Katinka Käyhkö, Ilona Bontenbal & Minna Bogdanoff (eds.)

“OPEN THE DOORS!„

Migrants in Higher Education:

Fostering Cooperation at Universities Seminar

13.–14.12.2016 in Jyväskylä

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Preface

In 2015, even the far northern corner of Europe currently called Finland received a significant number of asylum seekers. In a country where the population has never been large and the number of migrants has remained low, the sudden addition of over 32,000 people created many kinds of reactions, from fear and resistance to volunteerism and hospitality. It was also soon recognized that many of those who came already had skills and qualifications as well as hopes to educate themselves further – like so many migrants before them. Finally, the numbers were big enough to provoke structural changes. Due to this general wake-up call, two pilot projects run by Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (UAS) and the Finnish University Partnership for International Development (UniPID) network in the University of Jyväskylä were born in spring 2016 with funding provided by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC). The name created by the UniPID project, Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland (SIMHE), was soon applied to both projects.

The main task of the pilot projects was to develop and provide nationwide guidance and counselling services to asylum seekers, refugees, and other migrants, such as spouses of Finns, expatriates and workers who had interest in higher education studies or recognition of their prior higher education studies and degrees. To facilitate this core work, extensive networks were needed within the piloting institutions, between different higher education institutions (HEIs), among researchers, with regional and national stakeholders and interest groups, and even beyond the national borders. In the original plans for the SIMHE-UniPID project, a series of smaller workshops and seminars were to be organized for the different groups involved. However, as soon as the work got properly started it became obvious that it was better to bring everybody together in a cross-sectional and bridge-building manner. Thus, the seminar *Migrants in Higher Education: Fostering Cooperation at Universities* was created and held at the University of Jyväskylä on 13–14 December 2016.

The seminar gathered a genuinely diverse group of participants and multiple interrelated themes. This variety of viewpoints facilitated lively discussions and the sharing of ideas and practices. Though the content this time was more university-oriented, we were happy to also have presenters and participants from universities of applied sciences and other institu-

tions. In a situation where experts are still hard to find, we were fortunate to have so many people with first-hand experience and knowledge with us.

In its scope and thematic content, the seminar was the first of its kind in Finland. Due to this, it was considered important to facilitate its key contents in the form of a report to two groups of people: (1) to those who participated in the actual event but would have liked to participate in multiple sessions at the same time, and (2) to those who could not make it to the event but are interested in the themes treated. This latter group also includes many international contacts and colleagues across Europe and beyond.

The name of this report, 'Open the doors!', is owed to Vice-Dean Marjo Kuronen from the University of Jyväskylä and to Careers Advisor Paul Abbey from the Kotona Jyväskylässä (Home in Jyväskylä) project, who summed up their thoughts with this Twitter-length comment in the panel discussion concerning the future of Finnish HE policies that took place in the closing plenary of the seminar. A lot is also owed to the chairs of the parallel break-out sessions, who have taken the extra trouble of writing the summaries related to their sessions with the help of the sessions' note-takers listed as collaborators or co-authors depending on their input to the final text. In addition, individual presenters have kindly checked the parts of the texts concerning their own presentations. The photos were taken by photographer Hanna-Kaisa Hämäläinen, while the help of Matthew Wuethrich, Johanna Kivimäki and Anna Grönlund in the final steps of editing the whole was very much appreciated. Ilona Bontenbal's and Minna Bogdanoff's efforts as co-editors really made the report possible, so special thanks are in order.

Because the plenaries of the event are available as recordings and the majority of the slides of the individual presentations can be found on the event webpage (www.unipid.fi/simhe/seminar), this report pays special attention to the discussions. The structure of the whole is simple: the materials from the plenary sessions are first, followed by the summaries of the break-out sessions. After these come the summarized versions of the Poster Park presentations and a summation of the researchers' workshop. We close the whole with some concluding words from the perspective of SIMHE's work. For those seeking material on the plenary session regarding SIMHE's work, a separate report on the pilot project itself will soon be available.

It is important to note that this report is not the whole truth of what is happening in Finland and Europe among migrants and higher education institutions. Not all that is currently going on made it to the seminar or

into this report. Many bigger and smaller projects, individual people and institutions that we simply haven't heard about yet have already done and are currently doing a lot in this area. So, if you read this report and find something important missing, please let us know by sending an email to simhe-info@jyu.fi. For all too long we have been working without cooperation and losing sight of the bigger picture – we simply need more eyes to see, ears to listen, heads to think and hands to work together.

One final remark before we let you read further. Migrants in Higher Education: Fostering Cooperation at Universities was soon christened the 'SIMHE seminar'. In the feedback on the seminar, the vast majority of respondents hoped that these themes could be addressed in future seminars as well and with even more time to discuss and cross-pollinate. We do not yet know how and when this will happen. What we do know, however, is that in 2017 the work of SIMHE will change from two short pilot projects into wider and more long-term oriented strategic work. There are now six HEIs specially named for this national task, but all HEIs in Finland are invited to find their own best ways of making Finnish higher education a more equitable place to enter, to learn, to share, and to work for all those residing in Finland.

So, if you are one of the already actively involved people, we sincerely hope you'll find encouragement and support for your efforts from these pages. If you are just getting to know the theme or pondering what you or your institution could do, we hope to offer you at least some ideas, insight and practical suggestions for going forward. There are many doors that need to be opened, and we need to figure out together how to do that. As the Spanish poet Antonio Machado has wisely put it:

"Caminante, son tus huellas
el camino y nada más;
Caminante, no hay camino,
se hace camino al andar."

"Traveller, the road is only
your footprints, and no more;
Traveller, there's no road,
the road is made by your travelling."

In Jyväskylä, January 2017, on behalf of the whole Migrants in Higher Education: Fostering Cooperation at Universities seminar team,

Katinka Käyhkö
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Material from the plenaries

The plenaries of the event are available as recordings that can be found on the event webpage (www.unipid.fi/simhe/seminar). The first section of this report presents Pedro Góis's keynote lecture and the corresponding commentaries, a summary of Riitta Pyykkö's keynote and of the closing panel discussion. For those seeking material on the plenary session regarding SIMHE's work held on the morning of 14 December, a separate and more comprehensive report on the pilot project itself will be provided later.


CATCH
BOX

Keynote lecture, 13 December 2016

Facing the human capital challenges of the 21st century's new era of mobility: Migrant populations in higher education – students, academics, researchers

Assistant Professor Pedro Góis
University of Coimbra

Abstract

The world of higher education with its national focus, national students, national academics and researchers has had its day. The higher education ecosystem is now diverse and global. Today, higher education is becoming a global commodity with a strong focus on providing solutions to new types of clients, users, and partners around the world. Our users are no longer only locals, although locals are still part of our core mission. The challenge is simultaneously to shape, deliver and gain human capital while serving a diverse population as opposed to the more uniform one of the past. In this talk, migrants (students, academics, and researchers) will be presented as key elements in the internalization of globalization within our higher education systems. The example of the University of Coimbra, the oldest Lusophone university in the world (established in 1290), reflects these wider perspectives. At the University of Coimbra there are presently more than 4,600 foreign students representing 97 nationalities, and academic, research and technical staff representing 24 different nationalities. Among academics, the maxim of 'publish or perish' is a threatening reminder of the importance of publication. Among higher education institutions, the maxim should be 'Migrants will be part of the system. Learn to deal with it.'

1. Introduction

Contrary to conventional wisdom, nationalism remains alive and well across an (at least believed) increasingly integrated Europe. At a time when restrictions to achieve mobility are being discussed all over Europe, it's important

to ensure that we do not forget who we are. Europe is a continent of migrations, of migrants. It is not a recent trend that Europeans migrate within Europe, receive migrants from other continents or move around the world. Among these mobility processes, students, academics, researchers, and administrative or technical workers help to build our common idea of Europe.

In fact, without migration, Europe would not be what it is today, what it was in the past, or what it will be in the future. If, for instance, we talk about art – that inheritance that we receive and retransmit to the next generation – we must stress that migrations created European art. From the builders of cathedrals to the artists of the Renaissance, many were those who circulated, who created some of their best works in countries other than their own, and who left a legacy that brings us closer.

In the early 20th century, the Paris School was not a school but a multicultural event where Europe reconciled with creativity. Many artists were part of that group, such as the Italian Amadeo Modigliani (1884–1920), the Bulgarian Jules Pascin (Julius Mordecai Pincas) (1885–1930), the Russian Marc Chagall (1887–1985), the Polish-French Moise Kisling (1891–1953) and the Lithuanian Chaim Soutine (1884–1943). At the same time, creators like Picasso, Amadeo de Souza Cardoso, Paul Klee, Marc Jacob and many other Europeans were also in Paris. Music, dance, fine arts, literature, and poetry were made within this multicultural ecosystem (Pajeanc et al., 2016).

In contemporary times, studies show that immigrants bring growth and innovation in both the countries they come from and in those they move to. In the United States alone, immigrants have founded or co-founded companies such as Google, Intel, WhatsApp, PayPal, eBay, Tesla, and Yahoo. Although they make up less than 15 percent of the US population, skilled immigrants account for over half of Silicon Valley start-ups and over half of patents.

The motto for a UN campaign last month, 'At least 100 migrants and refugees have been awarded a Nobel Prize', was a way to communicate the importance of migrants and refugees in our contemporary world (UN, 2016).

Today, in hope of controlling the near future (or the near future elections, I should say), we want to forget the past and, in so doing, we prevent the future. Populist politicians keep saying we don't need immigration but, any evidence-based research shows the opposite. Europe and every European country need migrants. It's a commonplace that Europe is aging. According to the European Commission's 2015 report on aging,

the dependency ratio of people over 65 years to the economically active group of people aged 15–64 will increase to 50.1%, from 27.8%, by 2060. That means that there will be just two potential workers per retiree, down from almost four. The aging of the population shaves 0.2 percent a year off European economic growth, but it hasn't become a full-blown crisis yet; that will happen when pension systems grow unsustainable, long after current political leaders have left the stage (Aiyar et al., 2016).

To keep the current ratio of senior citizens to the general population steady, Europe needs its younger population to increase over the coming decades by hundreds of millions more than the current rate. There's no way to organically increase the EU's population. You can't force people to make more babies. Increased immigration is, therefore, Europe's only escape from an approaching economic and social disaster.

Europe does not need mobility restrictions. On the contrary, it needs to find a strategy to prevent immobility and promote the movement of persons and their capacities. It's not free movement within the Schengen area that needs to be restricted but the relationship of the Schengen area with the rest of the world that needs to be changed and which will allow mobility to take place. As knowledge providers, it is part of our mission to bring up ideas to change the world. This will be my first main idea: to stress the importance of building a strategy to increase human global mobility and to gain from that mobility. In an age of global movement of products, ideas, and services, to restrict human mobility makes no sense.

2. Education as the pillar for 21st century development

The world of higher education with its national focus, national students, national academics and researchers has had its day. Nationalism has no place in academia. The higher education ecosystem is now diverse and global. Universities have become unique global institutions.

Universities are institutions intended to be durable and enduring. Universities are neutral conveners, assemblers of talent, and unmatched idea factories where the passion, creativity and idealism of great minds – young and old, gender neutral, race dispassionate, religion disinterested – can be applied to problem-solving and advancing our societal and economic well-being. The pursuit of the future is the quest of the common good which is shared by and beneficial to all.

In recent decades, the number of university students worldwide who have received some part of their education abroad has been rising rapidly. There seems to be a positive association between study abroad and graduates' job prospects. A major advantage claimed for study abroad programmes is that they can enhance employability by providing graduates with the skills and experience employers look for. These programmes also increase the probability that graduates will work abroad, and so may especially benefit students willing to pursue an international career (Di Pietro, 2014).

Tertiary education increasingly reaches beyond national boundaries. In many parts of the world, tertiary-level students are enrolled in programmes in countries where they are not permanent residents. This was known already a decade ago, as revealed by figures on the percentage of foreign students in any given host country already. The numbers are similar today. Out of every ten tertiary students studying abroad, five are Asians, three are Europeans and one is African. Half of all foreign students studied in Europe and one-quarter in the United States. Three countries hosted almost half of the world's foreign students (United States, United Kingdom, and Germany). Add the next three highest hosting countries (France, Australia, and Japan), and these six countries all together served two-thirds of the world's foreign students. While 25% of all foreign students were in the United States, they represented only 4% of the country's tertiary students. In the United Kingdom and in Germany, foreign students make up one in ten total tertiary enrolments, and in Australia almost one in six. Eight out of ten foreign European students study in another European country. Around 50% of all foreign students are women.

Nowadays, we are living in the era of mobility, a system where clients, users, and partners become co-designers of their journeys. Migrants and their descendants are already and will be part of the so-called national education systems in destination countries. Universities are today multicultural sites. Ideas and human elements have multiple backgrounds and are mobile. A student can start his graduate courses on one continent and finish his/her post-graduation courses on another. Academics frequently move to teach in different countries, present papers at conferences and seminars or to participate in workshops.

Disciplines (even in the social sciences and humanities) are losing their methodological nationalism to become global in their learning objectives, syllabi, and modes of delivering. Today, researchers, students,

and academics are the new Argonauts, to paraphrase from AnnaLee Saxenian's books on entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley. 'Like the Greeks who sailed with Jason in search of the Golden Fleece, the new Argonauts – foreign-born, technically skilled entrepreneurs who travel back and forth between Silicon Valley and their home countries – seek their fortune in distant lands by launching companies far from established centres of skill and technology' (Saxenian, 2007).

In her Argonaut metaphor, Saxenian shows that the way engineers who came to Silicon Valley from China, India, Taiwan, and Israel have created entrepreneurial networks, transforming what was once a brain drain into brain circulation and allowing Silicon Valley to deepen its managerial, technical and professional know-how. Allow me to stress this link between migration, skilled individuals and innovation (and I will come back to it later on). The Argonauts' story illuminates profound transformations in the global economy. It tells us how the brain drain turns out to be brain circulation, and becomes an accelerator, a powerful economic force for global development and benefits for all. Migration is an opportunity, a challenge and higher education will be the incubator to gain this opportunity. Those entrepreneurs were made in a global university street (made of segments of courses in different countries and built on internationalised courses and disciplines).

Today, higher education is becoming a global commodity with a strong focus on providing solutions to new types of clients, users and partners around the world. Our so-called customers are no longer only local students, although local students are still part of our core mission. In addition to the challenge of delivering courses over long distances (through e-learning, always-be-learning or MOOCs) there is the challenge to manage diversity on our campuses. The motto of 'think global, act local' also applies to universities.

Our mission is simultaneously to shape, deliver and gain human capital while serving a diverse population in situ as opposed to the more uniform one of the past. Local vs. global, monocultural vs. multicultural, diversity vs. super-diversity – these are some of the challenges Steve Vertovec (2007, 2014a & 2014b) has stressed:

> *'super-diversity' was intended to address the changing nature of global migration that, over the past thirty years or so, has brought with it a transformative 'diversification of diversity'. This has not just occurred in terms of movements of people reflecting more ethnicities, languages*

and countries of origin, but also with respect to a multiplication of significant variables that affect where, how and with whom people live. (…) It is not enough to see 'diversity' only in terms of ethnicity, as is regularly the case both in social science and the wider public sphere. In order to understand, and more fully address, the complex nature of contemporary, migration-driven diversity, additional variables need to be better recognized by social scientists, policy-makers, practitioners and the public. These include: differential legal statuses and their concomitant conditions, divergent labour market experiences, discrete configurations of gender and age, patterns of spatial distribution, and mixed local area responses by service providers and residents. The dynamic interaction of these variables is what is meant by 'super-diversity'. (Vertovec, 2007)

Are universities prepared for this opportunity? And by universities I mean the whole institution: students, academics, researchers, technicians – in short all personnel – but also in their portfolio of ideas, concepts, teaching materials and courses.

The first challenge will be to include the newcomers and their descendants in the higher education system. Education has been the basis of migrant integration into European societies. It not only provides adequate skills to be successful in the labour market but also contributes to the active participation of migrants, by communicating the culture and values of the societies they settle in. Integration is made easy in the campus by the process of creating enduring networks of human and social capital.

In the complex knowledge societies in which we live, the need to acquire skills to adapt to our changing environments and to generate innovative solutions reinforces the importance of education. The main path to social mobility is and will be acquiring certain educational credentials, as they increase the likelihood of finding quality employment and improving material wellbeing. But credentials alone, without social capital, are worthless. Universities seem to be the place where to link the human capital to the social capital. This is a new challenge for us all. How to promote an inclusive social capital among our local and foreign students?

Employers, students, and administrators who manage international student mobility programmes at higher education institutions perceive a connection between study abroad and graduates' employability. Study abroad is noteworthy for students – but what about for receiving countries or institutions?

In a recent study by Arnaud Chevalier (2014), the author emphasized the link between the need to attract a highly skilled workforce and education: 'Empirical evidence suggests that concerns about brain drain – that is, the emigration of highly qualified workers – are overblown and that student migration can positively affect economic growth in both sending and receiving countries. However, migrants themselves reap most of the gains, through higher earnings. So that in the end, international student mobility can be beneficial for all participants: migrating students and those who remain at home, as well as home and host societies' (2014, 1). Education benefits individuals, but the societal benefits are likely even greater.

