



EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT IN FINLAND: CASE STUDY OF ADECCO

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Tämä opinnäytetyö tarkastelee Suomen kohtaamia haasteita työvoimatarpeidentäyttämässä työperäisen maahanmuuton avulla ja keskittyy erityisesti siihen, miten Adeccovo auttaa osaamisvajeen paikkaamisessa. Tutkimus nostaa esiin maan demografiset kehitystrendit, kuten työikäisen väestön vähenemisen ja kasvavan tarpeen osaavalle työvoimalle erityisesti aloilla, jotka kärsivät työvoimapulasta. Laadullisen analyysin kautta työssä tunnistetaan keskeisiä tekijöitä, jotka vaikuttavat ulkomaisen työvoiman rekrytointiin. Näitä ovat muun muassa sääntelyvaatimukset, kulttuurinen sopeutuminen ja logistiset seikat. Työssä käsitellään myös olennaisia taitoja ja osaamisia, joita työnantajat arvostavat kansainvälisissä rekrytoinneissa, sekä merkittäviä tekijöitä, joita tulisi huomioida itse rekrytointiprosessissa. Tutkimustulokset osoittavat, että Suomen työmarkkinat voisivat hyötyä sujuvammasta kansainvälisestä rekrytointiprosessista. Adecco HR-konsultoinnin ja rekrytinnin johtavana toimijana on hyvin asemoitunut vastaamaan näihin haasteisiin auttamalla työnantajia navigoimaan byrokraattisissa ja kulttuurisissa esteissä, mikä edistää sujuvampaa ulkomaisten työntekijöiden integroitumista. Yhteenvetona tämä opinnäytetyö korostaa strategisten uudistusten ja yhteistyölähtöisen työvoimasuunnittelun tarvetta osaajapulan ratkaisemiseksi. Näin Adecco asemoituu keskeiseksi toimijaksi Suomen työvoiman vahvistamisessa kohdennettujen ja tehokkaiden kansainvälisten rekrytointikäytäntöjen avulla.

Avainsanat Työperäinen maahanmuutto, rekrytointi, osaaminen

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Abstract

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This thesis examines the pressing challenges Finland faces in addressing its labor force needs through work-related immigration, with a focus on how Adecco can contribute to closing skill gaps. The study highlights the country's demographic trends, including a declining working-age population and a rising demand for skilled workers in sectors experiencing labor shortages. Through qualitative analysis, the thesis identifies key determinants that influence the recruitment of foreign talent, encompassing regulatory requirements, cultural adaptation, and logistical considerations. It also explores essential skills and competencies that employers prioritize when hiring internationally, alongside important factors in the hiring process itself. The findings reveal that Finland's labor market could benefit from a streamlined approach to international recruitment. Adecco, as a prominent HR consulting and recruitment partner, is well-positioned to address these challenges by helping employers navigate bureaucratic and cultural hurdles, facilitating a smoother integration process for foreign employees. In conclusion, this thesis underscores the need for strategic reforms and a collaborative approach to labor force planning, positioning Adecco as a key player in strengthening Finland's workforce through targeted and efficient international recruitment practices.

Keywords Work-related Immigration, recruiting, skills

Pages 50 pages and appendices 2 pages

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

At Present, Finland currently has a massive labour shortage in certain sectors – especially in IT sector. The importance of work-related immigration has been emphasized in Finland in recent years. It has been noted that the Finnish workforce in certain sectors does not meet the demand that the market creates. The lack of highly skilled IT experts are not produced by the Finnish educational program and this phenomenon has led to the need of bringing highly skilled individuals from abroad. (Saukkonen, 2020, p.32)

Labor migration is vital for Finland's future economic development. Adequate labour supply and growth opportunities can be ensured through either broad-based migration or migration focused on high-productivity sectors. Therefore, promoting labour migration is essential for economic and labour market sustainability, requiring actions in both attracting a skilled workforce and supporting education and internal cultural adaptation within companies. (Akava, 2024)

Despite the ongoing labour shortages and a rapidly evolving workforce, many companies, particularly in the IT sector, are not utilizing available services that facilitate the hiring of foreign workers. Several barriers may explain this hesitation, such as complex application processes, unfamiliarity with the benefits of international recruitment, or concerns about integration and compliance with local regulations. This study seeks to identify the reasons behind this reluctance and explore how Adecco can effectively address these concerns. (Kauhanen, 2020)

