



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

# **Case Study on Diversity Policy in Employment and Service Provision**

## **Turku, Finland**



Author(s):

**Rinus Penninx**  
Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies  
Universiteit van Amsterdam

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Wyattville Road, Loughlinstown, Dublin 18, Ireland  
Telephone: + 353 1 2043100, Fax: + 353 1 2826456

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# 1 Background information on the country<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 History of migration and composition of migrant populations

Finland used to be an emigration country from the 17<sup>th</sup> century on (Tanner 2004). Between 1860 and 1920 circa 300,000 Finns emigrated to the USA and Canada (Martikainen, 2004, 193). After WWII emigration resumed (Heikkilä & Peltonen 2002). Many Fins left the country, particularly to Sweden in the 1960 and 1970s as workers: some 500,000 of which a significant number have stayed (Martikainen 2004, 118)<sup>2</sup>.

From the beginning of the 1980s on, Finland has received more immigrants than emigrants left the country. The percentage of immigrants in the total population was still low in the mid-1980s: only one percent. Since then the number of resident immigrants has grown significantly. As of January 1, 2007, there were 187,910 residents of Finland or 3,6 percent of the total population of Finland that had been born outside Finland<sup>3</sup>). In the European context Finland is thus a relatively recent immigration country. UN-publications give the following key data on immigration in Finland:

*Table 1. Total population and migrant stock in Finland 1985-2005.*

	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Total population*	4 902	4 986	5 108	5 172	5 249
Migrant stock**	48	61	103	134	165
%	1	1.2	2	2.6	3.0
of which Refugees*		2.3		13.3	11.0

\* in thousands \*\* criterion is born outside the country Source: www.unpopulation.org.

A significant part of the present cultural, religious and language diversity of Finland has its roots in Finnish history. Its long common history with Sweden until 1809 resulted in the fact that Finland still has a significant Swedish speaking minority and two official national languages: Finnish and Swedish.

After 1809 during the Russian period (when the Grand Duchy of Finland was part of the Russian empire till 1917) also “small Jewish, Catholic and Tatar Muslim communities were founded (..) Jews were mostly retired soldiers, Tatar Muslims tradesmen and Catholics of divers origin” (Martikainen 2004, 117). The rulers and soldiers of the Russian empire also brought the Russian Orthodox Church into a predominantly Lutheran Finland.

<sup>1</sup> I thank Arto Alakoski, Hasan Habib, Mari Hakkala, Johanna Järvinen, Mikko Lohikoski, Tuomas Martikainen, Jarkko Rasinkangas, Regina Ruohonen, Anna-Mari Sopenlehto, Elina Tuukkanen and Timo Vahtonen for their comments on the draft version. Responsibility for the text remains with the author.

<sup>2</sup> The Government Report (2002, 8) estimates the number of ‘overseas Finns’ at 1,3 million at the turn of the century.

<sup>3</sup> This includes Finnish citizens born abroad. Source: <http://pxweb2.stat.fi>. Martikainen estimates the additional categories of ‘children of immigrants’ at 80,000 and ‘temporary foreign workers’ with permits shorter than 12 months at 40,000 (personal correspondence, January 2008).

The presence of that Church was reinforced later by the immigration of Karelians: Karelia was incorporated into the Grand Duchy of Finland in 1811. Most Karelians were Finnish speaking. After the Second World War, some 450.000 Karelians had to be resettled in new areas, as Finland lost its most eastern part to the Soviet Union. Among the Karelians were circa 50.000 Russian Orthodox Church members who resettled around Finland (Martikainen 2004, 103-106).

A comparable specific immigration to Finland is that of the Ingrians, the original inhabitants of 'Ingermanland', a region along the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland, near St. Petersburg. The predominantly Finnish speaking population of this region underwent a strong russification in the late 1920 and 1930s. Many Ingrians were deported to Siberia, the Ural and the Caspian Sea before, during and after WW II. In 1990 the Ingrians were granted the right of 'return' to Finland, which has led to a migration movement of some 25.000 Ingrians from the former Soviet Union as of 2003, with some 22,000 more lining up in Russia and Estonia for entry interviews (Tanner 2004, 3); a movement comparable to the Aussiedler in the FRG (Gulijeva 2003). The Finnishness of many returnees (in terms of identity and knowledge of the Finnish language) is questioned recently<sup>4</sup>.

In the recent immigration movement the return migrants from the former Soviet Union are thus a significant part of the 'supply driven' immigration. Another significant part of such immigration are refugees and asylum seekers. Since 1990 Finland has received Somalis<sup>5</sup>, thousands of Kurds from the Middle East and thousands of refugees fleeing the Balkan conflicts. There are two ways for admission to Finland. The first is that of the refugee quota: these quota vary between 500 and 750 annually. The government typically fills the quota through selecting vulnerable refugees from the region's refugee camps. Chileans benefited from such quota in the 1970s, Vietnamese in the 1980s and people from the Middle East's most conflict torn areas, and Bosnia and Albania in the 1990s.

The second way is through an asylum application. In the period 1990-1999 18,292 applications were received and 6,574 of them were granted some form of residence permit. In the period 2000-2005 these number were 18,920 and 3,762 respectively ([www.uvi.fi](http://www.uvi.fi)). The tendency has thus been an increase in applications (towards some 3,000 annually) and a decrease in 'favourable decisions' (towards some 600 annually). Countries of origin of applicants are divers, but Finland received many from the Caucasus area of the former Soviet Union, the Horn of Africa and recently Kosovar Albanians and Roma from Eastern Europe.

Thirdly, immigration for family reasons (family reunion and new marriages) has gained significance in the course of time, nowadays probably being the major entrance title, between 2,000 and 3,000 annually (Government Report 2002, 7). There is, however, no qualitative information aside from the official categories reported (Clarke 2006, 139).

According to Tanner, Finland admitted in recent years also "tens of thousands of labor migrants who have first secured job contracts with Finnish employers"<sup>6</sup>. (..) The newest Aliens

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<sup>4</sup> According to some observers the remigration policies of Ingrians has created a vital Russian minority (correspondence with researcher Annika Forsander, August 2007).

<sup>5</sup> As of January 1, 2007 there were 5,261 persons born in Somalia residing in Finland ([www.sta.fi](http://www.sta.fi)).

<sup>6</sup> It is observed that this is a somewhat unqualified statement: most of them are seasonal workers. In recent years, for example, some 15,000 Estonian construction workers come to Finland for the building season. Few of them become permanent settlers (Personal communication of Annika Forsander, August 2007).