Global demand for higher education is expanding. In developed countries, educational institutions look to international students, who are often charged higher tuition fees, to ease budgetary constraints following negative demographic trends and financial disengagement from the state. Universities adapt themselves to a new era, to new users and consumers. One of the recent challenges in Europe has been the need to answer the so-called refugee crisis and to provide those who have arrived with access to higher education.

The massive influx of refugees to Europe, primarily from Syria, but also from Eritrea, Libya, Afghanistan, the Kurdish territories and Iraq, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, must be added to the already significant numbers trying over the years to move from Africa to Europe. The motivations for this massive migration are both political and economic: refugees are escaping terrorism, civil war and poverty in the countries they come from.

Many refugees and asylum seekers have gained university entrance in their home country, or commenced or completed a degree programme there. In addition, and this is where education enters the equation, refugees from Syria, Iraq and the Kurdish areas are perceived to be better educated and, therefore, potentially easier to integrate into society and the labour market in receiving countries.

In the current competition for talent, these refugees are not only seen as victims and a cost factor for the local economy, but in the long run also as welcomed new talent for the knowledge economy.

As stated before, integration trough education is very important for migrants. When it comes to integrating refugees, education also plays a central role. A large percentage of the refugees arriving in Europe are younger than 25 – in other words, an age when education is most need-

ed. Four main areas should be prioritized: recognising skills and qualifications, ensuring academic qualification, language and subject-related preparation, and supporting integration at universities.

In different EU countries (including Portugal), students, academics, universities and governments are beginning to explore ways to integrate young academic refugees, students and also researchers, scholars and teachers into the educational system. Refugees who are potentially qualified for university study arrive with a wide range of language skills and abilities. Precisely determining what these abilities are, whether they qualify them for study and where support is needed, facilitates integration into regular degree programmes and contributes to academic success.

The universities themselves are of central importance. They can act quickly and independently in many ways. They can smooth the admission processes, open study places for refugee students and provide counselling and other services to traumatised students and their families.

Since many students may lack appropriate credentials, universities can, through testing and other means, determine appropriate placement for students. Language and cultural training should be a priority. All of this requires the commitment of human and financial resources.

3. The case of Portugal within the competition for international students'

Portuguese higher education is split into polytechnics and universities, both public and private. Universities are generally focused on theory and research. Polytechnics are more focused on practical and vocational courses. Some of these are offered by both universities and polytechnics, while some courses such as nursing and accountancy are only offered at polytechnics. The Portuguese system of polytechnics and universities is linked, and movement between the two systems is quite possible.

Portugal has long been a destination for immigrants, descendants of migrants and international students. The number of foreign students choosing to study in Portugal is rapidly increasing. Still, most students originate from Portuguese-speaking countries, many of which are former Portuguese colonies. The top four countries of origin are Angola, Cape Verde, Brazil and Mozambique. There is also a growing, though still small, number of English-speaking postgraduate programmes in Portuguese schools that aim to attract a greater number of non-Portuguese speaking

students. The following figure shows the number of university students from other EU, EEA and candidate countries to Portugal from 2005 to 2012. The peak for this period was in 2012 when 9,200 students came to study at Portuguese universities. Since 2012, the numbers are still on the rise, as we will see through the example of the University of Coimbra.

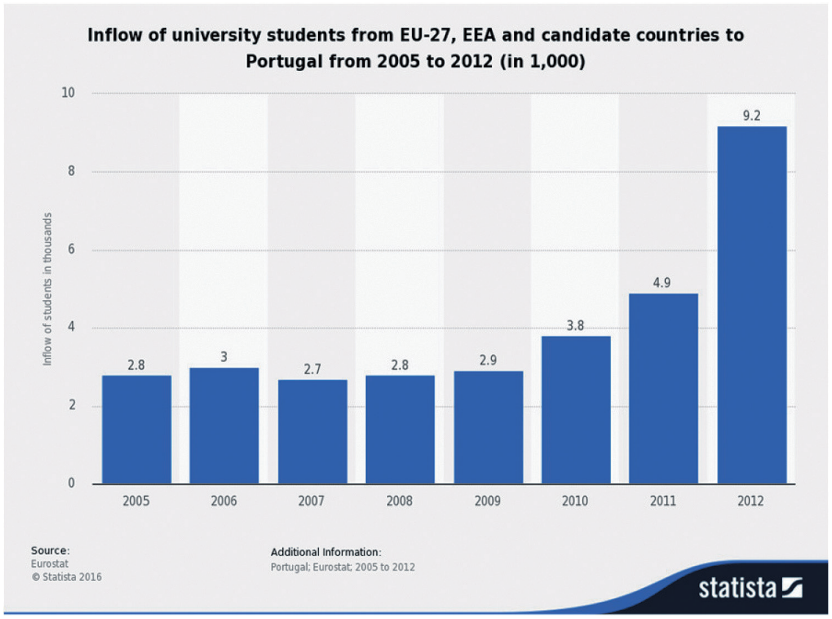

Figure 1. Inflow of university students from EU-27, EEA and candidate countries from 2005 to 2012

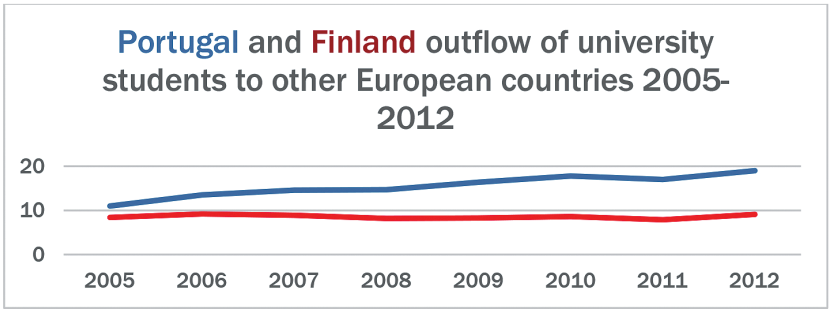

Figure 2. Portugal and Finland outflow of university students to other European countries 2005-2012. Source: Eurostat

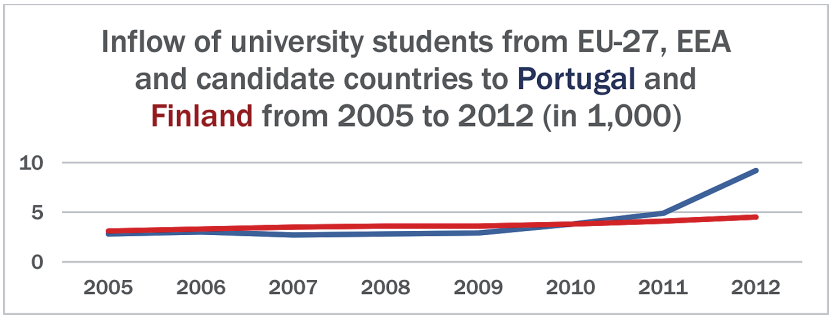

Figure 3. Inflow of university students from EU-27, EEA and candidate countries to Portugal and Finland from 2005 to 2012 (in thousands). Source: Eurostat

Portuguese legislation provides a special regime that allows international students to obtain a residence permit for the exercise of a professional activity after they conclude their academic studies. This way, the international students do not have to leave the country and request a new visa. This authorization for the exercise of a professional activity is temporary, valid for one year, and then renewable for successive two-year periods. In the cases where the international students have remained in Portugal for a period of five years or more, with successive temporary residence permits, they are given the possibility to obtain a permanent authorization. For that authorization to be granted, students should show that they have the means to subsist, show basic knowledge of the Portuguese language and prove that they have not been sentenced to prison for periods that, cumulatively, make up to one year (SEF, 2012).

4. The example of the University of Coimbra

The University of Coimbra (UC) is a Portuguese public higher education institution with more than 700 years of experience in education, training and research (since 1290). As the first and only Portuguese-speaking university until the early 20th century, UC has affirmed its position over the years with a unique mix of tradition, contemporaneity and innovation. The University of Coimbra is a world-leading university that offers education and research in all study levels and in nearly all fields of study. At the University of Coimbra there are presently more than 4,600 foreign students representing 97

nationalities and academic, research and technical staff representing 24 different nationalities. Of those, around 1,000 students are exchange students.

Coimbra has always been a very open university. Until the early 20th century Coimbra was the only university in the Lusophone world. UC has a tradition of becoming the alma mater for the elites of those countries. Brazilians, for instance, have had a presence at the university since before Brazilian liberation in the early 19th century. Today, Coimbra accepts, with no further exams, the validity of the access exam for Brazilian universities – the *Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio* (*Enem*). This means Coimbra is, in practical terms, another/equivalent university for any Brazilian student. Currently, Coimbra is the biggest university receiver of Brazilian students outside Brazil, offering no less than 600 places every year for Brazilian prospective students in graduation courses. Three different websites were designed to specially attract international students from Brazil, China and other countries. (see slides).

And now a few last words to present to you the Casa da Lusofonia – International Student Lounge**.** Casa da Lusofonia (CLUC) is a new place located on the main campus of the University of Coimbra (UC) that aims to facilitate the creation of links between Portuguese-speaking students and the national and international students of UC. It is a kind of one-stop shop for Portuguese-speaking international students. Simultaneously, Casa da Lusofonia is an international student lounge and a meeting point for all students interested in the internationalization of their curriculum. There, students find the front-office staff of the International Relations Unit of UC ready to help them with a variety of issues related to incoming and outgoing mobility. The creation of this multicultural space is part of the internationalization strategy of the University of Coimbra in which the dissemination of the Portuguese language and cultures plays a fundamental role.

Facing human capital challenges of the 21st century's new era of mobility means facing a complex and multidimensional world. That's our common challenge for the future.

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Sharing and caring

Professor Anja Heikkinen
University of Tampere
Invited comment on Assistant Professor Pedro Góis's keynote

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to say something. Pedro Góis's background is in sociology and economics. I come from educational sciences, so my point of view is different. My own focus is on refugees, thus the title of 'Sharing and caring'.

First, as a general observation it seems that we are – and you were – still looking at the whole issue from a very Eurocentric point of view. However, the concept of super-diversity you propose seems to suggest that 'we are all different and unique'. While multiculturalism keeps putting people into boxes, the concept of super-diversity seems to be a move in the right direction. I also appreciated that you did not talk about the 'problem' or 'crisis' but about the promise and potential of migrants. Yet I am not sure what to think about seeing migrants merely as a solution to European 'stagnation'. Furthermore, here in Finland we cannot open up our higher education to any so-called Finnish-speaking world to attract students, like you in Portugal can do regarding the Lusophone world.

I do believe it is important to make a difference between the concepts of mobility, migration and refugee. You focused a lot on the importance of mobility, and how we should not restrict it, but learn to gain from it. However, mobility as such is already a strategic element of whole educational systems, not just individuals or certain universities. It is a national tool for business, and it is already behind the Bologna process and the idea of the European Research Area.

Migration is already a slightly different concept. Migration can be conceived as intended or unintended relocation of people. It is also often referred to as a work related, even a work-based phenomenon. When we talk about refugees, it is a completely different matter. We are talking about people who are fleeing, displaced from a country or a region in order to get protection or permission to reside elsewhere.

I am also a bit confused with the term higher education. Do we mean just the universities – and academia – or the polytechnics or both? I sense

differences between them. Of these two, the polytechnics seem to be the more vocation- and business-oriented. Terms like human capital, innovation and competitiveness belong very much to the vocabulary of business and economics! I especially wonder if this vocabulary is being used to refer to mobility, migration or refugees.

In higher education, we cannot just 'pick the best' of the migrants in order to promote the position of our own institutions or countries in the global marketplace. Shouldn't we also look at the planetary-level problems? It's not just a question related to humans; the whole planet is at stake. Are we really serious about the so-called European values of equality and justice? When discussing the globalization of higher education, whose curricula are we using and where do they come from? We are still living under European hegemony and colonialism. We should also ask: Is it really progress if people come to Europe or Finland? Why can't people develop higher education in their own contexts, and why can't we go there to learn?

I propose that, together with those who are with us here, we should ask what a good way of living on this planet would be. What can we do together to improve the livelihood, wellbeing and safety of all humans all over the planet? We should also talk about the exploitation not just of humans but also of animals and natural resources. Why do people desire or have to move, and what are the consequences?

So, how to react? I suggest we take this opportunity seriously in the content of our courses, in the ways of organizing our studies in higher education, and in opening it up to society. Where are these issues discussed if not in higher education or academia? This is a radical challenge – it is not just a question of promoting economic competitiveness, but of how to critically problematize what we are doing in higher education. In this discussion, migrants and refugees are important partners for us.

Intersecting mobilities, diversity and power in higher education

Senior Researcher Tuija Saresma
University of Jyväskylä
Invited Comment on Assistant Professor Pedro Góis's keynote

I wish to thank Professor Pedro Góis for his bullish keynote. I was asked to comment on it from the viewpoint of a researcher. In my current research project on narratives of migration and belonging, I concentrate on intersecting mobilities.

Professor Góis expressed his concern about the restrictions that hinder mobility all over Europe. I share this anxiety, especially after the so-called immigration crisis in autumn 2015 collided with the rise of populist right-wing parties across Europe and the consequent boom in xenophobia. I could not agree more with the claim that Europe is indeed a continent of migrations, of migrants. I especially appreciate Góis's emphasis on *migrations* in plural. The focus of my research project is on the diverse experiences of migrants. Drawing from studies on global mobility, postcolonial critique, racialization and studies on the gendered experiences of migration, I analyse the differences between various systems, patterns and statuses of migration.

I suggest that migration should always be understood as a diverse phenomenon – sometimes a threat and sometimes as encouraged; sometimes forced, other times voluntary. In the context of migrants in higher education, the concept of intersecting mobilities enables an analysis of geographical, gendered, ethnic, age-related, class and economic differences, and the perception of the varying experiences of emigrants, immigrants, expatriates and refugees. Furthermore, the context of higher education necessarily presupposes access to education, which is a privilege as such.

I appreciate Professor Pedro Góis's discussion on diversity and what Steven Vertovec calls *super-diversity*. The latter concept has been criticized because it fails to recognize that societies have always been diverse. It also underestimates or perhaps even dismisses the workings of power in the negotiation of diversity. I thus prefer the concept of intersectionality in analysing how people are positioned differently based on certain

Keynote lecturer Pedro Góis and the commentators Anja Heikkinen and Tuija Saresma responding questions proposed by the audience.

social categories. I believe that the question of power is also essential in determining who is included and who is excluded in the context of higher education.

The emphasis on power and privilege is something that I missed in the keynote. When Professor Góis discusses the contemporary mobility era as a system where clients, users, and partners become 'co-designers', I need to ask: who are they actually? Hardly all the academics in the world; perhaps only the most privileged ones.

Therefore, in this particular context of migration and higher education, it is especially relevant to talk about clients, users, partners and customers; to talk about education as a global commodity and human capital – that is, as a subject of merchandise. This highlights the benefits and the economic aspects of education and the emphasis on making profit in global knowledge capitalism. Simultaneously, this approach emphasizes the unequal distribution of economic resources upon entering academia, and the hardening competition for decreasing resources within academia that affects all of us, from students to professors.

Integration of academic migrants: From problematic areas towards flexible transitions

Vice-Rector Riitta Pyykkö
University of Turku

In an era of internationalization and growing diversity, immigration issues need to be considered from a strategic point of view. These issues relate both to the internationalization strategies of higher education institutions and to the everyday life at universities. Language is an important part of academic life and integration to new societies, and therefore special attention should be paid to it.

Internationalization in higher education is not a new phenomenon, as it has been happening since the Royal Academy of Turku was founded in 1640. In today's universities, internationalization has been growing for some decades. Since the 1980s, staff mobility has increased, incentives have been made by the Ministry of Education and Culture and strategic reports and documents about internationalization have been prepared. Nowadays, research universities receive about 9% of their state funding on the basis of different international indicators. There is also strategic funding that has been focused on creating pathways for migrants to higher education in Finland. The SIMHE project is one example of what this funding has accomplished.

It is very important to consider academic migrants when talking about internationalization at universities. Academic migrants are a large and complex group: some of them are degree students, doctoral candidates or exchange students, and others are staff members like researchers or lecturers. Special attention must be paid to two groups of students with Finnish as a second language: students from immigrant families and adult immigrants.

Students who come from immigrant families are usually quite fluent in speaking Finnish. They have completed their secondary education and high school in Finnish, but the language skills are still often not sufficient for academic purposes. From the employment point of view, it would still

be better to apply for degree programmes taught in Finnish, but these students often decide to apply for programs in English because they feel more confident with this language. Universities should develop ways to further support the students from immigrant families and offer academic Finnish courses directed to them. Nowadays, the courses are mainly directed to native speakers or to those who don't know Finnish at all. There are not courses for those with good knowledge of Finnish but whose mother tongue isn't Finnish.

Immigrants who have moved to Finland as adults have different kinds of challenges related to higher education. The first challenge is how to get to university. Unlike vocational institutes, universities don't offer preparatory courses for adults who have recently moved to Finland. Intensive courses in Finnish or Swedish should also be offered. Second, the recognition of prior learning at universities isn't as structured and established as it should be. Recognizing previous degrees and work experience is crucial for creating smooth pathways to higher education and working life. Third, adult immigrants need a different kind of counselling and guidance than, for example, those students who have lived in Finland for all their life. Universities have to ensure that staff members have the multicultural skills needed in counselling adult immigrants.

