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# KING

Knowledge for INtegration Governance

## Integration Policies for Immigrants of the City of Turku / Åbo, Finland

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KING Project – Social Science Unit  
In-depth Study n.9/October 2014



# KING - Knowledge for INtegration Governance

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The KING project's objective is to elaborate a report on the **state of play** of migrant integration in Europe through an interdisciplinary approach and to provide decision- and policy-makers with **evidence-based recommendations** on the design of migrant integration-related policies and on the way they should be articulated between different policy-making levels of governance.

Migrant integration is a truly multi-faceted process. The contribution of the insights offered by different disciplines is thus essential in order better to grasp the various aspects of the presence of migrants in European societies. This is why **multidisciplinarity** is at the core of the KING research project, whose Advisory Board comprises experts of seven different disciplines:

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The present paper belongs to the series of contributions produced by the researchers of the “Social Science” team directed by Rinus Penninx.

The project is coordinated by the **ISMU Foundation**.

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## Integration Policies for Immigrants of the City of Turku / Åbo, Finland

### 1. THE CITY OF TURKU

#### 1. Some general structural data on the city

Turku is an old city, going back as far as the 13th century. Situated in the South-West of the present Finland, at the shore of the Baltic Sea where the river Aura (Aurajoki) goes inland. The city developed as a trade town (Nordstat 1999). Under the Swedish rule until 1809, Turku was the capital of the province of Finland, under the Swedish name of Åbo. After Russia annexed Finland in 1809 Tsar Alexander moved the capital of the new 'Grand Duchy' of Finland to Helsinki in 1812. Traces of the Swedish and Russian reign are still to be found in the city of Turku / Åbo.

Industrialisation in Turku began in the 18th century, particularly in the ship building industry. During the 19th century, many new industries sprung up in the city, such as the breweries. The rapid industrialisation resulted in the first significant migration from rural areas to Turku. Around 1900 Turku had about 42,000 inhabitants.

The city's profile has changed significantly in recent decades. Its population has grown to 182,072 inhabitants as of January 1st, 2014. Spatially, the city has expanded by building residential areas around the old city, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s. Economically there was also a profile shift: while the harbour and ship building are still important economic activities, there has been a major shift from manufacturing (a decrease from more than 25,000 work places in 1987 to less than 15,000 in 2004) to services (an increase from 26,000 in 1987 to 34,000 in 2004). Turku has specifically aspired to become an internationally renowned centre for bio-technical research and business. Many biotechnology companies are located in the Turku region.

Turku is also the centre of a Finnish Maritime Cluster, at the heart of which are the former Aker shipyards in Turku – taken over and renamed STX Europe - where the biggest luxury cruise ships in the world are built. STX Europe and its subcontractors in and around Turku presently employ thousands of foreigners, many of them come from new EU member countries like Estonia, on short-term work contracts sent by foreign subcontractors.

Furthermore, Turku is an important university city: its universities (University of Turku, the Turku University of Applied Sciences, Åbo Akademi University and the Turku School of Economics<sup>1</sup>) together have more than 35,000 students, a significant numbers of them coming from abroad. The annual average unemployment figure for Turku for 2007 was 9.4 percent<sup>2</sup> (Turku Annual Report 2007, 6), but the global financial crisis of

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<sup>1</sup> As per 1 January 2010, the University of Turku and the School of Economics merged.

<sup>2</sup> The percentage for native Turku residents was 8 %, while that for immigrants amounted to 26 % (City of Turku 2008).

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2008 and its aftermath have brought a new economic recession: the average unemployment rate for 2013 had gone up to 14,5 % ([www.turku.fi](http://www.turku.fi)).

The present physical structure of the inner city is strongly determined by the great city fire of 1827 that destroyed the predominantly wooden buildings of the old city almost completely. The city was rebuilt according to a grid pattern of rectangular blocs in which the relatively broad streets should prevent raging fires. The rebuilt wooden houses have been replaced nowadays - within the grid - by buildings and blocs of stone and concrete.

This 'old town' is the commercial centre of Turku and houses a mixed population of all classes, including many students. The wealthiest residents are to be found in the city centre and on the islands to the south where new high-quality residential areas are located. The less well-off population lives in the areas east and west of the city grid. The poorest areas are located close to the municipal borders, some 5-7 kilometres from the centre. The western side of the city has a large shipyard. The Turku harbour (cargo and passenger ferry traffic) is located adjacent to the centre (southwest). To the north of the old town centre, there are vast areas of fields and forest. Turku Airport is located north of the city.

The City of Turku is part of several larger units in Finland. First of all, the city is the centre of the Turku Region, a strip of urban areas running parallel to the coastline. The city of Turku is located in the middle of this strip. The length of the city area from north-south is approximately 40 kilometres, while the widest part of the city (east-west) measures only 10 kilometres. The seven neighbouring municipalities of the Turku Region are small (2,000 - 24,000 residents). They are very dependent on the jobs and services available in the city of Turku. The percentage of immigrants in neighbouring municipalities is much lower than in Turku, although the population of these neighbouring municipalities has grown more in recent decades than Turku itself.

The next level is that of the County in which 28 municipalities of the South-West region of Finland are brought together. The Regional Council of the County is relevant for policy, because it makes development plans, including immigration planning for the region. The city is a prominent partner in the latter respect, since it houses about two-thirds of all immigrants in the region.

## **1.2 Migration and composition of migrant population in Finland and Turku**

### *1.2.1 Migration and immigrant population in Finland*

Finland used to be an emigration country from the 17<sup>th</sup> century on (Tanner 2004). Between 1860 and 1920 circa 300,000 Finns emigrated to the USA and Canada (Martikainen 2004: 193). After WWII emigration resumed (Heikkilä & Peltonen 2002). Many Fins left the country, particularly to Sweden in the 1960 and 1970s as workers: some 500,000 of which a significant number have stayed (Martikainen 2004: 118)<sup>3</sup>.

From the beginning of the 1980s on, Finland has received more immigrants than emigrants left the country. The net migration figures have grown from 2500 annually in 2000 to around 10,000 in 2006 and to an all-time high of 18,000 in 2013. The percentage of foreigners in the total population – still at the level of only

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<sup>3</sup> The Government Report (2002, 8) estimates the number of 'overseas Finns' at 1,3 million at the turn of the century.

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one percent in the mid-1980s – has grown to 3,8 %. The percentage of immigrants, i.e. those born outside Finland, has risen to 5,6 % by January 1, 2014<sup>4</sup>.

A specific immigration to Finland is that of the Ingrians, the original inhabitants of 'Ingermanland', a region along the southern and eastern shore of the Gulf of Finland, near St. Petersburg (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ingria>). The predominantly Finnish speaking population of this region underwent a strong russification in the late 1920s and 1930s. Many Ingrians were deported to Siberia, the Ural and the Caspian Sea before, during and after WW II. In 1990 the Ingrians were granted the right of 'return' to Finland, which has led to a migration movement of some 25.000 Ingrians from the former Soviet Union as of 2003, with some 22,000 more lining up in Russia and Estonia for entry interviews (Tanner 2004, 3). The return of the Ingrians is comparable to the Aussiedler in the FRG (Gulijeva 2003). The Finnishness of many returnees (in terms of identity and knowledge of the Finnish language) is questioned recently. In the recent immigration movement the return migrants from the former Soviet Union are thus a significant part of the 'supply driven' immigration<sup>5</sup>.

Another significant part of such immigration are refugees and asylum seekers. Since 1990 Finland has received Somalis<sup>6</sup>, Iraqi's<sup>7</sup> and Kurds from the Middle East and thousands of refugees fleeing the Balkan conflicts. There are two ways for admission to Finland. The first is that of the refugee quota: these quota are standard 750 persons annually (since 2001). The government typically fills the quota through selecting vulnerable refugees from the region's refugee camps. Chileans benefited from such quota in the 1970s, Vietnamese in the 1980s and people from the Middle East, Bosnia and Albania in the 1990s.

The second way is through an asylum application. In the period 1990-1999 18,292 applications were received; between 2000-2005 the same number was received in 5 years, and in recent years the annual number of application lies around 3100 ([www.uvi.fi](http://www.uvi.fi)). Not all applications, however, are accepted: of the 9455 applications in 2011-2013 only 41,5 % did receive some form of 'favourable decision' (i.e. a residence permit).

Thirdly, immigration for family reasons (family reunion and new marriages) has gained significance in the course of time, although nowadays the number of applications granted has decreased significantly: of the 5707 applications in 2011-2013 only 34,7 % did receive a positive decision.

The cumulative number of quota refugees, admitted asylum seekers and immigrants admitted under the family reunification scheme over 40 years (1973-2013) amounts to 42,524 persons. The average over the last 5 years was 2151 persons admitted under these titles.

