

Adopted in Government negotiations on 28 September 2017

Government Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns  
for 2017–2021

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

During the various phases of its history, Finland has had a sizeable diaspora relative to its population. Nearly every Finn has a family member, friend or acquaintance living abroad. There are approximately 1.6 million expatriate Finns. The figure is based on official census data from a selected 29 countries. Since some countries allow ancestry to be reported as Finnish while others only include persons who were born in Finland or are Finnish citizens, the data are not comparable. The total number of expatriate Finns is therefore even higher.

There are around 300,000 Finnish citizens living abroad and in April 2015, a total of 242,096 of them were eligible to vote. In terms of eligible voters, expatriates as a whole are comparable to the Central Finland electoral district, which elects ten Members of Parliament.

Finns who have married abroad still make up a considerable proportion of the total expatriate population, which broadens and diversifies the definition of who Finnish expatriates are and expands the interfaces between expatriate Finns and their home country. Expatriate Finns also include a significant number of Finnish-speaking Swedes and their descendants. The increase in the number of expatriate Finns is grounded not only in traditional immigration but also in moves abroad due to work, studies or traineeships as well as retirees moving abroad for shorter periods on a seasonal basis. The latter two have been on the rise for the past two decades. Fewer people are moving abroad permanently, but the mobility of Finns in everyday life is also on the rise.

The right of immigrants to base their cultural identity on that of their country of origin has been established by international convention and must be honoured by the host state. The preservation of such an identity is generally also in the interest of both the host state – typically assisting rather than hindering integration in the new country – and that of the country of origin, with the links retained by expatriates serving to foster wellbeing, a sense of togetherness, collaboration and also internationalisation. There is moreover a growing understanding and appreciation in society of cultural diversity and of living ‘between’ cultures. For the expatriates themselves, a strong cultural identity supports their engagement with the host country as well and may serve to raise awareness of Finland abroad.

The mobility of families is reflected in the rising number of expatriate Finnish children and young persons, as demonstrated e.g. by the growth in the number and size of Finnish Schools receiving state aid from one academic year to the next. While not all schools apply for state aid, in the 2015–2016 school year aid was paid to a total of 136 schools in 37 countries. The schools had a total of 4,238 pupils, 4,183 of them at Finnish Schools and 55 at Swedish Schools. For 90 years now, the Finland Society has provided a link between expatriate Finns and their country of origin while also serving as the secretariat for the Finnish Expatriate Parliament, which meets in session every two or three years to convey proposals and initiatives from expatriate Finns to the Finnish Government. At year-end 2015, 512 expatriate Finnish communities from 38 countries were involved in the Finnish Expatriate Parliament.

The evolving operating environment puts a premium on a knowledge of the needs of the different groups of expatriates and the more efficient use of resources. According to Statistics Finland, in 2014 a total of 31,510 persons moved to Finland, 430 persons fewer than the year before, while the number of persons moving from Finland was 15,490 or 1,590 persons more than the year before. Net immigration in 2014 totalled 16,020 persons, which was 2,030 fewer than the year before. The net immigration of foreign nationals decreased slightly, by 1,480 persons. In 2014, 25% of those migrating to Finland and roughly 65% of those migrating from Finland were Finnish citizens. The figures

also include expatriate Finns who are not Finnish citizens. EU countries were the country of origin or destination for 75% of expatriate Finns migrating to Finland and nearly 70% of those migrating from Finland. The fast pace of modern society calls for precise data on migration to be made quickly available. Existing procedures are constantly being challenged by EU membership, EU expansion, the decision of EU courts and the social security and tax treaties concluded by Finland with various countries.

### **1.1. Significance of and need for policy programme**

This third Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns presents perspectives, estimates and approaches for further strengthening the relationship between expatriate Finns and their country of origin.

Expatriate Finns provide a multi-dimensional resource for Finland. They raise awareness of Finland abroad. An active and effective network of expatriate Finns nourishes Finland's commercial, cultural and political life. Those who return home bring back knowledge and skills they learnt abroad. Returning migrants account for a considerable share of total immigration. Partly employment-related, the migration of returnees and their integration in Finland does not usually involve major problems.

The Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns strengthens the continuity of expatriation policy implementation. Published in 2013, Finland's immigration strategy lays out the long-term guidelines for immigration policy. The expatriate policy supports the overall immigration strategy of Finland, in which the emphasis is on the topics of immigration, employment and integration. The drafting of the expatriate policy programme was coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior, with consultations being held with the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as well as with the Finland Society and the Finnish Expatriate Parliament. The implementation of the policy programme and the allocation of responsibilities to the various ministries as well as financial aspects are addressed in section 4.

The policies proposed in this programme and the proposed measures under each policy serve to reinforce Finnish expatriation policy and express it in more concrete terms.

In terms of the substance of the programme, it is important for the updated programme to provide a balanced and realistic presentation of needs and goals. It is also important for the implementation of the policies already appearing in the previous programme to be continued by the various ministries responsible in a consistent manner from one parliamentary period to the next. Most of the policies have no specific new budgetary impacts.

The key goals of the programme from the perspective of expatriate Finns are:

- further development of the Finnish Schools (3.1.1.) and other school conditions of expatriate Finnish children and young persons (3.1.2.–3.1.3.),
- support for organisational activities arranged by expatriate Finns (3.1.7.),
- increasing voting rates among expatriate Finns (3.2.3.), and
- safeguarding the operations of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament (3.2.4.).

## **2. BACKGROUND TO THE PROGRAMME**

## 2.1. Finnish expatriation in transition

The earliest emigration flows from Finland during the 16<sup>th</sup> century and 17<sup>th</sup> century were directed towards central and northern Sweden – the native language of Sweden Finns is Finnish or *meänkieli* (Tornedal Finnish) – as well as Norway, North America, and the areas conquered by Sweden in Russia (Ingria). Some traces still remain of these migratory flows. Finnish expatriation is also a consequence brought about by the shifting of borders. For the most part, however, Finnish expatriation is the result of later migrations such as:

- migration to the United States and Canada which began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century ,
- migration to Australia which started in the 1920s
- migration to St Petersburg and Ingria (also in the territory of Estonia) that continued until the Russian revolution
- migration of Finns and Finnish Canadians and Americans to the Soviet Union during the 1920s and 1930s
- migration to Sweden and other European countries that started after the Second World War
- increased mobility within the EU since Finland's accession to the European Union on 1 January 1995.

The reasons behind emigration have been partly economic and partly political. The concept *expatriate Finn* refers to native-born Finnish nationals who have moved from Finland to live abroad. The concept also covers the descendants of these people — regardless of whether or not the descendants are Finnish citizens or born in Finland. They must, however, regard themselves as Finnish (i.e. be Finnish in their identity). Since the 1970s, Finland has received immigrants who have subsequently been granted Finnish citizenship and whose children are Finnish citizens by virtue of being born here. They are expanding the concepts of 'Finn' and 'expatriate Finn'. The return of such immigrants to their roots presents the policies concerning expatriate Finns with new opportunities and challenges.

The character of migration has changed since the turn of the century. These days, a more permanent — and traditional — form of emigration is represented by marriages abroad, which are a significant reason for moving to a foreign country. Quite often, current emigration is intended to be temporary. The reasons may include study, work experience, acquiring foreign language skills, career advancement, foreign posting or new life experiences. The emigrants of today are, on average, better educated than their counterparts in the past. Retirees represent a new group of emigrants in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Moving abroad, to Mediterranean EU countries in particular, continues to attract Finnish pensioners. Portugal, Spain and France are equally popular among those who move abroad permanently and seasonally. Other destinations favoured by seniors moving abroad seasonally, include Alanya in Turkey and Hua Hin and Pattaya in Thailand. Florida and the Lake Worth area in particular also remain popular. Estonia and the other Nordic countries are rising in popularity among destinations for senior citizens moving abroad.

As the number of retirees living abroad on a seasonal basis rises, Finland is also a destination for a handful of traditional returning migrants. The ageing of the baby-boomer generations has resulted in migrants returning from Central Europe, and Germany and the UK in particular. Other countries of origin for returning retirees include Sweden, Australia, the United States and Canada. Returning to Finland is also on the rise among those who have retired to Spain, although Finns also relocate from Spain to other EU countries, especially Portugal.

No exact data are available on the number of Finnish citizens living abroad. According to the Vaalit.fi website maintained by the Ministry of Justice, the total number of expatriate Finns eligible to vote stood at 242,096 in April 2015 (source: voting register established by the Population Register Centre). The figure is exclusive of expatriate Finns who are under the age of 18 or who have not applied for restoration of citizenship but who reported their ancestry as Finnish in the census taken in their country of residence. The Migration Institute of Finland estimates the number of first-generation expatriate Finns born in Finland to be approximately 300,000 and that of second-generation expatriate Finns to total around 600,000.

All told, there are more than 1.6 million expatriate Finns, of whom 711,000 live in Sweden (2013: Census, generations 1–3); 650,000 in the United States (2011: Census, ancestry); 136,200 in Canada (2011: Census, ancestry); 22,400 in Australia (2011: Census, ancestry); 20,000 in Russia (2011: Census, primarily Ingrians); 14,000 in the United Kingdom (2014: Census, Finnish citizenship); 13,000 in Germany (2014: Finnish citizenship); 12,600 in Spain (2014: persons registered, plus winter migrants); 7,600 in Estonia (2014: Statistics Estonia, plus around 6,500 Ingrians); 6,600 in Norway (2010: Eurostat, place of birth Finland); 4,000 in Denmark (2010: Eurostat, place of birth Finland); 4,000 in Switzerland (2010: Eurostat, place of birth Finland), and so on. Being based on official statistics, the above figures are reliable but under-representative, as the total number of expatriate Finnish is certainly higher.

Today, features shared by expatriate Finns include an awareness of a Finnish background and roots, an attempt to preserve a Finnish identity, and the need to maintain contacts with Finland regardless of their country of residence, generation, and political views.

## **2.2. Development of policies concerning expatriate Finns**

The large waves of migration from Finland to America which began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century attracted the interest of the authorities. On the proposal of Parliament, the Senate commissioned a report with a view to enacting legislation, but this was unsuccessful. What was striking was the extent of emigration, and the social and individual disadvantages associated with it. The general attitude towards emigration was negative. Activities aimed at expatriate Finns were mainly arranged by the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Finnish Seamen's Mission Society.

Attempts to legislate continued after Finland gained independence. The goals included elimination of some of the disadvantages associated with emigration, compensation for the migration loss, and promotion of the return of emigrants. These preparations did not, however, lead to any actual laws.

After the turn of the century, the emergence of policies concerning expatriate Finns resulted in the establishment of an expatriate Finn division at the Association of Finnish Culture and Identity. From this, the Finland Society was founded in 1927, and government representatives were included on its board. In practice, this was a recognition of the fact that it was also in government interests that expatriate Finns had contacts with Finland, and a desire to retain their language skills as well as their Finnish identity.