As we can see, especially the issues related to languages have to be taken into account at universities. Language is a medium for all academic work, and as the world and the universities are getting more and more international, the role of languages is highlighted as well. Finnish and Swedish are still by law the official languages of universities in Finland, but the significance of English is increasing all the time. Nowadays, international degree programmes taught in English don't necessarily contain any Finnish courses. Universities have their language policy programmes that mainly concentrate on English, and it seems that being international in an academic environment automatically means using English. The big questions are how to maintain linguistic diversity and how to develop multilingual and multicultural learning and working environments at universities. Languages other than Finnish, Swedish and English are seldom utilized in academic life in Finland, and the multilingual opportunities are unfortunately still unused at universities.

Languages and internationalization are also equality issues, and they are very important when talking about wellbeing. For the younger academic migrants at universities, English seems to be a medium for equal

interaction, but those who have stayed in Finland for a longer time emphasize the meaning of Finnish and Swedish. It is possible to work in English in academia and there may be an illusion of English as a lingua franca, but in many social contexts good command of the national languages is needed. Active citizenship and equal participation in the society require knowledge of Finnish or Swedish.

The University of Turku serves as an example of how international themes can be included in the official strategy of the university. The University of Turku has a new strategy where internationalization is a comprehensive theme, related to the wellbeing issues of the students and staff. The strategy contains, for example, recruiting staff members internationally and supporting their integration processes. In addition, the university establishes degree programmes in English, and also ensures that every degree program taught in Finnish contains some kind of internationalization. This can mean, for example, exchange programmes or mobility periods, languages studies or internationalization at home. Besides, the university supports international students in working life and fosters the export of education.

According to the language policy of the University of Turku, parallel lingualism and receptive multilingualism are supported at the university. Everyone is encouraged to speak the language they know the best. For example, many languages can be used during a meeting as long as everyone can understand each other. In practice, this does not happen in everyday life to the extent it could. The languages used most often are Finnish, English, and Swedish.

Internationalization is an issue that challenges universities to react and develop their strategies and procedures further. Successful actions related to teaching and using languages, welcoming academic migrants and fostering multiculturalism will lead to greater equality at universities.

Notes: Minna Bogdanoff, University of Jyväskylä

Changing policy from the grassroots

Project Manager Jens Kemper
University of Bremen

Thank you for the opportunity to tell about the processes that have happened in the smallest of German states, Bremen, within the last three years. In Germany, the federal states have a lot of responsibility in the educational sciences, so in the state of Bremen the path to the ministry is short.

The whole story started in December 2013, when the University of Bremen rectorate received a letter from a manager of a refugee hostel expressing concern about the growing number of highly qualified refugees and asking if the university could do something with these people who had nothing else to do but wait for months and months.

This message gave a start to discussions between the rectorate and the department of student affairs, when it was noticed that due to legal issues it was not possible to open possibilities for study as regular students, visiting or guest students. The issue was then transferred to the International Office and came to my desk. There was clearly willingness to do something, but the legislation did not give many options. After getting to know the situation at the refugee hostels it soon became obvious that something had to be done, and it had to be done now, and since the International Office represented the so-called free spirit within the university, a programme called IN-Touch was created in April 2014. Through IN-Touch, the refugees with academic backgrounds and sufficient levels of English or German language skills could participate in the university lectures, have access to the university library and use the university network. We started with small identity cards, which had not been part of the university procedures, but it gave us a chance to start.

The first group was 25 refugee participants. When they were asked for feedback after the first semester, the response was 'It is wonderful with you guys, but we really want to study, we want to be regular students'. In autumn 2014 a draft concept of a new office and a new pathway for refugees was made, including the very much needed German language

studies and financial support during that time. This draft was sent to the Bremen Ministry of Science. While waiting for the response, the IN-Touch programme continued and the numbers were increasing tremendously (doubling the amount of people joining in every semester). In our last summer term we already had 240 participants.

In 2015 a major change happened. The World Food Programme was cut by 50% and people from the camps surrounding Syria made their way to Europe, especially to Austria, Germany and Sweden. Now the idea of higher education and flight became publicly visible. Before it had been in the dark corner of our education, at least in Germany. It was perhaps a little bit possible, but not planned at all. The main aim had been to get the people to work in something as soon as possible, no matter their prior qualifications. The large numbers of people called our ministry's attention to our prior proposal, and a work group was established to start an office in order to work out a plan for these people who want to study and who have the qualifications to study at the universities in Bremen. In 2015 the three other public universities of Bremen joined the IN-Touch programme. We did it together, which was important in order to avoid the overlaps of doing the same thing just a few kilometres away from each other. Thus, we had this strong group of all the universities to develop the plan with the ministry.

In 2015 the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), in an understanding with the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, made this their issue as well. We were invited to conferences with them, and it was great that we, from our desk, could provide our ideas and experiences to them of how to do this successfully. A special call for proposals was opened for preparation courses and courses in German. As a consequence, in 2016, we had to change the Bremen University Act, regarding issues such as what to do with people who have lost their papers, or what to do with people whose secondary school certificates are not fully accepted.

In March 2016 the Bremen parliament implemented the new Bremen University Act with the necessary changes so we could start working legally. A new joint office, called Higher Education Refugees Entrance (HERE) for the four state universities, was also founded. In 2016 we have so far facilitated entrance exams for over 1,000 refugee students in the Bremen region only and there are currently 200 people in our language courses. They are registered as 'preparation students', they have their

semester tickets and their student ID cards. We successfully negotiated with the social stakeholders, such the Job-Center, so they are allowed to take part.

We have been quite successful, and it is a good example of how one little email and one little programme can lead to far bigger things. We started something unusual, and with that we were able to change the landscape of German higher education. What we did was not something incredibly ingenious; it was just switching on the light in a dark corner of the landscape of higher education for refugees, allowing them to join higher education in Germany. That's the process that happened here, which has been very exciting and exhausting as well. We are still working on it, we are still looking for some rooms and there are things still in process. Part of this story's success is that this has been copied in other places and other universities in Germany, also Austria took our programme into use and so in the end we have been able to help a lot of people and give them hope and perspective for their personal development and future. That, in brief, is what I wanted to tell you about our programme.

In the discussion, Ahmed Hamad from the University of Vaasa thanked Jens for giving this good example of how to start and asked what he meant by saying 'those with a sufficient level of English could participate'. How did you assess the level of English? How was it done?

Jens: It was very simply done. We talked with them, we talked with every participant before and we gave the recommendation. In some cases it was clear that the level was not sufficient, so we told them to come again next semester, for example, or try to join the German course, which in the long run is their goal, to learn German. Of course there were some yes-or-no cases and the programme had and has a lot of dropouts. At first we thought we had done something wrong. But you can say a lot of things at the office and people don't believe you. Being able to have a conversation at the office does not mean your language level is sufficient to follow lectures. Only being at the lectures did people realize that they cannot yet manage. So we tested them individually and there were no papers requested, not for prior studies and not for the language level.

Notes: Katinka Käyhkö, SIMHE-UniPID, University of Jyväskylä

Summary of the panel discussion

Author: Minna Bogdanoff, University of Jyväskylä

Chair: Knowledge Development Adviser Leasa Weimer, EAIE

Panellists: Careers Advisor Paul Abbey, Kotona Jyväskylässä Project, City of Jyväskylä; Vice-Rector and Professor Riitta Pyykkö, University of Turku; Researcher Aminkeng A. Alemanji, University of Helsinki and University of Turku; Vice-Dean Marjo Kuronen, University of Jyväskylä.

The panellists received six key questions that were brought to them from the break-out sessions of the same morning. Some of the questions were paired with each other. The question from break-out session 2.5 (Language issues and multilingual learning in universities) was considered to have been answered already by **Riitta Pyykkö** in her keynote lecture. This question dealt with the contradiction between the international degree programs taught in English and the labour market where a good command of Finnish is necessary.

The first two questions were developed by break-out sessions 2.1 (Spaces of integration) and 2.4 (Sense of belonging): *How can we create spaces that will allow both immigrants and members of the local population to meet and participate in activities that leave everyone as an equal*? *How could we facilitate practices that foster proximity amongst segregated groups of Higher Education students?* These questions provoked lively and even contradictory discussion among the panellists, and many different viewpoints were presented. The main themes discussed were integration and equality.

Integration was defined as being incorporated into something that already exists. For **Paul Abbey**, integration is a two-way street, and both the host community and immigrants need to want it for it to happen. Equality is a fundamental part of this process: it is the basis of integration, and without equality a society cannot function. On the other hand, it is important to ask if there really is equality in Finnish society at all. Finland has been a diverse country long before the migrants came here, but, for example, the rights of the ethnic minorities like the Sami and Roma

people have mainly been ignored. **Marjo Kuronen** suggested that the so-called narrative of equality may be a heritage from the Finnish civil war: we are still telling a story about becoming one nation after difficult times, and we may not notice that equality is actually an illusion. The structures should be changed and what are seen Finnish values reconsidered. We can't be equal as long as we are creating dichotomies between so-called Finnish people and migrants.

The theme of equality was also strongly present when discussing the question created by break-out session 2.2 (Teacher's pedagogical training and intercultural competence): *How do we foster and enhance intercultural competence among staff members and through the curriculum?* According to **Aminkeng A. Alemanji**, the educational system in Finland is very white at the moment. The admission structures of educational sciences are white-oriented, and whenever one goes to teach a Finnish teacher education group the audience will be mainly white. In addition, the curriculum system and educational materials are still quite homogeneous, and the reality they represent doesn't exist anymore. We can certainly have courses and train the personnel, but what we really need is to raise the consciousness about our existing structures and strive to change them. We need to wake up from our sleep.

Once again, equality – or more precisely, equitability – was the core of the next question considered by break-out session 2.6 (The changing sceneries of 2017): *How to make the admission system fair and equal for all prospective students (Finnish, migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, international, undocumented, etc.)?* We have students coming to the admission system that are not as privileged as Finnish students. We think it is equal because it is under the same system, under the same law. But is it really fair? The beauty of the Finnish education system is that there are so many diverse ways of assessment. Why are they not used in the admissions and entrance exams, too? Aminkeng A. Alemanji and Paul Abbey agreed that different methods could be used to achieve the same goal: to find out if the person has the sufficient knowledge and motivation to succeed in the educational programme. Riitta Pyykkö also stated that to ensure the fairness of the system, we have to support the people *before* the admissions and make sure they acquire the tools needed for admissions and studying in academia. Preparatory courses and path options should be organized not only by the universities of applied sciences but the research universities as well.

Closing panel: chair Leasa Weimer and panellists Riitta Pyykkö, Paul Abbey and Aminkeng A. Alemanji engaged in discussion.

The last question was formulated during break-out session 2.3 (Dilemmas explaining persistent social exclusion in Finnish academic development). The panellists were asked to answer the question in so-called Twitter mode (that is, very briefly): *What vision could close the gap that exists between existing talent and societal needs?* The visions the panellists had were in line with each other: the discussion started with expressions like 'Antiracism', 'Open the doors!' and 'More dialogue'. To conclude the panel, chair **Leasa Weimer** reminded the audience that there is a lot of talent and potential among the people migrating here, and these prospective students are knocking at our door. At the same time, Finland is introducing tuition fees for international students, so there may be more opportunities to focus on the asylum seekers currently in Finland. What are we going to do? We have to create equitable solutions for entering higher education and society, and ensure that the guidance and counselling concentrate on what the people themselves would like to do. The first steps have already been taken in SIMHE and other projects related to these issues.

Notes: Ilona Bontenbal, University of Jyväskylä

Break-out sessions

Break-out sessions were thematic encounters where practitioners, researchers and those interested could dig deeper into the theme in question. There were 11 sessions and themes to choose from. Each one featured both visiting and Finland-based specialist presentations to stimulate discussion. Almost all of the presentation slides are already available on the seminar webpage. This section contains brief summaries of the presentations' main content and discussions.

Refugees and asylum seekers: from where and to what?

Chair and responsible authors:
Sari Pöyhönen, University of Jyväskylä

Other presenter:
Eveliina Lyytinen, Migration Institute of Finland

This break-out session dealt with refugees and asylum seekers and the possibilities of higher education institutions to support individuals while they are still awaiting a decision for their claim or when they have settled in Finland. The session started with two short presentations followed by a general discussion.

Eveliina Lyytinen gave an overall picture of forced migration. Globally in 2015, over 65 million people were forced migrants: 3 million asylum seekers, 21 million refugees, and 41 million internally displaced people. In addition, Finland was in an exceptional situation when the number of refugees seeking asylum was ten times more than in previous years. Over the decades, forced migration has changed. Currently, most (86%) refugees stay in developing regions. And contrary to popular opinion, not all of them are men. Worldwide, 49% of refugees are female, and 51% are children. As one group of stakeholders, researchers need to challenge the labels and categories of refugees and migrants. Lyytinen presented the Coming of Age in Exile (CAGE) project, which examines the links between refugee youth's health, education and integration into the labour market as well as experiences of youth with a refugee background and employers. In higher education institutions, there is a great need to develop new solutions to meet the evolving and changing nature of forced migration.

Sari Pöyhönen presented an ethnographic research project in a reception centre located in a Swedish-dominant region in Finland. The project focuses on narratives of seeking asylum, waiting for a decision, hopes and fears of the future, and the significance of Finnish and Swedish in participants' lives. Refugees seeking asylum are in a vulnerable situation, and they have limited agency regarding studies or work. Finland has also changed migration policy in 2016, which has resulted in more negative de-

cisions for people who originate from Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan. Research results with ten key participants indicate that integration activities start too late and individuals lose precious time to settle in a new country.

The general discussion was very active and brought perspectives and stories from individuals who have experienced life as a refugee seeking asylum, international students from developing countries, researchers, teachers, and authorities. The most important themes of the session dealt with individual and systemic choices and constraints, changing migration policies, and future actions of HEIs. The participants agreed that there are now too many small projects going on and too little interaction between them. What we really need is more cooperation, communication and an open attitude. The first steps have already been taken, and many HEIs have started working with refugees and asylum seekers. We are the ones who can decide to make a change in our own HEIs. Let's open the university doors and create a safe atmosphere for everyone to study and construct a new life in a new society.

Recommended next steps:

- Roundtables for decision-makers, refugees, asylum seekers, researchers and local authorities to acquire a holistic view based on research.
- HEIs continue to work with refugees seeking asylum, the first steps have already been taken in SIMHE.
- Reception centres and HEIs need to be informed more about the Scholar Rescue Fund (hosted in Finland by CIMO).
- We can start changing practices from the inside of our own institutions.

Named best practices:

- Universities could be made hubs for socializing – not just for studying.
- Student-volunteers bridging refugee centres and HEIs.

Notes: Minna Bogdanoff, University of Jyväskylä

Study rights, eligibility and tuition fees

Chair and responsible author:
Leasa Weimer, European Association for International Education (EAIE)

Other presenters:
Anna Grönlund, University of Jyväskylä
Ahmed Hamad, University of Vaasa

As tuition is introduced in 2017, international student admissions in Finland will change both in numbers and demographics. Over the last decade, several European countries have introduced tuition fees for non-EU students as a way to generate revenue and become internationally competitive. There is a global trend for decreasing governmental support for higher education and Finland is no exception. Naidoo (2007) argues that higher education is being repositioned as a global commodity as governmental reforms reorient universities towards economic productivity. At the same time, the international student market is becoming more competitive. The competition fetish in higher education 'promotes, controls, and maximizes returns from market forces in international settings while abandoning some of the core discourses of the welfare state' (Naidoo, 2011, 41). The introduction of tuition fees is an example of 'exclusionary internationalization' (Olson, 2016) because it is exclusionary and targeted to those prospective international students who can afford to pay.

The approximate cost of higher education studies per year in Finland is approximately €7,000 a year (CIMO, 2015). Currently, the tuition fees range from €8,000 to €18,000 depending on the institution, field, and level of study.

At the same time, higher education institutions (HEI) in Finland are still working to develop mechanisms to respond to the high number of asylum seekers and refugees. According to the Council of Europe, the definition of a migrant is 'any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born, and has acquired some significant social ties to this country'. From this definition there are many populations of migrant students, including degree-seeking EU students and non-

EU students, asylum seekers, refugees, undocumented and even exchange students. However, when discussing study rights, eligibility and tuition fees for academic migrants in Finland, there is a migrant population that is of specific interest: non-EU asylum seekers. These are the students who have limited possibilities in the current higher education system in Finland. Once an asylum seeker is granted asylum, they assume the rights of EU/EEA students and do not need to pay tuition. However, until an asylum seeker receives a decision they are treated as a non-EU student.

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, there are no direct limitations on asylum seekers regarding access to higher education. However, when constructively analysing the realities faced by asylum seekers, there are several obstacles. First, during the admissions procedure differences in background studies or the lack of degree documentation on paper may not be taken into account. Second, asylum seekers may not have the level of language skills to be admitted into either Finnish- or English-language degree programmes. Third, the process of obtaining a residence permit based on student status has financial thresholds which most asylum seekers may not be able to meet. Asylum seekers are free to apply for studies in Finnish HEIs, and if they are admitted they can apply for a residence permit based on their student status in a Finnish HEI. (This permit must be applied for if a person wishes to reside in Finland studying for longer than 90 days, i.e. all international degree students apply for the student residence permit). For the permit, the applicant needs to have, among other documents, a certificate from the admitting HEI and sufficient means to support him- or herself, which in practice means €6,720 in their bank account. Finally, with the introduction of tuition fees in 2017, this adds another financial obstacle for asylum seekers in addition to the finances needed during the application process and the high cost of living in Finland. Overall, asylum seekers are treated as any other non-EU applicant. No exceptions, special scholarships or pathway programmes exist for this population of migrants.

