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Immigration Strategy for Northern Ostrobothnia 2015

Heikki Keränen
Sami Rontti
(eds.)

03/2010

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Abstract A strategy process was completed in the ESF project "Promotion of Work-related Immigration", which was implemented at Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia, and an immigration strategy was drawn up for Northern Ostrobothnia on the basis of the process. Information was collected about the situation in Northern Ostrobothnia from the point of view of immigration and the future availability of labour. The intention was to use the information as background material for the strategy. Employers' need for support in recruiting foreign labour was investigated with a broad inquiry, to which 1000 respondents replied. The strategy process was carried out together with an outside consultant (Net Effect Oy) by arranging three workshops and a seminar where the workshop results were summarised. A large number of companies, authorities, municipalities, associations, project actors and immigrants engaged in immigration issues participated in the workshops. The draft strategy is based on their experiences about immigration and on statistical data, background inquiries and surveys. To ensure the accuracy of the draft strategy, comments were requested from several parties and received from 64 organisations. The core of the immigration strategy consists of an initial analysis, values, a vision and priorities. The strategy is composed of three priorities. The key aim of the priority Internationalisation and Supporting Diversity is to support diversity in schools, workplaces and people's everyday lives e.g. through attitude development and by promoting internationalisation in companies and education institutions. The aim of the priority Supporting Entrepreneurship and Recruiting Foreign Labour is to promote entrepreneurship among immigrants and the recruitment of foreign labour and to develop the forecasting of educational needs. The priority Developing Integration Services, Regional Cooperation and Networks, in turn, seeks to develop the service structure and policies of immigrant integration and to increase cooperation and exchange of information between regional actors engaged in integration issues. The aim is to use the strategy as a guideline document for immigration issues in Northern Ostrobothnia. The strategy is used to coordinate the existing organisations and operations dealing with immigration issues. In addition, it contains a future-oriented focus and underlines the management of new immigration projects and operations. The main party responsible for the implementation of the strategy is the Immigration Committee. In addition, responsible parties have been assigned to each measure. The implementation of the immigration strategy will be monitored annually on the basis of indicators.				
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Internationalisation and the growing number of foreigners also show more and more in the streets.

Preface

Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia, which was established at the beginning of 2010, is a regional state administrative authority, whose statutory tasks also include immigration, integration and the promotion of good ethnic relations. In this mission, it is assisted by the Promotion of Work-related Immigration project, which is pursued within the Centre and supported by the ESF. The project has administered a strategy process as a result of which an immigration strategy was drawn up for Northern Ostrobothnia.

The initial aim of the Promotion of Work-related Immigration project, which was launched in 2008, was to find out the needs of employers in the region in order to support the recruitment of foreign labour. Information was collected about the situation in Northern Ostrobothnia from the point of view of immigration and the future availability of labour, to be used as background material for the strategy. This laid a foundation for the process of drawing up a regional immigration strategy. Project work is now continued in order to promote labour immigration e.g. by developing a joint system based on employers' needs so as to facilitate the recruitment of foreign labour and to help foreign employees and their families feel at home in the region.

The point of departure in preparing the regional immigration strategy was to take into consideration the viewpoints of regional immigration actors as broadly as possible. A large number of parties engaged in immigration issues in the region participated in the strategy process, including companies, authorities, municipalities, associations, project actors and immigrants. The key part of the strategy, priorities, was formed on the basis of background information and the experiences of the actors that participated in the strategy process. The priorities cover the aspects that all the actors should develop and improve in order to create a tolerant atmosphere that gains strength from internationalisation, to ensure the availability of skilled labour and to support the integration of immigrants having moved here for different reasons. To ensure accuracy, the draft strategy was specified on the basis of comments requested from a large number of parties.

The labour market situation in 2010 is essentially different from the time when the strategy formulation process was launched. Immigration issues have been broadly publicised in recent times. At the beginning of the process, some sectors had already faced recruitment difficulties or even labour shortage. Taking up the issue of promoting labour immigration in the present labour market situation must be supported by background facts in order to justify the project. The statistics analysed for the strategy and the survey conducted with employers together indicate that despite the current situation Northern Ostrobothnia, too, should prepare for a time when the mainstream population and immigrants do not necessarily make up a sufficient resource base for ensuring the availability of labour to the region's companies. The ability to attract new skilled labour to work in Northern Ostrobothnia and integrating them and the immigrants already resident in the region call for long-term future-oriented efforts from all the actors involved. We should not forget to integrate the mainstream population either: we must learn how to live in Northern Ostrobothnia whose population consists of people from different countries and cultures. The purpose of the strategy is in part to ensure that different types of issues concerning migration and the recruitment of foreign labour can be addressed in order to succeed in this complex task. The aim is that regional actors can commit themselves to the strategy and implement its objectives through their actions.

The personnel responsible for preparing the strategy at Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia wish to express their warm thanks to the various parties that contributed to the strategy work.

Oulu 16 August 2010

Maire Mäki

Head of Unit, Immigration Manager
Employment and Entrepreneurship Unit
Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia

Mary Kow attending on-the-job learning at Sara Wacklin home in Oulu. On-the-job learning is part of the scheme "Education introducing immigrants to working life", which is arranged by Oulu Adult Education Centre Oy.



Summary

The share of immigrants of the population is much smaller in Northern Ostrobothnia than in Southern Finland. In Oulu, for example, the share was 2.2 per cent in 2009, as compared with 7.2 per cent in Helsinki and 4.7 per cent in Turku. The number of immigrants in Northern Ostrobothnia has increased by some 280 persons per year in the last few years. The growing number of immigrants calls for systematic actions to prepare for immigration. The purpose of this document is to address the need for a specific immigration strategy for Northern Ostrobothnia.

The strategy sets out from an operational environment analysis based on statistical data (population, employment and regional economy), which also cover foreigners. A survey was conducted with companies, associations and municipalities in Northern Ostrobothnia in October 2008. The framework of the immigration strategy was set up in three work seminars with participants representing a large number of regional parties engaged in immigration issues: companies, authorities, municipalities, associations, project actors and immigrants. The Promotion of Work-related Immigration project and Net Effect Oy, an outside consultation firm, contributed to the implementation of the process.

The most important strengths, improvement areas, future opportunities and threats of Northern Ostrobothnia were determined in a SWOT analysis, in which the points of departure for the immigration strategy were outlined. Five values were defined for use as the cornerstones of the strategy: **1. Equality, 2. Safety and Well-Being, 3. Permissiveness and Understanding, 4. Ethical and Moral Responsibility, 5. Sense of Community and Genuine Interaction.**

Immigration in Northern Ostrobothnia - VISION 2020 was expressed as follows:

Northern Ostrobothnia is the most pluralistic, attractive region in Finland, with daily cultural interaction between its inhabitants. The communities of the region work towards ensuring that employers have flexible access to labour, which in turn strengthens the competitiveness

of the region on the global market. Northern Ostrobothnia is a good place to live, work, run a business and study for immigrants and their families regardless of their background.

Three strategic focus areas or priorities with specific sub-aims and measures were defined in order to implement the above vision:

1. Internationalisation and supporting diversity

1.1. Supporting diversity in schools, workplaces and people's everyday lives

1.1.1. International education from pre-schools to higher education institutions

1.1.2. Supporting diversity at work based on different types of cultural influence

1.1.3. Supporting everyday multicultural interaction by promoting awareness and understanding

1.2 Supporting internationalisation

1.2.1. Supporting the internationalisation of companies by strengthening multicultural skills

1.2.2. Promoting internationalisation in education institutions and among students

1.2.3. Utilising the network of Northern Ostrobothnians living abroad

2. Supporting entrepreneurship and recruiting foreign labour

2.1 Self-employment among immigrants or foreigners moving to Finland

2.1.1. Promoting entrepreneurship among immigrants

2.1.2. Active communications and developing information packages about entrepreneurship in Finland

2.2 Supporting the recruitment of foreign labour

2.2.1. Outlining future labour needs according to occupational group (forecasting)

2.2.2. Creating shared recruitment policies and disseminating the existing ones

2.2.3. Developing integrated information and advice service centres

2.2.4. Focusing on regional attraction factors

2.3 Developing education models and the forecasting of educational needs

2.3.1. Developing educational planning and forecasting models

2.3.2. Developing comparability between degrees and competence

2.3.3. Drawing up targeted and continuing education models for immigrants

3 Developing integration services, regional cooperation and networks

3.1 Developing integration services

3.1.1. Developing integration service structures and policies

3.1.2. Strengthening the role of employers in integration

3.1.3. Developing integration based on immigrants' needs

3.2 Strengthening regional cooperation in integration

3.2.1 Gathering scattered information, exchanging information and experiences between municipalities and utilising them in decision-making

3.2.2 Establishing the post of an integration and immigrant employee for the whole region

The aim is to use the strategy as a guideline document for immigration issues in Northern Ostrobothnia. The purpose of the strategy is to coordinate the existing immigration organisations and operations. The strategy also has a future-oriented focus and underlines the management of new immigration projects and operations.

The Promotion of Work-related Immigration project of Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia was in charge of the immigration strategy process and the drawing up of the strategy. Upon completion of the strategy, the main responsible party will be the Immigration Committee. The strategy will be specified, where necessary, and after five years the whole strategy will have to be updated in any case. The implementation of the immigration strategy will be monitored annually on the basis of indicators.

Liubov Lezhneva, who works at Haapaveden puukaluste, telling about her work to Andrey Telli and Dhanamurthy Sammeta, who study Finnish and culture at Haapavesi Folk High School.





Foreign labour are also employed in the metal industry. Lázár Tibor drilling holes to a main girder at Miilupipe Oy in Raahé.

Introduction

Compared with many other regions, Northern Ostrobothnia has a fairly young age structure. The ageing of its population will show in future as a fall in the number of working age population especially outside the Oulu Region. The need for labour will increase in future particularly after the current economic recession. Labour immigration is one way of addressing this need.

The share of immigrants Northern Ostrobothnia is still well below the average for the rest of the country. However, their number has been increasing in the region steadily since the 1990's. Preparatory measures and actions to support integration, for instance, are required of society in order to respond to the growing number of immigrants. Some regions (South Savo, Central Finland, Lapland, Tampere Region and Southwest Finland) have already prepared for immigration issues by drawing up regional immigration strategies. There has not been any consistent regional strategy for Northern Ostrobothnia so far that would cover the whole region, address the most important regional immigration issues and outline related future development actions. This strategy seeks to address these needs.

Points of departure

Government Immigration Policy Programme

The focus in the Government's first immigration and refugee policy programme, which was introduced in 1997, was on refugee-related issues. In its next migration policy programme, which was published in 2006, the Government adopted a comprehensive approach, covering issues connected with entry, stay and expulsion, working, integration, studying, social security, housing and ethnic relations. The labour shortage that was envisaged when the policy programme was being prepared directed the main focus to promoting labour immigration. Labour immigration has also been promoted through an ESF Programme during the EU programming period 2007–2013, in which the theme was addressed by the projects included in Priority 4. The Government Immigration Policy Programme outlines immigration

issues for the whole country. An immigration strategy has been drawn up for Northern Ostrobothnia, mainly based on regional viewpoints.

Immigration Act and other topical immigration issues

Several amendments are currently being prepared for acts dealing with immigration. The Aliens Act is being reformed (Government Proposal 240/2009 Parliamentary Session). The most important changes have to do with applying for a residence permit to minor asylum-seekers and the right of asylum-seekers to work.

The employee's residence permit system will be simplified by amending the Aliens Act and the Aliens Register Act, because the employee's residence permit system currently in use has not worked as intended. With the change, the application procedure will only involve a single stage, which will improve control and facilitate the procedure. In future, employees could submit their residence permit applications to a representation or the local police, while the actual permit decision will be made by the Finnish Immigration Service. If necessary, the residence permit could be granted for a longer period than now, yet for no longer than five years. At the same time the current labour availability considerations would be abandoned. However, the precondition for receiving a residence permit is that the employer must first have tried to recruit employees from the EU Member States, countries of the European Economic Area and Switzerland. In future, residence permits awarded on criteria other than employment would contain a broader right to work. This means that a residence permit awarded for studying would entitle its holder to work during the study period without limitations. This would give foreign students the same rights to work as Finns (Ministry of the Interior 2009a, Government Proposal 269/2009: 15).

The integration legislation is being reformed, too. A major legal reform is that integration will cover all immigrants who will stay in the country for at least one year. Integration plans are still a necessary tool, and more specific statutes will be issued about their content. The follow-up and execution of the programmes will be monitored more carefully than

before. According to the Act on Integration and Reception of Asylum Seekers, the heterogeneousness of immigrants should be taken into consideration in integration. Initial information will be available to all immigrants while other services will be offered according to need. The intention is that the Government will issue a proposal to the Parliament about the Act during the plenary session in autumn 2010.

An experimental fixed-term pilot act is also being prepared, in which the idea is to test three paths of integration containing aims and measures that vary according to the needs of different immigrants. Two of the paths are intended for adult immigrants: Path 1 is for immigrants wishing to enter the labour market and it contains measures for supporting their employment more effectively, Path 2 is for immigrants who need special support, and Path 3 promotes the integration of children and young people. The aim is that the Government will issue the pilot act proposal to the Parliament as part of the overall reform of the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers in autumn 2010.

The Ministry of the Interior launched a pilot programme in summer 2009 concerning the integration of immigrants. The purpose of the programme is to develop new ways of employing immigrants and supporting their integration and help municipalities recognise and prevent problems in residential areas with large immigrant populations. In addition, municipal services will be developed in order to address the needs of immigrants. A total of 11 pilot projects were accepted for the programme based on applications. The projects of the City of Oulu and Oulu City Art Museum from Northern Ostrobothnia are included in the programme.

Labour immigration issues have been outlined in the Action Plan for Labour Immigration (Ministry of the Interior 2009b). The Action Plan is a document specifying the guidelines expressed in the Government Immigration Policy Programme. Covering the period 2009–2011, the Action Plan introduces basic guidelines for developing labour immigration and proposes a total of 28 measures for preparing for such immigration and for taking concrete actions, where necessary.

The state regional administration was reformed at the beginning of 2010. In Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia, immigration issues are handled by the Employment and Entrepreneurship Unit. The statutory duties of Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia include immigration issues, integration and the promotion of good ethnic relations. The head of the Employment and Entrepreneurship Unit currently also acts as the immigration manager. In immigration issues, the Unit's area of responsibility covers Northern Ostrobothnia and Kainuu. In future the Regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Northern Ostrobothnia and Kainuu will pursue even closer cooperation in immigration issues.

A joint Immigration Committee has been established for the regions that operate under the Centres (see Appendix 2). Consisting of the representatives of authorities, municipalities and employer and employee organisations, the task of the Committee is to assist the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, the Regional State Administrative Agency, the region's Employment and Economic Development Offices and municipalities in developing and harmonising the integration of immigrants and in other questions related to immigration.

The operation of Finnish Immigration Service changed at the beginning of 2010: practical guidance and planning duties connected with the reception of asylum-seekers were transferred to it from the Ministry of the Interior. As a result of the change, it also accepted responsibility for controlling and supervising the operation of the detention facility and for administering measures to help the victims of trafficking in human beings.

Pending projects on reforming alien-related legislation and other changes taking place in immigration issues will have a major impact on the operational environment and on the future implementation of this strategy. For instance, extending the integration scheme to all immigrants would essentially change the current practises in which integration measures mainly cover immigrants who are registered as unemployed job-seekers in Employment and Econom-

ic Development Offices and are covered by immigrant services in the social services scheme.

Regional strategies of Northern Ostrobothnia: the regional programme, strategy of the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, and education strategy of the Province of Oulu

As a result of the reform of regional administration and the Regional Development Act, the Council of Oulu Region is more profoundly responsible for strategy-based development work and for managing collaborative efforts. The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, which represents regional state administration, is an important partner to the Council of Oulu Region. In the 2010-2011 strategy document for Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, integration is included in the strategic aim "Promoting regional competitiveness and population well-being" (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2009), which is also part of the strategic result agreement for Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia (Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia 2010). Long-term development efforts in the region are based on a regional plan and short-term development (4 years) on a regional programme, both of which have been updated by the Council of Oulu Region. The new regional plan extends to the year 2030 while the regional programme covers the implementation period 2010–2014. The regional council accepted the regional plan and regional programme on 10 May 2010. Other authorities and development programmes in the region must take account of the regional programme in their actions, promote its implementation and assess the impact of measures on regional development. In the educational sector, opinions have been expressed in the Education Strategy for the Province of Oulu 2015 about internationalisation and about increasing the number of international educational programmes available to foreigners. In this sense the immigration strategy is in part connected with the aforementioned regional strategies.

Immigration strategies of other regions

Regional immigration strategies have already been prepared in South Savo, Central Finland, Lapland, Tampere Region and Southwest Finland. The strategies of these regions were used as examples to the immigration strategy for Northern Ostrobothnia, though in a sense the latter strategy has been drafted from scratch through the strategy process. The implementers of strategies in the other regions were interviewed and their experiences about preparing and implementing the strategies were discussed in a work seminar in order to learn more about issues connected with the strategy process and the practical implementation of strategies. Participatory strategy work, which brought together and committed different immigration actors, was considered useful for implementing the strategies of Lapland and Southwest Finland.

In Northern Ostrobothnia, the Haapavesi-Siikalatva sub-region completed a labour immigration strategy on 10 December 2009, in which it outlines the needs for labour immigration and recruitment models from the point of view of small municipalities. The aim of the strategy is to provide permanent, comprehensive plans for promoting labour immigration. The strategy points out that labour recruited from abroad does not replace the labour already available in the region but instead supplements it. The aim is to recruit foreigners in long-term employment relationships and thereby help them settle down in the region more permanently.

Operational environment analysis for Northern Ostrobothnia

Demographic trends

The population of Northern Ostrobothnia has been growing by an average of 2 500 – 3 000 people per year, which is mainly attributable to high natural population growth. There have been major fluctuations in net migration, with migratory trends varying from migration loss to migration gain. In the long term, however, migration has been close to balance. The age structure in the region is fairly young as compared with many other regions in Finland (Ker-

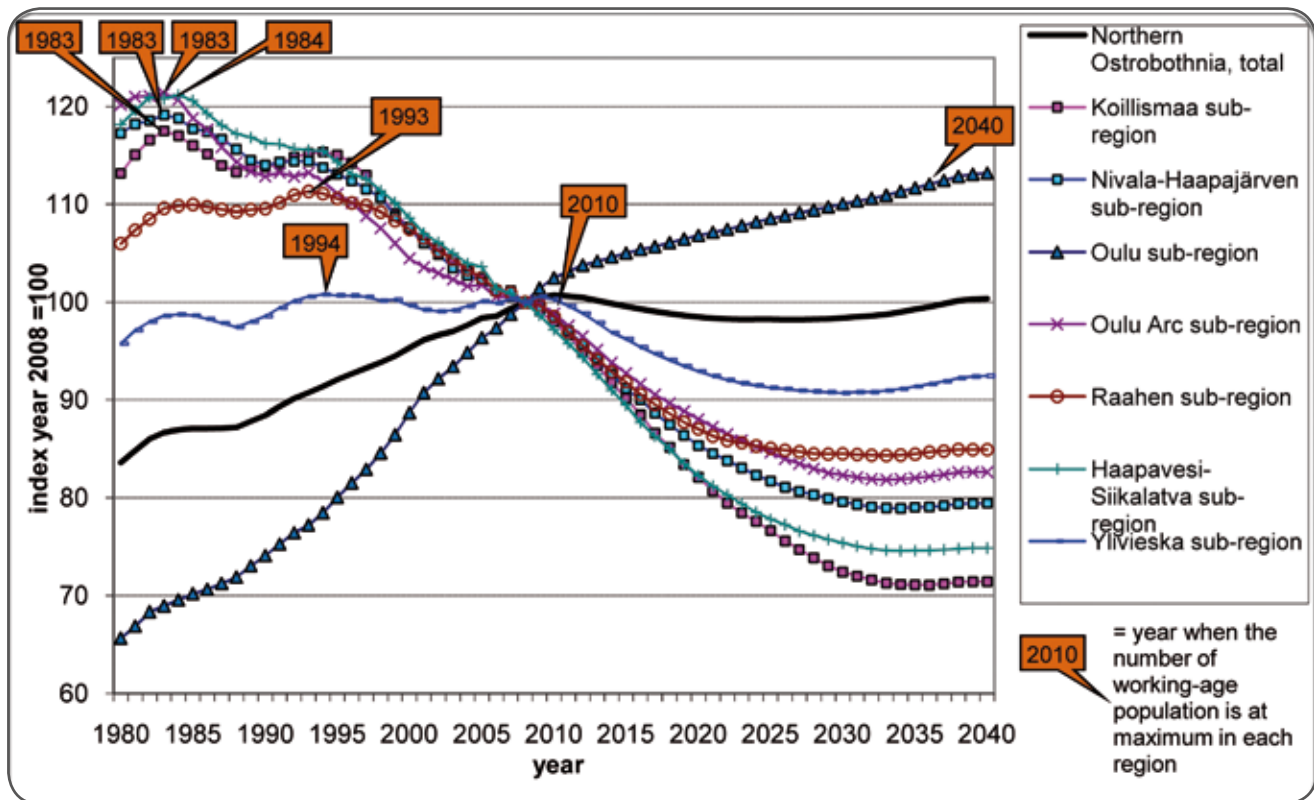


Figure 1. Trends among working age population (15–64 years) in 1980–2008 and according to a population forecast in 2009–2040 by sub-region in Northern Ostrobothnia, index year 2008=100. Note: The population forecast is based on the regional division for 2009, so the municipality/sub-region division of 2009 was used here in which Himanka was still part of Kokkola sub-region. Material: Statistics Finland.

kelä 2006), mainly thanks to the prominent position of the Oulu Region. The age structure in the Oulu Region is considerably younger than elsewhere in Northern Ostrobothnia. In future, the Oulu Region will be the most advantageous region in Finland in terms of the availability of young labour, together with the Rovaniemi and Jyväskylä regions (Kerkelä 2006:8). The Oulu Region is characterised by a young age structure and the in-migration of young people, as a result of which the unemployment rate is especially high among young people (Kauppinen & Viitanen 2008).

According to population statistics published by Statistics Finland, the number of working age population has been decreasing in most of the sub-regions in Northern Ostrobothnia since the 1980's, except for the Oulu sub-region where the number has been growing all the time (Fig. 1). According to a population forecast, this trend will also continue in the coming years and the number of working age population in Northern Ostrobothnia will reach a peak in 2010 after which it will adopt a slightly declining trend. The working age population in the Oulu sub-region will continue to grow steadily in future, too.

The retiring of the baby boom generation will strongly affect the supply of labour in the next few years and decade. The labour reserve made up by the young age groups will decrease considerably from the mid-21st century onwards. Where the age group 20 years used to exceed the age group 60 years by some 2000 persons in the past decades, the size of these two age groups will be balanced in the coming decades. According to Statistics Finland's population forecast, the number of young age groups entering the labour market in the Oulu sub-region will continue to be much higher than that of age groups leaving the labour market. In other sub-regions, the size of the age group 60 years has been increasing considerably since 2005 and will exceed the size of the age group 20 years. After that the age group 60 years will remain larger than the age group 20 years for at least 20 years (15 years in the Ylivieska sub-region). The age structure has changed especially fast in the Raahen sub-region where the number of persons aged 60 years will increase rapidly while that of young people aged 20 years will fall sharply at the same time.

Economy and employment trends

Major changes have taken place in the global operational environment in recent times. The global economic recession that began at the end of 2008 has also been reflected strongly in economic trends in Finland. In January-October 2009, production decreased by 8-10 per cent from the previous year. The falling trend in production slowed down towards the end of the year, and the production volumes were almost at the level of the previous year in January-March 2010 even though there were no signs of economic growth yet. A similar trend has also been seen in Northern Ostrobothnia.

According to Statistics Finland's consumer barometer, consumers' opinions about economic development in Finland during the next 12 months turned very negative at the end of 2008. During the second half of 2009, opinions turned more positive, and at the beginning of 2010 consumers strongly believed that the economic situation will improve. It is expected that unemployment will continue to increase though not so much as believed at the beginning of 2010.

Employment has developed favourably in Northern Ostrobothnia, especially after the mid 2000s, though there are differences between the various areas: development has been much more positive in the Oulu Region than in the other sub-regions. At the end of 2008, employment quickly adopted a falling trend. At the same time the unemployment rate, which had been down for many years, began to rise. By the end of March 2010, the unemployment rate in whole Northern Ostrobothnia reached 12.2 per cent, which is 0.6 percentage points higher than in the previous year. Also according to the business barometer of the Confederation of Finnish Industries EK (February 2010), SMEs will face a downward employment trend in the whole country despite the fact that the prospects turned more positive towards the end of 2009. The Mitenna forecast of the Ministry of Education indicates that a large number of new jobs will become available in Northern Ostrobothnia by 2020. According to a baseline forecast, the total need for employed labour will be 71 500 people and according to a target baseline 81 000 people. The economic recession will probably make the forecast obsolete, because it is likely that the predicted

change in the number of employed persons will not be realized. According to Statistics Finland's labour survey, the number of employed persons in the region fell by 5000 in 2009, for example.

According to statistics maintained by Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia, there have been constant recruitment problems in the area of the Employment and Economic Development Offices in the 21st century. An inquiry conducted in January 2010 indicated, however, that recruitment problems have decreased considerably. Some sectors nevertheless reported that they had difficulties in finding suitable employees. It is also likely that recruitment problems will increase in future, as less labour will enter the labour market (see above). It must also be remembered that global competition for experts will become keener, which is considered one of the global development trends, i.e. a megatrend.

Number and employment of foreign population

Immigration is one of the megatrends found in the social environment. The situation with immigration in Northern Finland is very different from the major urban conglomerations in Southern Finland, for instance, in that the number of immigrants in Northern Finland is much smaller. In Oulu, for example, the share of foreigners of the population in 2009 was 2.2 per cent, as compared with 7.2 per cent in Helsinki, 4.7 per cent in Turku and 3.5 per cent in Tampere.

The number of foreigners in Northern Ostrobothnia has increased by an average of some 280 people per year in the last few years. In Oulu, the number of immigrants increases by some 150 people per year. The growth rate was higher than before in 2009: the number of immigrants in Northern Ostrobothnia rose by some 540 people, of whom 380 settled down in Oulu. The number varies considerably in different parts of the region, particularly between cities and rural urban areas (Fig. 2).

At the end of 2009, for instance, 3 101 of the 5 058 immigrants resident in Northern Ostrobothnia were living in Oulu. Other municipalities with more than

100 immigrants were Raahe, Kuusamo, Siikajoki, Haukipudas and Kalajoki. There were many rural municipalities in the region, however, where the number of immigrants was very small: according to statistics, there were less than 10 immigrants in Alavieska, Hailuoto, Merijärvi and Pyhäntä.

According to statistics compiled by Statistics Finland in 2008, 47 per cent of the foreigners living in Northern Ostrobothnia were registered as labour, which is one percent bigger than for the whole population. Thirty six per cent of foreigners were employed, which is less than for the population as a whole (41 per cent). The number of unemployed foreigners was over two times higher as compared with the whole population. There were few retired foreigners, but many of them were outside labour for some other reason. The share of men of employed foreigners was markedly higher than that of women. In the category "Other people outside labour", however, the share of women was markedly higher than that of men.

