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Country-internal migration and labour market activities of immigrants in Finland

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Country-internal migration and labour market activities of immigrants in Finland

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the processes of country-internal migration of immigrants in 2001. The internal migration of immigrants within the country and the growth of urban centres are studied on the national level by municipalities. In more detail, it is studied the position of immigrants in nine differently structured local labour market areas during recession and boom periods in the 1990s. Urban centres with developed, multi-structured labour markets have strengthened their edge over others in attracting the immigrants from more peripheral areas in the sub-group of immigrants as in the total population. Internal and international migrations are related to each other. The larger urban centres and refugee receiving municipalities play an important role in linking international and internal migration.

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Introduction

The population of Finland is considered more ethnically homogenous than the populations of most other European countries. During the 1980s, the foreign population was still veritably low in Finland, however it doubled during the decade. In the beginning of the 1990s, immigration began to rapidly increase and it coincided with a deep economic recession (see Forsander 2001). In 2002, the total number of immigrants in Finland was 103 692, which accounts for only 2% of the total population (Ulkomaalaisvirasto 2003; see Heikkilä and Peltonen 2002).

This article discusses the internal migration of immigrants in Finland and their employment in various types of labour market areas. In addition to the priorities on the need for research concerning immigrants presented by The Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (1999), the importance of the study was set forth in the research political programme of the Institute of Migration for the years 2000-2004 (Heikkilä 1999). The research data, purchased from Statistics Finland, comprises material from both municipalities and local labour market areas.

The regional distribution and internal migration of immigrants

The largest groups of immigrants in Finland come from Russia, Estonia, Sweden, Somalia, former Yugoslavia, Iraq, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Vietnam. The Russians, Estonians, Americans and Britons are so-called voluntary immigrants, while most of the immigrants from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Somalia, and Vietnam came to Finland as refugees. The people from Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Iraqis and Somalis arrived in the 1990s, whereas the Vietnamese are a more established immigrant group from the turn of the 1970s and 1980s (Heikkilä and Peltonen 2002).

The immigrants have not been differentiated into separate groups in the analysis; they are seen as comprising a whole. The data does not take into consideration immigrants who have received Finnish citizenship. The majority of immigrants is concentrated on the coastal areas in the southern and western parts of the country, and also on the border of Russia in the north-east (Figure 1). In Kainuu county, the proportion of immigrants in Vuolijoki is emphasized because of the location of the refugee receiving centre there. Cross-border marriages and the short distance between Finland and Russia account for the large amount of immigrants in eastern Finland. Over sixty-two percent (62.6%) of

the immigrants in Northern Karelia come from either Russia or the area of the former Soviet Union. Their proportion consists of over half of the immigrant population in the counties of Southern Karelia and Kymenlaakso (see Statistics Finland 2001).

