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Active Civic Participation of Immigrants in Finland

POLITIS – a European research project

Project information

POLITIS is short for a research project with the full title: *Building Europe with New Citizens? An Inquiry into the Civic Participation of Naturalised Citizens and Foreign Residents in 25 Countries*. The European Commission funds the project that mainly seeks to improve our understanding of different factors that promote or inhibit active civic participation of immigrants. A unique project construction is developed that includes workshops with foreign-born students who are recruited as discussants and interviewers. National experts in all 25 EU countries have prepared country reports on the contextual conditions and state of research concerning civic participation of immigrants. These reports can be downloaded from

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Executive summary

Finland has traditionally been a country of migration. During the 1960s and 1970s a lot of people migrated from the country. Traditionally Finnish migration policies have been restrictive and the number of immigrants has been low. The immigrants now amount to approximately 3% of the population. The immigrant groups in Finland are generally small and heterogeneous, which makes it hard for them to get organized. Finland has been faced with increased immigration since the beginning of the 1990s and this development will probably continue in the future. As many other West European countries, Finland is going to suffer from an ageing population and will consequently need more foreign labour force. The Finnish government has already taken action to manage the immigration issue by softening the immigration laws and adopting a comprehensive integration law. Immigrant inclusion is made easier by laws governing the rights for immigrants to participate at the municipal level.

The civic participation of immigrants in Finland is generally low but is on the increase. In recent years immigrant advisory boards have been established both at the state and at the municipal level, in order to improve both the formal and informal participation of immigrants in the policy making processes. This should also be seen as a reciprocal development between the local authorities and the immigrants themselves. It has been shown that co-operation projects and immigrants’ participation in the planning of immigrant issues at the advisory boards are important and efficient ways to improve the inclusion of immigrants in the Finnish society.

Further significant forms of civic participation are the associational activities of immigrants. Today there are approximately six hundred immigrant organizations, of which most have been established during the 1990s. A majority of the immigrant organizations are located in the capital region and in the other big cities where most of the immigrants live. Immigrant organizations are still weakly organized due to their short existence and have weak resources. The organizational life plays an important role both for the collective identity of immigrants and the integration of immigrants into the Finnish society. The co-operation between authorities and immigrant associations is still in an evolving stage. In the future more effort is needed in order to include immigrants into the Finnish society.

The political participation of immigrants in Finland is low, which resembles a lack of political integration. Electoral participation among immigrants in Finland is lower than in the other Nordic countries, although there are great variations between different immigrant groups. Immigrant groups in Finland are generally too small and to heterogeneous to be able to organize effectively politically. The lack of organizations, information and resources seems to explain the low levels of electoral participation. The main parties have only recently shown some interest in recruiting immigrant candidates. The number of immigrant candidates has therefore increased and immigrant and minority issues have become more salient.
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Introduction
This country case report examines the civic participation of third country immigrants in Finland within the framework of immigrants' political and associational participation. The report highlights the rules for participation, the role of the Advisory Board of Ethnic Relations and the local immigrant advisory boards and diverse forms of active civic participation, including participation in civil society organisations and political participation.

Finland has been faced with increased immigration since the beginning of the 1990s, and this development will probably continue in the future. As many other West European countries, Finland is in the future going to suffer from an ageing population and will thus need more foreign labour force.

The Finnish government has already taken action in order to manage the immigration issue by softening the immigration laws and adopting a comprehensive integration law. Political participation is made easier by laws governing the rights for immigrants to participate at the municipal level. Are the measures taken sufficient enough to promote active civic participation of third country immigrants? What are the factors affecting civic participation among third country immigrants in Finland? These are the questions that we try to find an answer to, based on previous research made in Finland.

So far there has not been much research in the field of civic activities and political participation of immigrants in Finland, but the number of research projects seem to be increasing. In order to gain deeper insight into the factors and circumstances affecting civic participation more profound and extensive research is needed.
PART 1: Understanding the conditions for immigrant participation

1.1 Key events and demographic developments in the migration history of Finland

The case of Finland is rather unique compared to the European countries that have a colonial past such as France and England and the Central-European and Scandinavian countries that were faced by the second wave of immigration in the 1970s. Finland as well as Ireland and the Southern-European countries were emigration countries until recently and were first hit by immigration in the late 1980s (Forsander 2002).

Finnish migration is closely related to its history and to its peripheral location. Traditionally Finland has been a country of emigration: after World War II nearly 700 000 Finns emigrated to Sweden, North America, Australia and other countries (Forsander 2002) much due to rapid structural changes in the Finnish society (Sandlund 2004, 4). During the late 1960s and early 1970s, a tenth of the so-called baby-boom generation emigrated from the country. Currently, there are over one million people of Finnish descent living abroad. Although much of the migration has targeted North America and Australia, Sweden has been the most popular destination of emigration (Forsander 2002).

Finnish immigration policy has traditionally been restrictive and there has not been a great pressure of immigration to Finland. The granting of residence and work permits has been very restrictive, which has resulted in very limited immigration to Finland (Sandlund 2004, 5). During the 1990s, immigration to Finland increased. In 2003, 17 600 of foreign nationals moved to Finland of whom 6 700 came from the EU member states and 10 700 from outside the EU. At the same time 12 083 persons moved abroad from Finland of which 9 805 were Finnish born. The net immigration of foreign nationals for 2003 was 5 755 (3051 men, 2704 women).

The table below describes the Finnish population at the end of 2003, the first column by nationality, the second column by mother tongue and the third column by state of birth.
Table 1, Population according to nationality, mother tongue and state of birth

In total the Finnish population amounted to 5 219 732 by the end of 2003, of which 158 867 were born abroad. Immigrants from the former Soviet Union areas and from Sweden form the largest groups of people born abroad (see column 3 of the table). More than half of the immigrants from the former Soviet Union areas are Ingrian return migrants. Also, a large number of the immigrants from Sweden are people of Finnish descent that have moved back to Finland. Besides these groups, there are fairly large refugee groups from the former Yugoslavia, Somalia and Iraq. Other significant immigrant groups are mainly labour immigrants from other Western-European countries and the USA (Statistics Finland 2003, 25).

Among the permanent population in Finland 5 112 729 have Finnish citizenship while 107 003 people are of another nationality. Finnish citizens are allowed to have dual citizenship since 1.7.2003, when the new citizenship law came into force. The by far largest groups of foreign nationals living in Finland are Russians and Estonians. There is also a fairly large group of people with Swedish, Somali and Iraqi citizenship (see column 1 of the table).

Finland is a bilingual country with Finnish and Swedish as the official languages. People in Lapland have the right to use Lappish (Same) in schools and take care of their affairs with authorities in their own language. Russian is by far the most common foreign mother tongue in Finland. There are also considerable groups with Estonian, English, Somali, Arabic, Albanian, Kurdish and Vietnamese as their mother tongue. (see table 1)

1 Ingrians are descendants of Finnish migrants who moved to Russia in the 17th century and are now returning to Finland after the fall of the Soviet Union (more details see below).

(Source, Statistics Finland StatFin -tilastopalvelu)
1.1.1 The special features of the Finnish case

The special feature of the Finnish case is that the number of immigrants compared to the other Western European countries is still very low. Most immigrants have lived in the country for a very short period of time and Finland has traditionally not been a country of destination for refugees. The proportion of labour migration is very small, there is a special composition of immigrants with regards to countries of origin and a high proportion of marriages between Finns and immigrants (Similä 2003, 101-102).

The main immigration flows to Finland have traditionally consisted of return migrants from Sweden and after the collapse and the dissolution of the Soviet Union from the former Soviet Union area. The war in Somalia and former Yugoslavia and other restless areas in Africa and Asia are other big sources of immigration. (www.mol.fi)

Figure 2, Foreign Citizens in Finland 1990-2004

![Foreign Citizens in Finland 1990-2004](image)

The main reasons for increased immigration to Finland are to be found in allowing return migration, in having larger refugee quotas and in increased labour migration especially from the neighbouring countries in recent years. We can assume that one of the conducting devices to increased immigration is related to Finland first joining the EEC and in 1995 joining the European Union and the Schengen agreement.

The number of foreigners legally living in Finland without citizenship quadrupled between 1990 and 2004, from 26 300 to 108 424 (see figure 2). During the same period the number of foreign-born Finnish citizens and residents doubled from 77 000 to 159 000, which constitutes 3% of the total Finnish population. The number of residents whose first language is not Finnish has increased from 43 000 in 1992, to 128 000 in 2004 (Tanner 2004).

1.1.2 The main types of migration

Migration to Finland can roughly be divided into five categories: refugees, including UN quota refugees and so called de facto refugees; family reunifications; return
migration; labour migration and migration for other reasons. The most common reasons for migrating to Finland are return migration, asylum seeking and for marriage and family reasons (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al. 2002, 17).

Return migrants are mostly Finns born in Sweden and Ingrins from the former Soviet Union area, which also constitute the largest groups of immigrants in Finland. Ingrins are descendants of Finnish migrants who moved to Russia in the 17th century and are now returning to Finland after the fall of the Soviet Union. Ingrins were granted the right of return migration by a decision made by President Mauno Koivisto in 1990 (Söderling 2004, 47). 60% to 70% of all immigrants coming to Finland from the former Soviet Union area are Ingrin return migrants (Jasinskaja-Lahti et. al. 2002, 18). The mostly used term for Ingrin immigrants in Finland is returnees or remigrants. The term remigrants however usually refers to an international migrant who leaves the country of origin but later returns. According to this definition, it is wrong to consider Ingrin Finns as remigrants because the Ingrins are descendants of people who moved from Finland to Ingria in the 16th and in the 17th century. This is the reason why Ingrin immigrants are usually called return migrants (Sorainen, 2001) (www.mol.fi). Most of the Ingrin immigrants have never visited Finland before.

There were still 22,000 Ingrins lining up for entry interviews in Russia and Estonia in September 2004. It is anticipated that the pace at which applications are now approved, it will take several years and perhaps even decades to process all. Some expatriated Ingrins have a strong Finnish identity and good language skills upon arrival but many are still struggling in everyday life because of the weak ties to the Finnish language and culture due to Soviet assimilation of the past (www.uvi.fi).

