



**MIGRATION INSTITUTE  
OF FINLAND**

International degree students and their  
socio-economic integration into Turku, Finland

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## Project Path, June 2015 – May 2018

Funded by the European Social Fund

Coordinated by Åbo Akademi University, Finland

Partners: the University of Turku, Turku University of Applied Sciences, the Migration Institute of Finland and the City of Turku

Aim: to help international students in Higher Education Institutions in the Turku area in Finland to act as a productive part of the local industry after their graduation

# Main research questions

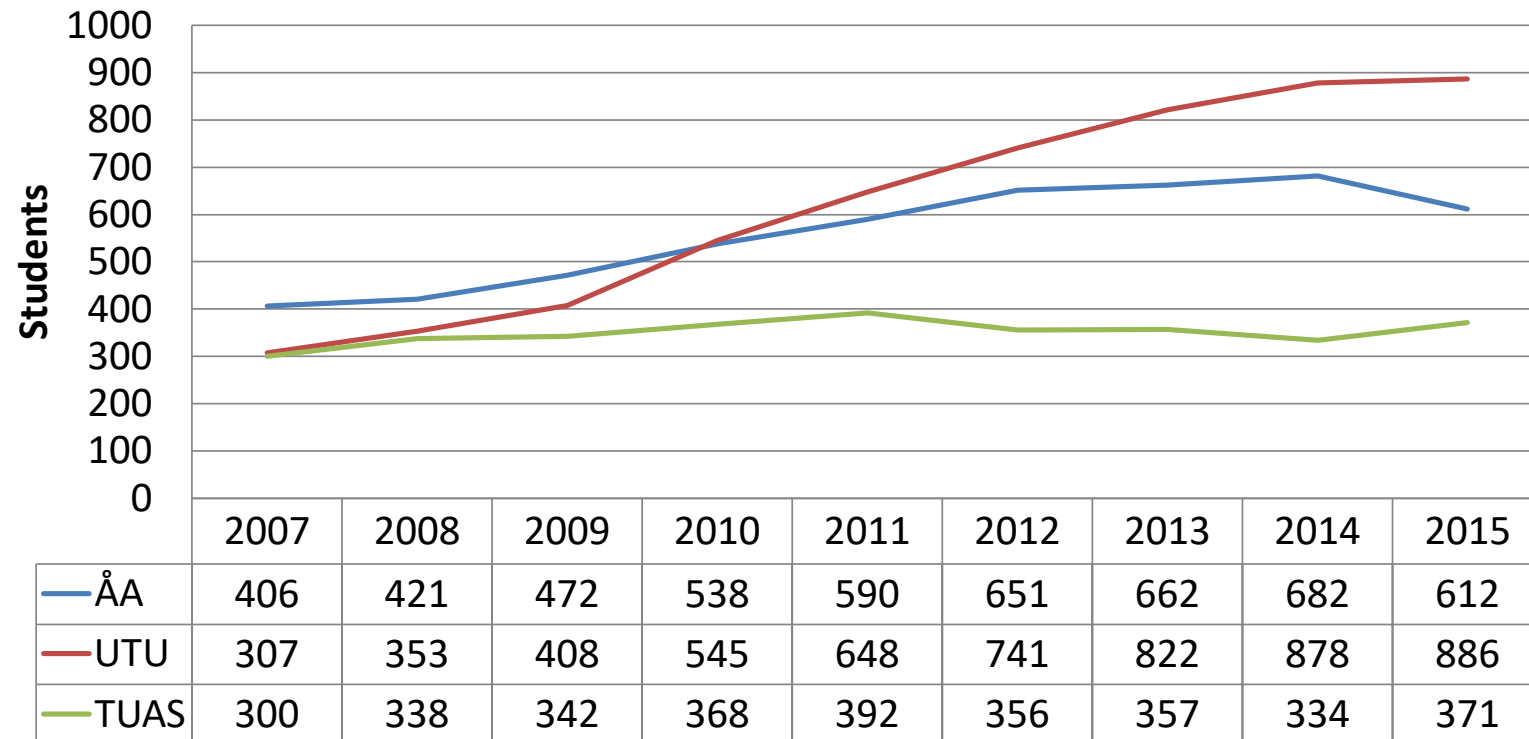
- What attracts international degree students to Turku?
- How are the international students integrating in socio-economic life into Turku and what could be done to help their integration process?
- What do international students plan to do after their graduation?