The number of employed immigrants has increased 140 - 175 per year in 2005 - 2008. The number of employed foreigners was 1 642 at the end of 2008. Economic recession slowed down growth at the end of 2008.

There were 1 642 employed immigrants in Northern Ostrobothnia at the end of 2008. The number of employed foreigners increased by some 140 – 175 per year in 2005 - 2008. There were 1 642 employed immigrants in Northern Ostrobothnia at the end of 2008. The rapid deterioration of the economic situation since the end of 2008 has also impaired employment among immigrants, so it is likely that the number of employed immigrants also decreased slightly in 2009. There were approximately 1 560 employed foreigners at the end of 2009. Their share of employed persons was around one per cent, showing a gradual rise.

According to a sectoral review, most of the immigrants were employed in manufacturing, education, real estate, rental and research services, business services, and accommodation and food service activities. In the manufacturing sector the number of foreign employees has been increasing in the manufacture of food products, manufacture of machinery

and equipment, and manufacture of wood products. Their number has also been growing in construction, accommodation and food services, business services, and research and development activities. The number of immigrants also rose in health care and social services.

Survey of foreign labour recruitment needs

An inquiry was conducted with companies, associations and municipalities in Northern Ostrobothnia in October 2008 as part of the Promotion of Work-related Immigration project. It was implemented using the Digium program and a web form. A total of 6351 e-mail reply invitations were sent, and replies were received from 882 companies, 61 associations and 57 municipalities/other public sector parties.

The inquiry was conducted at a time when the global economic recession was just beginning. At that point the effects of the recession were not yet reflected in the replies, although many of the companies reported having had recruitment problems in the near past. One fifth of them had had recruitment problems during the past year and 15 per cent had suffered labour shortage. A recruitment problem means that a company looking for labour has found it difficult to find candidates for open vacancies. Labour shortage, in turn, means that the company has not managed to find suitable employees at all or has only been able to fill some of its open vacancies.

According to the inquiry 13 per cent of the companies in Northern Ostrobothnia had hired foreign employees during the past year or earlier, as compared with 15 per cent for associations and 33 per cent for municipalities. At that point the number of foreign employees in the companies varied from 1 to 40. Most of them only had one foreign employee and only few more than 5.

The companies expressed a much more prominent need/interest to hire foreign employees in future than at the time of the inquiry. More than 40 per cent of them had a need or interest to hire foreign labour in future, though some of them only under certain conditions. Associations were slightly less interested in hiring foreign labour. In the municipal sector, how-

ever, more than a half of the respondents were willing to recruit foreign labour.

Most of the companies with a need to hire foreign employees in future would place them in expert positions (28 per cent) and in service, sales and care positions (20 per cent). Employees were also needed in construction, repairs and manufacture and in other positions, such as cleaning and translation work. The companies replying to the inquiry had recruited foreigners from a total of 47 countries. By far the most prominent country in this respect was Russia, from where a total of 42 companies had recruited employees. The next most common country of departure was Estonia, followed by Thailand and China. In Europe, the most popular recruitment countries were Great Britain, Germany and Poland. The respondents envisaging a need to hire foreigners in future would recruit them mainly from the same countries as before.

The companies pointed out that by far the most difficult problem in recruiting foreign labour was their inadequate command of Finnish. The next most prominent problem was inadequate professional skills. However, the ability of foreigners to adapt to Finnish workplaces or the ability of workplaces to accept foreigners was not considered a problem. Most of the respondents felt that the work motivation of foreign employees is as good as that of Finnish employees.

The respondents were strongly of the opinion that the nationality of employees does not matter – the most important thing is that they do their work well. Some of them also agreed with other statements stressing the positive effects of foreign labour: re-

cruiting foreign labour improves linguistic skill at the workplace; a foreigner provides information on the labour market of his/her native country; foreign labour should be considered an element improving competitiveness; foreigners are diligent employees. The respondents also agreed that the foreign employee's family arriving in Finland needs help in order to integrate in Finnish society.

Yritysharava project

Updated information on the need of foreign labour is available through the company interviews conducted in the Yritysharava project, which outlined the labour and development needs of companies through telephone interviews throughout Finland. The interviews were conducted in the areas of 12 former Employment and Economic Development Centres, including Northern Ostrobothnia. Slightly less than 13 000 companies had been interviewed in Northern Ostrobothnia by April 2010. The interviews also included questions about foreign labour (Table 1).

According to the interviews, slightly over 5000 companies (40 per cent) could use foreign labour (Table 1). A slightly larger number (43 per cent) stated that they have now jobs for foreigners. One third of the companies considered a sufficient command of Finnish a compulsory requirement for foreign employees. Slightly less than 200 companies, some 1.5 per cent of the respondents, would be willing to act as integration employers.

Table 1. Questions about foreigners in the Yritysharava inquiry (28 April 2010).

Employment and Economic Development Office	Possibility to use foreign labour	Command of Finnish compulsory	Would like to act as an integration employer	No jobs for foreigners	Further information on the use of foreign labour	Interviews, total
Koillismaa	436	324	17	222	96	873
Nivala-Haapajärvi	500	329	17	346	93	1 112
Oulu	2 646	2 360	110	4 007	483	7 463
Raahe	533	384	18	301	115	1 136
Siikalatva	235	151	11	151	39	522
Ylivieska	776	515	25	534	150	1 710
Northern Ostrobothnia, total	5 126	4 063	198	5 561	976	12 916

Strategy process

The process of drawing up the immigration strategy was already included in the planning phase of the Promotion of Work-related Immigration project in September 2007. The recruitment need inquiry conducted with companies at the beginning of the project served as a starting point for the immigration strategy. The strategy formulation process took into account labour immigrants, employers, the needs of support to the immigrants' families, and the existing foreign population in Finland.

The planning of the immigration strategy process began in March-April 2009. Net Effect Oy was chosen as the process consultant after competitive tendering, and process planning was continued with the company in May. The process was implemented through workshops to which as many regional immigration actors as possible were invited: companies, authorities, municipalities, associations, project actors and immigrants. The purpose with such a large number of participants was to promote the commitment of the various actors to the strategy so that it would not remain just a document written by officials.

Three work seminars were arranged: 3 June, 1 September and 13 October. Forty to sixty persons from different organisations attended each occasion (Appendix 1). The first workshop set out from the points of departure and values of the immigration strategy.



Immigration strategy workshop. Photography: Sami Rontti

Drafting was continued on the basis of these in the second workshop by defining visions and preliminary priorities. The third workshop specified the strategic priorities, contemplated on their preliminary content and determined the responsible parties. Immigration strategies already completed in other regions and the experiences gained from their implementation were also discussed in the workshop (the immigration strategies of Lapland, Southwest Finland, and Pieksämäki Region as the representative of South Savo). A summary was drawn up of the results of the workshops, which was discussed in a separate presentation and hearing meeting on 10 December 2009.

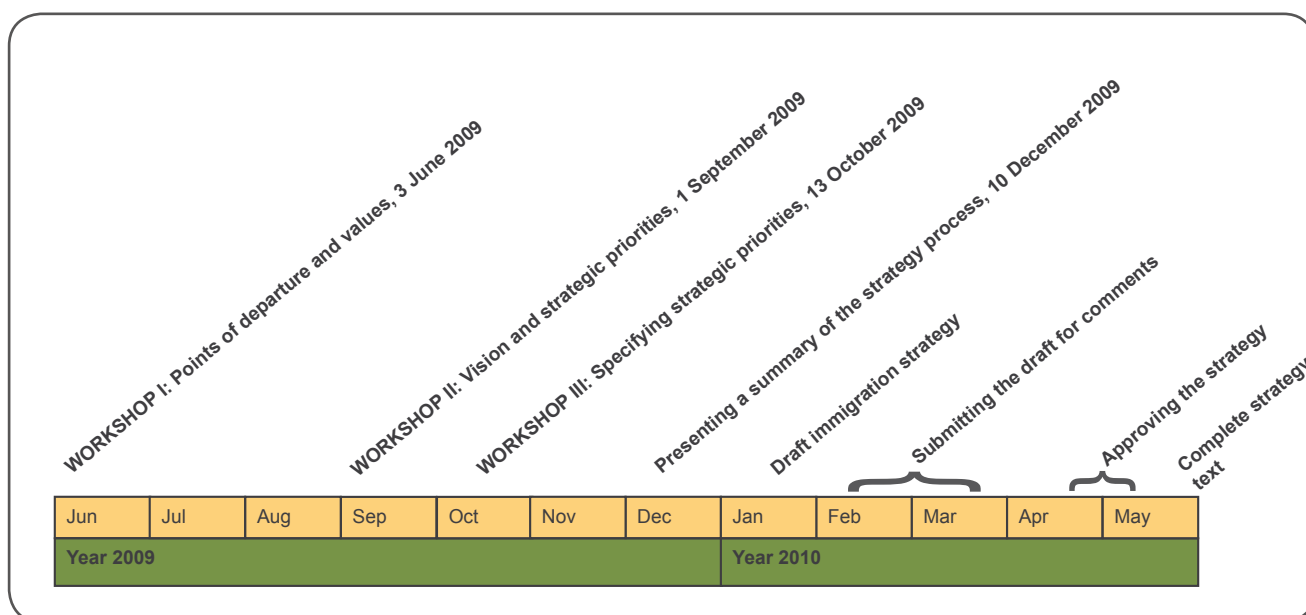


Figure 3. Stages of the Northern Ostrobothnia immigration strategy process.

The draft summary of the strategy was presented in the Immigration Committee on 17 December 2009. The Committee has representatives from the following authorities and organisations engaged in immigration issues: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, Employment and Economic Development Offices, State Provincial Office, Council of Oulu Region, Confederation of Finnish Industries, employee organisations (Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions, Finnish Confederation of Professionals, Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland), municipal representatives, and the Refugee Advice Centre).

The draft strategy was submitted for comments between February and March 2010 and comments were requested from authorities, organisations, parishes, municipalities and companies in Northern Ostrobothnia and the members of the Northern Finland Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO). In municipalities, requests for comments were sent

to municipal managers and all chairmen of political groups in municipal councils. As for Kainuu region, a comment request was sent to the Regional Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, the administration of Kainuu municipal federation, the management of Kainuu regional council, Kajaani centre for asylum seekers, and development company Kainuun Etu.

Requests for comments were sent to 417 persons representing 376 organisations or groups. A total of 64 comments were received. Some requests for comments (4) could not be sent, due to incorrect or obsolete e-mail addresses. Some were also sent by mail if no e-mail address was available. Revised on the basis of the comments received, the strategy was approved in the steering group of the Promotion of Labour Immigration project, the Immigration Committee and the management team of Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia.

Subsistence farming in Ruukki. Rahlan Saara watering the plot together with her mother Rahlan H Huong.



Immigration strategy

The structure and compilation process of the immigration strategy are shown in the picture below.

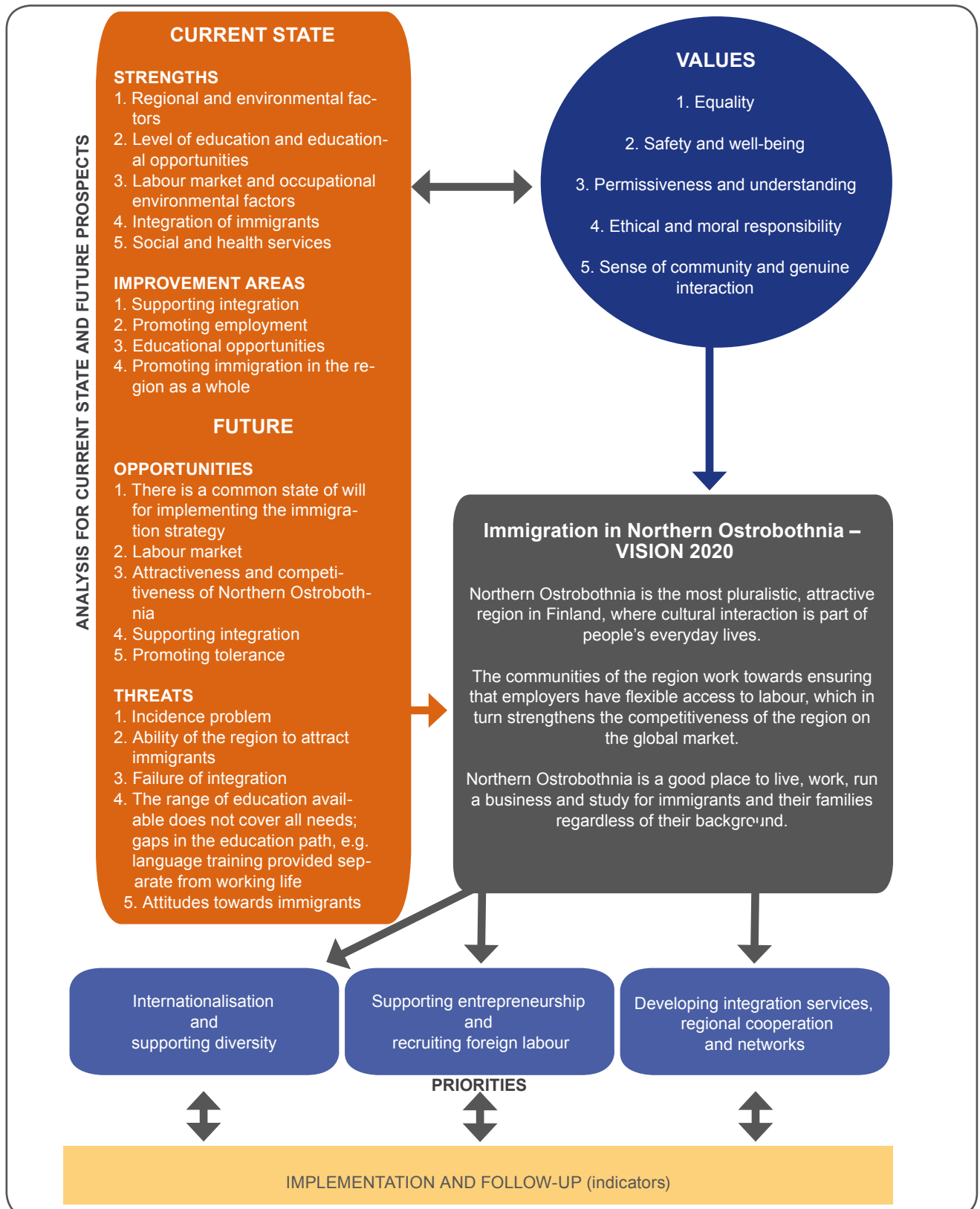


Figure 4. Strategy chart.

Analysis of the current state and future prospects (SWOT)

The immigration strategy is based on an analysis of the current state and future prospects of immigration, which was approved jointly in the strategy process. The operational environment analysis looked into the current strengths and improvement areas of Northern Ostrobothnia from the point of view of the immigration strategy (Table 2) and also future opportunities and threats (Table 3).

The following aspects were identified as the key strengths of Northern Ostrobothnia in view of the immigration strategy (See Table 2):

- 1) regional and environmental factors
- 2) level of education and educational opportunities
- 3) the labour market and occupational environmental factors
- 4) integrating immigrants
- 5) social and health services

The following improvement areas were identified:

- 1) supporting integration
- 2) promoting employment
- 3) educational opportunities
- 4) developing integration as a whole in the region

When discussing the strengths of Northern Ostrobothnia, the human scale of the region and the availability of housing and services were taken up as a factor attracting people. The region offers the services of the Nordic welfare society from maternity clinics onwards. Urban areas and nature lie close each other, offering a wealth of recreational opportunities throughout the year.

Educational opportunities and above all the versatility of Oulu as a venue of education were considered a major strength in Northern Ostrobothnia. The Uni-

versity of Oulu, which was founded in 1958, is one of the oldest and most multidisciplinary universities in Finland. The universities of applied sciences in the region offer education in a variety of fields, and there are also several education institutions that provide vocational upper secondary education and adult education. There is an international school in Oulu, which makes it easier for immigrating families to settle down. Education is the cornerstone of the region's competitiveness, which also shows in the fact that companies, too, arrange education. In fact, their education resources were regarded as one of the strengths of the region.

The technology industry has laid a foundation for labour immigration and integration in Northern Ostrobothnia. An international business environment has been set up in the region, thanks to the strong development of the technology industry, especially the IT sector. There are major flagship companies in the region, such as Nokia, which have broad international networks. An important issue from the point of view of labour immigration is that there is need for new jobs in Northern Ostrobothnia in sectors for which labour can be obtained from abroad – such as the service sector. For labour immigration, it should be noted that the population structure is much older outside the Oulu Region so the need for labour may become even more acute there. There are good examples of labour immigration in Finland that Northern Ostrobothnia can learn about. Safe working environments and consistent conditions of employment were also taken up as factors promoting labour immigration. The labour market in Finland is quite well regulated as compared with many of the countries from where immigrants arrive.

Another strength is that attitudes towards immigrants have become more favourable. The atmosphere in Oulu in particular is considered open, thanks to the open-minded attitudes of the younger generations. In the future regional strategic programme (2010-2013), Northern Ostrobothnia is referred to as the region of young people (Northern Ostrobothnia – Region of Youth). However, prejudice was mentioned as the key problem that should be addressed throughout Northern Ostrobothnia. Attitudes should be developed by already including international education studies in the basic teacher education scheme. This would ensure that international educa-

tion can be passed on to next generations. In addition, communications should be developed in order to disseminate more exhaustive information about immigration. The mass media should more take up positive examples of immigration, not only the challenges connected with immigration.

As indicated by Table 2, an important development target is to help immigrants adapt to Finnish culture and lifestyle. Society should take more responsibility for the integration process so as to of-

fer "an integration path" to immigrants. Among other things, interpretation services and the inclusion of the teaching of Finnish in the immigrant education scheme should be developed in order to promote integration. In addition, different types of housing alternatives must be developed for immigrants. From the point of view of immigration, Northern Ostrobothnia should be developed as a whole and with a view to differences between the sub-regions in terms of age structure and the degree of internationalisation, for instance. The attractiveness of other

Table 2. Summary of current strengths and improvement areas.

Strengths	Improvement areas
<p>1. Regional and environmental factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human scale of the region • Nature and the environment • Availability of housing and services <p>2. Level of education and educational opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of education and linguistic proficiency • University, university of applied sciences and other education institutions • International school and day-care centres in Oulu • Education and educational resources available in companies <p>3. Labour market and occupational environmental factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International business environment and international business networks • The IT sectors has created preconditions for labour immigration • There is need for jobs in sectors where labour can be obtained from abroad (e.g. the service sector) • A safe working environment • The conditions of employment are consistent; regulated labour market <p>4. Integrating immigrants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiences have been gained about integration • Open-mindedness of the young generations • Attitudes have become more favourable • Open atmosphere • Good examples ("the path", e.g. Närpiö) • Possible to learn from the experiences of other sub-regions in Finland (and they can learn from Oulu's experiences) <p>5. Social and health services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services of the Nordic welfare society from maternity clinics onwards 	<p>1. Supporting integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prejudices • Attitude development (including international education in the teacher training scheme) • Communications (diversifying communications) • Adapting immigrants to Finnish lifestyle, job induction • Offering different types of housing alternatives to immigrants as well • Interpretation help • Teaching of Finnish should be included in other forms of immigrant education • Finnish language courses should also be offered as independent modules, which would support the path of immigrants to education and work <p>2. Promoting employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecasting capabilities of companies • Service offering (employer services) • Diversity included in management education • Developing the conditions of employment in order to address different requirements better • Entrepreneurship education to immigrants <p>3. Educational opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International school and day-care centres • Internationalisation of regional education institutions • Education offered by the open university (distance learning) • Diversifying linguistic proficiency <p>4. Developing immigration in the region as a whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the region as a whole; society assuming more responsibility ("the path") • Developing the attractiveness of other sub-regions than Oulu (e.g. developing public transport) • Taking account of the age structure of and differences between sub-regions (Oulu versus others) • Benchmarking

sub-regions than Oulu should be developed in particular. Developing public transport in all parts of the region was mentioned as one way of improving their attractiveness. Although broad educational opportunities are an evident strength in Northern Ostrobothnia, they are also a weakness especially outside the Oulu Region in view of immigration. The lack of an international school and international day-care centres outside Oulu was considered a weakness. The education institutions in the various regions should assign more resources to internationalisation. In addition, the linguistic proficiency of the region's inhabitants should be diversified. Educational opportunities should be improved in Northern Ostrobothnia e.g. by including more distance learning in the open university scheme of the University of Oulu throughout the region.

Among other things, arranging job induction to immigrants is considered a major weakness. Immigrants should have better access to different types of services offered by employers and to entrepreneurship education, for example. Labour immigration can be enhanced better by improving the forecasting capabilities of employers, such as companies. In addition, workplace management education should include diversity studies, and the conditions of employment should be developed to account better for the varying requirements of immigrants who represent different cultures. The immigrants in the Oulu Region are a very heterogeneous group in terms of their nationality, education, skills and immigration motives so it is impossible to offer them a single path for employment and coping at work (Parhankangas 2004).

All in all efforts should be taken in Northern Ostrobothnia to develop ways of comparing regional immigration practises with those of other regions in Finland. It is possible to constantly learn from other regions through benchmarking, at the same time questioning the existing policies.

A summary of future threats and opportunities drawn up during the strategy process is shown in Table 3. The following issues are regarded as the key future opportunities:

- 1) there is a common state of will to implement the immigration strategy
- 2) the labour market

- 3) attractiveness and competitiveness of Northern Ostrobothnia

- 4) supporting integration

- 5) promoting tolerance

The most important threats are:

- 1) the incidence problem

- 2) ability of the region to attract immigrants

- 3) failure of integration

- 4) attitudes towards immigrants

There is a common state of will, conception and approval for the immigration strategy for Northern Ostrobothnia, which provides excellent preconditions for implementing the strategy. Northern Ostrobothnia will compete for labour in the northern corner of Europe in future, and its opportunities in view of immigration in future lie in the presence of sectors where jobs are available. To support labour immigration, other opportunities are the opening of the labour market, forecasting labour needs and supporting entrepreneurship. The business sector should take a more active role in employing immigrants e.g. by advertising jobs directly to them and making apprenticeship education available to immigrants.

One of the resources of Northern Ostrobothnia is the environment, which allows interaction between urban and rural areas. Among other things, rural areas can attract immigrants who were born in the countryside, or lifestyle migrants who want to move away from the city. The attractiveness of rural areas should also be promoted among a larger group of immigrants. In future, it is likely that the number of immigrants with previous immigration experience will increase, which in turn will facilitate their integration in Finland. While gaining knowledge of integration, the structure of immigration services should be developed by adopting new means, such as extending work periods, teaching Finnish at work, utilising the special competence of immigrants and promoting multiculturalness through technology. The Finnish system of education and day-care centres is an attraction factor that should be developed from the

point of view of multiculturalness. In addition, national legislation must be developed in order to support immigration. In future, immigration can be promoted by publicising successful experiences and also telling about them in immigrants' home countries, for example. Immigration promotes competitiveness, and to market it use should be made of the twin cit-

ies that the region's municipalities have in different parts of the world.

A major threat to immigration is the incidence problem, i.e. whether the education, competence and professional skills of immigrants match the needs for labour. Other challenges connected with the

Table 3. Summary of future threats and opportunities.

Opportunities	Threats
<p>1. There is a common state of will to implement the immigration strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The immigration strategy has been recognised: A common state of will, conception and approval regardless of the "path" through which immigrants arrive in Finland <p>2. Labour market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are sectors in the region where jobs will be available • Opening of the labour market, forecasting and targeted education: apprenticeship education • A more active role of the business sector in employing immigrants, even by advertising • Supporting entrepreneurship • Positive discrimination = employers will benefit from recruiting immigrants if they promise that the employment will continue <p>3. Attractiveness and competitiveness of Northern Ostrobothnia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration as a competitive factor, advertising immigration e.g. by making use of the twin cities of the City of Oulu • City-countryside interaction -> rural industries, immigrants arriving from rural areas and lifestyle migrants as a resource in the countryside • The Finnish system of education and day-care centres is a competitive asset • Marketing to the immigrant's home country, role of short-term immigrants as ambassadors and contact persons <p>4. Supporting integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing service structures and creating and adopting new policies • Using the existing knowledge in integration • Looking at integration from a new perspective: extending work periods, teaching Finnish at work, utilising the special competence of immigrants • "Experienced immigrants" to Finland: earlier immigration experience helps integration • Richness of a multicultural environment, supporting multiculturalness e.g. by arranging comprehensive school education in the immigrants' native language and utilising technology • Developing legislation to support immigration <p>5. Promoting tolerance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful experiences and telling about them in the mass media 	<p>1. The incidence problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour immigration is occasional for the time being • Ability of companies to anticipate future trends • Jobs are available in localities where nobody wants to move • Economic situation • Attitudes of employers and employees • Failure to make use of immigrants' education and competence, e.g. the recognition of degrees. Among other things, is the requirement of having a command of Finnish too strict? <p>2. Ability of the region to attract immigrants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition; Finland is competing for labour in the northern corner of Europe • Age structure of the sub-regions; young people move from impoverished sub-regions to Oulu or elsewhere • Narrowness of the cultural environment • Humanitarian migration must be seen as a labour resource <p>3. Failure of integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration ineffective • The integration of the spouse and children poses a major challenge; "attracting" immigrants to the country and its risks involved: e.g. the social security scheme does not cover the whole family • The emerging of a disillusioned minority culture and risks resulting from failure to integrate young immigrants; marginalisation, radicalism, increased crime etc. • Weakness of the integration system: the management's genuine commitment to the strategy and its implementation • Supporting self-initiative – is there any? • The range of education available does not cover all needs; gaps in the education path: language training not provided as part of working life or it is too limited; forms and ways of arranging language training do not match the needs of immigrants <p>4. Attitudes towards immigrants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mass media are looking for negative news about immigrants

employment of immigrants include the insufficient ability of companies to forecast future trends, and the economic situation, attitudes of employers and employees, and the recognition of foreign degrees. Another key challenge is the location of jobs and the fact that they are available in areas where immigrants are not willing enough to move.

Insufficient integration is a threat that can be due to a variety of reasons. The challenge is how the executive management of the municipalities in Northern Ostrobothnia can be committed to the immigration strategy and to its implementation. Integration can be hampered by the negative attitudes that immigrants may have faced due to the publishing of negative news about immigrants in the mass media. Other obstacles can be the cultural environment in Northern Ostrobothnia, in which immigrants from different cultures may sometimes find it difficult to adapt. Challenges connected with the integration of family members can also be a problem in cases where the social security scheme does not cover the whole family. The risk is that failed integration will lead to marginalisation and crime.

Values and vision

Values

Values make up the cornerstone of the strategy. They crystallise the background principles that are connected with the strategic priorities and guide the operation. Values are relatively permanent and do not necessarily have to be upgraded even if the priorities and measures of the strategy were revised.

There was lively discussion between the participants in the workshop group work sessions about the shared values of the strategy. The participants raised several parallel value alternatives, of which the following immigration-related values were selected for the final strategy:

1. Equality
2. Safety and well-being
3. Permissiveness and understanding
4. Ethic and moral responsibility
5. Sense of community and genuine interaction

Vision

An immigration vision was formulated for Northern Ostrobothnia at first in three groups. The various



Immigration in Northern Ostrobothnia - VISION 2020

Northern Ostrobothnia is the most pluralistic, attractive region in Finland, with daily cultural interaction between its inhabitants.

The communities of the region work towards ensuring that employers have flexible access to labour, which in turn strengthens the competitiveness of the region on the global market.