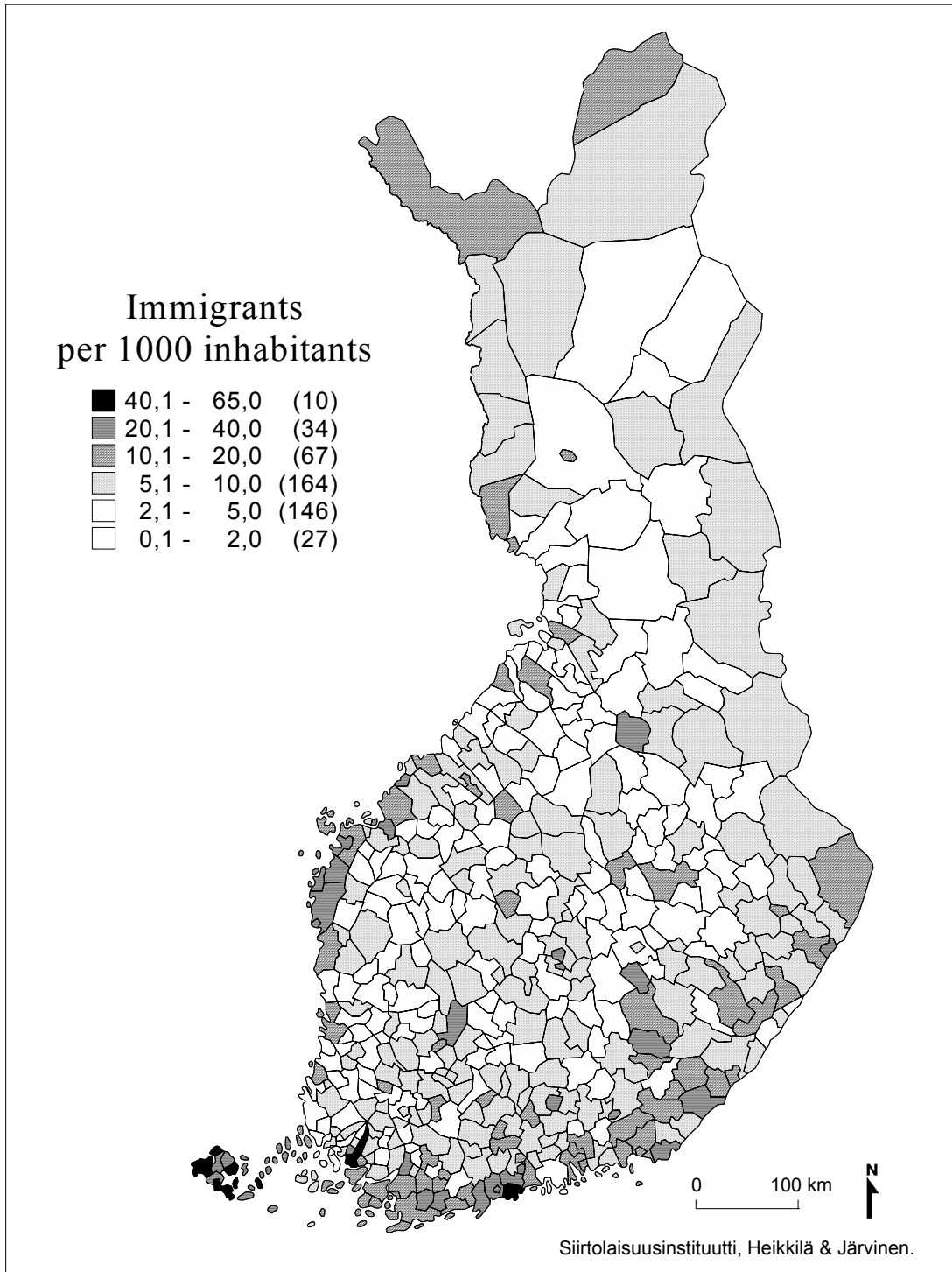


Figure 1. Regional distribution of immigrants in Finland in 2001.

Diverse employment opportunities and services attract immigrants to the southern coastal areas, including the capital area of Helsinki. In the year 2000, the immigrant population was 3.4% of the total population in the province of Uusimaa, a percentage nearly double of the average for the entire country. Half of Finland's immigrants live in Uusimaa. During the 1990s in particular, immigrants heading for Finland settled first and foremost in Helsinki. Later, they then moved to the outskirts of the Helsinki conurbation. Turku is the second largest area of immigrant concentration in our country after the Helsinki conurbation proportion, which comprises Helsinki, Vantaa, Espoo and Kauniainen. Turku has the third largest amount of immigrants of all Finland's municipalities; only Helsinki and Espoo exceed in immigrant numbers. In the year 2000, seventy-five percent of the immigrants to the Åland were from Sweden (see Statistics Finland 2001; Kokko 2002).

The internal in-migration of Finland's immigrants has been strongly directed towards five cities: Helsinki (1,545 persons), Espoo (812 persons), Vantaa (783 persons), Turku (562 persons), and Tampere (287 persons) in 2001 (Figure 2). Thus, urban areas have received 53% of the immigrant influx. The city of Oulu is the only place in northern Finland that has received more than one hundred immigrants, 119 altogether. Fifty-four percent of the municipalities have received only 1 to 10 immigrants and 28% of the municipalities have not received any immigrants. Thus, the internal in-migration of immigrants has been rather concentrated to the urban areas, as has internal migration been on the whole.