Since the late 1990s Finland also receives 'demand driven' migrants. According to Tanner (2004) Finland admitted around the turn of the century already "tens of thousands of labor migrants who have first secured job contracts with Finnish employers". From interviews with practitioners and city employees in Helsinki and Turku it transpires that (often unregistered) 'temporary labour' migration has increased significantly during the first decennium of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Certain sectors, like construction, ship building but also some service sector parts, attracted temporary workers – either by sub-contracting to foreign firms or directly – from the Baltic states, particularly Estonia. This is strongly the case for the Helsinki region that is only at a two hours distance by ferry from the Estonian capital Tallinn. This labour migration is greatly helped by the accession of the Baltic states to the European Union in 2004 and the free circulation of

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<sup>4</sup> This latter percentage is so much higher than that of foreigners for two reasons: firstly, because it includes Finnish citizens born abroad. Secondly, because the number of naturalisations in Finland is relatively high: 9087 persons in 2013, and 4558 in 2012 for example ([www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi)).

<sup>5</sup> By January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 in total 53.740 persons residing in Finland had been born in the former Soviet Union ([www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi)).

<sup>6</sup> As of January 1, 2014 there were 9,618 persons born in Somalia residing in Finland ([www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi)).

<sup>7</sup> As of January 1, 2014 there were 9,275 persons born in Iraq residing in Finland ([www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi)).

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labour and persons that it implied.<sup>8</sup> Another category of immigrants that Finland has started to attract are international students.

The general picture that arises from the data can be summarised as follows:

- Immigration has started primarily with returnees from Sweden and the former Soviet Union, family related migration, refugees and asylum seekers, but in recent years labour migrants and international students do form the great majority of immigrants.
- The level of immigration and net immigration in 2013 has steadily increased – also during the recent financial and economic crisis - to reach the highest level since Finnish independence.
- As a consequence of the peculiar history of migration, statistics on the immigrant stock are expressed in varying statistical terms, each having their advantages and disadvantages. If defined by nationality of residents, for example, 207,511 aliens were living in Finland on January 1st, 2014: 3,8 % of the population. The largest groups are Estonians (44,774), Russians (30,757), Swedes (8,382), Somalis (7,465), Chinese (7,121) and Iraqis (6,353)<sup>9</sup>. If defined as 'residents born outside Finland' – the number of immigrants amounted to 304,274 on that same date: 5,6 %. If we look at the first language of residents, the number of non-Finnish/non-Swedish<sup>10</sup> speakers (as home language) is 289,068 (5.3 %); Russian, Estonian, Somali, English and Arabic are the most frequent found home languages.
- The new immigration tends to settle in the major cities of Finland, particularly in the Helsinki Region that attracts some 60 percent of all immigrants. Turku is the second city in terms of receiving immigrants.

### *1.2.2 Migration and immigrant population in the city of Turku*

The number of immigrants in Turku was not significant until the early 1990s, but increased afterwards. In the 1990s and early 2000s refugees, Ingrian returnees and their families formed the most significant and most visible part of immigrants in Turku. These categories have continued to come to Turku, directly when refugees are assigned to Turku by the national authorities, or indirectly when refugees come to Turku after having lived for some years elsewhere in Finland. Within the refugee population of Turku, Iraqis and Kosovar Albanians are somewhat overrepresented as compared to the national figures, while there are less African refugees.

During the last decade other categories of newcomers, such as foreign workers in the shipyards and in the construction industry, highly skilled workers in the bio-technical industry, and foreign students have come to Turku. No exact figures for these categories are available, but several informants report that their numbers have been growing recently. A figure of some 1800 foreign workers employed in some major industrial enterprises is mentioned, but such a figure excludes the seasonal construction workers, mostly from Estonia. As for students, the Integration Programme for Turku (City of Turku 2014) suggests that the three universities of Turku together had 1800 foreign students in 2011. Nevertheless, the dominant public perception is that a majority of the immigrant population in Turku has some refugee/returnee background. In any case, it is that latter part of the immigrant population that clearly dominates the policy field of integration and its facilities in Turku.

As in the case of Finland as a whole, the immigrant population can statistically be described in several ways. If we take the criterion of nationality 10,086 foreigners lived in Turku as of January

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<sup>8</sup> Personal communication with Annika Forsander, coordinator of migrant integration policies of the City of Helsinki in February 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Many immigrants do have dual nationality: see note 7. They are counted as Finnish.

<sup>10</sup> Finnish and Swedish are the two largest official languages in Finland. Sami is the third, but has very few speakers.

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1st, 2013. That is 5.5 % of the population. Estonians (1454), Russians (1066), Iraqi's (756), Somali's (553) and Iranians (501) are the largest nationality groups. If the criterion of first or home language is used, 8,7 % of all inhabitants of Turku have another language than Finnish or Swedish as their mother-tongue. The largest language groups are Russian (2794) , Arabic (1566), Kurdish (1424), Estonian (1320) and Albanian (1115).

### **1.3 National migration and integration policies**

#### *1.3.1 Finnish immigration policy*

Although there have been political discussions in Finland about the necessity of having an explicit Immigration Law, among others to regulate the recruitment of workers from abroad (Heikkilä & Peltonen 2002), no such act exists. Immigration matters are primarily handled by two ministries having different tasks. The process of admission of migrants for work in Finland is prepared by the Ministry of Employment and Economic Development ([www.tem.fi](http://www.tem.fi)) and implemented administratively by the Directorate of Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior. In matters of asylum it is the Ministry of the Interior that determines policies and takes decisions on applications, while the Ministry of Employment and Economic Development is responsible for reception and post-asylum integration policies. As for refugee quota the same division of tasks applies (Tanner 2004). This division of tasks does not always work smoothly. While the Ministry of Employment and Economic Development primarily looks at labour market interests, reception and integration, the interests of Ministry of the Interior are more dominated by security issues.

Since the beginning of 2008, the Ministry of the Interior has been made responsible for Finland's immigration policy and its administration, and (until the beginning of 2012) for the coordination of the integration programmes. Within the Ministry, the Finnish Immigration Service handles matters of entry, residence and refugee status of third country nationals and all naturalisation matters ([www.migri.fi](http://www.migri.fi)). The police grants first residence permits in some cases. Prolongations of residence permits and permanent residence permits are generally issued by the police in the municipality in Finland where the applicants lives. EU-nationals register their residence in the local police office.

In 2013, a new long-term Migration Strategy for Finland was formulated. The key message of the strategy is that people who move to Finland and settle in the country "must be included in the process of building our shared future". Migrants and their communities must be treated as active subjects and participants rather than objects of services and measures. Three principles underpin the strategy. The first is that migration is viewed as an opportunity: it creates international networks and brings new ways of doing things; it may also solve Finland's dependency ratio problem. The second is that the strategy should ensure that new arrivals in Finland are able to make use of their skills in various ways and to participate in the further development of Finnish society. Learning Finnish and/or Swedish, together with personal networks of contacts, are of great importance for participation in society. Teaching of Finnish and/or Swedish as well as other education and training organised as part of labour policy should be increased, also for those who are employed. Thirdly, the acceptance of diversity and equality is an important pillar of the strategy: discrimination must be monitored systematically. Politicians, the media, public authorities and civil society organisations play a key part in influencing public debate about migration and people's impressions of migration.

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### 1.3.2 Finnish integration policy

In May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999 Finland got its first Integration Act (493/1999): in full 'Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers'. The objective was to promote the integration, equality and freedom of choice of immigrants through measures which help them to acquire the essential knowledge and skills they need to function in society and to participate in work life, and to ensure the essential livelihood and welfare of asylum seekers by arranging their reception. The law aimed at the same time to offer immigrants opportunities to preserve their native language and their ethnic and cultural features (see: Heikkilä & Peltonen 2002: 7).

The act defined the responsibilities of different providers of integration work and the immigrants' responsibilities in participating, and provided (financial) means to support integration. Key element was that those immigrants (registered at a municipality and less than 3 years in Finland) who are not gainfully employed and receiving social benefits have the right to an 'individual integration plan'. Such a plan might include a basic course in Finnish language, occupational and craft courses and other actions or educative activities that help to integrate them into Finnish society. Regional Employment and Economic Development Centres ([www.ely-keskus.fi](http://www.ely-keskus.fi)) and local social offices should make these plans and monitor them. Implementation would be financed by a lump sum of the Ministry. Municipalities were furthermore requested by law to develop a local integration policy.