Law of 2004 maintains the authority of offices of the Ministry of Labor over case-by-case evaluations of candidates' credentials, and the Ministry's recommendations depend on the labor market's needs. The Directorate of Immigration (under the Ministry of the Interior) then makes the ultimate decision." (..) "Registered students are now subject to a lighter process, and basically need only a temporary residence permit" (Tanner 2004, 3).

The general picture that arises from the data can be summarised as follows:

- Immigration has started primarily as supply driven (such as returnees from Sweden and the former Soviet Union, family related migration, refugees and asylum applicants) but seems to have gained a growing demand driven dimension (expressed in increasing labour migrants and international students);
- As a consequence of the peculiar history of migration, statistics on the immigrant stock are expressed in varying statistical terms, each having their advantages and disadvantages: a) nationality of residents (between 1000 and 2000 aliens naturalise annually); b) 'immigrant background' indicated by the country of birth of residents (sometimes including country of birth of parents); this category may include children of Finnish emigrants who have been born abroad); and c) first language of residents<sup>7</sup>. Such figures vary significantly. By January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005, for example, 108,424 aliens (foreign citizens) were living in Finland<sup>8</sup>; the number of immigrants - defined as born outside Finland - amounted to 165,000 at that moment<sup>9</sup>. The number of non-Finnish speakers is still higher: some 450,000 including Swedish speakers. The new immigration tends to settle in the major cities of Finland, particularly in the Helsinki Region that attracts 60 percent of all immigrants.
- Apart from immigrants discussed above, special policies relate to old minority groups, particularly the aboriginal Sámi in Lapland estimated at 6500 persons, and the Finnish Roma stemming from 16<sup>th</sup> century immigration, estimated at some 10,000. In some respects special provisions for example in language, are made for these groups (Finnish League 2003, 15).

## 1.2 National integration policy

Although there have been political discussions in Finland about the necessity of having an explicit Immigration Law, among others to regulate the recruitment of workers from abroad (Heikkilä & Peltonen 2002), no such act exists (yet). Immigration matters are primarily handled by two ministries having different tasks<sup>10</sup>. The process of admission of labour migrants is prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and implemented

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<sup>7</sup> Statistics on first language include the Swedish speaking minority in Finland.

<sup>8</sup> On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 the number of foreign citizens has grown to 121,739. The largest groups are Russians (25,314), Estonians (17,543), Swedes (8,295), Somalis (4,621), Serbians (3,352), Chinese (3,299) and Iraqis (3,038).

<sup>9</sup> On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 the number of foreign born citizens has grown to 187,910.

<sup>10</sup> During national elections early in 2007 right wing parties have won and formed a new coalition. The new cabinet appointed a special Minister for Immigration and European Affairs, Astrid Thors. However, administrative reforms of the Immigration and Integration policies, promised when the new ministry was announced, have not been made public yet (as of September 2007).

administratively by the Directorate of Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior. In matters of asylum it is the Ministry of the Interior that determines policies and takes decisions on applications, while the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is responsible for asylum reception and post-asylum integration policies. As for refugee quota the same division of tasks applies, be it that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has a significant say in this (Tanner 2004). This division of tasks does not always work smoothly. While the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs primarily looks at labour market interests, reception and integration, the interests of Ministry of the Interior are more dominated by security issues. It is suggested that such security issues, particularly related to Muslims, has been a reason why the refugee quota of 750 was not filled recently.

Since May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999 Finland has an explicit Integration Act (493/1999): in full ‘Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers’. The objective is to promote the integration, equality and freedom of choice of immigrants through measures which help them to acquire the essential knowledge and skills they need to function in society and to participate in work life, and to ensure the essential livelihood and welfare of asylum seekers by arranging their reception. The object of the law is also that at the same time immigrants could preserve their native language and their ethnic and cultural features (see: Heikkilä & Peltonen 2002, 7).

The act defines the responsibilities of different actors in integration work, immigrants’ responsibilities in participating, and gives authorities means to support integration. Key element is that those immigrants (registered at a municipality and less than 3 years in Finland) who are not gainfully employed and receiving social benefits have the right to an ‘individual integration plan’. Such a plan may include a basic course in Finnish language, occupational and craft courses and other actions or educative activities that help to integrate into Finnish society. Regional Employment and Economic Development Centres and local social offices make these plans and monitor them. It is financed by a lump sum of the Ministry. Municipalities are furthermore requested by law to develop a local integration policy. Problems of implementation have been signalled: waiting lists for language courses and insufficient level differentiation of courses, insufficient financial resources and limitation of facilities to three years.

The Finnish Integration Act focuses thus on recent immigrants who are dependent on welfare benefits. In practice, refugees, accepted asylum seekers and Ingrian returnees are the main target groups. A trajectory to work and financial independence of the state – through several kinds of courses and training – is key in the approach. The Act is much less explicit in other domains like housing, health and culture (Government Report 2002, 43). Local integration programmes, however, involve both labour market policy and the provision of other services. In the minds of policymakers at the local level, e.g. in Turku, national integration policy is seen as aiming primarily for adaptation of immigrants, while at the local level one is more open-minded.

## 2 Background information on the city and its integration policy

### 2.1 Structural data of the city

Turku is an old city, going back as far as the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Situated in the South-West of the present Finland, at the shore of the Baltic Sea where the river Aura (Aurajoki) goes inland, it developed as a trade town (Nordstat 1999). It was the capital of the province of Finland, i.e. the residence of the Governor, under the Swedish rule until 1809 under the Swedish name of Åbo. After Russia annexed Finland in 1809 Tsar Alexander moved the capital of the new 'Grand Duchy' of Finland to Helsinki in 1812. Traces of the Swedish and Russian reign are still to be found in the city.

Industrialisation in Turku began in the 18th century during the Swedish rule, particularly the ship building industry and during the 19th century, many new industries sprung up in the city, such as the brewing industry. The rapid industrialisation resulted in the first significant relocations from rural areas to Turku. Around 1900 Turku had about 42,000 inhabitants.

