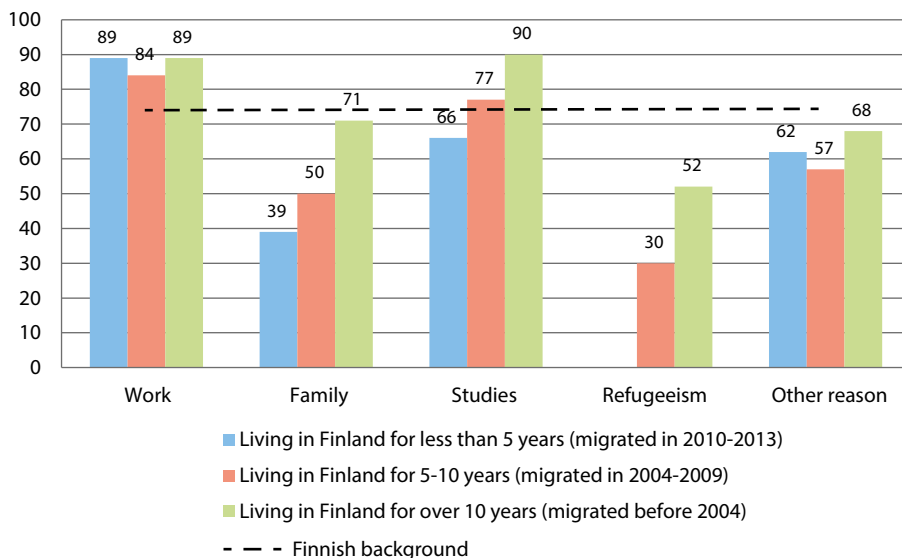
Differences in the employment rates between various immigrant groups are great, however, and level out with a longer period of residence in the country, approaching the levels of the main population. Gender differences are also significant: the employment rate of immigrant men is higher than that of women, even if women do catch up with the men as they live longer in the country. An uneven division of child-care responsibilities between men and women, and the consequent lower participation rate in integration training of immigrant women, has been estimated to be a particularly important factor in immigrant women's slower access to the labour market in the initial stage. It is thus essential to focus on means that can support all immigrant groups in finding jobs more rapidly in the initial phase of unem-

ployment. Finding jobs faster is particularly important in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, where 23% TE Office customers are foreigners and where one long-term unemployed person out of five is a foreigner. The number of unemployed foreign-language speakers in the whole country is some 40,000, and one half of them live in Uusimaa.

While immigrants' enterprising rates are generally similar to those of the mainstream population, there are great variations between different nationalities. In 2014, one fifth of immigrant entrepreneurs had arrived in Finland from Estonia, and almost one quarter from other EU countries. Over one fifth of the entrepreneurs originated in Asia (the greatest numbers coming from Thailand and Vietnam), 14% in Russia and 8% in Turkey. According to Statistics Finland's employment statistics, the number of foreign-language speaking entrepreneurs has more than tripled in the 2000s. This development has been faster among female than male entrepreneurs, as there has been an almost four-fold increase in the number of woman entrepreneurs with a foreign background. The companies of entrepreneurs with a foreign background are often small. According to Statistics Finland, there were some 11,200 immigrant entrepreneurs and 6,321 entrepreneur-led companies with a foreign background in Finland in 2012. The number of enterprises grew by almost 500 companies year-on-year, and these companies employed 8,650 people and had a turnover of approximately one billion euros.

Employment rate of 20–64-year-olds with a foreign background by length of residence and reason for immigrating in 2014, %

Figure 4. Employment rate by length of residence and reason for immigrating in 2014.



*Data on the employment rates of immigrants with a refugee background who have lived in the country for less than five years is unreliable due to the small number of observations.

Source: Survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin 2014, Statistics Finland

The opportunities brought by immigration and immigrants' knowledge and skills have so far not been adequately utilised in the Finnish labour market. The industrial structure, jobs and occupations in Finland are undergoing a transformation, and the labour market mismatch is more prominent. One of the key challenges is the ageing of the population, which is reducing the supply of labour and, over the long term, also demand and employment. If properly managed, immigrants' work input could have a significant impact on employment trends. While 64% of the mainstream population are in working age (15–64 years), this figure for immigrants is 78%. The population growth in Finland is already based on increasing immigration. As the population ages and immigration increases, ensuring that those immigrating to Finland can find jobs or become entrepreneurs faster is an important question for not only employment trends but also the equal inclusion of immigrants.

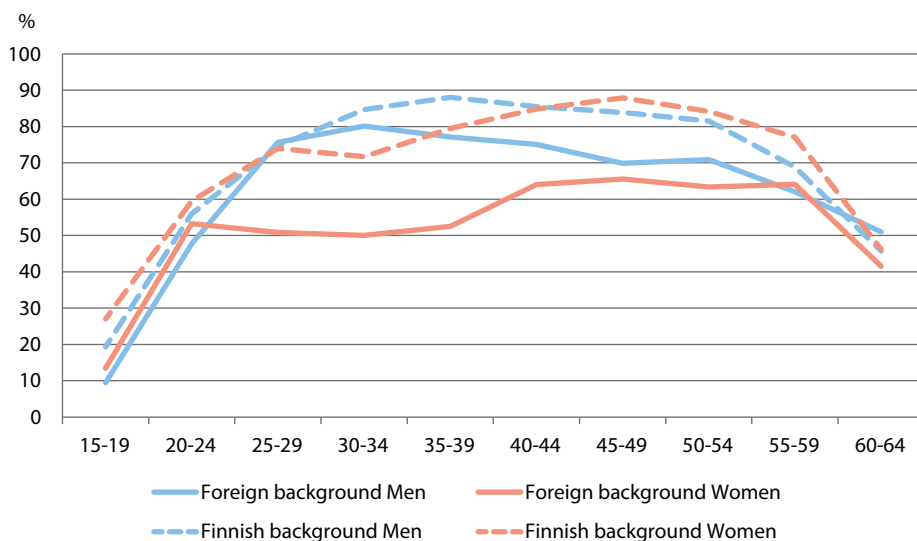
In 2015, 70% of asylum seekers were men in working age. A competence assessment pilot conducted at reception centres in Uusimaa region⁷ indicated that based on their own reports, approx. one half (49%) had completed studies following basic education/a qualification, and approx. 27% had pursued higher education studies. Of those aged less than 30 years, roughly one third (31%) had no basic education, or their basic education was incomplete, and 7% of the applicants were illiterate. Well-functioning and efficient initial-stage services, including mapping prior learning, appropriate and flexible educational and training pathways as well as needs-based TE services and providing services in a timely and effective manner are emphasised to promote fast employment and to achieve the other benefits discussed above.

Studies on recruitment, the labour market and working life indicate that women with a foreign background struggle to find jobs more than men, even if the impacts of education were accounted for. This should be taken into consideration when planning the measures.

⁷ Report on initial-stage recognition of competence at reception centres implemented by Testipiste and commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Culture (15 March 2016).

Employment rate by age, gender and origin in 2014*

Figure 5. Employment rate by age, gender and origin in 2014 (W, M).



*For those with a foreign background, data on the employment rates of 15–19-year-olds and 60–64-year-old women is unreliable due to the low number of observations.

Source: Survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin 2014, Statistics Finland

In addition to the actions described in previous sections (I, II), immigrants' employment and entrepreneurship will be promoted by the following measures:

Measures:

21. The full range of TE services will be utilised in order to promote immigrants' employment and entrepreneurship in cooperation with such actors as entrepreneurs' organisations, regional business services, employers and educational institutions.

- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
- *Development of integration training and TE services will be funded under the Ministry's main title.*

22. The central government and municipalities will engage in closer cooperation with the aim of coordinating more efficiently the services that promote immigrant integration by clarifying the division of responsibilities for guidance and advisory services, initial and competence assessments, and directing immigrants to other initial-stage services, education and services that promote employment, if necessary by means of experiments or letters of intent.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
23. An experiment of employing immigrants will be carried out following an impact investing model, which combines fast-track employment and training integrated with work, with the target set at 1,500 jobs. The impact investing experiment will be funded with private capital, and if savings are obtained by the central government as a result of immigrants' faster access to employment (savings in labour market support and gains of tax revenue), a share of the returns will be paid to the investors on the basis of an impact calculation produced at the end of the experiment.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
 - *The production charge of the employment experiment to be implemented following the impact investing model will be funded under the Ministry's main title. The production charge will be payable in 2020.*
24. Positive attitudes, non-discrimination and diversity management in working life as well as possibilities for language studies during an employment relationship will be developed in cooperation with labour market organisations.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
25. In families with a foreign background, the fair sharing of childcare responsibilities between women and men will be supported to promote equal employment and study opportunities.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.*

Indicators

- Employment rate of foreigners. Source: Statistics Finland.
- Unemployment rate of foreigners. Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Employment Service Statistics.
- Number of those setting up an enterprise on support of a start-up grant. Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Employment Service Statistics
- Number/share of entrepreneurs with a foreign background of the employed with a foreign background. Source: Statistics Finland.

2.2.4. High-quality basic education will improve young immigrants' capabilities for further studies and labour market access

The objective is that more and more young immigrants will complete at least secondary level studies and achieve capabilities for applying for a place in further studies or transitioning to the labour market.