The Finnish Integration Act of 1999 focused thus on recent immigrants who are dependent on welfare benefits. In practice, refugees, accepted asylum seekers and Ingrian returnees were the main target groups. A trajectory to work and financial independence of the state – through courses and training – was key in the approach. The Act was much less explicit in other domains like housing, health and culture (Government Report 2002: 43). Local integration programmes, however, involved both labour market policy and the provision of other services.

By the end of 2010 the Finnish Parliament accepted a new Law on the Promotion of Integration of Immigrants in Finland (Law 30.12.2010/1386) that entered into force in September 2011. The most important new feature was that the target group of the law had changed: while the 1999 law targeted primarily refugees and admitted asylum applicants, the new law targeted in principle all aliens having a valid residence permit. The facilities for the former category remained in place, including the central financing of 3 year maximum integration plans and the implementation by the municipality and the Regional Office for Employment and Economic Development, but important facilities as courses of a Finnish language, on Finnish social and business life and guidance to the labour market would also be available for other immigrants. Art. 10 of the Law foresaw that the Regional Office for Employment and Economic Development would start to map the need for courses of unemployed immigrants who enjoyed social benefits and prepare individual plans for them (that have the form of a contract). But regional offices and municipalities can extend such assessments of individual knowledge needs and draw up of individual plans for other immigrants. The first integration plan is for one year, but can be extended up to three years. The division of tasks in implementing the integration plans is similar to that in the past: the local/regional office for Employment and Economic Development is responsible for training, job search and employment support measures. The municipality is responsible for all elements in the plan that can be provided through services of the municipality. In order to do so, the law obliges municipalities to develop every four year a municipal programme for integration.

The introduction of the law situates the activities foreseen in the law in a culturally liberal context in which integration is defined as an interactive process of immigrants and the society that aims to provide them with the knowledge and skills to function in the workplace and in society "while contributing to the possibility of immigrants to maintain their own language and culture" (Art. 3). It also uses the term social

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empowerment in that same article. When looking at the concrete measures, however, the focus is overwhelmingly on concrete labour market insertion and on facilities and skills that are needed for that.

Since the beginning of 2012, the Ministry for Employment and Economic Development is officially responsible for integration policies and finances the programme. The website of the ministry formulates it as follows: “Integration means that immigrants adapt to Finnish society and adopt new knowledge, skills and practices that will help him to actively participate in their new home country’s way of life. Some immigrants settle in easily, others need more time to adapt and more support of integration measures. Finnish or Swedish language skills and knowledge of Finnish society are important prerequisites for integration” ([www.tem.fi](http://www.tem.fi)).

## **2. TURKU’S APPROACH APPROACH TO MIGRATION, INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL COHESION**

### **2.1 A brief history of local integration policies**

Although Turku received refugees from 1987 on and Ingrians since 1994, the first policy document called “the City of Turku immigrant integration programme” was approved by the City Council only on 19 November 2001. This programme was actually a local policy document required by the national Integration Act of 1999. It did not yet include concrete measures. The Council of the city nominated four working groups to develop such measures. The working groups worked on: a) Immigrant children and youth; b) Training and employment; c) Collecting information, and d) Housing. The reports, delivered in 2003, included all measures that had to be implemented by the various departments of the city that carried responsibility for that particular topic<sup>11</sup>.

In the following years, the various departments of the city have reported annually to the City Council on the development and implementation of local integration policies. The mandatory immigrant integration programmes of the city were evaluated by the City Council every four year, laying the foundation for new policy documents for the coming period such as the “City of Turku Immigrant Integration Programme 2007-2011, dated August 15, 2008 (City of Turku 2008) and the 2011-2015 programme.

### **2.2 The Turku city integration program for the period 2014-2017**

The latest city integration program for immigrants is that for the period 2014-2017, prepared in a broad process of evaluation and of collecting views of stakeholders in 2013 and adopted by the City Council of Turku on March 10, 2014 (City of Turku 2014). The programme is – in its own words - designed to act as a guiding document for the city’s work to promote integration. Hereafter the text of the programme is used to outline the present framing of integration policies of the city.

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<sup>11</sup> In the four CLIP-reports on Turku different aspect of integration policies have been described and analysed: 1) housing policy of the city; 2) diversity policies in Employment and in Service Provision; 3) Intercultural Policies and Intergroup Relations, and 4) Immigrant Entrepreneurship policies. See Penninx 2008; 2009; 2010 and 2012.

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As to the concept of integration, the text of the Integration Programme 2014-2017 follows closely the new national Law on Integration in force since September 2011: also here integration is defined as an interactive process of immigrants and the society that aims to provide them with the knowledge and skill to function in the workplace and in society “while contributing to the possibility of immigrants to maintain their own language and culture”.

The city of Turku gives this general concept a specific content of measures and activities under 7 headings. Such measures are listed– again in the words of the programme - to bridge the differences between population groups in health and welfare, establish the diversity of the city and promote the utilisation of the richness of diversity. The first heading is called “Immigration as a resource”, obviously based on the philosophy of the strength of internationalism, multiculturalism and diversity. The measures under this heading should make society and business aware of these strengths and stimulate migrants and their organisations to participate and use their specific knowledge and networks. The second called “Well-being and health” basically outlines the early reception and information tasks that the city has for newcomers and the provision of municipal services to immigrants (“in collaboration with the users”). The third is “Competence and learning” in which the adult courses in Finnish language and knowledge on society (particularly also for women), reception of immigrant pupils in the educational system and training of teachers in “multicultural skills” are important elements. The fourth is “Participation and Interaction” where participation in society in general as well as in leisure is promoted, including cross-cultural activities and events. The fifth is “Employment”: it outlines responsibilities and activities of the Employment Office and city services for informing, training and improving competences of immigrants, for mediating them to the labour market through regular procedures and special projects like the ESF-funded Triangeli-project, and reach out to employers to increase their knowledge of diversity management. The sixth activity domain is “Housing” in which availability of cheap rental housing and urban planning is dealt with. Finally, the seventh heading is “Developing Integration Work”. It enumerates a number of strategic elements for the implementation of policies and building trust: the need to improve accessibility of services for immigrants and strengthen the “multicultural competences” of service providers; improve data management on integration (monitoring) and share and use it; cooperation and “goal oriented interaction” with organisations, associations and NGOs; and cooperation with the national government (specifically on refugees) and with neighbouring municipalities.

The policy concept of integration in the document is one that emphasises primarily the need for economic integration (“workfare”) within general welfare policies guided by principles of equal opportunities and access in the socio-economic domains of work and income, housing, education and health; in order to participate on an equal level, the immigrant should be given the opportunity to acquire the (language and other) skills that are needed to adapt. In the phrasing of policies the cultural-religious dimension is weak: there is a liberal, verbal statement on respect for the immigrants’ language and culture, but in policy activities only selective functional use appears, such as in diversity management in companies (or the city) or promoting cross-cultural events and interaction. The legal-political aspect is implicitly present: when it comes to legal status, the city conforms to national policies in accepting the different statuses (Returning Ingrians, refugees, admitted asylum seekers, persons admitted as family members, workers, students; also EU- versus TCN-citizens) and the policy facilities that go with these statuses. When it comes to political participation in the strict sense, the document is silent; when it comes to immigrant organisations, these do appear when they might help to implement integration policies.