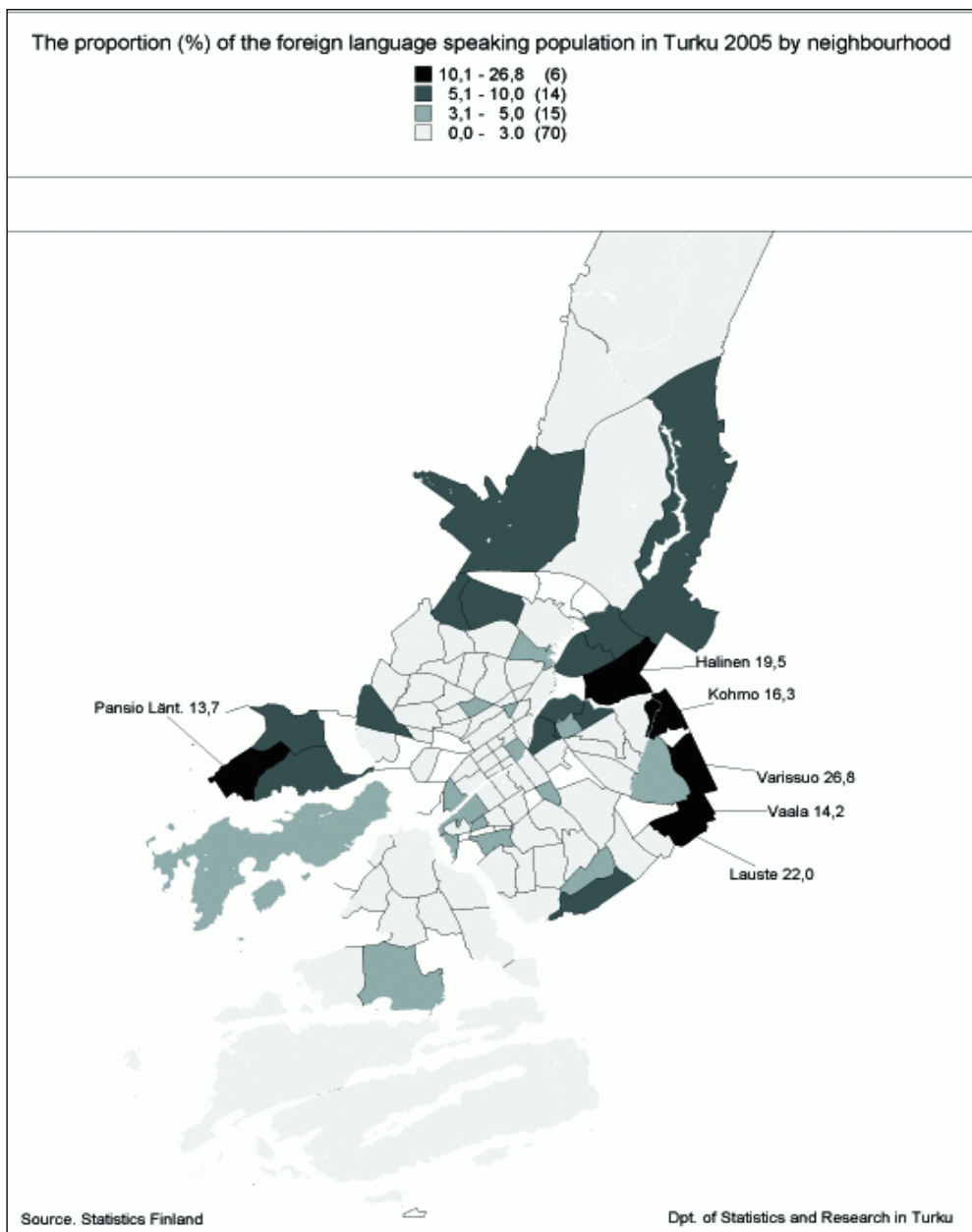
The city's profile has changed significantly in recent decades. Its population has grown to 175,354 inhabitants as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. Spatially, the city has expanded by building residential areas around the old city, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. Economically there was also a profile shift: although the harbour and ship building are still important economic activities, there has been a major shift from manufacturing (a decrease from more than 25,000 work places in 1987 to less than 15,000 in 2004) to services (an increase from 26,000 in 1987 to 34,000 in 2004). Turku has specifically become an internationally renowned centre for biotechnical research and business. Most of the biotechnology companies in Finland are located in the Turku region.

Turku is also the centre of a Finnish Maritime Cluster, at the heart of which are the Aker shipyards in Turku, where the biggest luxury cruise ships in the world are built. Aker Yards and its subcontractors in and around Turku presently employ thousands of foreigners. Their exact number is not known: many of them come from new EU member countries on work contracts for shorter periods with foreign subcontractors. In these cases they are not registered officially in Turku.

Furthermore, Turku is an important university city: its universities (University of Turku, the Turku University of Applied Sciences, Åbo Akademi University and the Turku School of Economics) together have some 35,000 students and attract also significant numbers of foreign students. Although the general unemployment figure for Turku for 2007 was still high, at a level of 9.3 percent, unemployment is on the decrease and the economic labour market prospects are deemed positive (Turku Annual Report 2006, 3 and 13).

The present physical structure of the inner city is strongly determined by the great city fire of 1827 that destroyed the predominantly wooden buildings of the old city almost completely. The city was rebuilt according to a grid pattern of rectangular blocs in which the relatively broad streets should prevent raging fires. The rebuilt wooden houses have been replaced nowadays - within the grid - by buildings and blocs of stone and concrete.

This 'old town' is the commercial centre of Turku and houses a mixed population of all classes, including many students. The wealthiest residents are to be found in the city centre and on the islands to the south where many new high-quality residential areas are located. The less well-off population lives in the areas east and west of the city grid. The poorest areas



are located close to the municipal borders, some 5-7 kilometres from the centre. The western side of the city has a large shipyard. The Turku harbour (cargo and passenger ferry traffic) is located adjacent to the centre (southwest). To the north of the old town centre, there are vast areas of fields and forest. Turku Airport is located north of the city.

The City of Turku is part of several larger units in Finland. First of all, the city is the centre of the Turku Region, a strip of urban areas running parallel to the coastline. The city of Turku is located vertically in the middle of this strip. The length of the city area from north-south is approximately 40 kilometres, while the widest part of the city (east-west) measures only 10 kilometres. The seven neighbouring municipalities of the Turku Region are small (2,000 - 24,000 residents). They are very dependent on the jobs and services available in the city of Turku.

The percentage of immigrants in neighbouring municipalities is much lower than in Turku, although these neighbouring municipalities have grown more in recent decades than Turku itself.

The next level is that of the County in which 54 municipalities of the South-West region are brought together. The Regional Council of the County is momentarily relevant, because it makes development plans, including immigration planning for the region.

## **2.2 History of municipal migration and composition of migrant populations**

The number of immigrants in Turku was not significant until the early 1990s, but increased afterwards. The table below indicates the numbers of immigrants for which the Immigrants' Office of the city had direct responsibility: refugees and Ingrian returnees. Within the refugee population of Turku Iraqis and Kosovar Albanians are somewhat over represented (compared to the national picture), while there are less African refugees.