# Surveys

- Survey was sent to 1,717 international degree students studying at Åbo Akademi University, the University of Turku, Turku University of Applied Sciences and Novia University of Applied Sciences Turku campus in September 2015
- 303 respondents (response rate 18%)
- 135 of them announced to be willing to take part in the follow-up survey a year later. Totally, 48 of them answered to the survey in 2016. Study data was gathered by Surveypal.

# International students in Turku

International degree students studying in the higher education institutions of Turku in 2007-2015.



# International students in Turku

Top 10 nationalities of international students in Turku in 2014-2015.

Citizenship	Students	% of international students
Russia	190	9
China	180	9
Sweden	127	6
Nepal	121	6
Pakistan	119	6
Iran	99	5
India	92	4
Vietnam	91	4
Germany	82	4
Estonia	65	3

## Respondents' primary reason to move to Finland by continent, %

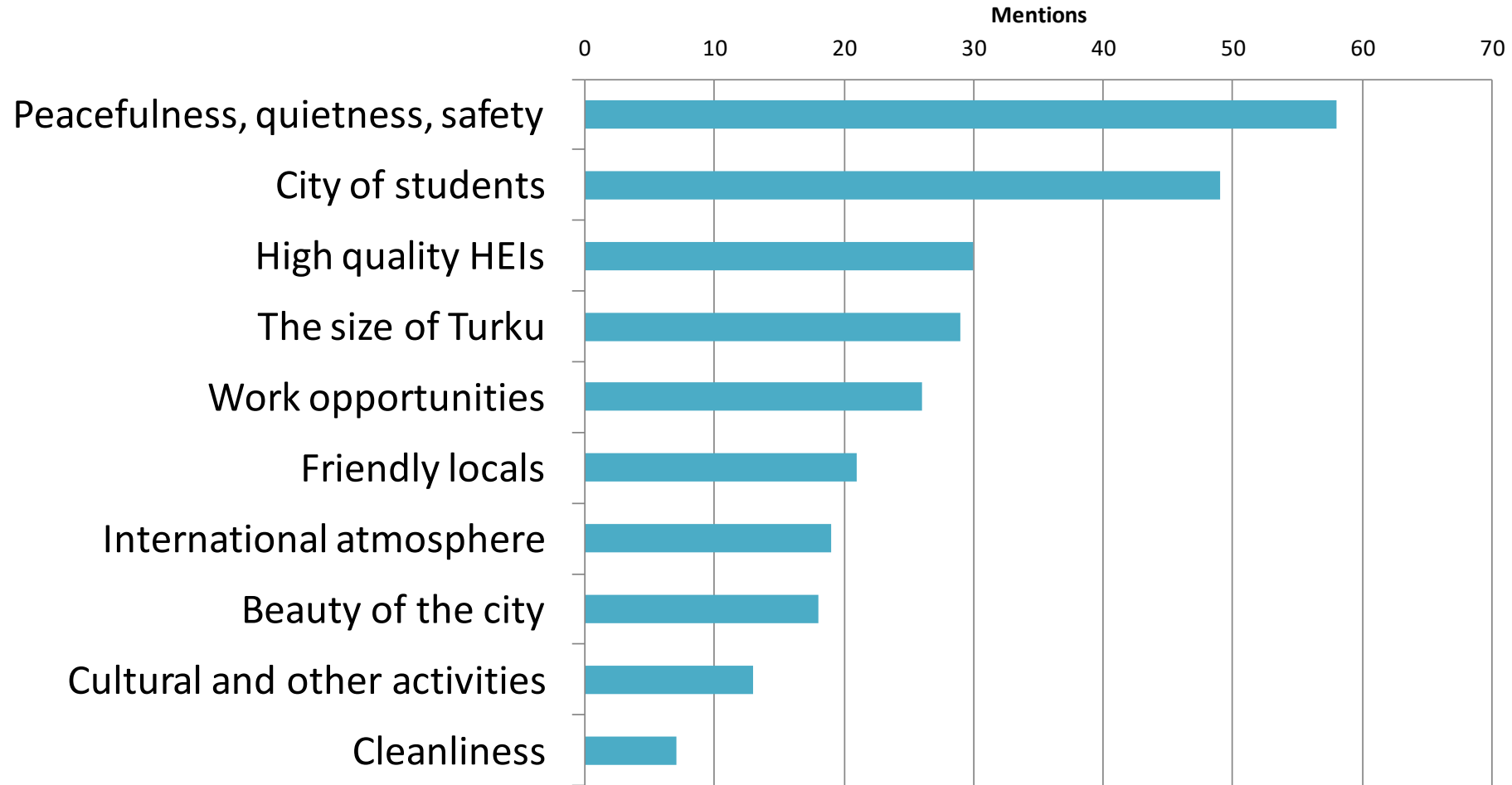
Continent	Study	Work	Social	Refugee	Born in Finland or moved as a child	Other
EU/EEA (N=76)	59	5	24		3	9
Other Europe (N=40)	95	3		2		
Asia (N=140)	94		4			2
Africa (N=24)	100					
North America (N=17)	77		23			
South America (N=6)	83			17		
Total (N=303)	85	2	9	1	1	2