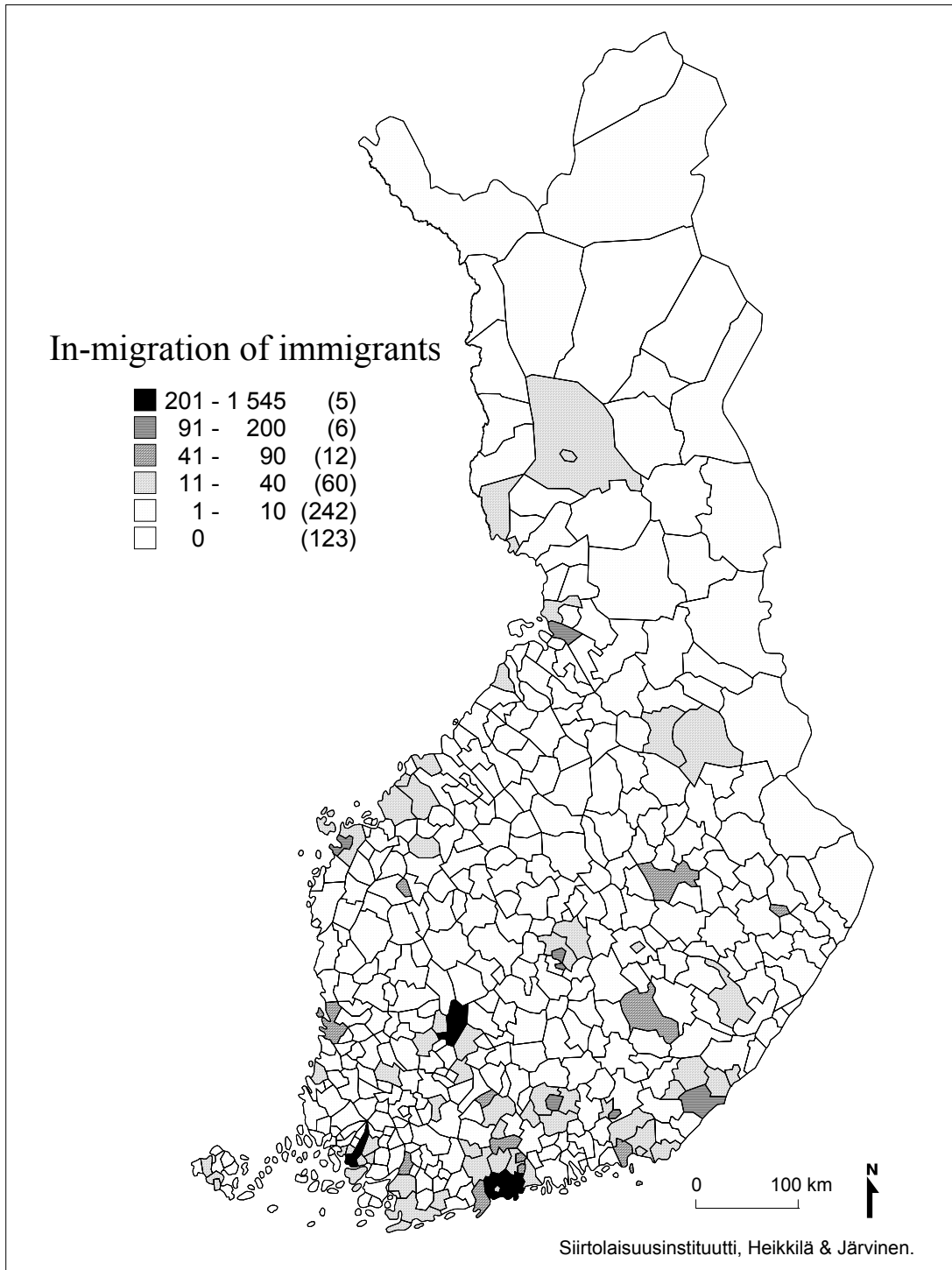


Figure 2. Country-internal in-migration of immigrants in Finland in 2001.

The areas of internal out-migration have been the same as for internal in-migration, i.e. our urbanised areas (Figure 3). The most significant flow of out-migration has been from Helsinki (1,230 persons), Vantaa (515 persons), Espoo (471 persons), Turku (338

persons), and Tampere (276 persons) in 2001. The division of the municipalities into different out-migration groups according to size coincides with the division of municipalities for in-migration.

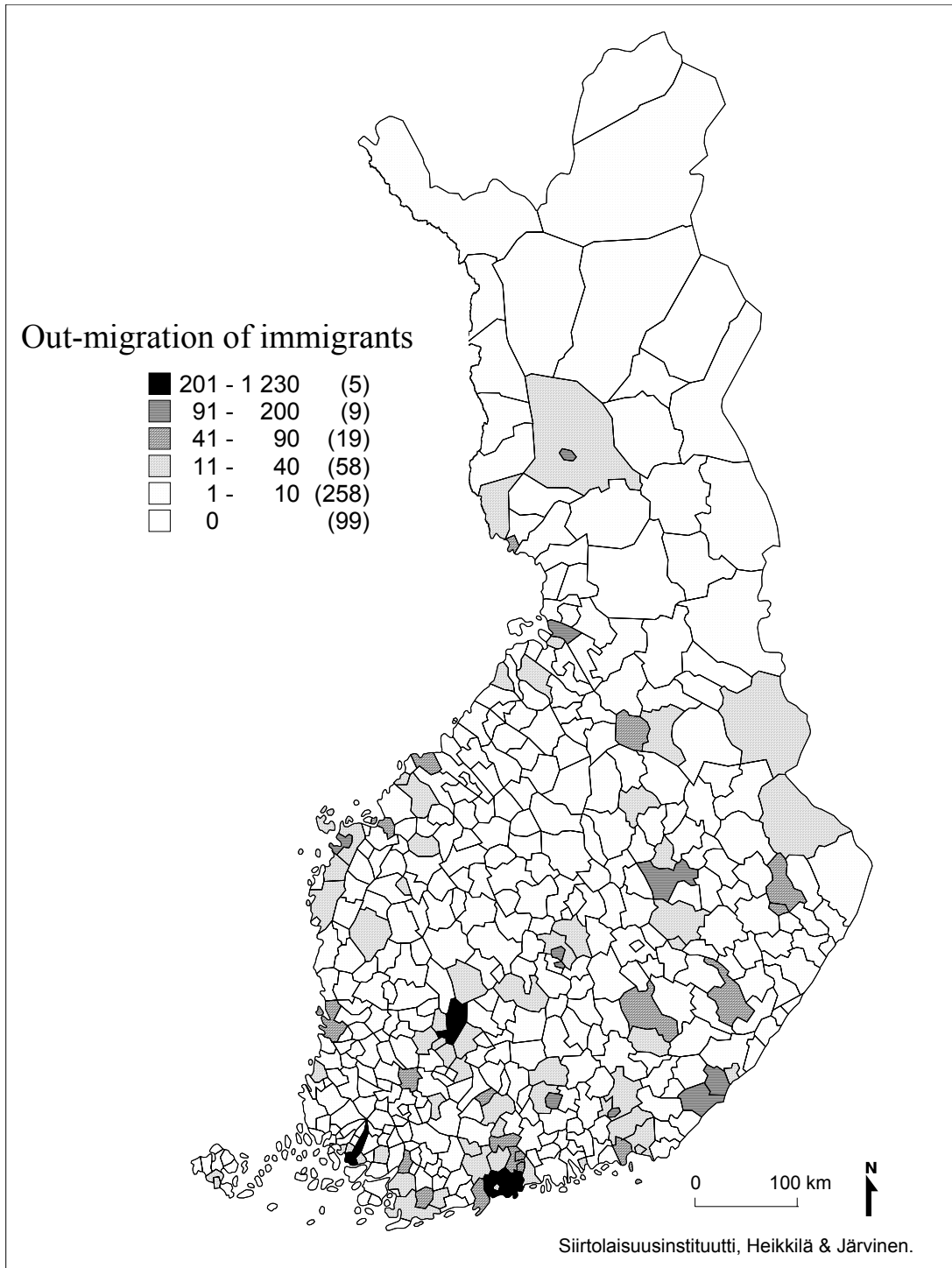


Figure 3. Country-internal out-migration of immigrants in Finland in 2001.