Description of the current situation

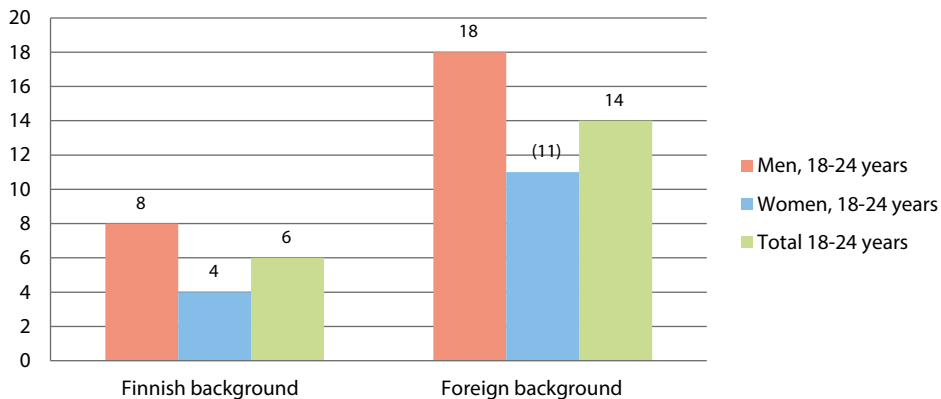
The Finnish immigrant population is relatively young, and children account for one fifth of the foreign-language speaking population. Recent comparison studies indicate that differences between the learning outcomes of young people with an immigrant background and the mainstream population in Finland are some of the greatest in the OECD countries.⁸ In addition, it is estimated that young immigrants' risk of being excluded from education and working life is many-fold compared to the mainstream population. Young people with a Finnish background are up to twice as likely to continue in secondary level studies after basic education than young people with a foreign background; in 2014, 18% of men with a foreign background had no education beyond a basic education certificate. For young women with a foreign background, starting a family early can be linked to dropping out of education and being excluded from work and training; in 2014, 19% of these young women were outside work, education and training, and approximately one half

⁸ National Audit Office. Performance Audit Report 12/2015. Maahanmuuttajaoppilait ja perusopetuksen tuloksellisuus.

of them were at home caring for their children.⁹ Young adults who migrate to the country shortly before or after reaching the age of compulsory education are in a particularly challenging position. Of those who had arrived in Finland at an older age, 18% had dropped out of school early in 2014. Additionally, 22% of young people with a foreign background and poor Finnish or Swedish skills were not in education, training or employment in 2014. Young people with an immigrant background also encounter challenges related to their well-being; for example, they experience bullying at school more often than other young people. Despite the increased offer of instruction in Finnish or Swedish as a second language in basic education, the most common problems encountered by young immigrants are lack of language proficiency and study skills required in the Finnish education system.

The share of those who dropped out of school early among 18–24-year-olds in Finland by origin in 2014, %

Figure 6. Share of those who dropped out of school in 2014.



Source: Survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin, Statistics Finland

As the number of asylum seekers increased in 2015, the number of unaccompanied minors also went up. Some 3,000 unaccompanied minors arrived in Finland in 2015, mainly boys, most of whom are expected to receive residence permits. All in

⁹ Larja, L., Sutela, H. & Witting, M. Ulkomaalaistaustaiset nuoret jatkavat toisen asteen koulutukseen suomalaistaustaisia harvemmin. Statistics Finland 2015.

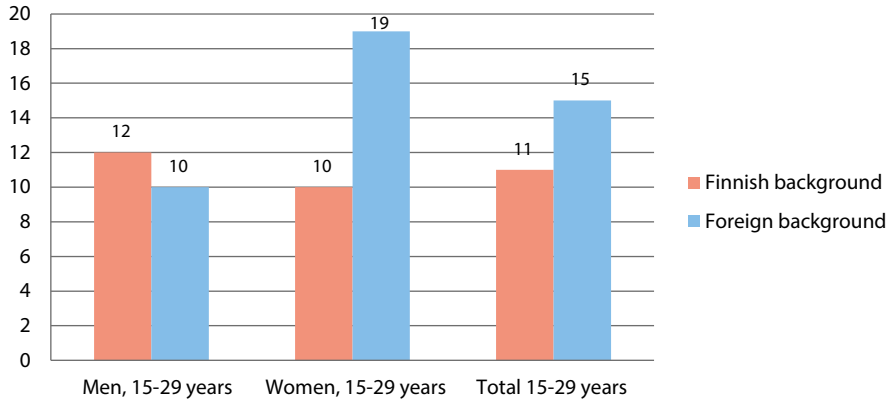
all, some 3,000 asylum seekers aged 16–18 years who will reach the upper age limit for compulsory education shortly or who are over this age arrived that year. Some of these young people are estimated to have very inadequate educational backgrounds and to need support in improving their literacy and study skills in addition to instruction that complements basic education. The need for training preparing adults for basic education, and also basic education for adults, is expected to increase in the next few years. Another precondition for supporting coherent educational pathways is increasing the provision of linguistic support, instruction that builds up study skills and guidance associated with education and training after basic education, especially at the secondary level.

The objective of the Youth Guarantee that entered into force at the beginning of 2013 is to guarantee to all young people a pathway to education, training and working life by offering them a job or a place in a work try-out, studies, a workshop or rehabilitation at the latest within three months after they have registered as unemployed, and a place in further studies for all those who complete their basic education. In the case of young immigrants, achieving this objective requires special attention to the transition from basic education to the secondary level, in particular. These transitions can be supported by means of multidisciplinary cooperation, for example at the low-threshold Ohjaamo service points for young people¹⁰ through diverse utilisation of partnerships between such actors as NGOs and immigrant communities. Flexible ways of incorporating language studies in a young person's educational pathway and other services over the long term should be developed further to support progress on the educational pathway. In keeping with the priorities of the Youth Guarantee, particular attention will be paid to bringing young immigrants excluded from education, training and work within the scope of education and employment services, for example with the support of outreach youth work and Ohjaamo service points.

10 Ohjaamo service points that provide low-threshold multiprofessional guidance and advisory services are being developed with co-funding from ESF programme Sustainable growth and work (priority axis 3 (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment), national Youth Guarantee package of measures and regional sections). Ohjaamo activities were launched in many locations in 2015.

NEET rate, or the share of young people not in education, employment, training or doing their military service of the age class, %. By age and gender in 2014.

Figure 7. NEET rate in 2014.



Source: Survey on work and well-being among persons of foreign origin, Statistics Finland

Young immigrants are customers of employment and entrepreneurship, education and training, rehabilitation and guidance services. Taking their special needs into account when they are using or directed to these services or when developing the services is essential. In guidance, especially, attention should be paid to supporting immigrant girls and boys in individual educational choices and career plans, rather than guiding them to stereotypical sectors associated with their gender and immigrant background. By building up the guidance competence, awareness of different cultures and gender sensitivity of those providing guidance, the relevance of the guidance can be improved. In the vocational education and training reform, this sector will be developed as an extensive whole that will serve flexibly different types of students of different ages and in various life situations, including immigrants. The reform of the legislation on the operation of vocational education and training will apply to such areas as on-the-job learning, student admissions, choices and application rounds as well as educational paths.

Measures:

26. At all levels of education, pathways to working life for immigrants who have been granted a residence permit will be accelerated in accordance with the service promise contained in the Youth Guarantee, taking the gender perspective into account in progress on educational and employment pathways.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
 - *Work to develop the Ohjaamo service centres for young people will be supported on ESF funding (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, priority axis 3).*
27. More preparatory education for vocational training and education aiming for a qualification targeted at immigrants will be provided, especially competence-based qualifications and, in association with them, training that improves study skills from 2017 on.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
28. Pilot projects on training agreements in vocational education and training will be launched in spring 2016, ensuring that the model is also suitable for immigrants and that the gender perspective is taken into account.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
29. The distribution of lesson hours, core curriculum and funding of basic education for adults will be updated. Introduction to working life periods and optional vocational studies will be included in basic education for adults. Basic education in its updated form will begin in 2018.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
30. As early as from autumn 2016 on, sufficient provision of basic education or instruction preparing immigrants for basic education will be ensured for immigrants who are over the age of compulsory education in cooperation with municipalities and other basic education providers, if necessary by increasing the student numbers stated in the education providers' authorisations.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*

31. In accordance with the decision of the Chancellor of Justice, the necessity of incorporating an obligation to provide instruction preparing immigrants for basic education in the Basic Education Act will be examined.
Instruction preparing immigrants for basic education and basic education for adults will be organised more efficiently by associating the funding more closely with the actual volume of teaching delivered. Obstacles to efficient initiation of the instruction created by the funding system will be dismantled. An amendment to the Act on the funding of education and cultural activities will enter into force at the beginning of 2017.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
32. Adequate competence in identifying learning difficulties experienced by foreign-language pupils will be ensured.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
33. Multicultural guidance competence in the guidance network will be built up.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
 - *The guidance competence of TE administration employees will be developed within the framework of their official duties. The work to develop guidance will also be financed from ESF funding (Ministry of Education and Culture, priority axis 4).*
34. Actors will be encouraged to apply for ESF financing to carry out projects that account for the special needs of young immigrants as part of efforts to develop rehabilitation, mental health and intoxicant abuse services for young people.*
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.*
 - *The development work will be financed by ESF funding (Ministry of the Interior, priority axis 5).*

* ESF programme Sustainable growth and work, priority axis 5 (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health): Package of measures titled Support for the well-being and active inclusion of young people.