The wide-scale emigration to Sweden which began at the end of the 1950s presented a whole new dimension in the debate on Finnish expatriation. The permanent Finnish population in Sweden has also required active measures on the part of the Finnish Government, as well as bilateral cooperation between the Finnish and Swedish Governments. This has extended to the more general Nordic col-

laboration in questions related to the position and circumstances of the Finns in Sweden. The Finns in Sweden have, as a result of active lobbying by their associations, achieved the position of a national minority and, with it, protection for the Finnish language and culture. In the history of Finnish expatriation, this represents a unique accomplishment. In 2000, the Swedish Parliament Riksdag recognised Finns in Sweden as a national minority and declared Finnish, Sámi and the *meänkieli* Tornedal Finnish as national minority languages. The rights of these minorities were further strengthened through legislation in 2010, especially in the areas where under law, services must be provided in Finnish. Swedish-speaking Finns living in Sweden make up at least one fifth of all Finns in Sweden, perhaps even more, but they are not covered by Swedish minority policies.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland has always had a relatively strong position among Finnish expatriates. The Church, for example, sent immigrant pastors to Sweden from 1950 up until the late 1980s and early 1990s. The centre for Finnish pastoral work in Sweden (RSSK) was merged with the central administration of the Church of Sweden at the beginning of 1990. Today, the Church works with expatriates in 38 countries. The Church's immigrant pastors – 3 in Asia, 8 in Africa, 15 in North America, 5 in Australia and 165 in Europe – are employed by a local sister church or other partner. The Church also has tourist pastors and cantors based in mainland Spain and the Canary Islands, Greece, Cyprus, Estonia, Thailand, Turkey and the United States (Florida). Expatriate congregations typically provide worship services and also perform marriages and baptisms.

Proposals for measures concerning expatriate Finns and return migration were included in many of the 1970–1992 reports of the Advisory Board on Refugees and Migration established by the Government. A number of these were also implemented. In its report released in 1980, the Advisory Board established the principles of Finnish expatriation policies. These have driven the activities of the authorities in matters associated with Finnish expatriation. The scope of the Advisory Board (the current Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations) has since grown and concentrated on questions relating to migration and ethnic relations.

During the 1980s, questions relating to Finns in Sweden were dealt with by the *Svenska emigrationskommitté* ('Swedish emigration committee').

At the beginning of the 1990s, the Ingrian Finns who used to reside within the area of the former Soviet Union (people who moved to Ingria in the vicinity of the current St Petersburg in the 17<sup>th</sup> century from Savo and the Karelian Isthmus) and those who had moved to the USSR during the 1920s and 1930s, as well as their descendants, emerged as a 'new' group of expatriate Finns. For decades, these groups had not had any possibilities of maintaining contacts with Finland, nor the Finnish state with them. More than 63,000 people in the Soviet Union were granted the right of return. Upon their return, many Ingrian Finns registered their native language as Finnish and were thus excluded from immigrant statistics. Ingrian Finns make up the largest group of immigrants in Finland. It is estimated that over a period of 25 years, some 30,000–35,000 returnees and their families came to Finland from Russia and Estonia. The return migration scheme was gradually phased out and the final date for applying for a returnee's residence permit was 1 July 2016.

The establishment of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament in 1997 symbolised a new phase in Finnish expatriation policies. Today, expatriate Finns living the world over have direct lines of communication with Finnish government representatives and, by means of resolutions adopted by the plenary session of the Parliament meeting every 2–3 years and its speakers, may bring up problems and needs and present proposals for measures. The resolutions of the Parliament are submitted to the Prime Minister of Finland and also circulated to the Government for comments. The Finnish Expatriate

Parliament provides a window for parliamentary and non-partisan cooperation free of charge to all expatriate communities which have ratified its rules. At year-end 2015, a total of 512 expatriate communities in 38 countries participated in the operations of the Parliament. The Parliament has eight deputy speakers who are regionally elected and confirmed by the plenary session. The chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Finland Society serves as the chief speaker. The Parliament is funded by the Finland Society, which also serves as its permanent secretariat. In the interests of safeguarding, clarifying and streamlining its operations, the Parliament in 2015 adopted a resolution aiming to put the Parliament on an established footing by means of legislation. The work of the Parliament, administrative in nature, and its activities among expatriate Finns seeking to boost their national identity increases equality, the enforcement of their rights and their access to services.

The first policy programme for expatriate Finns, extending until 2011, was not drafted until 2006. It complemented the migration programme of Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen's Government that extended until 2011. The following Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns covered the years 2012–2016 and the present programme has been prepared for the years 2017–2021.

### 3. POLICIES AND MEASURES

The policies and measures presented below constitute the Government's Policy Programme for Expatriate Finns for the years 2017–2021. The actors relevant to each policy are indicated in the context of the policies and the measures. Programme implementation and actors as well as the economic impacts of the programme are discussed in Section 4.

#### 3.1. Preservation of Finnish identity

##### 3.1.1. Further development of Finnish Schools ('Suomi-koulu')

Finnish Schools have represented the most successful educational aspiration on the part of expatriate Finns during the last few decades. The purpose of these schools is to support the children's learning of the Finnish and Swedish languages, Finnish culture, and the preservation of language skills already acquired. The instruction provided is supplementary in nature, i.e. it is provided alongside regular instruction. Instruction with government grant funding is provided to children having one or both parents of Finnish birth. The study groups set their own goals. These range from maintaining sufficient language skills for interaction with relatives to pursuing studies or a career in Finland and completing an official language test in the country. Finnish Schools provide opportunities for maintaining a range of social networks.

There are about 150 Finnish Schools in more than 45 countries at present. In the 2015–2016 school year, Finnish Schools receiving government grant funding numbered 136 and they were located in 37 different countries. All told, they had a student body of 4,238 aged 3–18. Finnish Schools accounted for 4,183 students and Swedish Schools ('Ruotsi-koulu') for 55 students. The average grant in the 2016–2017 school year was EUR 112/student/school year. While the number of the schools is rising only slowly, an exceptional spike in enrolment – 258 students – was seen in 2015 at the schools on which statistics are compiled, i.e. those which receive government grant funding. Schools have locally expressed interest in starting elementary instruction groups for under three-year-olds, as the first years of life are crucial to the development of language and the Finnish Schools can offer invaluable assistance in this respect to families and the identity of their children.

Finnish Schools are supported through government grants on an annual basis. The appropriation is included in the budget of the Ministry of Education and Culture, under the item 'discretionary government transfers to civil society organisations'. In its breakdown of budgetary accounts, the ministry allocates a share of this appropriation to the Finnish National Agency for Education, which further allocates it to the activities of Finnish Schools, home-based comprehensive schools and *Suomi-koulujen tuki ry* ('Support for Finnish Schools'). The same item also includes aid to other recipients as well, such as organisations focusing on home/school cooperation. In 2009, the Finland Society was assigned responsibility for the distribution of the government grant to Finnish Schools, while responsibility for supervising the process continues to lie with the Finnish National Agency for Education. The government grant not only helps cover the operating expenses of Finnish Schools, but is also necessary to arrange seminars and conferences for the teachers. The most significant of these are the professional training days organised each year at the premises of the Finnish National Agency for Education. On average, 80 people from different parts of the world participate in this event. State aid to Finnish Schools has decreased due to pressure to make adjustments in central government finances. This is inconsistent with the rise in the number expatriate Finnish children of all ages, including those under the age of three. The variation in the number of children queuing for enrolment has not

been examined. To date, the lack of funding has prevented the creation of separate groups for children in need of additional instruction. Despite fluctuation from year to year, the Finnish Schools overall have been on a growth track and may be considered a very established component in the educational services for expatriate Finns. Nonetheless, since it has been impossible to fix state aid at an established level, the schools are on quite a fragile foundation.

In 2011, a study kit entitled *Kielipuntari* was prepared for the Finnish Schools with funding from the Finnish National Agency for Education to help teachers determine the level of their students' language skills.

An increasing number of schools follow a country-specific or a school-specific curriculum. In 2012, the then National Board of Education launched a project in collaboration with *Suomi-koulujen tuki ry*, the Finland Society and Finnish Schools to prepare a recommendation for a common curriculum covering all Finnish Schools. The recommendation, the first of its kind in the over 40 years of Finnish Schools, was introduced on 1 August 2015. It is designed to support goal-setting and assessment and also to encourage the drafting of school-specific curricula.

The advances in data transmission technology and the internet in particular have opened up fresh opportunities for the development of Finnish Schools. A major step was the establishment of the association *Suomi-koulujen tuki ry* in 2006. The association provides pedagogic and administrative support in the form of training, manuals and an internet portal ([www.suomikoulut.fi](http://www.suomikoulut.fi)).

**Policy 1:**

- \* **Ensure the sufficiency of funding to Finnish Schools and continue their active development.**
- \* **Examine the potential for extending state aid to language instruction for under three-year-olds.**
- \* **Cater for the needs of children with rudimentary language skills for elementary and additional instruction.**

**Measures:**

- \* **Implement Finnish School funding within the limits of the Budget appropriation.**
- \* **Reduce, within the limits of the Budget appropriation, the group size required to qualify for state aid to Finnish Schools from six to four students.**
- \* **Finland Society: Continue to financially support Finnish Schools under the direction of the Finnish National Agency for Education and within the limits set by the Budget. Arrange training days for teachers at Finnish Schools with the help of government grants.**
- \* **Support the operations of *Suomi-koulujen tuki ry*.**
- \* **Increase cooperation between civil society organisations fostering education provision to Finnish expatriate children.**
- \* **Take advantage of the opportunities provided by advances in ICT in terms of furthering administrative and pedagogic expertise at Finnish Schools.**

**Actors: Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education**

### ***3.1.2. Support to basic education provided to children temporarily residing abroad***

The increase in the number of Finnish families temporarily residing abroad has brought the need to secure an education corresponding to Finnish comprehensive school in other countries. The Act on schools equivalent to Finnish comprehensive schools (379/1981) and the Decree issued pursuant to the said Act entered into force in 1981. Under this Act, a full government grant is to be awarded to these ‘Finnish schools abroad’. The Basic Education Act which entered into force in 1999 also covers Finnish comprehensive schools operating abroad. Finnish comprehensive schools abroad are private schools similar to comprehensive schools, maintained by supporters’ associations. They follow Finnish curricula. In 2016, the number of such schools was six, operating in Brussels in Belgium, Fuengirola in Spain (including an upper secondary school), Moscow and St Petersburg in Russia, and Tallinn and Tartu in Estonia. The number of students in basic education totals approximately 350. Until 2012, professional training days for the staff of the schools were arranged by the then National Board of Education on an annual basis. A project based the University of Helsinki’s Palmenia Centre for Continuing Education to prepare a curriculum for Finnish comprehensive schools abroad was implemented in 2013–2014 with funding from an appropriation to staff development in the education sector.