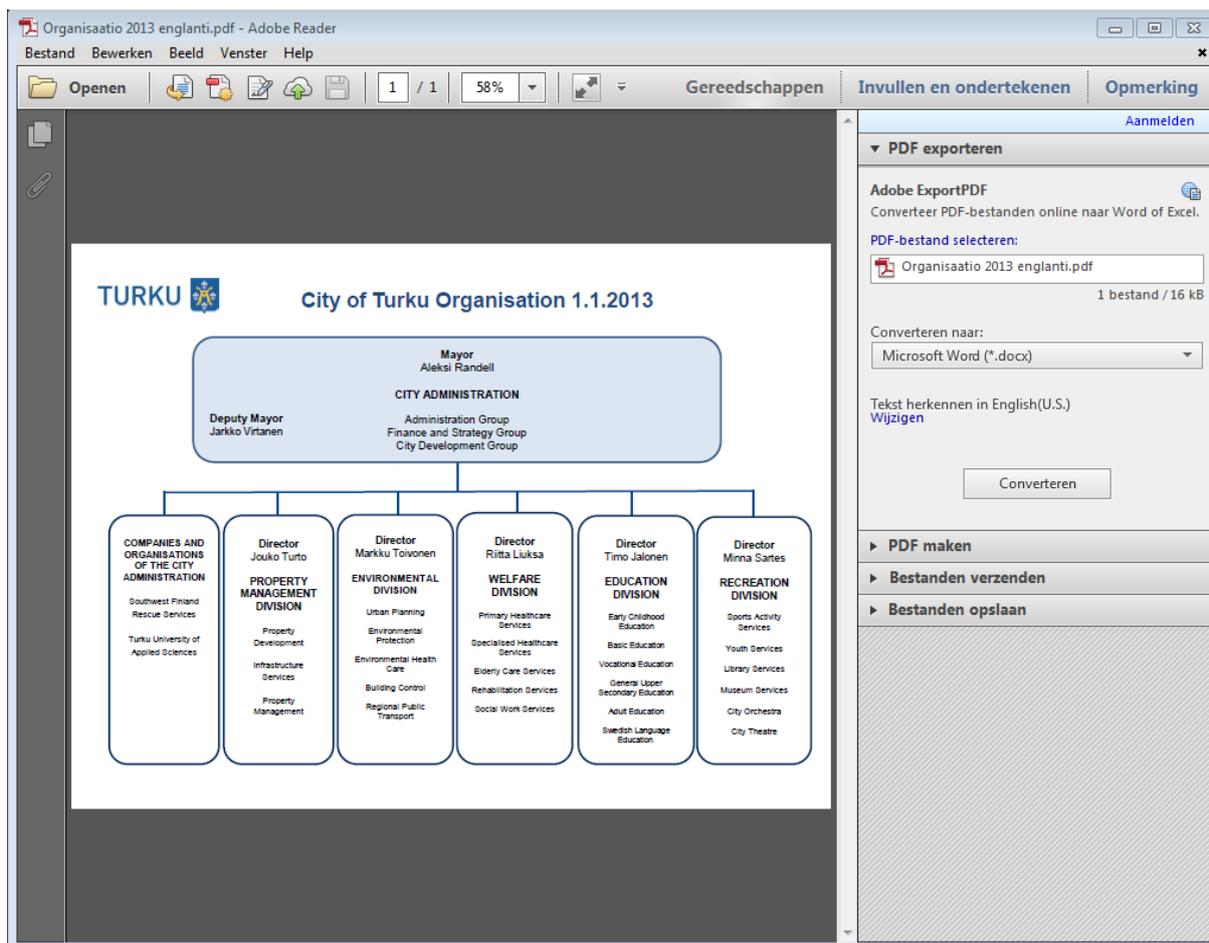
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## 2.3 Administrative organization of policies

As stated above, the city started to implement its special responsibilities for admitted refugees and Ingrians after the introduction of the Integration Act of 1999. Such migrants arrived by decision of the national Directorate of Immigration. The Immigrants' Office of the city started to make personal 'integration plans' in cooperation with the Regional Employment and Economic Development Centre. The Ministry of Employment and Economic Development paid the city a lump sum for the reception services. These reception services for immigrants were placed in the Immigrants' Office of the Social Welfare Office. Other services for these immigrants (related to work, education, housing, health, etc.) within the city were coordinated by the co-ordinator located in this Immigrants' Office.

The immigrant integration programme of the city, including its coordination, was evaluated by the City Council in 2007, as part of an evaluative exercise that is planned every five years. A new vision was developed on integration policies and its organisation: integration was seen as part of normal administrative operations. It required co-operation between administrative committees and other actors, clearly defined appointments of responsible parties and, above all, municipal-level co-ordination. So the coordination function was relocated from the Immigrants' Office of the Social Welfare Office to a more central position in the department of Strategy and Communication within the City Office, directly under the Mayor. Furthermore, the City Board decided to institute centralised municipal integration funding (in 2007 EUR 160,000) within the central administration. A budget for its allocation is made every year and approved by the City Board. The 2007-policy document expressed explicitly that immigrant and multicultural organisations will be given a more central role in policies.

By the end of 2012 the coordination of local integration policies was moved to a still more central (above the six executive Divisions for Welfare, Education, Leisure etc.) place in the Department for Strategy and Development, and directly under the mayor. It is from there that the preparation of the most recent 2014-2017 Integration Programme in six working groups was coordinated. As the coordinator stated: basically, two sub-programmes have been developed. The first covers Employment and Entrepreneurship (essentially economic integration) that starts from the assumption that migration and diversity should be made beneficial for the city and should make Turku more competitive. The second covers well-being and welfare, meaning that immigrants should be given the opportunity to exercise their rights and access to facilities.



## 2.4 Political responsibility: elected representatives and officials

Within the city of Turku the institutional setting of the administration has been reformed continuously over the past 15 years. The new administration is built on the idea of a consolidated municipality according to the market economy ideal. The new system is quite complicated, the basic structure being as follows.

The political authority rests with the City Council, consisting of 67 members that are elected every four years<sup>12</sup>. The Council meets every three weeks. The City Council in its turn elects from its members – after local elections – the City Executive Board, consisting of 13 members and representing all major parties. This Board meets every week; only the chairperson is full time on this job; other members work part time. The City Executive Board has twelve specific Boards that steer the work of specific fields: the Board of Social Welfare and Health, the Educational Board, etc.

The most important person in the executive part of the organisation is the mayor: he is nominated by the City Council, not necessarily from its members, and for a period of time that is longer than four years<sup>13</sup>. The

<sup>12</sup> In the present Council eight political parties are represented. The National Coalition Party is the largest (19 seats), followed by the Social-Democrats (14), the Green Party (10), the left Union (9), the True Finns Party (6), Finnish Centre Party (4), the Finnish-Swedish People's Party (3), the Finnish Christian Democrats (1) and the Blue and White of Finnish People (1) ([www.turku.fi](http://www.turku.fi)).

<sup>13</sup> The present mayor of Turku, Aleksi Randell, is in office since September 2010. He is from Turku, where he has substantial political experience as chairman of the Executive Board. He is from the Coalition Party.

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mayor is supposed to be and act above parties. He heads the 'City Office' in which some 300 civil servants work under the generic headings of 1) Administration, 2) Finances and Strategy and 3) City Development. The mayor prepares all plans and presents them to the Executive Board.

One step further down to execution of policies are five major sectors, each headed by a director (who are full time, professional executives), also nominated by the City Council, not from the City Council itself. Each of them is responsible for a sector that comprises several departments (see figure above):

- The Property Management Division
- The Environmental Division
- The Welfare Division (including health and social work)
- The Education Division
- The Recreation Division (incl. Sports, Youth and Cultural services).

Each of the deputy mayors has a number of 'Boards' for specific fields. The administrative units operate to a great extent independently (accountability). This intensifies an inward-orientation and the need for a strong position of the coordinator of (cross-sectional) integration policies, presently located in the Department for Strategy and Development, and directly under the mayor.

### **3. THE CITY'S PRACTICE OF (GENERAL AND SPECIFIC) POLICIES RELEVANT FOR INTEGRATION PROCESSES**

#### **31. The legal/political dimension of local integration policies in Turku**

##### *The city and the relevance of legal different legal statuses of immigrants*

Finland wants to have controlled immigration, but it has not built up the strong securitization policies and border controls that countries elsewhere in the EU have built up (Koch 2013). Illegal immigration and irregular migrants do not seem to be important phenomena in Finland, nationally nor in the city of Turku. Different statuses of legally resident immigrants, however, do matter. There is first of all, the official legal status of refugees, accepted asylum seekers, Ingrians and their family members who come directly to Turku and are covered by the 1999- and 2010 Integration Law. That status is very relevant, because it entails obligations for the city to provide integration services, but it also offers financial resources from the national level to the city (and it guarantees the status holders extensive rights). Three aspects, all related to finances, lead to complaints at the local level of Turku. The first is that the Integration Law covers only the first three years of integration plans. After that period the city incurs the costs. Municipalities complain that three years is not enough, since it often takes many years before they are ready to take part in work life. Refugees often receive social benefits from municipality longer than 3 years. The second is that Turku attracts holders of such a status that were originally assigned to other municipalities: "Some move very quickly - after living some months in Northern Finland, for example. They may stop their studies/language course in Northern Finland because of moving, and then again in Turku we look for a new language course/studying place. After moving, the state pays compensation to Turku instead of a municipality in Northern Finland. Compensation is paid, however, for three years altogether. Some quota refugees and accepted asylum seekers that are assigned to the Eastern or Northern part of Finland move to Turku after several years. The state does not pay compensation for them. Some of them still need social benefits from municipality." For those immigrants the city does not get financial resources for integration support

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measures from the national level. The third and most important is that the new Law on Integration of 2010 opens opportunities to make integration plans for all immigrants, but the financing for this significant broadening is not (sufficiently) coming from the Ministry.

Since 2004 the status of being an immigrant from an EU country has become relevant in Finland and Turku. Particularly the growing number of workers from Estonia and other Baltic states that use their right to work and reside in Turku, did pose problems: there was no registration of their work and residence and their work contracts were often not in line with Finnish collective agreements between employers and trade unions. That made data collection on and policy for such groups difficult. It was reported that recently an obligation for employers was introduced to 'register' such workers.