Northern Ostrobothnia is a good place to live, work, run a business and study for immigrants and their families regardless of their background.

visions were combined in a general discussion arranged in the work seminar.

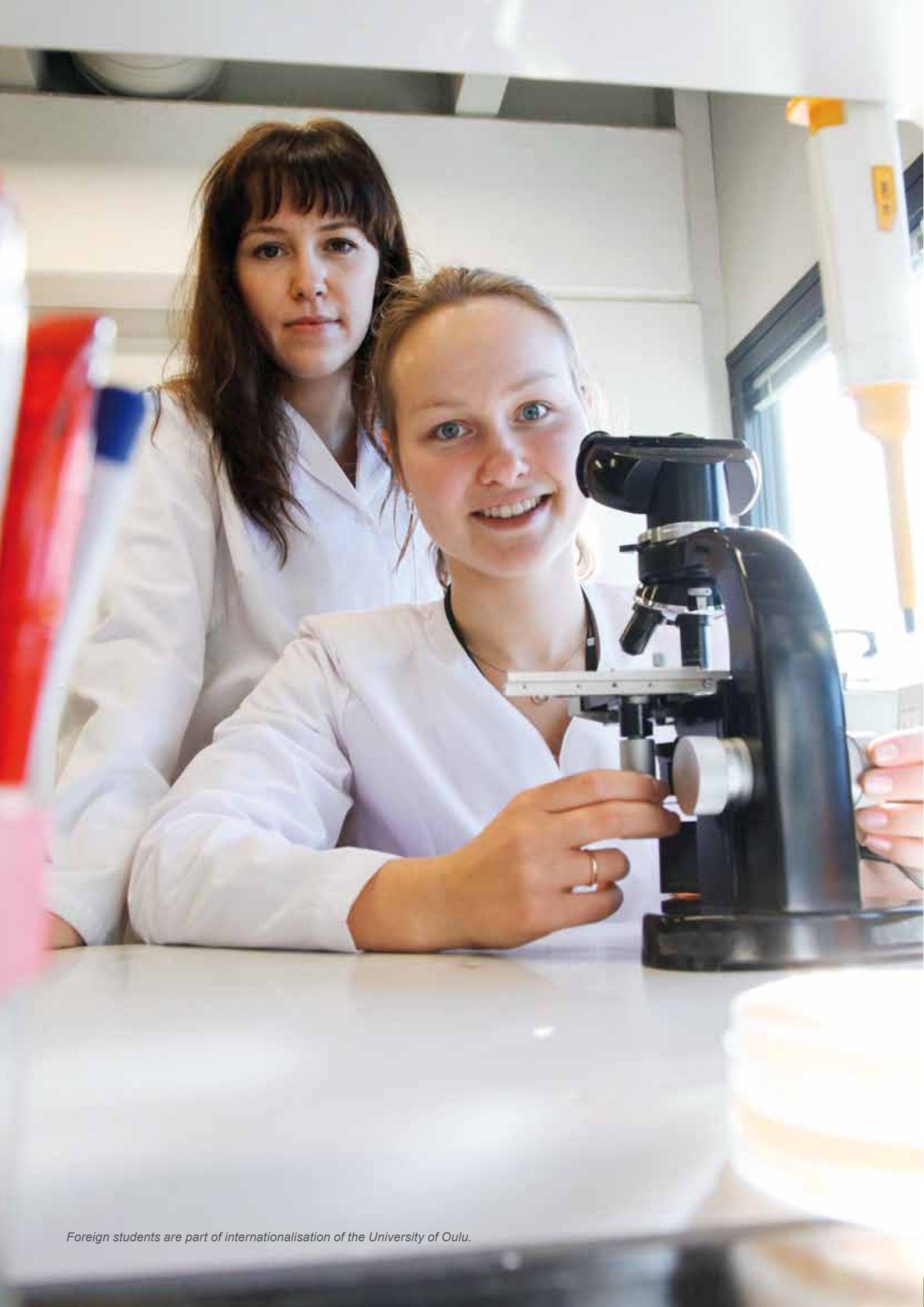
Priorities

The precondition for implementing the above vision is that strategic priorities have been defined clearly. Six key strategic priorities were at first determined as a result of the strategy process. The number of priorities was then reduced to three in order to avoid overlapping. The priorities were divided into sub-aims (e.g. 1.1) and the sub-aims into measures (e.g. 1.1.1). However, the measures were not necessarily determined very accurately at the strategy formulation phase. The idea is to use the immigration strategy to manage future immigration operations in the region so the content of the strategy will expand.

Priorities

- 1) Internationalisation and supporting diversity
- 2) Supporting entrepreneurship and recruiting foreign labour
- 3) Developing integration services, regional co-operation and networks

The content, measures and responsible parties of each priority are presented below.



Foreign students are part of internationalisation of the University of Oulu.

1 Internationalisation and supporting diversity

Northern Ostrobothnia is quite homogenous in terms of its culture and values. This can be considered a strength in view of the sense of community and the formation of social capital. Combined with the appreciation of enterprise and diligence, this has also had economic effects that show in the prosperity and economic success of the region. However, the global economy and the transfer of production to countries with lower labour costs are placing new challenges to strengthening the region's intellectual capital, creativity and innovativeness. In order to succeed in national and international competition, Northern Ostrobothnia must be able to reform and also open up to influence from elsewhere.

As a term, diversity means that the region can be proud of its history, culture and the practises it has developed during the years, at the same time accepting new, different practises and cultures. Innovations that form the basis for growth are best generated at the interface between old and new operational cultures. The aim of the first priority is to prepare different types of operation models and procedures for supporting diversity in schools, education institutions, workplaces and in people's everyday lives. The strategy also places major emphasis on factors connected with the internationalisation of companies and education institutions in the region. Another challenge here is that the various parts of the region differ in terms of their future challenges and the current state of internationalisation.

1.1 Supporting diversity in schools, workplaces and people's everyday lives

1.1.1. International education from early childhood education to higher education institutions

International education must be extended to all levels from early childhood education onwards. By nature, young children are not prejudiced and can thus accept difference. The internationalisation theme should be included in studies qualifying people to work with young children (teachers, kindergarten

teachers, Bachelors of Social Services and practical nurses), paying attention to the local culture as well. This provides a basis for extending attitudinal education to the school system. The operation of the international school and day-care centres in Oulu should be developed in order to support international education better. The internationalisation of other schools and day-care centres should also be supported. Sufficient resources must be secured for teachers, as immigrants may first need more guidance than other students. International education can be provided in clubs arranged to children under school age. It is already available in clubs run by parishes, for example.

Responsible parties: education institutions, municipalities, parishes, the Global School project (Ministry of Education)

1.1.2 Supporting diversity at work based on different types of cultural influence

The IT sector has offered preconditions for labour immigration in Northern Ostrobothnia. The companies in the region are not as familiar with immigrant employees as those situated in Helsinki Metropolitan Area, for example. Efforts should be taken to influence the attitudes of employers and employees. Entrepreneurs may not have the courage to hire immigrants, due to their prejudice, inadequate knowledge of multiculturalness or fear of how customers will react. The situation can be improved among other things by arranging diversity training to employees at workplaces. Different types of incentives should be provided to employers in order to encourage them to hire immigrants. Perceiving difference as a resource will strengthen cooperation between different groups and individuals.

Main responsible party: Employer and employee organisations

Other responsible parties: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia

1.1.3 Supporting everyday multicultural interaction by promoting awareness and understanding

The role of versatile communications is emphasised in supporting everyday multicultural interaction. Telling about the lives of immigrants in the mass media through positive examples will make the mainstream population more familiar with immigrants and help understand them. It is important that immigration issues are also communicated at the level of municipalities and their decision-makers. However, taking up immigration topics should not be a value in itself, and care should be taken not to create a stereotypical picture of immigrants that will foster the division between "us" and "them".

Emphasis should be placed on two-way interaction. While increasing the knowledge of the mainstream population of immigrants and their cultures, the knowledge of immigrants of Finnish society and culture should be increased and their involvement in society supported. Immigration and cultural interaction can strengthen traditional Finnish culture. The actions of the third sector, i.e. associations and immigrant organisations, and voluntary work play an important role here. Parishes, too, are important actors by arranging clubs to children and families and by organising youth work. Immigrants' own organisations also play a role here, although there are still few of them in the region. The establishing of organisations should be supported, without forgetting to maintain interaction with the mainstream population.

The social media plays an important role in modern society. Immigration issues, too, have been broadly publicised in the social media both positively and negatively. Active use should be made of the social media in order to increase multicultural interaction and in communications. As labour migration increases, care should be taken to ensure that the general attitude of the public towards immigrants does not turn negative. For example, the mainstream population can feel that immigrants take their jobs.

Main responsible party: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia (Immigration Committee)

Other responsible parties: Northern Finland Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO), third sector, parishes, organisations and associations, and immigrant organisations.

1.2 Supporting internationalisation

1.2.1 Supporting the internationalisation of companies by strengthening multicultural skills

Companies should perceive multiculturalness as a competitive factor. At best foreign labour can enrich their operation and create an innovative business environment. Multiculturalness can be supported among other things by including diversity in management education and by arranging companies and employers training about the theme. Internationalisation can also be enhanced by offering more practical training opportunities to immigrants. The multicultural aspect must be taken into consideration when developing job induction practises and building risk and quality management models.

Main responsible party: employer organisations

1.2.2. Promoting internationalisation in education institutions and among students

The education institutions in the region from the upper secondary level to universities have set aims for promoting and increasing internationalisation. According to its strategy, the University of Oulu is a globally renowned scientific university, in which "the international dimension is a cross-cutting theme". Among other things, the University of Oulu develops foreign-language training in its focus areas and recruits immigrants with suitable background education. Many education institutions already offer international degree programmes, the availability of which should be promoted.

The number of students entering exchange schemes from the University of Oulu and Oulu University of Applied Sciences is much smaller than the number of overseas exchange students entering them. International student exchange must be promoted in order to provide students with international experience and competence. The aim of the upper secondary

education institutions in the region is to promote internationalisation and increase mobility. Among other things, students participate in overseas on-the-job learning schemes while overseas students enter corresponding learning schemes in our region. The international dimension can also be included easily in the teaching of art subjects, as the language of arts is international. Many education institutions aim to increase the number of foreign teaching personnel, which in turn will promote their internationalisation. Short-term pupil and student group visits also make educational institutions more international.

The education institutions in the Oulu Region are more internationally oriented than those situated elsewhere in the region. In future, more attention should be paid to promoting internationalisation in education institutions in other parts of the region.

Main responsible party: education institutions

Other responsible parties: Regional State Administrative Agency

1.2.3 Utilising the network of Northern Ostrobothnians living abroad

The Northern Ostrobothnians living abroad, their knowledge of the local operational environment and their networks make up a potential resource for establishing international contacts and networks.

Main responsible party: Council of Oulu Region

ICT is a good example of a sector that has already been using foreign labour for a long time. Sandun Dasanayake is employed as Senior Software Engineer at Symbio Oy in Oulu.



2 Supporting entrepreneurship and recruiting foreign labour

The regional programme for Northern Ostrobothnia 2010–2014 is based on major efforts towards internationalisation. The success of the region stems from its broad, innate spirit of entrepreneurship. As a result the number of entrepreneurs now complies with the average for the country.

Supporting entrepreneurship and recruiting foreign labour call for innovative measures, which are based on forecasting the region's labour needs and a view of the competence required of labour. From the point of view of SMEs, the core of the incidence problem lies in the question of whether companies can hire skilled foreign labour and how easily this can be done. Distinct methods and policies are required in order to help employers in the actual recruitment process. A successful set of measures includes utilising the competence of foreigners and permanently resident immigrants living in the region and launching open-minded overseas recruitment measures based on the competence needs of different sectors.

2.1 Self-employment among immigrants or foreigners moving to Finland

2.1.1 Promoting entrepreneurship among immigrants

For some immigrants, setting up a business is good way of employing themselves. They may already have run a business in their former home country or have vocational special expertise that they can utilise as entrepreneurs. Immigrants' knowledge of different types of assistance supporting entrepreneurship, such as the start-up grant and career path service, should be promoted. The services should also be refined in order to make them better suitable to immigrants. Entrepreneurship counselling and guidance should be included in the integration process in order to identify potential entrepreneurs at an early stage. The testing of immigrants' entrepreneurship capabilities should be developed as part of the entrepreneurship counselling scheme.

A network should be formed of the foreign entrepreneurs already running a business in the region. The network can be used to support entrepreneurship among immigrants and to promote the internationalisation of Finnish companies.

Main responsible party: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia

Other responsible parties: Employment and Economic Development Offices, entrepreneur organisations, Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), development companies

2.1.2 Active communications and developing information packages about entrepreneurship in Finland

A lot of information can be obtained about entrepreneurship from different sources. However, a foreigner not familiar with Finnish society and the business world can find it difficult to access this information. With this in mind, entrepreneurship information should be made available in a single package and expressed in a form that foreigners can understand easily. Here, attention should be paid to their countries of origin, because foreigners arriving from different countries may have completely different experiences about entrepreneurship and may also perceive it differently. It is also important to collect information about parties that offer entrepreneurship services in Northern Ostrobothnia. This involves developing and distributing business location and networking services and offering basic regional information. An essential part of the measure is active communications about entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship information packages will also be marketed abroad through suitable channels.

Main responsible party: entrepreneur organisations

Other responsible parties: Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia, Employment and Economic Development Offices

2.2 Supporting the recruitment of foreign labour

2.2.1. *Outlining future labour needs according to occupational group (forecasting)*

The purpose with forecasting is to find out the sectors and professions where there is need for foreign labour. In this sense forecasting lays the foundation for labour immigration. Forecasting future labour needs should take place at the level of companies and regions. The analysis of the current state in the strategy pointed out that there is room for improvement in the ability of companies to forecast future needs. Limited means are available to help single companies forecast their labour needs, but their forecasting skills can be improved. It is also important that the organisations engaged in forecasting in the region pursue closer cooperation.

Main responsible party: Council of Oulu Region

Other responsible parties: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia, Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)

2.2.2 *Creating shared recruitment policies and disseminating the existing ones*

It is important to develop effective recruitment models in order to help companies recruit foreign labour. Companies often face recruitment problems when looking for labour for jobs where special competence is required. It may be possible to find some suitable candidates among the immigrants already living here, but for some reason companies do not know how their competence could be utilised: it is either not recognised or recruitment is prevented by the employers' attitudes. For some of the tasks, a sufficient number of skilled employees cannot perhaps be found at all or quickly enough from the region or from any part of the country. Measures should then be taken to look for qualified experts abroad. There are also employers who actively seek to promote internationalisation by recruiting foreign labour. The international recruitments at the University of Oulu, for example, set out from the internationalisation of in-house research and teaching. Foreign labour can help companies extend their operation abroad. It is

much easier to work in overseas projects if the supervisor was born in the target country and is thus familiar with the local culture.

Foreign labour can be recruited through a variety of channels. Companies can use the services of private recruitment firms or public job exchange services (EURES, see Appendix 2) or recruit labour on their own. One possibility worth considering is to set up recruitment offices in interesting target countries. Some foreign labour enter the country as employees that an overseas company has despatched to work here for a fixed period of time ranging from some days to several years. There are separate regulations concerning despatched employees. One potential employee group comprises foreigners studying who are studying in the region's education institutions. The international student organisation AIESEC, for example, plays a specific role in this. One of its tasks is to offer international practical training places to academic students. Universities of applied sciences also have a career and recruitment service (Jobstep) through which they provide recruitment services to their students.

It is important to eliminate factors hampering recruitment for those companies that recruit employees on their own. Information and practical advice should be offered to them about how to recruit foreign labour and take care of the related bureaucracy. The aim should be to facilitate recruitment at all levels. Special attention should be paid to recruitment from non-EU countries, in which the permit processes, for example, are much more complex. Expert services should be available to help recruitment and to deal with the practical issues connected with it. First of all, information connected with the recruitment process should be available quickly and easily. Amendments must be made to the relevant laws and regulations, where necessary, in order to facilitate recruitment and reduce the related bureaucracy.

Making the existing services better known is one way of promoting the recruitment of foreign labour. The services of Employment and Economic Development Offices include the EURES job exchange service, which offers access to a network of 800 EURES advisors in all EEA countries (Appendix 2). According to a recruitment inquiry conducted by the Promotion of Work-related Immigration project,

companies are poorly familiar with the services. This may be partly due to the fact that many of them do not know what EURES means. The existing policies can be utilised by attending international recruitment fairs. For example, the City of Oulu attended the Emigration Fair in Utrecht, the Netherlands, in 13 – 14 February 2010. Another way of attending international recruitment fairs is to use the Eures service available in Employment and Economic Development Offices.

Private sector actors acquiring foreign labour (businesses and companies offering hired labour) and public job exchange services (the EURES service of Employment and Economic Development Offices) currently work separately. Recruitment can be enhanced by developing cooperation between the private and public sector. Global recruitment companies in the region already have the necessary expertise and experience and have established complete networks, with which closer cooperation should be pursued. The capabilities of companies to recruit foreign labour can be improved by arranging training to persons responsible for recruitments.

In the recruitment process, foreign employees must be secured the same rights as Finnish employees. Foreigners should be given the same opportunities as Finnish candidates to enter job interviews, for example. If the task in question does not require a perfect command of Finnish, the language skill requirement should be lowered. Measures should be taken at the same time to ensure that foreign employees are familiar with the rules and obligations of working life in Finland.

The ability of workplaces to adapt to the presence of foreign labour should be supported. To facilitate this, the range of services and the training of workplace instructors should be increased.

There have been several immigrant employment projects in the region and many of them are still in progress. They include the "Muutoksessa mukana" project (Union of Rural Education and Culture), the Promotion of Work-related Immigration and Koto-työ projects implemented by Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia, the Verkko project (Oulu Deaconess Institute), the Labour Immigration Strategy project

of Haapavesi-Siikalatva sub-region (completed), and the City of Oulu's EFA – Expatriate Family Adjustment project (completed). Cooperation between the above existing projects and new projects to be launched should be increased in order to avoid overlapping.

Main responsible party: Employment and Economic Development Offices

Other responsible parties: Finnish and overseas recruitment companies, Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), entrepreneur organisations, employer organisations, municipalities, permit authorities (e.g. the police).

2.2.3 Developing integrated information and counselling services

Information about the recruitment of foreign labour is available from a variety of sources. However, the problem is that the information and services are scattered. There is no need to set up a new counselling service but instead the existing services should be integrated into a flexible whole. Services of this kind are provided by Employment and Economic Development Offices, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland KELA, the police, tax offices, municipalities and recruitment companies.

Main responsible party: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia

Other responsible parties: Employment and Economic Development Office (EURES service), the Social Insurance Institution of Finland KELA, the police, tax office, municipalities

2.2.4 Focusing on regional attraction factors

From the point of view of the international labour market, Finland is competing for labour in the northern corner of Europe, and Northern Ostrobothnia does not necessarily appear as the most attractive region. Among other things, it is difficult to attract leading technology experts to the region. The strengths of the region are its human scale, favour-

able environmental factors and the services of a Nordic welfare society (e.g. the system of education and day-care centres), which should be emphasised in order to improve the attractiveness of the region. Cultural services should also be developed as part of the living environment. The international conspicuousness of the Oulu Region has earlier been promoted through the EFA 2015 – Oulu Expat City project, for example. Twin cities and the international networks of regional actors should be utilised in order to market the region. In addition, short-term immigrants can act as ambassadors to Northern Ostrobothnia in their home countries by virtue of their international networks.

In future, attractiveness will be developed through close interaction between the Oulu Region and the rest of Northern Ostrobothnia, setting out from the competitive factors of the various parts of the region. The rural environment in Northern Ostrobothnia can appear attractive to immigrants who have lived in the countryside in their home countries, to lifestyle immigrants and perhaps also to a larger group of immigrants. The evolution of rural areas into a valuable, attractive, safe living environment should be supported, because they need more population and labour in order to maintain their vitality, considering their age structure and their current migratory trends.

Main responsible party: Council of Oulu Region

Other responsible parties: entrepreneur organisations, employer organisations, municipalities

2.3 Developing education models and forecasting of educational needs

2.3.1 Developing educational planning and forecasting models

The range of education currently available to immigrants does not necessarily cover all of their needs or there are gaps in the education path. Language training, for example, may be too separate from working life. Arranging vocational education to immigrants places special challenges on the educational system. Attention should be paid to teaching the professional vocabulary and language typi-

cally used in a specific profession. In adult education, challenges are placed by demonstration tests, whose completion can be difficult to immigrants if they have an insufficient command of Finnish even if they had the necessary vocational skills. Effective education paths should be developed for immigrants based on their personal competences and need for special support. Education paths should be developed in order to ensure that they do not contain any gaps and that they cover all immigrants. Preparatory training should be arranged to young immigrants, for example, especially in rural municipalities.

The education needs of immigrants are assessed on the basis of the competence needs of working life. Forecasting educational needs should be integrated with forecasting future labour needs. The purpose of forecasting is to predict future competence needs as accurately as possible and to find out the sectors at which education efforts should be targeted. The increasing number of immigrants and the resulting special needs should be taken into consideration in forecasting. The possible lack of immigrant teachers in rural municipalities should also be taken into account.

Main responsible party: Council of Oulu Region

Other responsible parties: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia, Regional State Administrative Agency for Northern Finland (AVI), education institutions, Chamber of Commerce, entrepreneur organisations

2.3.2 Developing comparability between degrees and competence

The vocational qualifications that immigrants have completed in their home countries do not necessarily correspond to Finnish vocational qualifications. As a result the recognition and comparability of qualifications should be developed. The knowledge of companies of the existing practises should be improved. In future, the population of whole Europe will be ageing fast and employees will have to be recruited from outside Europe. In recruitment taking place in Europe (EU/EEA countries), use can be made of the Europass system, through which students and employees can prove their competence by means

of jointly agreed documents. However, according to the recruitment inquiry, companies are not very familiar with the Europass system, which is already in use in upper secondary education institutions.

Systems for comparing degrees and competence should also be developed for recruiting labour from outside Europe. There is need for a distinct, flexible system by means of which it is possible to compare foreign degrees and qualifications with Finnish ones and indicate the type of supplementary education needed in order to achieve correspondence between them. Therefore, a testing and training package is needed in order to make degrees or qualifications completed in the country X comply with corresponding Finnish degrees and qualifications.

Main responsible party: Regional State Administrative Agency

Other responsible parties: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia, education institutions

2.3.3 Drawing up targeted and supplementary education models for immigrants

Vocational competence can be updated through supplementary education, which must be offered to those sectors and professions where the need for labour is greatest. The apprenticeship education scheme should also be developed with a view to the special needs of immigrants, such as language issues. Work on developing educational models should be based on first outlining the competence and work experience of immigrants. Educational means can then be introduced to support the competence that immigrants have had in their home countries. It is often possible to harness the immigrant's competence through short-term supplementary education. Trying to retrain personnel who have already completed qualifications elsewhere is a waste of time and effort. Experiences about arranging qualifying education to immigrants with tertiary education were gained in the SPECIMA project, for example (Huttunen & Kupari 2007), according to which qualification enables skilled labour to be obtained quickly and with small investments.

Main responsible party: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia

Other responsible parties: education institutions



Immigrants studying Finnish at the International Activity Centre Villa Victor in Oulu.

3 Developing integration services, regional cooperation and networks

The aim of integration is to enable immigrants to participate in Finnish society in the same way as the mainstream population, regardless of the reasons why they have entered the country. One of the key factors supporting integration is the ability to learn the country's native languages. The aim is to help immigrants of working age find a job so that their competence and education can be harnessed to the benefit of Finnish society. New means for addressing different situations must be developed in order to integrate the immigrants already living in the region. The families of labour immigrants should not be forgotten either, as it has been found that when the family adapts to life in Finland and its situation is in order, it is much more likely that the foreign employee will stay in Finland (e.g. Kotzschmar 2009).

A successful integration process is the sum of many parts. It requires that authorities are capable of pursuing flexible cooperation, educational organisations know how to deal with immigrants representing different backgrounds and cultures, and the third sector supports the integration process. Immigrants, in turn, must be motivated and willing to learn Finnish, the regularities of Finnish society, and Finnish culture. The focus in the priority is on the open-minded development of integration measures and cooperation between different regional actors. The aim is to exchange experiences and good practises and to put together scattered pieces of information in order to support integration.

3.1 Developing integration services

3.1.1 Developing integration service structures and policies

Amendments will be made to the Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers, which will probably extend integration to cover all immigrants. The focus in developing integration measures in future will be on increasing cooperation between parties engaged in integration work and on developing the content of integration efforts. All

the parties engaged in integration must be involved: authorities, municipalities, the third sector and other actors (e.g. parishes and education institutions). With such a large group of parties, it is possible to ensure that the strengths of each organisation can be utilised. Parishes and religious communities, for example, have the type of knowledge that municipalities and many third sector actors do not have. They can help immigrants become integrated in that they disseminate information about the role of religion in Finland and about religious communities. Integration should be viewed from a new perspective by developing and adopting new policies: longer work periods should be arranged in integration education, Finnish should be taught at work, immigrants' special competence should be utilised and peer support should be offered to immigrants. Organisations play an important role in providing peer support.

The role of work in integration is important, because it offers immigrants a chance to genuinely integrate with the Finnish society. Positive feedback has been received about courses aimed at employing immigrants. They should be arranged in all the municipalities that have immigrants of working age. Providing a long on-the-job learning period and drawing up a personal teaching plan effectively help immigrants find a job. Immigrants should be assisted in entering working life by also offering jobs to less competent persons who are not so familiar with the Finnish language.

Municipalities play a prominent role in arranging integration services. Their key duty is to arrange services to all of their inhabitants. Their financial resources should also be taken into consideration when arranging services to immigrants. Attention should be paid to the following issues:

- The content, availability and usability of basic services – these should be based on genuine equality and mainstreaming principles
- Improving and developing initial immigration advice and counselling services
- Special services – immigrant groups in danger of marginalisation, and children and young people

The challenge with respect to arranging services is the broad heterogeneousness of immigrants, which has a major impact on their service needs and ability to use the services. Much more resources are needed for arranging services to immigrants than to the mainstream population. This imposes pressures to the allocation of resources, which municipalities should take into account when arranging services, if possible in view of their financial resources. The municipal social services and health department and education department play an important role in providing services to immigrants. The potential available in recreational services should be used more extensively. Pressures to cut down resources but still having to provide more immigrant services and cope with the resulting personnel growth make up a controversy that should be resolved locally, regionally and nationally. At the local level solutions can be sought through cooperation and the exchange of information between municipalities about issues connected with integration efforts (see Priority 3.2.1).

The dual nature of integration should not be forgotten either. This means that the cultural knowledge of both immigrants and the mainstream population should be supported. Finns and Finnish communities also need "integration" in order to adapt to pluralistic everyday life, and they should become familiar with the culture of immigrants. Among other things, this can be done by arranging shared entrepreneurship and employment projects to both immigrants and the mainstream population and through cooperation between organisations or religious communities.

An important development theme in integration is the teaching of Finnish to immigrants. Language training can be developed by linking it more closely with other forms of immigrant education, by providing it at work and by developing functional learning schemes. In addition, sufficient Finnish studies should be available as independent modules that immigrants can complete in even if they were not yet employed or attending education. Some English studies are also required if immigrants are not familiar with the English language, because having a sufficient command of English will open up job opportunities in companies that operate on the global market. Language training should also be arranged to the immigrant's family members – his/her spouse and children.