The reasoning of the government proposal on the Act on schools equivalent to Finnish comprehensive schools notes, regarding schools abroad, that it may occasionally be difficult to determine whether the residence abroad is temporary by nature. The Act starts from the premise that all residence is temporary except when a child, young person or adult has officially emigrated. Changes in society have introduced migration back and forth alongside emigration. In 2014, the Ministry of Education and Culture adopted the definition of temporary residence laid down in section 5 of the Act on municipality of residence, under which municipality of residence is determined according to population register data. Thus residence abroad of more than one year is interpreted as being permanent in nature. The current interpretation has resulted in the children of families residing abroad temporarily being again registered in Finland while their parents continue to reside abroad. The aid per student granted to the schools is based on the residence abroad being temporary. In addition, in some cases the legislation of the host country requires any stay in the country of more than brief duration to be recorded in the local population register. This results in the removal of the record of the residence abroad being temporary in nature from the Finnish Population Register.

The Finnish Music Institute at the Finnish School in St Petersburg provides basic education in the arts in accordance with a curriculum prepared on the basis of the national core curricula for education in the arts (Act 633/1998, Decree 813/1998). Since section 3 of the Act on basic education in the arts does not provide for the grant of an education provision licence for education arranged abroad, the studies completed at the Music Institute do not officially constitute basic education in the arts and the Finnish children and young people who study there thus cannot be awarded a certificate of basic education in the arts. Without an education provision licence for the advanced syllabus in basic education in the arts, the Finnish Music Institute does not satisfy the criteria for membership in the Association of Finnish Music Schools SML and instead only contracts for the Association’s services.

Finnish children living abroad may, irrespective of their place of residence, attend the *Kulkuri* School of Distance Learning, a service provided by the Finnish Lifelong Learning Foundation. This format was launched as a correspondence course in 1975 and is now online for the most part. In 2012, approximately 450 students in 65 countries attended this home-based comprehensive school. A large proportion of students also attend a local or international school in their country of residence. For

some students, *Kulkuri* is the only available educational option and such students may complete the basic education syllabus either in part or in full in *Kulkuri* as a separate basic education examination. The Finnish National Agency for Education supports *Kulkuri* and its Swedish-language sister school, established in 2008, through government grants. Support to *Kulkuri* has totalled EUR 165,000 per year since 2012. The Swedish-language home-based school is called *Nomadskolan* and it operates as part of the Swedish-language educational services of the town of Raasepori, Finland. The school receives a government grant of EUR 20,000–25,000 annually. The school's student numbers are gradually rising and currently stand at around 30. Digitalisation, for which government grants have been also been made available, has played an important role in the development of both home-based schools.

**Policy 2:**

**\* Support the access to basic education of children temporarily residing abroad.**

**Measures:**

**\* Finnish National Agency for Education: support the professional development of educational staff at Finnish schools abroad and promote electronic distance learning projects.**

**\* Continue supporting Finnish- and Swedish-language home-based schools within the framework of the Budget.**

**Actors: Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education**

### ***3.1.3. Monitoring and influencing the school conditions of expatriate Finns***

In countries that have a relatively high population of Finnish origin, it is possible to study in Finnish, or to be taught the Finnish language. In Sweden, municipal education at the primary school level is limited to the Borås school, which has a total of ten pupils in grades from pre-primary to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade primary. A pre-primary class is starting out in Haninge. 'Free' schools, i.e. non-municipal schools, currently number six after the closure of the Örebro school. The free schools have approximately 700 students: some 50 in Kista, 60 in Gothenburg and Eskilstuna each, nearly 100 each in Botkyrka and Upplands Väsby, and 360 at the Stockholm bilingual school in the school year 2016–2017 (700 students in total when taking into account the pre-primary class for six-year-olds). The gradual decline has been compensated for by establishing pre-primary departments, which now feature at all schools. The Stockholm school has 30–40 children who are Swedish-speaking Finns while 78% of the students are second or third-generation Finns in Sweden. The minority language legislation has made Finnish one of the national minority languages and at 1 February 2015, there were 59 municipalities providing services in Finnish under law. Pre-primary education in Finnish is one of the services provided to the residents of these municipalities. In 2015, the heads of the Sweden Finnish schools started an association, the aims of which include expanding the itinerant native language instruction in the national course curriculum to more than one hour per week, and establishing one Finnish-language teacher's post at an upper secondary school, for example centrally in Stockholm, which in turn would support applications to the Finnish-language teacher training programme set up at Stockholm University.

In Norway, Finnish is taught in the comprehensive and upper secondary schools in the provinces of Finnmarken and Tromssa. In comprehensive school, students are entitled to be taught Finnish when a request to that effect is made by at least three students of Kven or Finnish ancestry. Upper secondary schools may provide instruction in Finnish as a second language. In Germany, education policy is steered by the Ministry of Education while the states are responsible for education provision. Finnish is not among the approved foreign language subjects in Germany but the states may grant exemptions to schools with a specific language profile. In France and some German states, Finnish may be included in the upper secondary school matriculation examination. In Canada, a few schools had Finnish among the subjects taught, but this is no longer the case. The school board of the city of Ottawa pays for a Finnish teacher's salary and makes a classroom available at a local school, but instruction is only provided on Saturdays. An evening class for adults is held at the upper secondary school. There are an estimated five schools in Canada that specialise in adult education or are otherwise excluded from state aid. Unlike the numbers of Finnish Schools receiving state aid and instructing 3–18-year-olds in Finnish (see section 3.1.1), the country-specific numbers of open language schools for adults irrespective of nationality are difficult to determine.

In St Petersburg in Russia, Finnish is taught as a first foreign language at five comprehensive schools. Dozens of schools in St Petersburg, Karelia and areas with Ingrian Finn populations teach Finnish as either a second language or an elective subject. In the 2015–2016 school year, 908 students at comprehensive and upper secondary schools in Estonia were taught Finnish as an extra subject, with the syllabus choices of B, C or D. Most students took Finnish as a third foreign language, i.e. the C syllabus in upper secondary school. The B syllabus starting in comprehensive school was studied by 256 students at five schools. In the 2016–2017 school year, the B syllabus in Finnish was available at eight schools. Three schools in Tallinn started teaching Finnish in 6<sup>th</sup> grade in autumn 2016 and these had a total student pool of nearly 100. Three parallel classes at one school alone had nearly 70 students in all. Finnish instruction is also provided less formally at Finnish clubs. While no official figures for such enrolment are available, the estimate for the 2015–2016 school year is 908 students at 38 schools. Active Finnish teachers in Estonia number around 100. Finnish is taught at the university level in Tallinn and Tartu.

The conclusion of the Ingrian Finn return migration scheme on 1 July 2016 spelled an end to the status of Ingrian Finns as a special group of immigrants and thus also to the provision of the IPAKI language test in Russia. The test had been used to establish sufficient Finnish skills.

**Policy 3:**

**\* Monitor and promote the development of the school conditions of expatriate Finns.**

**Measures:**

**\* Work with the relevant authorities in the main countries of residence of expatriate Finns to improve opportunities of obtaining teaching in Finnish or Swedish, or teaching of the Finnish or Swedish language.**

**Actors: Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education**

### ***3.1.4. Applying to European Schools and increased availability of the European Baccalaureate (EB) programme***

European Schools are joint educational institutions of the Member States of the EU and the European Commission. There are currently 14 such schools, operating in different parts of Europe. The oldest school was established as early as the 1950s. In accordance with the Convention concerning European Schools, their purpose is to educate together children of the staff of the European Communities. Finland joined the Convention in 1996 (Act 105/2004 and Decree 106/2004). The same year saw the establishment of Finnish-language sections at European Schools in Brussels and Luxembourg. The purpose of European Schools is to support the children's own cultural identity, at the same time focusing on the European perspective and identity along with global themes.

The schools are situated in Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, the United Kingdom and Spain. In 2015, a total of around 22,500 students attended these schools —slightly over half of them were at the four European Schools in Brussels and 4,500 at the two in Luxembourg. The number of Finnish students was 560. Most of them studied in the Finnish-language sections of European Schools in Brussels and Luxembourg, the others mainly in the Swedish-language section of the same schools in accordance with their mother tongue.

The schools cover pre-primary education, basic education and general upper secondary education. Upon completing the syllabus of upper secondary school, students take the European Baccalaureate examination. The European Baccalaureate is the only certificate awarded by the European Schools. The examination in most subjects is taken in the student's own native language. The curricula are common to all European Schools, yet different from the Finnish ones. Inspectors from a number of countries draft the curricula together.

The expenses of European Schools are covered by the Commission and EU Member States. Upon application, children other than those of the staff of EU institutions may be admitted to these schools. This opportunity exists in locations other than Brussels and Luxembourg, where demand for study places is the greatest. Term fees range from EUR 2,400 (pre-school) to EUR 4,500 (upper comprehensive level and secondary school). In 2011, 11 per cent of the schools' expenses were covered with term fees.

Children attending European Schools do not have the same right to special education and remedial instruction as children attending school in Finland. The European Schools have in place an Educational Support Policy. The policy, updated in 2013, is available for review on the European Schools website ([www.eursec.eu](http://www.eursec.eu)). The European Schools apply a document adopted by the Board when it comes to the integration of special needs students. The school may provide learning support to this end. When a child is diagnosed with learning difficulties, the school enters into a fixed-term agreement with the child's parents to determine the support measures required and to allocate costs. Special needs education is required at all levels of comprehensive school. In recent years, the student body of the European Schools in Brussels has grown to such an extent that the premises of some of the schools are proving inadequate. Admissions have had to be restricted and the learning conditions have deteriorated. All of this serves to increase the need for special needs education and undermines the situation of children with special needs.

European Schools play a key part in maintaining children's cultural identity abroad, since a large part of the teaching is given in their mother tongue, either Finnish or Swedish. Measures have also been

taken to ensure that children are taught their mother tongue (either Finnish or Swedish for Finnish citizens) at schools which do not have a section for their language. The Finnish National Agency for Education recruits teachers for the Finnish-language sections. Students in the Finnish and Swedish-language sections also have the opportunity to study the other national language, which improves their prospects of further education and a career in Finland.