Foreign students is another status category that has come into Turku policies recently. The long term philosophy of the city is now to not only to attract foreign students in its three universities, but also to keep the best of them for the future labour market of Turku and Finland. In the recent integration document 2014-2017 such links as between the city's aspiration to become an internationally renowned centre for bio-technical research and business and educating (foreign) students for this is made.

#### *The practice of migrants' direct participation in politics*

In the official policy documents of the city, political participation of immigrants never was an explicit topic. In practice, however, immigrants residing more than two years in the country have local (active and passive) voting rights. A number of immigrants - all of them active in immigrant organisations - have played a role in local politics for quite some time. Roda Hassan, a woman of Somali origin who was one of the leading figures the Daisy Ladies, an organisation of immigrant women, had been chosen in the Council of the city on the list of the Green Party already in 2005. Hasan Habib (of Indian origin), president of the umbrella of immigrant organisations in Turku, SONDIP, was deputy-Councillor since that same year.

In the most recent elections of 2013 the political participation of immigrants in Turku received a boost: three members of immigrant background were chosen as councillors for three different parties: Mohamed Azizi of Iraqi origin was newly elected for the National Coalition Party, Roda Hassan was re-elected for the Green Party, and Alas Ali, also of Somali origin, was newly elected for the Finnish Centre Party. The three form 4.5 % of the 67-members counting Council, which is still below the percentage of the foreign and immigrant population, but nevertheless a significant result. The more so, because it does not seem to be the result of an explicit city policy. It is also remarkable that the three are elected in three different parties that cover the left-right spectrum of local politics. Obviously, there is some openness in political parties to accept candidates with an immigrant background and maybe even some competition on the immigrant vote, but none of my informants talks about it in these terms. Civil servants point to the effect of their election: the three have taken the initiative to form a new committee in the Council on matters of migration and immigrant policy in the city.

Informants report on the new immigrant council members in a normal and non-sensational way, but they also report rather unemotionally on the success of the nationalists, in particular the True Finns Party in Turku. This party grew from two seats in 2007 to six in the most recent elections. But civil servants did not seem to be aware of this growth, or at least they do not see serious consequences for immigrant policies in Turku. "Yes, they have asked some questions on the budget for integration policies recently, but they do not give signs of systematic anti-immigrant sentiments", says the coordinator who did not know how many seats the True Finns Party had in the Council.

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So the general impression is that – in a climate in which immigrants and their integration is not very politicised in Turku - as compared to many other cities in Europe – political participation of immigrants is increasing in a sort of natural way, neither as a consequence of an active city policy to promote political participation, nor forced by a strong mobilisation of immigrants themselves, but rather as a consequence of certain openness of the political system (at least for immigrants who have established themselves successfully in Turku).

### *Immigrant organisations in local integration policies*

Notwithstanding the relative short history of immigration, there is a significant number of immigrant organisations in Turku. The website of the City ([www.turku.fi](http://www.turku.fi)) listed 55 'registered multicultural and immigrant organisations' already in 2007<sup>14</sup>. Elina Mäntylä, project coordinator Diversity and Immigrants, Department for Strategy and Development found in her inventory in 2014 even more than 200 organisations. The high number is certainly due to the fact that registration is a requirement for applications for financial or other support of the city. The researcher adds that a substantial number might not be active (any more), but many are.

The great majority are organised on a country of origin basis or a language (ten Kurdish, nine Arabian, seven Russian and six Estonian organisations, for example). Religious organisations is a second large category, including a number of Islamic organisations (see also Martikainen 2013: 34 ff). There are also a number of organisations that the city calls 'multicultural organisations'. These are associations in which individuals of different backgrounds, including Finnish, work together on integration and living together. I mention briefly the three most important of these multicultural organisations: SONDIP, The Together Association and Daisy Ladies.

SONDIP, "The Union of Multicultural Associations" (originally in Turku but nowadays somewhat broader in South-West Finland) was founded in 2006 as an umbrella organisation. Already in 2010 it had twelve member organisations, including a number of Cultural Associations (among others a Russian, Albanian, Iraqi, Afghan and Iranian one), some 'multicultural associations' and some student organisations. This umbrella organisation has its own building, the city paying half of the rent. It has gradually built up cooperation with the city by doing information work for the city<sup>15</sup> (part of which is recently taken back by the city's in its new Infotori "Welcome and Information Centre"). SONDIP works together with the city and the regional Employment Service on informing immigrants about work projects, and is regular asked as expert on topics such as Integration and Equality plans of the city. One of the most comprehensive projects of SONDIP – in cooperation with the city and the regional Employment Service is the Triangeli Employment Project for Immigrants (2011-2014), financed by the European Social Fund.

The Together Association started in 1998, actually as an EU-funded project of the Social Department of the city. After the project had finished a number of individuals of various backgrounds felt that they should continue the cooperation in this Together Association. They were able to raise new funding, amongst others from the National Lottery and the Regional Employment Office (for which the association does significant work). The activities of the association are defined as 'basic': language courses in Finnish, courses for women, etc.

The Together Association has grown in the course of time: it has its own building, in which there are two office rooms and five rooms for activities. These activity rooms are also made available according to a

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<sup>14</sup> The website's update of the list from January 22, 2007.

<sup>15</sup> SONDIP made brochures about the city's services in eight different languages. The city had tendered this task publicly and chosen SONDIP among the applicants.

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schedule to immigrant organisations that do not have their own facilities. The Association claims to be an organisation in which nine different communities work together. It had in 2010 five full time workers employed: 3 Finnish and 2 of immigrant background. The city of Turku funds 100 % of the rent for the building and pays one of the five workers. The other workers have to be financed by project work and funds from the National Lottery.

The third multicultural organisation is the immigrant women organisation Daisy Ladies, established in 2002 by an entrepreneurial woman of immigrant background, Hüllya (Hissu) Kytö. According to an observer of the Åbo University, she “really made things happen. She was very good in getting funds and she had very good contacts in conservative political circles”. The aim of the association is to help immigrant women to integrate into Finnish society. The members of the association represent different cultural backgrounds from different age groups. Daisy Ladies provides peer support, lessons in the Finnish language and guidance for women. Another important goal is to create diverse social networks between Finnish women’s associations, service providers and institutions.

#### *City’s direct support for (immigrant) organisations*

The city of Turku takes a positive attitude towards engaging civil society and its organisations in policy implementation during the last decades. A general system has developed in the course of time in which each department may give subsidies to civil society organisations *for specific activities/projects*. Sectors of sports, youth, women, culture and education seem to be the most important. One of the conditions for getting subsidies is that organisations (also immigrant organisations) should be registered in a municipal register of organisations.

Immigrant organisations may – as any other organisation – apply for subsidies related to activities that fit into the general policies of departments. It is clear that immigrant organisations apply and get funds, but it is an open question whether they are as successful as other organisations are. There is no central registration of such departmental subsidies.

In some cases the city (or its departments) may also buy *services* from immigrant organisations: language courses, training for job seekers, counselling, for example. This obviously can only be done by well-established organisations that have qualified personnel, such as the umbrella organisation SONDIP or the Together Association.

Another way of direct support for (immigrant) organisations is that the city allocates a *rent subsidy to organisations* to cover part of the costs of their housing, or give them rent reduction when they rent a municipal place. This form of support was mentioned by many immigrant organisations that I interviewed, including religious ones.

#### *Indirect support*

The positive attitude of the city towards immigrant organisations - but also its somewhat uncoordinated policy - can be illustrated with the story of the International Meeting Point (IMP). IMP was part of the Cultural Centre (Kulttuurikeskus) of the city of Turku ([www.turku.fi](http://www.turku.fi); Martikainen 2004: 245). It was established very early, in 1989, initially led by Hüllya (Hissu) Kytö (who later also founded Daisy Ladies). Her work was taken over in 1995 by an anthropologist, Sari Kanervo. The philosophy of IMP was that, if immigrants wanted things to be done, they have to establish their organisations. So IMP gave courses and advice on how to handle the registration of associations and acted as a facility centre for new organisations

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and initiatives. Organisations could use space in the centre for meetings and activities. The IMP also “reacted to the needs of immigrants” by initiating service provision: legal services (in cooperation with the universities), a project for addicts, but also language courses in Finnish, Arabic, etc. Even Koran courses were given in the building and there was a prayer room made available. All this was actually done for a long time with only one permanent staff member, assisted by a number of interns. Later the IMP got a permanent secretary and teachers for Somali, Persian and Russian language. The IMP developed into a cradle for immigrant organisations of all kinds.