The internal net migration of immigrants has been the best in Espoo, Helsinki, Vantaa, and Turku (Table 1-2; Figure 4). The number of immigrants has remained rather stable in 95% of the municipalities: net increases and decreases have been below 20 persons. The intense net out-migration from Vuolijoki is due to the fact that immigrants arrive from outside the country and they out-migrate and relocate to other areas within the borders of Finland. Vuolijoki is then a so-called transit area. Looking at Tables 1 and 2, it is important to realise that although the net amount of in-migration and out-migration for an area may seem small, the overall total flows for in-migration and out-migration may be fairly large as in the case of Tampere.

Table 1. Ten municipalities of the highest net migration for internal in-migration and out-migration of immigrants.

Municipality	In-migration	Out-migration	Net migration
Espoo	812	471	341
Helsinki	1,545	1,230	315
Vantaa	783	515	268
Turku	562	338	224
Järvenpää	72	49	23
Seinäjäki	50	30	20
Nurmijärvi	40	21	19
Rauma	38	25	13
Tampere	287	276	11
Sipoo	26	15	11

Table 2. Ten municipalities of the lowest net migration for internal in-migration and out-migration of immigrants.

Municipality	In-migration	Out-migration	Net migration
Joutseno	11	108	-97
Rovaniemi	30	100	-70
Oravainen	2	69	-67
Punkalaidun	1	62	-61
Kuopio	83	143	-60
Vaasa	116	175	-59
Lahti	108	166	-58
Vuolijoki	2	58	-56
Kontiolahti	10	61	-51
Kemi	15	66	-51

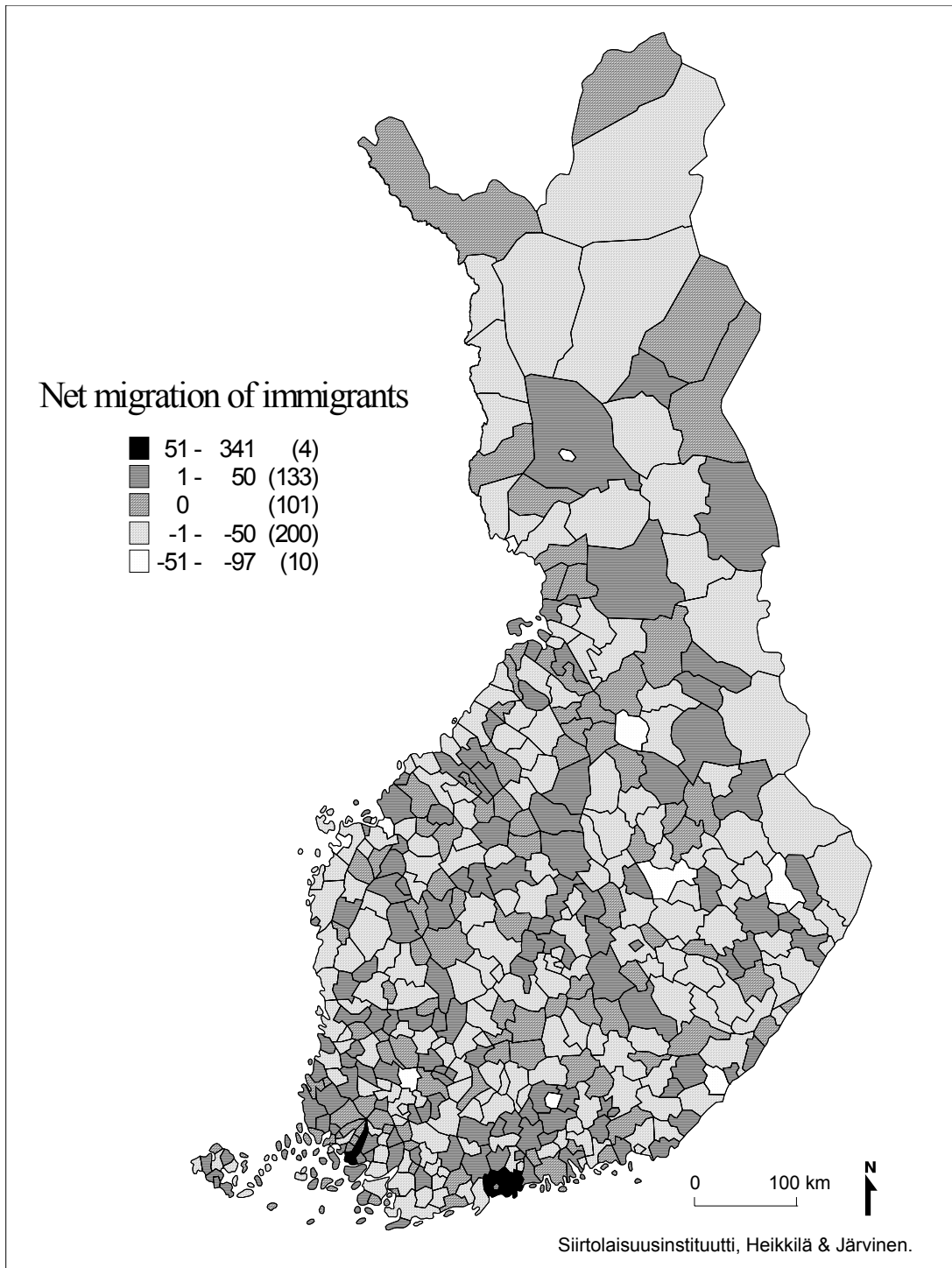


Figure 4. Country-internal net migration of immigrants in Finland in 2001.