Resources should also be set aside to address the challenge of integrating the families of immigrants who have entered Finland to work here. More attention should be paid to the position of immigrant women and to preventing marginalisation. Special challenges are placed by the integration of young people and young adults. Difficulties at school and failure to adapt will easily lead to marginalisation. In the case of young people, the critical point is when they leave school and enter the labour market. Foreigners having moved to the countryside often lack a support network when none of their neighbours speaks their language. It is also important in the integration process to support the self-initiative of immigrants.

Main responsible party: municipalities

Other responsible parties: Employment and Economic Development Offices, education institutions, organisations, parishes

3.1.2 Strengthening the role of employers in integration

Having a job makes it much easier to adapt to Finnish society. The role of work and practical training in the integration process must be developed by encouraging employers to offer more training places to immigrants. Longer work periods should be used in the integration process.

Main responsible party: entrepreneur organisations

Other responsible parties: Employment and Economic Development Offices

3.1.3 Developing integration based on immigrants' needs

Immigrants entering the region for a variety of reasons need very different integration services. Labour immigrants are positioned differently as compared with people having moved to the region on account of family ties, asylum seekers, refugees and minors who have moved in alone. The integration needs of immigrants depend on their cultural and educational

background and linguistic proficiency, for example. The range of immigrants varies from highly educated, linguistically proficient people to completely illiterate, analphabetic persons representing a completely different cultural environment. It is not necessary to offer an equally comprehensive integration package to all immigrants but services should be provided flexibly. Integration programmes should be drawn up comprehensively by first analysing the needs of each individual in order to combine education and training for work. The integration process must be started immediately when the immigrant arrives in the country. Integration is also the aim in the case of refugees, and the intention is to ensure that they, too, are available on the labour market in future. Even refugees introduce new customs, cultures and ways of interaction to municipalities and can thus lend an international dimension to the region.

The integration of labour immigrants currently too much depends on the activeness of employees and immigrants themselves. Assistance and concrete measures are needed in order to support integration. Entrepreneurs or employees must have access to integration support immediately upon employment.

There is currently a lack of places for immigrants in municipalities. Measures are currently being taken at the national level to address this need: a municipal refugee placement strategy is being prepared at the Ministry of the Interior. Therefore, this theme will not be discussed in more detail in this strategy. In any case the following municipal viewpoints from the region should be noted:

- It would be a good idea to increase cooperation between municipalities at the regional level, for example.
- It is important that immigrants are placed in municipalities in a carefully planned, controlled manner in order to ensure that municipalities can take placements into consideration when planning the organisation of integration measures and the allocation of integration resources.

Main responsible party: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia

Other responsible parties: municipalities, non-governmental organisations

3.2 Strengthening regional cooperation in integration

3.2.1 Gathering scattered information, exchanging information and experiences between municipalities and utilising them in decision-making

The municipalities of Northern Ostrobothnia already have experiences about integration, which differ according to municipality. It takes years for municipalities to learn the integration work process. Organisations engaged in integration work are all preoccupied with their special fields so integration-related information tends to be scattered. Therefore, measures are needed to gather the information. The exchange of information between municipalities should be increased. Municipalities can learn about the integration models already implemented in other municipalities that are thus more familiar with integration.

Main responsible party: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia

Other responsible parties: municipalities, Employment and Economic Development Offices

3.2.2 Introducing an integration and immigrant employee post for the whole region

An integration and immigrant employee post should be established for the whole region in order to promote cooperation between actors engaged in the integration process. His/her duties would include disseminating information about integration and coordinating cooperation between the various actors. He/she should also coordinate cooperation between regional immigration employees.

Main responsible party: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia



Konstantin Denisov preparing a customer for a safari (Rukapalvelu Oy, Kuusamo).

Implementation and follow-up of the strategy

Implementation

The aim is to use the strategy as a guideline document for immigration issues in Northern Ostrobothnia. The strategy is used to coordinate the existing organisations and operations dealing with immigration issues. In addition, it contains a future-oriented focus and underlines the management of new immigration projects and operations.

It is important to ensure sufficient communications in the implementation of the strategy in order to make regional immigration actors sufficiently familiar with it. In addition to disseminating information through the media, use will be made of the networks of the immigration actors in communications and in implementing the strategy. To develop the networks further, the contact details of persons responsible for immigration issues in the organisations were collected when the immigration strategy was submitted for comments. The awareness of the various actors of each others' operation is promoted through active networking, such as regular meetings. The aim is to reduce overlapping activities and to enable the actors to specialise in different themes. This will benefit all the parties. At the municipal level, an important issue in the implementation of the strategy is the common state of will: officials and elected officials should share the same view about immigration issues.

The measures of the strategy have not been scheduled here. When launching the actual implementation, a schedule should be drawn up together with implementers and responsible parties of the strategy.

Follow-up

The immigration strategy process and strategy preparation were pursued by the Promotion of Work-related Immigration project of Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia. Upon completion of the strategy, the main responsible party will be the Immigration Committee. Amendments are being prepared for immigration legislation and administration. They should be monitored with a view to assessing how they will effect the implementation of this strategy. The strategy should be specified, where necessary, and after five years the whole strategy will have to be updated in any case. The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Kainuu and Northern Ostrobothnia pursue closer cooperation than before, because the two regions operate under a joint immigration manager. In future, their immigration issues will be harmonised e.g. with regard to the immigration strategy that has been planned for Kainuu.

Indicators

The implementation of the immigration strategy will be monitored annually with the help of indicators. Initial and target levels are set for each indicator. The indicators are also assessed at the level of sub-regions if data are available. They should be compared with the immigration indicators that are currently being formulated by the Ministry of the Interior, and specified during the strategy implementation process, where necessary.

Table 4. Indicators, their development and targets levels. Actual development, source: Statistics Finland.

Indicator	Year						Trend	Target
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2015	2015
Population								
Number of foreign citizens, persons	3 733	3 963	4 257	4 540	5 058		7 046	7 100
- share of the whole population, %	0.98	1.03	1.10	1.17	1.29			
- share of the whole population, % (whole country)	2.17	2.31	2.50	2.69	2.91			
Number of population with some other native language than Finnish, Swedish or Sami, persons	4 125	4 448	4 853	5 301	5 905		8 575	8 600
- share of the whole population, %	1.08	1.16	1.26	1.36	1.51			
- share of the whole population, % (whole country)	2.75	2.97	3.26	3.58	3.87			
Migration, net migration, persons	399	365	495	469	771		500	500
Employment								
Number of employed foreigners, persons	1 181	1 323	1 467	1 642			2 718	2 300
- share of all employed persons, %	0.82	0.86	0.93	1.03			1.52	1.5
- share of all employed persons, % (whole country)	1.73	1.94	2.19	2.48				
Number of self-employed foreigners, persons	109	122	135	154			259	280
Unemployment rate among foreigners, %	29.7	26.7	23.5	23.2			8.1	15.0
- Unemployment rate among foreigners, % (whole country)	26.1	22.8	19.6	19.2				
Unemployment rate difference between foreigners and the mainstream population, percentage points	16.6	15.5	13.3	12.1			1.7	6.0
- Unemployment rate difference between foreigners and the mainstream population, percentage points (whole country)	15.3	13.4	11.4	10.5				
Employment rate among foreigners (employed persons/population aged 15-64 years), %	42.7	43.4	44.6	46.1			54.0	54.0
- Employment rate among foreigners, men, %	51.6	53.2	54.5					
- Employment rate among foreigners, women, %	34.0	33.7	34.9					
Education								
- Number of foreign pupils in comprehensive schools	332	381	471	476				
Foreign students, post-basic degree education (education arranged in Northern Ostrobothnia)								
- upper secondary education, persons	52	63	66	63				
- basic vocational education, persons	226	251	290	304				
- polytechnic education, persons	158	148	222	284				
- university education, persons	146	170	179	207				
Degrees completed by foreigners, post-basic degree education (education arranged in Northern Ostrobothnia)								
- upper secondary education, pcs	21	9	17	11				
- basic vocational education, pcs	48	51	56	61				
- polytechnic education, pcs	13	12	11	19				
- university education, pcs	12	13	18	16				
Number of persons having studied in an immigrant course								
Number of immigrants in practical training								
Number of foreigners aged 17-25 years not attending education								
- of whom illiterate and analphabetic								
- of whom without vocational education								

Indicator	Year						Trend	Target
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2015	2015
Integration								
Integration programmes in municipalities and their updatedness								
Availability of an integration programme: yes/no								
Updatedness: updated during the past year, updated 1-4 years ago, updated more than 4 years ago or not updated at all								

Table 5. Regional indicators.

Region	Foreign citizens											
	Development				Initial level	Target level						Trend development*
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2015
Northern Ostrobothnia, total	3 733	3 963	4 257	4 540	5 058							7 046
Haapavesi-Siikalatva sub-region	63	64	82	84	84							116
Koillismaa sub-region	189	194	185	208	219							264
Nivala-Haapajärvi sub-region	156	188	188	211	213							299
Oulu sub-region	2 637	2 813	2 996	3 151	3 565							4 957
Oulu Arc sub-region	115	111	126	100	123							135
Raahe sub-region	329	346	402	466	513							789
Ylivieska sub-region	244	247	278	320	341							487

Ali Hosseini in practical training at Huovisen Leipomo. Practical training is part of the immigrant course arranged by Oulu Adult Education Centre.



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Foreign labour are also employed in mechanical engineering industry in the region. Sergey Ivanov repair welding the clasp nut of a gyratory crusher (Telatek Oy, Raahe).

Appendices

Appendix 1. Workshop participants

	Participant	Organisation
1.	Niina Kuokkanen	Amnesty International, Oulu Branch
2.	Aino-Kaisa Manninen	Amnesty International, Oulu Branch
3.	Jussi Kejo	Amnesty International, Oulu local branch
4.	Vesa Saarinen	Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions SAK
5.	Timo Lehtiniemi	Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners, Northern Ostrobothnia
6.	Anna-Liisa Hietala	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
7.	Briitta Linna	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
8.	Hanna Määttä	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
9.	Jouko Sarkkinen	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
10.	Leila Helaakoski	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
11.	Maire Mäki	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
12.	Elina Kurtti	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
13.	Sisko Kotzschmar	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
14.	Heikki Keränen	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
15.	Sami Rontti	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
16.	Sari Leppäluoto	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
17.	Veronika Zaburchik	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment
18.	Anne-Mari Suopajärvi	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Lapland
19.	Jouni Aitto-oja	City of Oulainen
20.	Anne Rännäli-Kontturi	City of Oulu
21.	Tuula Hautamäki	City of Oulu
22.	Pia Kortessalo	City of Oulu / Immigration Services
23.	Shahnaz Mikkonen	City of Oulu / Villa Victor
24.	Tuula Tolkkinen	City of Pudasjärvi
25.	Birgitta Ojala	City of Pudasjärvi
26.	Marianne Mäntylehto	City of Pudasjärvi / Työvarma Project
27.	Asko Ojamäki	City of Ylivieska
28.	Jukka-Pekka Kivioja	Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)
29.	Keijo Putkonen	Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)
30.	Ilkka Yliniemi	Council of Oulu Region
31.	Pauli Harju	Council of Oulu Region
32.	Pasi Wallenberg	Employment and Economic Development Office of Oulu
33.	Pirjo Juntunen	Employment and Economic Development Office of Oulu
34.	Tina Sundqvist	Employment and Economic Development Office of Oulu
35.	Outi Parhankangas	Employment and Economic Development Office of Oulu
36.	Mira Saarela	Employment and Economic Development Office of Raahe sub-region
37.	Marjo Kolehmainen	Entrepreneurs of Northern Ostrobothnia
38.	Sari Reinikainen-Laine	Entrepreneurs of Northern Ostrobothnia
39.	Tuula Sivonen	Federation of Finnish Technology Industries
40.	Ella Pozharskaja	Finland-Russia Society
41.	Ekaterina Pozharskaja	Finland-Russia Society
42.	Reijo Lähteenmäki	Finnish Broadcasting Company

43.	Saara Määmi	Finnish Confederation of Professionals STTK, Union of Health and Social Care Professionals Tehy
44.	Esa Niskanen	Finnish Construction Trade Union
45.	Natalia Päivinen	Haapavesi College / R.O.A.D. Project
46.	Päivi Moilanen	Haapavesi College /R.O.A.D. Project
47.	Viktoria Agapitova	Haapavesi comprehensive school
48.	Marjut Välikangas	Homelike Oulu Project / City of Oulu
49.	Marguerite Guibert	Homelike Oulu Project / City of Oulu
50.	Titta Nurkkela	Luovi Vocational College
51.	Vuokko Ryytty	Mahdollisuuksien työpaikka Project
52.	Juhani Tervonen	Maikkula-linatti residents' association
53.	Matti Hippeläinen	Miilukangas Oy
54.	Terhi Ahokangas	Municipality of Sievi / Economic Development Office
55.	Jukka Mikkonen	Municipality of Taivalkoski
56.	Petri Uusikylä	Net Effect Oy
57.	Katri Haila	Net Effect Oy
58.	Maria Karppinen	Oulu Settlement / Nuoren turvapaikahakijan polku Pudasjärvellä Project
59.	Minna Savikko	Osuuskauppa Arina
60.	Piia Törmä	Osuuskauppa Arina
61.	Matti Johansson	Oulu Central Laundry
62.	Markku Santaholma	Oulu Deaconess Institute / Verkko Project
63.	Risto Kalliorinne	Oulu Deaconess Institute / Verkko Project
64.	Hilmi Oral	Oulu Settlement
65.	Aili Saukkonen	Oulu Settlement
66.	Liisa Viren	Oulu Settlement
67.	Aruna Somani	Oulu Settlement
68.	Mamurkhon Akramov	Oulu University Hospital
69.	Sanna Matikainen	Oulu University of Applied Sciences
70.	Tuuli Lähteenmäki	Oulu University of Applied Sciences
71.	Marjo Pääskylä	Oulu University of Applied Sciences
72.	Anu Riippa	Oulu Vocational College, Kontinkangas Unit
73.	Anu Ronkainen	Oulu Vocational College, Unit for Adult Education and On-the-Job Education
74.	Erja Paso-Hietala	Oulu YMCA
75.	Ilona Suppanen	Oulun Jätehuolto
76.	Marja-Leena Timonen	Oulun Seudun Mäntykoti Association
77.	Raimo Hätälä	Palmberg-Rakennus Oy
78.	Merja Räihä	Prokura oy
79.	Salla Herrala	PSK Adult Education Centre
80.	Pirta Kaan	PSK Adult Education Centre
81.	Ari Koski	PSK Adult Education Centre
82.	Pentti Myllyoja	Reception Centre of Oulu
83.	Petri Haapala	Russia Society of Northern Finland
84.	Marja Lähde	Semantix Lingua Nordica Oy
85.	Eevamaria Dahl	Semantix Lingua Nordica Oy
86.	Mervi Vierela	Service Union United PAM
87.	Paula Grekelä	Service Union United PAM
88.	Susanna Sakko	Siikalatva-Haapavesi sub-region / Promotion of labour immigration in Siikalatva sub-region
89.	Ildiko Loikkanen	Sillat Oy

90.	Päivi Huovinen	Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela)
91.	Markko Saukkonen	Staffpoint
92.	Anne Palokangas	Summer University of Northern Ostrobothnia
93.	Terttu Tolonen	Team Power Oulu / Entrepreneurs of Northern Ostrobothnia
94.	Miram Attias	The Red Cross, Oulu Branch
95.	Janne Hyvönen	Union of Rural Education and Culture
96.	Virpi Harilahti-Juola	Union of Rural Education and Culture
97.	Farid Bezzi	University of Oulu
98.	Jaakko Seppänen	Young People's Friends Association
99.	Marjaleena Immonen	Yritetään Yhdessä Association
100.	Akil Abdulrahim	
101.	Elsa Kukkola	
102.	Galina Raavi	
103.	Galina Saukko	
104.	Kyllikki Poutiainen	
105.	Nadjesda Garmash	

Appendix 2. Terms

EURES services

Introduced by the European Commission in 1994, the EURES (European Employment Services) is a job exchange network covering all EU/EEA countries. The network is intended for employers who want to hire foreign employees from EU/EEA countries and job-seekers wishing to work in another EU/EEA country. The network consists of electronic services and of guidance and counselling provided by some 800 advisors in EU/EEA countries. There are currently 32 EURES advisors in Finland, and the operation is coordinated by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

The recruitment support available to employers includes exchanging job information, marketing at overseas employment fairs and arranging recruitment occasions in the desired target countries together with the local EURES network. Since 2006 the EURES services of the Oulu Region Employment and Economic Development Office and the City of Oulu have pursued cooperation with the Emigration Fair which is arranged annually in the Netherlands. This cooperation is part of regular EURES services. In addition, Finnish EURES advisors have marketed Finland's job opportunities in about 70 occasions in different parts of Europe in 2009-2010.

The Immigration Committee

Decree of the Ministry of the Interior No 1353 contains provisions concerning the Immigration Committee, which according to the decree can be set up by the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment. The purpose of the Committee is to assist the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, Regional State Administrative Agency, regional Employment and Economic Development Offices and municipalities in developing and harmonising integration and in other immigration issues.

The decree states the parties that must be represented in the Committee. The Immigration Committee of Centre for Economic Development, Transport

and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia has representatives from the following parties: Northern Ostrobothnia Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, Council of Oulu Region, Joint Authority of Kainuu Region, Northern Finland State Administrative Agency, Oulu Employment and Economic Development Office, City of Oulu, Municipality of Siikajoki, City of Pudasjärvi, Confederation of Finnish Industries EK, Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland AKAVA, Central Organisations of Finnish Trade Unions SAK and Oulu Settlement.

Northern Finland Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO)

The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations is a broad-based expert advisory panel appointed by the Finnish Government. Its purpose is to develop interaction and assist ministries to develop an ethnically equal, diverse society. The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations consists of a national advisory board and four regional advisory boards.

ETNO consists of the representatives of employment and economic development centres, the Regional State Administrative Agency, key municipalities, non-governmental organisations, parties engaged in working life and the business sector, and immigrants. The Northern Finland Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations is coordinated by Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment. Its mission is to promote good ethnic relations in the region, interaction between different parties and organisational activities of ethnic minorities, launch initiatives about actions promoting good ethnic relations and equality, provide regional and local views to the operation of the national Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations, promote the immigration policy and underline the role of ethnic equality and ethnic diversity as a resource to society.

Appendix 3. Description of the operational environment in Northern Ostrobothnia

The statistical data on population, employment and economy in Northern Ostrobothnia that were utilised in drawing up the strategy are shown in this Appendix.

Population

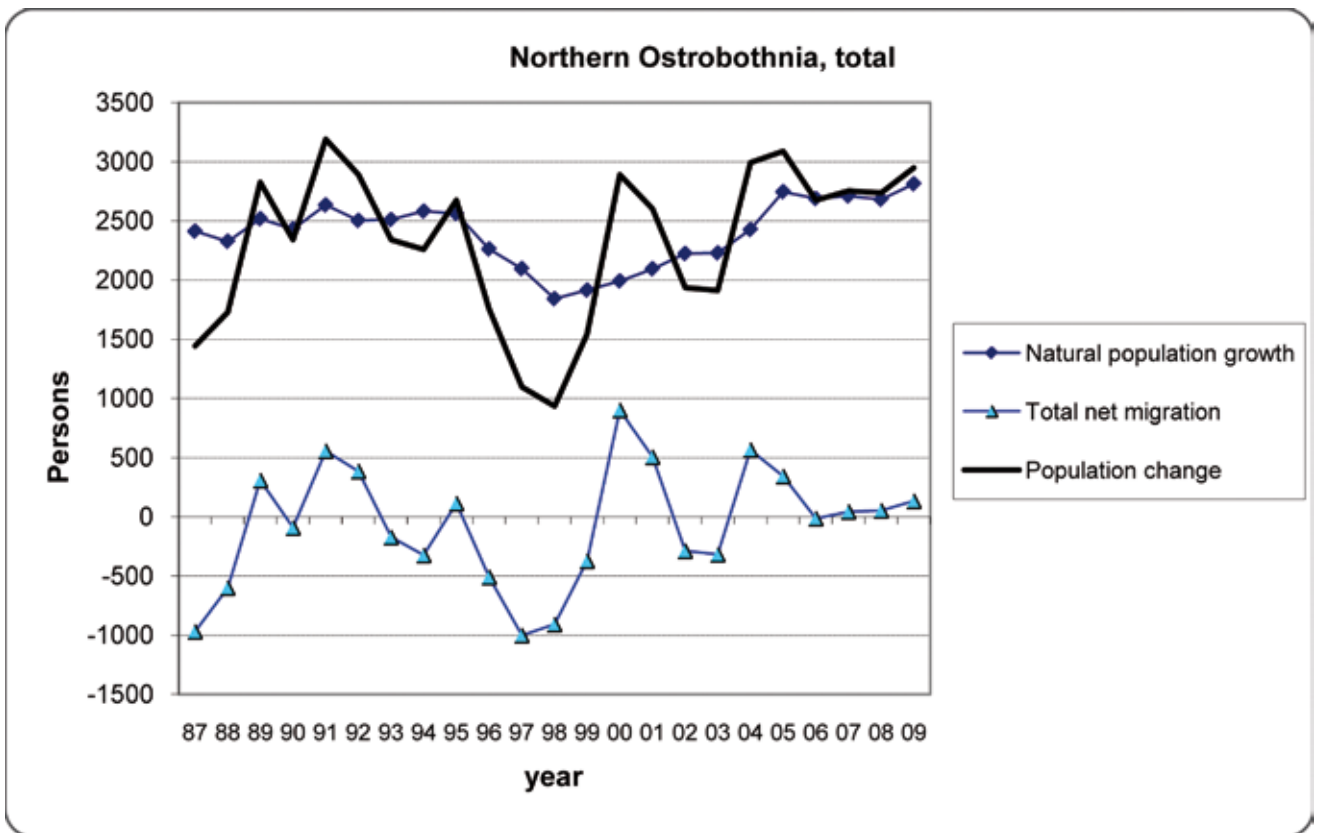


Figure 1. Factors of population change in Northern Ostrobothnia in 1987–2009, persons. Source: Statistics Finland.

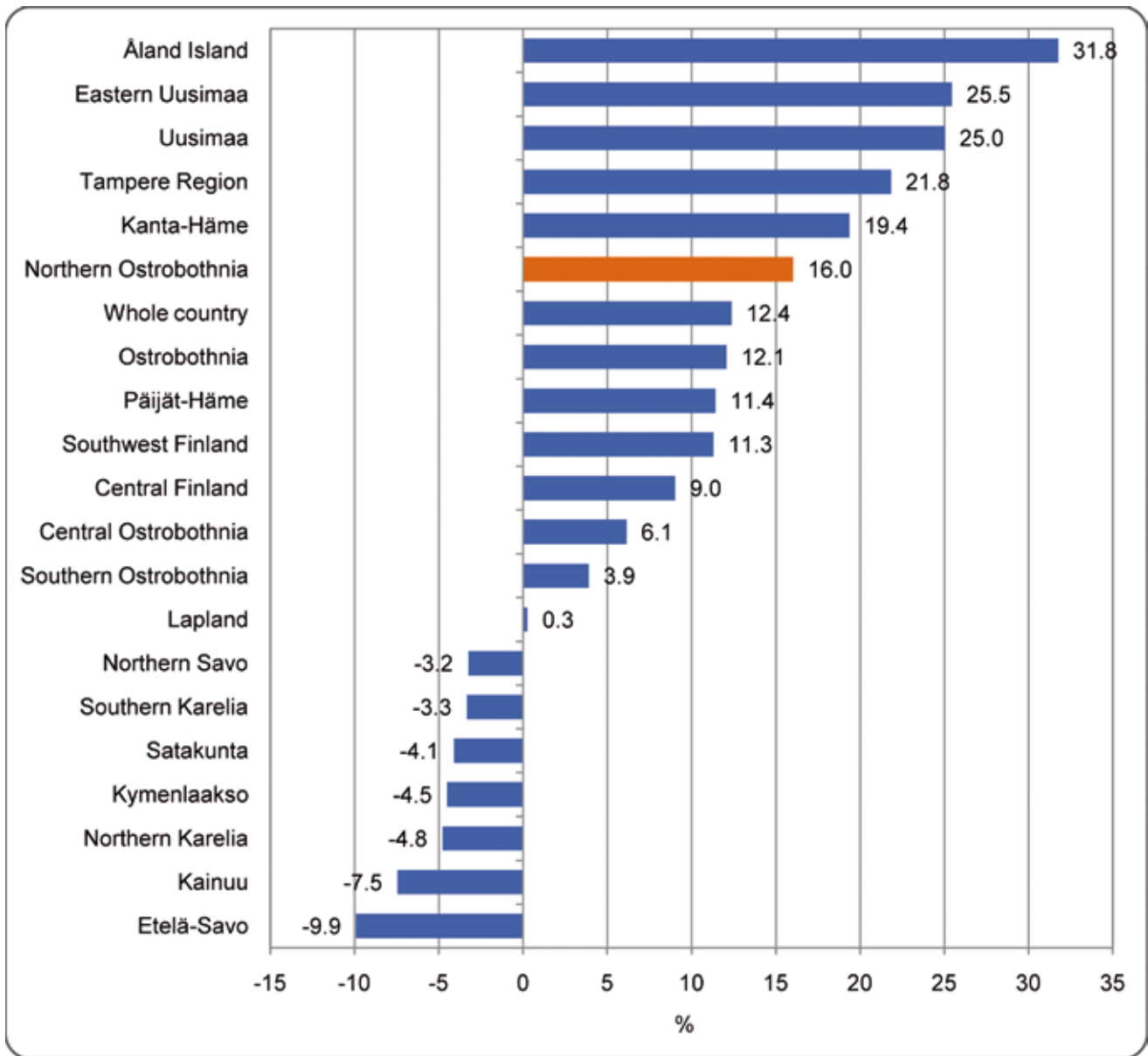


Figure 2. Regional population trends in 2006-2040 according to Statistics Finland's population forecast 2009, %.