**Policy 4:**

- \* **Develop the activities of the European Schools.**
- \* **Focus on the opportunities of European Schools to promote the mobility of employees and their return to Finland.**
- \* **Promote interaction between European Schools and Finnish schools operating abroad, and between European Schools and national schools.**

**Measures:**

- \* **Provide more information about European Schools to Finns living abroad and those planning to move to the EU area.**
- \* **Safeguard the quality and structures of teaching to strengthen and maintain cultural identity.**
- \* **Provide informative guidance to support the learning conditions of Finnish students and intensify the management of learning difficulties**
- \* **Finnish National Agency for Education: arrange professional training to teachers of European Schools, within the framework of the Budget.**
- \* **Provide more information about the European Baccalaureate**

**Actors: Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education**

### ***3.1.5. Study of Finnish language and culture at universities abroad***

At present, Finnish language and culture can be studied at roughly 90 universities in 30 countries. Finland's support for these studies is coordinated by the Finnish National Agency for Education<sup>1</sup>. Services are available for both universities and their professors and students. The Agency's activities include sending visiting professors and interns to universities, arranging language and culture courses for students in Finland, and awarding grants for studies and internships in Finland.

While the prospects for instruction in Finnish language and culture are uncertain at some universities abroad and the course offering has been cut, an interest in studying Finnish language and culture has been sparked also in countries where such instruction to date has been unavailable. The number of potential students of course has an impact on the scope of the instruction offered.

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<sup>1</sup> The Centre for International Mobility CIMO and the National Board of Education merged on 1 January 2017 to form the current National Finnish Agency for Education, which continues to perform the duties of CIMO and the National Board of Education. As an expert agency within the remit of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Finnish National Agency for Education is responsible for duties relating to education and training, early childhood education and care, and lifelong learning as well as internationalisation

The European Union has given a new kind of international status to the Finnish language, which is now more broadly appreciated also beyond our national borders. A possible tool further to advance this development would be to offer the National Certificate of Language Proficiency test in Finnish also outside Finland. The test assesses language skills in practical situations where adults may generally need to speak, listen, write or read Finnish. The current legislation on the proficiency test does not provide for testing outside Finland. However, on the few occasions on which the proficiency test has exceptionally been arranged abroad – in at least London and Dusseldorf – the reception has been positive and the test arrangements successful.

**Policy 5:**

**\* Promote the study of Finnish language and culture at universities abroad.**

**Measures:**

**\* Provide more information to expatriate Finns about courses in Finnish language and culture available at universities abroad.**

**\* Highlight the need to preserve education in Finnish language and culture in the context of bilateral cooperation with countries that have, or are in the process of, cutting back on such instruction.**

**\* Explore, in the interests of supporting the official languages of Finland, the potential for amending the legislation on National Certificates of Language Proficiency to allow the proficiency tests in the official languages of Finland to be taken also outside Finland.**

**Actors: Finnish National Agency for Education, Ministry of Education and Culture**

### ***3.1.6. Promoting school attendance, studies and internships in Finland***

Foreign-language study programmes at Finnish higher education institutes provide the opportunity for young expatriate Finns to apply for studies in Finland. Agreements on temporary attendance by expatriate Finns of comprehensive or upper secondary school age can be made with individual schools.

International summer courses are organised in Finland for foreign students. Intensive courses in Finnish language and culture from the elementary level upwards are provided by e.g. the Finland Society ([www.suomi-seura.fi](http://www.suomi-seura.fi)) and by summer universities ([www. kesayliopistot.fi](http://www.kesayliopistot.fi)). These summer courses are open to all, including expatriate Finns with deficient skills in Finnish and knowledge of Finland and Finnish culture.

The summer courses in Finnish organised by the Finnish National Agency for Education are intended for students at universities abroad who are studying Finnish as a foreign language.

The study, youth and cultural programmes of the European Union provide opportunities for collaboration between schools and educational institutions, basic and continuing training for teaching staff and the creation of networks between various EU and ETA countries.

Information about study and internship opportunities in Finland is available from the Study in Finland website maintained by the Finnish National Agency for Education ([www.studyinfinland.fi](http://www.studyinfinland.fi)). Infor-

mation on education and training as well as the admission criteria is provided and applications may be submitted via the Opintopolku service, website in English at [www.studyinfo.fi](http://www.studyinfo.fi).

All Finnish citizens, including expatriate Finns, may apply to the Social Insurance Institution of Finland KELA for student financial aid (study grant and student loan guarantee) for the purpose of pursuing a degree or qualification in Finland.

The decision taken in 2015 of studies in pursuit of a first and second-cycle degree in Finnish and Swedish-speaking higher education programmes remaining free of charge for students from outside the EU/EEA regardless of nationality was widely welcomed by expatriate Finns. However, the admission tests of higher education institutions in Finland are often only arranged in Finnish and may be completed in English only when applying for admission to an English-speaking programme. Expatriate Finns may not necessarily have the language skills required to pass the admission test, nor are there plain-language versions of the admission tests available. The admission criteria to higher education institutions are undergoing reform in a manner agreed jointly by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the institutions. As of 2018, no lengthy advance preparation will be required for the admission tests and as of 2020, a higher number of students will be admitted on the basis of their secondary education certificates alone. Besides Finnish school-leaving certificates, the reform also takes into account the international IB, EB and Reifeprüfung certificates. The admission test pathway to higher education remains available in respect of those who cannot be admitted on the basis of a certificate alone.

It is vital that Finnish alumni and expatriate Finns with higher education qualifications be involved in promoting internationalisation in Finland's higher education and research. This was among the policies on promoting internationality in higher education and research laid out jointly by the Ministry of Culture and Education, higher education institutions and other stakeholders. The policy steering group proposes creating a network of expatriate Finns and alumni educated in Finland, as such networking will make it easier for return migrants and alumni to relocate to Finland, help in making connections, and also facilitate interaction with the authorities. The networks are to support cooperation among the various administrative branches and strengthen the internationality of Finnish higher education institutions and research by means of publications, projects and joint programmes, and also by making use of the connections thus made in cooperation with corporate partners.

In many cases, expatriate Finns find it impossible to take the admission test to Finnish higher education institutions in the same year as they graduate from their local upper secondary school because the matriculation examinations in their countries of residence often take place very close to or at the same time as the admission tests of Finnish universities. It is therefore difficult to organise trips to Finland for the purpose of taking admission tests.

**Policy 6:**

**\* Promote school attendance, studies and internships of expatriate Finns in Finland and inviting expatriate alumni to join the networks of Finnish higher education institutions.**

**Measures:**

**\* Provide more information aimed at young Finns living abroad about opportunities to attend school and take part in study and internship programmes in Finland.**

**\* Encourage expatriate Finnish teachers to take part in exchange programmes.**

**\* Higher education institutions: within the boundaries of their autonomy, review their admis-**

**sions such that the opportunities of expatriate Finns to be admitted improve and the admission test no longer constitutes an obstacle to admission. Explore the potential for admitting students on the basis of secondary education certificates awarded abroad.**

**\* Higher education institutions: invite expatriate and Finnish alumni to join shared networks. Once the networks are on an established footing, the substance of their activities will be the responsibility of the Finnish National Agency for Education, the higher education institutions, enterprises and research institutes in cooperation with the network of Finnish missions abroad.**

**Actors: Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education, Social Insurance Institution KELA, higher education institutions**

### ***3.1.7. Support for organisational activities arranged by expatriate Finns***

Expatriate Finns have made efforts to preserve their Finnish identity through a range of hobbies and leisure activities. It is estimated that there now are almost 1,500 non-profit and cultural/educational organisations that started from these activities.

In the United States, some of the best known of these associations are the Finlandia Foundation; the church-based Suomi Conference; and FinnFest USA, which organises an annual summer festival for expatriate Finns. In Canada, the Finnish-Canadian Cultural Federation arranges yearly gala parties for Finnish Canadians, bringing together Canada's Finnish societies, with the Australasian Federation of Finnish Societies and Clubs Inc. performing a similar role in Australia. The Ingrian Federations of Russia, Karelia, Estonia and Sweden serve Ingrian Finns. The National Association of Finns in Sweden (RSKL) is Europe's largest organisation for expatriate Finns, and there is also an association specifically for Swedish speaking Finns in Sweden, the Organisation for Swedish Finns in Sweden, *Finlandssvenskarnas Riksförbund i Sverige* (FRIS). Finnish students have organised activities in the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Germany, Sweden and Estonia, and Finnish clubs, friendship societies and other similar organisations also function in other European countries.

Activities organised by expatriate Finns are many and varied, but in some places differences have emerged between old and new groups of immigrants.

The Finland Society represents the interests of expatriate Finns. In 2017, the Society celebrates 90 years of service as a link to Finland for expatriate Finns, whom it provides with representation, advice and expertise. Founded in 1927, the Society has approximately 6,000 individual and 300 organisational members. The Finland Society maintains ties with expatriate Finnish organisations and communities, Finnish authorities and decision-makers and NGOs in Finland. Its activities include:

- Provision of advice on questions relating to moving to and living abroad and returning to Finland, and on topics including social security, taxation and pensions
- Distribution of official communications and preparation of country guides intended for those migrating abroad
- Arrangement of courses for returnees to Finland and those planning to spend their retirement abroad
- Arrangement of an annual two-week summer course in Finnish language and culture for young expatriate Finns aged 18–40

- Development and training of a support person network in cooperation with expatriate Finnish organisations (at present, there are some 30 support persons providing guidance to recent Finnish arrivals in 21 countries)
- Together with the Finnish National Agency for Education, the Finland Society arranges a three-day annual teacher training event in Helsinki. The Agency transferred responsibility for the event to the Society in 2012 but continues to provide expert consultation in programme preparation and also the event venue. In 2009, the distribution of operating grants to the Finnish Schools transferred from the then National Board of Education to the Finland Society.
- The Finland Society publishes a membership magazine and a monthly newsletter. Finnish products can be ordered via the Society. Members receive comprehensive advisory services and discounts on training and services provided by the Society.
- Service as the secretariat of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament and arrangement of parliamentary sessions every second or third year.

The Finland Society distributes the grants received annually from the Ministry of Education and Culture for the cultural and other activities of associations of expatriate Finns. These grants are not limited only to members of the Society, and are also used to support Finnish Schools and the upkeep of club houses and facilities held by associations of expatriate Finns, and to donate books to the libraries of member organisations such as the Finnish Schools. The Society also acts an intermediary for the Ministry of Education and Culture's youth activities grants to expatriate Finnish student associations and the youth projects undertaken by associations of expatriate Finns. In addition, the Society once a year awards grants to expatriate Finnish media (section 3.1.8). Excluding the state aid to Finnish schools (which is reported in section 3.1.1), the annual grants to associations of expatriate Finns are as follows: in 2014 the aid amounted to EUR 255,000; in 2015, it had fallen to EUR 235,000; and by 2016 it was only EUR 195,000. The Finland Society used to receive EUR 50,000 in youth activity grants (2013) but now the sum has fallen to EUR 30,000 (2016).

The Ministry of Education and Culture provides financial support for the activities of the Finland Society. In 2014, the amount of aid totalled EUR 275,000. In 2016, the aid fell to EUR 235,000. The sum is used to support the activities of the Society and the Finnish Expatriate Parliament, whose establishment in 1997 and the Society's services as its secretariat had done nothing to boost the financial aid which the Society receives.