Indicators

The shares of immigrant pupils and pupils with an immigrant background who move on to secondary level education and training directly after basic education and those who do not continue their studies immediately of the total number of pupils by gender. Source: Ministry of Education and Culture's statistical system.

2.2.5. Providing for multiprofessional support given to immigrant families, teachers' capabilities and student welfare services

The objective is that the special needs of immigrant children, women and families can be taken into account in the services.

Description of the current situation

Immigrants who are outside working life, including stay-at-home mothers, may frequently be excluded from advisory and guidance services. Mothers of young children often do not have time to participate in training adequately or at all during the integration period, even if women's education and training is important for not only their equality and right to self-determination but also the integration process of the entire family and the children. Pupil welfare services as a right and form of activity are a novelty for many who arrive in Finland from a different culture.

Many asylum seekers originate in crisis areas and very difficult circumstances. The Finnish society, language and culture are alien to them. In many cases, they have also had traumatic experiences. Many children and young people thus need support in recovering their feeling of security and adapting to a new environment. Unaccompanied refugee children need diverse solutions that secure the child's best interest, care and attention. An initial assessment shows clearly that the greatest share of unaccompanied minors are aged over 12. Many adults may also need individual support.

Measures:

35. Guidance provided for immigrant families as part of the operation of family centres that are included in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health's programme for developing services for children and families will be strengthened. Access to psychosocial services will be improved, especially for beneficiaries of international protection.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.*
36. Substitute family activities, in particular for unaccompanied minors under 12 years of age, will be developed. Any legislative amendments required for this in the administrative branches of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will be investigated.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.*
37. At educational institutions, pupils, students and guardians will be informed comprehensibly about the pupils' rights and the available pupil welfare services in early childhood education and care, pre-primary and basic education, and general and vocational upper secondary schools. If necessary, interpretation and translation services will be used. The Finnish National Board of Education will prepare support material related to pupil and student welfare issues and the safety of educational institutions. Multiprofessional advisory and guidance services (including those provided by Ohjaamo service points) will also be targeted at immigrants.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
38. The availability of adequate expertise to recognise immigrant pupils' and students' learning difficulties, stress disorders and depressive states will be ensured. The Finnish National Board of Education will target in-service training at student health care personnel and teaching personnel related to identifying and encountering students with special support needs and directing them to other services. Research results and competence produced in on-going projects will be utilised, including the experiences of the Oma tie (My way) project and a national project on developing mental health services for refugees.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*

39. The contents of teacher education will be reviewed, and teachers will be supported in their work with immigrants. The share of language awareness studies will be increased in basic teacher education, and in-service training will be organised on the subject. If necessary, the intake of Finnish/Swedish as a second language teachers will be increased, and their eligibility requirements will be reviewed. The linguistic, cultural and other competence of teachers and support persons with an immigrant background will be utilised in all stages of educational pathways. Specima education for teachers, which confers eligibility to work with immigrants, will be put on a permanent footing.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
40. More interpreters and translators will be educated, and the contents of the relevant education programmes will be updated.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
41. Low-threshold language learning groups in which immigrants can meet and learn the language and culture together with native speakers, for example while pursuing a hobby, will be supported.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
42. On the basis of experiences obtained in different projects, pathways to education and training will be developed, especially for parents caring for their children at home, where language instruction can be combined with child-minding services provided by early childhood education and care services or NGOs.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.*
43. A good level of personnel expertise in guidance, advisory and support services will be ensured.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*

2.2.6. Supporting immigrants' participation in leisure activities

The objective is increasing immigrants' participation in leisure activities.

Description of the current situation

Art and cultural activities encourage interaction and intercultural dialogue. Asylum seekers and other immigrants need more mutual interaction with Finnish people

and opportunities for familiarising themselves with Finnish customs and culture already in the initial stage. Children's culture provides children and young people with opportunities for play, pursuing hobbies and intercultural dialogue. Asylum seekers' threshold for inclusion in Finnish society may be lowered by means of arts and culture. Immigrants need more effective channels for self-expression and meaningful ways of passing time outside reception centres and educational institutions. Culture and arts offer multiple means of self-expression and participatory activities, especially for those with limited language skills.

Sports and youth work have an important role in immigrants' integration and supporting togetherness. Youth work and sports can flexibly offer meaningful pastimes and encounters with the mainstream population, also for asylum seekers and immigrants who are not in education, training or working life. NGOs, sports and exercise and youth work also have a key role in supporting the language learning and studies of young asylum seekers and in peer activities that immigrants' associations also engage in. Youth work at schools may support group dynamics and the inclusion of young immigrants.

Measures:

44. Art and cultural services that promote integration offered by art institutes and other arts and cultural sector actors directed at asylum seekers and immigrants will be enhanced.
45. More communal and creative leisure activities associated with different fields of arts will be offered that support interpersonal encounters needed for integration and joint activities as well as introduce immigrants to Finnish culture.
46. The availability of literature in immigrants' mother tongues will be ensured, and immigrants will be given opportunities for telling their own stories in their own languages.
47. In cooperation with higher education and other educational institutions that provide youth sector education, additional training will be offered for personnel at youth workshops and the youth workers in municipalities on encountering young people with different backgrounds. In addition, action-based stimulating material will be developed to speed up integration.

48. For a fixed term, the degree to which national youth centres offer targeted activities for young asylum seekers and/or, more generally, for young immigrants, will be highlighted as one of the priorities when granting support.
49. The Ministry of Education and Culture will support the Avartti Foundation's package of measures aiming to promote the integration of young immigrants in cooperation with liberal adult education institutions. This package of measures will support national projects seeking to activate young asylum seekers.
50. The Ministry of Education and Culture will make available grants related to equal opportunities to exercise, with the particular aim of attracting women and girls and the most difficult-to-reach groups to exercise and sports activities. The Regional State Administrative Agencies will support the creation and development of sports activities that promote asylum seekers' mental and physical well-being at asylum centres.
51. The Ministry of Education and Culture will support NGO's work to promote equality during the government term.
 - *Measures 45.–52. implemented by the Ministry of Education and Culture.*
 - *The measures will be funded under the Ministry of Education and Culture's main title.*
52. In 2016 and 2017, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment will fund projects to coordinate voluntary work that promotes integration and support the activities of grass-roots level organisations.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
 - *The measures will be funded under the Ministry's main title, item 32.70.03.*
53. Young people's recreational activities and networking with the mainstream population in rural areas can be supported from co-funding from the Rural Development Fund (Rural Development Programme for Mainland Finland 2014–2020).
 - *Funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.*
 - *The projects will be funded under the Ministry's main title, item 30.10.64.*

2.3. Focus area III: Increasing cooperation between the State and municipalities in the reception of beneficiaries of international protection

The objective is that quota refugees and asylum seekers who have received a residence permit will be settled in municipalities within two months after receiving notification of the residence permit, and the integration process will begin immediately.

Description of the current situation

Finland has been implementing a resettlement programme for those in need of international protection with the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR for over 30 years. Every year, 200–1,050 refugees have arrived in Finland within this programme quota. The quota has been decided by the Parliament in connection with the budget. In addition to the resettlement programme, asylum seekers who apply for residence permit because they need international protection arrive in Finland. Over a number of years, some 3,500 asylum seekers have arrived annually, and 30–40% of them (1,000–1,400 people) have been granted permission to remain in Finland. All in all, it is estimated that there are some 45,000 people with a refugee background in Finland.

The starting point for refugees' integration is settling them in municipalities and thus giving them access to the service system. A municipality's basic public services, as well as those offered by the TE Offices, are key services that support integration, also for refugees. The central government reimburses the municipalities separately for the expenses they incur for receiving and integrating refugees. A precondition for receiving reimbursements is that an agreement between the municipality and an ELY Centre on settling immigrants in the municipality and a municipal integration programme are in place.

The municipalities also receive the same central government transfers for the refugees as for other residents. The share of foreign-language speakers in the municipality's residents is taken into account when determining a municipality's central government transfers. The number of foreigners affects the central government

transfers for basic public services that are calculated on the basis of the population at the end of the year, and thus the impacts of asylum seekers who receive a residence permit in 2016, for example, are reflected in the transfer amounts for 2018. If some 1,000 immigrants who have been granted a residence permit move to a sample municipality of 20,000–40,000 residents in 2016, the municipality's central government transfers for 2018 would go up by over EUR 2.5 million. In addition, the central government would reimburse the municipality for calculated expenses for three years following the immigrants' settlement in the municipality at EUR 3.2 million/year and for special expenses up to their full amount.

The principle applicable to immigrants who arrive in Finland as part of the refugee quota is that a municipal allocation will have been made when the residence permit is granted. After the relevant decisions have been made and the residence permits have been granted, the refugees have arrived in Finland and gone directly to the municipality with which the ELY Centre has concluded an advance agreement on their reception.