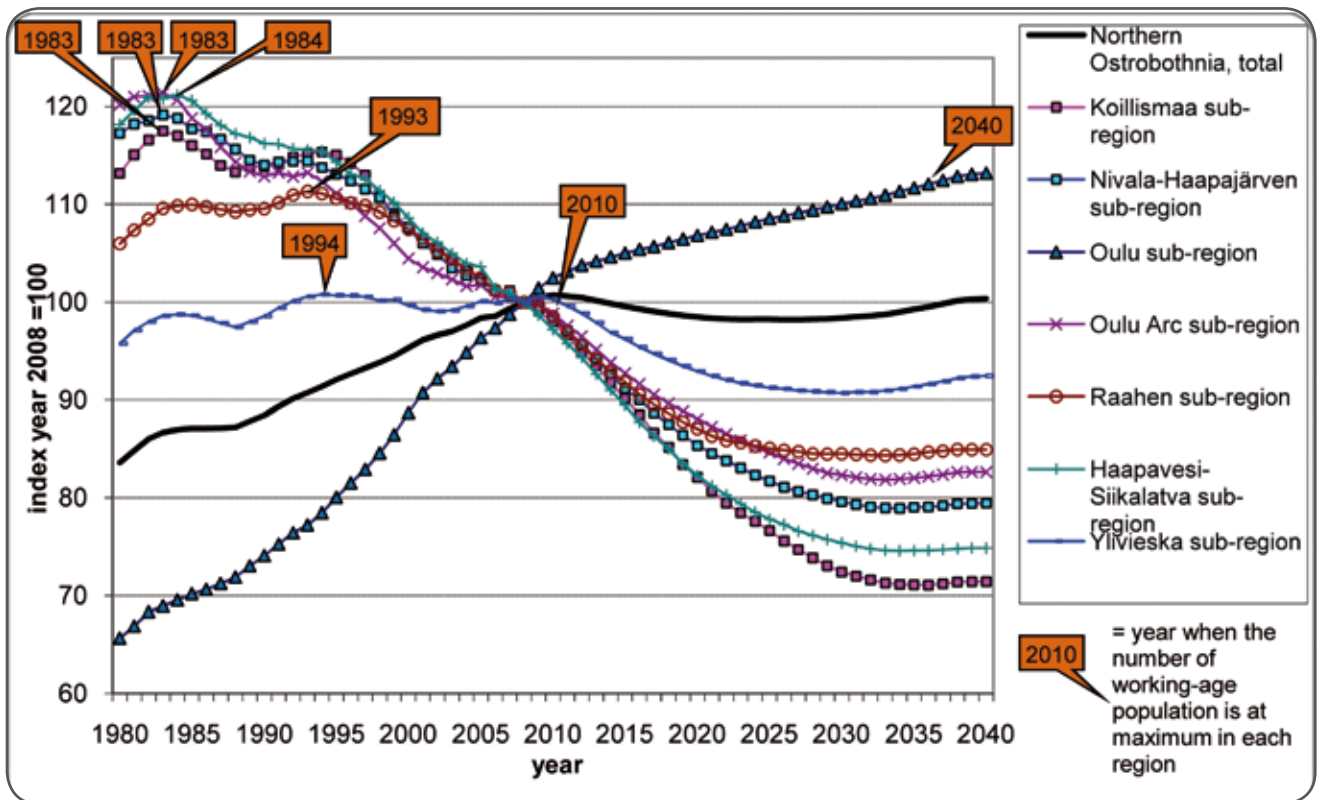


Figure 3. Trends among working age population (15–64 years) in 1980–2008 and according to a population forecast in 2009–2040 by sub-region in Northern Ostrobothnia, index year 2008=100. Note: The population forecast is based on the regional division for 2009, so the municipality/sub-region division of 2009 was used here in which Himanka was still part of Kokkola sub-region. Material: Statistics Finland.

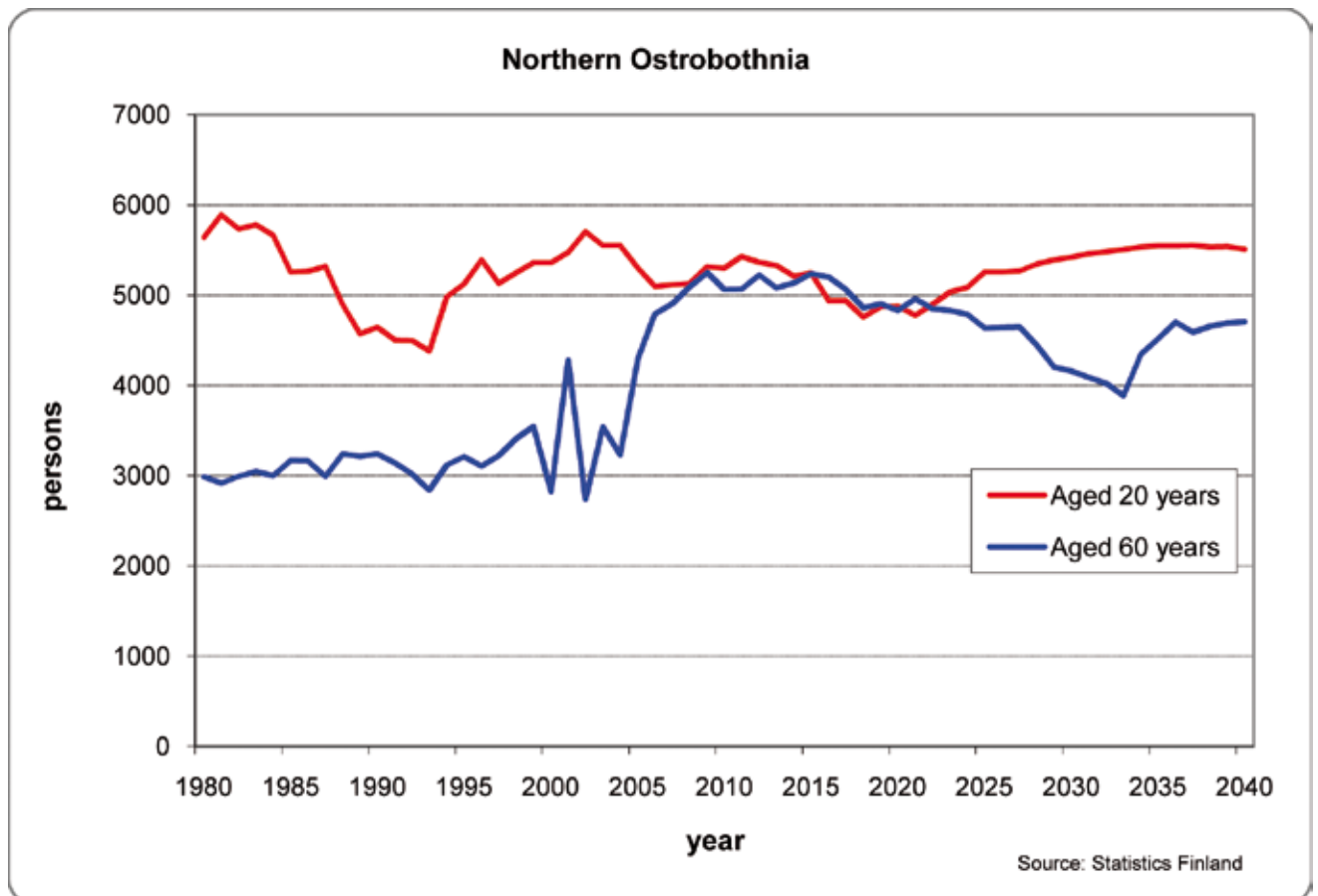


Figure 4. Trends in population aged 20 years and 60 years in 1980–2008 and forecast (2009) for 2009–2040 in Northern Ostrobothnia. Source: Statistics Finland.

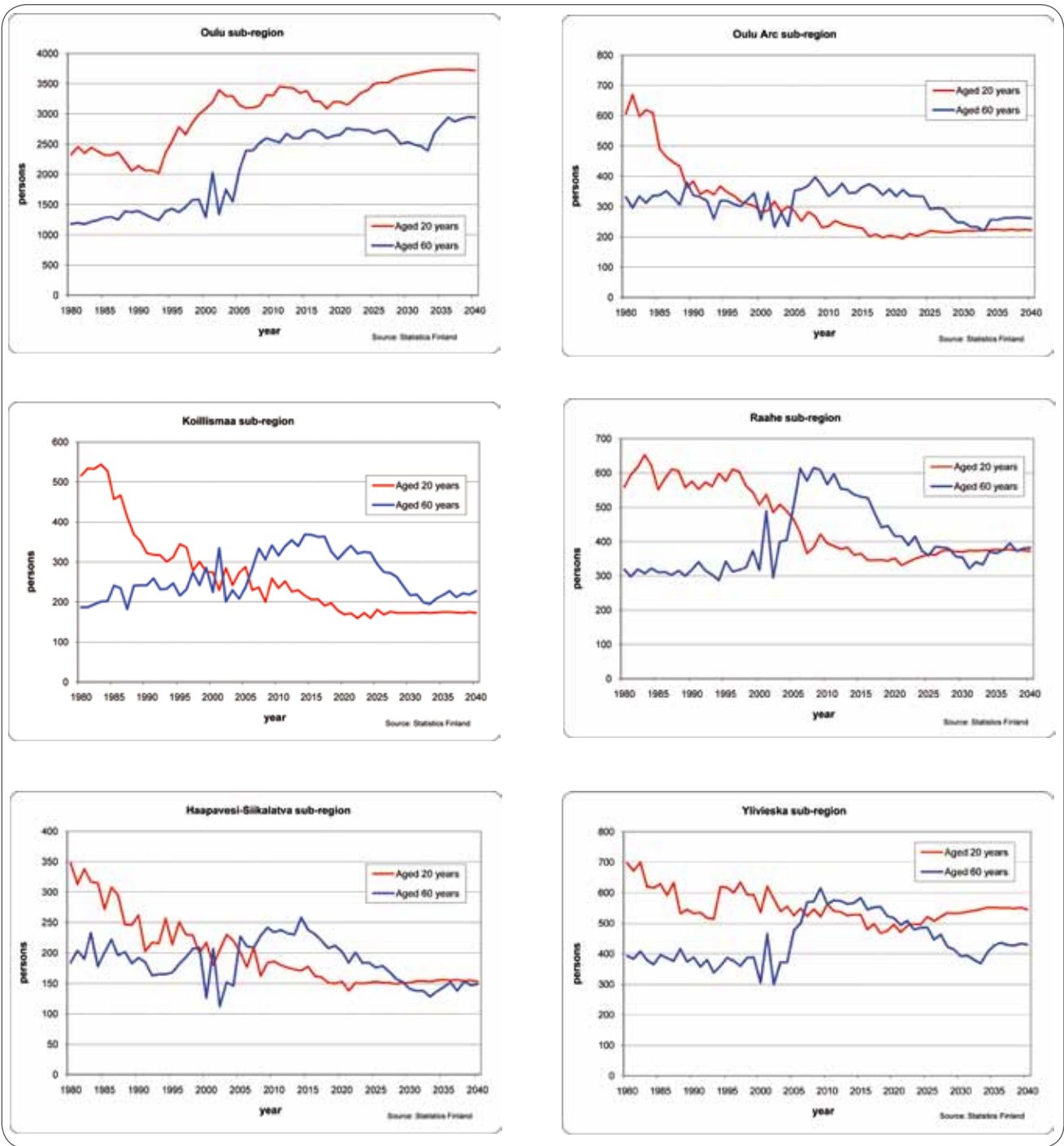


Figure 5. Trends in population aged 20 years and 60 years in 1980-2008 and forecast for 2009-2040 in Northern Ostrobothnia. Source: Statistics Finland.

Economic development

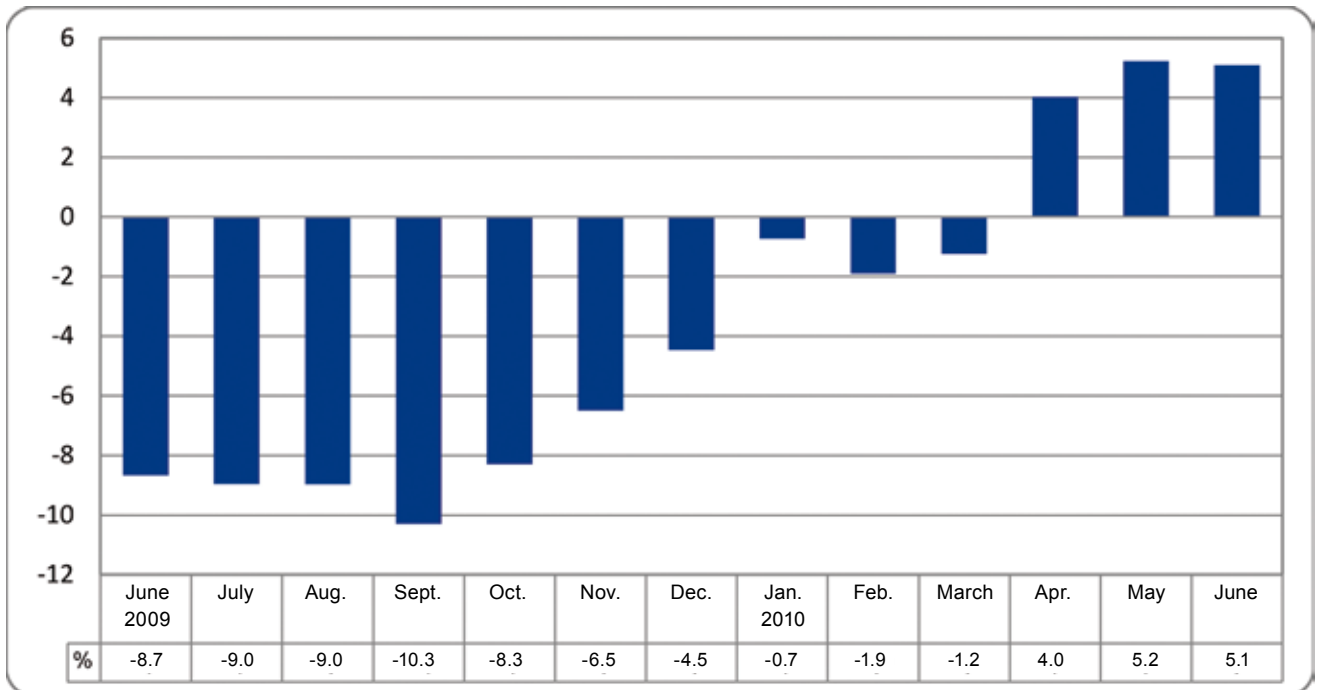
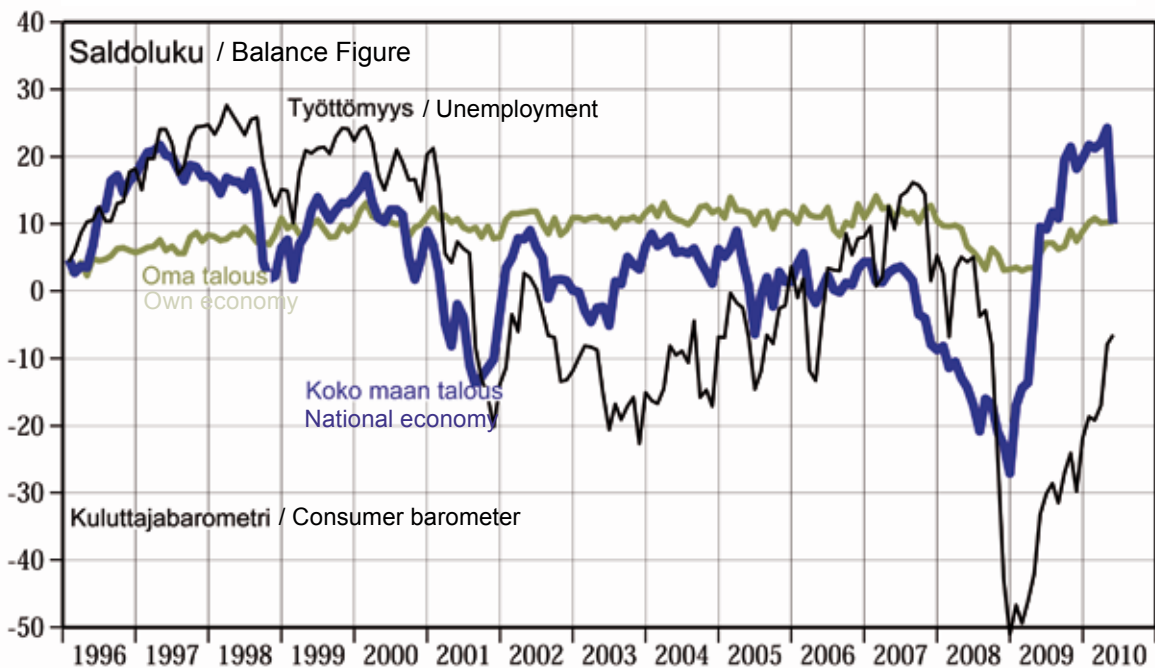


Figure 6. Calendar-adjusted change in production in Finland, as compared with the same month in the previous year, %. Source: Statistics Finland.

Consumers' estimates about the situation after 12 months



Source: Statistics Finland

27.5.2010/kuli4/jka/EKI Talousgraafit

Elinkeinoelämän keskusliitto



Figure 6. Consumers' estimates about the situation after 12 months. Source: EK / Statistics Finland, consumer barometer.

Employment trends

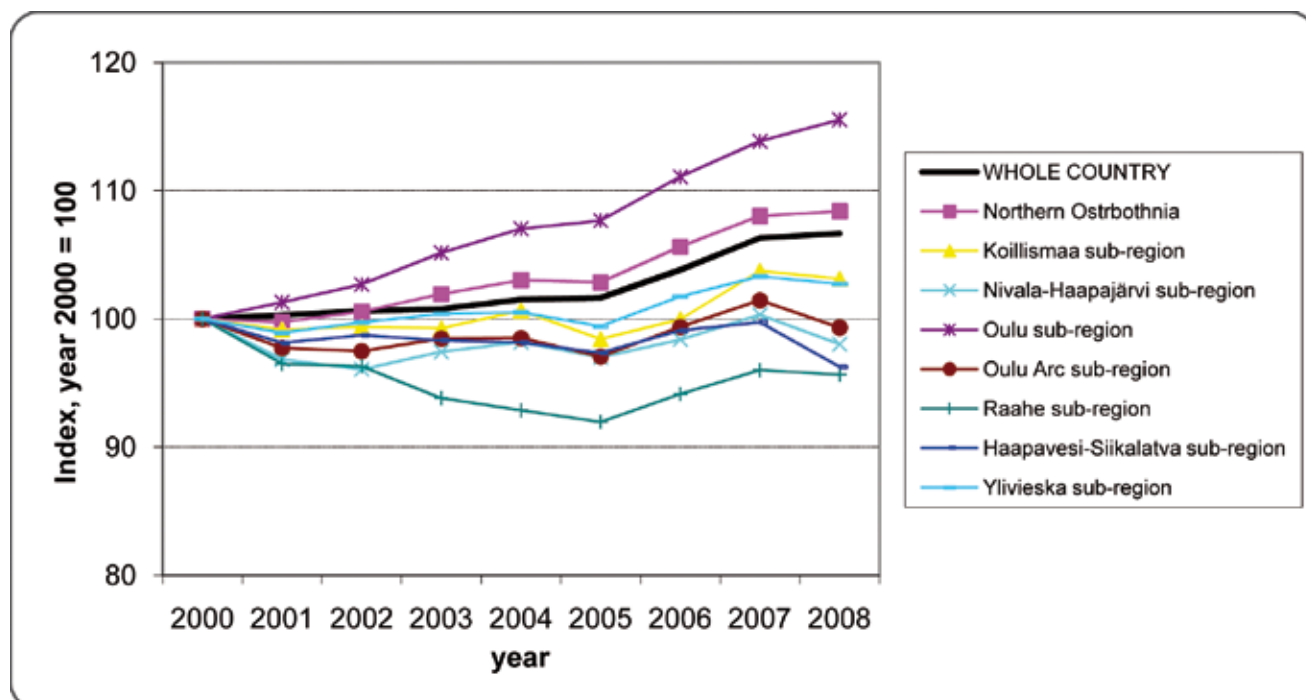


Figure 7. Employed persons by sub-region in 2000–2008. Source: Statistics Finland.

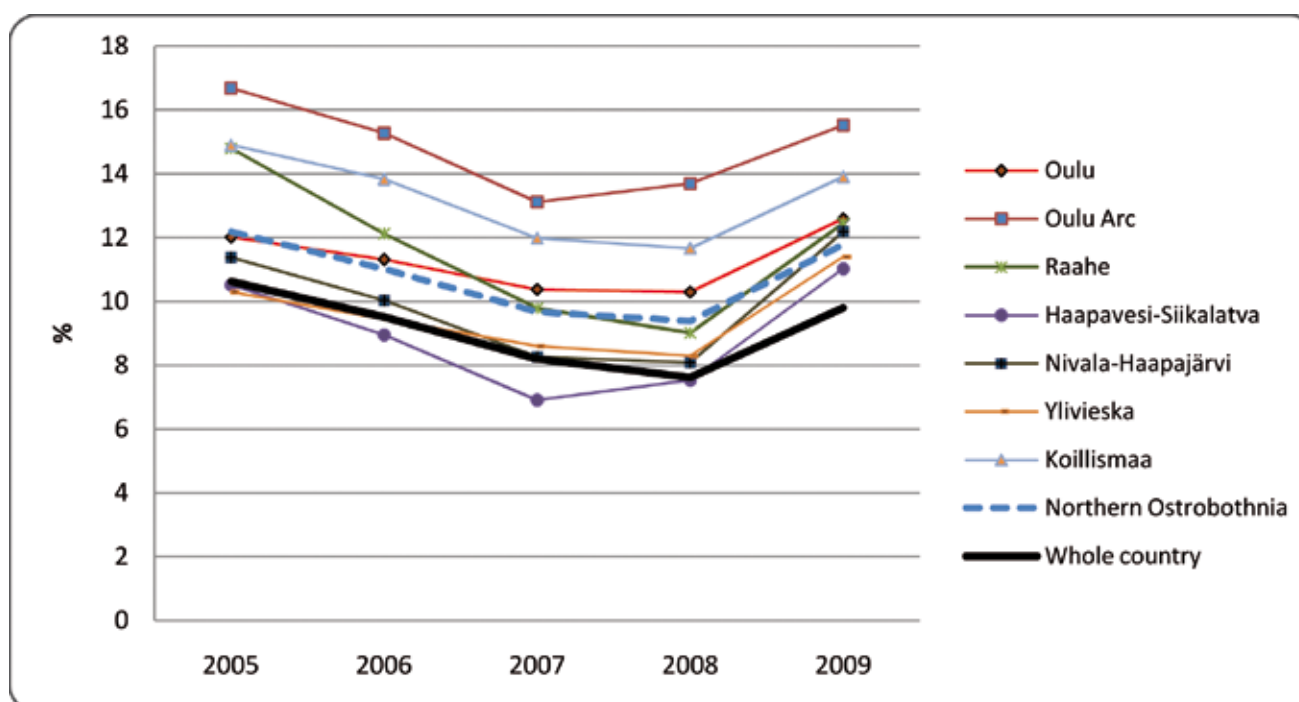


Figure 8. Average unemployment rate by sub-region in 2005–2009 (annual averages). Source: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia; Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

Personnel trends in SMEs

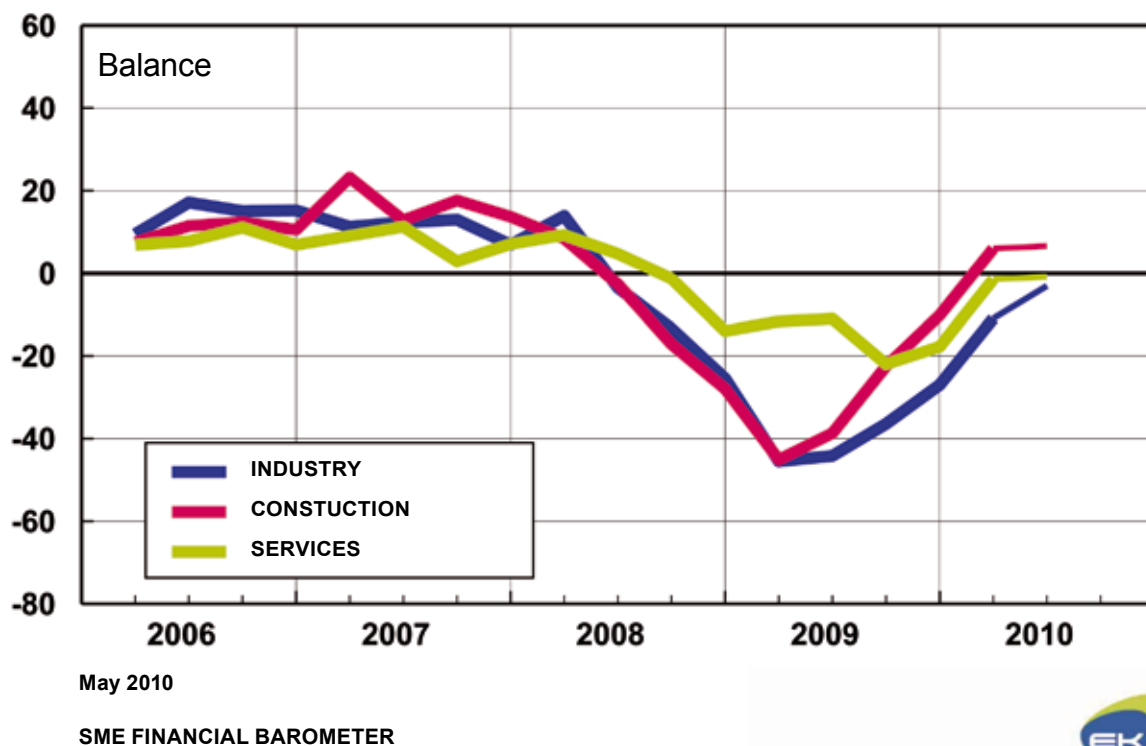


Figure 2. Personnel trends in SMEs, balance figure. Source: Confederation of Finnish Industries, financial barometer, May 2010.

Table 1. Employment trends in Northern Ostrobothnia according to the Mitenna Forecast of the National Board of Education.

	Baseline		Target baseline	
	change 2005-2020	per year	change 2005-2020	per year
Change in the number of employed persons	12 907	807	25 050	1 566
Employed persons leaving the labour market	55 872	3 492	55 872	3 492
Vacant jobs	68 779	4 299	80 922	5 058
Available unemployed labour	5 837	365	5 837	365
Total need for new employed labour	62 942	3 934	75 085	4 693
Unemployed persons in 2020	8 594		6 101	
Total need for new labour	71 537	4 471	81 186	5 074

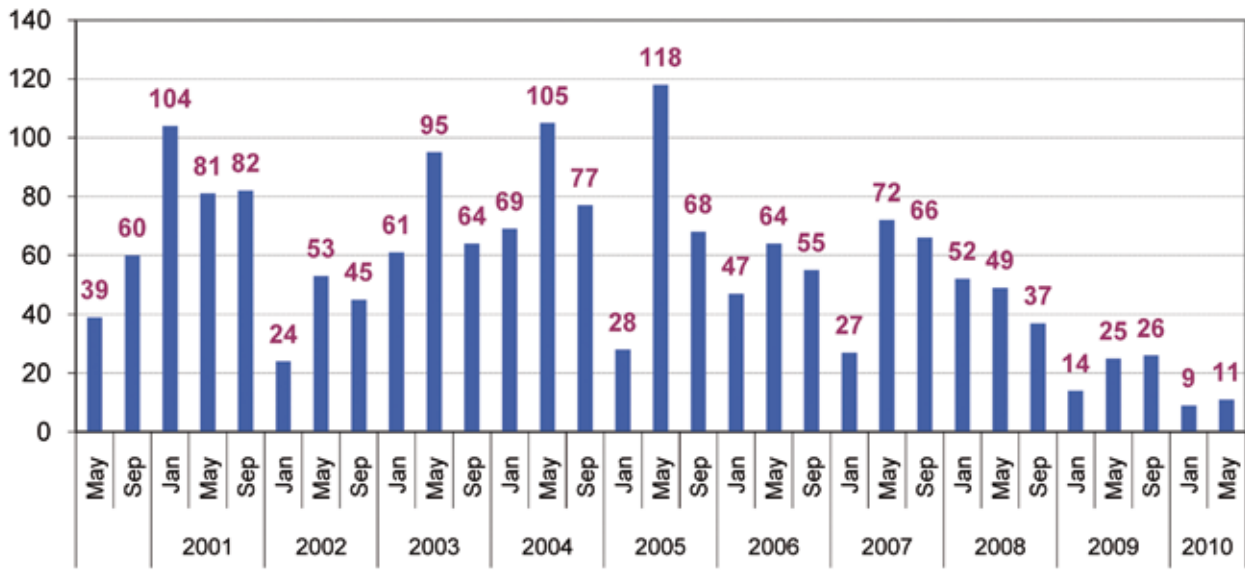


Figure 10. Recruitment difficulties in Northern Ostrobothnia, inquiry by the Employment and Economic Development Office, May 2010. Source: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia.