In view of this history it was remarkable that the IMP was abolished unexpectedly in March 2008, as a consequence of a ‘reorganisation’ of the Cultural Centre where IMP was located by the Department of Cultural Affairs. Obviously, the IMP, although it had developed into an important institution for integration in practice, could not be upheld as such by a coordinated integration policy. However, the specific function of the IMP to help immigrant organisations in establishing itself was continued: on the one hand, umbrella organisations as the Together Association and SONDIP have taken over part of these tasks, and on the other hand it turns out that the former manager of IMP, Sari Kanervo, is still doing these same tasks but now – less visible than before - from the Recreation Division of the city of Turku.

During my visits and interviews in Turku, I came across another interesting form of indirect support for immigrant organisations: a key person in the organisational field of immigrants in Turku, Hasan Habib, combines a number of functions and activities: he is an active member of a political party that has nominated him member of one of the City’s Boards. He is also chair of the umbrella organisation SONDIP and one of the leaders of the Together Association. But he is also a full time civil servant of the city. His department has allowed him to work half time for the first three functions.

#### *Contacts of civil servants with organisations*

From the paragraphs above, it follows that many civil servants of the municipal organisation do have regular or incidental contacts with immigrant organisations: the ones in the departments of sports, youth, employment, education, health and culture particularly, because these are the domains in which many of the concrete projects are funded. Such contacts, however, seem to be isolated: departments are not mutually informed, and even the coordinator of integration policies in Turku has limited knowledge of all these contacts.

### **3.2 The practice of policies in the hard socio-economic domains and migrants**

#### *3.2.1 Migrants and work and entrepreneurship*

Finnish ‘workfare’ policies in general, and the Integration Laws of 1999 and 2010 in particular, give high priority to integration in the sphere of work and there is an active policy of mediation and training unemployed for the labour market. The principles of equality and non-discrimination are deemed important and protection of workers in the labour market is strongly surveyed by trade unions. Nevertheless, unemployment rates of foreigners have always been significantly higher (three times) than for natives, also before the crisis of 2008 (Martikainen et al. 2012: 136; Penninx 2012). Although some observers attribute this primarily to discrimination and the lack of anti-discrimination policies (see Valtonen cited in Martikainen et al. 2012: 139 ff), most policy makers see this as a consequence of the lack of relevant skills (incl. language) of foreigners. As a consequence, policy focuses strongly on providing training and skills as a remedy, both in the general service provision for unemployed and in special projects.

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In 2004, Turku started an active and coordinated policy to re-integrate long-term unemployed and vulnerable workers in the labour market by establishing the Turku Labour Force Service Centre. This Centre is in fact a close co-operation between three partners: Turku Employment Service, Turku Social Services and Health Care and the Social Insurance Institution. Their main client groups are long-term unemployed (among which many immigrants), people with disabilities and young drop-outs. Most clients come through the Social Service department and the Regional Employment Office. The basic idea is that all clients are assessed (on physical, social and insurance condition) and that depending on that assessment an activation plan is made that may entail training (and language courses) and (subsidised) employment (or in some cases a final social security position, such as retirement). The Turku Labour Force Service Centre also participates in special projects in this field, such as the HOT-project for Social Enterprises<sup>16</sup> in the field of welfare services that ran till 2008.

In all these policy initiatives immigrants do not figure as a special client group. Within the Service there used to be a special team for immigrants in the beginning, but that has been abolished. The Service does cooperate regularly with immigrant organisations and they are asked to deliver services (information meetings; training).

In 2011 the special project TRIANGELI (Employment Project for Immigrants 2011-2014) started for Turku and surroundings. The project – funded by the European Social Fund, the Regional Employment Centre and the city of Turku – mediates immigrants (300 per year) to the labour market or to training, and guides and mentors them. It is implemented by SONDIP, the umbrella of immigrant organisations in Turku.

The number of people of immigrant background employed by the city is very low (Penninx 2009). Most of these employees worked in positions that relate to service provision for immigrants: Mother Tongue teachers, interpreters and health care workers.

*Immigrant entrepreneurship* has received little systematic attention in policies on SMEs so far. At the national level, a number of facilities created in the framework of promoting SME in general have gained importance also for immigrant entrepreneurs: the 'start-up-grants-regulation', the Finnvera fund and the financing of training facilities and education for entrepreneurs.

The fact that these general facilities are nowadays also used by immigrant entrepreneurs is due to the bottom-up initiatives of two institutional actors: in the first place, the Turku Regional Business Service Centre Potkuri that has opened up its consultative work in a significant way for immigrant entrepreneurs. That has been done within a general policy of consultancy without giving it a prominent status in official policy documents. Secondly, the two Adult Education Centres of Turku and Raisio have in the same incremental way adapted their offer of courses to a new clientele of immigrant entrepreneurs, or they at least started to work along such track. These institutional actors have made the national regulations work for immigrants (Penninx 2012).

### 3.2.2 Migrants and education

In the Finnish system education and vocational training is free accessible (no tuition fees), which promotes participation, also from immigrants. Furthermore, education and vocational training are in principle

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<sup>16</sup> In 2003, the Act on Social Enterprises (1351/2003) was adopted through which any regular business could become a Social Enterprise, if at least 30 percent of its workforce would consist of people with disabilities or long-term unemployed. The Social Enterprise pay normal salaries, but are entitled to wage subsidies (maximally 50 % of the salary) and a special project subsidy for the start-up phase.

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responsibility of municipalities<sup>17</sup>. This sector thus counts about one quarter of all expenses of the city of Turku and a quarter of all city employees (Turku Annual Report 2006, 18 and 25). The sector is governed politically by the three Boards, consisting of elected Council members: the Educational Board (for basic and secondary schools), the Vocational Education Board and the Board of Turku University of Applied Sciences.

The national Finnish educational system finances some of the special costs that schools may make for immigrant children: for immigrant children in the first nine grades of the educational system schools receive 120 % of the regular norm per pupil. These additional resources may be used in several ways. In Turku, the sector of basic and secondary education employs some 2000 workers. Of these some 50 altogether are of immigrant background: more than two percent. Most of these are Mother Tongue teachers: the city has decided that – on a voluntary basis – children of immigrants may have two hours a week instruction in their native language, which is given after school time and thus outside the regular curriculum<sup>18</sup>. Another 19 remedial teachers of immigrant origin (representing nine different languages) are employed by the city. However, not all of these are full time employees.

For immigrants, adult education, particularly Finnish language courses, are important. The city of Turku also invests in special language courses for housewives, apart from the language courses that are financed for refugees and for unemployed immigrants. The Multicultural Adult Education Centre is the largest and most important in the field of adult education. Courses of the Adult Education Centre are financed by the State for 57 %. The other 43 % comes from the budget of the city.

People working in the adult education sector has seen their clientele grow (both as a consequence of having more immigrants in general and increasingly also moving to Turku from within Finland, and of policies promoting (language) courses for immigrants since the new Integration Law. They fear that the city, in this time of economic and financial problems, will use the money for the free courses for immigrants for other purposes.

Although people of immigrant origin are hired more often in this sector than elsewhere, spokesmen of the sector agree that this has not been the consequence of any kind of employment equity policy. It is the special (and irreplaceable) tasks that employees of immigrant background do within education that explain their relative high presence in this sector.

### *3.2.3 Migrants and housing*

Housing has been an important issue in integration policies in the earlier 2000s (Penninx 2007). The problem – as perceived then – was not the accessibility of housing: on the one hand, the Integration Law obliged the city to provide refugees and Ingrians with housing and the two large housing corporations of the city could provide such housing from store and against a reasonable price<sup>19</sup> on the other hand. The problem was that cheap and available housing was concentrated in certain areas (the Eastern part of the city and some other pockets) and that concentration areas of immigrants had started to grow in a few neighbourhoods.

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<sup>17</sup> Universities, however, may be independent entities, covering a larger area than one municipality. The city of Turku has direct responsibility for only one of the four institutions for higher education in the city: the Turku University of Applied Sciences.

<sup>18</sup> Apart from Mother Tongue teaching schools in Turku have made some other adaptations with an eye on immigrants: one of these is that religion has been made part of the curriculum and for this school heads may cooperate with for example imams. An extra day off may be given to Muslim children at the end of the Ramadan. To stimulate participation of parents of immigrant children schools may hire interpreters from the city to ease communication.

<sup>19</sup> A system of rent subsidy, also available for low income immigrants, solves problems of affordability.

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Initial policy initiatives aimed at preventing further growth of concentration on the one hand, and improving livability in concentration areas on the other. In recent policies of the city, housing does not seem to have high priority. Varissuo, Lauste and Halinen are still concentration areas, but there is an optimism that a combination of 'mixed rent building', fundamental renovation of some of the concentration areas and 'neutral economic allocation' will be the right instruments for the near future.