While the introduction of tuition fees is seen as an exclusionary internationalization practice, Finland is in a unique position to balance these targeted practices with more inclusionary internationalization practices by integrating qualified and motivated asylum seekers and refugees into higher education (Olson, 2016). By doing so, higher education institutions embrace their social responsibility and serve the 'third mission' of the institution.

The discussion in the break-out session resulted in many questions that were not necessarily answered but made for thoughtful dialogue. Should the national aim be to integrate asylum seekers and refugees into Finnish or English language degree programmes when the labour market largely operates in the Finnish language? Is there the political will (i.e. adequate resources, processes and practices) to integrate asylum seekers and refugees into the Finnish higher education system? While there may be political will, strong Finnish values and the discourse of equality add complexity to action. How can the admissions process for refugees and asylum seekers be equitable to ensure equal treatment for all?

Recommended next steps:

- Develop a pathway programme for asylum seekers as they wait for a decision and for refugees who may not have the background studies or language requirements needed.
- Create more intensive Finnish language programmes for asylum seekers, refugees and all academic migrants.
- Streamline legislation in order to develop scholarships (for both tuition and cost of living) or tuition fee waivers for asylum seekers. Even though the scholarship programmes of Finnish HEIs are basically tuition fee waiver programmes, the Universities Act, actually prevents us from waiving fees from anyone. In addition, the Administrative Procedure Act (*hallintolaki*) is so complicated that HEIs will most likely have to set up separate scholarship quotas or programmes for asylum seekers (i.e. basically tuition fee waiver programmes again) and not include them in the same programme as the other applicants who are liable for fees and competing for scholarships (i.e. waivers).
- Assessment of the current higher education admissions process to ensure equitable access for asylum seekers and refugees.
- Develop new practices for recognition of prior learning.

Named best practices:

- All Finnish universities already have some kind of scholarship programmes, and there are some universities providing extra funding to cover living costs etc. for all those who need it (e.g. Tampere, Helsinki and Hanken)
- The Hellenic Open University (Greece) conducts fieldwork research to assess the educational needs of refugees.
- Central European University (Hungary) received an Erasmus+ grant for weekend and semester-long programmes (including language, cultural, and disciplinary courses) for refugees.
- VUB (Belgium) created online registration for refugees that is separate from the registration platform for domestic and international students to ensure the equity of admissions.
- Sweden has developed a consortium of universities to collaborate on higher education offerings for asylum seekers/refugees.

Notes: Melissa Plath, Finnish University Partnership for International Development (UniPID), University of Jyväskylä

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Recognition of prior learning in higher education

Chair and responsible authors:
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Márcia Rodrigues, University of Coimbra
Tommi Haapaniemi, University of Eastern Finland
Päivi Vartiainen, University of Tampere
Katarzyna Kärkkäinen, University of Jyväskylä

There are two different aspects of recognition of prior learning, recognition for academic (study) purposes and recognition for professional purposes. The session covered both aspects. In her presentation, **Márcia Rodrigues** touched on procedures for the recognition of prior learning at the University of Coimbra. **Tommi Haapaniemi** shared current practices, procedures and perspectives on the recognition of previous learning at the University of Eastern Finland. The last presentation, by **Päivi Vartiainen** from the University of Tampere, was related to devaluing Filipino nurses' education in Finland.

The procedures for recognition of prior learning at the University of Coimbra (UC) are an example of good practice. For those who want to enrol in a course degree, the UC offers a foundation year. It provides intensive training and customized follow-up in order to prepare them to take the required entrance examinations established for the cycle of studies.

During the recognition process, graduate candidates can start to do some unit courses of the master's or doctoral degree they are applying to and also learn Portuguese at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (which has 90 years of experience in the teaching of Portuguese for foreigners as well as research and advanced courses in the area of teaching Portuguese as a second language).

The process of recognition starts by creating a portfolio of the student (information on person, previous learning, contents, grades, from what degree program recognition is needed, professional experience related to the qualifications, description of educational system in which degree or learning was obtained, placing of own learning within this sys-

tem). In some situations further steps such as interviews with academic department and expert committee, practical placement, and even exams in some fields are taken. The portfolio is revised during an interview in their mother tongue (e.g. Arabic). There are no fees for procedures related to recognition of previous learning or for taking courses. The project and coordination of this initiative is funded from the university's own internal budget.

In his presentation Tommi Haapaniemi dealt with practices, procedures and perspectives on recognition of previous learning from the Student and Learning Services unit at the University of Eastern Finland. In this case, recognition of previous learning refers to a set of practices and procedures that can be used to assess the prior learning of a student and to approve that learning as a part of the student's studies. Prior learning is usually understood as learning that took place during the student's earlier studies, but it can also be learning acquired in some other way. The purpose of those procedures is to ensure that the student is not required to complete studies that correspond to the learning outcomes set for the degree and its components. There are three options for how recognition of prior learning is realized in practice: (1) some previous study components are included in a degree as such; (2) the studies that the student should undertake are replaced with prior studies of corresponding content and level; (3) there is also a possibility to organize demonstrations. The process of recognition of prior learning is initiated by the student. The decision on the recognition of previous learning is made by the department.

During the discussion after the presentations it was pointed out that similar practices are found elsewhere in Finland at, for example, the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. A lot has been done in this area in Finland over the last year. There are some good practices, but there are also differences between fields. Some fields are an exception, such as medical sciences and other regulated fields.

More generally, when it comes to recognition of prior learning for study purposes, there was an agreement among participants that even if decisions are made in higher education institutions, some kind of national guidelines would be useful. Furthermore, more cooperation between higher education institutions on a national and international level would also be of value. The currently planned changes in admissions to higher education institutions provoked concern: what will they mean for mi-

grants? Is only the Finnish matriculation exam to be taken into account? In some cases it may also be difficult to get documentation which proves completion of secondary school and eligibility to enter higher education from abroad. Some participants pointed out special application rounds as a possible practice for supporting migrants in entering higher education institutions.

The final presentation had slightly different perspective, addressing recognition of qualifications of Filipino nurses in Finland. There are many Filipino nurses with nursing qualifications. Though those individuals aim to work as registered nurses, they usually end up working as practical nurses or as nurse assistants. Most of them work full time and they do not have the time for further or complementary studies. For many, moving to Finland can mean redoing their already completed studies in the field of nursing. One of the outcomes of the TRANS-SPACE project is, therefore, a recommendation on designing a proper bridging program for Filipino nurses. The language tuition should be an integral part of the program. This presentation also provoked a lot of discussion. One of the conclusions was that the situation of Filipino nurses in Finland may be a sign that the labour force should be recruited in a more strategic way.

In summary, recognition of previous learning is a complex matter even if the legislation as such is flexible, as is the case in Finland. A lot of cooperation, discussion between different stakeholders (politicians, researchers, administrators, migrants) is needed in order to develop a good practice and to ensure people are treated in as similar ways and as fairly as possible. The wasting of human capital is costly for Finnish society, but the recognition of prior learning is also important from the point of view of individual. It is important to keep the individual in the centre. The evaluated qualifications are always somebody's qualifications. They are of real value for the individual in question and an essential part of her/his (professional) identity. Thus, it is not good if those qualifications are devalued.

Examples of existing good practices in Portugal and Finland:

- An overall process consisting of a set of RPL procedures (e.g. portfolios, interviews, demonstrations, exams) launched before enrolment as a degree student
- RPL procedures, local language learning and preparing for degree studies allowed simultaneously
- Both RPL and preparing for degree studies provided free of charge to participant
- The use of interviews and demonstrations as part of RPL
- Designing bridging programmes with integrated language tuition for professions (e.g. nurses) with a high risk of migrant-professionals ending up with lower level work assignments and salaries
- Functions and activities of SIMHE

Suggestions:

- A comprehensive and inclusive definition of RPL should be introduced in HEIs. The wasting of human capital is costly for society, but it is important to keep the individual in the centre.
- Holistic approaches to RPL in HEIs academic services
- National RPL guidelines for HEIs to be designed
- Regular and field-based seminars or forums organized for different stakeholders to discuss RPL
- Fostering cooperation between HEIs in Finland and cross-nationally

Intercultural guidance and counselling

Chair and responsible authors:
Juha Lahti, University of Jyväskylä
Catherine Gillo Nilsson, University of Gothenburg

Other presenter:
Nafisa Yeasmin, University of Lapland

Tell me…and I will forget.
Show me…and I might remember.
Take me with you to do (something) and I will understand.

Guidance and counselling – intercultural or not – is in its essence a holistic phenomenon. One just cannot lecture about it. It is not only about a highly trained professional using communication skills to empower the counselee to deal with her or his life better. One needs to first establish a sphere of trust, slowly and often indirectly. Only then can guidance and counselling do its thing. Guidance and counselling is something that you need to experience to grasp. Thus, we started our session by each of us picking up a picture card from a table that somehow corresponded to the inner feeling and motivation to join the break-out session. The participants told who they were, where they came from and why they joined this session – one by one. This naturally took some time from the session proper. However, as in a real counselling session this first phase cannot be omitted. In order to be efficient in the session you need to be slow at the beginning. You need to heat up the oven first to gain some warmth later.

The motivations to join varied, but some of the more experienced participants reported experiencing loneliness at work and wanted to join in with colleagues and share. This desire did not come as a surprise. People working with immigrants and refugees work in temporary projects and under circumstances in which they do not often have much collegial support – support they could certainly use!

After the common ground forming exercise, **Nafisa Yeasmin** shared her experience with working with immigrants in Rovaniemi. As the other

The break-out sessions were full of lively discussions. Sharing experiences in break-out session 1.4.

two contributors of the session – **Catherine Gillo Nilsson** and **Juha Lahti** – Nafisa Yeasmin stressed that the key in her work as a counsellors is to build up a good relationship with the counselee. There is no single theory that would enable the counsellors to automatically establish a good relationship with the counselee. People are always individuals and should be treated so, especially in counselling. The fact that you hold the same passport as your fellow person does not mean that you two share much at all. One needs to be aware in the counselling relationship, reading the signs that the counselee is providing – verbally or nonverbally. Misunderstandings and misreadings are so easy. As a counsellor, one should never jump to conclusions. (During the short session we only touched on the issue of language in counselling when there is no common language.) The immigrant is kind of caught between two cultures in trying to produce a culture mix of the two. There is no way an adviser or a counsellor can speed the process of integration into the host culture. It takes its individual time.

Yeasmin shared an example where the leader of an asylum seeker reception centre tried to force host culture on some of the asylum seekers

with little success. Actually this endeavour produced the opposite outcome: resistance. All three speakers noted the importance of self-assessment of the advisor or counsellors: Do my actions, my counselling, help the counselee, the client, or not? The self-assessment should also include topics like whether I as a counsellor am not in an ethnocentric trap myself. Can I see and appreciate the world outside of my own box? Hope and positive psychology is at the centre of things.

According to Catherine Gillo Nilsson, HEIs in Sweden have sought ways to widen the access to and participation in higher education for all groups represented in the country for the last 20 ways. However, there are no national standards or policies to achieve this. Each university has a different policy and profiles. One needs to, among other things, take a look at the admission and student selection processes, as well as issues on teaching and learning support, and guidance before, during and after the student's education in order to widen the access to and participation in higher education. Catherine shared experiences from the in-service stereotype reduction workshops she has been organizing and co-facilitating for counselling professionals in Sweden and South Africa. Kolb's experiential learning cycle forms the theoretical and practical framework in these workshops. The way how stereotyping is at the centre of a process that can end up with discrimination was demonstrated in the following three step model.

1. Boxing = Stereotyping. We put people in boxes/groups – e.g. women, students, teachers – and think that people in the same box are similar and that there are big differences between people in different boxes. We think that if we know which box/group a person belongs to, we also know what he/she is like because we think all the people in the box/group are the same.
2. Boxing and labelling = Prejudice. We put labels on each box/group, and we add feelings and emotional judgements, and/or negative evaluations about these groups.
3. Boxing + labelling + action = Discrimination. We act in an unfair manner.

In addition, the fact that counselling, as a western individualistic concept, might not be that helpful for non-western people was discussed, es-

pecially if counselling is seen and delivered only in a one-to-one mode. Group counselling might prove to be more beneficial.

Before the discussion, Juha Lahti briefly introduced the six steps, laid out by the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, of what it means if we really want to understand another person. When these steps (in italics below) were first introduced in the late 19th century, they were not intended to address counselling. However, even today they tell us something very essential about the approach a good counsellor – intercultural or not – should follow in her or his counselling. Current findings in counselling research are in congruence with Kierkegaard's ideas.

1. Listen and listen from the viewpoint of the other.
2. Exercise patience and humility. It is not that we only have the knowledge, it's information exchange and distribution, a reciprocal process.
3. Begin there where the other person is – not where you think he/she is. No stereotypes. Everyone is unique, so you always need to start afresh!
4. Let the other person to teach you. In the counselling profession, you are there to learn from others, and together you create the mutual understanding of the matter at hand.
5. Restrain your own vanity and your need to be viewed as superior in knowledge and skill. Be humble and reach out to the counselee. You do not need to deliver and you do not need to show your expertise and knowledge.
6. Be willing to admit your ignorance. This is what it means to be an expert. You can never be an expert of another person or her or his life.

In the short but lively discussion, we touched on various topics. How to become a good counsellor? How to develop the needed skills? Many participants stressed the importance of self-knowledge. An interesting point was made that an indirect way can be a very efficient way. For example, reading good literature, not professional literature but novels and such: 'How else can we live so many lives, learn to know so many people and learn from all this!' Willingness to learn from mistakes is needed and video can be used as a means of learning and assessment. We also talked about the 'crack' (särö) pedagogy in adult learning: we cannot learn unless something challenges our attitudes and questions our prior knowledge.

Good practices:

- Listen, listen, listen…
- Know yourself and learn from your mistakes
- Stereotype reduction workshops
- Using video for learning and assessment
- Group guidance counselling

Recommended next steps:

- Facilitate more collegial support and sharing for those who work with migrants and refugees.
- There is room for more diversity among those who do guidance and counselling work in different settings – let us make sure counselling as a career option is also available for migrants.

Notes: Marianne Autero, Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

‘Open or create?’ Providing study options for diverse students

Chair and responsible authors:
Anja Heikkinen, University of Tampere
Pia Polsa, Hanken School of Economics
Steven Crawford, JAMK University of Applied Sciences
Carina Gräsbeck, Åbo Akademi Open University
Nina Haltia, University of Turku
Katinka Käyhkö, SIMHE-UniPID, University of Jyväskylä

Other presenter:
Maher Abedah, JAMK University of Applied Sciences

This break-out session combined two separately planned sessions: one focusing on degree and non-degree studies in higher education institutions and the other focused on the role of open higher education. These sessions were combined due to notably overlapping themes and in order to avoid one of the groups from becoming too small for comfort. As a consequence, the session had numerous presentations and the time for discussion became very limited. However, as one of the participants later commented: ‘This session was great – it was like a parade of good practices and solutions one after another!’ With this summary we hope to bring you the essentials of this joint session.

To start, Professor **Anja Heikkinen** from the University of Tampere (UTA) gave the participants a glance at the Let’s Work Together (LWT) action group formed in UTA’s School of Education in autumn 2015. The work has had three main aspects: (1) opening some of the university’s courses to asylum seekers (as unofficial students they were granted a certificate for participation); (2) finding practical ways to collaborate by volunteering for credits to UTA’s degree students in relevant courses; and (3) creating vast regional networks and finding connections even outside of Finland. Cooperation with other disciplines such as English and social work was established in order to reach out to asylum seekers and refugees. All this has been developed in active cooperation with the asy-

lum seekers themselves and in 2016 the LWT work was even able to hire two asylum seekers as half-time interns to help and be the face of the project for refugees and asylum seekers. The action group has a website (https://letsworktogetheredu.wordpress.com/) as well as a Facebook group (https://www.facebook.com/letwork999/).

In autumn 2016 project worker **Saara Peltonen** wrote a report on the LWT and other asylum-seeker–related activities at UTA called '*Eliittiporukka ja turvapaikanhakijat'.* Some of the key findings of this report were that the 'refugee issues' were often considered as 'somebody else's problem' and that the administration tends to find obstacles instead of seeking opportunities. The report also found that the work is hindered by false assumptions, economic discourses and the fear of doing something that is 'not permitted'. Personnel can also decidedly commit only to Finnish or existing degree students in the name of fairness. Though a lot has been done, what has been done (so far) has been done by collaborating active individuals without official institutional support, strategy or funding.