Every year, an agreement on receiving refugees has been in place with 70–80 municipalities, which have offered places for 10–100 persons. The annual number of municipal allocations under the agreements has been 1,000–1,300. An effort has been made to direct those who have received a residence permit through the asylum procedure to municipalities following the same model. In practice, however, those who have received residence permits in the asylum procedure have only rarely been directed to municipalities on the basis of the agreement process. In municipality allocations, unaccompanied minors as well as those in a particularly vulnerable position, including single-parent families, have been prioritised. Many of them have found their way to a municipality on their own initiative.

2.3.1. Municipality allocations in the new asylum seeker situation

In the new asylum seeker situation, it is essential to improve the methodical approach and effectiveness of directing immigrants to municipalities. In 2016, an estimated 10,000 immigrants will be permitted to stay in Finland as a result of the asylum procedure, and the refugee quota is 750. The burden-sharing decisions of the European Union may also change these estimates. In other words, at least 10,000 people will need to be allocated to municipalities.

Based on the asylum seeker situation in 2015, the emphasis in the process of allocating immigrants to municipalities has already shifted to those who receive residence permits through the asylum procedure. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has directed the ELY Centres by means of new performance target policies and strengthened their role as regional coordinators of immigrant allocations to municipalities. In close cooperation with the Finnish Immigration Service, process descriptions have been produced of the customers' transition from reception centres to municipalities and, immediately after they have received a residence permit, becoming TE Offices' integration customers. For this purpose, additional personnel resources and funding for integration training have been allocated to the ELY Centres and TE Offices in the 2016 budget. However, in order to speed up allocations to municipalities and the launching of integration, it is essential to allocate resources to services that support integration.

The aim of the instructions issued to the ELY Centres and reception centres in spring 2016 was significantly reducing the independent migration of immigrants who have received a residence permit to the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and other growth centres, as it unavoidably pushes up the demand for housing in the largest urban centres in Southern Finland, where the demand already exceeds the supply. At the end of February 2016, a total of 23,926 applicants were in the queue for municipal rental housing (so-called ARA housing) in the large cities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. If great numbers of immigrants with a residence permit gather in the same cities without work or housing, this may increase homelessness. Those who stay in the country without a residence permit also increase the number of the homeless.

Immigrants' transition from reception centres to ordinary housing is a precondition for integration. In situations where the need for housing goes up rapidly over a short time period, not only financial support but also advice related to every-day questions of housing, local support and guidance in service use are needed to ensure successful integration and to prevent homelessness. To support independent living and search for housing, information on house-hunting is needed, while the existing housing stock will be used more efficiently in order to increase the offer of housing. Additionally, more housing construction is needed, especially in growth centres, which will be supported by MAL letters of intent. The MAL letters of intent between the central government and the largest growth centres set targets for

housing construction and the production of reasonably priced housing based on an estimate of the increase in housing needs. In the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, the number of housing units produced has not reached the set targets in recent years, which has exacerbated the quantitative lack of housing.

The number of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers has also increased in recent years. At the same time, family reunification practices have changed, as a result of which their parents and other family members can rarely join them in Finland. In compliance with the Integration Act, the central government ensures that they are provided with adequate care and attention by meeting the expenses in full until the immigrants turn 21. Children and young people worry about their loved ones every day, however, which affects their concentration and school attendance and slows down their integration in general. Unaccompanied minors are also a more vulnerable target group than others, for example for agitators of violent radical groups. The family reunification system should also be reviewed in this context.

2.3.2. Allocations to municipalities and integration of refugees should be developed further

In the reorganisation of refugee allocations to municipalities, the goal should be formulating an agreement package between the central government and a municipality/group of municipalities/regions that specifies the number to be received over a certain time. This will enable evaluations of the adequacy of housing and education places over the long term, the building up of municipal workers' competence and the fostering of balanced ethnic communities around Finland. In general, increasing immigration and the growing number of applicants for international protection should be taken into account at the latest when planning the regional government reforms that are part of the Government Programme. The reimbursements paid to municipalities that receive refugees in the social and health care system should be taken into consideration and reorganised as part of the social and health care reform, and the level of the reimbursements should also be reviewed in this context.

In addition to the agreement and reimbursement system reform, efforts to develop the reception of refugees should be continued on the basis of partnerships. If the cooperation of third-sector actors with the receiving municipality works smooth-

ly, the refugees can participate in activities that promote integration as soon as they arrive in the municipality and can obtain peer support from earlier arrivals. From the refugees' point of view, offering them possibilities for starting to rebuild their lives as soon as possible is humane, prevents frustration and increases motivation and the feeling of inclusion. Due to experiences of war and other traumatic situations, refugees may have special support needs that are different from those of other immigrants, especially in their first few years of living in the country. From society's perspective, integration without delays saves expenses and increases societal integrity.

Immediate measures:

54. An intensified information and negotiation campaign will be implemented in order to conclude agreements with municipalities, ensuring that asylum seekers who have arrived in 2015 and who have been granted residence permits can be settled in municipalities within a reasonable delay. As particular target areas will be examined the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, other large municipalities as well as locations and regions with reception centres.
 - *Campaign to be implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
55. Together with the ELY Centres, TE Offices and reception centres, the regional priorities of settling immigrants in municipalities will be defined and the relevant processes will be created, while also charting the situation of housing and educational places in different regions.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
56. When planning the placement of immigrants in different regions, the offer of empty ARA rental housing will be taken into account, ensuring that the services needed for integration will be accessible.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment as part of their official duties.*
57. The operating conditions of housing advisory services and information services that support independent searches for housing will be improved.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of the Environment.*
58. Instruments that will promote the more efficient use of existing housing stock will be developed.
 - *Implemented by the Ministry of the Environment.*

59. By coordinating different measures (including competence assessments, charting of housing and educational offer) and through projects, an effort will be made to ensure that after an immigrant has received a residence permit, his or her settlement in a municipality and transition to education, training or employment will take place as appropriately and rapidly as possible.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment together with the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of the Environment as part of their official duties.*

Long-term measures:

60. The **agreement procedure** that concerns settling immigrants in municipalities will be reviewed and updated, and it will be integrated in the regional agreements between the central government and municipalities referred to in the Government Programme.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.*
61. The **system and levels of reimbursement** referred to in the Integration Act will be evaluated. This system will be integrated with basic social assistance and social and health care services as part of the forthcoming social and health services reform.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.*
62. The needs to update the **family reunification system** for refugees will be reviewed.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of the Interior.*
63. The preconditions for **partnerships** between the central government, municipalities and the third sector regarding arrangements for initial-stage reception of refugees in municipalities as well as the promotion of integration and good ethnic relations will be improved by allocating funding through the available channels to priorities defined in the Government Integration Programme in keeping with Government Programme policies (ESF, AMIF).
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of the Interior.*

64. The availability of housing in large urban sub-regions will be improved by means of land use, housing and transport agreements (MAL letters of intent).
- *Implemented by the Ministry of the Environment.*
65. The production of rental housing subsidised by the central government will be increased in the largest urban sub-regions by introducing the so-called 10-year intermediate model in rental housing construction and by increasing the support for normal ARA rental housing production.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of the Environment.*

Indicators

- Immigrants who have been granted residence permits will move from the reception centre to a municipality within two months of being notified of the permit. Source: Finnish Immigration Service (UMA and UMAREK systems)
- The waiting time will be counted from the reception of residence permit notification till the immigrant moves to a municipality. Source: Finnish Immigration Service.
- NGOs and other third-sector actors will have strengthened their position regarding different measures that promote integration on the basis of partnerships. Source: A repeated survey carried out by the Centre of Excellence in Immigrant Integration among NGOs (including immigrants' associations) and religious communities.
- The refugee reception system and the associated reimbursements will have been integrated in the regional government and the social and health care reform. Source: Will be evaluated after the regional government and social and health care reform.
- Implemented ARA housing construction. Source: ARA statistics.
- Volume of housing construction in cities with a MAL letter of intent. Source: MAL follow-up reports.

2.4. Focus area IV: Promoting a humane national discussion culture on immigration policy that will not tolerate racism

The objective is a Finnish society where discussion on immigration is open and respectful of human dignity and where official forums will also have been created for dialogue between the authorities and immigrants and different population groups engage in well-functioning interaction.

Description of the current situation:

The foundation of successful integration is laid by daily interaction and open communication. An effort should be made to ensure the participative involvement of all population group members, allowing them to feel they are an important part of our society. For this, a culture of discussion is required where immigration can be talked about openly, including its challenges and problems, but racism is not tolerated from any population group.

The climate of attitudes may either promote or slow down immigrant integration. Indicators of positive attitudes, trust and respect between different population groups include feelings of togetherness and safety, non-discriminating treatment and equal opportunities to participate and exert influence. So far, there has been little research on these aspects in Finland. The attitudes of Finnish people towards different population groups and their development were studied systematically in 1989–2008. Since that time, various surveys have mainly set out to examine Finnish people's views of increasing or reducing immigration.