Finland has an agreement with the United Nations on receiving quota refugees. The number of refugees and asylum seekers has generally been low in Finland but has increased during the last decades. Chileans that came at the end of the 1970s was the first small group of refugees in Finland (Sandlund 2004, 5). There is also a fairly large group of Vietnamese refugees that mainly arrived in Finland in the late 1970s and in the early 1980s (Valtonen 1997). The largest refugee groups during the 1990s came from Somalia, former Yugoslavia, Iraq and Iran (Statistics Finland). Somalis form the largest refugee group in Finland, with about 5000 people (Sandlund 2004, 5). Most of the Somali refugees came through the Soviet Union in the beginning of the 1990s when civil war broke out in Somalia (Alitolppa-Niitamo 2004). A lot of refugees from former Yugoslavia arrived in Finland after the civil war in Yugoslavia. At the same time fairly big refugee groups from Iraq and Iran came to Finland.

The number of quota refugees is annually agreed upon by the Finnish government. The Directorate of Immigration and the Ministry of Labour are responsible for the selection of the countries of origin of the quota refugees. Currently about 750 quota refugees are accepted per year and for instance in 2003 the largest groups of quota refugees arriving in Finland were the Afghan, Iranian and Sudanese. The total number of refugees including quota refugees, family reunifications and asylum seekers amounted to 23,452 persons at the end of 2003.

Labour migration has been growing in recent years, much due to increased labour migration from the neighbouring countries, but is still comparatively low. Recruitment of skilled labour from abroad is extremely low compared to the other EU-countries (Forsander 2004, 28). After Estonia gained independence from the former Soviet Union and was confronted with economic problems and unemployment, some Estonians moved to Finland due to better job opportunities and higher salaries. Additionally, the employment office has rendered more flexible
attribution of work and residence permits compared to previous years (OECD-SOPÉMI 2003, 14-15). Most immigrants arriving in Finland don’t have a job waiting for them. According to Forsander the threshold is high for entering the labour market in the Nordic welfare societies, where there is a high rate of unemployment among immigrants. A majority of immigrants in Finland have an unstable or marginal position in the labour market. Immigrants are mostly employed in industry and in the service sector, and are overrepresented in sectors such as cleaning and public transportation. Although unemployment is high among immigrants in Finland, the danger of an ethnification of poverty is small due to social welfare services (Forsander 2002, 281-282).

1.1.3 Residence status
Finland has, as a member of the EU, taken several measures towards renewing the legislation concerning foreigners in recent years. The new Aliens act that brings together legislation in the field has however not been approved by the parliament yet and is still pending (HE 28/2003 vp). An alien is considered a person who is not a Finnish citizen or a citizen of an EU member state, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway or Switzerland (see Aliens Act-301/2004).

The residence status of immigrants in Finland is mainly governed through the general provisions as stipulated in sections 33 and 34 of the Aliens Act. Residence permits are either fixed-term or permanent. Fixed-term residence permits are issued for a residence of temporary nature. Permanent residence permits are marked by the letter P in the passport. There are two types of temporary residence permits, A and B permits. A-permits are continuous and valid until further notification. B-permits are based on changes in the status of the applicant, i.e. it can for example be extended if the person has acquired a permanent job in Finland (Alien’s Act-301/2004).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence permits in Finland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed term</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For temporary residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A-permit</strong> -continuous, valid ² until further notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B-permit</strong> -extension³ based on changes in status of applicant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Nationality Act guarantees the acquisition of Finnish citizenship for a former Finnish citizens and Nordic citizens after two years of uninterrupted living whereas people from other countries must live in Finland for eight years. For refugees with a residence permit, stateless persons and persons with Finnish spouses, the periods are shorter: four consecutive years of residence in Finland, or six years after the age of 15, of which the last two years uninterrupted. Spouses need to prove they have lived together and have done so for the past three years (see Nationality Act 359/2003).

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² Further notification means if the person is convicted of crime or serious allegation he/she may lose his/her status even be deported.

³ B. Permit stands also in a case that the alien cannot be removed from the country that is if the country of origin is unknown. In both case the A and B status, cannot be said to very safe they can be modified accordingly to circumstances.

NB. We do not have any exact statistic related the number of A and B status.
Table 3, the largest immigrant groups per continent of origin that have received Finnish citizenship between 1991 and 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continent</th>
<th>Citizenship between 1991 and 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>13588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>4612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morocco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colombia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>6592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28709</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(source: tilastokeskus 2004:6, 48)

In total, 28 709 foreign citizens have received Finnish citizenship between 1999 and 2003 of which 13 588 are from Europe, 6 592 from Asia, 4 612 from Africa, 856 from America and 45 from Oceania. The largest groups of European immigrants that received Finnish citizenship between 1991 and 2003 came from Russia, Estonia and Sweden. The largest African groups receiving Finnish citizenship during the same period were the Somalis, Moroccans and Ethiopians while the largest Asian groups receiving Finnish citizenship were the Vietnamese, Iraqi and Chinese. Immigration from North and South America and Oceania has generally been smaller and less permanent, which is also indicated by the amount of people that have received Finnish citizenship.

The population of illegal immigrants is estimated to be small. Most illegal immigrants enter the country legally, but are judged as illegal immigrants since their residence permit, visa or visa exempt period has expired. It has been estimated that there could be around 10 000 illegal immigrants in Finland, who have entered on tourist visas and are working temporarily in Finland. There is only a very limited number of people who have entered the country illegally, or who is staying permanently illegally in the country (Similä 2003, 107).

1.1.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the geographical location of Finland remains an obstacle for many people and additionally the culture and the language are elements that have an impact on the immigration development and issues related to it. The country has kept its borders closed until recently. There has been a debate about the ageing of the Finnish population and of the need of foreign labour force; which hasn’t however resulted in large scale labour migration yet. To what extent it will change the immigration patterns to Finland in the future remains an open question (Sandlund 2004, 5).
The rapid political change of the world, EU-membership and the international labour market, the declining birth rate and related aspects such as the ageing of the population in Finland, human rights agreements and freedom of movement have contributed to the increasing number of foreigners living in Finland. Yet, the amount of foreigners in the country remains low but is growing. The increase in immigration has created a necessity for rethinking the rules and legislation for the attribution and acquisition of Finnish state membership. The main types of immigration have been remigration of people of Finnish descent both from Sweden and the former Soviet Union areas. Also, labour migration from the neighbouring countries Russia and Estonia has increased during recent years. Finland has also since joining the EU opened up the borders for more refugees.

1.2 Major issues discussed in relation to immigration

According to Eurobarometer surveys, Finns consider themselves somewhat more racist than Europeans in general (Similä 2003, 104). The rapid increase in immigration to Finland started in the beginning of the 1990s. At the same time, Finland was in a deep economic repression and unemployment figures were high, which led to resentful attitudes towards immigrants. The attitudes towards foreigners have loosened up and people are less negative today, amongst other due to economic growth, more experience and contacts between immigrants and the general population (Ibid. 101-102).

There are a few issues concerning immigration and immigrants that have regularly been discussed in the Finnish press. 19.2% of these articles dealing with ethnic minorities and immigration issues focused on the relationship between ethnic minorities, 15.8% dealt with aspects related to legislation and authority actions and crimes committed by members of ethnic minorities and 8.6% focused on labour market issues. Among the legal and authority issues, the new Aliens act and the procedure of rapid expulsions have received a lot of attention. Other significant themes that have been discussed are the effect of the transition period law on the structure of the labour market and the effect of founding a discrimination board as well as the effect of the non-discrimination / equality act.4

Other significant issues were the wave of Roma refugees from Slovakia seeking asylum in Finland and Estonian labour migration. During 2004 a comparatively large number of Roma people from Slovakia came to Finland seeking asylum due to the circumstances in their country of origin, which received a lot of media attention and was linked to the debate on the new Aliens act and rapid expulsions.5

There has been a long standing debate on how to deal with immigration in general and on the need of labour migration to Finland. The development of the foreign population is also linked to the Finnish ageing phenomenon, resulting in a labour shortage (see OECD SOPEMI report 2003:6-19). The debate has focused on the unfavourable age structure of the country and its possible consequences and policy orientation, including debates on immigration policy and the need for increased labour

4 The percentages are based on a research project conducted by the Department of Journalism at the University of Tampere. The results are based on a media monitoring of seven major newspapers: Helsingin Sanomat, Ilta Sanomat, Iltaalehti, Aamulehti, Turun Sanomat, Kymen Sanomat and Kaleva
5 The Aliens act was presented for the parliament in December 2002, but when it was evident it was not going to be accepted as such, the law was taken back for preparation and will probably be presented for the new parliament within a few years (Streng 2002, 12).
migration. The opinion has been divided between those favouring increased labour migration and those against it. Connected to this, there have been discussions on the EU-enlargement process and the concern of illegal labour market and the asylum question of the Roma people. One of the recent, most visible and highly debated issues has been the immigration of Estonian workers to Finland after Estonia joined the EU and its impact on the Finnish labour market. There is also a reoccurring debate in the media on how to deal with the integration of immigrants, and on how well the integration policies work. Islam and the Islamic world have been mentioned much more frequently in the media after the terrorist attacks in New York and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The reporting has not been entirely negative towards Islam, on the contrary, there seems to be an increased awareness and consciousness from the journalistic side in general while dealing with issues concerning ethnic minorities and immigrants (Haavisto 2004, 18), see also (Sandlund 2000) (Sandlund 2002) (Raittila 2002).

1.3 Institutional setting framing immigrant participation

1.3.1 Governmental division of work

Immigration and refugee affairs fall within the scope of different authorities of which the Ministry of Labour carries most responsibilities. The Ministry of Labour is in charge of immigration policy and strategies, including legislation, implementation and guidance as far as these are concerned with labour immigration, the integration of immigrants in civil society and employment. The Ministry of Labour is also involved with the reception of refugees and asylum seekers, the prevention of ethnic discrimination, racism and intolerance. The Ministry of Interior deals with the supervision of the entry and departure of foreigners, issues of nationality and the co-ordination of EU-issues. It also hosts the Directorate of Immigration, which handles resident permits, asylum affairs, deportations and issues of nationality, the police force and the frontier guard.