# Respondents' area of study

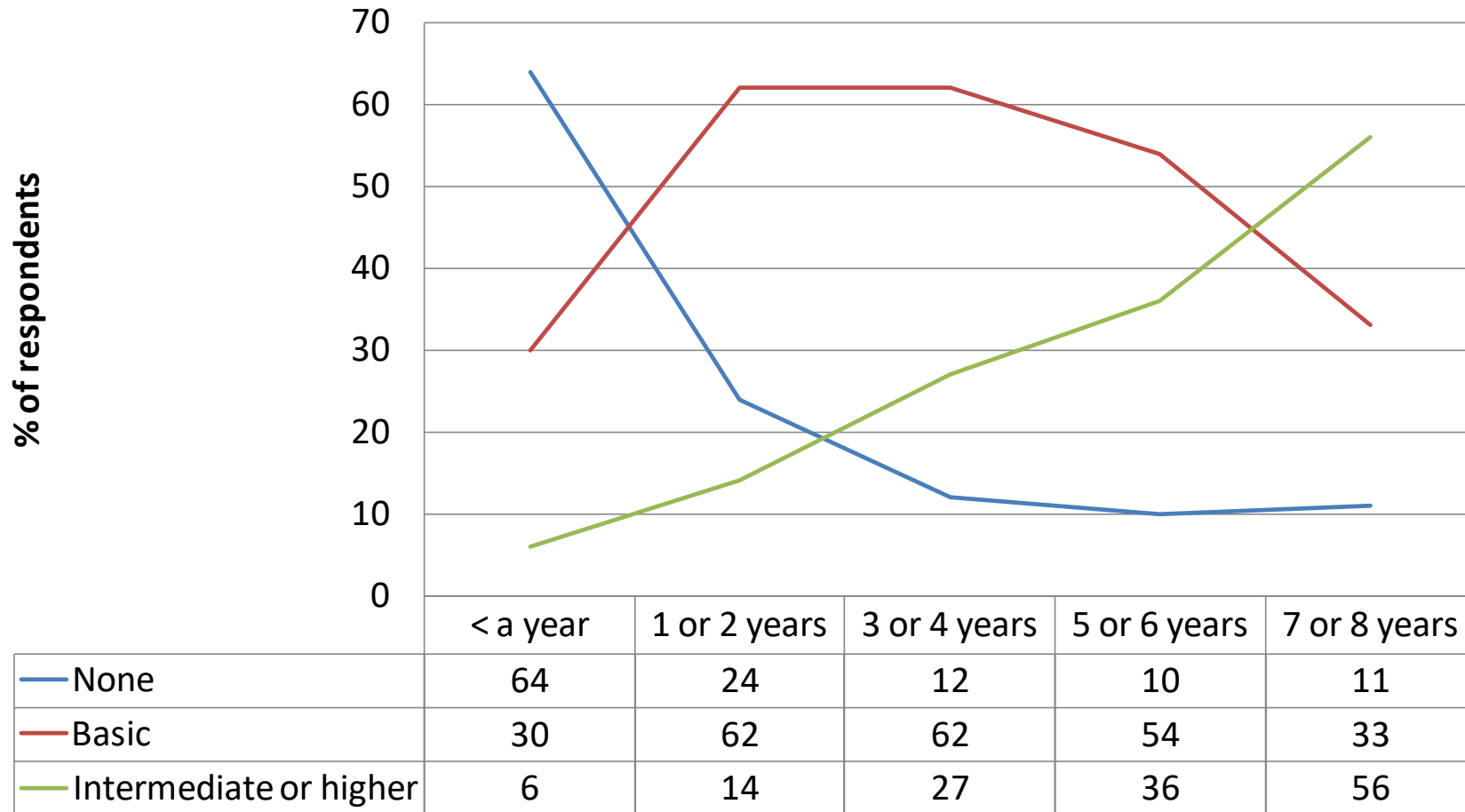
Area of study	Students	%
Technology/IT/Engineering	80	25
Business/Economics	63	21
Mathematics and Natural Sciences	60	20
Humanities/Theology/Fine Arts/Culture	24	8
Medicine	21	7
Education	17	6
Social Sciences	13	4
Health Care and Social Services	11	4
Law	5	2
Seafaring	5	2
Futures Studies	4	1
Total	303	100