Not all of these 5,503 have stayed in Turku. On the other hand there are other categories of newcomers in Turku, such as foreign workers (in the shipyards and recently also in the booming construction industry), highly skilled workers (in the bio-technical industry for example) and foreign students. No exact figures for these categories are available, but several informants report that their numbers have been growing recently. A figure of some 1800 foreign workers employed in some major industrial enterprises is mentioned, but such a figure excludes the seasonal construction workers, mostly from Estonia. Nevertheless, the dominant picture is that a majority of the immigrant population in Turku has some refugees/returnee background. It is also that part of the immigrant population that clearly dominates the policy field of integration and its facilities in Turku.

**Table 2. Refugees and Ingrian Returnees received by the Immigrants' Office in Turku: 1987-2006.**

	Refugees (direct)	Family Reunion	Others (indirect)	Ingrians	Total
1987	50				50
1988	64				64
1989	46				46
1990	133	22			155
1991	104	4			108
1992	169	23	16		208
1993	114	38	37		189
1994	73	41	24	127	265
1995	85	36	70	129	320
1996	80	29	39	143	291
1997	103	28	116	175	422
1998	127	40	272	149	594
1999	115	17	95	82	309
2000	61	13	163	122	359
2001	134	45	185	86	533
2002	81	49	185	63	378
2003	25	22	230	38	315
2004	56	18	121	34	229
2005	36	48	199	40	323
2006	40	47	220	38	345
Total	1 696	520	2 061	1 226	5 503

As stipulated by the Integration Act the municipality has special responsibilities for admitted refugees and Ingrians. Such migrants arrive by decision of the Directorate of Immigration. The Immigrants' Office of the city makes personal 'integration plans' in cooperation with the local labour office (the Regional Employment and Economic Development Centre). The Ministry of Labour (the Regional Employment and Economic Development Centres) pays the city a lump sum for the reception services. The immigrant work (work, education, housing, health, etc.) within in Turku is coordinated by the immigration co-ordinator in the central office of the city. The Immigrants' Office of the Social Welfare Office gives the reception services for the immigrants.

**Table 3. Population of Turku by first language and nationality as per January 1st, 2007.**

Population in Turku 31.12.2006	by Language	by Nationality
Total	175 354	175 354
Finnish	155 787	167 794
Swedish	9 113	377
Russian	2 310	1 165
Arabic	1 162	Iraq 550
Kurdish	819	
Albanian	797	
Estonian	619	745
Somali	455	292
Vietnamese	436	137
English	384	137
Chinese	304	264
Persian	286	Iran 622
Spanish	204	
Serbo-Croatian	190	Bosnia-Herzegovina Serbia-Montenegro 216 458
German	169	
Turkish	150	
Bosnian	137	
French	130	
Total Non-Finnish	19 567	7 560
	11.2 %	4.3 %

Data provided by the City of Turku.

As in the case of Finland as a whole, the immigrant population can statistically be described in several ways. If we take the criterion of nationality 4,3 % of the Turku population is 'alien' as of January 1st, 2007. When using 'Immigrant Background' (based on country of birth outside Finland) the percentage rises to 6 %. This means that Turku as a city has twice as much immigrants as the national average. (Turku has the second largest proportion of immigrants in Finnish cities, after the Helsinki Metropolitan area). If the criterion of first language is used, 11,2 % of all inhabitants of Turku have another language than Finnish as their 'mother-tongue'. The dominant group, however, are inhabitants who speak Swedish as their mother tongue (5,2 %); most of them are natives as is suggested by the low number of Swedish nationals. Non-Swedish/non-Finnish speaking make up 6,0 % (Data from the Turku Annual Report 2006, 5).

Notwithstanding the relative short history of immigration there is a significant number of immigrant organisations. The website of the City ([www.turku.fi](http://www.turku.fi)) lists 52 'registered multicultural and immigrant organisations'. Comments from participants indicate that not all of them are active and that the number of individuals carrying these associations and doing their representation in the city community is relatively low. In 2006, an umbrella organisation was founded: SONDIP. It has eleven member organisations, including some student organisations. This umbrella organisation has its own building, the city paying half of the rent for it. It is gradually building up cooperation with the city by doing information work for the city<sup>11</sup>, works together with the city and the regional Employment Service on informing immigrants about work projects, and is regularly asked as expert on topics such as Integration and Equality plans of the city. Furthermore, SONDIP received significant financial support from the National Lottery and intends to develop space and facilities for its member organisations.

The attitude of the city towards immigrant organisations is in principle positive. There is an International Meeting Point, which is part of the Cultural Centre (Kulttuurikeskus) of the city of Turku, that has close contacts with local immigrant associations. Staff at the meeting point helps immigrants to organise their activities, find places for them and assist them in search for finance ([www.turku.fi](http://www.turku.fi); Martikainen 2004, 245). Although there is increasing cooperation between city officials and SONDIP, the city does not (yet) have a systematic strategy to engage or consult immigrant organisations in the formation and implementation of (integration) policies.

### **2.3 Municipal migration and integration – history and policy**

Although Turku received refugees from 1987 on and Ingrians since 1994 (see table 2), the first policy document, the City of Turku immigrant integration programme, was approved by the City Council only on 19 November 2001. Since this programme (required by the national Integration Act) did not include concrete measures, the council nominated four working groups on a) Immigrant children and youth; b) Training and employment; c) Collecting information, and d) Housing. The reports, delivered in 2003, included all measures that had to be implemented by the various departments of the city that carried responsibility for that particular topic<sup>12</sup>.

The various departments of the city have reported annually to the City Council on the development of the measures proposed by the four working groups in 2003, the last report being that of April 2006. The immigrant integration programme of the city was re-evaluated by the City Council on January 12, 2007. The programme includes the integration services for various immigrant groups and sections of them (children, youngsters, working age immigrants, women and elderly immigrants) and the cooperation with the various authorities and immigrant associations.

The City Council has decided to use an integration index in order to monitor the successfulness of the integration measures. This index includes three main standards of

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<sup>11</sup> SONDIP makes brochures about the city's services in eight different languages. The city had tendered this task publicly and chosen SONDIP among the applicants.

<sup>12</sup> In the first CLIP-report on Turku the housing policy of the city has been described and analysed: see Penninx 2008.

measurement: the secondary education level of the immigrant youngsters, the (un)employment of immigrants and their level of income.

The regional immigration plan of Southwest Finland, "Monikulttuurinen Varsinais-Suomi", was approved in autumn 2006. The Employment and Economic Development Centre for Southwest Finland, the Regional Council of Southwest Finland, the Southwest Finland Centre of Expertise on Social Welfare, Finland Future Research Centre of Turku School of Economics, the cities of Turku and Salo and other stakeholders have participated in the preparation of the plan. The objective is to promote work-related immigration, to strengthen the participation of the immigrants and to develop services needed by the immigrants.

