



# COUNTRY FACTSHEET: FINLAND 2012

## EUROPEAN MIGRATION NETWORK

### 1. Introduction

This EMN Country Factsheet provides a factual overview of the main policy developments in migration and international protection in Finland during 2012, including latest statistics. It has been prepared in conjunction with the European Commission's 4th Annual Report on Migration and Asylum (2012).

### 2. Legal Migration and Mobility

As part of the Government Programme, the development of a comprehensive **Future of Migration 2020 Strategy** started in 2012. The objective of the Strategy is to design a policy which supports the building of an unprejudiced, safe and pluralistic Finland as well as enhance Finland's international competitiveness. The Strategy was developed under the coordination of the Ministry of Interior together with over 40 represented stakeholders and it was adopted in June 2013. Also, the Ministry of the Interior set up a project to improve **the effectiveness of the administration of immigration affairs** which will run until December 2014. The concept of improving the effectiveness of the administration of immigration affairs was supported by two **projects related to centres of expertise**: the first, led by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, looked into the establishment of **a centre of expertise that promotes integration activities**, while the second, set up by the Ministry of the Interior, assessed the prerequisites for founding **a centre of expertise on the compilation of statistics and research about immigration**.

**A public dialogue on immigration** was launched in 2012 focusing on the costs of immigration, while a project to adopt **a cooperative model among immigration authorities (FPB)** was launched in January 2012 by the Minister of Interior. The objective of the project is to improve the effectiveness of co-operation of authorities responsible for immigration affairs.

#### 2.1. PROMOTING LEGAL MIGRATION CHANNELS

As part of the **Action Plan on labour migration**, a number of projects in different parts of Finland have been financed by the European Social Fund (ESF). Projects focused on creating training systems, developing services for settling as well as building models for recruitment of labour migrants.

#### 2.2. ECONOMIC MIGRATION

The improvement of the labour market position of immigrants has been defined as one of the targets of the Government Programme. Cooperation between the State and the municipalities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was considered a functional operating model. The **implementation of the policy guidelines for international employment services**, approved by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy in 2011, started at the beginning of 2012. The Ministry of Employment and the Economy launched the **HYVÄ nurse recruitment project** as a part of its HYVÄ (entrepreneurship and cooperation programme (2013-15) with the objective to define the roles and tasks of various parties in the international recruitment of registered nursing staff.

In addition, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy has published **a practical guide "Experience of International Recruitment to Finland"**, which contains practical hints, check-lists and experiences that can be utilised at different stages of recruitment of foreign nationals.

The National Audit Office of Finland published the **report "Work-based Immigration"** in September 2012. The report reflected on targeted programmes and projects for the promotion of work-based immigration.

#### 2.3. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

**A comparative study on family reunification in Nordic countries** conducted by the Ministry of Interior was published in April 2012 with the aim to analyse and compare legislative provisions related to

residence permits issued on the ground of family ties and to formulate a proposal for amendments to the Aliens Act. The study recommended raising the threshold requirements of sufficient income to beneficiaries of humanitarian protection as well as introducing requirements for adequate accommodation.

#### 2.4. INTEGRATION

In September 2012, the **Government Integration Programme 2012 - 2015** was published. Special areas of focus include: the promotion of employment among immigrants and support for immigrant children, young people, families and women. The Government Integration Programme has served as a basis for the Government Resolution that sets the focus areas for integration.

An **online publication on the statutory initial assessment procedure related to the integration of immigrants**, targeted for all stakeholders participating in integration, was published in February 2012.<sup>1</sup> With regard to **encouraging migrants to be more active at the local elections**, the Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO) and the Ministry of Justice worked together in organising the iCount project.

#### 2.5 MANAGING MIGRATION AND MOBILITY<sup>2</sup>

Regarding visa policy, in October 2012 Finland joined other Schengen countries in **recording fingerprints** of applicants in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region, as part of the implementation of the Visa Information System (VIS). In relation to **the preparations for the visa facilitation between the EU and Russian Federation**, the Border Guard Department of the Ministry of the Interior published a report on the effects and management of growing border traffic.

In 2012, the **automatic border control checkpoints** at Helsinki Airport were further improved. In addition, an experiment to test the technical suitability of automatic border checks for visa-exempt third-country nationals was also initiated in 2012.

In particular, Finland will be the first in Europe to introduce automatic border control checkpoints at sea border crossing points.