On the other hand, racism and xenophobia – the negative dimension of relationships between different population groups – have been studied more extensively, including two doctoral dissertations on every-day racism.¹¹

¹¹ Anna Rastas: Rasismi lasten ja nuorten arjessa (2007). Anne-Mari Souto: Arkipäivän rasismi koulussa (2011)

Common offence categories associated with hate crime are ethnic agitation, defamation and illegal threat. The most common offence types have been assaults of various degrees. Hate crime or hate speech are not separately referred to in the Criminal Code. Most reports of an offence with racist features have concerned situations where a person representing the mainstream population has subjected a person belonging to an ethnic or national minority to racist verbal abuse. In particular, groups who stand out from the mainstream population most clearly because of their appearance are exposed to racist offences. When combating these offences, it is also vital to take the gender perspective into account, as the forms and modes of these acts are also connected to the gender of the perpetrator and the victim. The members of certain population groups have been involved in violent and sexual offences more often than others in proportion to their numbers, and particular attention should be paid to these phenomena. The Police University College publishes systematic monitoring data on hate crime. The Government's joint monitoring system of discrimination coordinated by the Ministry of Justice is being developed further.

According to reports issued by the Police University College, the share of actual hate crimes perpetrated on the Internet has been small, albeit growing. In 2013, the number of suspected racist offences that took place on the Internet was 45, which accounts for some four per cent of all scenes, and these figures in 2014 were 80 and eight per cent.¹² In many of these situations, no request for investigation is made. It can be generally observed that the threshold for expressing prejudiced and hostile views is low, especially in the social media. Immigrant communities, in particular, have expressed concern over this. They have stressed the impacts that hate speech has on immigrants' feelings of security and inclusion. A report published by the Ministry of Justice in March 2016 confirmed their concerns (Ministry of Justice reports and guidelines 7/2016), as the report indicated that hate speech and harassment affect the general feeling of safety, psychological health and trust in authorities of persons exposed to it. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has also recommended that Finland combat ethnic agitation and racial discrimination on the Internet more efficiently. The police is also active in the social media, where virtual local police officers operate under their own names.

12 http://www.polamk.fi/tki/projektihaku/viharikokset_2014_ja_2015

The authorities must also look at racism and discrimination as a structural phenomenon. From the perspective of integration, it is important to assess the impacts that racism, discrimination and prejudices have on those who are subjected to them either directly or indirectly. A society where these phenomena are not tolerated is a precondition for integration. A community free from racism and discrimination is a human rights issue and a prerequisite for inclusion, integration and societal integrity. In order to create communities free from racism and discrimination, it is essential to also maintain open dialogue between various population groups and the authorities. For this, the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) offers an official forum both at the national and the regional level. It is thus important to ensure that ETNO has proper resources for its work and that it is developed in pace with the changes in the operating environment.

International and national studies and barometers show that discrimination occurs in different areas of life in Finland, and that people may be exposed to it for many different reasons. In the Eurobarometer survey of 2015, 12% of the respondents reported that they had encountered discrimination in Finland in the last 12 months. Similar findings have been made in work and well-being surveys among workers with a foreign background conducted by Statistics Finland. The Eurobarometer survey also indicates that Finnish people find discrimination based on ethnic origin the most common form of discrimination.

The monitoring bodies of UN and Council of Europe human rights treaties and other human rights mechanisms monitor integration actions as part of the fulfilment of Finland's human rights obligations. Their assessments of policy development and actions related to integration and ethnic discrimination have often been positive. The CEDAW Committee that monitors fulfilment of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Finnish treaty series 67-68/1986) has, among other things, recommended more efficient action to eliminate discrimination against immigrant women both in society and in their own communities and to increase immigrant women's awareness of their rights to access general and vocational education, working life, health care and other basic services. In the context of implementing the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Finnish treaty series SopS 1-2/1998), the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recommends that Member States should do more to combat racism and xenophobia, which occur especially on the Internet, and ensure

the participation of minority representatives in the creation and implementation of integration strategies and plans.

Security incidents have occurred at reception centres, and according to police reports, these incidents increased in number in 2015, also in the vicinity of reception centres for asylum seekers. Paying particular attention to guaranteeing the safety of asylum seekers, employees at reception centres and local communities alike and allocating resources to this purpose have become necessary. Timely communication targeting both citizens and asylum seekers from all key organisations and all levels has also been found essential. Attempts to correct false or misleading information should also be made as soon as possible in the social media, where information spreads faster than ever before. The current debate can be influenced by correct information, and high-profile information campaigns should thus also be considered. At the same time, open, objective and diverse communication about the challenges and problems associated with immigration is needed. Successful integration is also vital in order to prevent radicalisation and other problems.

Both political decision-makers and all authorities play a role in creating a good climate of attitudes and a discussion culture respectful of human dignity. The Finnish parliamentary parties signed a Charter of European Political Parties for a Non-racist Society on 4 November 2015 and undertook to actively combat all forms of racism and hate speech as well as to promote the participation of immigrants and ethnic minorities in their activities. Racism occurs both in the attitudes of the mainstream population towards minorities and vice versa. All these perspectives must be taken into account in the combat against racism and hate speech, as racism and discrimination will not be tolerated from any population group. The authorities' common view of the objectives, close cooperation and measures planned by the authorities together and in a coordinated manner will be key. ETNO, together with the Human Rights League and the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, will monitor the implementation of the Charter in connection with the municipal elections of 2017.

The new Non-Discrimination Act (1325/2014) entered into force on 1 January 2015. The authorities, education providers and employers must have statutory equality plans by 2017. The practical implementation of the act is also an important element in promoting integration.

Measures:

66. An action plan on **ethnic equality, combat against racism and good dialogue** will be implemented, in which:

- The responsible authorities will communicate in a coordinated manner about issues related to the reception and integration of asylum seekers and network closely in order to combat, recognise and respond to racism, ensuring that racism is not tolerated from or against any population group. *(Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Culture, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Parliament's Human Rights Centre)*
- The responsible authorities will put together an information package on immigration and integration in Finland and maintain it on their websites and in the social media;
- The ministries, each in their respective branches of administration and in cooperation with NGOs, will ensure that factual information on immigration, promotion of integration and prevention of racism gets across. To support this objective, reproducible training contents on every-day work with customers will be prepared, and campaign-type actions will be implemented. A special target group will be those who work with young people in municipalities that host new reception centres and that receive immigrants who have been granted residence permits;
- The Ministry of Justice will develop the role of the regional advisory boards working under the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) in promoting effective interaction in localities with reception centres. The resources and other operating preconditions of the regional advisory boards will also be provided for;
- Drawing on earlier pilot projects (kysysuoraan.net project), ETNO will implement a national multi-channel discussion programme on the impacts of racism in the Finnish society;
- The Ministry of Justice will initiate cooperation with authorities, suppliers of social networking services and NGOs aiming for more effective forms of intervention in hate speech.

- The responsible authorities will work together with research organisations to identify research needs related to attitudes among and between different population groups, togetherness, non-discriminating treatment as well as structural and every-day racism. Actions aiming to eliminate discrimination against immigrant women in society in general and in their own communities will be a key objective. Appropriations will be allocated on the basis of prioritisation.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman and the Parliament's Human Rights Centre, coordinated by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment*

67. The **implementation of equality and non-discrimination legislation** and good ethnic relations between different population groups will be promoted:

- by providing key groups with training on obligations under the Non-Discrimination Act, implementing information campaigns against discrimination and racism, gathering information on the occurrence of discrimination in different areas of life, and supporting action to combat hate speech.
- by implementing a TRUST project focusing on the challenges associated with the asylum seeker situation that will develop operating models for promoting good relations between population groups at the regional and local level together with the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO), other authorities and NGOs.
- *Implemented by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior, coordinated by the Ministry of Justice.*

Monitoring and indicators

Indicators for equality and non-discrimination (attitudes towards different groups, experiences and observations of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech, reported cases of discrimination and sentences, promotion of non-discrimination).

Source: Government's joint monitoring system for discrimination maintained by the Ministry of Justice.

Appendix 1

Key concepts

Initial assessment

An assessment conducted with unemployed jobseekers and recipients of and applicants for social assistance, in which an initial assessment of the person's capabilities for employment, study and other integration is carried out. The assessment is conducted by a municipality or a TE Office. Based on the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (sections 9–10).

Initial-stage services

Initial-stage services include distribution of basic information, provision of guidance and advice, an initial assessment, and an integration plan.

Immigrant in need of special measures

An immigrant who needs intensified integration measures, in particular because his or her functional capacity is lowered by an illness, disability or other reason, or because of his or her age, family situation, illiteracy or other similar reason.

Ethnic background

Being part of an ethnic group. An ethnic group is a group of people that is considered to stand out because of their cultural heritage, religion, language or origin.

Ethnic relations

Attitudes that different ethnic groups have towards each other. The aim is at good ethnic relations, or a respectful climate of attitudes and effective interaction between different population groups, regardless of potentially conflicting views.

Beneficiary of international protection

A person who has been granted refugee status or a residence permit on the grounds of subsidiary protection or humanitarian protection.

Quota refugee

A person deemed as a refugee by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to whom authorisation to enter Finland has been granted within the refugee quota.

Integration

Multiprofessional promotion and support of integration. The means for achieving this include measures and services that promote and support integration offered by authorities and other parties. They are specified in a personal integration plan.

Integration programme

A programme aiming to promote integration and reinforce multiprofessional co-operation prepared by a municipality (or by several municipalities together) and adopted by the municipal council. The programme is adopted by the municipal council of each municipality and reviewed at least once every four years. It is taken into account when preparing the municipality's budget and financial plan. Regional and local authorities and other key actors participate in its preparation, implementation and monitoring. Based on the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (sections 32-33).