Foreign population

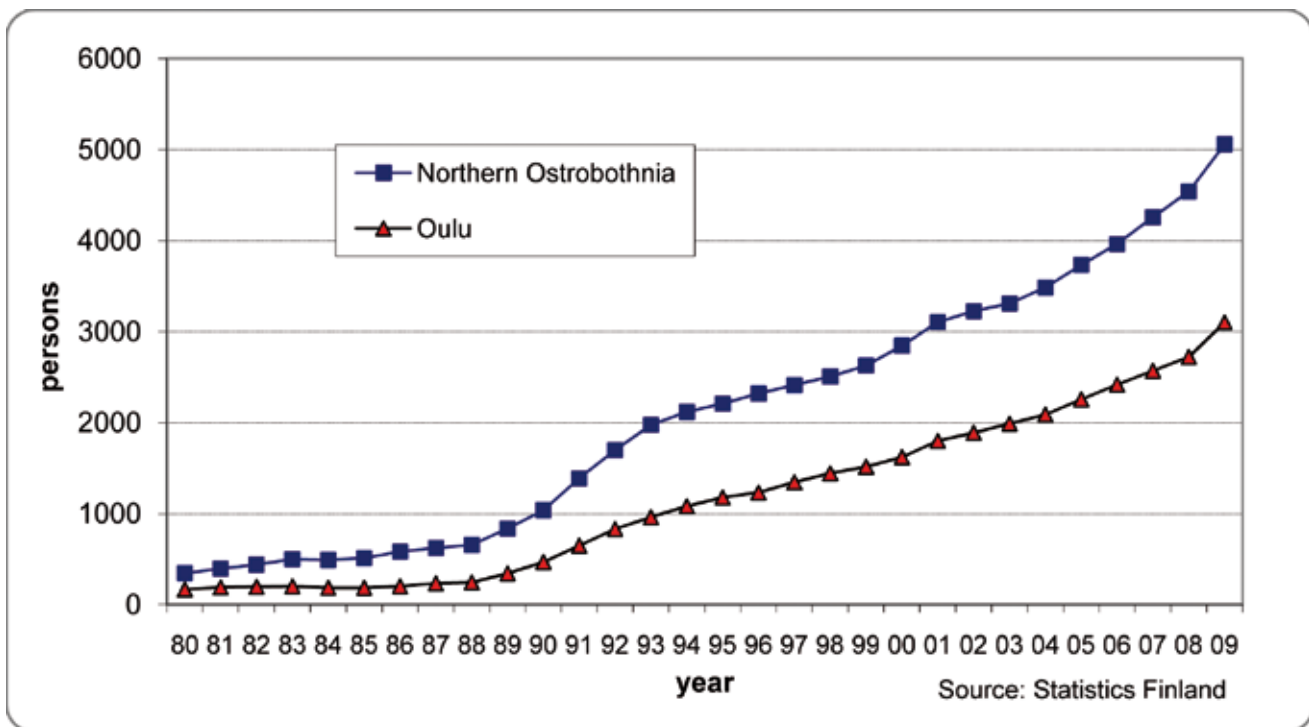


Figure 11. Foreign population in Northern Ostrobothnia and Oulu in 1980–2009. Source: Statistics Finland

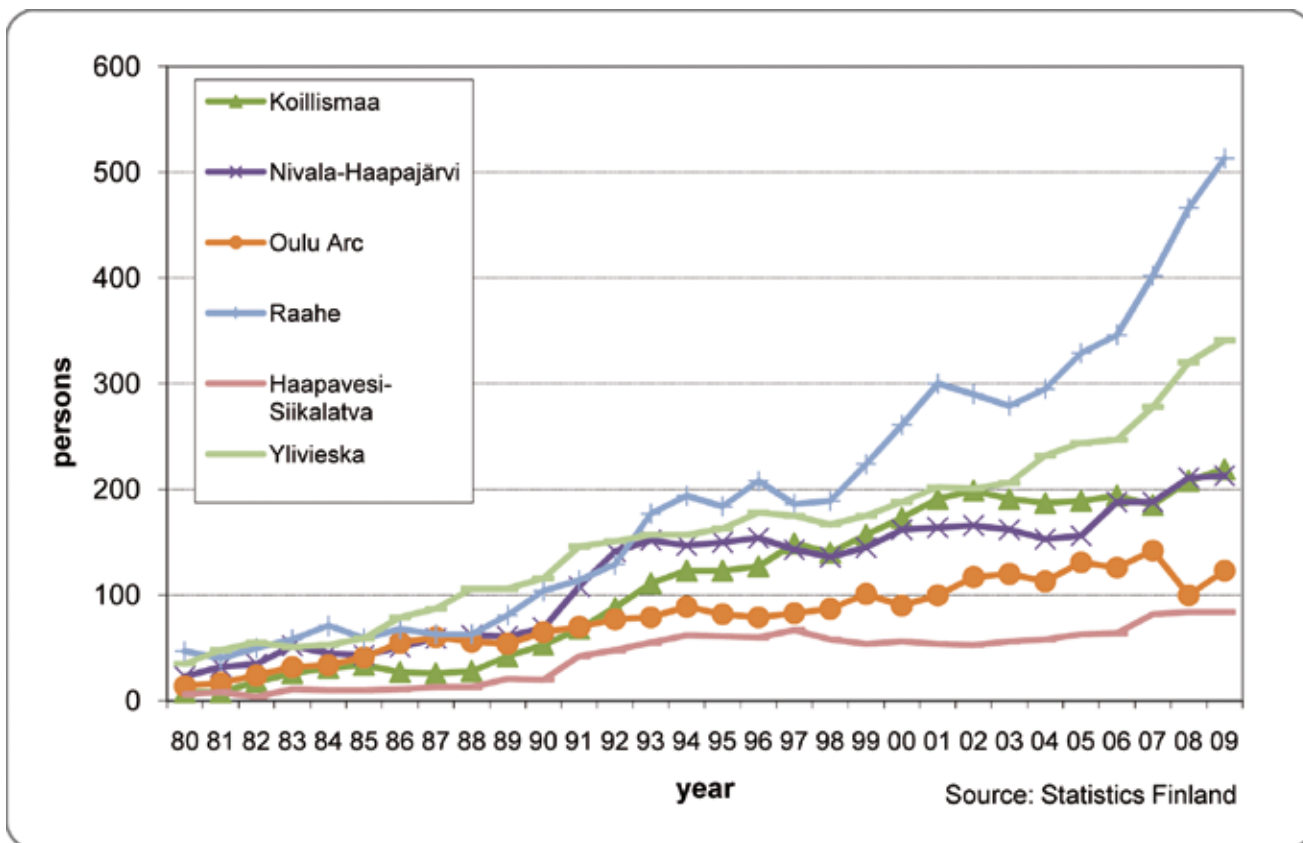


Figure 12. Foreign population by sub-region in Northern Ostrobothnia in 1980-2009, excluding the Oulu sub-region.

Primary activities of foreigners

Table 2. Primary activities of foreigners and the whole population in Northern Ostrobothnia in 2008, persons. Source: Statistics Finland.

Year 2008	Foreigners persons	%	Whole population persons	%
Population	4 540	100	389 182	100
Employed persons	1 642	36	160 045	41
Unemployed persons	496	11	20 253	5
Persons aged 0 - 14 years	740	16	79 892	21
Students, schoolchildren	683	15	35 527	9
Old-age & unemployed pensioners	283	6	81 330	21
Conscripts, people in civil service	0	0	1 247	0
Other people outside labour	696	15	10 888	3

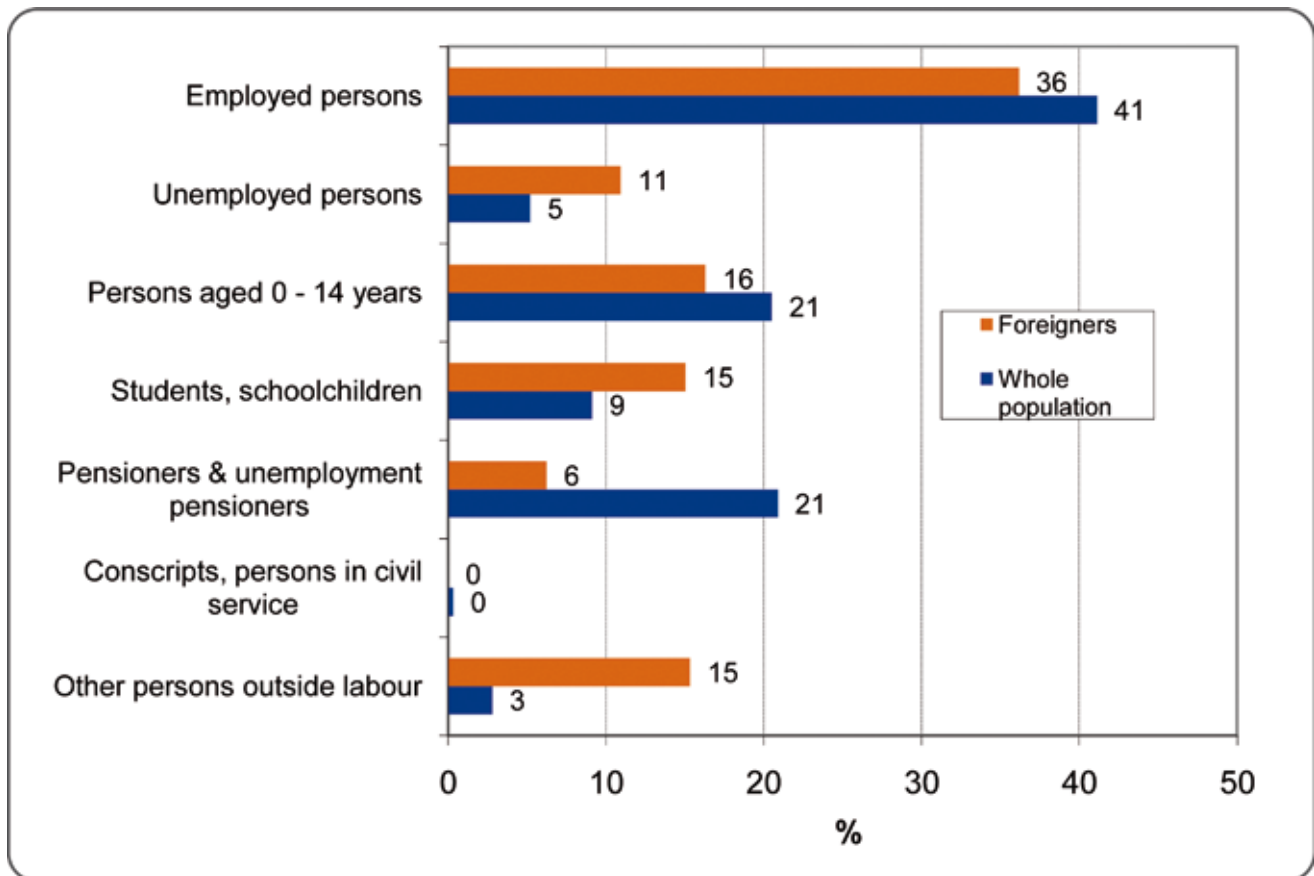


Figure 13. Primary activities of foreigners and the whole population in Northern Ostrobothnia in 2008, %. Source: Statistics Finland.

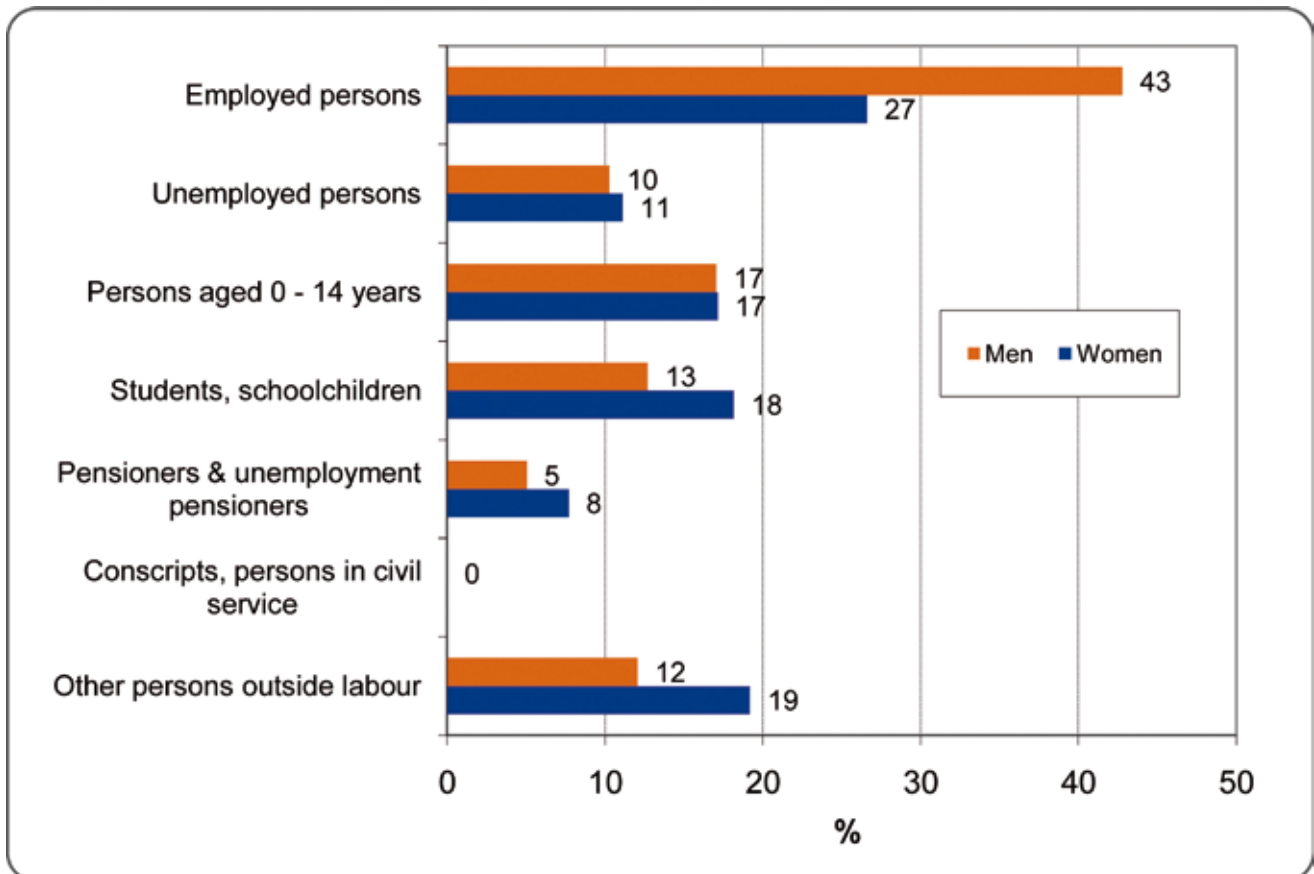


Figure 14. Primary activities of foreigners by gender in Northern Ostrobothnia in 2007, %. Source: Statistics Finland.

Employment among immigrants

Table 3. Employed immigrants and Finns in Northern Ostrobothnia in 2005-2008 and estimate of their numbers for 2008 and 2009. Source: Statistics Finland, estimate: Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia.

Nationality	Year					Es- timated numbers of employed persons*	2005 - 06		2006 - 07		2007 - 08	
	2005 persons	2006 persons	2007 persons	2008 persons	2009 persons		persons	%	persons	%	persons	%
Immigrants	1 181	1 323	1 467	1 642	1 560	142	12.0	144	10.9	175	11.9	
Share of immigrants of the whole labour, %	0.78	0.86	0.94	1.03	1.01							
Finnish	149 439	151 944	154 796	158 403	153 651	2 505	1.7	2 852	1.9	3 607	2.3	
Other or unknown	3	1	2									
Total	150 623	153 268	156 265	160 045	155 211	2 645	1.8	2 997	2.0	3 780	2.4	

*) Criteria for calculating the estimated number of employed persons in 2009.

The statistical data represent the situation at the end of the year. The onsetting recession began to impair employment at the end of 2008. According to Statistics Finland's labour survey, employment fell by approximately 3 per cent in 2009, probably more among foreigners, the estimate here being 5 per cent.

Note: The figures in the labour survey differ from those presented in the table, as they are based on a sample. The figures in the table were derived from register-based employment statistics.

Table 4. Employed immigrants by industry in Northern Ostrobothnia in 2004-2007. Source: Statistics Finland.

Industry	Year 2004	Year 2005	Year 2006	Year 2007
Total	1094	1181	1323	1467
A Agriculture, forestry and fishing	24	27	26	34
D Manufacturing	240	236	266	288
DL Manufacture of electronic and electrical equipment	151	141	156	154
DD Manufacture of wood and of products of wood	20	22	27	33
DJ Manufacture of basic metals and fabricated metal products	25	20	20	25
DA Manufacture of food products, beverages and tobacco	7	10	15	18
DK Manufacture of machinery and equipment	3	5	14	12
DC Manufacture of leather and leather products	11	13	11	14
F Construction	41	46	60	64
G Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods	74	86	102	90
H Hotels and restaurants	133	152	178	212
I Transport, storage and communication	35	43	39	48
K Real estate, renting and business activities	186	203	214	284
74 Other business activities	96	106	111	158
72 Computer and related activities	49	54	47	62
73 Research and development	33	35	41	50
70 Real estate activities	6	5	13	13
L Public administration and defence, compulsory social security	33	23	31	25
M Education	191	217	235	205
N Health and social work	59	75	98	119
O Other community, social and personal service activities	42	42	42	48
92 Recreational, cultural and sporting activities	24	18	22	27
91 Activities of membership organisations	12	18	12	10
X Industry unknown	33	25	28	39

Appendix 4. Recruitment need inquiry

Inquiry to companies, associations and municipalities about the recruitment of foreign labour in companies

A Digium web form survey was conducted with companies, associations and municipalities in Northern Ostrobothnia in October 2008. The target group consisted of those companies in the ASKO customer register of the Employment and Economic Development Centre for which e-mail addresses were available. The basic data in the ASKO register were derived from the Business Information Register (BIS). The contact data were supplemented with e-mail addresses obtained from company websites. Housing corporations and death estates, for example, were removed from the sample, as it would not

have been useful to send the inquiry to them. The inquiry also included private entrepreneurs. It turned out during the inquiry process that some of the respondents would have liked to receive the inquiry in English, as they had insufficient command of Finnish. The inquiry was translated into English and sent again to about 10 persons.

A total of 6351 e-mail invitations reached the recipients (Table). After a notification about replying to the inquiry, 882 replies were received from companies, 61 from associations and 57 from municipalities/other public sector parties. The response rate was 15 per cent for companies, 13 per cent for associations and 93 per cent for municipalities or other public sector parties. The reason why the last response rate is so high is that some of the respondents in the category Companies placed themselves in the category Municipalities or Other public sector parties in the response form.

Table 1. Sample size, number of replies and response rate according to type of organisation.

Category	Successful e-mail invitations, pcs	Replies, pcs	Response rate
Companies	5 824	882	15.1
Associations	466	61	13.1
Municipalities/ other public sector parties *	61	57	93.4**
Total	6351	1 000	15.7

*) includes respondents from public utility companies and some respondents from municipal federations (e.g. hospital districts)

***) Includes some respondents from the category Companies that had placed themselves in the category Municipalities and other public sector parties

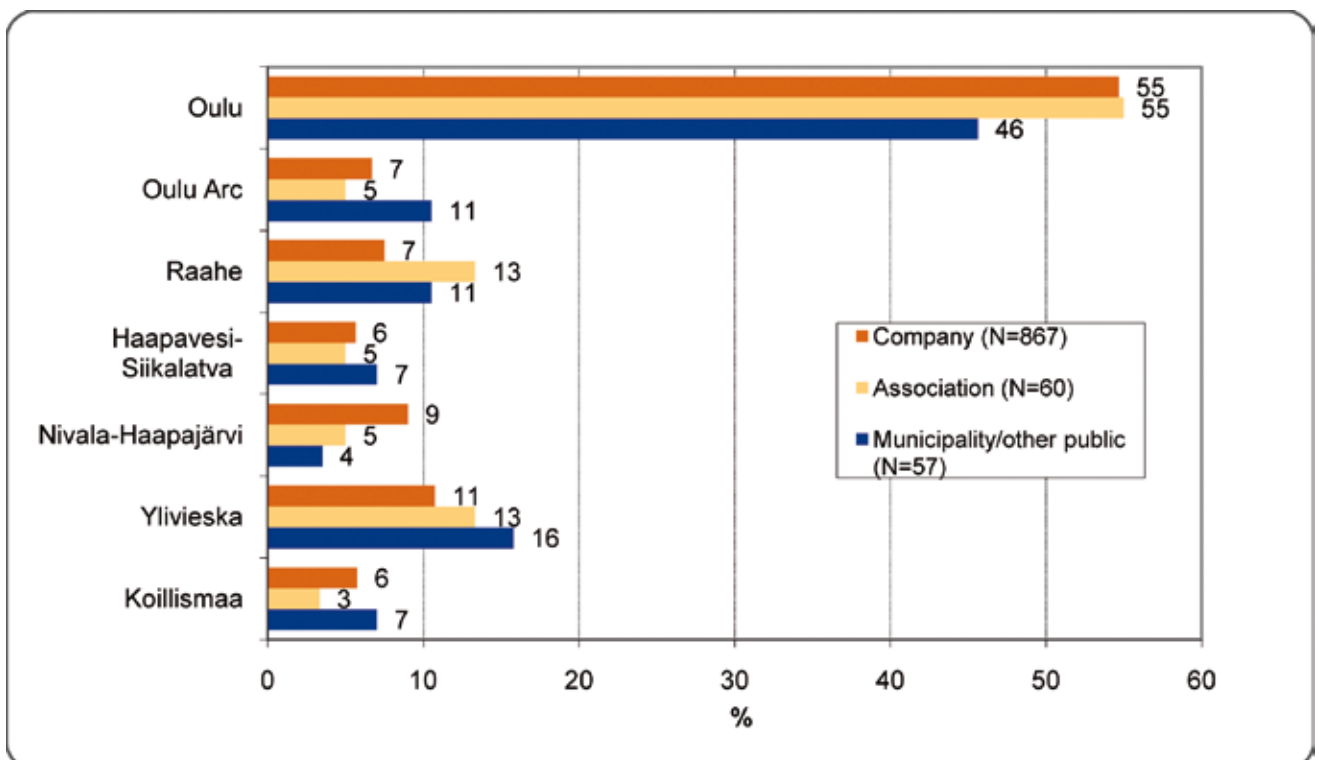


Figure 1. Respondents according to sub-region.

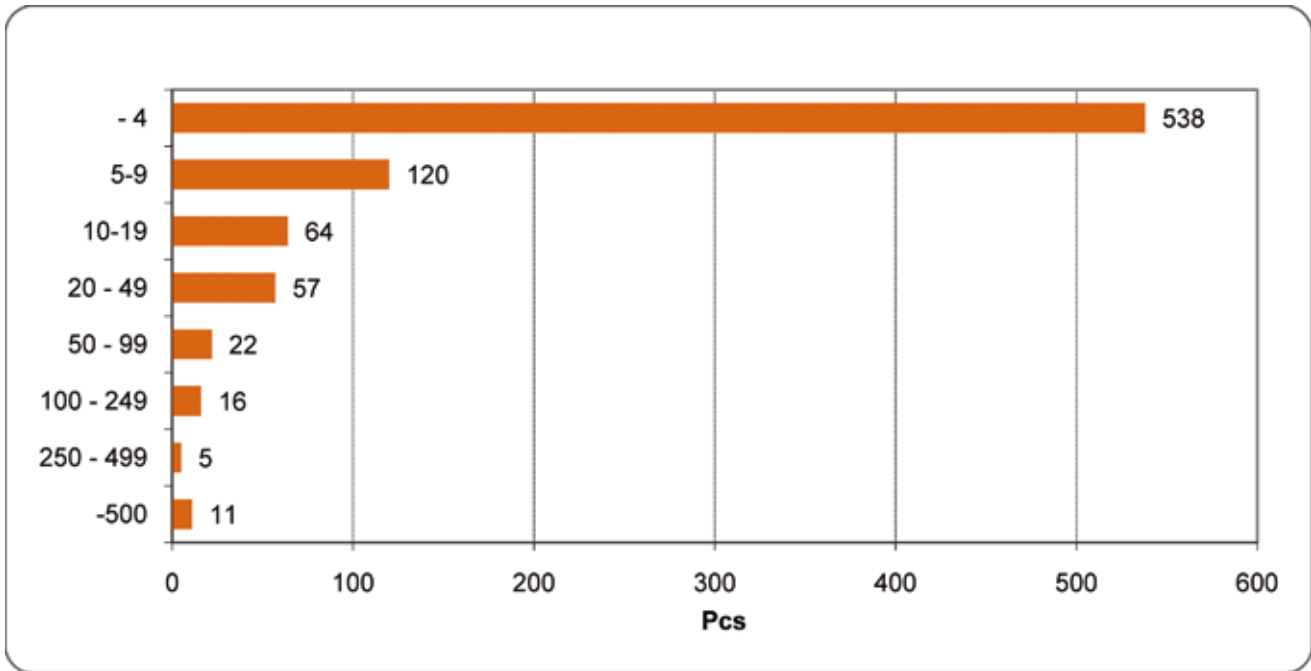


Figure 2. Size of companies having replied to the inquiry.

Need for labour

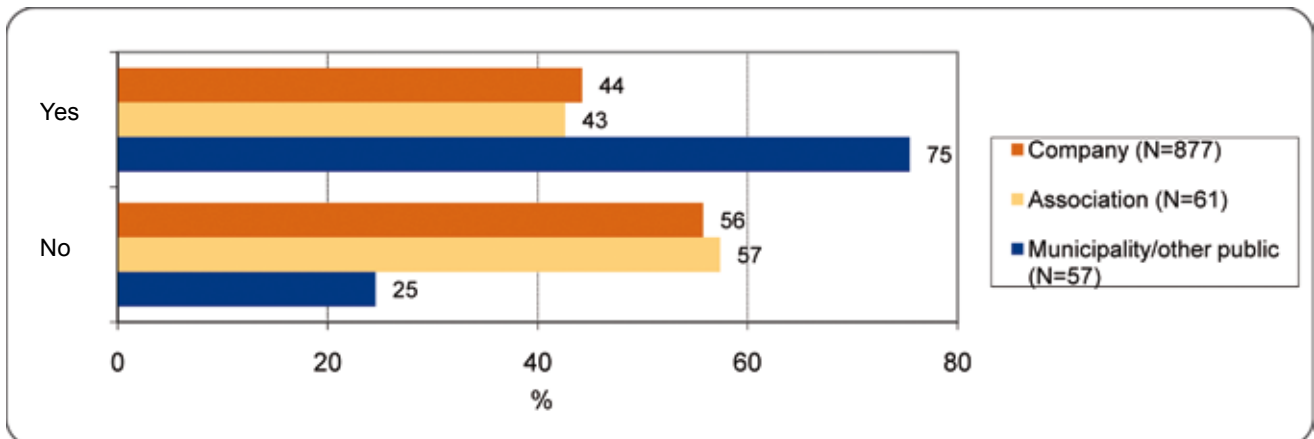


Figure 3. Has your company/organisation hired new labour during the past year?