### 3. International Protection and Asylum

**The project on the effectiveness of the administration of immigration affairs**, led by the Ministry of Interior, has brought improvements in the effectiveness of the asylum process. For example, in

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.tem.fi/index.phtml?C=97983&s=2684&xmid=47>

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<sup>2</sup> "Managing migration and mobility" refers to the following themes: visa policy, Schengen governance and border monitoring.

the court of appeal in asylum affairs, the Helsinki Administrative Court's processing times were shortened by 21 days. Furthermore, the overall budget for reception activities decreased by €14.5 million in 2012 from the previous year; the savings were achieved by realigning capacity of the reception network in line with the decline of the number of asylum seekers. Also, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy launched the VIPRO project, which examines ways to develop official refugee reception processes, particularly on the placement of refugees in municipalities.

The Finnish Ministry of the Interior set up a working group for the period 1 October 2010 – 1 October 2012 to study the legal impacts of implementing **an asylum seeker's smart card** to be used as an identification document, particularly in relation to the Finnish Act on Preventing and Clearing Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (503/2008) and other legislation that may be affected by the implementation of the smart card system. The working group proposed all aliens who have been granted a continuous residence permit, should have the opportunity to obtain an alien's identity card. As for persons who have been granted a residence permit but who cannot present a reliable document issued by a national authority about his/her identity, the granting of an alien's identity card should be considered on the basis of identity information recorded in the Register of Aliens. This would require amendments to the legislation related to the identity card.

### 4. Unaccompanied Minors and other Vulnerable Groups

The Ministry of the Interior initiated a project in December 2011, to review provisions regarding the detention of aliens. The first stage of the project focused on the **prohibition of the detention of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers** while the second stage aimed to determine any other needs to amend legislation. However, it became evident that the issues of the detention of children could not be separated from other detention-related issues; from the perspective of drafting legislation, it was considered more appropriate to address the issue of detention for all groups as a single entity. The mandate period of this project was extended until 31 December 2014.

During the summer 2012, a **public consultation** was launched on the draft Government proposal to the Parliament for an act amending the Aliens Act with regard to the detention of unaccompanied minors applying for asylum.

## 5. Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings

A working group was appointed, for the period from 1 February 2012 to 31 December 2013, for **the development of legislation on trafficking in human beings**. The latter's aim is to formulate proposals for more specific provisions concerning the system of assistance for victims of trafficking in human beings. Another **working group** was also appointed to review provisions related to trafficking in human beings in the Criminal Code (39/1889). The National Police Board issued **guidelines for the Police concerning responses to trafficking in human beings** and corresponding crime and provision of assistance to victims of trafficking in human beings.

## 6. External Dimension of EU Migration Policy

The **relationship between migration and development policy** is acknowledged in the draft new migration strategy. The strategy highlights the need to raise awareness on the interrelationship between migration and development, as necessary for acting in an ethically sustainable way and for preventing the negative effects of migration. In addition, the need to strengthen the work with diaspora communities in order to improve conditions in migrants' countries of origin is underlined in the strategy.

In 2012, Finland participated in the **Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD)** and supported the organisation of a political coherence meeting in Brussels for preparing the annual meeting of GFMD.

## 7. Irregular Migration

The Aliens Act and certain related laws were amended to facilitate the introduction of **biometric residence permit cards**. The microchip on the residence permit card will store a facial photograph and two fingerprint images as biometric identifiers. The introduction of biometric residence permit cards aims to prevent abuse of the residence permit system through the adoption of a more reliable connection between the residence permit and its holder. Amendments to the Aliens Act came into force on 1 January 2012 (631/2011). In October 2012, the ministerial working group on internal security approved the **Action Plan against Illegal Immigration 2012 – 2015**. The Action Plan contained a number of measures aiming at improving cooperation among authorities and streamlining legislation. In August 2012, the Ministry of Justice set up **a working group to design a proposal for the amendment of the Criminal Code** in regard to foreigners acquired entry documents by providing false information.

The **Employer Sanctions Directive** was transposed by amendments to the **Finnish Employment**

**Contracts Act**, in August 2012. The Finish Aliens Act also contains provisions with regard to granting a reflection period and a residence permit to illegally employed third-country nationals who have been subject to particularly exploitative working conditions or who are minor. Several projects were implemented. For example, the project **"Reviewing of provisions regarding the detention of aliens"** was extended to the end of 2014 and the **Paperittomat project**, coordinated by the Finish Refugee Advice Centre, was launched. The project provides legal counselling to undocumented persons and other people coming into contact with them. Also an online repository of information for undocumented migrants, including their rights was launched.<sup>3</sup>

The Finnish Border Guard and HAUS (an organisation that executes public sector development projects as an authorised representative of the Finnish government e.g. in twinning projects), together with Turkey, executed a **Twinning project** related to border management. The project focused on developing a risk management model for the Turkish Police and prepared a risk analysis training module for further training of police personnel; developing a risk management model and contingency plan for the Turkish Ministry of Health and provided related training and producing a risk management model.