The Government Integration Programme is a programme adopted by the Government that specifies the objectives and measures of integration for the government term.

Integration

Interactive development of an immigrant and society, the goal of which is that the immigrant feels he or she is an active and full member of society.

The objective is that immigrants learn knowledge and skills needed in society and working life. While they are familiarising themselves with the linguistic and cultural environment of their new country, their possibilities for maintaining their own languages and cultures are supported. In return, the host society benefits from new influences and diversity.

Promotion of integration

Supporting the immigrant integration process through measures taken by the authorities or other actors.

Integration training

Contains instruction of Finnish or Swedish and other teaching that promotes access to working life and further education and other civic capabilities. If necessary, integration training includes teaching of reading and writing skills. Integration training is mainly organised as labour force training. Independent general education studies may also be included in the integration plan. In that case, the studies can be financed by an unemployment benefit.

Integration plan

An immigrant's individual plan detailing the measures and services that will support his or her possibilities of obtaining adequate Finnish or Swedish skills and other knowledge and skills needed in society and working life as well as promote his or her possibilities of participating in society as an equal member. An integration plan may also be prepared for a minor and, if necessary, for a family. Based on the Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (sections 11-18).

Cultural awareness

A public servant's ability to take into account the impacts of culture on both the customer and himself or herself, for example in communication and customer contacts.

Integration Act, Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration
1386/2010, entered into force on 1 September 2011.

Immigrant

A person who moves from one country to another. A general concept that applies to all those who migrate, for whatever reason.

Multiprofessional cooperation

Cooperation between authorities in different branches of administration and other parties.

Diversity

Refers to all those characteristics and features that make people stand out in an organisation or society. These factors include age, gender, ethnic origin, culture, reli-

gion, education, marital status, sexual orientation, attitudes and values, personality and political and financial position.

The website Kotouttaminen.fi has a particular emphasis on diversity related to ethnic/cultural background.

Diversity competence

Ways of thinking and operating as well as practices based on respecting and appreciating other people, regardless of their background or position. Identifying and acknowledging not only the other person's general human needs but also needs arising from cultural differences or minority position is essential. A general objective is improving the position of those belonging to minority groups.

Foreign-language speaker

A person living in Finland whose mother tongue is not Finnish, Swedish or Sámi. See also foreigner.

Guidance and advice

Instruction, guidance and advice provided by the municipality, a TE Office and other authorities on measures and services that promote integration and working life.

Inclusion

Feeling of belonging to a larger social whole. Willingness to participate in it socially, economically and/or politically.

Refugee

A foreigner who has justified reason to fear persecution because of his or her origin, religion, nationality, membership in a certain social group or political opinion. Refugee status is conferred to a person to whom asylum is granted by a state or who is deemed a refugee by the UN's Refugee Council (UNHCR).

Returnee

An expatriate who returns to Finland. In Finland, this concept is applied to former and current Finnish citizens and persons of Finnish origin living in the ex-Soviet Un-

ion area, including Ingerian Finns. While the latter are Finnish by their ethnic origin, they do not have Finnish citizenship.

Basic services

All services based on specialist legislation that the municipalities are responsible for organising and funding, especially services within the scope of the statutory central government transfers system for social and health care and education and cultural services.

Basic information

Basic information on their rights, obligations in society and working life and their possibilities of accessing services that promote integration that is provided when immigrants are granted residence permits or, at the latest, when they are registered in a municipality of residence and in the Population Information System.

Racism

Ideology or activities where treating people differently (discrimination) is justified by their 'race' and physical and mental characteristics associated with it. This mentality includes stereotypical ideas of 'races' and ethnic groups, and often also the idea of the supremacy and dominion of a certain group. The concept of race is strongly questionable in terms of modern science. Societal structures or practices that lead to inequality can also be termed racist.

Migrant

A person who moves from one country to another to build a new life for himself or herself there. A migrant may be an emigrant or an immigrant.

Social empowerment

Consists of measures targeted at immigrants aiming to improve their life skills and to prevent exclusion.

Asylum seeker

A person who seeks asylum and the right to reside in a foreign nation. He or she has no residence permit in Finland.

Foreigner

A person who is not a Finnish citizen.

Foreign-language speaker

A person living in Finland who has registered a language other than Finnish, Swedish or Sámi as his or her mother tongue. See also foreigner.

Indirect discrimination

A situation where a person is put in a particularly unfavourable position compared to others as a result of a seemingly neutral regulation, grounds or practice without this being acceptably justified. For example, an employee at a social services office or health centre may fail to advise an immigrant, a person with disabilities or an older person in completing an official form, regardless of noticing that the customer does not understand its contents. In this case, the customer receives the same service as all others, even if he or she needs special advice. (Yhdenvertaisuus 2. Sisäministeriö 2014.)

Direct discrimination

A person is treated differently from another person in the same situation. This means treatment that has negative effects on the person, including loss of benefits, financial losses or less choice. For example, not having access to services provided in your own language is direct discrimination. (Yhdenvertaisuus 2. Sisäministeriö 2014.)

Equality

All people are equal regardless of their gender, age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics. In a just society, personal characteristics, including origin or skin colour, should not influence a person's opportunities of accessing education and different services or getting a job – the fundamental rights belong to everyone.

Non-Discrimination Act

20.1.2004/21, entered into force on 1 February 2004.

Appendix 2

Government Resolution on a Government Integration Programme

1 Government's focus areas in 2016–2019

Pursuant to section 34 of Act on the Promotion of Immigrant Integration (1386/2010; the Integration Act), the government decides on the development of integration at national level by drawing up a government integration programme containing the integration objectives for four years at a time. The first Government Resolution on a Government Integration Programme (VALKO I) was made on 7 June 2012. This programme described the cross-administrative policy package aiming to promote immigrant integration and good ethnic relations. The Government Integration Programme for 2016–2019 has four focus areas based on Prime Minister Sipilä's Government Programme:

1. Using immigrants' cultural strengths to enhance Finnish innovation capacity
2. Enhancing integration through cross-sectoral measures
3. Increasing cooperation between the State and municipalities in the reception of beneficiaries of international protection
4. Promoting a humane national discussion culture that will not tolerate racism.

As the asylum seeker situation changed in 2015, the Government launched a review of integration and employment actions and began planning new measures that can accelerate asylum seekers' transition to municipalities and the initiation of their integration as well as speed up their access to education and working life. The objectives of these measures include improving immigrants' possibilities of obtaining

Finnish or Swedish skills and improving their language proficiency as well as providing them with capabilities for progressing on their educational pathways through basic education. The current forms of multiprofessional support and student welfare services will improve the preconditions for learning, and the special needs of immigrants will be addressed in teacher education. Immigrants' inclusion in leisure time and NGO activities will be promoted. Workfare aspects of the social security system will be made more prominent, and participation in integration measures will be required.

Government Integration Programme measures will be carried out within the framework of both central government spending limits and local government spending restrictions. The programme contains key indicators that measure the achievement of each objective, and the implementation of each specific measure will be monitored. The indicators of the integration monitoring system will also produce information on the programme's impact. The evaluation of this monitoring data will be coordinated with the mid-term review of the Government Programme.

The Government will make decisions on the following objectives and measures grouped under four focus areas.

Focus area 1 Using immigrants' cultural strengths to enhance Finnish innovation capacity

Objectives

Actions related to immigrant integration will increasingly be seen as one of the instruments of the Finnish business and innovation policy and development cooperation policy. This includes utilising the knowledge and skills of highly educated immigrants and foreign students graduating from Finnish higher education institutions and promoting their career advancement in the Finnish labour market and in the growth and internationalisation of businesses, which will in turn strengthen Finland's competitiveness and the preconditions for economic growth.

1. A Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment project on rapid employment of immigrants and extensive utilisation of their knowledge and skills will assess various practical measures for recognising immigrants' compe-

tence and for establishing closer links between them and the development and implementation of business and innovation policy and development cooperation policy. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)

2. Foreign higher education students will be brought into contact with Finnish companies and working life through work placements and theses, thus utilising their competence. Higher education institutions and business life will also be encouraged to establish stronger mutual links. (Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
3. Higher education institutions will organise intensive Finnish and Swedish courses for their foreign-language speaking students and asylum seekers. These courses will also be offered outside the semesters, both as day and evening classes. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
4. The use of new technologies in language learning will be promoted. Information on digital Finnish and Swedish language learning materials that enable independent study will be spread efficiently. Funding will be granted for projects that produce adaptive learning materials and games for language learning. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
5. Utilisation of immigrants' knowledge and skills will be an element of business and innovation policy in growth agreements between the central government and cities. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
6. A network and operating models will be created for efficiently directing immigrants to business life as employees and entrepreneurs, including startup enterprising, in cooperation with regional actors (TE services, entrepreneurs' organisations, regional business services, enterprise agencies, chambers of commerce, business accelerators and universities). (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
7. An operating model will be created for identifying immigrants' entrepreneurial potential and special competence and utilising it to promote the growth, internationalisation and exports of Finnish companies. The possibilities of utilising immigrants' knowledge of target country markets and their networks in growth programmes will be investigated together with Finpro and other Team Finland actors. The offer of training that supports export promotion for immigrants will be increased, for example as part of integration training, in cooperation with Finnish companies and stakeholders engaged in export promotion. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)

8. The best alternatives for facilitating the immigration of foreign growth entrepreneurs, granting residence permits on the basis of investments in companies based in Finland, and streamlining the residence permit system for top experts needed by companies will be investigated. (Ministry of the Interior)
9. The efficiency of international employment services will be improved and the Eures services will be extended. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)

Focus area II. Enhancing integration through cross-sectoral measures

Good preconditions for integration through effective initial-stage services

Objectives

Integration will take place faster and the processes of transitioning to services that promote integration and working life will be improved, efficiently utilising immigrants' previously acquired knowledge and skills.

