

Country:	Finland
Member/Company	Confederation of Finnish Industry (EK)
Initiative	Policy Messages

Overview

[It is time to declare a state of emergency to tackle skills shortages - A new gear for work-based migration](#)

Jyri Häkämies, CEO of the Confederation of Finnish Industries EK, demanded that a state of emergency be declared at the EK's autumn seminar in order to solve the shortage of labor and skills. In Finland, the population will start to decline in 2034 and there will be 300,000 fewer people of working age in the 2050s and 2060s. Finland will not survive without foreign experts. We have to attract them to Finland - and a lot. In connection with the autumn seminar, EK announced the Full Translation of Immigration program.

“Finland must now take all possible measures to promote work-related immigration. We propose that the Ministry of Employment and the Economy be given clear leadership responsibilities to accelerate the migration of international skills. The Finnish Immigration Service should be divided so that the promotion of work-related immigration is transferred to the Ministry of Employment and the Economy,” said Häkämies.

Other solutions to the labor and skills shortage need to be put in place. Despite the labor shortage, long-term unemployment has only increased in Finland. “Labor policy must cut off the prolongation of unemployment. The threat is the prolongation of structural unemployment and the deterioration of both work skills and job security,” Häkämies said.

“Labor policy should follow Work First! Line. Doing work should always be more profitable than living on social security. For example, stepping up earnings-related unemployment insurance and increasing unemployment insurance deductibles are ways to increase employment.”

There are about 50,000 marginalized young people in Finland and almost 20,000 employees retire on disability each year. Each case is a huge human tragedy and a failure of economic and labor policy. “From primary school onwards, we need to invest in remedial education and individual support. The traditional learning path is not suitable for everyone, and for example, apprenticeships that strengthen practical skills need to be developed to be more attractive.”

EK presents a tripartite “North Karelia project” to combat disability pensions:

“The reversal of the development of disability can be compared to the success project in North Karelia, which turned cardiovascular diseases, which had already become a national catastrophe, into decline. A similar national project is now needed to prevent incapacity for work,” Häkämies describes.

In connection with the autumn seminar, the EC announced the Full Translation of Immigration Policy program. Its main messages are:

- LICENSE: The license leading to the work of the Finnish Immigration Service should be transferred to the direct responsibility of the Minister of Labor.
- LANGUAGE TRAINING: Foreigners who are working or coming to work must be offered high-quality Finnish and Swedish language training, regardless of time and place.
- JOB SEEKER VISA: Finland must create a new national visa for job search. The visa allows for entry, job search and employment until the application for a residence permit has been resolved.
- TAX BENEFITS: Foreign experts must also be attracted to the country through various tax benefits.

Key Messages

[Policy recommendations to ease income traps](#) (presentation in Finnish)