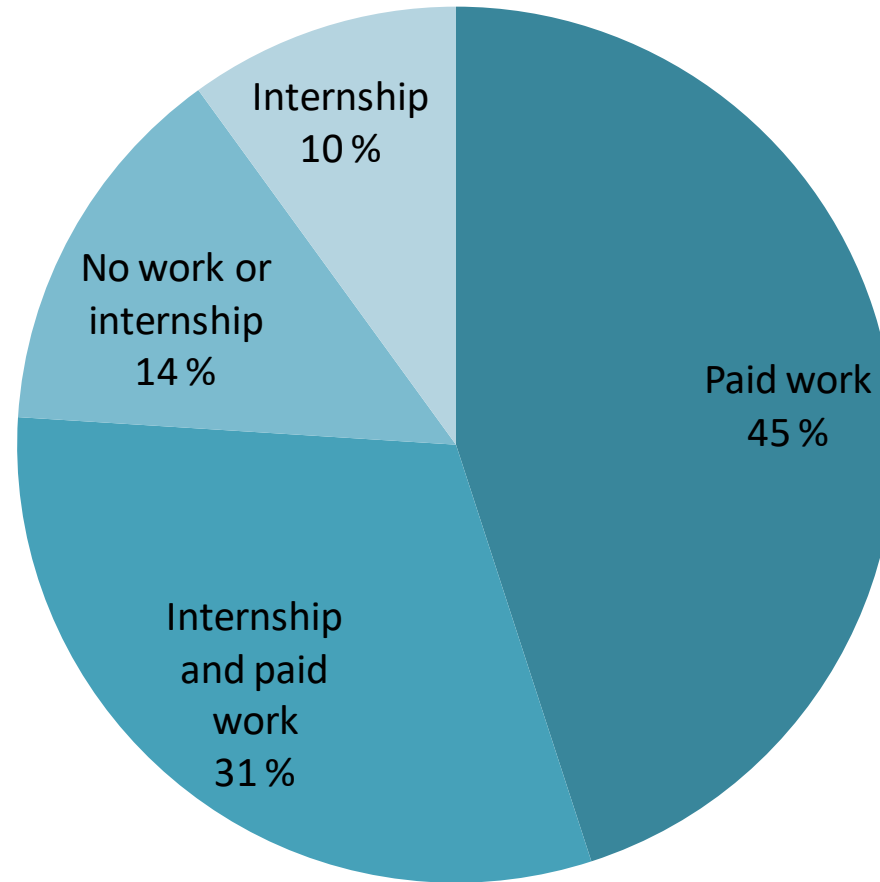
# Turku as a place to live



# International students' Finnish language skills



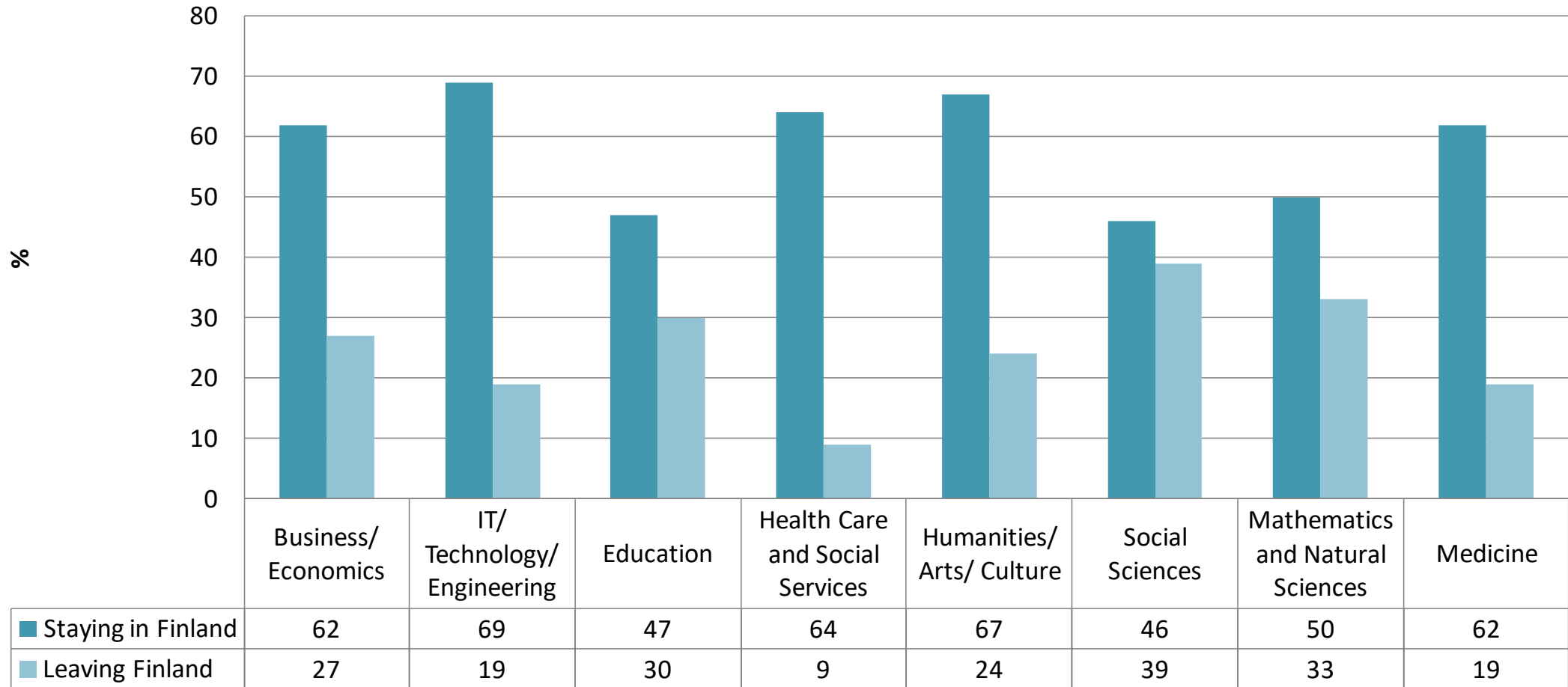
## Internship and work: Work experience gained in Turku and internships completed in Finland by students graduating in 2015 and 2016 from higher education institutions of Turku, % (N=144).