### *3.2.4 Migrants and health*

In the Finnish system municipalities are, according to the Health Act of 1972, in principle responsible for all health care services<sup>20</sup>. In the total budget of the city health care thus counts for nearly one thirds of all expenses in Turku in 2006. The health care sector accounted for 18 % of all city employees (Turku Annual Report 2006, 18 and 25). The sector is governed politically by the Board of Health, consisting of elected Council members.

The official strategy as mentioned in the latest policy document, is that in service provision equality of treatment should be the rule. Exceptions are the early reception measures for refugees and the availability of an interpreters service for clients that do not speak Finnish (The city of Turku 2014).

At the level of practical implementation of reception policies, institutions in the domains of employment, education, health and housing have to deal with the (cultural, religious and language) diversity of the target groups. At this level it is found that using the mediating or other expertise of individual immigrants or immigrant organisations is often an effective way to reach, mobilise or serve clients of immigrant background. That may lead to recruit individuals from these groups as volunteers or as workers. In Turku this has been most obvious in the education and health sector. Within the regular health services there are seven non-Finnish practising doctors (one of Chilean origin, working mainly for refugees and some Russian doctors).

In the Finnish system all doctors and nurses need to be registered by national associations for these professions. The evaluation of non-Finnish diplomas is done by the Department of Medical-legal Affairs of the ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Apart from procedural difficulties of such recognition, it is stated (also by representatives of trade unions) that the formal requirements are high. For example, nurses in Finland are supposed to be able to implement certain tasks that usually doctors do and they should be able to document care activities extensively. That makes it difficult to get foreign diplomas recognised as equivalent.

Command of the Finnish language, however, seems to be the major practical obstacle. It is not only recognised that Finnish is a difficult language to learn for most foreigners, there seems also to be a consensus that such a language requirement is essential for good functioning, voiced by both health care practitioners and trade union representatives.

At the same time there seems to be a shortage of health care workers for different reasons. One is that the health budget is tight. This leads to the particular situation that part of the personnel is recruited on a temporary basis (some 500). Another reason is that salaries of nurses are perceived as low, which does not stimulate particularly the supply of nurses. It has even led to a discussion on the possible recruitment of 200 nurses from the Philippines, which solicited the reaction of our spokeswoman: "I cannot see how they would manage the language problems". It also has led to a discussion on creating a special category of

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<sup>20</sup> Hospitals, however, may be independent entities, covering a larger area than one municipality. The city of Turku runs one city hospital, but there is also an independent University hospital (TUCS) in the city.

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'health care helpers' (obviously to avoid the high requirements for official nurses), particularly for care for the elderly (Penninx 2009).

From all of this it becomes clear that at the level of services there is an awareness of problems (and a feeling that the official mainstreaming policy of equal treatment is elusive), but there is not yet a clear answer. In practice, the few health care workers of immigrant background employed by the city do very specific tasks related to immigrants: they do the health check-up of new immigrant arrivals and form a special team for health care for refugees: a kind of parallel health system. In some cases this is the case in areas with high concentrations of immigrants, like in the special multi-cultural health centre in the Varissuo neighbourhood.

The conclusion of the spokeswoman of the Health Office condensed all this in her overall evaluation: "The system is not yet mature for diversity in the active sense; we do have equality programmes, but they do not cover immigrant background yet".

### **3.3 The practice of handling cultural and religious diversity and social cohesion**

As we have seen, both the 1999 and the 2010 Integration Law have a rather liberal official statement as to the cultural-religious dimension of integration: the latter one formulates that it wants to contribute "to the possibility of immigrants to maintain their own language and culture" (Art. 3). It also uses the term social empowerment in that same article. We also saw that the general introduction of the latest Integration Programme of the city of Turku follows this formulation literally.

Martikainen et al. (2012) appreciate the relative importance of the practice of cultural and religious diversity in policy at the national level as follows: while the official integration policy of Finland is built on three blocks, namely (1) on integration of individual immigrants in Finnish society, and especially into working life; (2) the right of immigrants communities to preserve their distinct (cultural and/or ethnic) identity; and (3) adaptation of Finnish society and population to immigration and immigrants, there is a consensus among observers that the first bloc has been given absolute priority in the number of activities, projects and resources spent (language courses, skills improvement). The second and third bloc have enjoyed much less attention, have seen less activities and limited resources. This has led some analyst to conclude that Finnish integration policies in practice "are more pragmatic than ideological and more assimilative than often presumed. The focus has mostly been on the integration of individuals, while support for communities has remained at a low level." (2012: 140).

#### *3.3.1 The practice of cultural/ religious rights in Turku policies*

When looking at the concrete measures and projects in Turku, a comparable picture of overwhelmingly measures (and funding) for labour market insertion and for facilities and skills that are needed for that, is visible in the City Integration Programme 2014-2017. Furthermore, in the domains of education, housing and health the primary focus is not only on equal rights of access but also – where-ever possible – the same mainstreamed service provisions. Cultural and /or religious elements do not enter these domains as relevant, except in the provision of facilities for teaching of home languages (outside the regular curriculum, and on certain conditions).

In the practice of implementation one may notice some more sensitivity for the cultural / religious elements. This is particularly visible in the health and partly also the educational sectors where

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practitioners/ teachers /volunteers with a specific cultural or religious background have become part of service provision. Sometimes the cultural/ religious element is brought in through cooperation with immigrant organisations in the implementation of policies in these domains. In this sense the policy practice in the socio-economic domain at the local level is more sensitive for cultural and religious diversity than the policy on the book, where formal right of equality (of access and treatment) are stressed.

“Maintaining their own language and culture” is obviously a right that can be exercised, but there is no other role for the city than to allow them, on the same conditions as other (non-immigrant) cultural practices and religions are allowed. Cultural organisations of immigrants may be rewarded and supported financially by (certain departments of) the city, but on the same criteria of their contribution to the common good of the city (and not on the basis of being a cultural or religious organisations itself).

When it comes to religion and religious organisations in a more strict sense, it is relevant to know that in Finland religion has always had an important place in society: the country has two National Churches: the Evangelical-Lutheran and the Finnish Orthodox Church. At the same time, that special position (and the ensuing strong position of these churches in civil society) is played down in politics, made invisible as it were, as if the principle of separation of Church and State forbids it to make relations explicit. On the other hand, there was also an early recognition and institutionalisation of Islam that has certainly eased the difficult position that this ‘new religion’ had to face in many other European countries and cities (Martikainen 2004; 2007; 2008; 2013).

The result of this specific legacy and history seems to be that, on the one hand, there is more of a general acceptance of the religious factor in civil society, but on the other hand the state and the city of Turku handle this by formally keeping at a distance. This is particularly the case, when it comes to religious activities in the strict sense, but also when it comes to activities of religious organisations in general. Inter-religious dialogue and activities is left to the initiative of civil society and the stakeholders themselves. And actually, there are indications that such dialogue exists, be it out of sight of the city itself (Penninx 2010).

### *3.3.2 The practice of policies of inter-group relations and social cohesion*

Intergroup relations, intercultural policies and interreligious dialogue are not explicitly part of the integration programme at the level of the city of Turku. As we have seen, the national programme has as its third pillar “the adaptation of Finnish society and population to immigration and immigrants”. This can only be understood as a partial element of intergroup relations at best, and at the level of Turku it does not get a very clear manifestation. For example, the mobilisation against immigrants by nationalistic parties such as the Blue and White of Finnish People (one seat in the Council) and the True Finns Party (six) may have led to reactions of established parties (by having candidates of immigrant background on the list and elected). It did not (yet) touch policy making in the area of integration policies in a significant way.

The absence of such concepts in policy documents, however, does not mean that practices related to it do not exist. On the contrary, quite a number of activities can be observed that can be classified as implicitly fitting such concepts. For one thing, the city of Turku has developed not only an extensive knowledge and interest in immigrant organisations, it has also a practice of supporting them and call upon them to promote integration of their members. This aspect has also gained a place in the recent policy documents. In doing so, the city has an eye for the multiple functions that such organisations may have.

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## 4. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 Frames and frame shifts in migration and integration

Within the European context, immigration in Finland and in Turku is relatively new: since the beginning of the 1990s. It started predominantly as supply driven migration (refugees, returnees and their family members). Integration policies targeted mainly the first mentioned category of immigrants since 1999. These specific policies relating to reception of refugees and returnees have been initiated at the national level primarily, inducing, obliging and resourcing local authorities to develop and implement integration programmes.