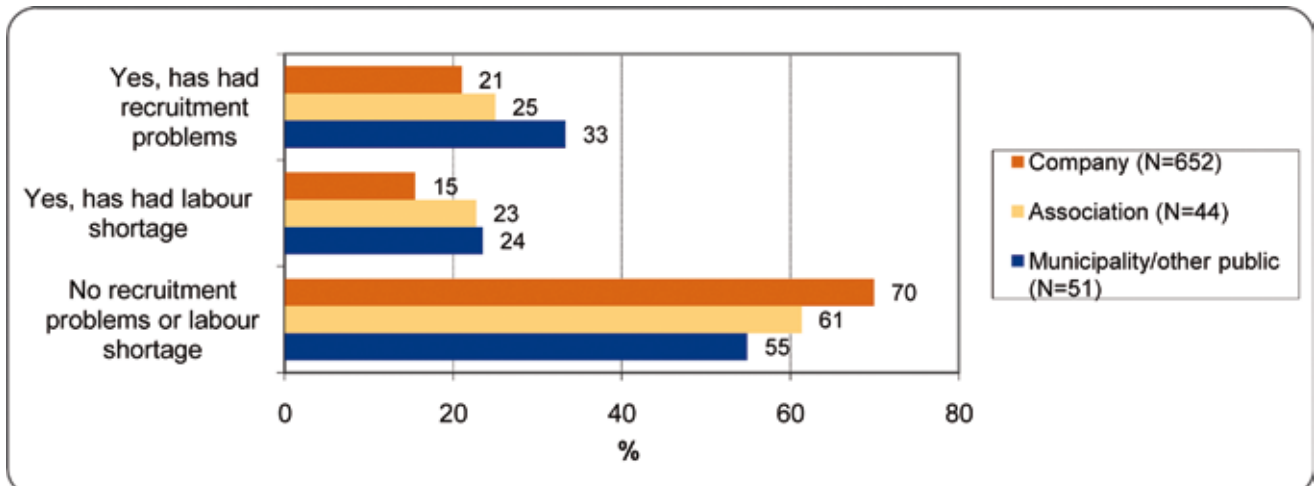


Figure 4. Recruitment problems and labour shortage during the past year. Recruitment problem = A company having sought for labour has had difficulties in filling vacancies. Labour shortage = A company having sought for labour has only been able to fill some of its vacancies or none of them.

Foreign employees in the company

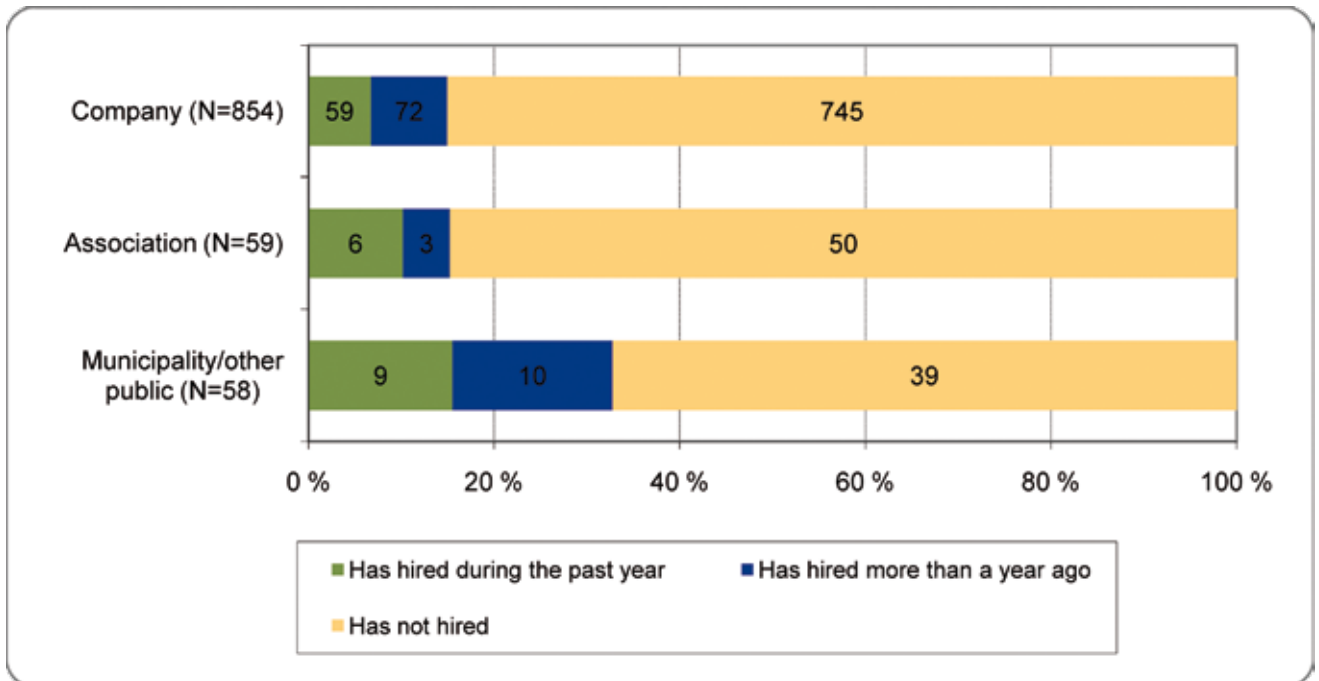


Figure 5. Has your company/organisation hired foreign employees?

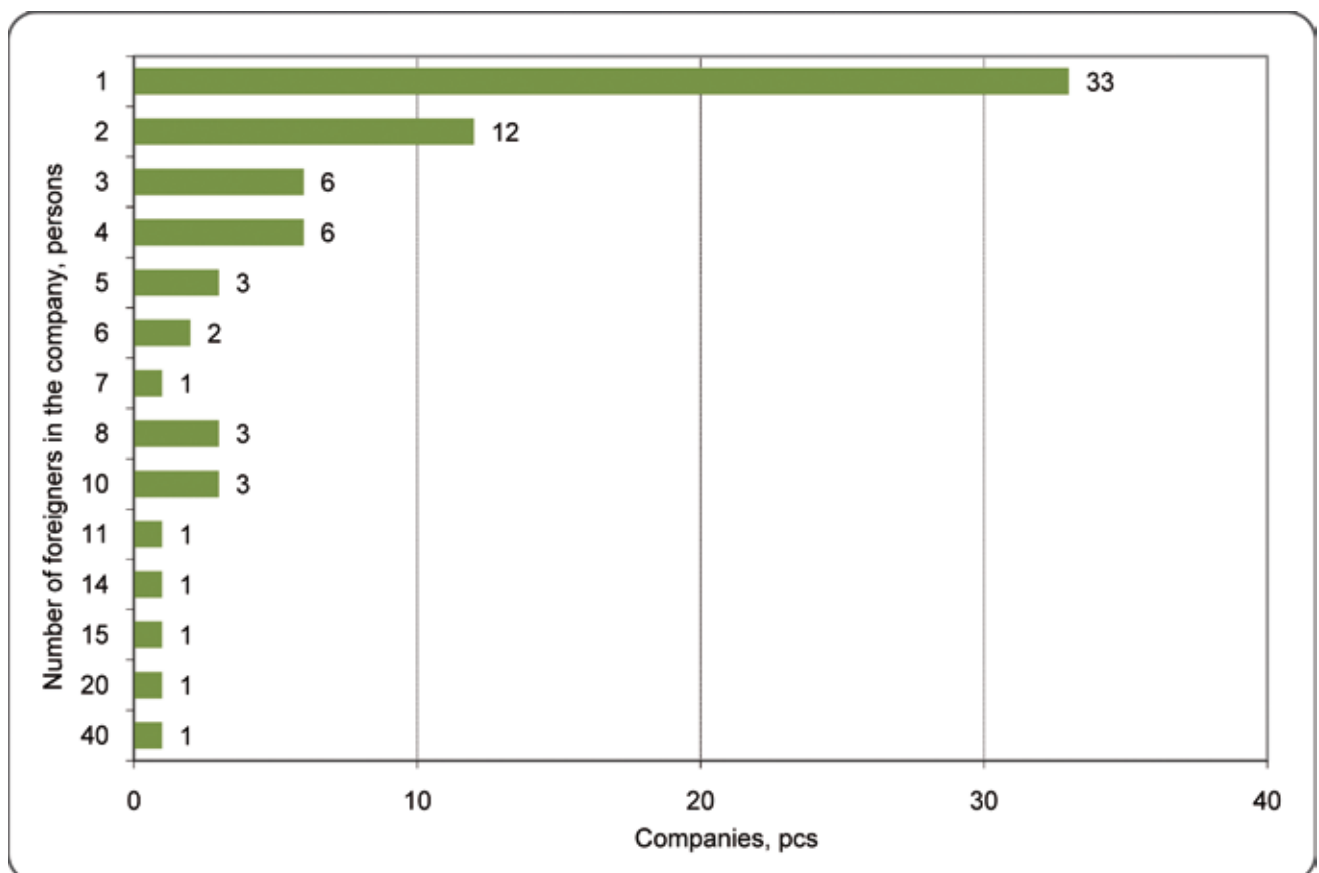


Figure 6. Number of foreigners currently employed in the company (October 2008).

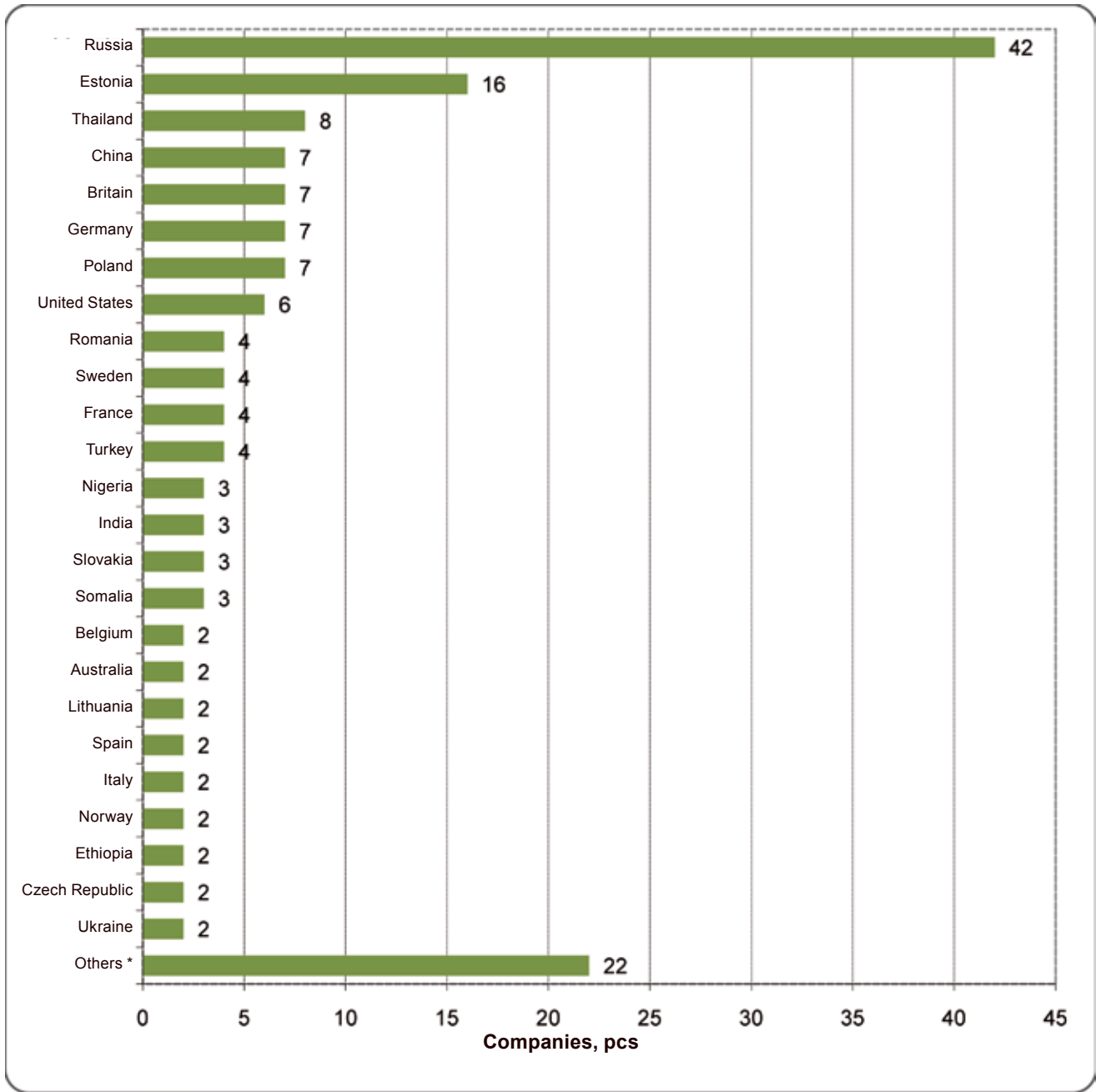


Figure 7. Country of origin of foreigners employed in companies.

*) The following countries have been mentioned once in the category Others: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Egypt, the Philippines, the Netherlands, Iraq, Austria, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Greece, Latvia, Morocco, Nepal, Peru, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Denmark and New Zealand.

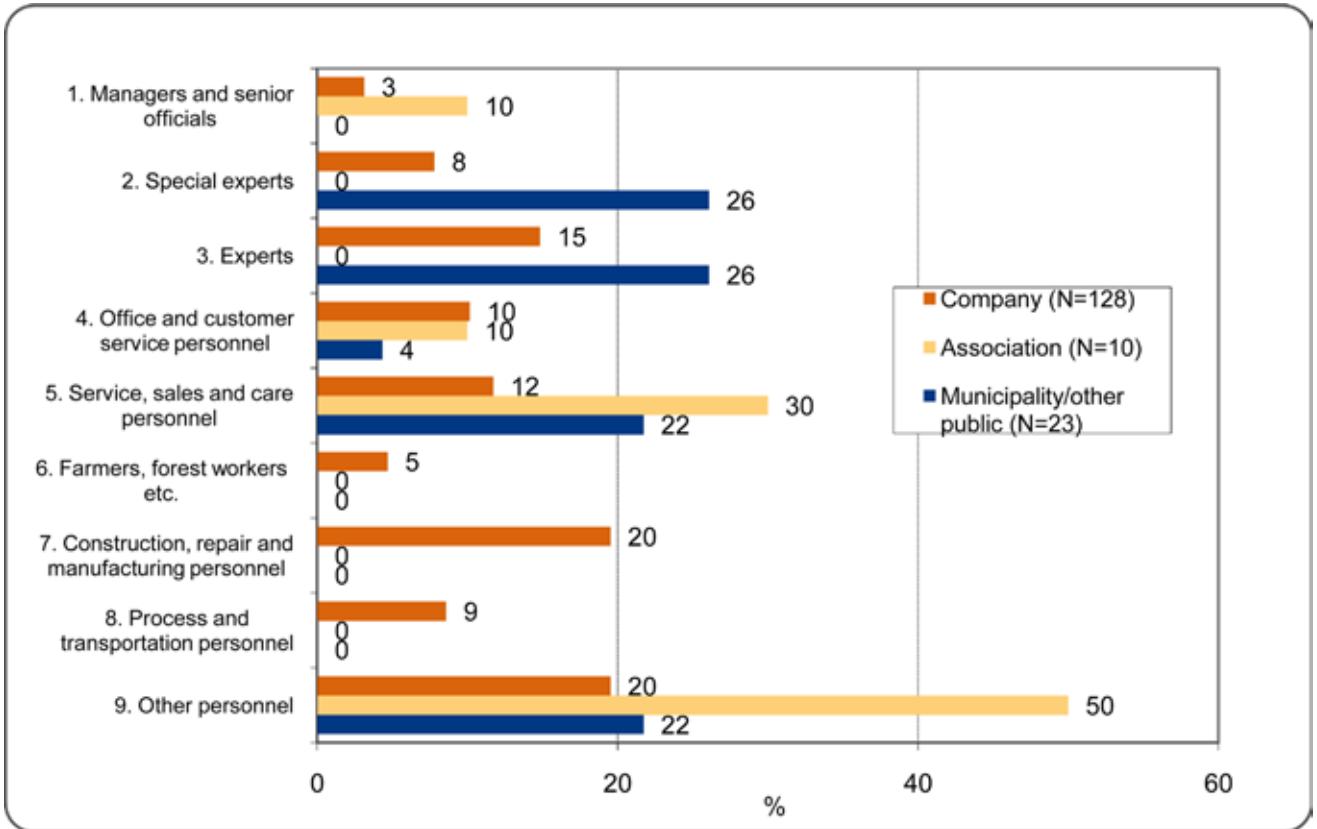


Figure 8. Posts of recruited foreigners.

Recruitment needs in future

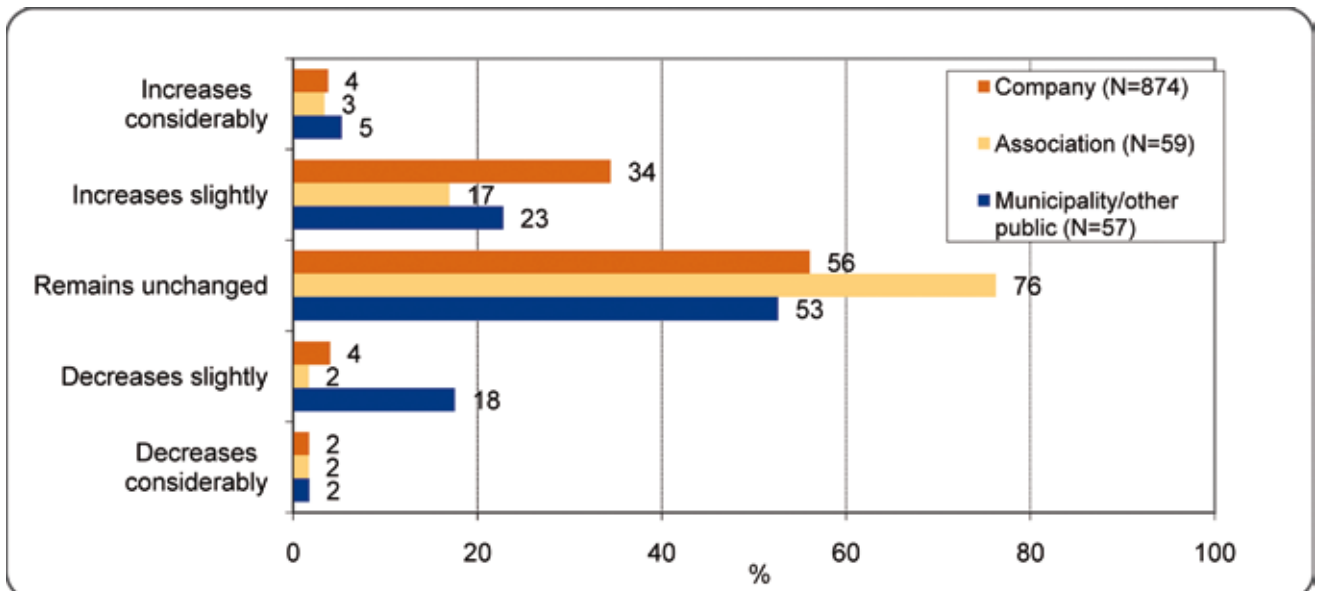


Figure 9. Need for labour next year.

Table 2. Need to increase/reduce labour during next year and the following three years in total, persons.

Organisation type	Need to increase/reduce labour, sum (persons)	
	during next year	during the next three years
Company (N=460/450)	648	2 100
Association (N=42/41)	42	41
Municipality/other public sector party. (N=31/30)	68	116
All, total (N=521/507)	758	2 257

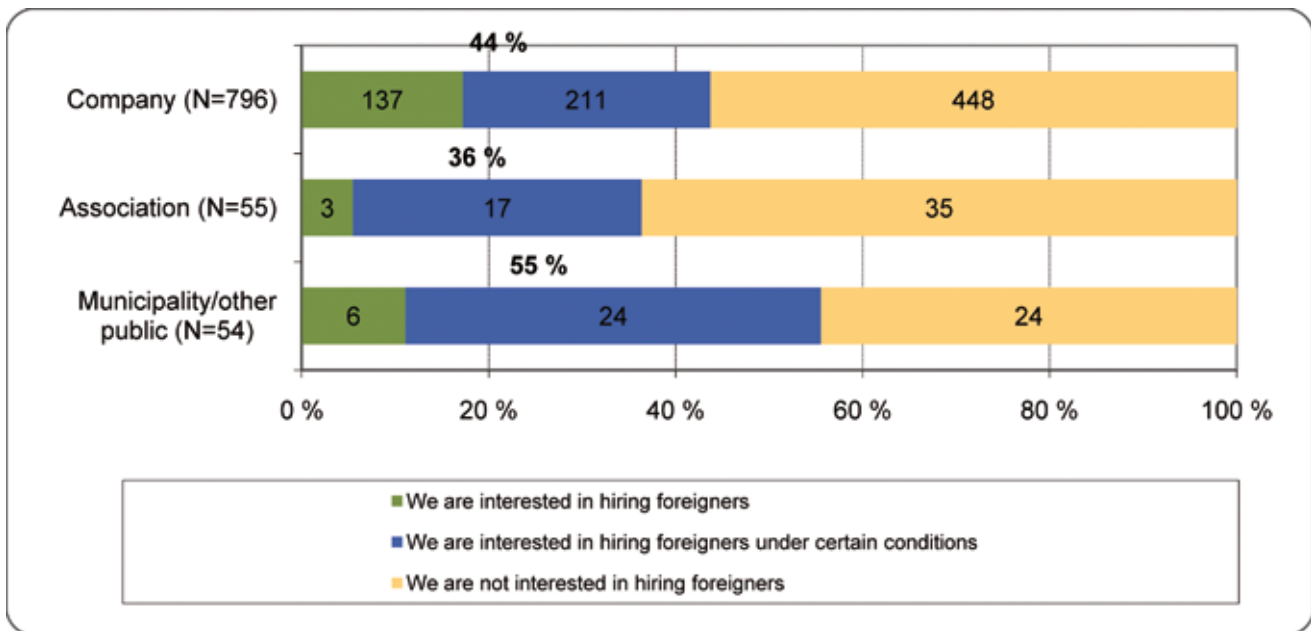


Figure 10. Need to recruit/interest in recruiting foreign labour in future.

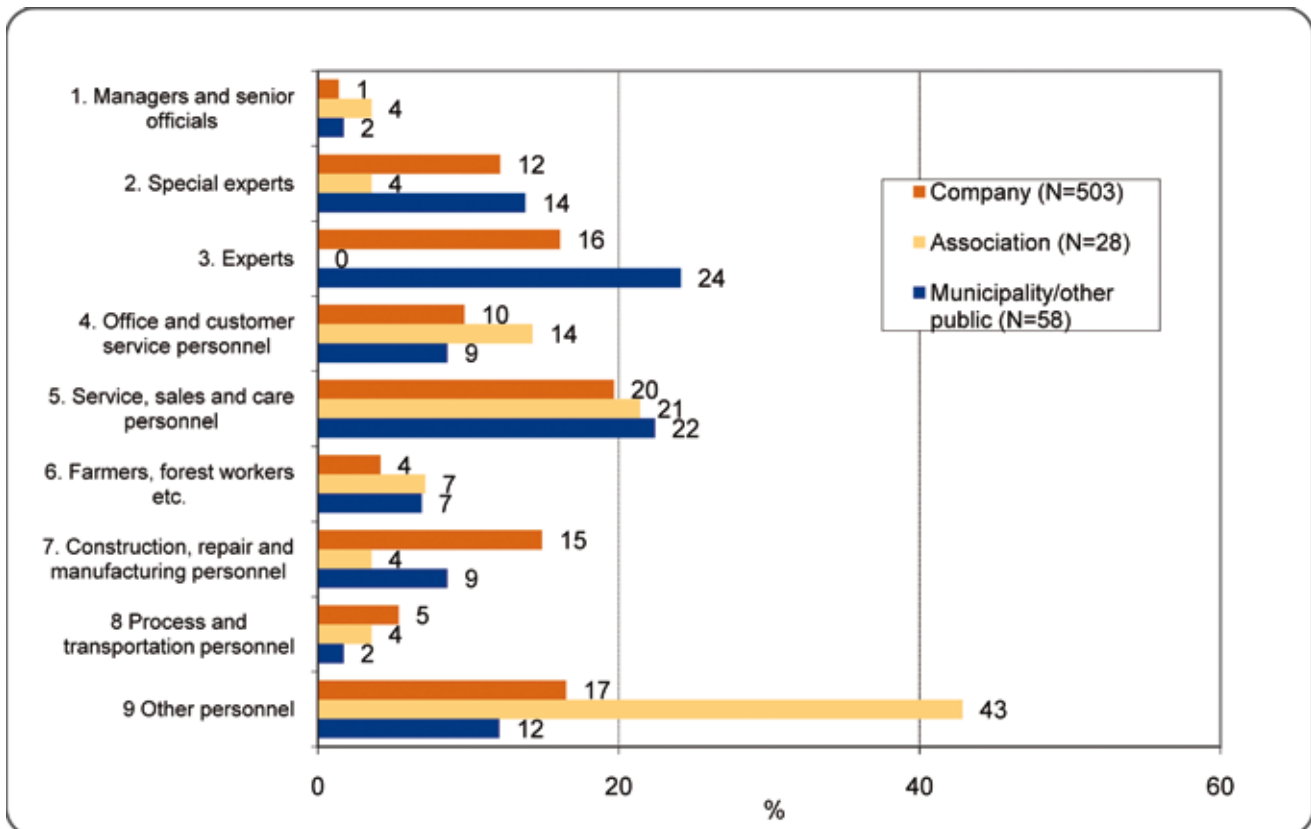


Figure 11. If you have a need to hire foreigners, for what types of posts?