The Ministry of Education is in charge of the educational and cultural services for immigrants while the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health gives guidance in matters regarding health care and social welfare. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinates the international cooperation, international agreements and the visa affairs while the Ministry of Justice handles issues on legal protection and discrimination (for the administration of migration affairs in Finland (see Annex I www.mol.fi).

The Finnish model for dealing with immigration issues has been criticized since it is too scattered, there is no coherence in the policies made and different authorities have different, sometimes even contradictory aims (Salmenhaara 2002, 80). In recent times there have been discussions in the Finnish media about establishing a special authority for immigration and immigrant affairs as in Sweden. The opinions on this issue have been divided since some think that the already existing institutions best deal with the immigration and immigrant issues since they are specialised in their field, i.e. the Ministry of Labour is specialized in labour market issues. Others think that a central ministry in charge of all issues related to immigration and immigrant issues would bring more coherent policies in the field.

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6 Results are based on a media monitoring project carried out by the Centre for Research on Ethnic Relations and Nationalism (CEREN) at the Swedish School of Social Science at the University of Helsinki and includes the monitoring of several major Swedish language newspapers and the major Finnish language newspaper.
1.3.2 General legal conditions

Finland has, as an EU member, in recent years taken several measures towards renewing the legislation concerning foreigners and aliens. The new Aliens act that brings together legislation in the field has however not been approved by the parliament yet and is still pending. (HE 28/2003 vp) An alien can be defined as a person who is not a Finnish citizen or a citizen of an EU member state, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway or Switzerland (See Aliens Act-301/2004).

The integration policies and policies concerning foreigners living in Finland have changed since the beginning of the 1990s due to both increased migration to Finland, membership in the European Council and EU membership. The arguments used while drawing up new legislation have still remained the same, with the sovereignty of the state and the effectiveness of the administration on the one hand, and the legal protection and security of refugees on the other hand (Lepola 2000, 416-417). The committee for refugee and immigration affairs was established by the Ministry of Labour in 1995. On the basis of their report a programme for immigration and refugee affairs was established on 16.10.1997. Finnish civil code and the constitution do not provide any specific provision, jurisdictional setting or amendment, except in matters related to residence permits and work. At the national level, all foreigners living legally in Finland are treated solely according the principles issued by the law (on restrictions see 1.3.4).

The main anti-discrimination provisions have been laid down in the Constitution, the Equality Act and the Penal Code. In addition, there are a dozen of individual acts dealing with labour life and prohibiting discrimination in their particular sphere of application. Discrimination based on sex is specifically dealt with in the Act on the Equality between women and men. Most anti-discrimination provisions explicitly prohibit discrimination on a wide variety of grounds and contain a clause according to which discrimination based also on other personal characteristics is prohibited as well (Nationality Act 359/2003).

Section 6 of the Finnish constitution provides for equality and non-discrimination on a wide variety of grounds such as health, disability, sex, ethnic origin, language, religion and belief. The constitution aims at guaranteeing formal equality, i.e. that people are to be treated similarly in similar circumstances, but it also aims at enhancing the achievement of full substantive equality in practice. The constitutional prohibition can directly be tried in courts. In addition to the national legislation the International Human Rights law provides added protection from discrimination (Nationality Act 359/2003).
1.3.2.1 Refugee quotas

There are about fifteen countries in the world that accept quota refugees and Finland is one of them. Within its refugee quota, Finland accepts persons defined as refugees by the UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and other aliens who are in need of international protection for resettlement. Refugee status can be granted to the following people: 1) An alien who has been granted asylum in Finland, 2) An alien who has been issued a residence permit on the basis of refugee status and admitted to Finland within the refugee quota and 3) A family member of the above-mentioned alien who has been granted a residence permit on the basis of family ties and who is to be regarded as a refugee. (www.uvi.fi)

The refugee quota is verified in the State budget each year. In co-operation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Labour annually presents a proposal to the Government concerning the regional allocation of the refugee quota. The grounds for granting a residence permit within the Finnish refugee quota are the following: The alien is in need of international protection in relation to his or her home country. The alien is in need of resettlement from his or her first country of asylum. The requirements for receiving and integrating into Finnish society have been assessed. There are no obstacles, such as public order, security or Finland's international relations, to granting a residence permit. (www.uvi.fi)

The Directorate of Immigration and the Ministry of Labour select the refugees who are admitted to Finland within the annual quota. The selections are usually based on interviews conducted in refugee camps, during which the above grounds for granting a residence permit are examined. A representative of the Security Police also participates in the interviews. A tenth of the refugee quota is annually reserved for urgent cases and for people whom the UNHCR has assessed as being in urgent need of resettlement. These refugees are selected on the basis of UNHCR documents (www.uvi.fi).

If the identity and travel routes of the asylum seeker are unclear, he or she may be placed in a detention center or reception center (there are 15 centers country wide). On March the 1st 2002, a new law on the establishment of a detention center for foreigners taken into custody under the Aliens Act came into force. During the period of detention, the police investigate the applicant’s identity, travel routes and history. According to the Aliens Act, the detention of asylum seekers is legal in cases where the identity or travel route remains unclear or suspicious. The State is responsible for the expenses of the asylum seekers while their application is being assessed. The average monthly cost for the services provided to the asylum seekers is approximately 850 € per person. The costs of the reception centers include the costs of the reception units, i.e. rent and expenses of properties, the living allowances, social and health services, education, interpretation and administration (Sirva, 2001).

As a conclusion, the Finnish anti-discrimination legislation and legislation concerning asylum policies could be said to be fairly liberal. The general practices especially concerning asylum policies are however restrictive (Similä 2003, 110). The policy towards asylum seekers is generally restrictive and will most likely remain that way, while there are suggestions of loosening up the regulations concerning labour migration, which have already partly materialized (Salmenhaara 2002, 62).
1.3.3 The integration law and integration policy programmes
The Finnish integration law is extensive and in a comparative perspective a fairly developed structure (Salmenhaara 2002, 61). The main emphasis of the immigration and refugee policy programmes is on rapid and flexible integration of immigrants. Integration refers to participation in the economy, politics and social life of the society on an equal basis and to have equal rights and obligations compared to the native population. Immigrants should at the same time have the right to maintain and develop their own culture and religion. The Finnish integration act came into force 1.5.1999 and aims at providing immigrants with knowledge in Finnish, information about the Finnish society and culture and possibilities to education and work (Immigration Act, 493/1999:1§). The objective is to support the integration of immigrants including refugees into the Finnish labour market and society by designing individual integration plans for persons who have moved to Finland and have a home municipality in Finland (493/1999, §3).

The law requires all the municipalities to have an integration programme, on the basis of which individual integration paths for all immigrants are built, which aim is full membership in society and work. A three year long individual integration plan is done for every immigrant. All unemployed immigrants or immigrants living on social welfare are required, within a year after coming to Finland, to together with the authorities draw up an individual integration plan and to participate in the education and other measures stated by the plan. Except education and language education the plan might also include work training and support work (Salmenhaara 2002, 61).

Rapid and flexible integration is important both for the well being of the immigrants in the country but it is also an important prerequisite for civic participation. According to Salmenhaara special attention should be drawn to the execution of the integration law and better results could be obtained by increased co-ordination between the authorities and more flexible practices (Salmenhaara 2002, 61).

1.3.4 Political rights and rights to organize
The political rights of foreigners settling permanently in Finland are the same as for Finnish citizens except for voting rights in parliamentary and presidential elections (Valtonen 1997, 235). The 26§ of the municipal law of 1997 establish that people born in an EU-country, in Norway or Iceland have the rights to participate in municipal elections in Finland. Also foreigners from other countries have the right to participate in municipal elections in Finland if they have lived permanently in the country for more than two years before the elections. Foreigners also have the right to stand as candidates in municipal elections assuming that they have voting right and are registered in the municipality in which they stand as candidate (municipal law 33§). The right to stand as candidate and to participate in parliamentary elections requires Finnish citizenship. The same applies for voting in presidential elections. In European Parliamentary elections citizens of other EU member states have the right to vote if they have lived in Finland for two years (Salmenhaara 2004, 11).

The right for foreigners to participate in political associations and political parties have changed during the last decades. Parties in Finland are governed through the association law and the party law (Sundberg 1995). According to the association law from 1919 (Association law 1/1919) foreigners where neither allowed to participate in political organisations nor in organisations with political purposes. Since the revision of the association law of 1989 foreigners were granted the same rights as Finnish
citizens to participate in political organizations required that they are permanently living in Finland (Association law 1989 / 503).

As indicated above the only restricting condition in the voting rights of immigrants in Finland is that citizenship is required for parliamentary and presidential elections. It also requires Finnish citizenship to be able to stand as candidate in parliamentary elections. Some of the highest posts in the Finnish society require that you are born a Finnish citizen. The president of Finland must be a native born Finnish citizen. The same applies for ministers and some high rank army officers.

There are no restrictions for immigrant membership in civil society organizations, even if the organizations pursue political activities. The change of the association law in 1989 (Association law 1/1989) abolished barriers for immigrants to engage in political party activities and also made it possible to join other types of organizations with political goals such as youth parties, leisure movements and labour unions. Nowadays immigrants have the rights to join all types of organizations in Finland on similar premises as native born Finns. Immigrants have similar rights as Finnish workers to join labour unions.

1.3.5 The Finnish electoral system
The electoral system affects the voters’ behaviour (Noponen 1992, 262-275). The electoral system has an impact on both the structure of the party system and the relative size of the parties, as well as it directs which of the candidates gets elected (Reynolds & Riley 2002). The Finnish electoral system is based on proportional representation, where the mandates are calculated based on the d’Hondt formula. The Finnish electoral system is candidate centred where the voter selects the name of the candidate from the party list and casts the vote directly for the candidate. The proportional system as well as the possibility to directly cast the vote for a candidate should be seen as favourable for immigrant voters, since they have the chance to directly cast a vote for some of their country-men and the candidates have a bigger chance of getting elected than in for example majority systems or closed list systems (Hammar 1990, 168).