The positive side of this newness of immigration and its relative low level is that it has not led to a politicisation of the topic of immigration and integration, compared to other European countries: there is obviously a commitment – materialised in the 1999 Integration Law - to receive refugees and returnees from abroad and give them access to national and local welfare systems during the process of their (initial) settlement, a task that is implemented in a clear and resourceful way.

Immigration in Finland and Turku changed its character to predominantly worker and student migration in the 2000s, and net immigration increased to (for Finland) unprecedented levels, even during the recent economic recession. Also immigration policy became more explicit since the mid-2000s: a purposeful controlled immigration policy in which migration and immigrants should be (made) beneficial for the future Finnish society. This philosophy was recently confirmed in the new Migration Strategy of 2013.

Such an explicit immigration policy and increased immigration made a new Integration Law (of 2010) a logical step: that law enlarged the target groups for integration to all immigrants and focused strongly on socio-economic integration, while maintaining a welcoming tone and a liberal attitude in cultural and religious matters.

Policies for immigrants in Turku should be situated against this national context. Initially, the city has developed a reception policy for refugees, Ingrian returnees and their family members in the early 2000s. That policy guaranteed housing and access to facilities of the welfare state as a starting point, and furthermore entailed activities that should promote access to the educational system and the labour market by procuring mediation and improving the (language) skills of the immigrants. In this conceptualisation and practice, the city followed predominantly national categorisations of the Integration Law of 1999 and used its facilities and resources.

The policy documents since the mid-2000s (mainly the Integration Plans and Programmes that the national Integration Law demanded from municipalities every four years) have shown the same frame shifts that we have seen on the national level (although it is not always clear which level was first to shift): the city started to participate in regional immigration plans since 2005 and thus in principle enlarging the target groups for integration to all immigrants. The practice of integration policies, however, remained very much focused on the old target groups of refugees, Ingrians and family members until changes in national policies – the new Integration Law of 2010, in force since September of 2011 - opened new opportunities. The latest Integration Policy Programme (The city of Turku 2014) follows quite literally the national framing of the new national Migration Strategy (2013) and the new Integration Law of 2010.

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## 4.2 Policy actions in dimensions and domains of integration

Thomas Martikainen et al. (2012: 134 ff) describe the practice of policies and programmes to promote integration in Finland as broad “since the comprehensive social security system with its social insurance, social services, and welfare arrangements is available to all immigrants settling on a permanent basis”. They continue to explain that social policy in Finland “has been developed within the frame of “social citizenship”, and is seen as the operationalization of social rights that focus in a substantive way on programs and services in the areas of health, education, housing, the labour market, and social and welfare services.” This strong embeddedness of integration policies for immigrants in general welfare state policies translates into a strong emphasis on the socio-economic dimension of integration: equal access to facilities, equal treatment and even an aspiration of equal outcomes. Integration in working life – and all measures that enhance skills of immigrants for adaptation and participation – is key in such an approach.

The legal dimension of integration processes is largely taken for granted. The controlled nature of immigration demands for legal residence of immigrants, but the policy and practice on this point is much less security focused than elsewhere in Europe and illegal residence is much less a problem.

As for political participation, immigrants do have local voting rights after two years of residence in Finland. Furthermore, the liberal naturalization practice (again in European comparative perspective) means that many immigrants get full citizen rights after a short period.

As for the cultural/ religious dimension, Finnish integration policy allows immigrants on the books to “maintain their own language and culture” and allows religious diversity; in practice, this should be interpreted more as a liberal statement of attitude, than as a ground to claim facilities in this domain.

This characterisation of policies at the national level holds to a great extent also for policies of the city of Turku. This is most clearly the case in the official statements of policy in the 4-annual programmes, where you may find literal quotes from national policy documents. In the policy implementation in Turku, however, one observes some deviations from this national picture. The first is that immigrant organisations are thriving – partly also by indirect support of civil servants and of the city. A selective part of these organisations – the ones called multicultural organisations by the city - i.e. those having members from various immigrant groups including natives - do also play a significant role in policy implementation. The second deviation is that the cultural dimension may be introduced to a certain extent in the policies of the socio-economic domain through a strong participation of immigrant organisations in service provision. This probably contributes to the fact that in the minds of policymakers in Turku, national integration policy was seen as aiming primarily for adaptation of immigrants, while at the local level one is more open-minded when it comes to the cultural dimension.

## 4.3 Anti-discrimination/equality instruments and monitoring as strategies

So, although integration policies of Turku do seem somewhat broader and show a somewhat higher sensitivity for cultural, ethnic and religious factors in the integration process in their implementation than national policies do, the basics of national policies are also the ones that structure local policies in Turku: equality of access, equal treatment and the expectation of equal outcomes, particularly in the socio-economic domains. The negative formulation of these principles - discrimination – undermines them. That makes anti-discrimination policies part of the integration policies.

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At the national level there is on the one hand the Equality Act (Yhdenvertaisuuslaki 2004) that forbids discrimination on the basis of age, ethnic or national background, language, religion, belief, opinion, health conditions and handicaps, and sexual orientation. Another Act (Tasa-arvolaki /2002)<sup>21</sup> bans direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of sex. Both laws emphasize the duty of the authorities to promote equality. The laws require the local government to make plans for such actions and measures. These include actions of the local government as employer and as a service provider.

In the city of Turku, it was decided that the (requirements of the) two laws would be combined: all administrative units of the city have been asked to make plans which have been added together in a city-plan and approved by the City's Executive Board. Evaluations of these plans are used as a 'soft' instrument 'to make departments aware of equality and possible discrimination questions'. The philosophy is that departments within the city organisation are so different ("compare the harbour with museums or the Youth department") that it is only the departments themselves that may set the goals and implement measures.

Apart from the two laws mentioned above, Finland also has an independent special Ombudsman for Minorities ([www.mol.fi](http://www.mol.fi)). Its jurisdiction only covers the supervision of ethnic discrimination. The primary means used by the Ombudsman include recommendations, instructions and advice. In exceptional cases he may also provide more extensive assistance. In contacts with Turku officials and informants, however, the Ombudsman was not mentioned as a significant actor in Turku.

The city of Turku reports as "probably the most important monitoring tool" the bi-annual national survey on various topics (Kunta-10) held among permanent employees of municipalities. In the survey of 2006, 68 percent of the Turku work force participated in that survey. On discrimination only 5 percent of the Turku respondents felt that there existed discrimination on ethnic grounds. The national average on this question was 4 percent.

#### 4.4 Governance patterns of integration policies

Competence for migration policies at the national level has always been and still is in the hands of the Minister of the Interior. For quite some time –until the beginning of 2012 – that same ministry was in charge of the inter-ministerial coordination of integration policies. The Minister for Employment and Economic Development has been in charge of the implementation of reception policies and labour market integration as described by the Integration Laws of 1999 and 2010 (the implementation of which was done through the Regional Employment Offices). Since the beginning of 2012 the coordination task for integration shifted to the ministry of Employment and Economic Development.

For integration policies, the vertical governance pattern of the State (and its ministries) towards cities and municipalities has always been and still is hierarchical: through the Integration Laws and its implementation structure, the national level not only prescribes to a great extent the content of policies (what should be done), but also makes the resources available for the integration activities foreseen in the Law. There have not been indications of serious conflicts on content (although the city may organise the implementation in specific ways, as we have seen), but there are increasingly worries and complaints about the (limited) resources coming from the national level to the city. Where the ambitions for (socio-economic) integration and the target group of policies have been widened by the new Migration Strategy and the new Integration Law, the resources for upgrading (language and other) skills of migrants and guiding them to the labour market have not increased at the same pace, according to many actors involved in local policies. And there

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<sup>21</sup> The earlier version of the gender equality act dates back to 1980.

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is a discussion at the local level in how far the revision of the national system of financing municipalities is advantageous for financing integration policies or not.

At the level of the city of Turku, we have seen a double shift of the internal coordination of integration policies: while the coordination was initially located in the Immigrant's Office in the Social Welfare Department, it shifted up in 2008 to the staff Department of Strategy and Communication, directly under the mayor. Recently it shifted once more, now to the City Development Group, another staff Department under the mayor. This last shift seems to reflect the priority of seeing the immigrants as contributors to economic development of the city over the welfare aspects of integration policies.

Finally, at the city level one may observe a strong tendency of mobilising and engaging more and more different actors in policy making and implementation. Where initially – in the period of strong welfare anchoring of integration – immigrant organisations (particularly the “multicultural” ones) and local education and welfare organisations were mobilised for policies, we see that in the recent preparation of the latest 4 year programme also relevant actors for economic integration and development of immigrants have been mobilised: employers, trade unions, universities.

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## ANNEX 1: Interviewees during the Turku city visit of June 2014

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