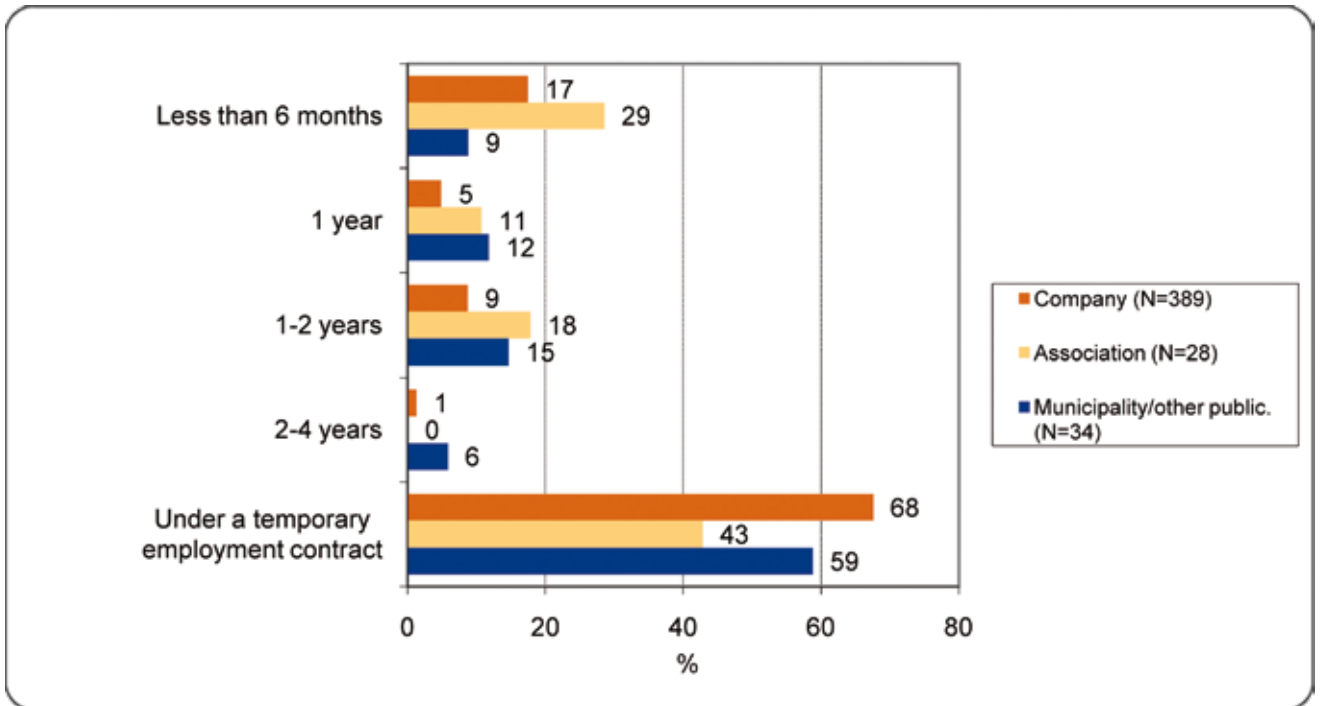


Figure 12. For how long do your need foreign labour?

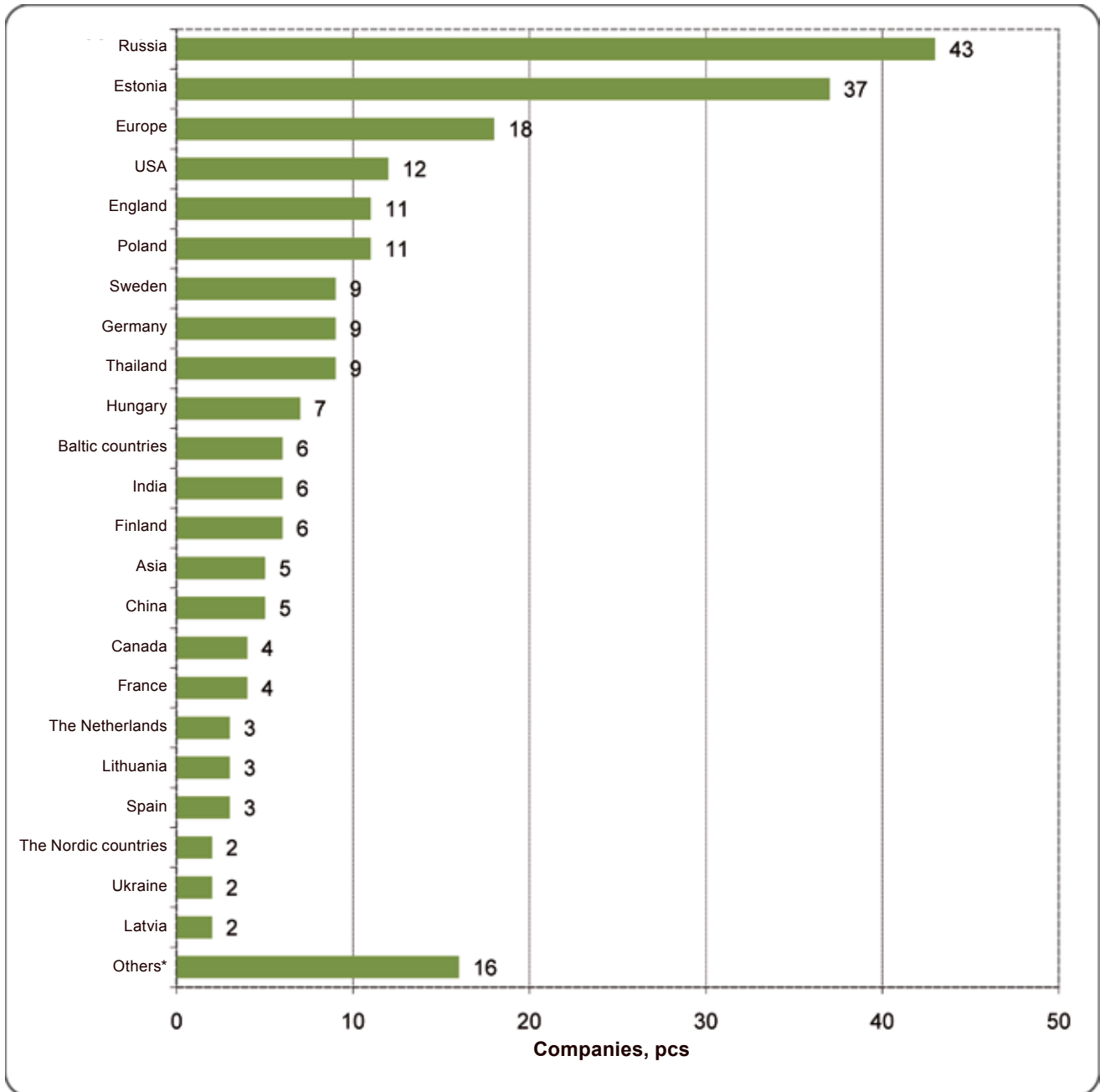


Figure 13. Countries from which the respondents intended to hire foreign employees if they had plans to do so.

*) The following countries have been mentioned once in the category Others: Algeria, Australia, Balkan, Bulgaria, the Philippines, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Denmark, Czech Republic, Turkey and Vietnam

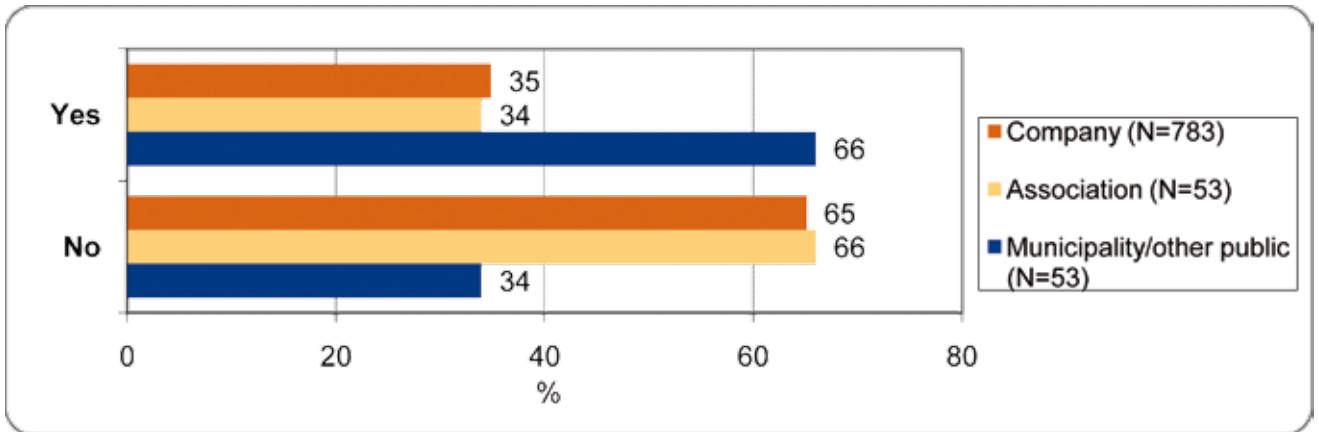


Figure 14. Interest in hiring foreign students in Finland for practical training.

Implementation of recruitments, related problems and the need for support

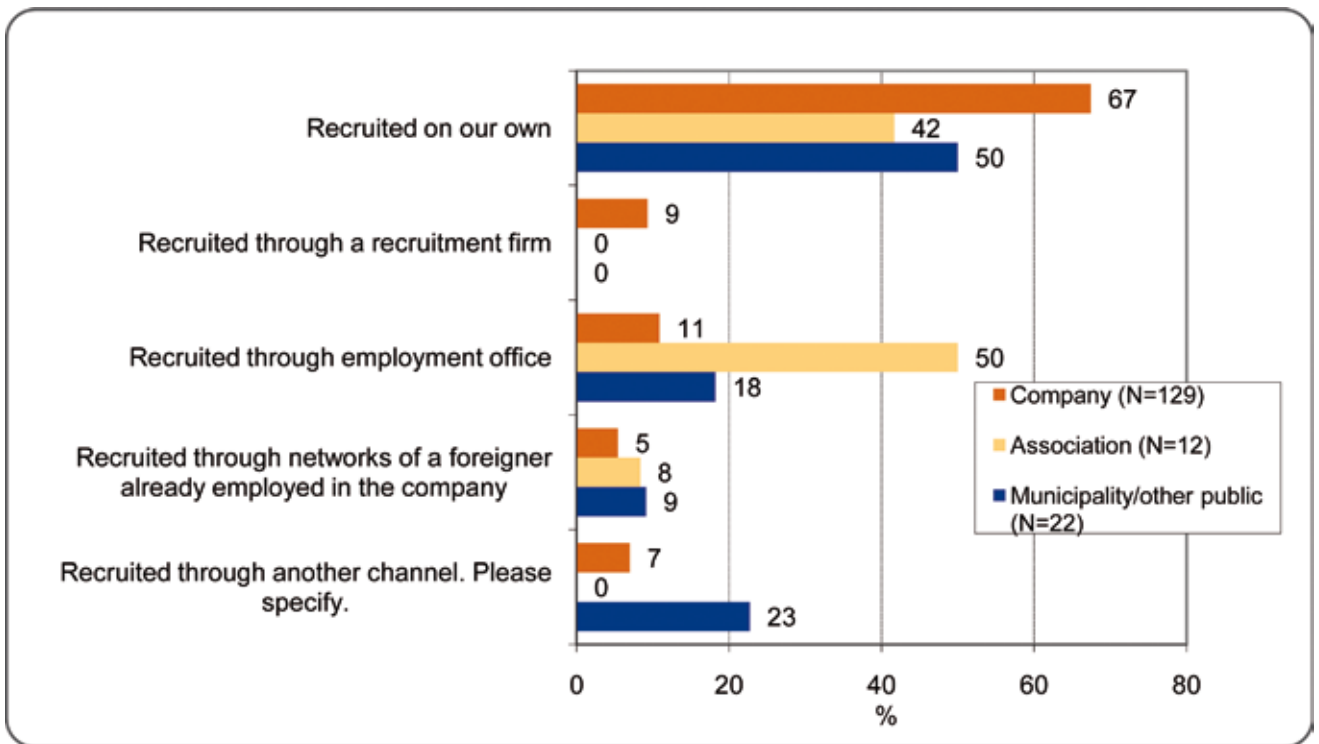


Figure 15. Recruitment channel used in hiring foreign labour.

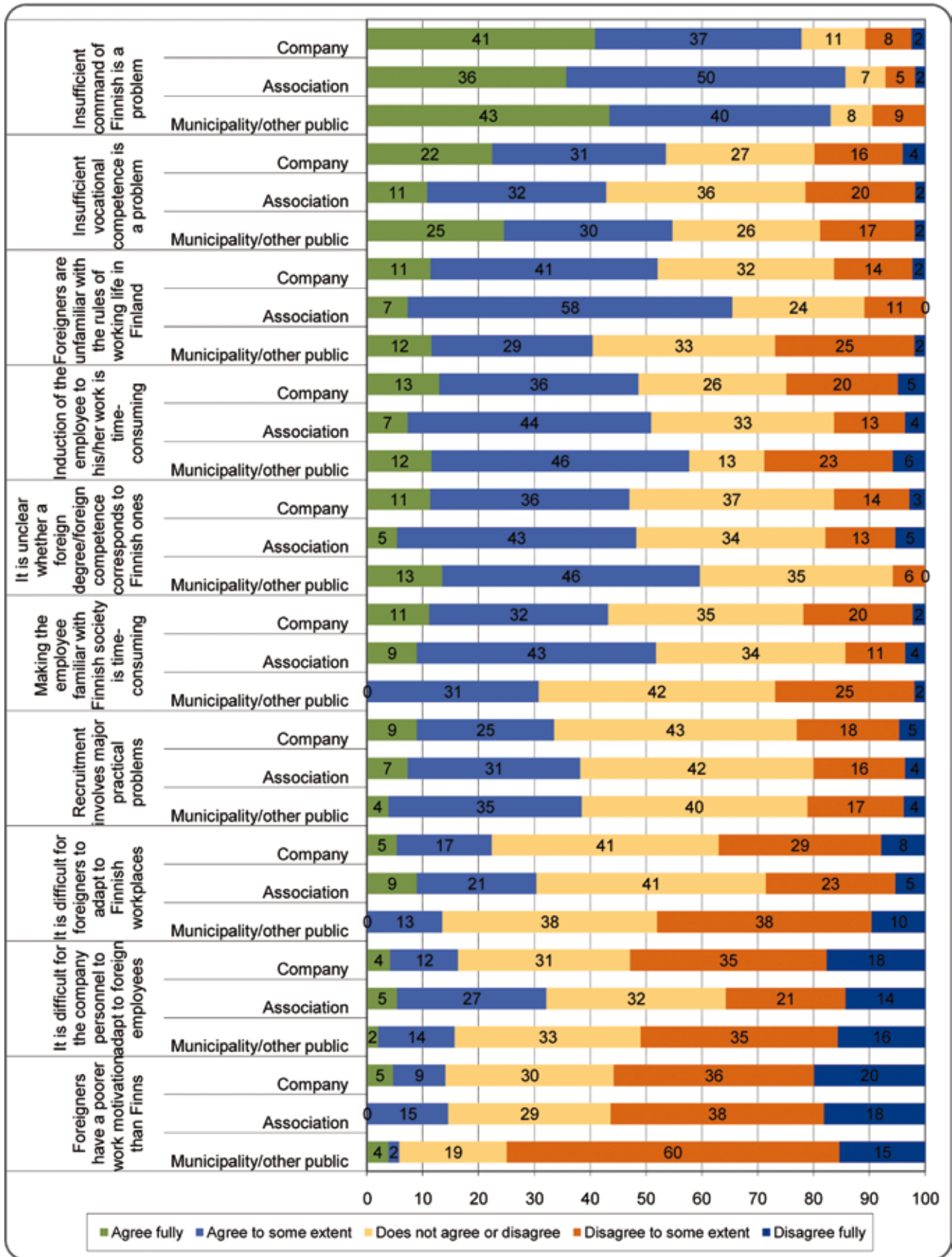


Figure 16. Problems connected with the recruitment of foreign labour. The statements have been placed in the order of magnitude, i.e. the statements with which the respondents agreed fully or agreed somewhat are shown first (companies' opinions).

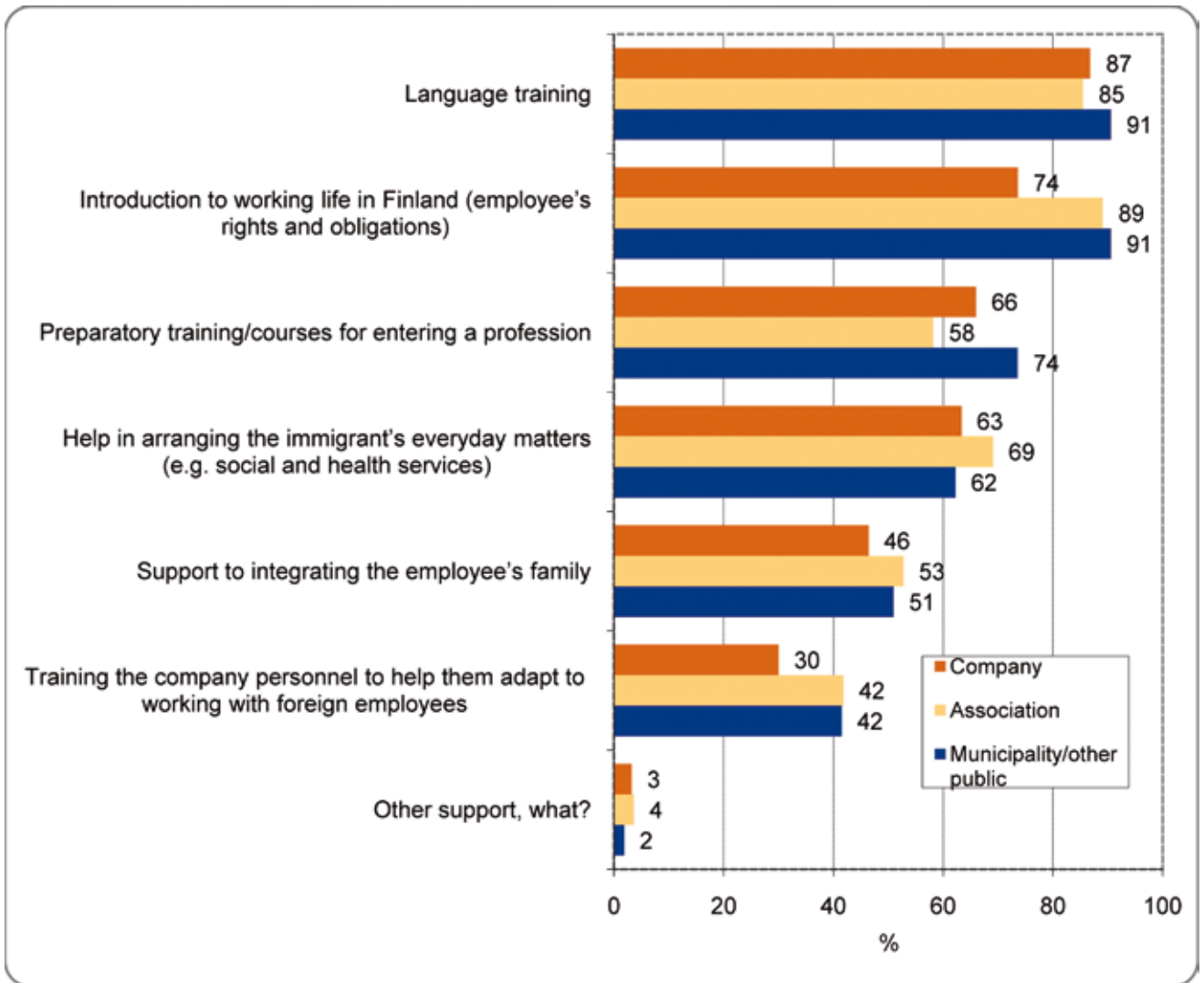


Figure 17. Type of support needed in recruiting foreign labour.

Opinions about foreign labour

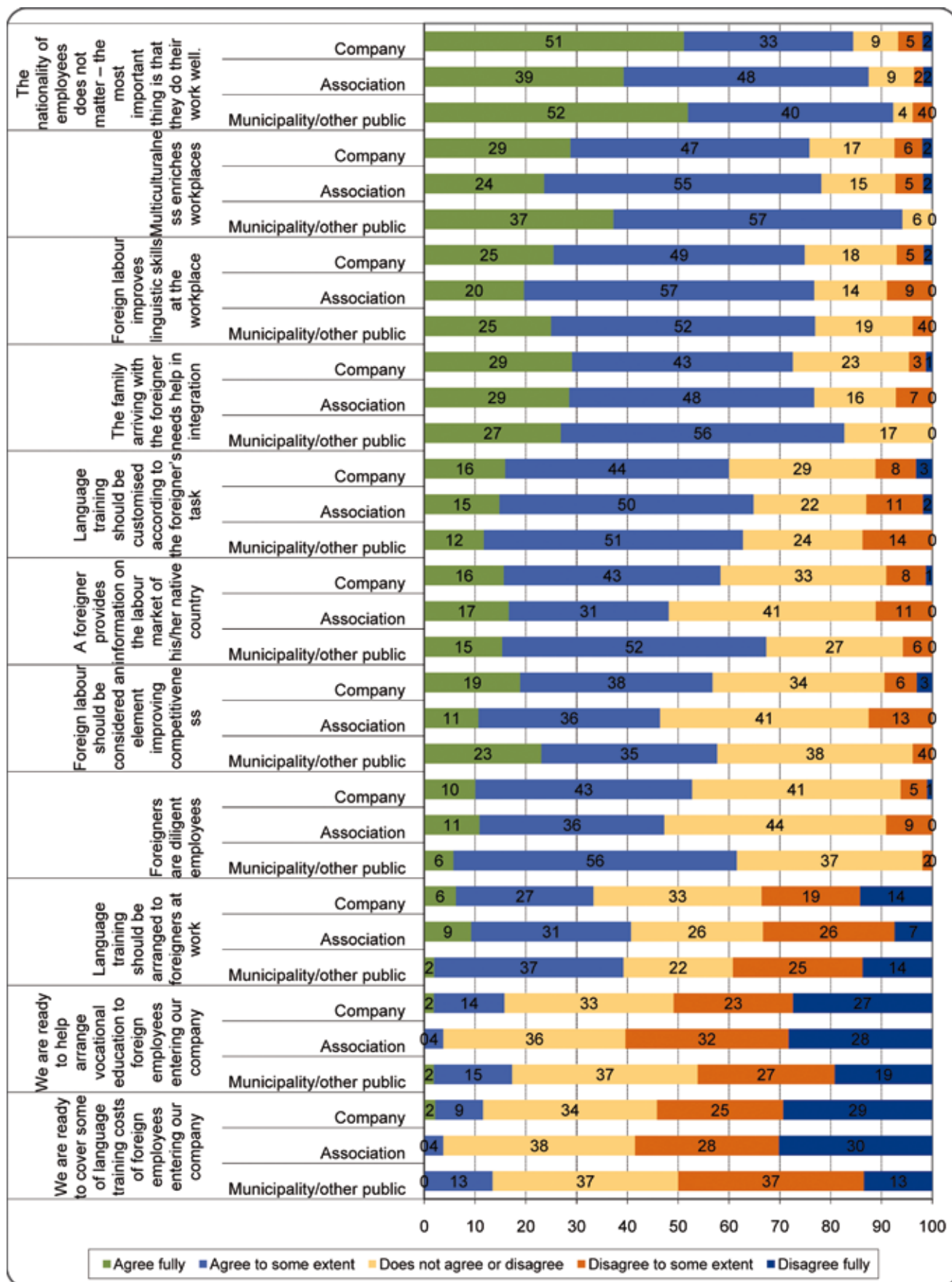


Figure 18. Opinions about foreign labour. The statements have been placed in the order of magnitude, i.e. the statements with which the respondents agreed fully or agreed somewhat are shown first (companies' opinions).

Familiarity with the EURES service and the Europass system

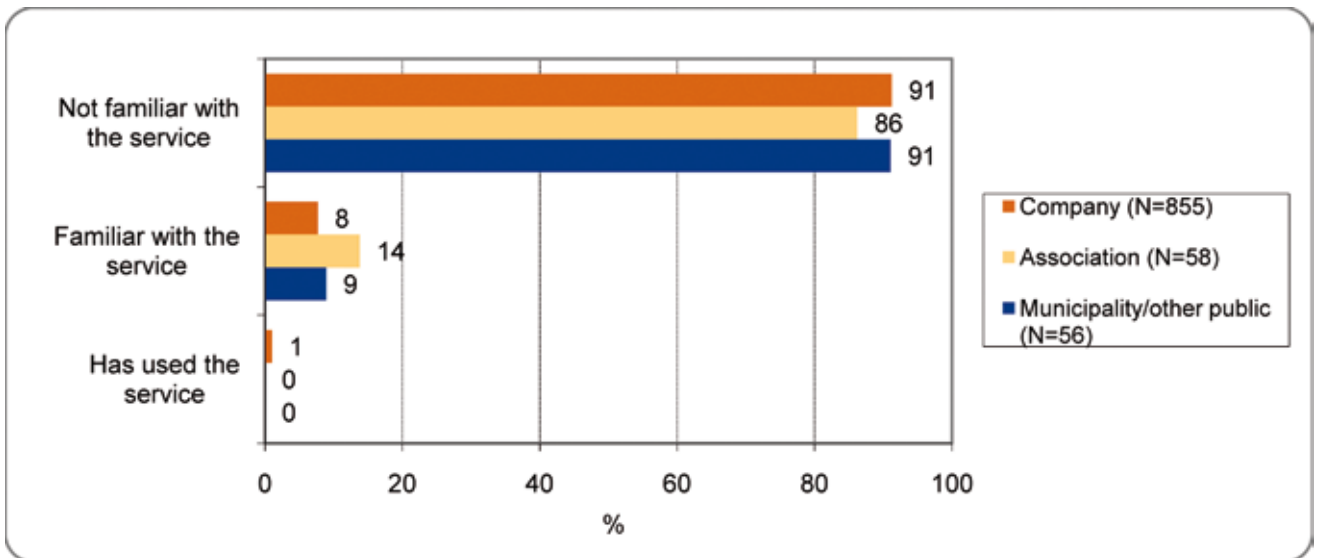


Figure 19. Familiarity with the EURES service offered by the employment agency.

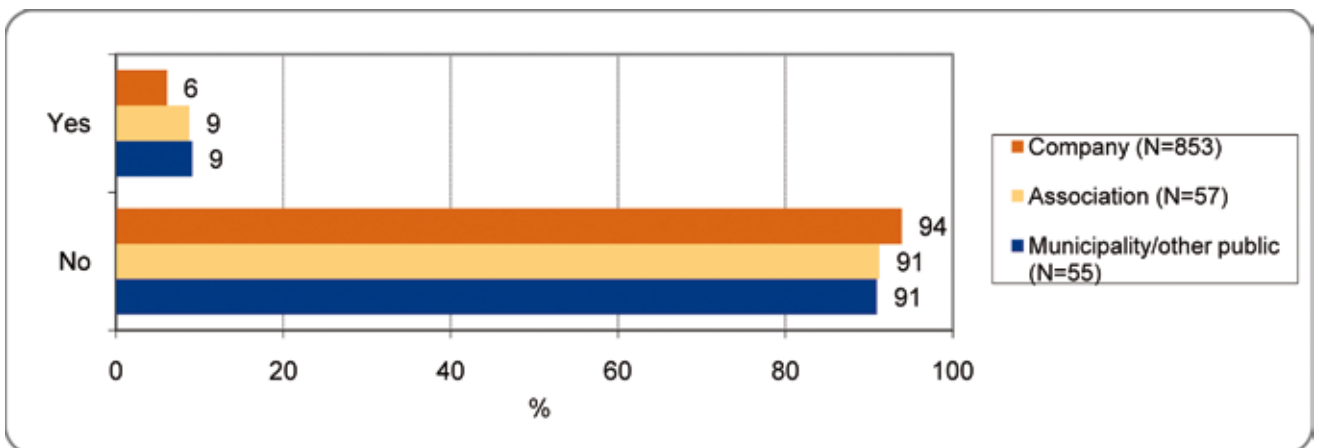


Figure 20. Familiarity with the Europass system.

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