1.3.6 Measures taken for improving minority rights
There have been some important measures taken in dealing with issues concerning immigrants and foreigners in recent years, like establishing the Ombudsman for minorities and the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO). The Ombudsman for Minorities works under the Ministry of Labour. The tasks of the Ombudsman for Minorities include promoting good ethnic relations, monitoring and improving the status and rights of ethnic minorities, reporting, taking initiatives and informing. In addition, the Ombudsman for Minorities will, together with other officials, supervise that everyone is treated equally regardless of their ethnic background. An Advisory Board for Minority Issues will be established to assist the Ombudsman for Minorities. The Ombudsman for Minorities mainly gives recommendations, instructions and advice. The Ombudsman may also take initiatives concerning social defects or the status of foreigners or different ethnic minority groups. In certain cases the Ombudsman or his office may help persons who have faced discrimination (www.mol.fi).
The Finnish Refugee Council has appointed the refugee woman of the year since 1998. Any refugee woman that is over eighteen years old and has a residence permit is eligible to be nominated for the award. The award winner is expected to participate in awareness campaigns aiming at raising the awareness of refugee issues. The Finnish Refugee Council is a politically and religiously independent non-governmental organisation founded in 1965. Its main tasks include information and education, fund raising, as well as work with refugees in Finland and abroad (www.pakolaisapu.fi).

1.3.7 Encouraging conditions for participation
In recent years immigrants have gained more possibilities to affect immigration and integration policies through the establishment of immigrant advisory boards both at the national as well as at the local level. A national advisory board for ethnic relations was established in 2001, and some of the larger cities have also established advisory councils for foreigners at the local level. The national advisory board for ethnic relations and the local advisory boards in the capital region are presented below.

1.3.7.1 The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO)
On August 16th 2001, the Council of State appointed the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO), by the submission of the Ministry of Labour for a term running from August 17th 2001 to August 16th 2004. The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) is as a broad-based consultative expert organ, which gives statements on matters relating to refugees and migration and on racism and ethnic relations. The board has 57 members; three chairmen, 27 regular members and their 27 personal deputies. A variety of linguistic and cultural minorities are broadly represented on the Advisory Board (www.mol.fi).

Half of the Advisory Board’s members represent traditional and new ethnic minorities. The following communities have their representatives in the Advisory Board: Ingrians, the Jewish congregation in Helsinki, the Finnish Islamic congregation (Finnish Tatar community), Arabic speakers, English speakers, Yugoslavs, French speakers, Somali speakers, Russian speakers, Vietnamese speakers and Kurdish-speaking immigrants. The Swedish-speaking population in Finland is represented by the Swedish Assembly of Finland. (www.mol.fi)

1.3.7.2 Advisory Councils for Foreigners at the local level
The Multicultural Advisory Councils (monikulttuurisuusasiain neuvottelukunta) of Espoo and Vantaa and the Advisory Council for Foreigners (Helsingin Ulkomaalaisasiain neuvottelukunta) were established after the Integration Act came into force. The main function of these councils is to coordinate and advise different delegations for immigration affairs, and especially to follow the outcomes of the integration programmes as well as the work done by the delegation for ethnic discrimination and racism. Members of immigrant associations do participate in the working groups of the Multicultural Advisory Council in Espoo and Vantaa. They are not involved in the decision-making, but do contribute to the planning of integrative issues. The Advisory Council for Foreigners in Helsinki is planning to involve members of immigrant associations and representatives of immigrant groups. The authorities participating in the advisory councils pointed out the problems in reaching
all immigrant associations in their communities due to old or missing contact information (Saksela, forthcoming).

PART II

2. The main fields of civic activities

Immigrant research is still a fairly recent topic in Finland and there is a lack of research in the field. The main interest has been on topics regarding racism and discrimination and labour immigration while there have been fewer studies dealing with the civic participation of immigrants. During the last years, the interest towards the civic participation of immigrants has also grown at the governmental and non-governmental level. The immigration act (493/1999) and the Council of State’s report (VNS 5/2002) emphasise the importance of cooperation among authorities and the third sector including voluntary associations. According to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) Finland has in the last few years taken a number of significant measures to include immigrants and minority groups in the policy development process (ECRI 2002, 5). However, there are still several obstacles to overcome before we can talk about “active participation” of immigrants.

Our attempt is to provide the reader with a description of the participative activities among first generation immigrants in Finland. Participative activities should be seen in a broader setting. Here the concept includes immigrants’ participation in both the political sphere, in associational activities and in other types of social activities, which may improve their position in the society. Beneath participative activities are divided into four subgroups: 1. Associational activities, 2. Religious organisations, 3. Official modes of participation and 4. Political participation.

2.1. Associational activities

Previous studies have shown that immigrant associations may have an important place in the local policy making and in the integration process (Mikkelsen 2003, Nyhagen-Predelli 2003, Leveau and Wihtol de Wenden 2001, van Heelsum and Penninx 1999). Furthermore, participation in organisational activities has given an opportunity for many immigrants to express the needs and interests of their ethnic group (see also Joly, Rex and Wilpert 1987, Layton-Henri 1990, Barany 1998, Winborg 1999). Immigrant associations may influence the mobilisation of an ethnic community by organising social and political activities (e.g., demonstrations) and by making contacts

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7 The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) was set up following a decision of the 1st Summit of Heads of State and Government of the member States of the Council of Europe, held in Vienna in October 1993, and strengthened by a decision of the 2nd Summit held in Strasbourg in October 1997. ECRI’s task is to combat racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance at the level of greater Europe and from the perspective of the protection of human rights (http://www.coe.int/T/E/human_rights/Ecri/1-ECRI/).

8 Most of the immigrants belong to the first generation because of the short immigration history in Finland.
with other voluntary organisations and local authorities (see also Fennema and Tillie 2001, 1999).

Immigrant associations are a new type of associations in Finland (Saksela 2003). Today the number of immigrant associations is approximately six hundred, most of which were established and registered in the mid 1990’s or later (ibid, Pyykkönen 2003a). The small number is partly attributed to Finland’s fairly recent turn from an emigration to an immigration country, which happened at the end of the 1980s. It seems that geographical distance plays a central role in the establishment of an organisation. Smaller ethnic groups that are living in sparsely populated areas of the country seem to have more difficulties to get organised than larger immigrant communities in urban areas.

Table 4 shows the number of registered immigrant associations as well as other associations dealing with multicultural activities. The information is based on a country case study on the role of immigrant associations in the integration process in the Nordic countries. The study explored various dimensions of internal and external activities of the immigrant associations in the Nordic countries (ed. Mikkelsen 2003).

Associations are defined as immigrant associations if they are established by immigrants or if the majority of its members are of foreign background. Apart from immigrant associations, there are also other significant forms of associations working with immigrant issues, for example solidarity associations (diverse types of NGOs), friendship associations (they promote the cultural relationship between Finns and other nationalities), multicultural associations (that emphasize diverse types of cultural activities between the majority population and foreigners in general).

Table 4 indicates the number of existing immigrant associations and of other associations dealing with immigration. Most of the associations (127) are located in the capital area and the other major cities of Tampere (20) and Turku (33) because most immigrants live in these areas. Most of the immigration associations have been established by Somalis, Russians and Ingrians which are also among the largest third country immigrant groups in Finland. The Somalis also represent the largest refugee group, consisting of members from several clans. Partly due to clan disputes Somalis have established parallel organizations. The Russian associations have been established by immigrants from the former Soviet Union. The Russians from the time of autonomy 1809-1917 (Horn 1997: 202-217) have not been included in this study. Today however several new Russian associations collaborate with the older Russian associations. Both the Russian and Ingrian associations emphasize the development of integrative activities and the maintenance of the language and homeland traditions.
Immigrant associations are important since they can both strengthen the integration of immigrants to the Finnish society and the social belonging to their ethnic groups. Immigrants can through these associations meet other immigrants and maintain contacts with their own culture and language. Many of the associations strive to strengthen the integration of immigrants by organizing courses (i.e. language, computer), giving advice in labour, legal and health care matters and by arranging cultural, sports and youth activities. Furthermore they work as bridge builders between immigrants and authorities in communicating the needs of the immigrants in the political sphere through which they contribute to the democratic pluralism (Saksela, 2003).

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9 Abbreviations: H= Helsinki area, Jo=Joensuu, Jy=Jyväskylä, Ko=Kotka, Ku=Kuopio, L=Lappeenranta, P=Pori, O=Oulu, T=Tampere, Tu=Turku
10 This number includes only the associations that are established by immigrants who came to Finland after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.
The cooperation between immigrant associations and authorities is still in an evolving stage. Due to the novelty of the immigrant associations in Finland many of them are still looking for the best ways of developing their activities and cooperation both with other associations in the civil society and with local authorities. This also regards the contacts between immigrants and the authorities in general (Saksela, forthcoming).

Immigrant associations are important for integration and can be divided into different types based on their interests. Different types of organizations emphasise integration in different ways. Ethno-cultural associations, for instance, mainly promote integration of participants to the ethnic group that they claim to represent and thus tend to increase ethnic affiliation. Coalition associations consist of several associations that share similar interests, integration associations strive to integrate immigrants to the majority community; and multicultural associations both to majority and local immigrant community. The associations may have a multidimensional approach to all directions. In practice, one association may represent several types, putting stress towards more than just one dimension of integration (Pyykkönen 2003b).

The associational participation among immigrants is also affected by the structure and function of the association. For example in the Jyväskylä area many multiethnic and multicultural orientated associations offer their members (and target groups) opportunities to belong to many different groups, which are not all founded on ethnic premises (Pyykkönen 2003a). Consequently there are memberships and networks of identities that vary according to time and place. These are used by young people in order to build “survival routes” in their lives where cultural and possibly very different social communities are at odds with each other. Activities such as sport events, discos, concerts, homework tutoring, informal social events and their own magazines open up possibilities for youth to establish new social contacts with the youth from the majority population and of other ethnic groups. Mono-ethnic youth associations on the other hand offer their members an opportunity of collective remembering of the home-land and cultural preservation (Pyykkönen, forthcoming).