### **3 The city's approach to diversity**

#### **3.1 Historical background**

The specific topic of Diversity has not been explicit on the agenda in any of the four working groups, or in any of the recent documents on integration policy in Turku<sup>13</sup>. References to a targeted employment policy for immigrants of the city as an employer are completely absent. Diversity in the sense of policies that aim to adapt services of the city in form (presentation) or content to the needs of immigrants is also absent in explicit forms, but attempts to adapt instruments in the implementation phase can be found in some domains. It means that what follows in this report should be read as an efforts to trace elements that could possibly be important for a future policy in the city. In doing so we will first look at developments at the national level in two important domains, as a setting for local policies in Turku: that of integration policies and that of anti-discrimination policies.

The Integration Act (493/1999) of 1999 and the national policy of reception of immigrants that follows the Act sets the most important institutional given for policy development in Turku: the requirement to receive (specific categories of) new immigrants, with a budget, and an obligation to develop an integration programme (see par. 1.2.). That policy, however, is in its conception and implementation rather a reception policy for vulnerable immigrants to ease their first entrance into society than a comprehensive, long term integration policy. The main aim is to guarantee access to the welfare state and to its main institutional domains: housing, education, labour and health. Equality of outcome of the process of integration and equity in treatment in the process of integration are not aims of such a policy in any explicit way.

Although city policies of Turku do seem somewhat broader and show a higher sensitivity for cultural, ethnic and religious factors in the integration process than national policies do, the basics of national policies are also the ones that structure local policies in Turku. It means

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<sup>13</sup> Also in the political sphere in Turku the topic has not received attention. In the Annual Report 2006 of the city that counts 26 pages in the English version, the topic of immigration is mentioned only once (giving the figure of 'net immigration': 419 in 2006) and integration of immigrants is not mentioned at all. The only reference to Diversity Policy that I found during the research period was "that the entire City Board visited Toronto two years ago to get acquainted with diversity management". Although it is reported that among the City Leadership "there is a growing understanding that the issues of diversity management and multicultural issues are strategic for long-term development" this does not seem to have left traceable marks in integration policies for immigrants yet.

that diversity policies, in the sense of personnel policies of the city as employer that aim for a fair representation of immigrants in the work force, have not been part of policies. Also diversity in the provision of services by the city has not been defined as a desirable principle of integration policies as such, but it has been brought up in certain circumstances and in some domains as a topic by those who try to implement present policies and sometimes by immigrants and their organisations.

The picture is not very different when we look at anti-discrimination policies. At the national level there is on the one hand the recent Equality Act (Yhdenvertaisuuslaki /2004) that forbids discrimination on the basis of age, ethnic or national background, language, religion, belief, opinion, health conditions and handicaps, and sexual orientation. Another Act (Tasa-arvolaki /2002)<sup>14</sup> bans direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of sex. Both laws emphasize the duty of the authorities to promote equality. The law requires the local government to make plans for such actions and measures. These include actions of the local government as employer and as a service provider.

In the city of Turku, it was decided that the (requirements of the) two laws would be combined: all administrative units of the city have been asked to make plans which have been added together in a city-plan and approved by the City's Executive Board (12-12-2006 § 362). The Human Resource Centre of the city is presently – as an evaluation of the 2006 plan and as a preparation for a new plan - making a survey of what has been done by sending a questionnaire to all departments. Neither the plans nor the questionnaire refers to concrete targets and figures. In the words of the officials of the Human Resource Centre who coordinates policies in this field within the city apparatus, both plans and evaluations are more of the 'soft' type that aim 'to make departments aware of equality and possible discrimination questions'. The philosophy is that departments within the city organisation are so different ("compare the harbour with museums or the Youth department") that it is only the departments themselves that may set the goals and implement measures.

Apart from the two laws mentioned above, Finland also has an independent special Ombudsman for Minorities ([www.mol.fi](http://www.mol.fi)). Its jurisdiction only covers the supervision of ethnic discrimination. The primary means used by the Ombudsman include recommendations, instructions and advice. In exceptional cases he may also provide more extensive assistance. In contacts with Turku officials and informants, however, the Ombudsman was not mentioned as a significant actor in Turku.

The city of Turku reports as "probably the most important monitoring tool" the bi-annual national survey on various topics (Kunta-10) held among permanent employees of municipalities. In the latest survey of 2006 68 percent of the Turku work force participated in that survey. On discrimination only 5 percent of the Turku respondents felt that there existed discrimination on ethnic grounds. The national average on this question was 4 percent.

### **3.2 Responsibility: elected representatives and officials**

Within the city of Turku the institutional setting of the administration has been reformed over the past 15 years. The old administration was based on strong public power, whereas the new administration is built on the idea of a consolidated municipality according to the market economy ideal. The new system is quite complicated, the basic structure being as follows.

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<sup>14</sup> The earlier version of the gender equality act dates back to 1980.

The political authority rests with the City Council, consisting of 67 members that are elected every four years<sup>15</sup>. The Council meets every three weeks. The City Council in its turn elects from its members – after local elections – the City Executive Board, consisting of 11 members and representing all major parties. This Board meets every week; only the chairperson is working full time on this job; other members work part time. The City Executive Board has eleven specific Boards that steer the work of specific fields: Board of Health, Municipal Social Welfare Board, Educational Board, etc. The most important person in the executive part of the organisation is the mayor: he/she is nominated by the City Council, not from its members, and for a period of time that is longer than four years<sup>16</sup>. The mayor is supposed to be and act above parties. He heads the ‘City Office’ in which some 300 officials work under the generic headings of 1) Administration, 2) Finances, 3) Human Resources, and 4) Communication. The mayor prepares all plans and presents them to the Executive Board.

One step further down to execution of policies are three major departments, each headed by a deputy mayor (who are full time, professional executives), also nominated by the City Council, not from the City Council itself. These are

- the Department for Services (including Health, Social Welfare, Cultural Affairs, Sports, and Youth Affairs);
- the Department for Competences and Business Development (including Education, Vocational Education and the Turku University of Applied Sciences);
- the Department for Environmental Affairs (including Real Estate, Technical Services, Environmental Protection and City Planning, Harbour and Waterworks).

Each of the deputy mayors has a number of ‘Boards’ for specific fields. The administrative units operate to a great extent independently (accountability). This has intensified an inward-orientation. This has consequences for integration policies in general and for diversity policies in particular. Integration policies are coordinated by the Immigrants’ Office, located within the Department for Services within the Social Welfare section. It implies, as we have seen in the earlier report on housing, a long administrative route towards other relevant departments and their relevant sections. In the case of diversity policies this is also the case: for diversity policies as personnel policies the principal lead should be in the Human Resources Center section of the City Office of the Mayor, while policies should be implemented in all departments and sections of the city administration. Diversity policies in service provision is likewise scattered in all three departments, depending on the services they provide to immigrants.