A large portion of internal migration has been between urbanized areas. Immigrants have preferred to settle in cities; 84% live in urban municipalities (Jaakkola 2000, 17). Urbanized areas not only offer more employment opportunities and better educational

opportunities for children, but immigrants can also form their own communities, which operate easier in larger areas.

Immigrants are seldom content with the size and the opportunities offered in their first place of settlement. They feel the municipality is too small and does not offer enough opportunities for them. Reasons for moving to a different town or city include loneliness and factors concerning ethnicity and culture. Preserving their culture is an important part of the immigrants' well-being. Maintaining their own culture and ethnicity is usually difficult in their first place of settlement where their own ethnic group may be rather small (Kokko 2002).

Likewise, the attitudes of Finnish residents can be seen as a force behind the internal migration of immigrants. Especially in small towns, the Finns are often considered narrow-minded and inexperienced with foreigners. Foreigners in this situation feel that they are unable to fit into the mainstream and this in turn weakens their ability to feel at home. Immigrants feel that the Finns living in large cities are more experienced with foreigners and thus more tolerant towards them (Kokko 2002).

Regional labour market status of immigrants

The following is an analysis of the changes in the labour market status of immigrants after settling in the country. The material for the gross-stream analysis consists of data analysed according to the education and occupation of the immigrant population in the primary field of activity in the nine local labour market area case-studies. The gross-stream data serves to show the mobility between different labour market status groups from 1996 to 1997. Hence, it is possible to determine what has occurred to an immigrant, who has been unemployed in 1996, by the end of the next year in the labour market; whether she/he has been employed following the migration, if she/he is still unemployed or perhaps outside the labour force.

The target group for study is the working-age immigrant population (16-74 year-olds) in the nine local labour market areas in 1996-97. Their year of immigration was 1996. Three types of labour markets were chosen for the study: Helsinki, Tampere and Turku representing the major cities, the regional centres of Oulu, Jyväskylä and Rovaniemi, and the smaller centres of Rauma, Kajaani and Lohja (Figure 5).

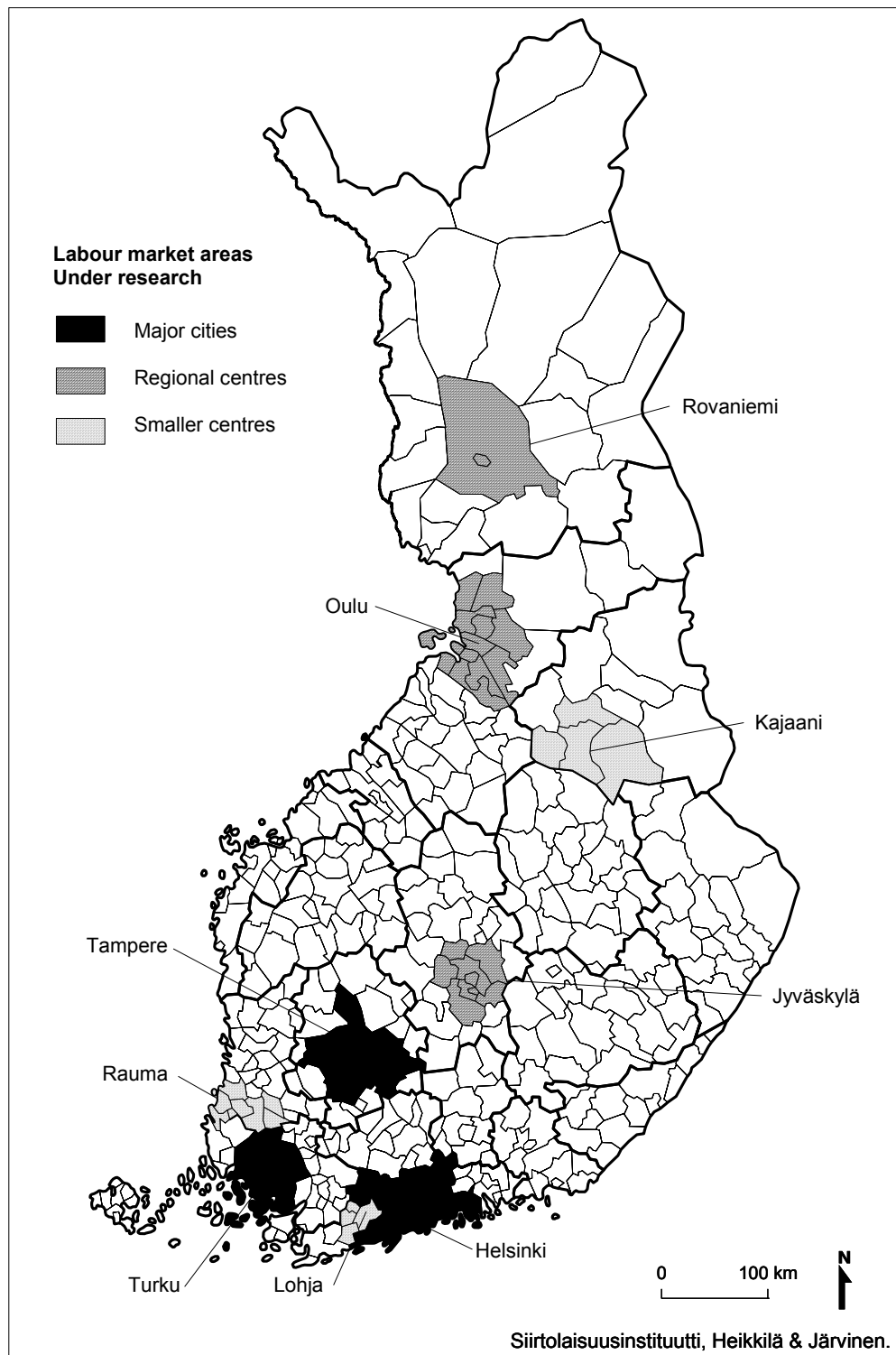


Figure 5. The nine case local labour market areas in Finland in 1996 (Map: Institute of Migration/The University of Oulu, Research and Development Centre of Kajaani).