2.2 Religious organisations

Religious practices often play a crucial role in the integration of immigrants into the host society. Earlier studies have shown that it is difficult to make ‘clear cut boundaries’ between different arenas of integration (Martikainen, forthcoming). Being a member of a religious association, for example, can strengthen the belongingness to the civil society in general and provide “cultural integration” by maintaining elements of the immigrants’ own culture and by incorporating new elements from the host society. Furthermore, members of religious associations can also work as bridge builders between the local authorities and their ethnic communities by transferring information of their ethnic group to the Finnish society and vice versa (Martikainen 2004b,c; Saksela forthcoming).

Religion plays an important role in the maintenance and (re)creation of the ethnic collective identity among immigrants. Immigrants’ associations, their participation in public discussions and their religious adaptation have a central function in the process of immigrant settlement to their local host communities. Practices and forms of religious activities in the immigrants’ local communities are also influenced by their international and transnational contacts and global media (Martikainen, 2004a).
It has been proven that inter-religious dialogues are important forums through which immigrants become part of the civil society (Martikainen, forthcoming). Associations make immigrants recognized actors in the eyes of local authorities, and it also furthers an adaptation process to local social structures as the forms of associations are mostly dictated by national legislation. Inter-religious dialogue initiates a similar process with regards to being religious in a nationally accepted way. It also promotes religious tolerance between religious communities. Furthermore, through these activities the immigrants start to conform to local ways of understanding religion (ibid).

Based on demographical statistics, it can be estimated that all of the larger and many of the smaller new ethnic and national groups have organised themselves religiously. About 20% of people of immigrant origin are formally registered members of religious organisations, but the real figure is higher, as the idea of formal belonging is alien to many religious traditions, e.g. Buddhism and Islam. Therefore the rates also appear the highest among Christians. For instance, only 10% of Somali speakers are officially members of Muslim organisations, but we know that almost 100% of them consider Islam to be an important part of their lives (MAMELO 2002) (Martikainen 2004a).

The establishment of religious associations or communities is not hindered by any legal limitations in Finland, but the level of formal organisation is very different between groups. Communities of Christian origin (Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant) have been the most active in this respect, but also extensive Muslim organisation has taken place. The number of Muslims living in Finland is around 30 000 (in 2004) of which 95% are of recent immigrant origin, 2,5% converts and 2,5% belong to the “Tatar Muslims”, which is an Islamic minority of Russian origin established in Finland in the late nineteenth century. There are around 30 mosque associations, most of which are formally organised as either “registered religious communities” or “registered associations”.

Religious activity is an important way for Muslims to participate in their local communities. They can adapt to Finnish civil society and become partners of cultural negotiations through religious associational activities. The local Muslim community needs to adapt certain associational features, in order to apply for financial help as well as to be able to promote their own interests, for instance, within the contexts of school, health care and cultural policy. Otherwise they will not be recognized as suitable actors by local authorities who prefer group representatives to individuals. In this way Muslims also learn how local society is structured and may take advantage of it (Martikainen 2004c).

Parochial assemblies as well as religious activities organized among ethnic and religious minorities (Jews, Tatars or Pentecostal members) can strengthen the belongingness of its members to the own ethnic community. In some cases religious activities can strengthen the bond between recent arrivals and immigrants who arrived long ago. For example Orthodox parishes provide a social space for both the old and the new Russians. The old ones are those who arrived to Finland during the Russian conquest of Finland in the 18th century (1721/1734-1812) and in the semi-autonomous time, 1809-1917 (Horn 1997: 202-217) while the new Russians are immigrants who have immigrated to Finland mainly in the 1990’s.
2.3. Official modes of participation

Legal and practical modes of participation have been explored in a country case report called ‘Glocalmig’ (Salmenhaara and Saksela 2004). The aim of this study is to show the reader the importance of the connection between global change and its influence on the lives of citizens (and non-citizens) in their local settings. Therefore four target groups were selected: (1) historical minorities, (2) extra-territorial citizens, (3) second-country nationals, and (4) third-country nationals. The collection of the data was based on the sub-national, regional, national and supra-national institutions and policies guaranteeing the status and rights of the before mentioned categories of people.

The study showed that the Finnish system of actualisation of rights is still ineffective in some part. Many immigrants and ethnic minorities feel deprived and are often dependent on the welfare state. Reasons for this may be discrimination or a non-adaptive service supply, which creates a process of double deprivation, a kind of vicious circle. Deprivation in society may be followed by deprivation in health care, housing, education, vocational training and so forth, which again is easily reflected in the employment situation of these groups. Further, the study showed that multicultural places, which could be characterized as glocal settings, prove to be important for minority members, to exercise their rights, re-create and transform their ethnic identity, as well as to build up new social contacts. In the development of a more equal and efficient incorporation of minorities into the Finnish society, more attention should be paid to the development of multicultural sites and their cooperation with the authorities.

Cooperation between immigrant associations and local authorities has proved to be important in the process of settling into the Finnish society. A recent study of the cooperation forums in the capital area showed that there is a lack of information between local authorities and immigrant associations, which may hinder the active participation of associations in their local communities (Saksela, forthcoming). A forthcoming article charts the appearance and function of existing cooperation arenas among local authorities and immigrant associations in the capital area of Finland, and describes some of the obstacles that may impede the cooperation. The methodological setting of the study emphasizes the “top-down” approach, although also the “bottom-up approach” will be applied in the author’s subsequent research. The material consists of semi-structured questionnaires sent to authorities working with immigrants, and of semi-structured interviews conducted among immigrant associations of diverse types.

Cooperative arenas exist both within official sites (organised by the authorities) and within unofficial sites (organised by the immigrant- and other associations). According to the information received from the authorities the main activities include multicultural advisory councils, projects, social services, educational resources and the use of ‘Economic and Employment Development Centres’ (Uudenmaan työvoima ja elinkeinokeskukset, Te-keskukset). The multicultural councils work as important platforms for exchange of expertise in the planning and follow-up of integration

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11 The Finnish historical minorities include Swedish speaking Finns (Swedish speaking Finns are a numerical minority but have the same legal status as the majority population) the Same, ‘old Russians”, Jews and Tatars. Extra-territorial citizens include people from the Åland Islands. Second country nationals’ corresponds to EEA nationals and the Swiss and the citizens of Schengen countries. Third country nationals are people from outside these areas.
programmes. Members of associations may work as experts on several immigrant related issues in the advisory councils. Projects between associations and local authorities provide a crucial place in the improvement of immigrants’ well-being in the Finnish society.

The cooperation between immigrant associations and social services is important but still mainly limited to counselling and financial support. Immigrant associations are mainly in contact with the social services when they need information and advice on the Finnish social security system and in questions regarding how to finance their associational activities.

Bottom-up activities could be defined as events which aim at mobilizing ethnic group(s), in the form of public debates, demonstrations and cultural happenings focusing on the maintenance of ethnic group traditions. Multicultural centres provide a significant resource for getting immigrants’ voices heard in the civil society. The study proved that immigrant associations are often perceived as “passive actors”, who should be helped to find their place in society. The future will demand a new starting point for cooperation between immigrants and their associations, with the authorities and the immigrants being perceived from both sides as “equal partners” (Saksela, forthcoming).

2.4 The political participation of immigrants in Finland

There is a lack of research dealing with the political participation of immigrants in Finland (Valtonen, 1997). The political participation of immigrants in Finland is a subject that only briefly has been elaborated on in a few articles (Turkia 2002, 50). One reason for the relative absence of research in this field is the relatively short time that immigrants have had voting rights, the rights to party membership and rights to participation in political organizations. The second reason for the relative absence of studies in the field is that Finland is a new migration country, with a relatively small immigrant population. This is also the reason why research in the field of migration research and research dealing with ethnic relations has developed only since the 1990s (Wahlbeck 2003). According to a large quantitative mapping of research dealing with ethnic relations in Finland, most studies in the field deal with education and attitudes (Helander 1996). The interest in the field has been growing in recent years and at the moment there are a few projects dealing with the political participation of immigrants.

2.4.1 The electoral participation of immigrants in Finland

It is hard to establish an exact figure of the degree of electoral participation among immigrants in Finland. A sample from the electoral register indicates that in 1996, circa 17 % and in 2000 circa 14 % of the immigrant population possessing voting rights voted in the municipal elections in the capital region (Hellsten & Martikainen 2001, 52-53). Survey results indicate that these figures could be somewhat underestimated since one of the most decisive factors for electoral participation is

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12 No separate records are kept of the electoral participation of immigrants in Finland. The only way to establish the degree of electoral participation is either to take samples from the electoral register or to use survey techniques. There is no data available for other forms of political participation either.

13 The figures presented here represent the capital region where 44 % of the immigrant population lives. There are no official records of electoral participation of immigrants in Finland. The figures for the capital region are based on a random sample of (N=1461) from the electoral register.
citizenship. When studying electoral registers, only people with foreign background that have not yet acquired citizenship are included\(^\text{14}\). There also seems to be considerable differences between different immigrant groups concerning the degree of participation. According to a large survey by Statistics Finland\(^\text{15}\) circa 40 % of the Russian population, 35 % of the Somali population and 31 % of the Vietnamese and Estonian population voted in the municipal elections 2000 in the capital region (MAMELO 2002). The figures are much lower for immigrants that have not yet acquired citizenship. The degree of electoral participation among immigrants in Finland is very low compared to the general population. In 1996 the general turnout rate in the municipal elections was 61.3 % and in 2000 it was 55.9 % (Wilhelmsson 2004). Electoral participation among the immigrant population also seems to be lower in Finland compared to the other Nordic countries. In Sweden the general turnout rate among the immigrant population was 35 % and in Norway 38 % (Hellsten & Martikainen 2001, 52).