The Finnish government has introduced several programs aimed at attracting more labour from abroad. Currently, there are many highly educated foreigners in Finland who have struggled to find employment. To address this issue, the following development proposals have been suggested: First, the labour availability consideration should be abolished, and the processing of legal permits should be made more efficient. Foreigners already residing in Finland should be offered language training during their studies, for example, through business collaboration. Integration and employment could be enhanced by combining language training with university education. Additionally, Finland requires an application that serves as a benchmarking tool to recognize foreign degrees. It is also hoped that Finnish companies will offer more work trial opportunities to foreign job seekers. (Elinkeinoelämän keskusliitto, 2023) To understand the

how Adecco can address this skills shortage, the following research questions were developed.

1.2 Research questions

Authors main research question is: "What are the challenges to hire employees from abroad in Finland and how Adecco can address this skill gap." The first sub-question explores the key determinants that influence bringing foreign workers to Finland. The second research question focuses on finding the main factors that should be considered when hiring employees outside of Finland. The third sub-question is about what skills and competencies are important to take into consideration when bringing employees from abroad.

1. "What are the determinants in bringing foreign workers from outside of Finland?"
2. "What are the factors which should be considered during the hiring process of employees outside of Finland?"
3. "What are the competencies and skills to be considered when hiring employee from outside of Finland?"

1.3 Objective of the study

The objective of this research is to explore how Adecco Finland can address the skill gap in the IT sector by integrating work-related immigration into its business. The study focuses on identifying the key actions Adecco can take to effectively bring foreign talent to Finland and fill the skills shortage in the modern labor market.

1.4 Introduction of the commissioning company

Adecco Finland is part of the world's largest and leading recruitment company "Adecco Group". Adecco has been working in Finland for more than 20 years and is looking for job seekers and employers in the demanding job market. Adecco's goal in Finland is to reserve the most responsible and reliable operators in the area. The Adecco Group currently has more than 5,000 locations in approximately 60 countries. Adecco employs approximately 30,000 thousand people worldwide. Adecco Group's headquarters lie in Zurich, Switzerland. Adecco Group is also part of the Fortune 500 list of companies. Adecco Group also serves

approximately 100,000 thousand customers worldwide every year and offers approximately 3.5 million career paths around the world. Adecco Group's most important markets are North America, Asia and South Europe. (Adecco, 2023)

Adecco Finland's services consist of four basic components: Staffing, direct recruitment, employer/employee assessment services and development of the companies' staffing services. Adecco Suomi serves its customers in Finland mainly in the following sectors: the construction sector, the logistics sector, the restaurant and catering industry, the real estate service sector, the IT sector, the financial management sector, the customer service sector, the sales sector, as well as heavy industry and manufacturing industry. The main functions performed by Adecco and its subsidiaries are staffing and direct recruitment. Adecco Finland currently has 16 offices around Finland. Adecco has 150 employees and around 3,000 temporary employees. As a company, Adecco is innovative and is constantly looking for ways to develop working life as we know it - to seek new solutions for both employees and employers. Adecco Finland's motto is "People first". (Adecco, 2023)

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The first chapter of this thesis provides a comprehensive overview of the context and significance of the study, highlighting the key factors that have prompted this research and underscoring its relevance. This section also outlines the primary research questions and the associated sub-questions that serve to guide the investigation. Following this, the researcher defines the objectives of the study and elaborates on the intended outcomes of addressing these research questions. The second section, which forms the theoretical framework, examines the social factors that have contributed to the current situation under investigation and assesses their impact. Additionally, this section presents an overview of the IT sector's current status and future trajectory. Of particular importance, the researcher discusses the various mechanisms available for recruiting foreign workers and identifies key considerations in this process. In the third section, the research methodology is discussed in detail. The researcher explains the methods employed in the study, the rationale behind their selection, and the specific objectives they aim to achieve. The fourth section presents the findings derived from the research respondents, with their responses categorized thematically. This part also addresses the limitations of the research, discussing factors that may have influenced the outcomes and identifying areas where the study's scope may have been constrained. Finally, the researcher offers suggestions for future research and practical implications.