According to the statistics for employment in 1996, a local labour market area consists of a central municipality and its surrounding municipalities from which, at least 10% of the employed commute to the central municipality. The regional division dates to 1st of January, 1999.

Two-thirds of the immigrants who are of the working age have settled in the Helsinki local labour market area (Table 3). Turku and Tampere has got nearly the same amount amount of immigrants; in general, the larger the centre, the more immigrants. One-third of the persons who immigrated to Finland in 1996 had been recruited by the end of 1997, whereas one-fifth are still unemployed. There are significant differences between the local labour market areas. The unemployment rate is highest in Jyväskylä where over 30% of the immigrants are unemployed. There is a higher percentage of students in Turku than in the other areas. A relatively large amount of other groups (house wives, conscripts, pensioners etc.), which are not included in the labour force, are relatively most represented in Rauma but greatest in number in Helsinki (1,300 persons).

Table 3. Immigrants aged 16-74 years in 1996 and their position in the Finnish labour markets in 1997 (%) (Data: Statistics Finland).

Labour market area	Number of immigrants 1996	Employed 1997	Unemployed 1997	Students 1997	Others outside labour force 1997
Helsinki	4,052	37.0	20.3	10.7	32.0
Turku	694	25.1	15.0	29.3	30.7
Tampere	605	32.1	24.3	16.9	26.7
Jyväskylä	251	22.7	30.7	13.9	32.7
Oulu	269	34.9	17.5	16.0	31.6
Rovaniemi	87	29.9	24.1	18.4	27.6
Rauma	49	26.5	22.5	10.2	40.8
Lohja	62	29.0	19.4	24.2	27.4
Kajaani	31	25.8	25.8	12.9	35.5
Total	6,102	34.2	20.5	14.0	31.3

The unemployment rate of immigrants was three times higher than the rate of the total population in 1994 (Figure 6). Unemployment has decreased in both groups after the economic recession at the end of the 1990s. The relative difference between the groups in 2001, however, was still three times that of the total population (immigrant unemployment was 31.5%, and the total population 9%). There is a large difference in

the degree of unemployment between different ethnic groups. For example, the unemployment rate for Iraqi immigrants was 74% while only 9% of the French immigrants were unemployed in the year 2000. According to Jaakkola (2000) a dual system has developed in the recruitment of immigrants. The immigrants who have succeeded in finding work in Finland are usually college-educated Westerners, while those who have not succeeded usually come from third-world countries, possess little education and working experience.

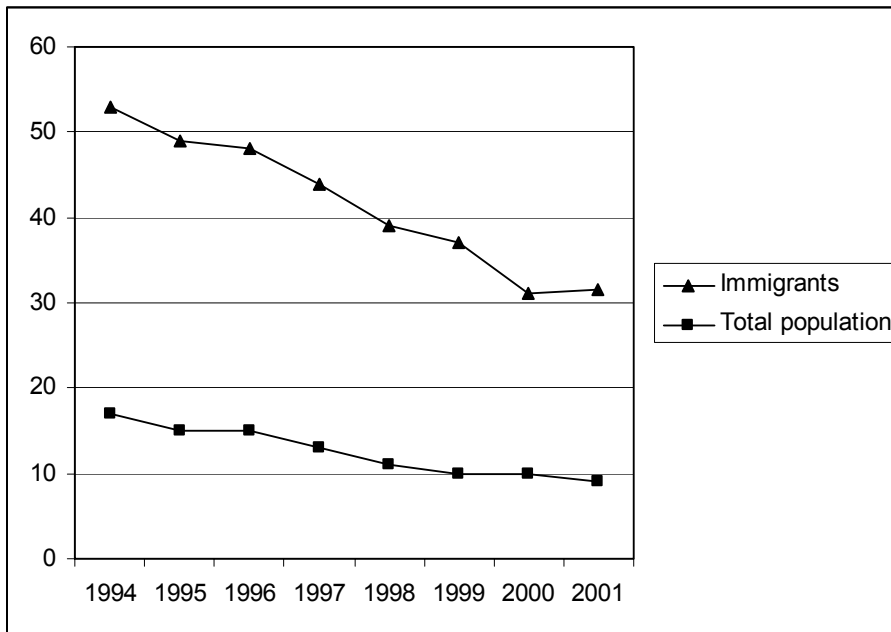


Figure 6. The unemployment rates for immigrants and the total population between 1994-2001 in Finland (Source: Monitori 2002).

Sixty-six percent of the highly educated immigrants chose to settle in the Helsinki area in 1996. The total figure rises to 90% when including the Turku and Tampere areas. In comparison, most immigrants who possess at least an upper-level higher education have moved to Jyväskylä. Immigrants who possess a basic education or whose level of education is unknown have settled mostly in the labour market areas of Rauma, Lohja, and Kajaani (Table 4).