2.4.2 Reasons behind the low levels of participation, some research results

Martikainen and Hellsten (2001) assume that the low levels of political participation among immigrants in Finland is a sign of a lack of integration since voting in elections is connected to integration into the host society. Ekholm (1994) has also dealt with the integration of immigrants in Finland\(^\text{16}\). Ekholm divides integration into structural integration and internal integration. Structural integration is defined as immigrant participation at an equal basis with the majority population in the economic, social and political life of the majority community by taking into account their own cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The electoral participation of immigrants is affected by the structures and rules of the host society but also by internal features of the immigrant groups; socio-demographic resources, such as education and language proficiency are features which can affect the ability to participate. Ekholm draws the conclusion that full participation in the economic, social and political life in the Finnish society has only been realized for a small group of refugees. There seems to be an interest in both political participation and in other types of societal participation. However, a lack of both individual and social resources as well as information among the refugee community in Finland makes it hard for them to organize politically and to be able to engage in activities in order to meet their goals and demands (Ekholm 1994).

According to Valtonen (1997) political activism seems to require familiarity with the political system and experience with the socio-political context before interest can be transformed into demand, involvement and action. Social resources and group cohesion is needed in order to be able to organize politically. Valtonen states that most of the immigrant groups in Finland are too small and too heterogeneous in order to organise and take action on their own. Immigrants have thus tried to seek affiliation with the mainstream organizations and parties which only recently have shown an interest in the inclusion of immigrants in their activities.

It also seems that it takes quite a long time before immigrants learn the Finnish political system. A lack of knowledge of the political context and the dynamics of the

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\(^{14}\) The problem with survey results on the other hand is a tendency of over reporting participation. There is a tendency of a 5 to 10 % over reporting of electoral participation in surveys (Borg 1996)

\(^{16}\) The research material consists of both quantitative survey data and interviews.
political system makes it hard to participate even though many immigrants have been politically active in their country of origin (Valtonen 1997, 52). A study by Wilhelmsson (2004) which is based on survey data consisting of Estonian, Russian, Somali and Vietnamese immigrants in the capital region, indicates that on the individual level, citizenship and connected to citizenship, the time of residence in the country are the most decisive factors for electoral participation in municipal elections. Also the level of organizational participation shows a positive correlation with electoral participation even while ruling out spurious effects of other relevant variables.

The conclusions that can be drawn from the existing studies in the field, is that the low levels of political participation of immigrants in Finland are due to several factors. Most immigrants have arrived in Finland only recently and are not yet familiar with the political system, the immigrant communities are fairly heterogeneous, have weak organizations and resources and the mainstream parties have not yet solicited the immigrant vote.

2.4.3 Participation in political parties and labour unions

Immigrant and immigration issues have become more prominent in Finland only in recent years. Some political parties have reacted and established immigrant working groups in recent years (Salmenhaara 2003, 31). There are however considerable differences between the parties in how they deal with the issue of immigrants and immigration. The Green League, the Left Wing alliance and the Christian Democrats pay attention to the issues of immigration and multiculturalism on the national level while the other parties neglect these issues or deal with them at the local level. The Green League seems to be the party with the strongest focus on the issues of immigration. It has a constructive and well developed national strategy on how to deal with the integration of immigrants into the Finnish society and see immigrants as an asset to the Finnish society (Lindén 2004). During the election meetings before the municipal elections 2004, for example the parliamentarians Ulla Anttila from the Green League and Eva Biaudet from the Swedish Peoples party strongly advocated the importance of having a coherent program for immigration policies and the importance of recruiting more immigrant candidates and promoting participation of the immigrant population.\textsuperscript{17}

Party membership and participation in political organizations was not allowed for foreigners before 1990 (Sundberg 1995). According to Valtonen it seems that the interest of political parties to recruit immigrants both as party members and as candidates seems to have increased in recent years. Also the interest of immigrants to get involved in politics and participate in party activities seems to have increased. (Valtonen 1999, 52). Recent empirical findings from the capital region, where 44 % of the immigrant population lives, do not confirm this development. Survey results indicate that participation in party activities is still very low. Only 1.4 % of the immigrants (N=1361) in the immigrant survey (MAMELO 2002) stated that they participate in party activities.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{17} Participant observation of Niklas Wilhelmsson
\textsuperscript{18} The political parties don’t keep membership records which would allow the assessing of immigrant members, which makes survey methods the only way of assessing the number of immigrant party members.
2.4.4 Membership in Labour unions

Labour unions are powerful organizations that have a significant role as negotiating partners between the workers and the employers. Labour unions have traditionally had a strong position in the Nordic countries. There are high instrumental incentives for workers to join labour unions because of the benefits that can be received. Membership in labour unions does not automatically imply a lot of activity from the members, it seems on the other hand that membership activities among labour union members usually is fairly low (Rothstein 2004, 137).

Figure 6, Membership in labour unions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership in interest organisations</th>
<th>Estonian</th>
<th>Russian</th>
<th>Somali</th>
<th>Vietnamese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>participate</td>
<td>49,4</td>
<td>44,9</td>
<td>17,0</td>
<td>29,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n)</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(MAMELO 2002)

Membership in labour unions is much more common among the Finnish immigrants than party membership. Almost 50% of the Estonian and Russian immigrants are members of a labour union while membership is less frequent among Vietnamese and Somali, which might reflect the different positions these groups have on the labour market. Unemployment rates are especially high among Somali immigrants and Vietnamese immigrants are often self-employed in small scale enterprises (Forsander 2002).

2.4.5 Immigrant candidates in municipal elections

The number of immigrant candidates in municipal elections has generally been low, but has increased significantly in the last elections. In the municipal elections in 2004 there where 209 candidates19 with immigrant background of which 75 were nominated in the capital region where most of the immigrants live. The number of immigrant candidates in the capital region (including Espoo and Vantaa) has increased especially rapidly. The number of candidates increased from 9 candidates in 1996 to 75 candidates in 2004. There are three main reasons behind the increase of immigrant candidates in recent years. First, immigrants where not allowed to participate in political party activities before 1989 (Sundberg 1995). Second, immigrants received voting rights in municipal elections only in the 1990s (municipal law 26-33§). Third, the relative number of immigrants eligible to vote has increased which makes them a more interesting target group for political parties.

19 There have been difficulties in establishing the total number of immigrant candidates representing the Social Democratic party, which may result in that some of the candidates representing the Social Democratic party are missing in the figures presented here. The number of missing candidates should however be small.
In recent years some political parties have indicated that they want more immigrant candidates but the recruitment has started slowly since the parties have often failed to take action. The parties have not arranged recruitment campaigns for immigrants and the general view among the parties has been that they would like to have more immigrant candidates but they have expected immigrants to be active and take contact (Turkia 2002, 50-51). Valtonen (1997) draws the conclusion that the immigrant vote is still small and the parties have not yet solicited it (Valtonen 1997, 195).

Table 7 Number of immigrant candidates and elected representatives in the municipal elections in the capital region 1996-2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital region</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of candidates elected</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital region</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Immigrant candidates still only amount to a small percentage of the total number of candidates. Most immigrant candidates in the capital region where nominated by the Green League (19) followed by the Social Democratic party (15). The corresponding figures for the other major parties are as follows: the Christian Democratic Party (13), The National Coalition Party (conservatives) (12), the Centre Party (7), the Left Wing Alliance (4), the Swedish Peoples Party (4) and the Communist Party (1). Some small alternative parties (Vaihtoehtoväki and the Liberals) have also nominated several immigrant candidates (Vasama 2004). The largest group of immigrant candidates was of African origin followed by candidates from the former Soviet Union, Asia and candidates from other European countries. Only three immigrant candidates in the capital region were elected. Of the candidates that were elected two represented the Green League and one the Left Wing Alliance.

Immigrant candidates in the municipal elections 2004 were generally well educated. Around 53 % of the immigrant candidates had a university degree compared to 25 % among candidates in general. The average age of the immigrant candidates was 41.8 years compared to 46.7 among candidates in general. The largest group of immigrant candidates where entrepreneurs (23 %) which is not surprising considering the high proportion of immigrants that are self employed or work in small scale businesses in Finland. The other large areas of occupation among immigrant candidates include the service sector (20 %) and education and language services (20 %) (Vasama 2004).20

Even though there has been a significant increase in immigrant candidates during the last years this has not translated into votes and representation, since only a few immigrant candidates, as indicated of table 3, have been elected to the municipal

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20 The figures are based on a student paper written by Erica Vasama. The figures are based on information received from the web sites of the Finnish parties and the home pages of the candidates. The education and occupation is based on the information the candidate him or herself has given.
councils. Some parties have also nominated candidates with immigrant background in parliamentary elections. So far no candidates with immigrant background have been elected to the Finnish parliament (Salmenhaara 2003, 31).

2.4.6 Participation in advisory boards
Immigrant participation in the policy making processes has increased in recent years. The development of the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) is seen as important progress. In ETNO immigrant members have for the first time equal voting and decision rights as the Finnish officials (Tuomarla MT 4/2000). Members of immigrant organisations also participate in the multicultural advisory board of the communities of Espoo and Vantaa. They mostly take part in the planning of issues regarding the living conditions of immigrants but they do not take part in the decision making. The participation of immigrants in the advisory board of Helsinki is under planning. (Saksela, forthcoming).

In the year 2005 the Advisory Board on Ethnic Relations (ETNO) have extended its activities to the regional capitals. In the regional offices minority members are working together with officials representing the State. The restructuring of ETNO that was approved by the parliament has received negative reactions from some of the minority members of ETNO living in Helsinki. Most of the former members have resisted the restructuring of ETNO due to a lack of coherence and a number of controversies related to the new policy and the new structures of ETNO. The main reasons behind the resistance cannot be detailed in this report, but it especially regards the structure of the executive body which now will be constituted in majority by members of the Ministries and communal authorities, this does not leave much room to minority representatives in decision-making. In any case, since the creation of ETNO in 1998, this is the first time that political parties are represented in the activities of the advisory Board. If the presence of the political parties will convert or reshape the image and the objectives of the Advisory Board remains an open question (Silvain Sagne).

2.5 Immigrants active in public life
There are some immigrants who are active in the public life in Finland but it is hard to select the most prominent ones following any objective criteria. The ones presented here are chosen by the authors of this article. Other persons than those presented here could equally well have been chosen. One of the most visible immigrants in public life in Finland is Umayya Abu-Hanna. She was born in Palestine but has lived in Finland for decades and is nowadays a Finnish citizen. Ms. Abu-Hanna is a well-known writer, journalist and media personality that actively has been working on human rights issues, gender issues and on welfare issues. She has been actively involved in third sector organizations. The Ministry of Culture has rewarded Umayya Abu-Hanna for her work.