**Policy 7:**

**\* Support the organisational activities of expatriate Finns.**

**Measures:**

**\* Ministry of Education and Culture: continue efforts to safeguard the operating conditions of the Finland Society.**

**\* Support the development of organisational activities in such a way that currently non-accessible groups will be included, with the purpose of improving collaboration between old and new immigrant groups.**

**\* Promote cooperation of Finnish diplomatic missions abroad and Finnish cultural and scientific institutes with expatriate Finns and their associations.**

**Actors: Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education, and others**

### *3.1.8. Communications with and information provision to expatriate Finns*

A central instrument in disseminating information from Finland to expatriate Finns is the Finland Society's Suomen Silta ('Finland Bridge') membership magazine, which comes out six times a year and is also widely distributed at events of expatriate Finns and at Finland's diplomatic missions abroad. The Society also publishes a monthly newsletter in electronic form, providing a summary of news items topical to expatriate Finns. It is also available on the internet. The Ministry of the Interior once supported the Finland Bridge magazine financially, but the amount of support decreased from more than EUR 200,000 at the turn of the millennium until its complete discontinuation after 2013 (the aid was included in the same budget item as wages and salaries). Through the Finland Society, the Ministry of Education and Culture also provides support to media operated by expatriate Finns themselves. In 2015, the information grants distributed by the Finland Society from the appropriation made available by the Ministry of Education and Culture to expatriate Finnish media and communities totalled EUR 92,000. By 2016, the cut in the Ministry's appropriation had brought the distributable funds down to EUR 80,000 divided among 78 recipients. Half went to traditional newspapers and the newsletters of associations as basic grants for 'ordinary activities' (printing and postage and other general operating costs), according to circulation and frequency of publication. The other half of the appropriation was disbursed as special grants for acquiring equipment (computers, cameras, copy machines, desktop publishing software, recorders, scanners, etc.) and for campaigns and other special projects. Special grant recipients include not only newspapers and magazines but also radio and TV stations, websites, online publications and special publications such as histories and their translations or guides for new immigrants.

The online communications of the Finnish Foreign Service and above all the social media channels maintained by Finland's diplomatic missions in several languages constitute important sources of information for expatriate Finns, not least in crisis situations. It is vital to remind expatriate Finns of the importance of monitoring these communications channels. In addition, the Foreign Service is responsible for the eight-language country information website [finland.fi](http://finland.fi) and the related social media accounts (ThisisFINLAND). The country information website offers content relating to Finnish expertise, phenomena and people, thus helping – alongside current media – expatriate Finns to gain a deeper understanding of what is going on in their country of origin. A key tool for disseminating information about Finland is the Finland Toolbox ([toolbox.finland.fi](http://toolbox.finland.fi)) linked to the country information website and maintained by the Finland Promotion Board. The toolbox contains presentations, videos, brochures, infographics and the like, available for use by expatriate Finns as well.

An increasing number of services provided to expatriate Finns by YLE, the Finnish Broadcasting Company, are available online. Alongside content, attention is paid to the service as a whole, including the technical platform and its capacity, together with development of reception methods. YLE discontinued the broadcasts of Radio Finland in 2005. After the satellite broadcasts of TV Finland also came to an end in 2013, TV Finland is only broadcast in terrestrial networks in Sweden and in cable networks in the areas of metropolitan Stockholm, Uppsala and Västerås. It is offered in Sweden's cable networks also elsewhere in the country and visible via satellite in most of Europe; viewing, however, requires a Canal Digital smart card. TV Finland transmits selected television shows from YLE's programming to expatriate Finns. As of 2014, the programming consists of reruns, and the number of news shows in Swedish, with Finnish subtitles, has increased. Ageing viewers would prefer shows in Finnish. TV Finland no longer broadcasts any shows live save for one news show in

Finnish and in Swedish. TV Finland may only broadcast shows that are a part of the programming of the main Finnish television channels Yle TV1, Yle TV2, Yle Teema and Yle Fem.

All YLE radio channels may be listened to online. In addition, the service suite includes Finnish television programmes — mainly news and current affairs programmes. Some programmes may be viewed and listened to online at *YLE Areena* and *Elävä arkisto* ('Live Archive') outside of Finland, too.

*YLE Areena* is an online service of YLE provided free of charge and the main platform for viewing YLE's domestic programming abroad. It features radio and TV programmes previously broadcast on television or on the radio. It also provides the opportunity to listen to all YLE radio channels in real time, including the regional stations of Radio Suomi and Radio Vega. The *Elävä arkisto* service includes a wide range of audio and video clips from past decades. Yle Areena is the main platform for viewing YLE's domestic programming abroad. However, many of the shows available on Yle Areena are blocked from viewing outside Finland due to copyrights and the costs ensuing from these to YLE.

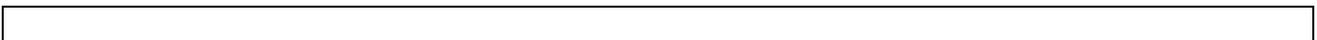
Teletext may be viewed on the internet and on a number of mobile devices. YLE radio channels feature Facebook and Twitter services. YLE Radio 1 also broadcasts news in plain language, a service which benefits immigrants too.

YLE has transferred its offering to *Yle Areena* after the discontinuation of the satellite broadcasts of Radio Finland and TV Finland. Not all shows are available for listening or viewing abroad due to copyright reasons, however. Finns living abroad who pay their YLE tax to Finland are thus unequal with YLE customers in Finland. The TV shows of commercial broadcasters are also unavailable for viewing abroad. Online broadcasts may not necessarily be an option due to internet access availability and costs. Finns living abroad also have information needs in matters which are taken for granted by those living here: KELA benefits, studies, immigration, citizenship issues, matters relating to moving abroad, and taxation, to name but a few. Expatriate Finns find it difficult to stay abreast of social and cultural developments in Finland, as magazines and newspapers tend to charge for online content. There is an obvious gap in respect of a communications channel that would disseminate information of this kind.

In addition to YLE, a number of other operators and factors have a part to play in terms of services provided to expatriate Finns. One of the most important things associated with the use of services is the performance of the reception equipment, together with the technical skills required to use the service. YLE maintains up-to-date instructions on its website to help users determine whether their technical environment is compatible with yle.fi services.

Alongside YLE and the Finland Society, some Finnish civil society organisations and commercial media also produce information targeted at expatriate Finns, particularly those working abroad.

Expatriate Finns may also look for information independently, for example by making use of the Europe Direct service available by telephone and online (europa.eu) and the Nordic Hello Norden service ([www.norden.org](http://www.norden.org)). Information is furthermore available from Finland's diplomatic missions abroad and their websites.



**Policy 8:**

\* **Provide more information to expatriate Finns.**

**Measures:**

\* **Conduct a study on the provision of Finnish communications services to expatriate Finns. Also determine the availability of YLE programming in different parts of the world and lay out further development of communications directed at expatriate Finns.**

\* **Encourage YLE to continue providing a diverse range of programming to expatriate Finns and ensuring its diversity, and in Sweden also a balance between programming in Finnish and in Swedish. Encourage YLE to enhance the offering of TV Finland and *YLE Areena* so as to make an increasing number of shows available for viewing outside Finland.**

\* **Finland should take steps to ensure that international copyright agreements are amended or supplemented so as to facilitate the obtaining of international distribution rights for television programmes**

\* **Increase the use of media operated by expatriate Finns themselves for communications from the authorities to expatriate Finns**

\* **Make use of the diplomatic missions network of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and their online communications**

**Actors: Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE, Ministry for Foreign Affairs**

### ***3.1.9. Pastoral work among expatriate Finns***

Spiritual beliefs take on new importance when living abroad in a setting of diverse cultures and values. Awareness of one's roots and spiritual beliefs is a part of our identity that also contributes to an atmosphere of tolerance. Christian faith, Finnish language and Finnish culture have always gone hand in hand. Despite Finland not having a national church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland may with good reason be referred to as the church of the people. In 2015, Church membership was held by 72.9% of all Finns, i.e. 3,999,414 persons.

The Church's work among expatriate Finns provides them with a safety net abroad. The Church is active among Finns living, travelling and holidaying in 40 countries. In terms of people served, the largest of these are Sweden, the United States, Spain, Canada, Germany and Australia. The Church's work among tourists is on the rise. The focus here is on the major holiday destinations for Finns: the Canary Islands, Spain's Costa del Sol, Greece, Turkey and Thailand. The core of the Church's work can be found in worship services, ecclesiastical family celebrations, community outreach work, private consultations and church social work. Most immigrant pastors have the right to perform wedding ceremonies in accordance with the provisions of the country in question and/or are licensed to do so by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture under Finnish law. Expatriate Finnish congregations can also help in cases of crisis, illness or just plain homesickness. In response to the challenges of modern technology, church actors have made the services of the Church to expatriate Finns available also online and through social media.

There is a great deal of cooperation between the Church's expatriate activities, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Finland's diplomatic missions abroad. In recent years the importance of such cooperation with local authorities, Finnish missions and other communities of Finns has been underscored

in crisis response following terror attacks or natural disasters. Expatriate Finnish congregations also support cultural activities, function as a base for Finnish Schools, and work with the Finland Society to provide community support.

The expatriate activities of the Church are centralised to a specific unit within the Church's central administration. The unit sends Finnish workers to minister abroad, consults with churches, and assists as required in launching new projects. The Finland Society, the Finnish Seamen's Mission, the Migration Institute of Finland and the seven official missionary organisations of the Church all work in close cooperation with one another. The Church's expatriate activities are based on the principle of integration, meaning that the sister church in a given country is responsible for ministering to the Finns living in its area in their native language whenever circumstances permit. The Church has a cooperation agreement on work with expatriate Finns with the Lutheran churches of Sweden, Norway, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Thailand, Australia, the United States, Canada, Estonia and Ingria, and with the Finnish Seamen's Mission Society. Most immigrant pastors are employed by the local sister church while tourist pastors and cantors are employees of the Church and seamen's ministers are employed by the Seamen's Mission. The Church's expatriate activities provide financial aid to support the activities of expatriate Finnish congregations.

The Finnish Seamen's Mission carries out Christian, social, cultural, outreach and international work among Finns living or visiting abroad as well as among seamen. The Mission works together with the Church and in keeping with its denomination in ecumenical cooperation with international sister organisations and local churches. The Mission and the Church have in place a cooperation agreement under which the Mission attends to the Church's expatriate activities in the British Isles, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg and also cooperates with the Church in this work in northern Germany. The Mission has offices in London, Brussels, Rotterdam and Hamburg as well as bases in Athens, Antwerp, Luxembourg, Lubeck and Warsaw plus travelling pastors in Asia. The Mission works in cooperation with local communities of Finns, Finland's diplomatic missions, local and Nordic churches, and international sister organisations.