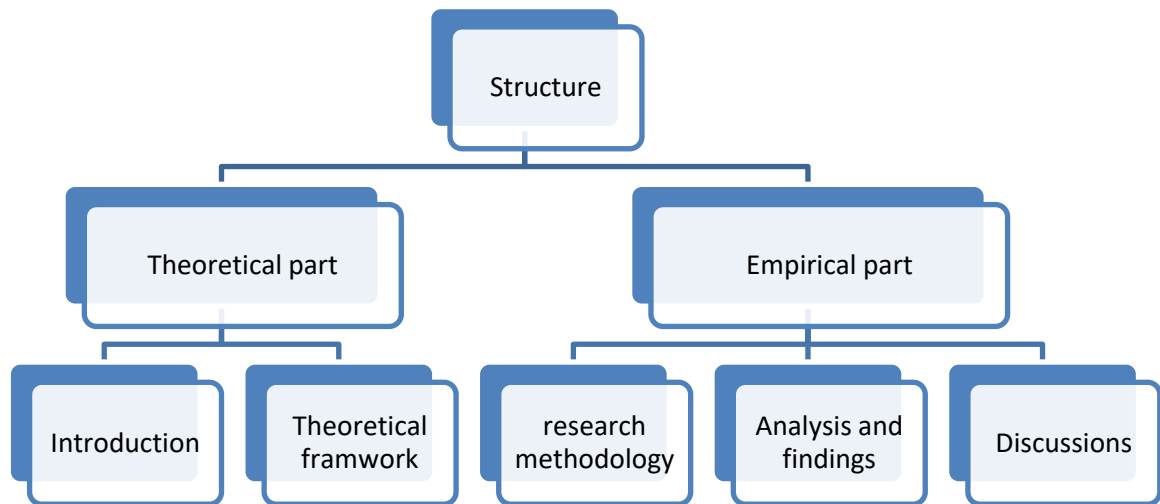


Figure 1. Structure of the thesis

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Characteristics of Finnish population

According to Statistics Finland's latest population forecast study, by the end of 2060, approximately 700,000 more people will die in Finland than will be born - if the birth rate remains at the same level. According to the study, around 40,000 more children will be born annually in Finland in the 2060s. The birth rate in question is not at a long-term sustainable level. This level of low birth rates has far-reaching effects. The year 2022 was the fourth year in a row in Finland that fewer than 50,000 children are born per year. The effects of a low birth rate begin to show in the long term in the number of first-born children and, in the worst case, can also lead to a significant reduction in the number of women of childbearing age. In Finland, the number of births in approximately 53 municipalities is higher than the number of deaths. According to the forecast made by the study, the number of young people under the age of 15 in Finland in 2060 would be 200,000 fewer than today. It is assumed that only in the 2040s we will see a decrease in the number of people of working age due to the low birth rate, which will have a direct impact on the demographic supply ratio. (Statistics Finland, 2021-a)