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21 No official records on the number of immigrant candidates are available. The figures presented here are collected from the party offices and are fairly accurate. There might however be a few immigrant candidates missing since some political parties had considerable difficulties in delivering the data and were uncertain if every single immigrant candidate was included. One of the party officials for example replied that we don’t make differences between our candidates since they all represent our party.

22 Immigrants who have already acquired Finnish citizenship are eligible to be nominated candidates in parliamentary elections.
Ms. Battulo Essak is another prominent immigrant in public life. Ms. Essak was born in Somalia and came to Finland as a refugee in 1991. Ms. Essak who nowadays is a Finnish citizen is a nurse who has been involved in many voluntary organisations and social activities. She was elected Woman Refugee of the Year 2001. Ms. Essak was elected to the municipal council in Helsinki in the municipal elections 2000. She represents the Green League.

Ms. Zahra Abdullah was born in Somalia and came to Finland as a refugee in 1991. Ms. Zahra Abdullah is an educated midwife and has been working both as a nurse and as an interpreter. She has also been active in public life and was elected Woman Refugee of the Year 2003. Ms. Zahra Abdullah was elected to the municipal council in Helsinki and was also close to going through in the parliamentary elections. She has by many been anticipated to be the first African born representative of the Finnish parliament.

Mr. Mohammed Kaiser was born in Bangladesh but has been living in Finland for over 10 years. He has an M.A. in political science and has been active in politics for over 35 years. He is a representative of the municipal council in Espoo, representing the Left Wing Alliance. He is also a member of the youth committee, equality committee, the board for multiculturalism and a member of several NGOs, amongst others he is the chairman of the USHA ry.

Mr. César Williams is originally from Guinea but nowadays a Finnish citizen. He is involved in many humanitarian activities and an active member of many third sector organisations. He has been working on equality issues and he has been encouraging active civic participation of immigrants in Finland.

PART III: Expert Assessment

The rapid increase in the number of immigrants in Finland from the beginning of 1990s has raised new issues concerning the integration of immigrants to the society. Participation in civic activities is one way to strengthen the inclusion of immigrants to their host society as well as to maintain their own cultural traditions. Furthermore, especially the granting of voting rights for immigrants makes it possible also for immigrants without citizenship to have a say in matters in their new home country. The Finnish state has recently taken some legislative measures in order to lower the threshold for participation and to incorporate immigrants in the decision making process both at the national and the local level. The Integration act requires the municipalities to give societal education and guidance in order to make societal participation easier. However, there are still problems in the sharing and dissemination of information between authorities and immigrants and in the division of work between different authorities. Advisory councils both at the national and at the local level have been established in order to get the voices of the immigrants heard and in order to have their opinions expressed (Saksela 2004).

3.1 Associational activities among third country immigrants

The research on immigration associations is still fairly new due to the short time of associative life of immigrants (and immigration) in Finland. Previous studies in the field show that the associative life of immigrants is quite heterogeneous (Pykkönen, 2003, Saksela 2003). The most significant types of associations can be divided into the areas of integration, multiculturalism, coalition, sport, religion and
immigrant women and youth associations. In practice one association can focus on several types of interests (Pyykkönen 2003). Recently associations have started to direct their activities towards women and youth. Immigrant women’s associations aim to improve the living conditions of women by organising educational courses and by sharing information of the Finnish society and the labour market. Youth associations focus especially on diverse forms of sport activities. There is also an increase in religious activity and a growing number of religious associations in the local communities (Martikainen 2004). Religious activities play a crucial role in the settlement of immigrants to the Finnish society even though the number of religious associations is low. Religious activity in immigrant associations strengthens the bond between immigrants sharing the same religion (Saksela, personal comment).

The largest number of immigrant associations in Finland have been established by Somalis (40 associations), Ingrians (40 associations) and Russians (28 associations). One reason for the comparatively high number of Somali associations has to do with the size of the Somali community in Finland and internal clan disputes which have divided the associations. There are also many Russian and Ingrian associations. Many of these associations emphasize maintaining contacts with the homeland traditions and language (Saksela, personal comment). Furthermore, other smaller immigrant and refugee groups, for example the Kurds, have become active in the associational life. The Kurds are famous for their extensive networks within and beyond the borders of their host society (Østergaard-Nielsen 2000a, b, Wahlbeck 1999). This may partly explain the active associational life among them.

Direct comparisons between the associational activities of the majority population and the immigrants have not yet been done. Party membership and participation in political associations among Finns has shown a decline during the last decades. Instead there is a growing interest towards leisure and hobby associations emphasizing individual issues like cultural and sport activities. This could partly be explained by the globalizing trends that has replaced collective values with the individual ones (Siisiäinen 2003).

Even if the associational participation in civil society is growing, it still covers only a small part of the immigrants. In addition to associational activities some of the immigrants participate regularly in religious and local community activities organised in their neighbourhood (Martikainen, forthcoming, Saksela, forthcoming). Communities have become more aware – partly due to the integration law and the application of the integration program – of immigrants’ interests and need of social activities. There are still problems in sharing information between local authorities, immigrant associations and immigrants. In the future more emphasis should be put on collaboration between mainstream society organisations and immigrant associations. The immigrants could learn and find new ways of organising their activities from the Finnish ones. Furthermore more effort should be given to get immigrant women into the civil society and out of the home. One way could be to ask active immigrant women who are members in immigrant associations to work as advisors and mediators between other immigrant women and the majority population (Saksela, personal comment).

Another group that will need more attention in the future is the aging immigration population in Finland. Amran Mohammed Ahmed, who has been nominated the refugee woman of the year, has pointed out that it would be important to educate support persons for older immigrants.
3.2 Political participation

The electoral participation of immigrants in Finland is generally very low and much lower than among the population in general. The electoral participation among the immigrant population is also lower in Finland compared to the other Nordic countries. There seems to be various reasons for the low participation levels, some resembling a lack of integration into the Finnish society while others are more specific for the political context. A few quantitative studies indicate (Valtonen 1997; Martikainen & Hellsten 2003) (Wilhelmsson 2004) that electoral participation is low among most of the immigrant groups in Finland. Immigrants from Western Europe and the USA generally tend to have higher degrees of electoral participation than third country nationals.

It seems as third country immigrants are often not well integrated into the Finnish society (Ekholm 1996) (Valtonen 1997). Third country immigrants tend to hold unfavourable socio-demographic resources for electoral participation. They have a younger age structure, are often less educated and many are unemployed and also lack the knowledge and experiences of the Finnish political system. This kind of knowledge and experience is necessary in order to be able to translate demands into involvement and action (Ekholm 1994) (Wilhelmsson 2004). Most immigrants lack information about politics in Finland, because they have arrived in Finland only recently. They lack language skills which are necessary in order to be able to follow politics and get involved in political activity. A quantitative survey material indicates that immigrants who arrived before the mid 1990s and those who have Finnish citizenship have higher participation rates than those who have arrived recently (Wilhelmsson 2004). This raises the hopes that political participation and involvement will increase within a few years (Wilhelmsson, personal opinion).

Finnish political parties have until lately not shown much interest towards incorporating immigrants into the political processes. Immigrant groups are furthermore too small and heterogeneous to be able to organize themselves (Valtonen 1997). Only in recent years some of the Finnish parties have started to draw up immigration programmes and recruit immigrant candidates. The number of immigrant candidates has increased rapidly during since the mid 1990s, which could be seen as an increased interest in involving immigrants in the political processes (Personal opinion, Wilhelmsson). Despite the new will of some politicians and officials to integrate foreigners, in certain decisions-making procedures, a majority of the third country immigrants, will remain politically marginalized. One reason for this is that the immigration questions do not have a major foothold in political debates nor will opposition parties choose immigration as an issue for challenging ruling parties. Even after being chosen, immigrants are still subjected to invisibility in terms of decision-making. One may suggest that in terms of power, the relations between naturalised citizens and genuine citizens are lacking in cohesion (Personal opinion, Sagne).

Based on survey data it is possible to draw the conclusion that participation in political parties and party activities is very low among immigrants in Finland. Only a small percentage of the immigrants are active with party activities, which is much lower than among the general population. Labour union membership on the other hand seems to be fairly common among the employed immigrants. Among third country immigrants Labour union membership is higher among immigrants from the former Soviet Union areas than among immigrants from African and Asian countries, which much reflects their position in the labour market (Mamelo 2003).
The political participation of immigrants in Finland is an almost unstudied field. The reasons behind the lack of studies in the field are to be found in the fact that the immigrant population in Finland is small and immigrants have received political rights only fairly recently. Some earlier studies and two ongoing research projects, deal with how immigrants engage in formal political participation, i.e. electoral participation, party membership and candidacy. To our knowledge the field of informal political activities among immigrants is an un-researched area.

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Directorate of immigration, http://www.uvi.fi, date of visit 1.11.2004-12-18

Legal sources: Nationality Act, Aliens Act, Immigration Act, Municipal law
ANNEX 1 Research institutions in Finland

Summary

Research dealing with immigration and ethnicity in Finland is still new and there has not yet been much research carried out in the field, which reflects the fact that the immigrant population in Finland is very small and immigration to Finland started only recently. In the late 1990s a few research institutes in the field were established at the University of Helsinki, at the University of Joensuu and at the University of Lapland. Then there is also the independent Migration Institute conducting research in this field. The establishing of these research institutes has lead to an increase in research in the field. Research on immigration and ethnicity is mainly carried out at these research institutes while there are also individual researchers spread out at different departments of the Universities dealing with the same issues. The specific field of civic participation of immigrants has not been researched yet. Several Ph.D. projects are however going on at the moment dealing with these issues. Ph.D. students are here called relevant researchers when they conduct research on these themes and publish articles related to these questions.