The employees of the Church's official missionary organisations are responsible for expatriate activities alongside their other duties in their countries of posting, which include several Asian and African countries.

The Orthodox Church of Finland is an official minority church in Finland with a membership of approximately 60,000. It has church communities for Finns living in Sweden, where the Finnish congregation serves as the spiritual home for Orthodox people in the Stockholm area. While the Orthodox Church of Finland supports the activities of the Finnish Orthodox congregation in Sweden, administratively the congregation does not come under it. Nonetheless, the two work very closely together to ensure that worship services and church ceremonies are provided. Tourist destinations in Spain and Portugal also have small church communities. Orthodox people living in other countries, such as Germany, Russia, Greece, Belgium and France, are encouraged to participate in the activities of the local Orthodox parishes. As part of its class teacher training programme, the University of Eastern Finland cooperates with the Finnish Schools in Greece and Cyprus in training of the Orthodox religion. There are teacher and student exchanges between these schools almost every year. The Orthodox Church of Finland carries out no expatriate activities *per se*.

The Pentecostal Church of Finland is a nationally independent religious community and the largest of the free church communities in Finland. At year-end 2013, the Pentecostal Church had approximately 50,000 members and 241 congregations. The Pentecostal Church has close ties to international Pen-

tecostal communities. Expatriate Finnish communities are served by their local Pentecostal churches that work together with FIDA International in locations including Thailand, Turkey, Spain's Costa del Sol, and Florida in the United States.

The Evangelical Free Church of Finland is an independent registered religious community. In 2011, their 101 congregations had a total membership of 15,000. The Free Church maintains congregations or equivalent centres among Finns in nine locations in Sweden, Spain, Canada and the United States. The congregations' activities aim to serve Finns and their descendants in the Finnish language and in ways rooted in Finnish culture. Free Church activities have always been mainly congregation-centric with few hired staff, though some congregations have salaried pastors.

The Catholic Church is the world's largest Christian church. The Catholic faith has many expressions varying from country to country and continent to continent, with differences also found within the faith. The Catholic Church in Finland had 14,000 members all across Finland in 2015. It carries out no expatriate activities *per se*.

The majority of Finland's Muslim population are immigrants and their number is estimated at 40,000. Most of Finland's Muslims live in the Helsinki region and other major cities. The Tatar community has been established in Finland since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and is well organised. Finland's Islamic communities carry out no expatriate activities *per se*.

There are also numerous smaller religious groups in Finland that have links abroad and work with expatriate Finns.

**Policy 9:**

**\* Recognise the presence of religious communities as cooperation partners.**

**Measures:**

**\* Build on cooperation with religious communities in dealing with problems associated with the social security of Finns living and travelling abroad.**

**\* Invite specialists from religious communities to training seminars for teachers at Finnish Schools to help them develop 'religious literacy'.**

**Actors: Religious communities**

### **3.2. Improving the legal status of expatriate Finns**

In Finnish legislation, Finnish nationality is a central element in determining the legal status of Finnish expatriates. Special provisions concerning former Finnish citizens or foreign nationals of Finnish origin exist solely in the Aliens Act and the Nationality Act. Certain rights based on residence in Finland, such as residence-based social security, and obligations such as tax liability, only concern Finnish nationals residing abroad to a limited extent.

Rights provided by law for Finnish citizens living abroad include the right to be issued a passport, the right to vote, and eligibility in state elections. Central statutory duties are the obligation to participate

or assist in national defence. Men aged 18 or older are moreover subject to liability for military service.

### ***3.2.1. Encouragement for regaining and retaining Finnish citizenship***

Finland's current Nationality Act, which came into force on 1 June 2003, allows for multiple nationality. Under this Act, Finnish nationality is preserved even if a person assumes the nationality of another state. The prerequisite for this, however, is that the other state also accepts multiple nationality. Countries have varying practices in terms of granting multiple nationality.

The Nationality Act previously included a transitional provision under which former Finnish citizens and their descendants could regain their Finnish citizenship by declaration between the period 1 June 2003 to 31 May 2008. According to the Finnish Immigration Service, a total of 10,318 former Finnish citizens and 9,089 descendants of former or current Finnish citizens had regained their citizenship via this declaration procedure by 31 December 2010.

On 1 September 2011, an amendment to the Nationality Act came into force, enabling former Finnish citizens to regain citizenship by declaration, irrespective of their place of residence. Between 1 June 2008, when validity of the transitional provision ended, and 31 August 2011, when the amendment took effect, regaining Finnish citizenship required that the person concerned resided in Finland. A total of 566 former Finnish citizens regained Finnish citizenship by declaration between 1 January 2011 and 30 June 2012. Of these, 439 acquired Finnish citizenship after the legislative amendment of September 2011.

A Finnish citizen who also holds the citizenship of a foreign State retains Finnish citizenship at the age of 22 years only if he or she has a sufficient connection with Finland. A sufficient connection is deemed to exist, if:

- the person was born in Finland and their municipality of residence is in Finland when they reach the age of 22
- the person has resided in Finland or another Nordic country for a minimum total of seven years before reaching the age of 22
- the person has applied for or been issued a Finnish passport between the ages of 18–21, or
- the person has completed or is currently completing military or civil service or women's voluntary military service in Finland and is aged 18–21

If none of these conditions is met, citizenship may be retained by submitting a free-form written declaration to this effect to a diplomatic mission of Finland abroad or to a local register office in Finland. Finnish citizens whose municipality of residence has been in Finland for less than seven years, and thus also those who have never lived in Finland, are informed by the Finnish Immigration Service of the impending loss of citizenship at the age of 22 and provided with instructions on how to retain their citizenship. The notice is sent to all Finnish citizens turning 18 who reside abroad and whose address is recorded in the Finnish Population Information System. A person who has lost Finnish citizenship at the age of 22 due to lack of sufficient connection may regain citizenship by declaration.

Citizenship of another country must be registered in the Finnish Population Information System by submitting a notice to this effect to the local register office in Finland. The processing time is around 2–3 weeks and no charge is made for the notice. The registration may also be filed through a Finnish diplomatic mission abroad, in which case the naturalisation decision or a certified copy thereof must also be Apostilled.

Persons have the right to review the data recorded for them in the various Finnish registers and to ensure the correctness of such data. The review may be undertaken once a year free of charge. The data may be reviewed by visiting a local register office or submitting a written request for data review to the local register office. The online service of the Population Register Centre provides further information on personal data review. The personal and residence data of Finnish citizens remain up to date in Finland only if they personally report any changed data to Finland during their stay abroad. Under the Nationality Act, such reporting is mandatory but failure to comply is subject to no sanctions. Finnish citizens living in Sweden are exempt from the obligation owing to an agreement between the two countries.

Finland is a Member State in the European Union and all Finnish citizens are thus also EU citizens with the full rights and obligations of EU citizens. These include the right to free movement and employment within the EU. The provisions on freedom of movement also apply to citizens of Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway, pursuant to the EEA Agreement, and to citizens of Switzerland pursuant to a bilateral agreement between the EU and Switzerland.

**Policy 10:**

**\* Encourage expatriate Finns to regain their Finnish citizenship.**

**Measures:**

**\* Inform Finnish living abroad of the right to review personal data and the importance of correct personal data.**

**Actors: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Finnish Immigration Service, Population Register Centre**

### ***3.2.2. Measures to facilitate applying for passports and identity cards***

Under law, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is the competent authority in applying for passports abroad. As of 1 January 2017, applications for identity cards may also be submitted to the Ministry.

As of 1 December 2014, it has also been possible to submit an online passport application to the Police via their eServices. Subject to certain conditions, an application for a new passport may also be submitted online without visiting a police station in what is referred to as ‘streamlined procedure’.

Online applications cannot be filed at Finland’s diplomatic missions abroad, nor can the missions assist in such filing due to the incompatible information systems of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Police in Finland, who process the passport applications. In order to file a passport application online, a person must be identified by means of strong electronic identification, in practice by using Finnish online banking codes. Online applications also require that the person is already a holder of a Finnish biometric passport, can collect the passport in Finland either in person or through an agent, and is able to upload a passport photo to the Police information system. Passport renewal online is an example of the differences in the accessibility of citizens’ services depending on place of residence. Cost correlation has brought down the fee charged for passports in Finland while the fees charged at Finland’s diplomatic missions have remained unchanged.

The ten-year passports which many expatriate Finns would prefer to hold will remain unavailable until e.g. the information security of the chip used in the passports can be ensured a longer lifespan.

Long distances abroad make applying for a passport more burdensome, especially in countries such as Canada, the United States and Australia, and even in some parts of Europe. A provision concerning the reorganisation of the network of diplomatic missions of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs entering into force in 2015 resulted in the closure of missions in countries including Luxembourg, Slovakia and Slovenia. The passport and consular bureau of the Netherlands was transferred to Belgium on the same occasion. In the interests of more reasonable travel requirements to apply for a passport, expatriate Finns have expressed their desire that mobile passport stations be supplied to areas with considerable expatriate Finnish populations that are far away from local Finnish embassies. One additional station should be situated in Central Europe and the other in Southern Europe. There are currently two mobile passport stations in the United States, one in Canada and two in Spain. Plans are underway to introduce mobile passport stations in Germany and Australia.

The opportunity to apply for a Finnish identity card at Finland's diplomatic missions that became available on 1 January 2017 represents a clear change for the better for expatriate Finns. The Citizen Certificate, issued by the Population Register Centre and included in the identity cards issued to adults, encourages expatriate Finns to keep their population register information up to date, as the data for passports and identity cards are based on the information recorded in the Population Information System. Dealing with the various authorities is easier when population information data is up to date. Identity cards issued on or after 1 January no longer contain fingerprints or KELA information, however.

Most expatriate Finns lack a means of strong electronic identification. Finnish citizens living abroad who do not have a bank account (online banking codes) or mobile phone subscription (mobile certificate) in Finland would benefit from a transition to a national identification protocol independent of banks and other commercial actors.

The draft Regulation on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market issued by the European Commission in 2012 aims to enable electronic identification for public sector services in all Member States. As of 2016, the adoption of this eIDAS Regulation remained uncertain.

**Policy 11:**

**\* Ministry for Foreign Affairs: Continue the development of information systems, e-services included, in cooperation with the National Police Board,**

**\* Ministry for Foreign Affairs: Strive to take into account the accessibility of passport and identity card services when modifying the network of diplomatic missions.**

**Measures:**

**\* Explore the potential for streamlining the procedure for applying for passports and identity cards abroad**

**\* Consider the placement of new mobile passport stations on the basis of the customer base.**

**Actors: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, National Police Board**

### 3.2.3. Increasing voting rates of expatriate Finns

A total of 242,096 expatriate Finns were eligible to vote in the 2015 parliamentary elections. In terms of votes, this figure is roughly equal to the Central Finland electoral district, which elects ten Members of Parliament. Voting is a central means for expatriate Finns to retain their link with Finland and participate in civil society, yet in the most recent parliamentary elections the voting rate among expatriate Finns was only around 8–11%. In other words, only one in ten expatriates votes.