Next, **Steven Crawford,** senior lecturer from JAMK University of Applied Sciences, took the stage. He was impressed by the broad and integrated work done at UTA and summarized: 'You say you don't care, but you do care!' Because often in Finland you either 'must do' something or you 'cannot do' something, Crawford and his colleagues and students tried a different approach in order to respond locally to the global refugee crisis of 2015 by creating the JAMK United for Refugees project. They considered that Finns who felt threatened in some way by the refugee crisis needed particular attention and support. The project was embedded in a 5 ECTS-credit cross-cultural management course that brought together asylum seekers, Finns and international students in spring 2016. The students created the New Horizons game to facilitate intercultural encounters, and students were also trained to facilitate game sessions. The game has already been used in many settings and the materials are freely available online to teachers and trainers across Finland (www.jamk.fi/en/newhorizons). The basic idea is to generate empathy between diverse people by talking about and sharing cultural aspects around a variety of themes. Crawford also suggested that the universities of applied sciences may have it a bit easier than do the traditional universities, due to their project orientation, in reacting to emergent societal needs and producing tangible results, such as the New Horizons training activity. He also de-

scribed the JAMK United for Refugees project as a grassroots initiative, comparing it to the student movements of the 1960s, and stated: 'Just go and do it!'

The next presentation came from the Hanken School of Economics. Associate Professor **Pia Polsa** showcased Hanken's response to the call made by Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) in autumn 2015. In practice, two educational options were opened to asylum seekers: (1) Finnish Business Culture (4 ECTS credits, funded by the rector and the credits were made possible via Open Hanken) with 11 asylum seeker / refugee participants, of whom 5 passed the course and (2) a semester-long Business Lead 2016 programme providing direct integration to working life with 38 asylum seeker / refugee participants (including 6 women), of which 30 graduated. An impressive amount of companies collaborated with LEAD and one sign of success is that many of the participants ended up working in the companies. The feedback from participants has been positive – 'I've been taken as a professional, not only as an asylum seeker' – and sharing the course with asylum seekers even changed the views of the other (international) students about the refugee crisis. Hanken's degree students have also been given credits for volunteering and Hanken's Vaasa campus Executive Education organises a 4-month program with 7 weeks live learning that is currently ongoing.

Impressed by all the previous presentations, **Carina Gräsbeck**, planning officer from Åbo Akademi (ÅA), pondered if open universities could be a 'saviour' in this situation. Because ÅA is a small institution, they are using existing tools with minor adjustments in order to see what can be done. Gräsbeck noted that although open university courses are open to everybody both the language and the price can become obstacles. Their selection of courses in English is also small and 'odd' (e.g. folkloristics). In 2016 ÅA has had ten asylum seekers taking part in the open university courses, most of them in Finnish as a foreign language, but also in a MOOC in data science. An institutional decision was made: the asylum seekers have not been charged for their studies, nor is a social security number needed for the registration. Altogether, 12 out of 18 interested asylum seeker students have also been able to take supplementary studies (i.e. individual courses) as so-called extra students together with the degree students of the international master's programmes of ÅA. Every faculty has their own system regarding the intake of these extra students. What has been done is (1) try to find

a suitable course for a person, (2) put in a good word to the professor of the department in question and (3) see what happens. Considering the limited course selection available in one university should a kind of JOO for asylum seekers (JOO = joustava opinto-oikeus, that is, a flexible study right between universities) be created? Regarding the international master's programmes and their built-in stumbling blocks, Gräsbeck also wondered if we even want the asylum seekers to apply to our institutions.

Nina Haltia from the University of Turku looked at open universities as a researcher, though she started by stating that there is still no research on migrants in Finnish open universities. As an institution, open universities are both open and closed. They provide quality education – 'not just any courses' but a true gateway to degree studies. The existing barriers of open universities include fees, limited course selections from just a few fields with few language options, and the fact that it is not possible to complete a whole degree at an open university. The course selection development also depends heavily on the 'mother' universities and many of the courses are already full of well-educated Finns. Additionally, the courses that prepare students for higher education studies are excluded from open university education. Yet open university has many possibilities and benefits to offer. For example, for language skills studying on an open university course in one's own field in Finnish can also be 'the best language learning ever'. According to Haltia's research, studies at open university serve at least four different groups of people from career builders to self-developers and those who plan to enter degree studies either by main entrance or gateway routes, and provide an impressive list of benefits related to, for example, work and career, future studies, self-respect, social capital, and citizenship skills. Considering all this, open university studies can offer something meaningful for asylum seekers and refugees as well. Yet the cultural and social barriers are often the toughest nuts to crack – so how to increase universities' interests in developing their activities and meeting the existing challenges?

In her closing remarks, Haltia questioned whether the small number of migrant students in open universities is at least partially an issue of marketing and awareness. She also suggested that, instead of automatically opting for the maximum fee collection, fees, discounts and free courses should be discussed. The role of open universities in the future of

university admissions is also interesting. There is still much to research, however, especially regarding prior qualifications and skill levels of migrants, the experiences of migrants at open universities, and case studies of the actions already taken. Future research should also have more effect on universities and other actors of the field.

The final presentation was given by **Maher Abedah**, a recently arrived refugee and a current student of the Open JAMK University of Applied Sciences path studies. He used his own experiences as mirror to the wider whole. First, Abedah had noticed that the recognition of a degree takes a lot of time and some degrees and courses 'from elsewhere' simply do not match with the Finnish system. Because open path studies are not considered as degree studies, the recognition of prior learning (RPL) has not served him yet. The Finnish educational system also seems tough to enter if you lack a residence permit. Yet there is much potential in asylum seekers: "There are skills and expertise in these people!" Abedah also provided an interesting comparison between the educational systems of the Middle East and Finland. In the Finnish system, he especially appreciated the more practical approach, smaller and more interactive study groups, the possibility to choose courses according to one's own interests and the up-to-date study materials.

In Abedah's own experience, the SIMHE service opened some doors and having a full English-medium degree programme as an option was helpful for him, but the future with the tuition fees was scary. It was great to have a migrant teacher (helped to belong and also served as an example of language learning) and integrating with the Finnish degree students has been important. He has especially enjoyed the company visits included in his studies. Abedah suggested that, from the migrants' point of view, a good course has plenty of practical aspects (often lacking in their previous education), has opportunities to work together with Finnish students in order to enhance integration and provides knowledge as well as experience of the actual working environment of the field in question.

The time for discussion was very limited but important themes came up. A general impression was that people actively working with these issues in their own institutions simply do not know enough about each other's work and initiatives. Ways to keep in touch and work together were requested and suggested from social media to email lists and joint platforms for facilitating information and collaboration. After the session, a spontaneous mailing list was gathered among the participants.

Some currently hot topics were also raised. First, Steven Crawford stated that the current policy of Migri (the Finnish Immigration Service) of moving asylum seekers from one reception centre to another across the country within only a few hours' notice does not help them mentally, with studies or work, nor with the integration processes. Pia Polsa and LWT intern reminded that not all those who have waited for a long time, and who have perhaps even worked and learned the language and then received a negative decision from Migri are going to leave the country. The next big question, therefore, is 'What to do with the paperless?' For example, some Roma people have been here for over five years and nothing has been done. Legal advice is being sought by some. Studies were seen as a meaningful option for spending the waiting time and a way of strengthening people in their own life and expertise: 'At least it should be made possible that when you go back, you go with new knowledge and networks.' The different, non-coherent approaches and policies of the different ministries and offices (e.g. Migri and the Employment offices) make the general setting very complicated.

Anja Heikkinen highlighted the fact that we have only individual solutions so far. What is the higher education policy or funding policy? We can all try in our own institutions, but it will keep the voices small. Thus, we need to join our voices and have ministries back up the work – and not only in words. This suggestion was widely supported. A representative from the University of Eastern Finland asked how to market all that is already being done. The Tampere experience with the asylum seeker interns as faces of the project in the camps has been very good: 'We should do this together with the asylum seekers.' Maher Abedah, too, saw the importance of getting more immigrants involved in the programmes and their development. Anja Heikkinen also called for flexibility between institutions, because not everything significant happens in HEIs. There are many options not yet known to or used by migrants (e.g. adult education centres) but the entrance may still be restricted for asylum seekers without an ID.

In the following wrap-up session, Saara Peltonen from UTA summarized the joint session by highlighting the need to share good practices and experiences and to include asylum seekers in developing the activities. She also reminded that the 'problem' will not just go away but continue. As a Finnish degree student involved in the LWT activities she also commented that all this information and experience will make her a better teacher in the future.

Best practices:

- Providing asylum seekers and refugees possibilities to study with Finnish and international students
    - Finding ways to open also credit-earning studies
        - Faculty-specific special study rights ('extra students' or open universities)
- Including asylum seekers in the planning and execution of projects
- Giving credits to degree students for volunteering

Suggestions for future:

- Joint platform to facilitate better collaboration between institutions and to share information about the existing options
- Creating an interinstitutional *JOO* for asylum seekers (i.e. a flexible study right)
- Clearer guidelines and HE policies to support the work
- More coherence between different ministries, regional authorities and other actors dealing with the same people
- The funding criteria of HEIs should be revised to include inclusive measures beside credits and degrees
- Modifying the open university course selection to respond better to the needs of asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants.

Notes: Johanna Kivimäki, UniPID, University of Jyväskylä

Spaces of integration

Chair and responsible authors:
Paul Abbey, *Kotona Jyväskylässä* project
Catherine Gillo Nilsson, University of Gothenburg

This session contained presentations by Paul Abbey (*Kotona Jyväskylässä* project) and Catherine Gillo Nilsson (University of Gothenburg). In the session discussions the group looked at four key questions related to the subject of the integration of immigrants generally in society. It was also suggested that the integration of immigrants as learners in higher education institutions should reflect the process in the wider society. The four key questions considered were

- **The definition of integration**, which was defined as the incorporation, as equals, of two separate entities. This means that the integration of an immigrant into society would require them to be accepted as an equal to the members of the local population.

- **The conditions that make integration possible** involve the understanding that it is not only a two-way process which cannot happen without the active participation of both sides that are involved in the integration process, but also that it is defined by feelings. The fact that feelings are involved in the integration process makes it a subjective one. It is, therefore, also difficult to measure. Its temporal nature was also emphasized, as feelings often change from one moment to another. It was suggested that since feelings are to be considered, identifying the stereotypes that people have about others, and removing them, can be a first step towards seeing the other as an equal, as unique and valuable. This would create the space where others can be seen in the

same light, and also lead to an understanding of the other's culture, which was also seen as an important part of integration. For the identification and removal of stereotypes, the Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC, by Carr and deRosenroll, Peer Resources Network) method, was introduced. General wellbeing and health issues are also significant in the process.

- **The processes that assist with the integration of immigrants** depend, among other things on being empathic, which means seeing everyone as peers, and being able to understand another's world. It is a complex and demanding way of being. This requires the willingness to put aside the views and values that one holds, so as to enable them to enter into the world of the other without prejudice, and in doing so appreciate and value diversity. Key to the success of the integration process is the building of trust, as the structures of the societies from where the immigrant has come from are normally different. On this there was the suggestion that cultural interpreters, instead of language interpreters, could be used as a bridge. There was also the consideration of the different measures that could be used to determine how well an immigrant had integrated into society. It was suggested that policymakers have an important role to play, through the formulation of policies that assist the process of integration. Mentions were also made of the current measures of employment and nationalization, as well as that of wellbeing, which are currently being introduced in the southern region of Skåne in Sweden. This idea of using wellbeing as a measure of integration came about when it was found that the wellbeing of immigrants, which following their arrival was at the same level when compared with Swedes, dropped and took about ten years to get

back to the level that it was when they arrived – this even when they had jobs, calling into question the use of employment as an indicator for integration. The Skåne model was implemented by using cultural interpreters.

- **The issues that can enhance the efficiency of the immigrant integration process**. In tune with the previous key question regarding the assisting processes of integration, policy was considered as an enhancing factor. The shortcomings of the integration process in Finland, which is based on integration through employment, were examined. The unusually high unemployment rate means this measure is lacking success. It was also suggested that, although this is probably due to stereotypes, there is also a lack of dialogue that involves the local population, because their consent and participation in the process is an important key to the success of the integration of immigrants. This could be corrected by involving the local population in the provisions of the integration law (currently only directed towards the immigrant). The issue of language was also brought up in the admissions of foreign students into certain fields of higher education institutions. For example, for social workers it is essential to be able to communicate with clients in the local language, so English programmes are not a solution. How to attract enough foreign or migrant students and provide them with a sufficient level of local language? Other factors mentioned were the involvement of immigrants in the formulation of immigration policies and guidance and counselling for immigrants. The latter was seen as an important tool, especially if it takes into account the needs of the immigrants and gives them the confidence and hope that they can achieve the goals that they want for themselves.

Examples of good practices:

- Cultural interpreters (Skåne model)
- ELC / Peer Resources Network, using similarities as a starting point
- Involvement of NGOs, some workplaces etc.
- Refugee entrepreneur experiences (Startup Refugees)

Suggestions and further steps:

- Involving local population and institutions in the process of integration (also at the level of legislation)
- Involving more migrants in the processes of law and policymaking
- Higher education should reflect the diversity of the society: special attention to the area of difficult entrance and language requirements
- Including measures other than employment in the evaluation of integration

Notes: Margaret Migayi, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

Teacher's pedagogical training and intercultural competence

Chair and responsible authors:
Katarzyna Kärkkäinen, University of Jyväskylä
Maija Yli-Jokipii, University of Tampere

This break-out session dealt with aspects and emerging questions related to teacher's pedagogical training and intercultural competence. The presentations approached the topic from two perspectives: The first was presented by **Maija Yli-Jokipii**, who gave an overview of the requirements concerning teacher qualifications in Finland from the perspective of teachers with a migrant background. In her presentation, Yli-Jokipii also concentrated on the possibilities and limitations connected to the *Kuulumisia* project (more on this later). The second perspective was presented by **Katarzyna Kärkkäinen**, who focused on matters related to teachers' pedagogical training in an era of growing diversity, with special attention being paid to the complexity of issues related to language, culture and learning.

To be a qualified teacher in Finland, one has to have university master's degree, a pedagogical degree of 60 ECTS credits, and a minimum of 60 ECTS credits in the subject one is teaching, or in the case of a classroom teacher 60 ECTS credits in multidisciplinary studies. Migrant individuals also need to provide a certificate of Finnish language skills on the YKI 6 level as well as the recognition of degree, eligibility and/or professional qualifications from the Finnish National Agency for Education.

The *Kuulumisia* project, introduced in Yli-Jokipii's presentation, is one of the initiatives established by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Its aim is to offer opportunities for completing the previously mentioned (pedagogical) study modules. Within the project, it is also possible to complete 15 ECTS credits of complementary studies in pedagogy. Until now, there have been over 150 students from 38 countries participating in the training project. The language of the programmes is Finnish. Most of the work during the courses is done independently, contact meetings take place only twice a month. The training periods in Finnish comprehensive schools are an important component of all the study units. The

training periods help students understand Finnish educational thinking and practices, and they also help them with networking with local schools and employers. The study units offer an opportunity for the students to get familiar with school legislation, teachers' responsibilities and duties in Finland. In other words, the initiative aims to prepare migrants for working in Finnish schools, also in the current context of growing diversity.

In the present era, aspects related to language and culture are often at the centre of the discussions concerning learning and teaching. These aspects are usually the easiest in which to spot differences and (educational) challenges. Language and culture are also often explained without too much reflection on what they actually are. They are often believed to be static entities with clear borders, when in fact both culture and language are very complex and dynamic phenomena. Culture and language are in a constant process of change. Moreover, huge diversity can often exist even within one language and one culture. The culture- or language-based identity one has is only one possible form of identity among other possibilities. There is a lot of talk on how cultures matter: culture has become a catch phrase for all. This all-infiltrating 'culture-talk' suggests that we want to understand this complex phenomenon called culture, the world around us, and ourselves. We are eager to make interpretations about other cultures. However, those interpretations are often based on our own assumptions.

Kärkkäinen's study shows that many challenges connected to migrant students' participation in educational institutions are explained with language and cultural aspects. However, in reality migrant students struggle with learning and the difficulty of teaching this group of students is related to many different phenomena. For example, there is huge heterogeneity among migrant students as well as trainers. Because of that, each individual has a different starting point for learning, teaching and for approaching diversity. The teaching of migrant students, especially among novice teachers, awakes a lot of uncertainty. However, at the same time many educators are showing a lot of flexibility and are in a constant search for developing new modes of working with migrant students. Though teaching this group of students often means hard and frustrating work, it is also very rewarding and leads to professional development. Some educators possess more expertise in approaching diverse student groups than others.

There are many initiatives that go under the name of *culturally responsive pedagogies* which aim at improving the situation of migrant students in educational institutions. They are good in their intentions, but they also eas-

ily give the impression that culture is a static entity. Taking into account the students linguistic and cultural backgrounds is, however, not enough. The aim is rather to see this background as an important resource for learning.

The aspects mentioned in this session leave us with many open questions concerning teachers' pedagogical training. Teachers are believed to be an engine of any changes that will happen. Yet monolingual and monocultural ideas are quite strongly present in (Finnish) educational settings. Educational institutions are seen as places where the right kind of culture and the right kind of language are transmitted. This is already problematic in the context of growing diversity. Therefore, we need to think about: (1) How can we help future teachers understand the complexity of learning and aspects related to language and cultural matters? (2) How can we ensure that teachers' lounges will become more multicultural and that in educational institutions there will be all kinds of role models available for pupils? (3) How can teachers' pedagogical training contribute to helping novice teachers in overcoming the uncertainty of approaching migrant students?

Appropriate pedagogical training for teachers is the first step towards making changes. However, the possibility to discuss and to reflect on those issues and the opportunity to exchange experiences and knowledge is important during a teacher's entire career.