Table 4. Educational level of immigrants in the nine local labour market areas in Finland in 1996.

	Basic education or education unknown	Lower intermediate level	Upper intermediate level	Lower-level higher education	Upper-level higher education	Total
Helsinki	57,6	7,3	17,7	8,6	8,8	100,0
Turku	57,9	9,5	14,3	8,6	9,7	100,0
Tampere	59,2	10,9	14,7	5,6	9,6	100,0
Jyväskylä	51,0	10,7	18,3	9,6	10,4	100,0
Oulu	58,7	11,1	14,9	8,2	7,1	100,0
Rovaniemi	67,8	12,6	10,4	4,6	4,6	100,0
Rauma	73,5	4,1	12,2	4,1	6,1	100,0
Lohja	77,4	4,8	11,3	1,6	4,9	100,0
Kajaani	74,2	9,7	6,4	6,5	3,2	100,0

When examining the labour market status of immigrants, according to their level of education, in 1997 who came to Finland in 1996, one can see that the areas of Helsinki and Oulu have been most successful in employing educated immigrants (Table 5). Seventy percent of the immigrants in these areas who possess at least a Master's degree or higher have been employed, while only 42% in the Jyväskylä area have found work. A notable amount of immigrants in Turku who possess a lower intermediate level of education are outside the labour force. Although they already have a degree, most of them are students. Half of the immigrants who possess a lower-level higher education have continued their studies in the technical and natural science fields. The amount of immigrants who possess an upper-level higher education is divided evenly between the different fields of science.

Attention should be drawn to the relatively large amount of unemployed immigrants in all of the labour market areas examined who have a lower intermediate level of education. Their portion is as much as 40% in the Jyväskylä and Tampere areas. The amount of unemployment is relatively high in many places in smaller labour market areas, but the amount of immigrants in those areas is also small.

Table 5. The labour market status of immigrants according to their level of education one year after immigration to Finland in the nine local labour market areas in 1997.

	Helsinki	Turku	Tampere	Jyväskylä	Oulu	Rovaniemi	Rauma	Lohja	Kajaani
Basic education or education unknown									
Employed	27,7	19,4	26,8	13,3	20,3	23,7	22,2	29,2	26,1
Unemployed	18,6	13,9	21,2	25,8	17,7	25,4	22,2	20,8	21,7
Outside labour force	53,7	66,7	52,0	60,9	62,0	50,9	55,6	50,0	52,2
Student	10,1	24,6	16,2	14,1	20,3	15,2	11,1	27,1	13,0
Lower intermediate level									
Employed	40,0	21,2	31,8	14,8	53,3	45,4	50,0	33,3	66,7
Unemployed	27,5	24,2	39,4	40,7	26,7	36,4	0,0	33,3	33,3
Outside labour force	32,5	54,6	28,8	44,5	20,0	18,2	50,0	33,4	0,0
Student	10,5	37,9	24,2	25,9	6,7	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Upper intermediate level									
Employed	42,7	27,3	29,2	32,6	55,0	44,4	16,7	28,6	0,0
Unemployed	23,8	14,1	33,7	37,0	12,5	0,0	50,0	0,0	50,0
Outside labour force	33,5	58,6	37,1	30,4	32,5	55,6	33,3	71,4	50,0
Student	17,0	43,4	18,0	10,9	17,5	55,5	16,7	28,6	0,0
Lower-level higher education									
Employed	52,6	33,3	41,2	41,7	50,0	25,0	0,0	100,0	0,0
Unemployed	24,8	16,7	17,6	33,3	18,2	25,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Outside labour force	22,6	50,0	41,2	25,0	31,8	50,0	100,0	0,0	100,0
Student	8,6	33,3	20,6	4,2	0,0	25,0	0,0	0,0	50,0
Upper -level higher education									
Employed	69,0	52,2	63,8	42,3	68,4	50,0	100,0	0,0	0,0
Unemployed	13,5	12,0	15,5	30,8	10,5	25,0	0,0	33,3	100,0
Outside labour force	17,5	35,8	20,7	26,9	21,1	25,0	0,0	66,7	0,0
Student	3,7	23,9	8,6	15,4	10,5	25,0	0,0	0,0	0,0

One-third of the unemployed immigrants had found work in the Oulu area one year after immigration in 1997, while only 3% had found work in northern Finland's second centre of Rovaniemi. Correspondingly, Helsinki, Turku, Lohja and Kajaani have employed one-fifth of the unemployed immigrants who have moved to the areas. Oulu has, in comparison, employed most immigrants in industry, business services, and the health care field. Helsinki has employed the largest number of unemployed immigrants. The most important fields of employment have been business services, health care, wholesale businesses, and the hotel and restaurant fields.

The availability of educated labour is a very important factor for Finland and its regional development. From the regional development point of view, the way in which

regions attract human capital and maintain their own human capital is significant. The position of the immigrants on the Finnish labour market is examined with emphasis on the highly educated, employed, 25-34 year-olds in Helsinki area (Figure 7). In the figure it can be seen that in 1996 there were 153 higher educated employed immigrants in Helsinki labour market area, and of these 144 persons were still employed in 1997. Four persons faced unemployment and five dropped outside of labour force. For 1997 there are 57 new employed immigrants who were in 1996 unemployed (28), students (11) and others outside labour force (18). The time scale of 1996-97 represents the boom period in the Finnish economy.