Measures

10. Initial assessments to evaluate immigrants' capabilities for employment, studies and other integration will be conducted in the municipality or the reception centre immediately after the granting of a residence permit. As the target time for the initial assessment will be set two weeks from the granting of the residence permit. Efficient use will be made of the information gathered during the initial assessment in directing immigrants to employment and educational pathways, taking into consideration the existing supply of housing when planning their regional placements. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
11. Interpretation and translation services will be used more efficiently, for example relying on remote interpretation.
12. A model for an initial-stage integration service package suitable for all immigrant groups will be developed and implemented in broad-based

cooperation between national actors.¹ (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)

13. Boundaries between integration training and subsequent other forms of education and training will be lowered, by means of experiments if necessary. Immigrants who have completed higher education or vocational studies will be directed to complementary education and training that is appropriate for them on a faster schedule. The expertise of educational organisations will be used better in guidance. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and Ministry of Education and Culture)
14. Knowledge, skills and qualifications will be recognised more efficiently, drawing on the best international and, in particular, Nordic practices. National operating methods will be created for the identification and recognition of vocational competence acquired abroad.² Particular attention will be paid to the organisation of additional studies that are a precondition for recognising qualifications and vocational competence (including language studies). Pilot projects of the Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education programme launched in spring 2016 will help to accelerate and streamline access to higher education studies for newly arrived immigrants and those already living in the country. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
15. Project actors will be encouraged to apply funding for and implement Rural Development Programme projects that promote immigrants' integration in the countryside. (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry)

1 Development work is being carried out in pilot projects implemented around Finland in the ESF programme Sustainable growth and jobs under the national package of measures titled At home in Finland (priority axis 3, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment). If necessary, the initial-stage service package may also be offered to TE Service customers who have been granted a residence permit as an orientation module to the integration training to be used, for example, while waiting for transition to a municipality and access to integration training.

2 To be developed as part of the ESF programme Sustainable growth and jobs under the national package of measures titled At home in Finland (priority axis 4, Ministry of Education and Culture).

Capabilities for pursuing further studies and accessing the labour market through integration training

Objectives

The initial language proficiency assessment will be improved, and immigrants will have access to integration training at the latest two months after the initial language proficiency test.

Measures

16. In 2016, new integration training models with more versatile implementation methods will be introduced that are working life oriented and develop vocational capabilities. They will be based on identified development needs and take into account the anticipated increase in demand for integration training in the years to come.³ Integration training with a vocational orientation will be focused on sectors with the greatest labour shortages. At the same time, the direction of immigrants to education, training and other services that meet their individual needs based on the information gathered in the initial and competence assessments will be developed, and the guidance personnel's competence related to this aspect will be built up. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Finnish National Board of Education)
17. As a particular target will be set accelerating access to integration training so that the training will start **at the latest within two months** after the assessment of initial language proficiency. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
18. Language instruction will be integrated in other studies, on-the-job learning and work practice. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
19. The language proficiency requirements of instruction preparing immigrants for vocational education and training will be relaxed, and more lan-

3 The possible new implementation models of integration training for immigrants are described in the annex to the National core curriculum for integration training for adult migrants (Finnish National Board of Education 1/011/2012): http://oph.fi/saadokset_ja_ohjeet/opetussuunnitelmien_ja_tutkintojen_perusteet/maahanmuuttajien_koulutus

guage instruction will be provided during the studies. (Ministry of Education and Culture)

20. Preparations will be made for transferring the responsibility for literacy training to the administrative branch of the Ministry of Education and Culture, where it will be part of the system for basic education for adults from 1 January 2018. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and Ministry of Education and Culture)

Improving immigrants' labour market position

Objectives

The employment rate of foreigners will go up from 59.4% in 2014 to 62% in 2016, their unemployment rate will drop from 29% in 2015 to 27% in 2016, and the number of those who started a business on the support of a start-up grant will increase from 699 in 2014 to 750 in 2016.

Measures

21. The full range of TE services will be utilised in order to promote immigrants' employment and entrepreneurship in cooperation with such actors as entrepreneurs' organisations, regional business services, employers and educational institutions. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
22. The central government and municipalities will engage in closer cooperation with the aim of coordinating more efficiently the services that promote immigrant integration by clarifying the division of responsibilities for guidance and advisory services, initial and competence assessments, and directing immigrants to other initial-stage services, education and services that promote employment, if necessary by means of experiments or letters of intent. (Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
23. An experiment of employing immigrants will be carried out following an impact investing model, which combines fast-track employment and training integrated with work, with the target set at 1,500 jobs. The impact investing experiment will be funded with private capital, and if savings are obtained by the central government as a result of immigrants' faster access to employment (savings in labour market support and gains of tax

revenue), a share of the returns will be paid to the investors on the basis of an impact calculation produced at the end of the experiment. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)

24. Positive attitudes, non-discrimination and diversity management in working life as well as possibilities for language studies during an employment relationship will be developed in cooperation with labour market organisations. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
25. In families with a foreign background, the fair sharing of childcare responsibilities between women and men will be supported to promote equal employment and study opportunities. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)

High-quality basic education will improve young immigrants' capabilities for further studies and labour market access

Objectives

More and more young immigrants will complete at least secondary level studies and achieve capabilities for applying for a place in further studies or transitioning to the labour market.

Measures

26. At all levels of education, pathways to working life for immigrants who have been granted a residence permit will be accelerated in accordance with the service promise contained in the Youth Guarantee, taking the gender perspective into account in progress on educational and employment pathways. (Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
27. More preparatory education for vocational training and education aiming for a qualification targeted at immigrants will be provided, especially competence-based qualifications and, in association with them, training that improves study skills from 2017 on. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
28. Pilot projects on training agreements in vocational education and training will be launched in spring 2016, ensuring that the model is also suitable for

- immigrants and that the gender perspective is taken into account. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
29. The distribution of lesson hours, core curriculum and funding of basic education for adults will be updated. Introduction to working life periods and optional vocational studies will be included in basic education for adults. Basic education in its updated form will begin in 2018. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
 30. The period of eligibility for independent studies supported with an unemployment benefit will be extended in cases where the student would otherwise be unable to complete basic education. The Act on financial aid for students will be amended so that students who are over the age of compulsory education will be entitled to student financial aid for full-time basic education studies. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Education and Culture)
 31. As early as from autumn 2016 on, sufficient provision of basic education or instruction preparing immigrants for basic education will be ensured for immigrants who are over the age of compulsory education in cooperation with municipalities and other basic education providers, if necessary by increasing the student numbers stated in the education providers' authorisations. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
 32. In accordance with the decision of the Chancellor of Justice, the necessity of incorporating an obligation to provide instruction preparing immigrants for basic education in the Basic Education Act will be examined. Instruction preparing immigrants for basic education and basic education for adults will be organised more efficiently by associating the funding more closely with the actual volume of teaching delivered. Obstacles to efficient initiation of the instruction created by the funding system will be dismantled. An amendment to the Act on the funding of education and cultural activities will enter into force at the beginning of 2017. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
 33. Adequate competence in identifying learning difficulties experienced by foreign-language pupils will be ensured. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
 34. Multicultural guidance competence in the guidance network will be built up. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Education and Culture)

35. Actors will be encouraged to apply for ESF financing to carry out projects that account for the special needs of young immigrants as part of efforts to develop rehabilitation, mental health and intoxicant abuse services for young people.⁴ (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)

Providing for multiprofessional support given to immigrant families, teachers' capabilities and student welfare services

Objectives

The special needs of immigrant children, women and families will be taken into account in the services.

Measures

36. Guidance provided for immigrant families as part of the operation of family centres that are included in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health's programme for developing services for children and families will be strengthened. Access to psychosocial services will be improved, especially for beneficiaries of international protection. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)
37. Substitute family activities, in particular for unaccompanied minors under 12 years of age, will be developed. Any legislative amendments required for this in the administrative branches of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will be investigated. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)
38. At educational institutions, pupils, students and guardians will be informed comprehensibly about the pupils' rights and the available pupil welfare services in early childhood education and care, pre-primary and basic education, and general and vocational upper secondary schools. If necessary, interpretation and translation services will be used. The Finnish National Board of Education will prepare support material related to pupil and student welfare issues and the safety of educational institutions. Multiprofes-

⁴ ESF programme Sustainable growth and work, priority axis 5 (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health): Package of measures titled Support for the well-being and active inclusion of young people.