## 8. Provision and Exchange of Information to support Policy Development

In 2012, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy participated in the meetings of the EU's integration network (NCPI), the European Integration Forum, technical seminars related to the development of EU integration indicators as well as in expert conferences organised by Denmark and Cyprus.

At regional level, cooperation and information exchange on immigration and asylum issues between the Nordic countries has been continued through **Nordic Joint Advisory Group on Refugee Policy (NSHF)**. During NSHF's meetings, issues related to returns to Iraq, Dublin returns and the determination of responsibility in particular, have been identified as problems common to all Nordic countries, thus it has been decided that related cooperation and information exchanges should be increased.

### STATISTICAL ANNEX

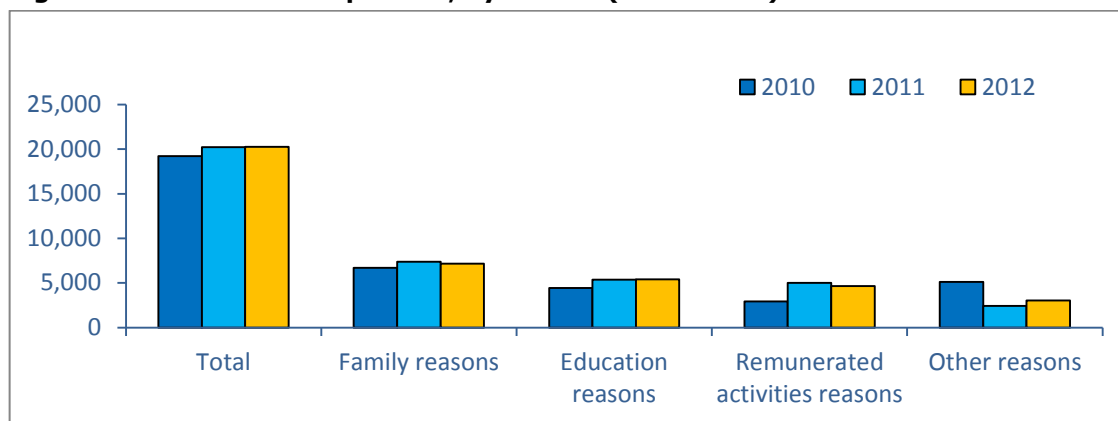
The Statistical Annex provides an overview of the latest available statistics for Finland on aspects of migration and asylum (2010-2012), including residence, asylum, unaccompanied minors, irregular migration, return and visas. Where statistics are not yet available, this is indicated in the Annex as "N/A".

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<sup>3</sup> [www.paperittomat.fi](http://www.paperittomat.fi)

## Statistical Annex: Immigration and Asylum in Finland (2010-2012)

**Figure 1: First residence permits, by reason (2010-2012)**



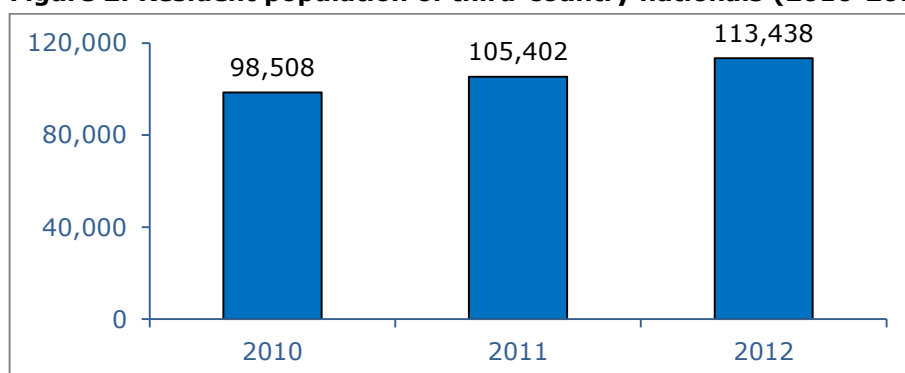
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_resfirst)