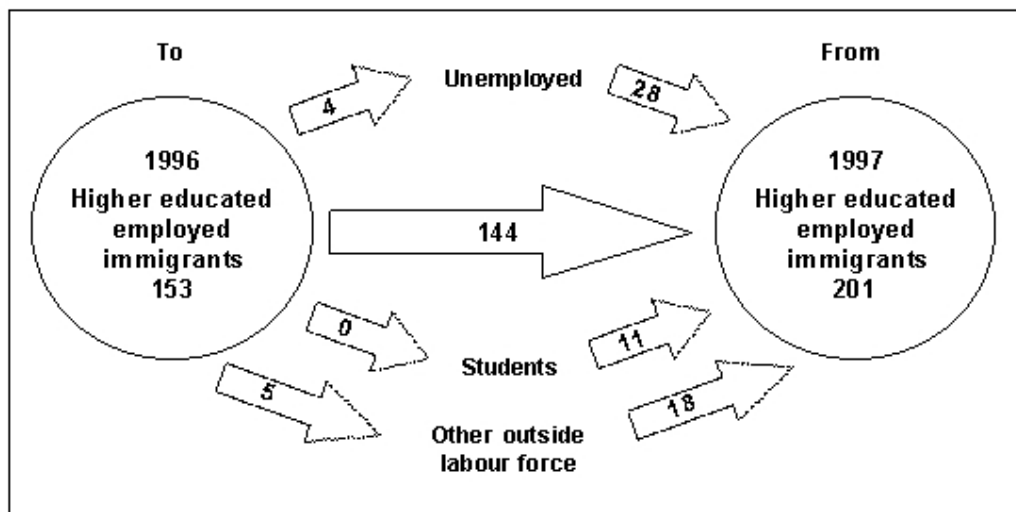


Figure 7. Highly educated immigrants 25-34 years of age in 1996 and their position in the Helsinki labour market area in 1997 (Heikkilä and Jaakkola 2000; Data: Statistics Finland).

The highly educated play an active role on the labour market in Helsinki labour market area. Only a few graduates have failed to find work during their stay in Finland. Most of the 25 to 34 year-old graduates are employed in industry, especially in the production of electrical and optical gadgets, financing, gross trade and agencies, public health and social services, and public administration. Men are typically employed in industry, financing, gross trade and agencies and women in public health and social services, public administration, gross trade and agencies, and financing (Heikkilä and Jaakkola 2000).

Discussion

Country-internal migration flows among immigrants in Finland has been directed towards southern Finland and especially the growth areas. Their main destination of migration, in this sense, does not differ from that of the native population. Urbanization continues in Finland as the population moves into larger cities. Also, the immigrant population may be concentrated in certain areas within a city as is the case in the eastern suburbs of Turku. For example, 16.8% of the population in Lauste comprises immigrants and the corresponding proportion for Varissuo is 14.4%. The percentage of immigrants of the total population in the eastern Turku area is 8% and for all of Turku the figure is 3.6%. (Turun kaupunki 2002; Kokko 2002; Statistics Finland 2000).

Housing availability is one of the driving forces affecting the regional distribution of immigrants in certain areas within cities because renting is the main form of living for immigrants. At the end of 1997, 64% of the immigrants rented flats. Five percent lived in flats supplied by their employer (see Forsander 2002, 114). This presents a challenge for city planning and for broader city politics.

Differences in country-internal migration motives for the Finns and immigrants are evident. The most significant reasons for the Finns to move from one town/city to another are work, studies, living, and changes in family relationships. The four main reasons for immigrants moving to another town/city are wanting to be near friends and family, employment and educational opportunities, wanting to be near people of the same ethnic group, and the need to feel less lonely. Motives concerning living circumstances were not nearly as important to immigrants as they were to the Finns. The basis for migration in search of work or education is different for the Finns and immigrants. Immigrants are more encouraged to move to another town/city although they are not entirely sure what awaits them. They believe that the employment and educational opportunities will be better in the new town/city, especially in growth areas. (Kokko 2002, 85; see Itäpuisto 1999).

One finding of the research is that there are found a kind of the transit areas of immigrants. This can be seen for example in refugee receiving municipality of Vuolijoki. The proportion of immigrants of the total population is high there although the out-migration of immigrants is remarkable strong.

Since 1997, refugees have been placed in municipalities outside the capital area of Helsinki as part of a so-called municipality placement programme. The dispersion of refugees to different areas of the country has been criticized. According to critics, the receiving system cannot offer enough support to the refugees' cultural identity as a result of the dispersion policy (Forsander 2002, 116-117).

There has been discussion in recent years concerning the availability of the labour force when baby-boom generation retires. One solution is to allow more immigration. A so-called active immigration policy has prompted discussion especially in eastern Finland because the eastern counties face loss in the country-internal migration. This has distorted the structure of the population, especially in the countryside.

The attitudes of the Finns towards immigration have been divided. On the one hand, internationalization, cultural diversity, and immigrants as demographic and economic resources are seen as being positive input. On the other hand, some feel that immigrants are a burden; increased immigration brings more people for the Finnish government to support (Pitkänen and Atjonen 2002).

Personal contact with foreigners living in Finland has been connected with positive attitudes towards immigrants. Those who were in contact with foreigners living in Finland had the most positive attitudes toward refugees and foreign jobseekers than those who knew none, or only one or two foreigners. People living in the Helsinki metropolitan area, women, and those who were highly educated possessed the most positive attitudes towards immigrants, and also knew the most foreigners living in Finland (Jaakkola 2000b, 150).

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