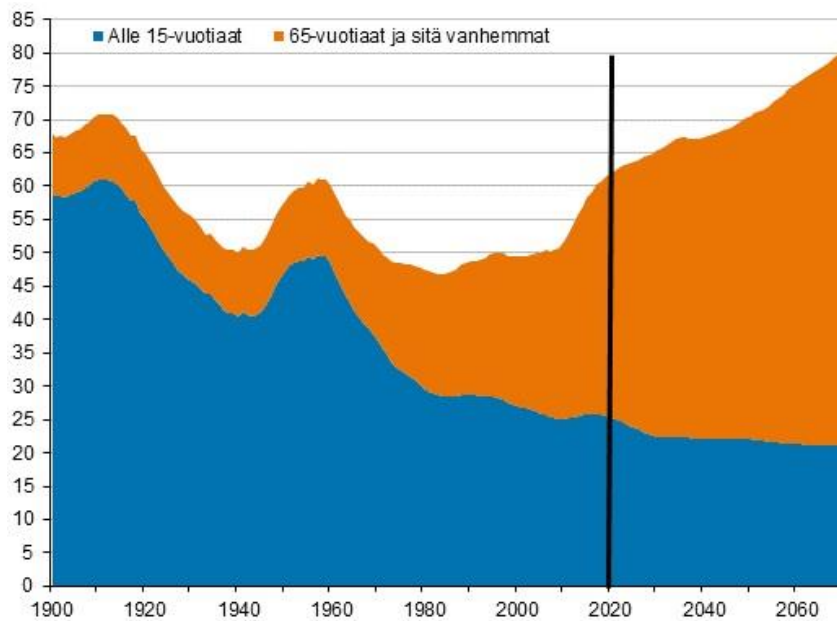


Figure 2. Population dependency ratio and forecast until 2070. (statistics Finland, 2022)

2.1.1 Population development

The number of people of working age was at its best in Finland in 2009, when there were 3.55 million people of working age (15-64 years). This number has started to decrease significantly between 2010 and 2020. During this period, Finland's working-age population had decreased by approximately 150,000 people. According to the forecast, Finland's working-age population will decline somewhat more slowly over the next two decades, i.e. 76,000 people in 2040. Due to the low birth rate, it has been predicted that the decline in the number of working-age people would accelerate by 2040 at the latest -the number. In 2021, the number of people employed in Finland's population was 62%. The proportion is predicted to decrease to 60% by the 2040s and 57% by the 2060s. In 2021, Statistics Finland's latest population forecast has assumed that the future birth rate will remain the same. In the forecast, it has been assumed that approximately 20,000 people will immigrate to Finland from abroad in the last year and 15,000 people per year in the coming years. (Statistics Finland, 2021-b)

According to the government office's publication, in modern population policy people are seen as the most important resource investing in well-being, competence and education. The amount of population in a society is not only related to a balanced population development, but human capital is also of great importance. Alongside the usual indicators of economic growth, the importance of public health and well-being is heavily emphasized. More and more EU countries have drawn up population programs for themselves, which support regeneration, healthy ageing, family-friendliness and more even regional development. Finland's and the EU's current population policy develops human resources and interaction, the goal of which is

the "HR strategy". Programs that support demographic development and target follow-up must be linked to programs for sustainable development. Fewer children are currently being born in Finland than the population would like. The reasons for this have been shown to be uncertainty about the workplace, uncertainty about one's own coping skills and the relationship. One hopes for a development within family policy in a way that gives families with children more flexibility. Childcare campaigns and incentives have been a hot topic this decade. Increasing employment rates and productivity is seen as one of the strongest ways to alleviate the economic distress caused by an aging population. Investments in lifelong learning, especially for men. The employment policy shows that the previously set upper age limit of 65 is no longer relevant. The role of social networks in monitoring psychological well-being will be significantly emphasized in the coming decades. (Rotkirch, 2021, p.6)

One of Finland's key socio-political challenges is the regional differentiation resulting from population trends. The largest cities and their surrounding areas have been the main beneficiaries of employment and economic growth, while municipalities and centres in core rural and peripheral areas have weakened. According to forecasts, this trend is expected to intensify, which will further impact the foundations of regional development as changes in regional and population structures continue to unfold. (Traficom, 2023)

The constant renewal of the population means that net immigration should increase significantly in the future. The government's possible goal is to increase the amount of net immigration to 25,000 people from the current 16,000 people per year by 2030. This also requires the development of return migration policy. With the reduction of the population and the shrinking of the age groups, it is necessary to prepare more proactively and open-mindedly than in the current population policy. In Finland, the population is decreasing in most municipalities, so Finland already has experience of how to act in situations where the population is decreasing at the regional level. In Finland, a valuable and safe old age must be secured for every family in the future, therefore regional monitoring and a modern development of services should be promoted. (Rotkirch, 2021, p.5)

2.2 Working population status

The method used in Finland to measure the economy is the financial support ratio. It refers to the relationship between employed and unemployed and people outside the labour force. Outside the workforce are conscripts, pensioners, school pupils, students and 0-14-year-olds. (Statistics Finland, 2020) The economic supply ratio decreases when the number of employed

increases in relation to the number of unemployed and those outside the labour force. The financial support ratio also increases according to the same principle as the proportion of the unemployed and people outside the labour force in relation to the employed population (Lilja et al., 1990). Factors affecting the financial support ratio is, for example, the increase in the number of pensioners and the weak employment situation. In recent decades, the financial maintenance ratio has seen a decline and an increase. During the recession of the 1990s, the maintenance ratio was at its highest. In 1993, there were 172 unemployed for every 100 employed persons in Finland. (Statistics Finland, 2021-b)