**Table 1: First residence permits: Top 5 nationalities (2010-2012)**

2010	2011	2012
<b>1. Russia</b> – 3,885	<b>1. Russia</b> – 4,374	<b>1. Russia</b> – 4,544
<b>2. India</b> – 1,410	<b>2. India</b> – 1,433	<b>2. China</b> – 1,442
<b>3. Somalia</b> – 1,344	<b>3. China</b> – 1,389	<b>3. India</b> – 1,119
<b>4. China</b> – 1,195	<b>4. Iraq</b> – 886	<b>4. Ukraine</b> – 866
<b>5. Iraq</b> – 1,155	<b>5. Somalia</b> – 850	<b>5. United States</b> – 807

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_resfirst)

**Figure 2: Resident population of third-country nationals (2010-2012)**



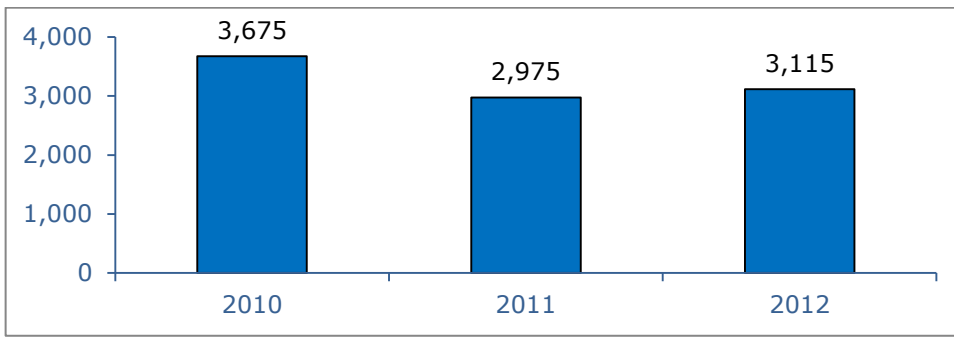
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_pop1ctz)

**Table 2: Resident population: Top 5 nationalities (2010-2012)**

2010	2011	2012
<b>1. Estonia</b> – 28,210	<b>1. Estonia</b> – 29,080	<b>1. Estonia</b> – 34,006
<b>2. Russia</b> – 25,510	<b>2. Russia</b> – 28,426	<b>2. Russia</b> – 29,585
<b>3. Sweden</b> – 8,506	<b>3. Sweden</b> – 8,510	<b>3. Sweden</b> – 8,481
<b>4. Somalia</b> – 5,570	<b>4. Somalia</b> – 6,593	<b>4. Somalia</b> – 7,421
<b>5. China</b> – 5,180	<b>5. China</b> – 5,559	<b>5. China</b> – 6,159

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_pop1ctz)

**Figure 3: Asylum applications (2010-2012)**



Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asyappctza)

**Table 3: Asylum applications: Top 5 nationalities (2010-2012)**

2010	2011	2012
1. Somalia – 520	1. Iraq – 580	1. Iraq – 830
2. Iraq – 515	2. Somalia – 340	2. Russia – 225
3. Bulgaria – 470	3. Russia – 290	3. Afghanistan – 210
4. Russia – 395	4. Afghanistan – 280	4. Somalia – 200
5. Afghanistan – 240	5. Iran – 120	5. Syria – 185

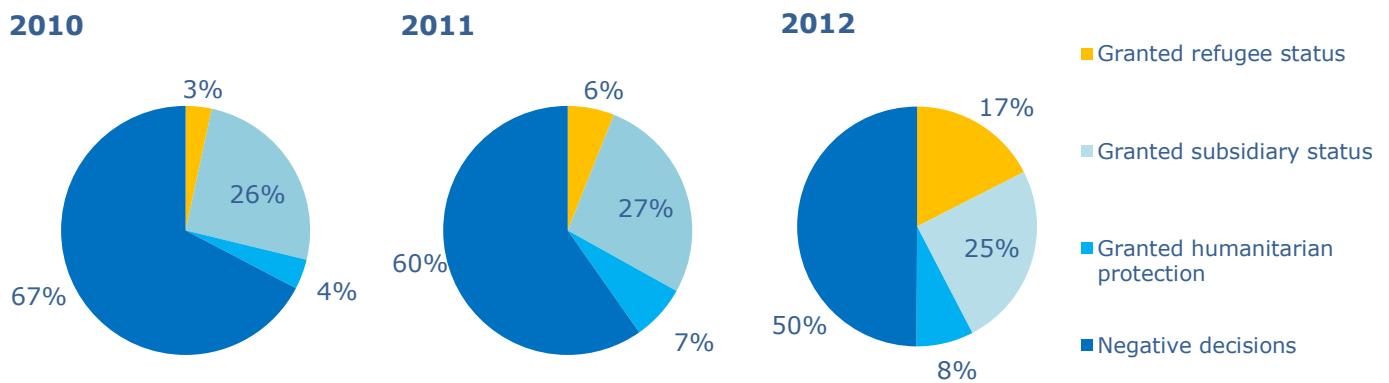
Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asyappctza)