1. Research institutes dealing with Active Civic Participation of Immigrants

Centre for Research on Ethnic Relations and Nationalism at the Swedish School of Social Science at the University of Helsinki
Phone: +358-9-19128470, fax: +358-9-191 28485
Website: www.sockom.helsinki.fi/seren
Director: Matti Similä

The Centre for Research on Ethnic Relations and Nationalism (CEREN) was established at the Swedish School of Social Science (SSKH) at the University of Helsinki in 1998. The aims of CEREN are to conduct and support research and teaching in the field, mainly in social and "human" sciences, gather and document Finnish research and research results in this area, arrange relevant seminars and postgraduate teaching, develop national and international networks for research and teaching, work together with official bodies, immigrant and minority groups in the struggle against racism and xenophobia.

Relevant researchers at CEREN:

Sanna Saksela MA in 1999 in Cultural Anthropology. Saksela’s thesis was about the social networks of Peruvian immigrants in Berlin. Today she is studying as PhD doctoral fellow at the University of Helsinki, with focus on immigrant women's associational claims making in the capital area. It is expected that the study will bring novel information of immigrant women's participation into the host society as well as give new insight of immigrant's civic activities in the host society.

Niklas Wilhelmsson M.A. is a research fellow at CEREN and works on his Ph.D. theses dealing with the political participation of immigrants in Finland, in which he focuses on both the electoral participation of the immigrant population, on participation in political party activities as well on immigrant candidates. His quantitative study builds on both survey and aggregate data. He has written articles on
both about the political participation of immigrants as well as on the Swedish speaking population in Finland of which the latest will be published in spring 2005.

Relevant Researchers in the field of immigrants’ civic participation:

**Kathleen Valtonen** is one of the only researchers in Finland that have dealt extensively with the political participation of immigrants in Finland. She has also been involved in several research projects dealing with the integration of immigrants in Finland.

Kathleen Valtonen  
Sosiaalipolitiikan laitos, Turun yliopisto  
Hämeenkatu 6, 20500 Turku  
phone 02-333 5713  
fax 02-333 5093  
kathva@utu.fi

**Tuomas Martikainen** works as a full-time researcher and a part-time teacher at Åbo Akademi University in the Department of Comparative Religion. He has been at the Åbo Akademi since 1997. In addition to Comparative Religion, Martikainen has studied Russian Language and Literature, Geography, Philosophy, Economics and Sociology.

He has recently finished his PhD in comparative religion with the title *Immigrant Religions in Local Society: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives in the City of Turku*. The major theme in the thesis is the multidimensional nature of locality (glocality). International and transnational contacts, immigration and global media increasingly change the lived locality of communities and people. The task of the research is to understand these various dimensions and their relevance in the life of the local religious communities. At the same time the study highlights some aspects of current religious change Finland. Martikainen has also written several articles dealing with religious organizations in Finland.

Åbo Akademi University Comparative Religion Fabriksgatan 2 20500 Åbo Finland,  
E-mail: tuomas.martikainen@abo.fi  
Telefax: +358-2-215 4902 Mobile:+358-40-592 4202  

**Miikka Pyykkönen** MA is in his PhD thesis dealing with the role immigrant organisations play for immigrants in their new home country. He examines which issues are considered important for different immigrant groups in organisational activities. The research was done through participant observations and interviews with immigrants.

Department of Science and Philosophy at the University of Joensuu. P.O. Box 35, 40014 University of Jyväskylä, Finland. E-mail: miippyk@yfi.jyu.fi. Tel: + 358-(0)14 260 36 36
2. Research institutes dealing with immigration
Centre for Research on Ethnic Relations and Nationalism at the Swedish School of Social Science at the University of Helsinki
(see above)
More relevant researchers: Matti Similä, Tom Sandlund, Annika Forsander, Catharina Lojander-Visapää, Silvain Sagne, Camilla Haavisto

Centre for Ethnic Studies at the University of Joensuu
Phone: +358 13 251 3343, fax: +358 13 251 5275
Website: http://www.joensuu.fi/etnica/paasivu_engl.htm
Director: Pirkko Pitkänen
The tasks of the research unit are, to coordinate the research focusing on ethnic and national relations, to promote the formation of multidisciplinary research groups and research environments at the University of Joensuu and to design and organize training on multicultural issues
Relevant Researchers: Pirkko Pitkänen, Päivi Harinen, Päivi Toropainen, Jussi Ronkainen.

Institute of Migration- Siirtolaisinstituutti- Finland
Phone: +358-2-2840441, Fax +358 22333460
Website: www.migrationinstitute.fi
Director: Professor Olavi Koivugankas
Research director: Elli Heikkilä (elli.heikkila@utu.fi)
The Institute of Migration was founded in 1974, and has its headquarters in Turku. The tasks of the Institute of Migration are: to promote the collection, storage and documentation of research material relating to international and internal migration including immigrants and refugees, to carry out and to promote migration research, to publish research reports, books and articles on migration, and to develop co-operation between the universities and special organisations related to migration, both within Finland and abroad. Institute of Migration is maintained by a non-profit-making trust administered by a Council and an Administrative Board. The organisation affiliated to the trust are, for the Republic of Finland, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, all the Finnish universities, and a large number of special organizations with an interest in the study of migration. The Institute is basically financed by an annual operating grant from the Finnish Ministry of Education, but in addition various projects are financed from a variety of other sources.

3. Researchers dealing with Civic Participation in general
Tuomo Martikainen is professor in political science at the University of Helsinki. Among his main interests are: elections and political behaviour / participation, public administration and “new politics”. For more information on publications see: http://www.valt.helsinki.fi/staff/martikai/marti-fi.htm.
Contact information: tuomo.martikainen@helsinki.fi Tel: +358-9-191 8819.
Mikko Mattila is acting professor in political science at the University of Helsinki. Political participation and voting behaviour are among his research interests. For Mattila’s publications see: http://www.valt.helsinki.fi/staff/mmattila/julkaisu.htm.

Kyösti Pekonen is professor in political science at the University of Helsinki. For research projects and publications see: http://www.valt.helsinki.fi/staff/kpekonen/pproject.htm
Tel.+358-9-191 24820, Tel. Office +358-9-191 24830, Fax +358-9-191 24832

Sami Borg is director of the Finnish social science data archive and one of the best known researchers in the field of political participation in Finland. For more information see: http://www.fsd.uta.fi/english/indices/staff.html
e-mail: sami.borg@uta.fi. Tel:+358 3 215 8524

Professor Risto Sänkiaho, University of Tampere. One of professor Sänkiaho’s interests is political activity and election studies. For more information on professor Sänkiaho and his research see: http://www.uta.fi/laitokset/ytty/keskusyksikko/henkilokunta/sankiaho.html
e-mail: risto.sankiaho@uta.fi, Tel: 03-215 6988

Professor Heikki Paloheimo, University of Tampere. Professor Paloheimo’s research interests include political participation and electoral studies. For more information see: http://www.soc.utu.fi/valtio-oppi/hallinto/heikki_julkaisut.html
e-mail: heikki.paloheimo@uta.fi, Tel: + 358-3-215 6412

Professor Tapio Raunio, University of Tampere. Professor Raunio’s research interests include elections and political parties. For more information see: http://www.uta.fi/laitokset/politiikka/henkilokunta/raunio.html
e-mail: tapio.raunio@uta.fi, Tel: + 358-3-215 6410

Professor Martti Siisiäinen, University of Jyväskylä. Professor Siisiäinen has written extensively on the third sector in Finland. His research deals with various types of social- and voluntary movements. For more information see: http://www.jyu.fi/yhtfil/shenk.html
e-mail: msiisiai@vfi.jyu.fi, Tel: + 358-14- 260 3129
Co-operation Bodies in Migration Policy

The relevant administrative sector is responsible for international issues, preparation of statutes and supervision of administration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MFA</th>
<th>Ministry for Foreign Affairs</th>
<th>ML</th>
<th>Ministry of Labour</th>
<th>MED</th>
<th>Ministry of Education</th>
<th>MSAH</th>
<th>Ministry of Social Affairs and Health</th>
<th>MJ</th>
<th>Ministry of Justice</th>
<th>MEN</th>
<th>Min. of the Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordination of international cooperation, international agreements, visa policy</td>
<td>Immigration affairs</td>
<td>Migration affairs</td>
<td>Educational and cultural services for immigrants</td>
<td>Guidance in matters regarding health care and social welfare</td>
<td>Health and Safety at Work</td>
<td>Issues on legal protection and discrimination</td>
<td>Appeals and Courts of Appeal</td>
<td>Housing matters</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Embassies and consulates abroad</td>
<td>Visa affairs</td>
<td>* Entry into the country and departure from the country, aliens' residence and their supervision</td>
<td>* Coord. of the EU issues</td>
<td>Coordination: ethnic relations, racism and discrimination</td>
<td>Employment and Economic Development Centres (15)</td>
<td>National Board of Education</td>
<td>* Organizing of immigrants' education</td>
<td>Administrative Courts (Asylum matters: Helsinki Administrative Court)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directorate of Immigration (UVI)</td>
<td>Employment Departments: Guidance of municipalities in immigration and refugee issues, supervision of reception units, development of labour services and promotion of employment</td>
<td>Reception centres 15: maintained by municipalities (10), the State (3), the Finnish Red Cross (2)</td>
<td>Employment Offices (149)</td>
<td>*Recognition of foreign qualifications</td>
<td>*Ombudsman for Minorities</td>
<td>*securing the position and rights of ethnic minorities and foreigners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Controls of entry conditions, turning back aliens at the frontier</td>
<td>Integration of immigrants, arrangements concerning employment measures for immigrants, foreigners' working and issues on return</td>
<td>*Finnjobb Information Service /Stockholm</td>
<td>*Finnish Embassy/Tallinn</td>
<td>*supervising the principle of non-discrimination</td>
<td>Discrimination Board</td>
<td>*supervising the prohibition of ethnic discrimination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>*Finnish Consulate General/St. Petersburg</td>
<td>Helsinki Administrative Court</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence permits, investigations of asylum applications, travel documents and alien's passports, implementation of entry refusals and deportations, surveillance</td>
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Co-operation Networks: Municipalities have a general responsibility for the integration on immigrants (regional councils, provinces, municipalities)