Voting rates of expatriate Finns in state elections have usually been low. The reasons behind this may include a sense of estrangement from Finnish political life, and the practical arrangements for voting — exercising the right to vote may require travelling hundreds of kilometres and even across country borders. To increase the voter turnout of expatriate Finns, the establishment of their own electoral district has been proposed (for instance, by the Advisory Board for Immigrant Affairs in 1981). However, a separate electoral district for expatriates has not been considered feasible.

Voter turnout among expatriate Finns in recent parliamentary elections

Year	Number of eligible voters	Voter turnout
2003	205,399	8.5%
2007	208,887	8.5%
2011	227,844	10.6%
2015	242,096	10.1%

Comparative situations tell us that allowing voting by mail would facilitate the exercise of the right of vote, i.e. voting, and might raise the voting rate. Sweden introduced voting by mail in 2002, and in the fourth state elections following, in September 2014, the voting rate among expatriate Swedes had already risen to more than 32%. Voting by mail would be easy to implement and it is fairly common the world over. The situation is evolving in EU Member States as proxy voting and voting by mail gain ground, but as of 2013, the Member States in which neither voting by mail nor online voting was permitted were Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, Denmark and Romania.

The Ministry of Justice worked on preparations for the implementation of voting by mail at various stages in the years 2008–2016 and the work remains ongoing. Implementation calls for amendment of the Elections Act (714/1998) and the allocation of sufficient appropriations. The Ministry is also considering the potential for the development of online voting.

An active citizenry and the effectiveness of representational democracy are among the cornerstones of civic society. Consequently it is important for expatriate Finns as well to exercise their right to vote – and to provide circumstances when failure to turn up at the polls is not solely due to overwhelming practical difficulties.

**Policy 12:**

**\* Improve the circumstances of voting for expatriate Finns and increase voter turnout among them by making it easier to exercise the right to vote.**

**Measures:**

**\* Implement voting by mail in national elections by quickly accomplishing the required legislative amendments.**

**\* Increase the use of expatriate Finns as election officials in order to facilitate the exercise of the right to vote among expatriate Finns. Train election officials in cooperation with Finland's diplomatic missions, its cultural and scientific institutes, and civil society organisations working with expatriate Finns.**

**\* Continue to explore the potential for online voting in national elections.**

**Actors: Ministry of Justice**

### ***3.2.4. Safeguarding the operations of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament***

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament (FEP) was established by organisations working on behalf of expatriate Finns in 1997 to represent expatriate interests in Finland. The Finnish Expatriate Parliament convenes every two or three years for a two-day session. The participants are delegates selected by communities which have ratified the rules of the Parliament. These communities have the right to put forward initiatives for the Parliament to discuss. The proposals concern problems in which changes are desired. During the parliamentary session, the select committees formulate initiatives into draft conclusions. These are considered in plenary session, where they can be amended and either adopted or rejected by vote. The conclusions are submitted to the Prime Minister and also forwarded to the Government for circulation for comments. The eighth session of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament took place in Helsinki in May 2015. The next session of the FEP, on 16–17 July 2017, marked the Parliament's 20-year anniversary.

Between the sessions, Finnish Expatriate Parliament issues are promoted by its speakers and the Finland Society, which serves as the secretariat to the Parliament and finances the operations of the Parliament in full, with no outside support. The representatives cover their own travel expenses to the sessions.

The Finnish Expatriate Parliament counts among its accomplishments the right to hold multiple nationality, the decrease in the citizenship declaration fee to a more reasonable level, an exchange programme for Finnish language social services and health work in Finnish nursing homes abroad, rehabilitation provided to war veterans in their countries of residence, and the introduction of a progressive tax rate applicable to tax deducted at source from employment pensions remitted abroad. Support for the education and training, native language and culture of expatriate Finnish children and young persons is a permanent fixture on the Parliament's agenda, as are also the affairs of senior citizens and the aged as well as safeguarding the provision of radio and television services abroad. The FEP advocated for voting by mail for 15 years before a decision on its implementation was finally taken in 2016.

The FEP is an esteemed, regulated and established cooperation forum for expatriate Finns. However, its operations are not taken into account in the state aid to the Finland Society despite the work of the Parliament being akin to that of an administrative authority in maintaining activities to reinforce

national identity among expatriate Finns. The prime concern of the FEP is indeed to safeguard its own standing by having it made a statutory body.

The aim of putting the FEP on an established statutory footing is rooted in the need to safeguard the FEP's operating conditions. Achievement of the aim would necessitate the enactment of a specific Act. Making the FEP a statutory body under law calls for political will and secure funding through the Budget.

**Policy 13:**

**\* Safeguard the operating conditions of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament.**

**Measures:**

**\* Explore the potential for putting the Finnish Expatriate Parliament on a more established footing.**

**\* Continue to support the Finnish Expatriate Parliament via the Finland Society.**

**\* Consult with the Finnish Expatriate Parliament when preparing plans of action regarding matters that concern Finnish expatriates.**

**Actors: the ministries, in particular the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health**

### **3.3. Social security and public health care of expatriate Finns**

Expatriate Finns are not usually covered by Finland's residency-based social security and public health care, except in cases where the person is a student or an employee posted from Finland, or a family member of such an employee. Expatriate Finns generally belong to the domain of social services and public health care systems of their countries of residence.

Efforts have been made to safeguard the social security of Finns on the basis of social security agreements with other countries. The EU's social security legislation (Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems) applies to persons who move between EU and EEA Member States. Tax agreements concluded in order to avoid double taxation also regulate the taxation of pension incomes of expatriate Finns. However, the application and interpretation of social security and tax agreements has occasionally given rise to ambiguity.

The growing range of Social Insurance Institution KELA services available online allows also expatriate Finns to make use of them. Not everyone finds e-services easy to use, however. The rise in the need for services to seniors is reflected in e.g. the desire of expatriate Finns to receive a certificate/translation of their Finnish pension decision in the official language of the pension applicant's country of residence.

The Nordic Social Security Convention contains a provision concerning the transfer of patients to the Nordic country that the patient has close ties with. Under the Convention, the sending and receiving municipality can agree on the sharing of costs required by treatment and transfer. Despite the

guidelines issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the appropriation reserved for patient transfers in the Budget, few patient transfers to Finland have been made. The Nordic Social Security Convention is likely to be revised in the near future.

Retirement homes for expatriate Finns exist in Sweden, Canada, the United States and Australia (fewer than 20 in total). These homes serve their residents in Finnish and Swedish, and some of them have dementia and infirmary wards. They were founded by Finnish expatriate organisations, which usually raised the necessary funds from the local Finnish community. The operating expenses are covered by the country of location and users of the services together. In some regions, home care services for elderly people are also provided.

The need for Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking nursing staff and trainees in expatriate Finns' nursing homes is also great. As a consequence of dementia, people who have been away from Finland for an extended period often forget the language of their new country of residence, and are not able to communicate in any language other than their mother tongue. On the initiative of the Finnish Expatriate Parliament, the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) has coordinated an exchange programme between polytechnic students of social services and health care and Finnish expatriate nursing homes since 2004. The project is still ongoing under the coordination of the Finnish National Agency for Education, with decisions on its funding being made one year at a time.

In 2014, CIMO sent out 28 trainees to retirement homes in Canada and four to Australia. In 2015, the figure was 17 for Canada and three for Australia. The destinations of the trainees in 2014–2015 were retirement homes in Vancouver, Toronto and Sudbury in Canada and Thornlands in Australia. Stricter visa requirements on traineeships involving contact with patients have made it impossible to send any more trainees to the United States. The Hatsina assisted living facility in Russia does get the occasional trainee, however.

Traineeships through the Finnish National Agency for Education are only available to students or very recent graduates (the traineeship must start within one year of graduation). The subjects most often studied at polytechnics by trainees at retirement homes for expatriate Finns include nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy or social services. Music therapy and art therapy students have also been provided traineeships.

Both the trainees and the employers have been very pleased with traineeships taking place at retirement homes of expatriate Finns. The residents of these homes enjoy speaking their native language with the trainees, for whom the traineeship in turn offers an opportunity to improve not only their professional skills but also their English skills.

In 2011–2013, a trial project on posting a social worker to support Finns living or staying in the region was implemented in Spain's Costa del Sol together with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The project clients considered it such a success that they asked a permanent position for a social worker to be set up. However, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health holds that under current circumstances, permanent Finnish social worker postings in countries with a high expatriate Finnish population is not an option. The matter may be taken under further review, with regard also to the viewpoint of non-discrimination, when finances better permit.

Baby boomers will exit the labour market in Finland within the next few years. The situation is the most critical in the social and health care sector, where by 2025 a shortage of at least 25,000 employees is expected following the retirement of nearly half of the current workforce in the sector.

The number of people in need of services is constantly rising, yet younger generations are becoming smaller. Meeting this shortage of labour requires recruiting employees from abroad, also from non-EU countries.

The World Health Assembly, the decision-making body of the World Health Organization WHO, adopted in 2010 a Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel (WHA63/16). As a WHO Member State, Finland is committed to enforcing the Code. Based on the WHO Code, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health published on 12 January 2016 a memorandum on ethical guidelines in international recruitment of health personnel in Finland (Reports and Memoranda of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2016:4).

**Policy 14:**

**\* Promote the transparency of social security and availability of social and health care.**

**Measures:**

**\* Build up the expertise of Finnish authorities on issues related to social security and taxation-related agreements, and EU social security legislation.**

**\* Provide more information on expatriate Finns' right to social security.**

**\* In cooperation with the relevant authorities, explore whether the exchange programmes for social and health care students to Finnish expatriate nursing homes could be extended to cover students in upper secondary education.**

**Actors: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Social Insurance Institution KELA, municipalities, organisations of patients and clients, Finnish National Agency for Education**

### **3.4. Expatriate Finns as a resource in business and industry**

Expatriate Finns promote cooperation between their countries of residence and Finland. They have provided a link to foreign cultures and linguistic areas which have previously not been accessible because of the language skills and local knowledge required. This has had great significance for the internationalisation of Finnish businesses. The Federation of Finnish Enterprises collated a register of expatriate Finns in the early 2000s. This has helped Finnish businesses operating in foreign trade and considering entry into new markets. However, due to scarce resources, the Federation is no longer able to maintain the register. Returnees often themselves provide employment opportunities for other returning migrants, as demonstrated by *Osuuskunta Paluu* cooperative established in Tampere in 2014.

Finns returning to Finland have long felt that the skills, education, experience and networks that they have gained abroad are under-appreciated and under-utilised in Finland. The *Talent Boost – International Talents Boosting Growth* agenda of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment aims to promote the more effective utilisation of the networks and expertise of international talents to spur growth and internationalisation and to attract investment to Finland. The development of targeted employment services would further the utilisation of the knowhow held by returning migrants.