### **3.3 Collaboration with social partners and non governmental organisations**

In general, employees in Finland are to a high degree organised in trade unions, in the order of more than 80 percent of all workers. This is also true for municipal employees who are organised in different unions. Among city employees of Turku, eight special union members, representing different confederations of unions, are chosen to consult regularly (four times a year as a standard) with the mayors and vice-mayors on all kind of topics. Typical trade

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<sup>15</sup> In the present Council nine political parties are represented.

<sup>16</sup> The present mayor of Turku, Mikko Pukkinen, was nominated about a year ago for a period of eight years. He is not from Turku, but has substantial political experience in the Coalition Party.

union topics, such as equal treatment and privatisation of services, are discussed, as well as specific topics for specific unions, for example smaller classes demanded by the union of teachers. The topic of diversity, however, has never been on the agenda.

According to the trade union representative the unions count only a few members with immigrant background among the city employees. The particular trade union that represents the academicians among the city employees, some 3000 including staff of the Turku University of Applied Sciences, has only an estimated 20 members of immigrant origin.

When discussing the unequal outcomes of the existing system for immigrants it is noted that the general requirements for the jobs, and especially the requirement of having command of the Finnish language, are the most important barrier for skilled immigrants. The specific protective rules of the unions may reinforce that. For example, in the case of an in principle qualified immigrant who cannot get a job on the level of his qualification because of the lack of language: he is also not accepted on a lower level of assistant, because that would undermine the position of fully qualified, in the eyes of the trade unions.

Partners from civil society – both existing general organisations and those originating from immigrant communities - have not achieved a significant status in promoting specific diversity policies for immigrants. Immigrant associations - or maybe more adequately: some of their leaders - are consulted incidentally, but there is not (yet) a form of regular and structural consultation. If such consultancy takes place, and when forms of cooperation are established, it is in relation to major service provision in the areas of employment, education and health. Diversity policies as personnel policies have not been a topic of discussion between the city and these partners.

#### 4 Employment: policy, practice and outcomes

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006 the number of salaried personnel of the city amounted to 14,072 persons, of whom 282 were employed in special employment programmes. The distribution over departments is as follows (Turku Annual Report 2007, 25):

**Table 4.** *Employees of the City of Turku by department/ activity sector 2007.*

Social Welfare Department	29%
Health Care Department	18%
Education Department	15%
Vocational Education and University of Applied Sciences	10%
Technical Services	9%
Culture and Leisure Department	7%
General administration, Public Order and Safety	7%
Utilities	5%
Other	5%

Data on immigrant background of employees of the city, nationality or first language are not readily available, nor officially published. On our special request the Human Resources Centre of the City's Office produced the following data:

**Table 5.** *Employees of the City of Turku having another mother tongue than Finnish or Swedish 2007.*

Russian	17
Albanian	6
Kurdish	4
Persian	3
Arabic	2
German	2
Serbo-Croatian	2
Other	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

**Table 6.** *Employees of the City of Turku having another nationality than Finnish or Swedish, 2007.*

Estonian	7
Iranian	5
Russian	4
German	2
Polish	2
Other (each 1)	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>

Calculated as a percentage of the total employees this amounts to less than a half percent. It was indicated that most of these employees worked in positions that relate to service provision for immigrants: Mother Tongue teachers, Interpreters and health care workers.

The Human Resources Centre of the City's Office indicates that there are no legal barriers, such as the requirement to have Finnish citizenship to enter the city labour force. A good or satisfactory proficiency in the Finnish language, however, is a requirement. The main reasons for the low level of employment of immigrants in the labour force of the city, however, are perceived to be related to the specific personnel situation and policy in Turku. Firstly, the turnover in the labour force is very low, the average age of employees is high as is the number of years in service. This is also the case for low skilled work. In the sector of cleaning services of the city, for example, the percentage of those employed five years or longer is 82, the average age is over 50 years and the average duration of service is 15 years. Secondly, this low turnover goes hand in hand with a policy of the city to reduce staff in general and to outsource services. The combination of these two factors represents severe hindrances for immigrants to enter the municipal work force.

## 5 Diversity in service provision

### 5.1 Diversity in the health sector

In the Finnish system municipalities are, according to the Health Act of 1972, in principle responsible for all health care services<sup>17</sup>. In the total budget of the city health care thus counts for 30,7 % of all expenses in Turku in 2006. The health care sector accounts for 18 % of all city employees (Turku Annual Report 2006, 18 and 25). The sector is governed politically by the Board of Health, consisting of elected Council members.

The spokeswoman of the Health Office reports that there is no registration of the roughly 2500 permanent positions and 500 temporary jobs in the health sector by immigrant origin, but her guess is that it would be one percent at most. What she reports is mainly based on her informal contacts within the organisation: within the regular health services there are seven non-Finnish practising doctors (one of Chilean origin, working mainly for refugees and some Russian doctors).

In the Finnish system all doctors and nurses need to be registered by national associations for these professions. The evaluation of non-Finnish diplomas is done by the Department of Medical-legal Affairs of the ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Apart from procedural difficulties of such recognition, it is stated (also by representatives of trade unions) that the formal requirements are high. For example, nurses in Finland are supposed to be able to implement certain tasks that usually doctors do and they should be able to document care activities extensively. That makes it difficult to get foreign diplomas recognised as equivalent.

Command of the Finnish language, however, seems to be the major practical obstacle. It is not only recognised that Finnish is a difficult language to learn for most foreigners, there seems also to be a consensus that such a language requirement is essential for good functioning, voiced by both health care practitioners and trade union representatives.

At the same time there seems to be a shortage of health care workers for different reasons. One is that the health budget is tight. This leads to the particular situation that part of the personnel is recruited on a temporary basis (some 500). Another reason is that salaries of nurses are perceived as low, which does not stimulate particularly the supply of nurses<sup>18</sup>. It has even led to a discussion on the possible recruitment of 200 nurses from the Philippines, which solicited the reaction of our spokeswoman: "I cannot see how they would manage the language problems". It also has led to a discussion on creating a special category of 'health care helpers' (obviously to avoid the high requirements for official nurses), particularly for care for the elderly.

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<sup>17</sup> Hospitals, however, may be independent entities, covering a larger area than one municipality. The city of Turku runs one city hospital, but there is also an independent University hospital (TUCS) in the city.