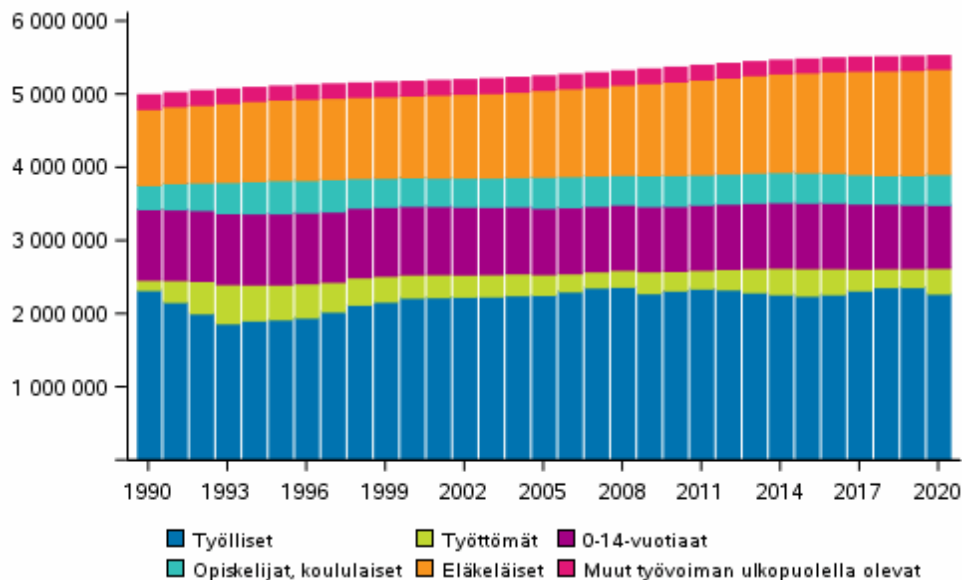


Figure 3: Population by main activity in 1990-2020 (Statistics Finland, 2022)

2.3 Baby boomers working trend in Finland

According to Statistics Finland, the number of people of working age in Finland will decrease from 66 percent to 58 percent in 2040. The reason for this can be attributed to large wartime cohorts leaving working life. According to a survey by Statistics Finland, the number of people reaching retirement age in Finland would increase from 905 thousand to approximately 1.79 million people in 2060 (Traficom, 2023). In the economies of the future, we will see a significantly larger population of retirement age, which is due to the declining birth rate and death rate. In this case, societies should maintain the same level of productivity with a significantly smaller number of employees while the working-age population takes care of a larger number of the retirement-age population. The phenomenon in question will inevitably lead to an increase in the retirement age within the state. The departure of the baby boomers

from the working population will revolutionize the known labour market. In Finland, for example, pressure is being put on the reform of health care services. The labour shortage that Finland may be facing could lead to a significant slowdown in economic development if investments are no longer directed towards Finland. Existing production could be moved abroad due to a looming labour shortage. Due to the above-mentioned phenomenon, unemployment would increase in Finland, which in turn is directly reflected in the development of living standards and the public authorities' ability to maintain a sustainable age policy. (Vuorinen, 2021, p.4-6)

2.4 IT sector in Finland

Three different scenarios are forming in Finland's current labour market. In the first scenario, permanent technical unemployment occurs in Finland, to which the state responds with more rare measures, such as the introduction of a basic income. In the second scenario, temporary technical unemployment occurs that has no long-term effect on employment and is responded to in a more normal way, such as educational changes and an increase in the labour force. In the last scenario, the only security is the uncertainty of the labour market. Technological unemployment, which can be either temporary or permanent, when policy measures are also flexible, such as transforming social support and enabling study and entrepreneurship. The majority of Finns believe that the second or third scenario is possible. (Pulkka, 2019, p.1-2)