## Employment by nationality of students having lived in Finland for at least a year (countries with more than five respondents are included), %

Citizenship	Full-time	Part-time	Self-employed	No work
Russia (N=23)	13	35		<b>52</b>
Vietnam (N=19)	16	52		32
China (N=19)	16	32	11	41
India (N=13)	<b>55</b>	23	<b>15</b>	7
Pakistan (N=13)	23	<b>63</b>	7	7
Nepal (N=12)	8	50		42
Bangladesh (N=10)	10	<b>80</b>		10
Iran (N=10)	<b>50</b>	20	10	20
USA (N=8)	13	25		<b>62</b>
Total (N=232)	27	40	4	29

## Wish to stay in Finland if work is available



# Plans after graduation by region of citizenship

Plan	EU/EEA (N=76)	Other Europe (N=40)	Asia (N=140)	Africa (N=24)	North America (N=17)	South America (N=6)
Work in Turku if possible	30	25	35	38	17	17
Continue studies in Turku	9	5	16	17		33
Stay elsewhere in Finland	13	30	18	8	18	17
Go anywhere for work	5		2	4	12	
Back to home country	7	10	7	13	12	33
Move elsewhere abroad	25	20	15	4	12	
Don't know yet	11	10	4	8	23	
Other			3	8	6	
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

# Main reasons to leave Turku

Reason to leave	Number of answers	% of answers
Lack of work	39	28
Language difficulties	32	23
Family elsewhere	23	16
Do not feel at home	16	11
Studies elsewhere	13	9
Job waiting elsewhere	8	6
Racism	3	2

# Follow-up survey

- The survey was responded by 32 international degree students and 16 graduates from four higher education institutions in Turku.
- The results showed that 44 percent of the international students and 90 percent of the graduates who had stayed in Turku worked.
- 63 percent of the graduate respondents had stayed in Turku after graduation. 80 percent worked as professionals and most of them were Ph.D. candidates.
- Most had Finnish friends, especially if they had a Finnish partner, and had at least some Finnish language skills.
- Three quarters felt at home while the rest did not.



# Need for talents in Finland

- Finland's demography is changing; the population is aging and labor shortage is believed to be a great problem in the near future. Staying there after graduation, international students could become employees, tax-payers, consumers, even employers in the country that needs all of these. Integration into the labour market is very important.
- The benefits that the international students can bring to the host country cannot be measured only in monetary terms. The amount of knowledge, experience and international contacts, i.e. cultural and social capital, they possess are a valuable asset to any country.
- The aim of the Finnish Government is to triple the number of international students by 2020.

"I don't think services may increase chances to stay in Finland. Finland is a good country, it's more about convincing industries that foreign students are assets rather than burden and if given a chance they will prove themselves." (male, Asia)

**The reports are published online:**

**[www.migrationinstitute.fi/files/pdf/julkaisuja-sarja/j-13-isbn-978-952-7167-32-8-international-degree-students-and-graduates.pdf](http://www.migrationinstitute.fi/files/pdf/julkaisuja-sarja/j-13-isbn-978-952-7167-32-8-international-degree-students-and-graduates.pdf)**

**[www.migrationinstitute.fi/dl/International-Degree-Students-in-Turku-C28-2016.pdf](http://www.migrationinstitute.fi/dl/International-Degree-Students-in-Turku-C28-2016.pdf)**

**The reports can also be find on the POLKU website:**

**<http://blogs2.abo.fi/polku>**

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