<sup>18</sup> An interesting cynical remark at this point states that lately national politicians have made promises to voters on higher wages for nurses at the expense of local authorities who employ and have to pay them. This led nearly to a national catastrophe in November 2007: the Nurses' Trade Union (Tehy) members decided to resign from their posts to back up their wage demands. This would have paralysed all major hospitals. The national Parliament passed a law ordering a critical number of nurses to work. An agreement was reached only a few hours before the resignations entered into force.

From all of this it becomes clear that at the level of services there is a beginning of awareness of problems, but there is not yet a clear answer to these. In practice, it is clear that the few health care workers of immigrant background are now employed for very specific tasks related to immigrants: they do the health check up of new immigrant arrivals and form a special team for health care for refugees: a kind of parallel health system. In some cases this is the case in areas with high concentrations of immigrants, like in the special multi-cultural health centre in the Varissuo neighbourhood.

The conclusion of the spokeswoman of the Health Office condensed all this in her overall evaluation: “The system is not yet mature for diversity in the active sense; we do have equality programmes, but they do not cover immigrant background yet”.

## 5.2 Diversity in the educational sector

In the Finnish system education and vocational training are in principle responsibility of municipalities<sup>19</sup>. This sector thus counts for 24,7 % of all expenses of the city of Turku in 2006. The sector accounts for 25 % of all city employees (Turku Annual Report 2006, 18 and 25). The sector is governed politically by the three Boards, consisting of elected Council members: the Educational Board (for basic and secondary schools), the Vocational Education Board and the Board of Turku University of Applied Sciences. The picture below refers to basic and secondary schools, including the School Centre.

The national Finnish educational system finances some of the special costs that schools may make for immigrant children: for immigrant children in the first nine grades of the educational system schools receive 120 % of the regular norm per pupil. These additional resources may be used in several ways. In Turku the sector of basic and secondary education employs some 2000 workers. Of these some 50 all together are of immigrant background: more than two percent. Most of these are Mother Tongue teachers: the city has decided that – on a voluntary basis – children of immigrants may have two hours a week instruction in their native language, which is given after school time and thus outside the regular curriculum.<sup>20</sup> Another 19 remedial teachers of immigrant origin (representing 9 different languages) are employed by the city. However, not all of these are full time employees.

Although people of immigrant origin are hired more often in this sector than elsewhere, spokesmen of the sector agree that this has not been the consequence of any kind of employment equity policy. There has simply not been a discussion on employment of immigrants in this sector, and special recruitment or employment programmes for immigrants are even deemed ‘unrealistic’. A number of reasons are brought forward for this: first of all, the standards for teachers are high in Finland which makes it difficult for immigrants; secondly, until now there has not been a significant shortage of qualified teachers, so there was no special demand for them; and finally, there has not been – as of yet – any offer from immigrant circles. So the obvious conclusion is that the special (and irreplaceable) tasks that

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<sup>19</sup> Universities, however, may be independent entities, covering a larger area than one municipality. The city of Turku has direct responsibility for only one of the four institutions for higher education in the city: the Turku University of Applied Sciences.

<sup>20</sup> Apart from Mother Tongue teaching schools in Turku have made some other adaptations with an eye on immigrants: one of these is that religion has been made part of the curriculum and for this school head may cooperate with for example imams. An extra day off may be given to Muslim children at the end of the Ramadan. To stimulate participation of parents of immigrant children schools may hire interpreters from the city to ease communication.

employees of immigrant background do within education explain their relative high presence in this sector.

### 5.3 Services in employment

Of old the city of Turku has had a policy of assisting long-term unemployed and vulnerable groups on the labour market. One element of this is that the city has two 'Work Centres': one for adult and elderly workers that employs vulnerable workers on a more or less permanent basis (some 100) and one for young unemployed that get only temporary jobs. The strong increase of unemployment in the early 1990 (from 5 % in 1990 to 24 % in 1993) led to an intensification of employment policies, mainly through subsidised employment.

In 2004 Turku started an active and coordinated policy to re-integrate long-term unemployed and vulnerable workers in the labour market by establishing the Turku Labour Force Service Centre. This Centre is in fact a close co-operation between three partners: Turku Employment Service (that employs now some 23 employment and training advisors, one of immigrant background), Turku Social Services and Health Care (with 34 employees) and the Social Insurance Institution (one advisor). Their main client groups are long-term unemployed (among which many immigrants<sup>21</sup>), people with disabilities and young drop-outs. Most clients come through the Social Service department and the Turku Employment Office. The basic idea is that all clients are assessed (on physical, social and insurance condition) and that depending on that assessment an activation plan is made that may entail training (and language courses) and (subsidised) employment (or in some cases a final social security position, such as retirement). The Turku Labour Force Service Centre reports over 2005 that they have some 2400 clients per month, received more than 1100 new clients in that year and delivered some 1000 individual activation plans for clients. As to the number of subsidised workplaces (6 months) the target for 2006 was set at 650.

An interesting new development in this sector is related to national Finnish policies and a EU-project in this field: the HOT-project for Social Enterprises in the field of welfare services. In Finland the Act on Social Enterprises (1351/2003) was adopted and entered into force as per 1-1-2004. The basic idea of this law is that any regular business may become a Social Enterprise, if at least 30 percent of its workforce consists of people with disabilities or long-term unemployed. The Social Enterprise pay normal salaries, but are entitled to wage subsidies (maximally 50 % of the salary) and a special project subsidy for the start-up phase.

Within this national framework Turku has attracted a special consultant within the Turku Labour Force Service Centre to assist initiatives for Social Enterprises in Turku. The basic idea is to support and advice initiatives to establish new Social Enterprises in three sectors: in catering for the elderly, in cleaning and house care, and in nursing between hospital and home. In this pre-establishment phase already some ten workers have been placed (none of them immigrants). All this activity is part of the pilot phase of the project that is to be evaluated towards the end of 2007. It is expected that in the next phase new Enterprises will be able to employ many disabled and long-term unemployed, including immigrants.

In all these policy initiatives immigrants do not figure as a special target group, nor in terms of employees of the Service (only one), nor as a special client group. Within the Service there used to be a special team for immigrants, but that has been abolished: every consultant within

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<sup>21</sup> According to data of the Labour Force Service Centre 17 % of the clients in 2005 had an immigrant background.

the Service has immigrants, although some seem to be more specialised in this respect. The Service does cooperate regularly with immigrant organisations and they are asked to deliver services (information meetings; training).