According to a study conducted by the Finland Society in 2012, a large number of expatriate Finns would like businesses to consult them in the internationalisation process. Expatriate Finns can offer businesses local knowledge of the country, together with their language skills, expertise and networks. However, more systematic efforts are needed to provide information to businesses and expatriates on the different opportunities and mechanisms available to them with regard to bringing them together and achieving the goals set. In addition to expatriate Finns providing support in the internationalisation of Finnish enterprises, their voluntary efforts in actively marketing Finnish expertise and in steering interested parties abroad to the Team Finland network could to an increasing degree advance foreign investment in Finland.

The Finland Society held a networking session in autumn 2012, co-organised by the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), FinnCham, the Federation of Finnish Enterprises, the SME Foundation and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Finnish export organisations, chambers of commerce, and diplomatic missions can also mediate these contacts. There are expatriate Finns in positions of influence in the world of business and finance. With a minimum of effort, these contacts could yield great benefits for Finland's national economy. Expatriate Finns engaged in international business are already networking with Finland in our key export countries through Finnish commercial guilds and chambers of commerce, business councils, and via membership in similar organisations. The year 2016 saw the planning stage of the Findwork.fi project to boost the employment of international higher education graduates and also to reach Finns living the world over. The campaign was monitored by the Confederation of Finnish Industries EK, Sitra, AmCham Finland, Team Finland, Finpro and organised by consultancy company me2we. The service, which brings together enterprises, higher education institutions and their graduates, was launched in late 2016 under the name Talent Network by the Federation of Finnish Enterprises.

Expatriate Finns also play a central role as intermediaries and distributors of information about Finland in their countries of residence. It could be said that they engage in this duty on a daily basis at their workplaces, schools, and in their living environments in general. In this way, they create an image of Finland in their surroundings, which has crucial importance in marketing Finland as a tourist destination and Finnish products internationally. Through their networks, expatriate Finns can also pass on information about work and business opportunities in Finland. One such network is the *KAATO* business community consisting of more than 500 Finnish-minded expatriate and international business leaders with faith in Finnish technology expertise and a desire to discover synergies between foreign enterprises and Finland. *KAATO* network meetings are held from time to time in foreign key markets (including the United States, Japan, Germany, the UK and Sweden) to provide a sounding board for ideas and encourage interested enterprises to make their initial visit to Finland. *KAATO* activities are organised through Invest in Finland.

Finland should indeed make better use of its digital expertise alongside more traditional processes and methods, and look to the international arena for best practices. One such concept, which could be put into practice within a fairly short amount of time, would be the Finnish counterpart of the New Zealanders' *Global Community of Kiwis* application. Such an app would allow Finns living or moving abroad to network easily with other Finns in their new home area. The networking of people with similar profiles (persons living abroad due to spouse's employment, third-generation immigrants or students, for example) often brings about meaningful activity, helps make the voice of expatriate Finns better heard, and may also result in action that makes a splash locally while also benefitting business.

**Policy 15:**

**\* Promote contacts between businesses and expatriate Finns.**

**Measures:**

**\* Make use of Finland's honorary consul network throughout the world by informing companies about this network and its service potential.**

**\* Capitalise on the value added provided by the expertise, local knowledge and networks of expatriate Finns within the Team Finland network to promote Finnish enterprises.**

**\* Finland Society and Finnish Expatriate Parliament: continue to further contacts between businesses and expatriate Finns.**

**\* Utilise the worldwide contact network of the Finland Society, also in the field of economy.**

**Actors: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Finnish Tax Administration, Confederation of Finnish Industries EK, chambers of commerce, others**

### **3.5. Supporting return opportunities for expatriate Finns**

Some expatriate Finns never intend their stay abroad to be permanent and eventually return, sometimes bringing with them their foreign spouse. Successful expatriate and migration policies improve the opportunities of expatriate Finns to return to Finland, should they so wish. The requirements for successful return are the preservation of contacts with Finland, the maintenance of a command of the Finnish language, and the ongoing monitoring of the conditions and developments in Finland. The return process can be guided by providing information and guidance. When necessary, other measures can be taken to ensure that return is desirable both for Finland and for the life situation of expatriate Finns. The Government issued on 13 June 2013 a resolution on the *Future of Migration 2020* strategy, in which attention is drawn to topics including the advancement of labour immigration, taking into account Finland's labour needs, demographic future and changing economic dependency ratio.

The prerequisites of returning for those of active working age are naturally dependent on the economic situation in Finland at the given time. In health care and the service sector, in particular, a command of Finnish and often also Swedish is required. This is why skilled Finnish workers employed abroad can be a natural target for recruitment. In recent years, professionals in the health care field, for instance, have emigrated from Finland to other Nordic countries, the UK and Switzerland.

The need for information by returnees varies according to their life situation and those of their families. Information about issues such as work, day-care, schools, studying, housing, social security, pensions, taxation, and the removal of household goods is needed. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of each authority to disseminate information to returnees within its own branch of government.

Employment and Economic Development Offices provide advice to returnees and help them in matters associated with work. EURES, the European Job Mobility Portal, also serves returnees by informing them about working life, jobs and the labour market situation in Finland. In addition, the EURES network occasionally organises campaigns targeted at potential returnees, particularly in Sweden, with health care professionals being the main target group. Finland has a positive attitude

towards remigration, and it is regarded as a favourable development from the perspective of both the labour market and society.

However, there still remain legal provisions and their areas of application that pose problems for immigrants. Those moving from elsewhere may become subject to prejudiced treatment by their immediate environment and even by the authorities. Promoting good ethnic relations promote the returnees' integration in society. This is the case especially where a multinational or multireligious Finnish returnee family is concerned. Churches and local parishes in Finland have wide-ranging expertise and experience in encounters and cooperation between different religions and values.

**Policy 16:**

**\* Take expatriate Finns into consideration as potential returnees in the drafting of employment-related migration policies.**

**Measures:**

**\* Work with public authorities and the Finland Society to provide more information to Finns living abroad on central issues relating to their return.**

**\* Inform employers operating in Finland about the possibilities of hiring returnees.**

**\* Encourage those studying abroad to return to Finland upon completing their studies by actively informing them about work, training and continued education opportunities as well as the labour market situation and employment opportunities.**

**\* Address problems and drawbacks associated with legislation and administrative procedures that present an obstacle to remigration, and make proposals to change them.**

**\* Increase cooperation with the Church and local parishes.**

**\* Examine how various services support return of expatriate Finns.**

**Actors: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Social Insurance Institution KELA, Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish National Agency for Education, Ministry of the Interior, religious communities**

### **3.6. Support for research on Finnish migration and expatriation**

Up-to-date research data is central in terms of implementing Finnish expatriation policies. Considerable research data is available on Finnish emigration and expatriate Finns. The Turku-based Institute of Migration plays an important role in the production of research data and the coordination of related research projects.

However, migration trends change constantly, which is why it is important that continuous research interest is focused on questions associated with Finnish migration and Finnish expatriation. At the moment, for example, there seems to be a need for research on the migration trends of Finns in Europe.

For both expatriate Finns and the entire population, it is essential to gather and archive information and material on the subject of Finnish migration and expatriation. This will enable the reasons, con-

sequences, and significance of migration to be preserved for future generations, and increase the understanding of the population resident in Finland towards migration and migrants.

Support for the digital availability of research data and research materials is of particular importance, as many of those interested in the subject live outside Finland and lack access to the original materials stored here.

**Policy 17:**

**\* Support research on Finnish migration and expatriation.**

**Measures:**

**\* Allocate research funding to areas central to migration studies.**

**\* Support the collection and archiving of data and materials on Finnish migration and expatriates.**

**Actors: Ministry of Education and Culture, Institute of Migration, research institutes**

#### 4. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, ACTORS, ECONOMIC IMPACTS AND FOLLOW-UP

The majority of the measures proposed in this policy programme are already being implemented through actions by the authorities. Since the proposed measures are already being implemented, the policies and related measures will not have significant economic impacts. It is proposed that the new measures put forward be implemented gradually, within the framework of the Budget. The additional expenses incurred will thus be distributed over the course of several years.

Finnish expatriation policy is being developed on the basis of guidelines and processes already established, taking into account the changes in the Finnish expatriate population, the new requirements resulting from these changes and, in particular, the opportunities opened up by advances in information technology. In planning the functions of the various ministries specific to expatriate Finns, it should be borne in mind that expatriate Finns are not only a group incurring expenses but also a resource that yields many benefits to Finland.

The issues touch upon some ministries more than others. A consistent feature is how each topic addressed falls within the remit of more than one state actor, and the fact that in addition to the public sector, the private sector and civil society actors may also play a pivotal role. The actions of all three may be complementary in nature. Follow-up might comprise one meeting annually to review the implementation of the programme, while an annual one-day seminar on current issues would raise the programme's profile. The project to put the Finnish Expatriate Parliament on an established footing would provide the programme with a further dimension of influence.

The *Ministry of the Interior* is responsible for formulating Finland's migration policy and for drafting legislation on migration. It represents Finland in immigration matters both within the European Union and at international forums. It also coordinates immigration-related work between different administrative branches. The *Finnish Immigration Service*, operating under the Ministry of the Interior, handles and decides matters relating to individual foreigners' entry into, residence in and removal from the country, together with citizenship matters.

The *Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment* is responsible for employment and enterprise matters, and for the integration of migrants.

The *Ministry of Transport and Communications* is responsible for safe and effective transport and for communications connections and services and it also enables the operating environment for new digital services.

The *Foreign Service* promotes the safety and wellbeing of Finland and Finns globally. The *Ministry for Foreign Affairs* and the diplomatic missions under it have the best prerequisites to operate as the contact point between Finland and expatriate Finns.

The administrative branch of the *Ministry of Education and Culture* supports the activities of Finnish comprehensive schools operating abroad, the European Schools, Finnish and Swedish-language home-based schools, the Finnish Schools and cultural institutes. It also promotes the study and position of Finnish language and culture in countries with major groups of expatriate Finns. Civil society organisations, periodicals and other media of expatriate Finns are supported through the main title of expenditure of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) and the National Board of Education merged on 1 January 2017 to form the current Finnish National

Agency for Education, which now has responsibility for promoting Finnish language and culture studies at foreign universities and for arranging international trainee exchanges.

The *Ministry of Social Affairs and Health* and the agencies under it are responsible for advisory and information activities concerning the pensions, medical care and social benefits issues of expatriate Finns. In the dissemination of information, it would be possible to work together with the Finland Society and foreign diplomatic missions.

The *Ministry of Justice* is the highest electoral authority in Finland. It is responsible for drafting legislation on elections and developing the electoral system. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is in charge of arranging advance voting abroad.