Recommendations and next steps:

- Providing enough opportunities to national teachers to get in touch with migrants and their families in order to be more familiar with diverse groups of students.
- Fostering the understanding of aspects related to diversity among teacher educators.
- More teacher students, teacher educators and, above all, teachers in schools with diverse backgrounds.
- Facilitating more study and practice periods abroad also for teacher students and trainers.
- Rethinking the language requirements for becoming a teacher. (Is YKI6 / C2 really a reasonable level of language?)
- Enhancing possibilities to exchange good practices and experiences regarding working with migrant students.

Named good practices:

- The *Kuulumisia* project as an example of one of such good practices.
- The initiative at the University of Tampere aiming at getting more mixed groups of students in teachers' pedagogical training (8 students with migrant background are selected every year to teachers education).
- There is a lot of creativity in the approaching of migrant learners among trainers.
- The existing modes of working that are suitable for diverse learning settings such as emphasizing learning by doing instead of lecturing, supporting the involvement of all senses in learning, many kinds of well-prepared teaching materials, and many possibilities for learning within groups. However, it is also important to be aware of the limitations of theses modes of working.

Notes: Eija Aalto, University of Jyväskylä

Dilemmas that explain persistent exclusion in Finnish higher education

Chair and responsible authors:
David Hoffman, Finnish Institute of Educational Research (FIER), University of Jyväskylä
Susanna Piepponen, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

Susanna Piepponen from the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment presented population register data focused on unemployment among highly educated migrants in Finland. Differences exist between native-born Finnish persons (in a better situation) and highly educated persons with a migrant background (in a worse situation). Unique to Finland is the very low number of persons with a migrant background. This paradoxically makes emergent disparities highly visible, especially regarding so-called closed areas of the higher education (HE) system (e.g. police services, medicine, classroom teaching, law – domains with structural lags, compared to more open areas) with key linkages to Finland's small, tightly structured labour market, yet potentially easier to handle than almost all EU countries because of the very low numbers of persons with a migrant background.

David Hoffman critiqued the data especially for being unproblematized in terms of international state-of-the-art literature and practices that define equality and identity within social institutions, organizations and professions. Unquestioned assumptions cast doubt on the relationship between population data and the limitations inherent in the analysis of theoretically ungrounded and underproblematized data. This challenge manifests in Finland especially in areas of the HE system remaining unnecessarily closed to highly educated, highly skilled migrants. Finnish HE, combined with professional regulation, remains the single access point to closed areas, spotlighting settings where key unquestioned assumptions are located with respect to the notion of integration. Specifically, the key leverage or focal points in Hoffman's research for integration policy concern practices and patterns inside established institutions, organisations and professions. In other words, migrants themselves are not where the real leverage for change is located, as is often assumed by researchers, policymakers and practitioners.

The insight from both presentations was of the potential in the research/policy nexus, when key actors and stakeholders meet in settings where the necessary perspectives needed to problematize and engage unresolved dilemmas, paradoxes and contradictions interact in dialogue. In particular, key assumptions and the unintended consequences of normative institutional, organizational and professional action within HE need to be challenged. In Finland, regarding migration, this type of dialogue remains exceptional in many settings. The discussion based on the two presentations was wide-ranging. Of particular note were the following issues:

- HE diplomas or certifications (from inside or outside Finland) without the social capital inherent in professional networks mean little. Key differences between occupational sectors in which internships are crucial for employment were noted. This gap has been extensively researched and is well known to policymakers. The salient difference is between Finnish- and Swedish-speaking students within degree programmes in those languages, particularly regarding work placements and English-language programmes. Participants questioned why institutions, organizations and professions in Finland are not responding to societal challenges in the same – or better – manner as has been done in other countries for decades. Highly qualified students and faculty within HE understand this dynamic better than the institutions, organizations and professions they work within do and have a key alternative: leaving for more competitive countries with more professional opportunities.

- It was observed that personnel within closed organizations and professions often seem unaware of their narrow demographic profile or how this shapes HR recruitment, selection, promotion and retention. Although the theory and knowledge linked to this is well known, that knowledge is not applied, nor does it influence HR practice in settings that are very easy

to locate. This is paradoxical because it is precisely settings where a broader profile is most needed that are often the narrowest, while those that are quite open (and already operating at a world-class level) are often quite diverse.

- The decentralization and privatization of the national employment office under the guidance of regional and municipal authorities was discussed as a major structural challenge. Participants were sceptical of these services, perceiving them as ineffective when it comes to addressing the needs of highly skilled migrants. Will organizations and professions linked to employment services see the opportunity of connecting the highly skilled graduates with a migrant background (who are needed to problematize and act on these challenges) or continue to use the types of approaches criticized in this session?

- Economic and employment challenges often cut across the general population, not only bearing on migrants. Recent research has highlighted distinctions that bear almost exclusively on migrants but which are not considerations amongst the general population. The participants also believe neither distinction is currently well understood among many policymakers, researchers and stakeholders in Finland focused on employment – precisely due to the key unresolved challenges and unquestioned assumptions presented by Hoffman. The issue is exacerbated by the economic challenges experienced by non-migrants, who cannot realistically be expected to understand and act on a distinction not understood by many policymakers, researchers and practitioners. Further exacerbation happens when non-migrants undergo intense pressure under austerity measures in the public sector. The moment one's own job comes under threat, the dilemmas, paradoxes and contradictions discussed

in this session become non-issues and unquestioned cultural assumptions causing the challenges that need to be addressed will govern action.

- Some speakers and participants were sceptical of the 'top-down, policy-driven, short-term project mentality' aimed at complex structural challenges. Hoffman's research, modelled on current EC policy, highlights the need for precisely the opposite in cases of unresolved, persistent social justice challenges. Specifically ground-up, stakeholder-driven, sustainable, long-term engagement based on new knowledge. It was debated whether policy actors, researchers and stakeholder were too uncritical of projects aimed at acute challenges of a structural nature. Despite this, the SIMHE project is a good example of a short-term project that accomplished a lot with respect to a poorly understood set of social challenges.

- Power relations were also discussed. Scholars with a migrant background are acutely aware of the dangers associated with challenging authority guided by the prevalent neoliberal ideology that currently structures HE. To question authority, even under the guise of academic freedom, can bring the risk of being labelled a 'troublemaker' – for all scholars in the Finnish system – and a 'foreign troublemaker' for session participants. The professed internationalization strategy of the EC and several Finnish universities to seek 'the most talented scholars' spotlights contradictions and unrealistic expectations within many settings focused on social challenges. World-class social sciences and humanities are often defined by challenging power relations. A reluctance to challenge authority triggers an ironic push for the persons most needed to problematize current conditions to settings where their talent is actively sought – especially the ability to 'speak truth to power', the currency of world-class

social scientists focused on the identical topics raised in this conference. In Finland, it is easy to locate talented scientists focused on so-called safe topics, whether or not these are in the best interest of migrants and the society in which they live. The inside-the-box neoliberal ideology governing HE highlights a troubling lack of visionary leadership of the type found in the countries, cultures and HE institutions of our most serious competitors.

Recommendations and practices:

The complex relationships between HE, employment stratification patterns, migration, student access and social stratification are (1) routinely problematized, (2) perceived as public policy issues and (3) the focus of world-class scholarship. However, this primarily occurs outside of Finland and anyone interested in researching those issues, critically engaging or intervening in those dynamics will have to travel to routinely experience this.

A possible first step in research-driven intervention involving novel action and new knowledge is to critically problematize the myriad unquestioned assumptions that explain our current literature/knowledge/practice gaps regarding the relationships between HE, employment, migration, access and labour market stratification. Yet it is hard to find people to do this in many settings and at all levels in Finland's HE system, especially when it comes to focusing on faculty members and other key actors.

Notes: Ilona Bontenbal, University of Jyväskylä

Sense of belonging, academic peers or passers-by?

Chair and responsible authors:
Marita Häkkinen, SIMHE-UniPID, University of Jyväskylä
Hana Vrzakova, University of Eastern Finland
Terhi Skaniakos, University of Jyväskylä
Victor Carrasco Navarro, University of Eastern Finland Doctoral Student Association ry (UEF-DSA)
Alex Cisneros, University of Jyväskylä

This break-out session started the discussion with a roundabout exercise. Participants shared their thoughts about building their own sense of belonging either at work or in studies. Views were linked to social communications and support provided by colleagues at work, working within diverse groups and sustainable funding of one's own work (e.g. doctoral studies). Study environments that encourage autonomous learning were considered valuable for building a sense of belonging, as well as sharing experiences within close, safe relationships, in smaller groups or with peers. The aim of this exercise was to share personal views and common emotional factors underpinning the sense of belonging.

The two presentations from this break-out session were aimed at disseminating results from empirical surveys applied to higher education students and their own responses to what contributed to their sense of belonging. The presenters **Hana Vrzakova** and **Victor Carrasco Navarro** from the University of Eastern Finland (UEF), along with **Terhi Skaniakos** from the University of Jyväskylä (JYU) concluded that even though international students are satisfied with their work and many of them are integrated into academic and non-academic groups, many of them still feel isolated from their peers. Although the future after completing a PhD seems uncertain, the majority of students are unaware of the counselling services provided by universities.

In two large-scale surveys of Finnish and international PhD students, from 2014 and 2016, Vrzakova and Carrasco Navarro targeted the topic of student wellbeing in the PhD community at UEF. The sense of belonging in academia was investigated from different aspects: student integration to

academic groups, belonging to communities, participating in non-work-related activities, supervision, and future plans after completing the PhD. Overall, PhD students ranked their work satisfaction high; however, the aspect of academic integration was biased. About a half of the informants reported active participation in seminar groups, which involved face-to-face interaction, and the remaining ones were academically integrated in online communities. Participation and research exposure at conference venues is vital to a PhD student's research and contribute to the sense of belonging. The majority of students received travel support from either UEF or external foundations; a smaller portion of respondents fully covered the travel costs by themselves or volunteered to partially reduce the costs. Those without any conference experience accounted for the lack of funding.

Sharing the student's struggles and victories is important for creating the sense of belonging. Although students shared these with their academic colleagues, supervisors or their friends, close to one third of respondents still felt isolated from their peers, and isolation was felt both within the university and during free time. Likewise, assistance in academic affairs was in need. Career counselling and courses, peer mentoring, and help with grant applications were mentioned consistently by all respondents. When asked, however, whether the students had used any counselling service to discuss their academic future, almost all respondents said no. The main reason for the lack of participation was that students were unaware of these services. Plans after the PhD are also an indicator of students' sense of belonging. Although the majority of students did not know exactly what to do after their PhDs, many hoped to continue to postdoctoral studies. If given the chance to stay or return home, less than half of the respondents would like to go back their countries of origin, and a third would enjoy staying in Finland after graduation.

In her presentation, Terhi Skaniakos focused on the roles that peers (i.e. fellow students) played in building psychosocial, emotional and study support among JYU students. This support is often represented by either formal peer tutoring and mentoring, or informal peer support. The survey also revealed the trend that students tend to connect to smaller groups first, before connecting to larger groups. A feeling of 'sameness', enforced by peer support, may influence the sense of belonging in groups importantly.

Surveys of international master's students from 2013 showed that international students do not get to know Finnish students easily and that

non-Finnish-speaking students tend to remain within their own groups. Doctoral student (both international and Finnish) surveys from 2016 showed that research support is received most easily from other doctoral students. In addition, research groups and the work environment were identified as having more impact than language differences in building a sense of belonging. However, international PhD students felt they were part of the university community more often than did Finnish PhD students, and they seemed to meet more often with other students with whom they can exchange thoughts.

According to Skaniakos, peer groups were identified as an essential part of forming a sense of belonging for all higher education students. In these surveys, the lack of peer groups in education was apparent, and needed to be addressed by finding the structures that support them. Finally, the gap in integration between Finnish and foreign students remains a persistent challenge.

Suggestions

- Create and facilitate spaces and activities that could bridge the integration gap between the student groups: intercultural and multilingual groups enabling peer-support and true dialogs.
- Collect information on a variety of funding options (including university foundations) for doctoral students in a common and accessible online platform, including the hands-on experience of those who have actually received funding.
- Release the feedback on funding applications in order to learn from the mistakes made.
- Develop the offering of career and funding guidance courses, English courses, mentoring and internships opportunities.
- Develop student guidance services as well as the managing and disclosing of their information.

Language issues and multilingual learning in universities

Chair and responsible authors:
Taina Saarinen, University of Jyväskylä
Inkeri Lehtimaja, Aalto University
Charles Mathies, University of Jyväskylä

The scope of the session: Separate international study programmes and integration

In her presentation, **Taina Saarinen** from the University of Jyväskylä considered why international students should (or shouldn't) learn Finnish and how to make that possible. According to Saarinen, it seems that while language is thought of as an important factor in integration, universities do not offer adequate courses or the courses do not meet the demands of the labour market. This raises the following questions: Should studying the local language be compulsory or optional for so-called international students? Where to place the Finnish/Swedish courses within the study programmes? And whom are the international programmes really meant for?

Alexander (2008) has made a typology of the use of English and the local language at German universities:

- The *replacement* type, where the local language has been completely replaced with English. Is the idea that international students take the degree and leave?
- The *cumulative* type, where English language teaching increases gradually. Is this meant to make internationalisation for local students easier?
- The *additional* type, where English language teaching decreases gradually. Is the idea that international students learn local language and stay?

Saarinen also concluded that our notions of *international student* and *national language* should be problematized because the concepts are in flux due to the diversification of mobilities for different reasons.

The question remains: How do we support the multilingual practices and practitioners needed in real-life situations?

In her turn, **Inkeri Lehtimaja** from Aalto University focused on the international doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers and their use of Finnish at the university. In addition, she considered the experiences related to the language skill needs at actual work and in social situations at the university. Lehtimaja's data consist of 20 interviews conducted at Aalto University.

Although international students and researchers are usually not expected to learn Finnish, the respondents felt that Finnish is still sometimes needed for actual work (e.g. some documents are more accurate in Finnish, at certain meetings, for courses available in Finnish only, communicating with stakeholders, writing scientific and official texts, funding applications etc.) and for social situations at work. Concerning actual work, there were three overlapping categories: (1) Finnish is practiced even if not needed, (2) Finnish is used because it is needed, (3) Finnish would be needed but the respondents lack sufficient skills. The interviews also showed that there is situated language learning at work: with time, the respondents could manage different tasks in Finnish more and more independently.

According to Lehtimaja, the respondents reported awkwardness in social situations. The international students and researchers felt guilty both when using Finnish and when not using it. All in all, more Finnish is wanted in social situations at work along with "language contracts" to ease communication and create occasions for practice. Lehtimaja concluded that according to the respondents, learning Finnish can give a reason to stay. They considered both the learner's responsibility and community support to be important.

The last presentation of this session was given by **Charles Mathies** from the University of Jyväskylä. His presentation focused on the international students' returns in the Finnish labour market, particularly the questions: What influences them to stay? What happens if they stay?

Mathies used international student migration (ISM), a theoretical framework explaining international student movements, to describe how many countries are now actively engaged in practices of controlled immigration with the aim to increase the stay rates of international students. So, how to improve the stay *rights* of the people involved and what kind of barriers (e.g. language, cultural/social capital) are there to be faced?

The sample studied included all international students who had completed a degree at universities or universities of applied sciences in Fin-

Charles Mathies in break-out session 2.5.

land from 1999 to 2009 (N=10 886). The informants were tracked for three years after graduation. The backgrounds of the respondents vary, but the asylum seekers or refugees were not identified as a specific group. The main results indicate that

- The stay rate of international students is high, but numbers are small compared to the other European countries.
- Age (+/-), gender (small influence), family and country of origin matter: those coming from Asia are more likely to leave than those coming from other European countries. Additionally, students living in a capital are more likely to leave and Finnish language courses have a positive effect on staying but only when coupled with white collar (professional) employment.
- There are differences compared with the Finnish graduates after three years of graduation in, for

example, family life, home ownership, staying in a study region (wealth and cultural differences), employment (employed at a lower rate), earnings (Finnish graduates generally earn more), and taxes (Finnish graduates generally pay more).

- White collar employment is the key employment: Prior to graduation it has positive influence on staying; after graduation there is reduced or no difference in earnings.
- Finnish language acquisition is likely a key factor in getting white collar employment.
- International graduates are worth the financial investment as government realises return on investment – i.e. they are net positive from the perspective of the amount of taxes received minus the social benefits they receive on average.

Discussion at the end of the session:

The introduction of tuition fees is expected to change the state of affairs because the amount of students incoming will change. The countries of origin will change, as will the mentality, since students will be seen as paying clients. From the researcher's point of view, the studies described above took place at a critical period of time; it will now be possible to track the changes. The picture, however, is complex. In certain cultures, the price tag on degrees may also represent quality.

This will naturally have impacts on the position of Finnish and Swedish for the integration of international students. Command of Finnish has an effect on staying in Finland, but this is a chicken or egg case: Do the students stay because they know Finnish OR because they had the opportunity to 'stay' and create social networks and references – and thus they know Finnish? Do those who are interested in staying take more Finnish and practice? Or do those who take more Finnish and practice it develop the idea that they want or could stay?

The questions are: How to develop the pedagogy, and how to integrate the relevant content, skills and language? How to support extending the language skills beyond the basics? How to raise language awareness and support bi-/multidirectional integration?