## 6 Conclusions

Immigration in Finland and in Turku is relatively new. It has been predominantly supply driven (refugees, returnees and family related migration) and is now gradually changing to more demand driven migration. Policy reactions – both at the national and local level – have been partial and targeted mainly at the first mentioned category of immigrants. In international comparative perspective migration and integration policies are in an early phase, primarily reacting to specific vulnerable categories of immigrants. The specific policies relating to reception of refugees and returnees have been initiated at the national level primarily, inducing and obliging local authorities to develop integration programmes for them.

The positive side of this newness of immigration and its relative low level is that it has not led to a politicisation of the topic of immigration and integration: there is obviously a commitment to receive refugees and returnees from abroad and give them access to national and local welfare systems during the process of their (first) settlement, a task that is implemented in a clear and dedicated way.

There are also challenges attached to that same situation. Immigration and integration are in the present policies narrowed down to specific groups and their immediate problems. Although there are signs that also other categories of (often demand driven) immigrants increase significantly, this has not (yet) become significant in the minds of policy makers<sup>22</sup>: long term, comprehensive policies for immigration and integration and concomitant institutions in these fields are thus lacking.

Policies for immigrants in Turku should be situated within this general framework. The city has not developed an integration policy for newcomers in general, but rather a reception policy for refugees, Ingrian returnees and their family members that guarantees housing and access to facilities of the welfare state as a starting point, and furthermore entails activities that should promote access to the educational system and the labour market by procuring mediation and improving the (language) skills of the immigrants. In this conceptualisation and practice the city follows predominantly national categorisations and related facilities and obligations (Integration Act and its implementation).

Since diversity policies as personnel policies (of cities as employers) aiming at employment equity of immigrants have historically always originated from comprehensive and long term policies, it is no wonder that such a conception has not yet emerged in the city of Turku. Nor has contract compliance been a topic of discussion. The primary goal is to guarantee access to the labour market on the implicit assumption that when such access is realised, equality of opportunities will do the rest. In the absence of such a conception, also the means to measure

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<sup>22</sup> It is remarked by some informants that on the national level trade unions have become more vocal on the topic of immigrants during recent years, but this was hardly noticeable in Turku.

or monitor employment equity in general, and within the work force of the city in particular, are absent. There is a monitoring system related to the reception efforts for the specific groups of refugees and Ingrian returnees, but the data collected is not apt to serve the purpose of a broader diversity policy as personnel policy. There is also a soft monitoring system related to the combined laws of General and Gender Equality, but immigrants are not part of that system in any significant way. There is not any specific pressure (nor any explicit resistance) from civil society organisations nor trade unions in favour of diversity policies: the topic has simply not been on the agenda. Furthermore, the awareness of discrimination – as measured among city employees – is remarkably low.

The number of people of immigrant background employed by the city – as far as this could be measured on our request – is very low: below one percent as against six percent in the total population of the city. Most of these employees worked in positions that relate to service provision for immigrants: Mother Tongue teachers, interpreters and health care workers.

This leads immediately to the second topic of research: diversity in service provision. Although there are no official explicit goals related to diversity in service provision, it turns out that at the level of practical implementation of reception policies, institutions in the domains of employment, education, health and housing have to deal with the (cultural, religious and language) diversity of the target groups. At this level it is found that using the mediating or other expertise of individual immigrants or immigrant organisations is often an effective way to reach, mobilise or serve clients of immigrant background. That may lead to recruit individuals from these groups as volunteers or as workers. In Turku this has been most obvious in the education and health sector.

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## Contacts and informants:

Arto **Alakoski**, Turku Employment Office, Department of Social Services and Health Care, City of Turku ([Arto.Alakoski@turku.fi](mailto:Arto.Alakoski@turku.fi))

Hasan **Habib**, Deputy Councillor of Turku, President of SONDIP, Umbrella organisation of Immigrant Organisations in Turku ([Hasan.Habib@turku.fi](mailto:Hasan.Habib@turku.fi))

Mari **Hakkala**, Planner at the Turku Health Care Department, City of Turku ([Mari.Hakkala@turku.fi](mailto:Mari.Hakkala@turku.fi))

Esko **Heikkonen**, Director of Upper Secondary and Adult Education, Educational Services Center, City of Turku ([Esko.Heikkonen@turku.fi](mailto:Esko.Heikkonen@turku.fi))

Suvi **Heiniola**, Project secretary HOT project, Turku Employment Office, Department of Social Services and Health Care, City of Turku ([suvi.heiniola@turku.fi](mailto:suvi.heiniola@turku.fi))

Marit **Holmberg**, Head of International Affairs, Social Services Department, City of Turku ([marit.holmberg@turku.fi](mailto:marit.holmberg@turku.fi))

Timo **Jalonen**, Head of the Educational Services Center, City of Turku ([Timo.Jalonen@turku.fi](mailto:Timo.Jalonen@turku.fi))

Johanna **Jarvinen**, Educational Services Center, City of Turku ([Johanna.e.Jarvinen@turku.fi](mailto:Johanna.e.Jarvinen@turku.fi))

Mikko **Lohikoski**, Director of Communication and External Affairs, City of Turku ([Mikko.Lohikoski@turku.fi](mailto:Mikko.Lohikoski@turku.fi))

Tuomas **Martikainen**, Dr, Researcher, Department of Comparative Religion, Åbo University ([Tuomas.Martikainen@vaestoliitto.fi](mailto:Tuomas.Martikainen@vaestoliitto.fi))

Jarkko **Rasinkangas** MA, Researcher, Department of Social Policy, University of Turku ([jarrasin@utu.fi](mailto:jarrasin@utu.fi))

Regina **Ruohonen**, Immigration Co-ordinator, Immigrants' Office, Department of Social Services and Health Care, City of Turku ([Regina.Ruohonen@turku.fi](mailto:Regina.Ruohonen@turku.fi))

Hannu **Ruonavaara**, Dr. Docent, Department of Sociology, University of Turku ([Hannuona@utu.fi](mailto:Hannuona@utu.fi))

Irmeli **Torssonen**, Special Advisor for International Affairs, Centre of Communication, City of Turku ([irmeli.torssonen@turku.fi](mailto:irmeli.torssonen@turku.fi))

Raine **Tuominen**, City Housing Corporation Lehtolaakso ([Raine.Tuominen@turku.fi](mailto:Raine.Tuominen@turku.fi))

Elina **Tuukkanen**, Senior Editor, Foreign News of Turun Sanomat (Turku News)  
([elina.tuukkanen@ts-group.fi](mailto:elina.tuukkanen@ts-group.fi))

Timo **Vahtonen**, Project manager HOT project, Turku Employment Office, Department of  
Social Services and Health Care, City of Turku ([timo.vahtonen@turku.fi](mailto:timo.vahtonen@turku.fi))