**Table 4: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2010-2012)**

	Total decisions	Positive decisions	Of which:			Negative decisions
			Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian reasons	
2010	4,880	1,595	165	1,240	190	3,285
2011	2,645	1,065	160	715	190	1,580
2012	3,110	1,555	545	775	240	1,555

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asydcfsta)

**Figures 4-6: Asylum applications - First instance decisions by outcome (2010-2012)**

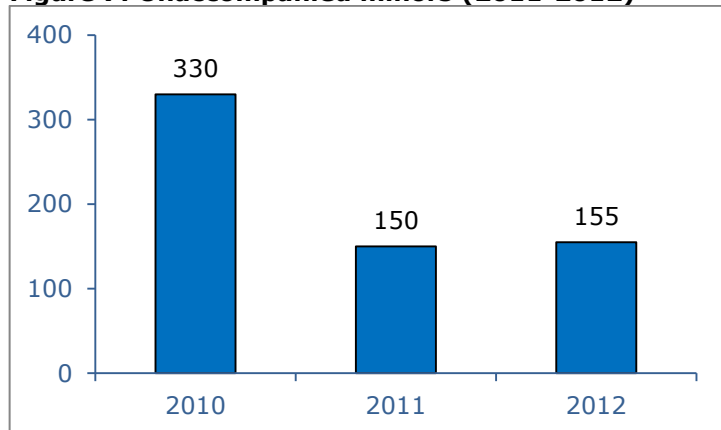


Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asydcfsta)

**Table 5: Third-country nationals relocated and resettled (2010-2012)**

	2010	2011	2012
Third-country nationals relocated	N/A	N/A	N/A
Third-country nationals resettled	545	585	730

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_asyresa) and National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report

**Figure 7: Unaccompanied minors (2011-2012)**

Source: National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report; \* Information provided by EMN National Contact Point

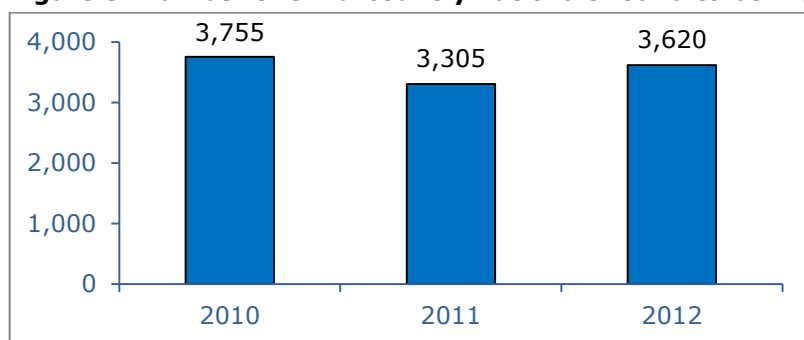
**Table 6: Unaccompanied minors (2010-2012)**

	2010	2011	2012
<b>Unaccompanied minors (total)</b>	330*	150	155
<b>Unaccompanied minors not applying for asylum</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Unaccompanied minor asylum applicants</b>	330	150	165

**Table 7: Number of third-country nationals refused entry at external borders (2010-2012)**

	2010	2011	2012
<b>Third-country nationals refused entry at external borders</b>	1,185	1,420	1,640

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_eirfs)

**Figure 8: Number of third-country nationals found to be illegally present (2010-2012)**

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_eipre)

**Table 8: Third-country nationals returned (2010-2012)**

	Third-country nationals ordered to leave	Returned as part of forced return measures	Returned voluntarily	Returned through an Assisted Voluntary Return Programme
<b>2010</b>	3,835	N/A	234	234*
<b>2011</b>	4,685	2,210	305	305
<b>2012</b>	4,300	N/A	320*	320*

Source: Eurostat migration statistics (migr\_eiord); National contributions to EMN Annual Policy Report; \*Information provided by EMN NCP

**Table 9: Number of visas issued by type (2010-2012)**

	2010	2011	2012
<b>Total visas</b>	1,007,974*	1,244,680*	1,376,425
<b>Schengen visa (short-stay visas)*</b>	1,007,989	1,244,683	1,373,848
<b>National visa</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Commission Staff Working Documents on the Annual Report on Immigration and Asylum; \*DG HOME Statistics on Visa Policy website: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/index_en.htm)