Suggested next steps:

- Integrating content (working life and social skills) and language teaching in order to develop professional/ expert skills and cultural/social skills dialogically, and in order to bridge the gap between (English language) studies and (Finnish/multilingual) working life.
- This requires pedagogical development of language courses -> look for good practices at language centres.
- Making language awareness an everyday practice in higher education and working life.
- Our understanding of language, language skills and language learning has changed, but how are these new conceptualisations mainstreamed?

Notes: Sanna Mustonen, University of Jyväskylä

The changing sceneries of 2017

Chairs and responsible authors:
Kaisu-Maria Piiroinen, Ministry of Education and Culture
Katinka Käyhkö, SIMHE-UniPID, University of Jyväskylä

This break-out session was a direct continuation to the morning plenary, where the idea of responsible higher education institutions (HEIs) and Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland (SIMHE) work was presented alongside reports of the two piloting SIMHE HEIs and the new HEIs joining the work in 2017.

The session had no presentations; instead, it was kept as an open forum for discussion, practical questions and suggestions of the participants regarding migrants and higher education in Finland. The representatives of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the old and new responsible SIMHE institutions tried to answer what could be answered and kept notes of the ideas and issues raised regarding the future SIMHE agenda. The content of the discussions of this session can be summarized briefly with bullet points under the following three headings:

1) Important questions

- Does 'equal admissions' mean 'no exceptions' or 'equitable' admissions?
    - Can recognition of prior learning (RPL) become a part of admissions?
        - Why require English language tests from people who have done all their studies in English and are not required to take these tests elsewhere (e.g. in UK)?
        - The value of unfinished foreign bachelor's degree (In some cases the degree could be completed soon -> benefit for the person and the HEI)
            - Concern: the varied quality levels of education in the world

- Shouldn't RPL also become an official part of the three-year integration training period?
    - Would e.g. free recognition of professional rights be possible for refugees?
- How to enhance cooperation between 'profiled' and simultaneously competing HEIs?
    - Focus on the person or on the institution? Customer segment study paths?
- Who is coordinating the SIMHE work nationally? (There is a national steering group.)
- Is SIMHE going to replace UAF (University Admissions Finland)? (No)
- 2017, tuition fees and asylum seekers: there will be many fewer applications from abroad, so can asylum seekers be seen as an opportunity for the international programmes?
- Scholarship issues related to this?

2) Suggestions and steps forward

- Collect all SIMHE actions (including research) to one place (e.g. one umbrella-like website) to be easily found by prospective students, practitioners and researchers alike
- A list of SIMHE contact persons from every university and university of applied sciences to facilitate direct communications, possibly even shared virtual workspaces
- Fair admissions system for ALL (national, international, asylum seekers, refugee etc.)
- More cooperation with the student unions (Note! ESU provides grants for national activities)

3) Good practices

- Good examples of handy and user-friendly internet pages can already be found around Europe, such as the Refugee Guide to Sweden or the International Copenhagen House website
    - *Korkeakoulut tukemassa maahanmuuttajia* Facebook group (run by CIMO) is worth joining, especially for HEI personnel

- Cooperation with regional stakeholders such as TE offices, reception centres, Poluttamo and Ohjaamo, and NGOs has been fruitful.
- Many HEIs are already doing a lot: individual courses, whole programmes etc.
    - Note: The Guidance generalia lectures of SIMHE-Metropolia can be joined online (please contact simhe-info@metropolia.fi)
    - The path studies of the universities of applied sciences seem to work well substance-wise, but they simultaneously deprive students of financial support, including student allowance.

One of the most important questions was asked right at the beginning of the session: 'How is it possible to join the SIMHE HEIs?' There are now six named HEIs for this work and this number is not likely to grow in near future. However, very important and impressive efforts are being made in other HEIs as well. For example, Hanken School of Economics has already provided credit studies to many asylum seekers, and University of Tampere has been active in providing continuing education for doctor and teacher qualifications.

This kind of proactivity will be needed in the future as well, because the long-term goal is that any prospective student, regardless of nationality or residence status, could approach any HEI in Finland and find relevant information and options to consider. Thus, while all the HEIs are encouraged to explore their own best ways of including SIMHE aspects to their services, curricula, research and inner policies, the named (and strategically funded) responsible SIMHE HEIs are there to offer national guidance and counselling service for all prospective students interested in any HEI, course or programme, to tackle specific system and field-related challenges, and to support and enhance the work done in other institutions. This requires both distribution of work and true cooperation.

Notes: Ahmed Hamad, University of Vaasa

Poster Park presentations

The Poster Park provided glimpses of what is already going on regarding migrants in higher education in Finland. Posters of existing and developing best practices and tips to participate were available throughout the seminar. Live poster presentations were also held, so it was possible to discuss the topics directly with the experts. This section includes summarized versions of the presented posters. Contact details are provided for further queries.

Alkio-opisto

Opening the doors of higher education

Alkio College is a folk high school located in the Jyväskylä area. We offer students open university studies and open university of applied sciences studies in several fields in about 30 different subjects.

The following fields can be studied at Alkio College: education and psychology, history and languages, health education and natural sciences, and society and economy.

During the academic year 2016–2017, we are offering a preliminary academic study programme for migrants. The aim of this programme is to improve Finnish language skills and academic study skills to the level that is required in the entrance exams of universities and universities of applied sciences in Finland. The basis of the programme is learning Finnish as a second language and attending individual guidance counselling. The students also choose other studies from the wide range that Alkio College offers, which gives them an opportunity to study and learn alongside Finnish students. The migrant students genuinely integrate into the Alkio community and take part in numerous student activities.

The first time that the programme was carried out in 2014, the duration of the programme was one semester. The funding was and still is provided by the Finnish National Agency for Education and the programme is targeted at students who have a residence permit and who are under 29 years of age.

The feedback from the students has been positive. Students have successfully completed open university studies (following the curricula of the University of Eastern Finland) in Finnish as a second language. Based on our contacts with former students, we know that some of them have received a study place at a university or at a university of applied sciences.

Contact person: Marjaana Göös, marjaana.goos@alkio.fi

POSTER PARK

The Centre for International Mobility (CIMO)

Online linguistic support for refugees

The OLS can be used at any time from a computer, tablet or smartphone with an internet connection.

The Erasmus+ Online Linguistic Support (OLS) currently offers online language courses to higher education students taking part in the Erasmus+ programme. The European Commission has decided to extend this service to the benefit of around 100,000 refugees over three years, on a voluntary basis and free of charge for them.

The OLS language courses include a variety of self-paced modules covering different linguistic areas, as well as interactive Live Coaching activities (online MOOCs, tutoring sessions and forums).

In the light of the current migration crisis, the objective of this initiative is to support the efforts of EU member states to integrate refugees into Europe's education and training systems, and ensure their skills development.

The OLS can be made available to refugees based on the definition below:

In the EU context, either a third-country national who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned above, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it, and to whom Art. 12 (Exclusion) of Directive 2011/95/EU does not apply. (European Commission, DG Migration and Home Affairs.)

This definition includes individuals having already obtained refugee status after asylum application, individuals having received a positive asylum decision with refugee status, temporary/subsidiary protection or humanitarian protection, asylum applicants, without age limits.

Contact person: Sofia Lähdeniemi, sofia.lahdeniemi@oph.fi
Further information: http://erasmusplusols.eu/ols4refugees/

The Centre for International Mobility (CIMO)

The Scholar Rescue Fund

The Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF) programme offers scholars threatened or persecuted in their home country the chance to continue their work in a safe environment.

Established by the U.S. Institute of International Education (IIE), the programme has been active since 2002. Finland joined in at the beginning of 2016.

In Finland, supporting research and teaching periods of Syrian and Iraqi scholars in the early stages of their academic career (i.e. recent PhD graduates or with limited academic experience after graduation) are prioritized.

The programme in Finland is open to all higher education institutions and all fields of study. The duration of supported periods can be 9–12 months. It is also possible to apply for an extension for another year.

A scholar resident in any country can apply for the programme. IIE-SRF and CIMO finance the scholarship periods together. The support available from the programme for a single scholar is approximately USD 50,000 a year. There is a rolling application period in the programme.

The scholar to be financed through the programme must apply for entry to the IIE-SRF list of potential grant receivers and meet IIE-SRF's eligibility criteria. Each higher education institution can suggest a potentially suitable scholar for the scholarship period, or can look for a suitable scholar for a scholarship period from the list of potential candidates.

Contact person: Sini Piippo, sini.piippo@oph.fi
Further information: http://www.scholarrescuefund.org/

POSTER PARK

JAMK University of Applied Sciences

diversophy® New Horizons: At Home Together In Finland

The New Horizons game is now freely available across Finland for teachers, trainers, municipalities, libraries, language schools, cultural centres, and others who are interested in learning more about the inhabitants of Finland and who wish to nurture the development of intergroup dialogue and empathetic connections.

The diversophy® game is the product of ongoing collaboration between students and teachers at JAMK University of Applied Sciences and George Simons International, the originator of the diversophy® series of cultural training games. The project is embedded in a cross-cultural management course that includes international exchange students, Finnish and international degree students, and asylum seekers registered as open university students. The game facilitates interaction and dialogue through game play, with the overall goal of increasing awareness, understanding and empathy between communities and between individuals residing in Finland.

The diversophy® New Horizons training game celebrates the present and future human diversity within Finland. Diversity in this case comprises all people in Finland including past, present and future newcomers, as well as those who are visiting from outside of Finland as students or professionals. The project involves finding common grounds to adapt to the changing composition of our local populations.

The game creation project has been embedded in a cross-cultural management course that has included international exchange students, Finnish and international degree students, and asylum seekers registered as open university students who have received academic credit for their participation.

Contact: newhorizons@jamk.fi (Steven Crawford)
www.jamk.fi/newhorizons
www.jamk.fi/en/newhorizons

POSTER PARK

University of Tampere: School of Education

Let's Work Together (LWT)

Let's Work Together **(LWT)** is an action group for supporting and integrating asylum seekers and refugees. Since autumn 2015 a group of teachers and students from the School of Education at the University of Tampere, in collaboration with the Finnish Red Cross, municipalities, reception centres and adult and vocational education institutes, have been organizing activities bringing together asylum seekers, refugees and local people.

فريق هو "معا لنعمل" عربي طالبي وادماج لاعانة عمل كلية .السياسي اللجوء و تامبري بجامعة التربية نشاطا ينظمون شركاؤها اللجوء لطالبي مشتركا طريق عن السياسي النشاطهذا من الهدف .التعليم اللجوء طالبي ادماج هو المجتمع في واللاجئين طريق عن الفنلندي مع مفيدة توفيرانشطة .الفنلنديين

The activities have focused on opening courses in education and language studies, on using courses for early childhood education with asylum seeker families, on voluntary work in clubs for children, and on open discussions and meetings. A number of graduate students are completing their thesis research on activities related to LWT.

The group has started a Facebook group and a website to open up a platform that is not restricted to the university. The group's activities include collaboration with actors from other European universities, such as the planning of joint projects and cross-cultural study modules. LWT has also carried out a small survey on integration activities at the University of Tampere.

Currently, LWT activities also include English language courses in the language centre as well as the staff and students in social work and language studies. The group is being assisted by a group of Finnish MA students and two asylum seekers, which has opened up new possibilities to further develop its activities.

LWT action group: https://letsworktogetheredu.wordpress.com/
https://www.facebook.com/letwork999/
Contact person: Anja Heikkinen, anja.heikkinen@uta.fi

POSTER PARK

Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

Strengthening the social and economic capacity of skilled immigrants through the Enhanced Apprenticeship Programme

Finland is the first country in Europe to face steep ageing due to large post-war (1945–1949) cohorts. About 20% of the population is aged 65 and over and this figure is expected to increase in the coming years. The combination of increased longevity and a reduced birth rate will directly reduce the growth rates of the Finnish economy by slowing the growth of the capital stock and by weakening the productivity of the labour force. This sluggish growth of GDP means a reduced tax base and less tax revenue. In addition, keeping up the current tax-financed systems of social pensions and health care will require substantial increases in the already high tax rates.

Migration is an opportunity to strengthen Finland's international networks, increase its competitiveness and stimulate its economic growth. However, these can only be achieved through comprehensive integration programmes.

Employment as a source of income, identity, social relations, self-esteem and well-being is critical for effective integration. On the other hand, language proficiency is key, not merely for survival purposes, but to finding employment and enhancing social and economic cohesion.

Currently, skilled immigrants are faced with the challenge of finding a comprehensive programme that effectively prepares them for the Finnish labour market. Many are therefore forced to find low-skilled jobs to make ends meet, while many remain unemployed. High unemployment rates and the employment of immigrants in low-skilled jobs, means that many are at risk of poverty and may become a net drain on welfare services, adding to the already existing pressure on taxpayers as well as on the social and healthcare sector. Therefore, key stakeholders must work in collaboration to create programmes that foster inclusion of foreign skills into the fabric of the labour market.

The principles of the Enhanced Apprenticeship Programme are rooted in three best practices that have proven to be effective in integrating skilled immigrants: apprenticeship, mentorship and networking. Apprenticeships are real jobs for real people, evidence that establishes their

credibility in the immigrant integration process.

The participants in the Enhanced Apprenticeship Programme are called apprentices. An apprentice is placed with an experienced member of staff to support them in learning the exact skills needed for their chosen career and working life in Finland, as well as in broadening his/her social and career network.

The Enhanced Apprenticeship Programme combines on-the-job training, classroom learning, peer groups and professional mentorship that lead to occupation-specific competencies and certification.

The Enhanced Apprenticeship Programme aims to bring together key stakeholders – including employers, government agencies, academic institutions, skilled immigrants and other interested entities – to combine resources and work together towards a holistic programme that will not only increase foreign skills participation but enhance the process of building our shared future.

Contact person: Margaret Migayi, margaret.migayi@metropolia.fi

POSTER PARK

Metropolia University of Applied Sciences/ Simhe-Metropolia

Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland (SIMHE) development project at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

SIMHE-Metropolia is piloting the model together with the SIMHE-UniPID project in University of Jyväskylä. The project is part of the model, created by the Ministry of Education and Culture, in which higher education institutions take their responsibility in supporting immigrants in higher education.

In April 2016 Metropolia University of Applied sciences launched the project Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education (SIMHE-Metropolia). The project is funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture. It aims at guiding highly educated immigrants, and those who are eligible to apply for higher education, for suitable and meaningful educational and career paths in a regional and national level. Additionally, the project aims at recognizing and acknowledging the prior learning and competences of highly educated immigrants.

SIMHE-Metropolia has been developing and modelling the following services within its SIMHE activities: the Guidance and Counselling Service and the Recognition of Competences and Prior Learning Guidance and Counselling Services were launched in May 2016, and, by October 2016, they have reached altogether over 200 immigrants.

The Guidance and Counselling Service has two service platforms: Personal Guidance Discussions and the Guidance Generalia lecture series.

The Personal Guidance Discussion aims at responding to an individual's needs in mapping the current situation and finding solutions for future educational and career paths. Personal discussion enables the customer to explain his/her individual case thoroughly and plans can be made accordingly. Additionally, immigrants, and people with a refugee or similar background in particular, are often in a vulnerable situation, and personal and confidential discussion can help them access the help and advice they need when planning their educational moves. The current findings, based on the discussions undertaken between May and October,

also show the need that exists for such a personal service with an expert in the field of higher education. Guidance and counselling is also provided via email, over the phone and via Skype if needed.

The Guidance Generalia lecture series is aimed at a larger audience to inform and educate immigrants about the Finnish education system, the emphasis being on higher education and applying for studies in higher education. In addition, Guidance Generalia connects immigrants to other actors in the field, as SIMHE-Metropolia has cooperated with, for example, the TE Office, the Finnish National Agency for Education and Kela to have their services introduced to the participants at Guidance Generalia lectures. Guidance Generalia has also been welcomed by educational institutions offering integration training for immigrants and they are thus important partners in reaching the potential audience.

Recognition of Prior Learning and Competences was first piloted in April 2016 in the field of technology. It included three parts to test participants' mathematical, engineering and digital skills. The pilot test had thirty-one participants, and it was offered in three languages (Finnish, English and Arabic). Participants had to have a degree or studies in the field of technology, but there was no need to have a permanent residency in Finland. The main result emphasized the factor that being able to succeed in the recognition of competences, the participant should have completed a degree and they should have established themselves in Finland. This supported the idea of offering such services in the future mainly for those who have a residence permit to stay in Finland. The second phase took place from October to December 2016 in the field of technology and business.

Based on the results of the original pilot in Recognition of Competences, the concept has now been developed to consist of two parts: Mapping of Competences and Demonstrating Competences. The latter part cannot be completed without completing the first part.

The first part, Mapping of Competences, aims at mapping what kind of competences and skills the customer has acquired through previous studies and possible work experience. This information is then compared with the equivalent education at Metropolia to seek out what kind of educational gaps there may be that are likely to prevent people from entering the labour market. Customers also undertake self-evaluation of their skills and competences, and all this is drawn together by having an In-Depth Professional Discussion with the expert in the field at Metropo-

Eligibility to participate in the Recognition of Competences requires a bachelor's and/or master's degree in the field of technology or business, a residence permit in Finland and sufficient language skills in Finnish or in English. The results of the Mapping of Competences will be ready in December 2016 and the results for the Demonstrating Competences later in spring 2017.

lia. Customers will receive a document based on the above after completing the Mapping of Competences.

