

EMN: Number of Asylum Seekers Down, Decisions at an All Time High

The European Migration Network's review of migration last year reveals that the number of asylum seekers fell to about one sixth from the previous year. Most residence permits on the grounds of international protection were granted to Iraqi citizens.

Last year, a total of 39,317 persons were granted a first residence permit or had their residence in Finland registered, according to the Annual Report on Migration and Asylum and the statistical publication for 2016, produced by the EMN National Contact Point for Finland. The number is considerably higher than the previous year, when 33,568 persons were granted a residence permit.

EU nationals and their family members coming to Finland based on free movement accounted for a quarter of all foreign nationals who settled in Finland last year. People arriving from outside the EU were granted residence permits largely on the same grounds as the previous year. The most common reasons were family ties (21%), international protection (18%), studies (16%) and work (15%).

The most significant change concerned those who were granted a residence permit due to international protection, whose number quadrupled compared with the previous year. This was also evident in that two asylum seeker producing countries, Iraq and Afghanistan, were first and third on the top-10 list of nationalities. The Russian Federation, which previously topped the list, was the second most common country of origin for persons granted a first residence permit in Finland.

More than half of asylum decisions were negative

Last year 5,561 persons applied for international protection in Finland. The number of asylum seekers was thus considerably lower than the previous year, when 32,476 persons applied for asylum. The largest group of applicants last year was Iraqi nationals (1,247), followed by Afghani (757) and Syrian (602) nationals.

The exceptionally large number of asylum seekers in 2015 was seen as a spike in the number of decisions made in 2016: The Finnish Immigration Service made a record number of 28,208 asylum decisions last year. 27 per cent of the applicants were granted a residence permit, while refusals accounted for 51 per cent of all decisions.

In 14 per cent of the cases, applicants cancelled their applications or went missing from reception centres, and their applications were annulled. Eight per cent of the applications were not examined in Finland. Non-examination of an application usually means that the person has been transferred, based on the so-called Dublin procedure, to the Member State that is responsible for examining the asylum application.

EMN publishes the **Annual Report on Migration and Asylum**, which is the only document that reports compiled information on development trends in migration-related matters in Finland. The annual EMN statistical publication **Key Figures on Immigration** is compiled with statistics from the Finnish Immigration Service, Police of Finland, Finnish Border Guard and International Organization for Migration (IOM). Together, the two publications provide a unique review of migration in Finland.

Links to studies:

Annual Report on Migration and Asylum - Finland 2016

http://www.emn.fi/files/1522/Politiikkaraportti_FI_EN_final.pdf

Key Figures on Immigration 2016

http://www.emn.fi/files/1527/Tilastokatsaus_2016_EN_netti.pdf

Further information and media contacts:

Senior Adviser Rafael Bärlund, European Migration Network, Finnish Immigration Service, tel. +358 (0)295 433022, e-mail: rafael.barlund@migri.fi

Mari Kuusinen, OS/G Communications, tel. +358 (0)40 196 4374, mari.kuusinen@osg.fi

Overview 2016

REGISTRATION OF
EU CITIZENS

9,852



FAMILY

8,177



STUDYING

6,348



INTERNATIONAL
PROTECTION

6,375



EMPLOYMENT

5,770



OTHER

1,569



RESETTLED
REFUGEES

749

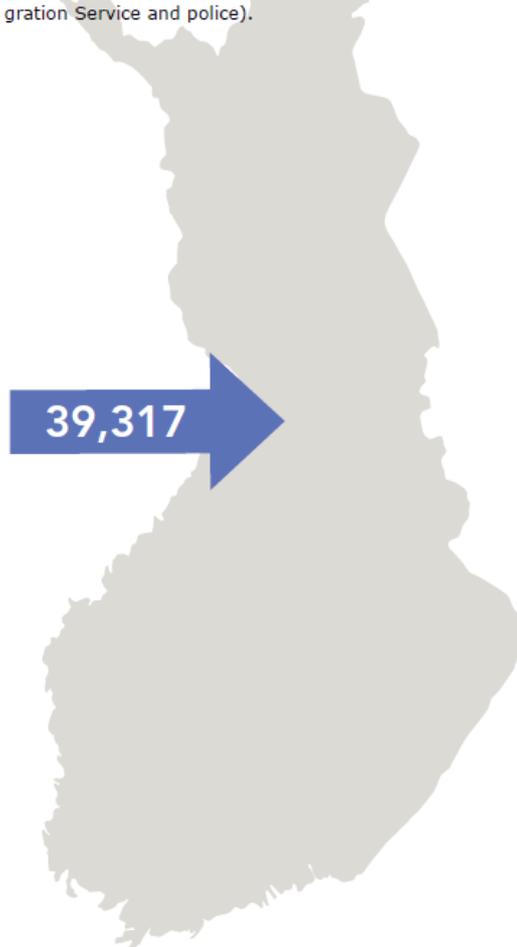


REMIGRATION

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The figure includes the first residence permits issued by the Finnish Immigration Service and police to third country nationals as well as the registration carried out by the police of the right of residence of EU citizens and family members. The number of EU citizens and their family members registered was 9,852. The next largest group is third country nationals arriving on the basis of family ties, a total of 8,177 people (first residence permits issued by the Finnish Immigration Service and police).



Source: The Finnish Immigration Service and the Police

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.

EUROOPAN MUUTTOLIIKEVERKOSTO

Maahanmuuttovirasto
PL 18,00581 Helsinki
puh. 0295 430 431
faksi 0295 411 720
www.emn.fi

EUROPEISKA MIGRATIONSNÄTVERKET

Migrationsverket
PB 18, 00581 Helsingfors
tfn 0295 430 431
fax 0295 411 720
www.emn.fi

EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

Finnish Immigration Service
P.O.Box, FI-00581 Helsinki, Finland
tel. +358 295 430 431
fax +358 295 411 720
EMN <http://ec.europa.eu/emn>