**Finland does not attract highly qualified foreign experts and investors**

*Finland’s immigration policy does not actively promote attracting investors and highly qualified experts from outside the EU to Finland.*

Three topical reports published by the European Migration Network (EMN) reveal that Finland hardly has any national-level strategies aimed at attracting highly qualified experts, entrepreneurs and investors from outside the EU. The reports discuss, among other topics, labour shortage, entry into the country for business purposes and attracting highly-qualified specialists into the country.

* “For Finland, these themes are relatively new. The Future of Migration 2020 Strategy, approved in the summer 2013, and the action plan based on it do mention these categories of immigrants. However, actual national-level programmes aimed at attracting highly qualified experts from third countries do not exist yet,” says **Rafael Bärlund**, Senior Adviser at EMN.

Different parties also consider Finland’s residence permit system too complicated for employees, entrepreneurs and investors.

* “Attracting foreign labour is politically difficult as the unemployment rate is currently high. Nevertheless, highly qualified experts and investors could generate innovations and boost our economy,” notes Bärlund.

The reports indicate that the effects of labour migration on the national labour market are not systematically monitored in Finland. At the moment, each stakeholder assesses the effects mainly in their own silo, according to their own interests.

**Only a few highly qualified experts from third countries**

So far, labour migration from outside the EU and the EEA has only played a minor role in Finland. In 2013, approximately 4,940 positive first residence permit decisions were made on the basis of work and self-employment and in the following year, the number was approximately 5,000. A total of 30 per cent of work-based residence permits are granted to highly qualified experts.

In addition, in 2013 approximately 16,000 workers came to work in Finland with a visa or on a visa-exempt basis, mainly for seasonal work. It is estimated that in the same year, the number of employees from the EU was approximately 50,000, consisting mainly of employees from Estonia.

**Estonia and New Zealand seek economic growth by attracting specialists and investments**

The most significant target of the government of Estonia, Finland’s neighbour, is to facilitate the entry of foreign investors and top experts into the country. The idea is to boost the Estonian economy through foreign companies, to create new jobs and to increase the internationalisation of education and science. The government offers foreigners the opportunity of applying for a digital residence permit for Estonia, which gives them the right to use the same state-provided online services as the Estonians use.

New Zealand regards immigration policy as an economic activity that attracts international talen**t** and investors into the country.

* “During the last five years, we have moved from solely granting visas to attracting international companies, highly qualified experts and wealthy investors. We see this as a means to integrate our country more closely with the global economic market,” says **Matt Hoskin,** National Manager, Skills & Investments, Immigration New Zealand.

**Links to studies:**

Determining labour shortages and the need for labour migration from third countries in the EU

[Finland’s National Contribution](http://www.emn.fi/files/1246/EMN_labour_ENGjaFIN_final.pdf)

Admitting third-country nationals for business purposes

[EU-level synthesis report](http://www.emn.fi/files/1245/emn_study_admitting_third_country_nationals_for_business_purposes_synthesis_report_04may2015.pdf)

[Finland’s National Contribution](http://www.emn.fi/files/1252/EMN_admitting_business_persons_EN_FI.pdf)

Attracting highly-qualified third-country nationals

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| **About the EMN**  The Finnish National Contact Point for the European Migration Network (EMN) operates in connection with the Finnish Immigration Service. National contact points have been set up in each EU Member State, as well as in Norway, which also participates in the network. The network is chaired by the EU Commission.  The task of the EMN is to support policy-making in the European Union by providing up-to-date, objective, reliable and comparable information on migration and asylum. In addition to politicians and government officials, information is also disseminated to the general public.  Among the most important outputs of the EMN are annual reports on the development of the immigration policies of EU Member States and institutions, as well as various thematic studies on topical migration issues.  Finland’s national EMN website is at [www.emn.fi](http://www.emn.fi/). |

[EU-level synthesis report](http://www.emn.fi/files/1163/emnsr_attractinghqworkers_finalversion_23oct2013_publication.pdf)

[Finland’s National Contribution](http://www.emn.fi/files/822/EMN_study_Attracting_highly_qualified_third_country_nationals_Finland_FI_EN_2013.pdf)

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