The latter part, Demonstrating Competences, allows the customer to show his/her skills and competences through a work-based project (10 ECTS) that the customer will undertake together with the Metropolia students in the customer's field of expertise. This allows the customers to update their project skills, to connect with higher education and, most importantly, to connect with potential employers. Demonstrating Competences will take place in January–May 2017. After they complete Demonstrating Competences, customers will receive a document with an evaluation of the project work and an official study transcript from Metropolia University of Applied Sciences.

SIMHE-Metropolia will develop the above services further in 2017 with plans to start a course in career planning as part of the Guidance and Counselling Services. There are also initiatives to develop alternative application paths for immigrants and creating a new concept in preparatory courses for immigrants to smooth their path to higher education and working life.

Contact persons:
Marianne Autero, marianne.autero@metropolia.fi
Heidi Stenberg, heidi.stenberg@metropolia.fi

POSTER PARK

Visio-säätiö

Minus-to-plus

A large number of immigrants and asylum seekers from different countries and educational backgrounds need to be integrated into Finnish society. In addition, they need jobs to be able to build a career and start a new life in a new environment. To address these issues, the Visio-säätiö started a project in Saarijärvi in March 2016.

The project is an international marketing company that draws on the connections immigrants have in their countries of origin as well as the needs that Finnish companies want to meet. Based on previous experience, it seems that Finland has not been recognized as one of the industrial countries that companies and businesses in the Middle East, the Gulf countries and North Africa want to have deals with. The idea is to introduce Finnish companies to companies that migrants have connections to in their country of origin in order to make new arrangements and close possible deals.

This project can also create global awareness about Finnish companies as well as the top industries and product fields that Finland has to offer.

Contact person:
Maher Abedah, m.abedah1@gmail.com

What has been done:

We have communicated with many companies in Finland and set up meetings to introduce our project.
We have made an agreement with a Finnish company for it to host our project and for it to provide the legal frame under which we can work.
We have also built a website to market our project and to make it easier to form connections with our customers.

In the future we are going to:

Continue marketing and building a large network of interested companies in Finland and in the targeted markets.
Look for companies seeking local partners outside of Finland and trying to find suitable ones.
Help new immigrants who have the intention to start their own projects in Finland.

POSTER PARK

UniPID

Virtual Studies

The Finnish University Partnership for International Development (UniPID) is a partnership network between nine Finnish universities supporting Finnish universities in the promotion and implementation of sustainable development and knowledge exchange in higher education.

UniPID's Virtual Studies (VS) are free of charge online courses, available for both international and Finnish students enrolled at the UniPID member universities. This study programme was created to deepen collaboration between universities and draw on the specific areas of expertise related to global development at different universities in Finland. In 2016 some virtual study courses were opened to asylum seekers. In cooperation with the Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland (SIMHE) project, special funding calls were made to finance SIMHE-UniPID courses.

In the first phase of the process, discussions were had with providers of four virtual studies courses whose coordinators agreed to open them for the SIMHE target group. These four courses varied by level, with some requiring more previous knowledge from the prospective students than did others. It was originally planned that 5–10 seats would be reserved for SIMHE students per course. Unfortunately, in the case of two of these courses, access was not possible after all due to the administrative issues at the university in question.

In autumn 2016 SIMHE-UniPID organized two funding calls for courses directed specifically at asylum seekers and refugees. A total of eight applications were received through these calls. Apart from specific intercultural and pedagogical aspects it was stressed that the applicants should be able to guarantee that (1) even the asylum seeker and refugee students could gain access to the online study environment and (2) that they could earn credits like any other students and receive an official university transcript of records after suc-

cessfully completing the course. Funding was granted for three courses:

- University of Helsinki: Introduction to Gender Studies in Nordic Societies
- University of Tampere: Technologies for Learning: Mobile and Social Technologies Integration in Pursuit of Quality Learning
- University of Helsinki: Introduction to Research Methods

At the Migrants in Higher Education Seminar´s Poster Park, the blueprint for the Technologies for Learning course was showcased as an example of a good way to facilitate access for asylum seekers and immigrants to Finnish higher education.

Technologies for Learning: Mobile and Social Technologies Integration in Pursuit of Quality Learning

(University of Tampere: School of Information Sciences)

The use of technologies in education has been previously and widely researched. However, this topic is constantly relevant because of the advances in technology and the related pedagogy.

At the School of Information, we are preparing a course and related research on the application of technologies for learning purposes. The course aims to highlight and apply some of the essential technologies for learning purposes. This includes social and mobile technologies that are already in use but are not yet well utilized for learning purposes.

The Technologies for Learning course is useful for a wide range of stakeholders, for example teachers and students who may not have had adequate training. It will help them keep in touch with potential technologies. Even more importantly, this course is of value for migrant students in order to learn about the technologies that are currently used in education in Finland. The course will thus help them adapt to the Finnish higher education system.

We use the results of previous research in the field to provide a course for migrant students to learn technology use in education. In do-

ing so, we are also extending the depth of our research on technologies in education. Both the technological and pedagogical perspective will be strengthened.

Contact persons:
UniPID Virtual Studies: Osku Haapasaari, osku.haapasaari@jyu.fi
University of Tampere: School of Information Sciences: Mikko Ruohonen, mikko.j.ruohonen@uta.fi and Nicholas Mavengere, nicholas.mavengere@uta.fi

After the seminar

Immediately after the seminar a researchers' workshop was organized to consider the seminar's implications for future study. Later on we summarized the discussions of our two days together to reach some conclusions.

Researchers' workshop

Chairs and responsible authors:
Sari Pöyhönen, University of Jyväskylä
Päivi Pirkkalainen, University of Jyväskylä
Ilona Bontenbal, University of Jyväskylä

Immediately after the seminar, a researchers' workshop was organized to bring together people interested in research in the fields of migration and higher education.

At the beginning of the workshop, a short introduction was held by PhD student Ilona Bontenbal. The main message of this introduction was that, based on the information provided on the websites of universities and universities of applied sciences, there is surprisingly little research going on about issues regarding migrants in higher education in Finland at the moment. Most migrant-related research, such as research on migrant employment or integration, only touches upon the topic of higher education without going into it more deeply. The research on migrants' education often concentrates on migrants within the Finnish comprehensive school system or adult education, so very little focus is given to migrants in higher education. It is worth pondering why there is seemingly so little research on this topic at the moment. One can also ask why most attention is still paid to the migrants themselves, and not nearly as much to the structures they are facing.

After the introduction, the group was divided into four sub-groups to discuss two key questions proposed by the organizers. At the end, each sub-group reported their conclusions to the whole group. Here we briefly summarize the discussion under the two questions proposed.

1) Did you find new ideas or topics for research from this seminar? What kinds of research topics are important in the future?

- Knowledge production and utilization
- Gender, migration and responsibility
- How to stop or challenge the social reproduction of inequality
- Asylum seekers and refugees are missing as a focus group in HE research (qualitative approach especially)
- ICT and migrants: How could ICT be used to make integration more flexible?

- Action research/experiential research on:
    - What are the actual (structural) obstacles or barriers from a migrant's perspective? Where do the obstacles appear?
    - Designing admission processes and criteria to support fair and equitable admission processes
- Concept-related
    - Re-conceptualize the concept of migrants / international students / internationalization
    - How do the labels predefine you and marginalize you?
    - Who are defined as migrants, and who are not? What are the consequences?
- Topics related to migrant students:
    - Comparison between countries – what is done elsewhere?
    - What happens after the 'student migration' ends?
        - How to stop international students leaving after graduation?
        - How to make it into the labour market for student migrants?
    - What happens in universities when internationalization is not working? (20%–50 % of the faculty should be international)
- Language issues:
    - What is the role of languages in higher education?
    - How to get people to a sufficient level in Finnish?
    - Where to fit the Finnish language courses and the practice needed?
    - Language learning in work environment
    - Situational assessment of how much is done at the moment in English in Finnish HE.
    - What Finland does in comparison with other nations with blocking integration on the basis of language barriers
    - Hierarchies based on accents
    - Necessity to know the Finnish language before you can get a job, etc. (there is plenty of research that questions this)

2) What types of activities would you suggest in networking with other researchers? Do you have any concrete ideas on research cooperation?

- Interaction with master's and PhD students
- Live & Skype meetings (funding issues)
- How to mainstream or communicate issues related to diversity in other / all disciplines?
    - These are not themes for ETMU days only!
    - Low threshold events and face-to-face meetings (e.g. A 'Migrants in higher education' table at any conference for a certain coffee break?)
    - Multidisciplinary meetings to share ideas and to network
- Universities and universities of applied sciences coming together to brainstorm future research
- Using ICT to help
    - Place to share research? (e.g. SIMHE web-world)
    - Data sessions, where researchers with different background look at the same data, discuss and debate
    - Facebook group & mailing lists (there are lots of those already, however)
- Using existing funding sources for networking (NORFACE, COST actions, ERASMUS+ Jean Monnet activities…)
- Using existing national/local/international networks (IMISCOE, ETMU, ESREA Network on Migration, Transnationalism and Racisms…)
- Events -> 'invading' new academic spaces and fields with migration themes
    - A special track for ETMU days in Jyväskylä 2017
    - Korkeakoulututkimuksen symposium (National Symposium of Higher Education Research) and international CHER Conference in Jyväskylä in 2017
    - Applied language studies symposium/Annual
    - Finnish Educational Research Association (FERA) Conference
    - Longer version of researchers' workshop for future SIMHE seminars

Lively discussion and various ideas exchanged indicate the need for basic research in this area. We need common concepts to research the issues relating to migrants and higher education, and the utilisation of multiple methods in order to understand the complexities and varieties of the field. There is a need for multidisciplinary research in this area, and we hope that in the near future ideas discussed here would turn into research project proposals.

Notes: Johanna Kivimäki, Melissa Plath, Marita Häkkinen and Katinka Käyhkö, UniPID, University of Jyväskylä

Conclusion

Katinka Käyhkö, SIMHE-UniPID, University of Jyväskylä
Marita Häkkinen, SIMHE-UniPID, University of Jyväskylä

This concluding text brings together the many strands of thought that emerged from the multilayered whole of the *Migrants in Higher Education: Fostering Cooperation at Universities* seminar. Even though the themes and discussions of the seminar were multifaceted, the reader has most likely recognized a few trends. This conclusion examines them once more through the lens of the practical experience gathered during the pilot year of Supporting Migrants in Higher Education in Finland (SIMHE) work.

First, as Pedro Góis stated in his keynote, the entire higher education system is diverse and global, and migrants are an important part of it. However, higher education in Finland has not been sufficiently prepared to include immigrants as prospective students. The existing policies are made to serve the national students, short-term exchange students or the international students who apply for degree programmes with their own funding. At the same time, Finland is among the European countries with the highest disparities between native-born and foreign-born populations in tertiary education (Eurostat, 2016). The work of SIMHE has revealed that, for many eligible immigrants, entry to Finnish higher education is too difficult and that those who are admitted often face a challenging path. For an asylum seeker the task is even harder.

Migrants with HE degrees often find it difficult to receive recognition for their expertise in Finland. Break-out session 2.6 considered if recognition of prior learning (RPL) could become a part of admissions and integration training. In addition, national guidelines to support RPL were called for in break-out session 1.3. Quoting Jens Kemper and Marjo Kuronen, we need to 'switch on the lights' and 'open the doors' of the HEIs also for these new groups of prospective students. Finnish legislation contains nothing to prohibit an academically eligible asylum seeker from becoming an HE student, but in practice there are multiple obstacles along the way. One new obstacle is the widely discussed introduction of tuition fees from 2017 onwards for the programmes in English.

Second, it must also be stated that much has been accomplished within a short period. Many of the HEIs have responded to the call made by

the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) in autumn 2015. In many cases, activities were initiated by the spontaneous involvement of the HE students, who went to help in the reception centres and requested that educational institutions support their efforts. As staff members joined the work, the activities became more structured. Even though the initial enthusiasm of the volunteerism has now faded, valuable initiatives continue.

However, almost all the work depends on active individuals or departments, without proper funding or strategic institutional support. There is a danger that these initiatives will survive only as long as the people who started them are able to maintain them. Guidelines and tools were frequently requested throughout the sessions. Practical suggestions for steps forward were given in the joint break-out session 1.5 & 1.6: for example the funding criteria of HEIs should be revised to contain inclusive measures, not just credits and degrees. The work already being done also needs to be disseminated more effectively because the people and HEIs involved do not yet know what their counterparts are doing. The dissemination of good practices and policy-level discussions about the revision of funding criteria are both issues in which the national SIMHE work can and should give more support to HEIs in the future.

Third, HEIs are not islands within Finnish society. Migrant issues have many stakeholders. During the seminar, more coherence was frequently requested between ministries, authorities and other actors because individual migrant´s issues too frequently end up in cross-policy gridlock. At the moment, cross-ministry level work is already being carried out, including a working group led by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in which SIMHE is participating. Additionally, it was seen as necessary to have roundtables for decision-makers, migrants, researchers and local authorities so that a holistic, research-based view could be achieved. HEIs were also encouraged to cooperate regionally with the employment offices, NGOs, vocational education and adult education centres in their endeavours. In break-out session 1.1, it was proposed that universities could become hubs for socializing – not just for studying.

The core of SIMHE work has been providing national guidance and counselling services for migrants. Guidance and counselling are needed at all levels of HE, from helping to identify one's own field to providing career services. As discussed in session 2.4, in a cross-cultural context this requires building relationships and offering various meetings, in which it

is also important to learn to listen from the other's perspective. The opportunities for group counselling are also worth considering and one has to remember that counselling is increasingly a part of teaching as well. In session 2.2, it was highlighted that there are modes of working that are suitable for diverse learning settings, such as emphasizing learning by doing instead of lecturing. Refugee student Maher Abedah stressed the importance of practice, opportunities to integrate with Finnish students and visiting actual workplaces.

In regards to values, the most extensive discussions took place regarding equality and equitability. In the panel discussion of the closing plenary, it was even suggested that equality in Finland is an illusion. In reality, the Finnish ideal of educational equality can frequently be reduced to the statement: 'No exceptions!' This is often taken to mean that giving alternative options to migrants would mean unequal or unfair treatment of native students. Yet even among the Finnish students we have been able to find more inclusive ways to support students with, for example, dyslexia, ADHD or hearing disabilities. What is stopping us from using similar logic for Finnish as a second language, academic writing or ICT skills? How to put into practice Birgitta Vuorinen's opening words: 'We cannot afford to leave anybody behind, and we do not want to leave anyone behind'?

At least according to the discussions of the break-out sessions 1.2 and 2.6 and the panellists of the closing plenary, the goal should be equitable solutions instead of equality. Could equal admissions someday mean equitable admissions? Could universities also feature special application rounds, scholarships, intensive academic level Finnish language courses, or pathway programmes for migrants? What could be the role of open universities in all this?

Practically all of the seminar sessions mentioned languages and multilingualism as important resources for learning and innovation. In her keynote lecture, Riitta Pyykkö emphasized that language is an important part of academic life and integration into new societies. We simply cannot afford to continue the monolingual way. If we require high levels of Finnish or Swedish skills, we should be able to provide the courses and support needed to reach those levels and not leave people to fill in the gap between levels B1 and C1 by themselves.

The seminar themes have suggested a number of paths for future research. As noted by Ilona Bontenbal in the researchers' workshop, re-

search related to migrants and education has been focusing on migrants within the Finnish comprehensive school system, and little attention is given to higher education. One aspect of this was revealed in session 2.4: relevant research is currently being conducted but the results are not always published. The lack of funding is another clear reason. A third possible answer was given by David M. Hoffman in session 2.3: the neoliberal ideology structuring HE has made researchers cautious, so it is a challenge to find people to carry out relevant social science research on Finland's HE system. The possible samples or concrete cases to study have also been scarce.

Finally, we are left with five keywords: *equity*, *cooperation*, *structure*, *courage* and *change*. We are called to be equitable and to work together. There is a lot to be done on the structural level. A change is emerging, and courage is needed in order to reach it. Our HEIs are autonomous, we have the people, and we have the support of the MEC. We actually have all the tools we need, so why not start changing practices from within our own institutions? As Steven Crawford declared: 'Just go and do it!'

Reference:

Eurostat. (2016). *Migrant integration statistics – education*. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migrant_integration_statistics_-_education

This report presents the key contents of the seminar Migrants in Higher Education: Fostering Cooperation at Universities held at the University of Jyväskylä on 13–14 December 2016. The seminar's diverse group of participants and interrelated themes promoted lively discussions and the sharing of ideas. Because the recordings of the plenaries and the majority of the presentations' slides can already be found on the event webpage, this report concentrates on the discussions.

The unexpected numbers of asylum seekers have triggered processes that can benefit all migrants interested in higher education, as well as educational institutions, and Finnish society. Innovative initiatives are already up and running, but they are still isolated from each other. A call for wider cooperation, policy-level support and further research was heard throughout the seminar. The diverse group of prospective students provides a challenge for the supposedly equal Finnish educational system. Yet they help by making the existing obstacles more visible and treatable, and are an essential part of the solutions needed.

This report is not the whole truth about migrants and higher education in Finland. It is a collection of voices and points of view of people representing different positions within, at the edges or on the outside of Finnish higher education. It contains inner tensions, suggestions for next steps, and unanswered questions. However, it provides a mosaic-like view of the current state of affairs, a point to move forward, and a tool for future actions and discussions. May it find its use in the hands of many.

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