- sional advisory and guidance services (including those provided by Ohjamo service points) will also be targeted at immigrants. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
39. The availability of adequate expertise to recognise immigrant pupils' and students' learning difficulties, stress disorders and depressive states will be ensured. The Finnish National Board of Education will target in-service training at student health care personnel and teaching personnel related to identifying and encountering students with special support needs and directing them to other services. Research results and competence produced in on-going projects will be utilised, including the experiences of the Oma tie (My way) project and a national project on developing mental health services for refugees. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
 40. The contents of teacher education will be reviewed, and teachers will be supported in their work with immigrants. The share of language awareness studies will be increased in basic teacher education, and in-service training will be organised on the subject. If necessary, the intake of Finnish/Swedish as a second language teachers will be increased, and their eligibility requirements will be reviewed. The linguistic, cultural and other competence of teachers and support persons with an immigrant background will be utilised in all stages of educational pathways. Specima education for teachers, which confers eligibility to work with immigrants, will be put on a permanent footing. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
 41. More interpreters and translators will be educated, and the contents of the relevant education programmes will be updated. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
 42. Low-threshold language learning groups in which immigrants can meet and learn the language and culture together with native speakers, for example while pursuing a hobby, will be supported. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
 43. On the basis of experiences obtained in different projects, pathways to education and training will be developed, especially for parents caring for their children at home, where language instruction can be combined with child-minding services provided by early childhood education and care services or NGOs. (Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)

44. A good level of personnel expertise in guidance, advisory and support services will be ensured. (Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)

Supporting immigrants' participation in leisure activities

Objectives

Immigrants will increasingly participate in leisure activities.

Measures

45. Art and cultural services that promote integration offered by art institutes and other arts and cultural sector actors directed at asylum seekers and immigrants will be enhanced. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
46. More communal and creative leisure activities associated with different fields of arts will be offered that support interpersonal encounters needed for integration and joint activities as well as introduce immigrants to Finnish culture. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
47. The availability of literature in immigrants' mother tongues will be ensured, and immigrants will be given opportunities for telling their own stories in their own languages. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
48. In cooperation with higher education and other educational institutions that provide youth sector education, additional training will be offered for personnel at youth workshops and the youth workers in municipalities on encountering young people with different backgrounds. In addition, action-based stimulating material will be developed to speed up integration. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
49. For a fixed term, the degree to which national youth centres offer targeted activities for young asylum seekers and/or, more generally, for young immigrants, will be highlighted as one of the priorities when granting support. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
50. The Ministry of Education and Culture will support the Avartti Foundation's package of measures aiming to promote the integration of young immigrants in cooperation with liberal adult education institutions. This package of measures will support national projects seeking to activate young asylum seekers. (Ministry of Education and Culture)

51. The Ministry of Education and Culture will make available grants related to equal opportunities to exercise, with the particular aim of attracting women and girls and the most difficult-to-reach groups to exercise and sports activities. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
52. The Ministry of Education and Culture will support NGOs in their work to promote equality during the government term. (Ministry of Education and Culture)
53. In 2016 and 2017, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment will fund projects to coordinate voluntary work that promotes integration and support the activities of grass-roots level organisations. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
54. Young people's recreational activities and networking with the mainstream population in rural areas can be supported by co-funding from the Rural Development Fund (Rural Development Programme for Mainland Finland 2014–2020). (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry)

Focus area III. Increasing cooperation between the State and municipalities in the reception of beneficiaries of international protection

Objectives

Quota refugees and asylum seekers who have received a residence permit will be settled in municipalities within two months of receiving notification of the residence permit, and the integration process will begin immediately.

Measures

Immediate measures:

55. An intensified information and negotiation campaign will be implemented in order to conclude agreements with municipalities, ensuring that asylum seekers who have arrived in 2015 and who have been granted residence permits can be settled in municipalities within a reasonable delay. As particular target areas will be examined the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, other large municipalities as well as locations and regions with reception centres. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
56. Together with the ELY Centres, TE Offices and reception centres, the regional priorities of settling immigrants in municipalities will be defined and

the relevant processes will be created, while also charting the situation of housing and educational places in different regions. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)

57. When planning the placement of immigrants in different regions, the offer of empty ARA rental housing will be taken into account, ensuring that the services needed for integration will be accessible. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of the Environment)
58. The operating conditions of housing advisory services and information services that support independent searches for housing will be improved. (Ministry of the Environment)
59. Instruments that will promote the more efficient use of existing housing stock will be developed. (Ministry of the Environment)
60. By coordinating different measures (including competence assessments, charting of housing and educational offer) and through projects, an effort will be made to ensure that after an immigrant has received a residence permit, his or her settlement in a municipality and transition to education, training or employment will take place as appropriately and rapidly as possible. (Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of the Environment)

Long-term measures:

61. The agreement procedure that concerns settling immigrants in municipalities will be reviewed and updated, and it will be integrated in the regional agreements between the central government and municipalities referred to in the Government Programme. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)
62. The system and levels of reimbursement referred to in the Integration Act will be evaluated. This system will be integrated with basic social assistance and social and health care services as part of the forthcoming social and health services reform. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)
63. The needs to update the family reunification system for refugees will be reviewed. (Ministry of the Interior)
64. The preconditions for partnerships between the central government, municipalities and the third sector regarding arrangements for initial-stage reception of refugees in municipalities as well as the promotion of inte-

gration and good ethnic relations will be improved by allocating funding through the available channels to priorities defined in the Government Integration Programme in keeping with Government Programme policies (ESF, AMIF). (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment)

65. The availability of housing in large urban sub-regions will be improved by means of land use, housing and transport agreements (MAL letters of intent). (Ministry of the Environment)
66. The production of rental housing subsidised by the central government will be increased in the largest urban sub-regions by introducing the so-called 10-year intermediate model in rental housing construction and by increasing the support for normal ARA rental housing production. (Ministry of the Environment)

Focus area IV. Promoting a humane national discussion culture on immigration policy that will not tolerate racism

Objectives

Official forums will have been created for open discussion on immigration that respects human dignity between the authorities and immigrants, and different population groups engage in well-functioning interaction.

Measures

67. An action plan on ethnic equality, combat against racism and good dialogue will be implemented, in which:
 - The responsible authorities will communicate in a coordinated manner about issues related to the reception and integration of asylum seekers and network closely in order to combat, recognise and respond to racism, ensuring that racism is not tolerated from or against any population group. (*Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Culture, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Parliament's Human Rights Centre*)
 - The responsible authorities will put together an information package on immigration and integration in Finland and maintain it on their websites and in the social media;

- The ministries, each in their respective branches of administration and in cooperation with NGOs, will ensure that factual information on immigration, promotion of integration and prevention of racism gets across. To support this objective, reproducible training contents on every-day work with customers will be prepared, and campaign-type actions will be implemented. A special target group will be those who work with young people in municipalities that host new reception centres and that receive immigrants who have been granted residence permits;
 - The Ministry of Justice will develop the role of the regional advisory boards working under the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) in promoting effective interaction in localities with reception centres. The resources and other operating preconditions of the regional advisory boards will also be provided for;
 - Drawing on earlier pilot projects (kysysuoraan.net project), ETNO will implement a national multi-channel discussion programme on the impacts of racism in the Finnish society;
 - The Ministry of Justice will initiate cooperation with authorities, suppliers of social networking services and NGOs aiming for more effective forms of intervention in hate speech.
 - The responsible authorities will work together with research organisations to identify research needs related to attitudes among and between different population groups, togetherness, non-discriminating treatment as well as structural and every-day racism. Actions aiming to eliminate discrimination against immigrant women in society in general and in their own communities will be a key objective. Appropriations will be allocated to prioritised targets. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Non-Discrimination Ombudsman, Parliament's Human Rights Centre)
68. The implementation of equality and non-discrimination legislation and good ethnic relations between different population groups will be promoted:
- by providing key groups with training on obligations under the Non-Discrimination Act, implementing information campaigns against discrimination and racism, gathering information on the oc-

- currence of discrimination in different areas of life, and supporting action to combat hate speech.
- by implementing a TRUST project focusing on the challenges associated with the asylum seeker situation that will develop operating models for promoting good relations between population groups at the regional and local level together with the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO), other authorities and NGOs. (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of the Interior)

Government Integration Programme for 2016–2019 and Government Resolution on a Government Integration Programme

The major conflicts of recent years are creating new types of migration pressures in Europe. This is also felt in Finland. For an extended period, the main reasons for migrating to Finland were family ties, work and studies. This situation changed in 2015, however, as the annual number of asylum seekers increased from approximately 3,000 to over 32,000. This change has necessitated a reassessment of the Finnish integration policy, legislation on integration and its implementation practices as well as resource allocations and official processes.

The Government Integration Programme for 2016–2019 (VALKO II) takes into account the policies set out in Prime Minister Sipilä's strategic Government Programme, the immigration policy measures adopted by the Government on 11 September 2015 as a consequence of the increased number of asylum seekers, the Action Plan on Asylum Policy published by the Government on 8 December 2015, the Action Plan on Integration published by the Government on 3 May 2016 as well as the policies formulated by the Ministerial working group on migration. The programme contains the focus areas, objectives, measures and responsibilities related to integration for the current government term and the resources for promoting integration specified in the General Government Fiscal Plan 2016–2019, including EU funding. The programme measures will be implemented within the framework of the state budget, central government spending limits and local government spending restrictions.

The Government Integration Programme was prepared in cross-administrative cooperation. At public servant level, the preparation work was led by a cooperation group on integration, which had representatives from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Environment.

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