Countries that started investing resources and time in the development of education 20 years ago are today leading countries in Europe in terms of technological development and the functioning of the ICT sector. Finland currently leads the statistics that Finland has the most employees in the IT sector in relation to the country's total employment. The situation in Finland is strongly explained by Nokia's rise in the 90s. Finland has also invested in the development of the IT and ICT sector over the years. In 2020, there were 191,500 employees in the IT sector in Finland. It corresponded to 7.6% of the total working population. There are also more women than average working in the IT field in Finland. Men accounted for 76.7% of the total in the IT sector, while women accounted for 23.3%. (Cathcart Technology, 2023) In Finland, 80% of people who attended a university of applied sciences in the ICT field were employed in the province where they were educated. Uusimaa is definitely the most attractive municipality in Finland. In the ICT sector, 44.3% of people are employed in Nyland. The second most attractive is Birkaland. In Finland, 59% of companies in the IT or ICT sector suffer from difficulties in filling vacant jobs. Finland's statistics are average among EU countries, but Finland has an exceptional phenomenon - in Europe, the majority of jobs in the IT and ICT

sector have an outsourced ICT department, while 68% of companies in Finland have their own internal ICT organization. (Mäntysaari, 2022, p.92-95)

2.5 Foreign people on the job markets in Finland

The concept of immigrant is not clear-cut. According to the Institute for Health and Welfare, immigrant refers to a person who has moved from their home country to another country due to family reasons, work/studies or forced refugee status. (Terveyden- ja hyvinvoinnin laitos, n.d.) Immigrants are also divided into two groups: Finnish and foreign. People with a Finnish background means people whose one of the parents was born in Finland. A person with a foreign background means a person whose parents were both born abroad. (Statistics Finland, n.d.)

According to Statistics Finland's birth classification, in 2022 there were approximately 508,000 people with a foreign background in Finland. Of this group, 83% were first-generation immigrants (422,000 people). 17%, or approximately 86,000 people, had a second-generation foreign background. The largest population groups in Finland were the nations that belonged to the former Soviet Union, and the second largest groups were from Estonia, China, Somalia and Iraq. (Statistics Finland, 2021-b)

In 2022 there was 496,000 foreign-speaking people living in Finland whose language is something other than Finnish, Saami or Swedish. The number of foreign speakers of the total population was 9 percent. The number had increased compared to the previous year by approximately 8%, or 38,000 people. Of these languages, Russian was by far the most widely spoken language. The second most common language spoken was Estonian, followed by Somali, English and Arabic. (Statistics Finland, 2021-b)

According to a previous study, recruiters hire a native Finn for their company rather than a person with an immigrant background, who is in the same situation. This can be seen as a reason for weak Finnish language skills (Yle, 2019). People with a foreign background, who speak Finnish at the same level or almost at the same level as people who speak Finnish as their mother tongue - were employed almost as well as people with a Finnish background. Recruiters in Finland considered language skills to be a very important factor when hiring someone with a foreign background. According to statistics, only 23% of Finnish companies are ready to hire a person who does not speak Finnish fluently. In the Nyland region, the percentage is slightly higher than in other regions of Finland (29%). In industrial sectors in

Finland, people who are not fluent in Finnish are treated much more positively - about 35% of companies are ready to hire a person without fluency in Finnish. Within the construction industry in Finland - the importance of Finnish language skills is strongly emphasized. The reason for this can be found above all in the guarantee for ensuring safety for all. (Eronen, 2014, p.3)

The study produced by Almeida (2015) examined the of hiring people with a foreign background. The study showed that it is very challenging to equate professional experience abroad with Finnish experience (Almeida et al, 2015, p.2812). The study also showed that the educational background of highly educated people is often not recorded. Immigrants' access to the Finnish labour market is particularly slowed down by the fact that it is not easy to utilize existing skills and degrees, and that the quality of most degrees remains unclear to the employer. Employers in Finland value work experience acquired in Finland significantly more than work experience from abroad. (Eronen. 2014, p.16)

2.6 Theory of social identity

Social identity theory describes how all people divide each other and themselves in a certain social network/group and how these divisions create conditions and how they influence opinions. Social identification can be divided into three areas: social class division, social identification and social comparison. This "identity" is formed when people are divided into groups, where there is similar behaviour among the group, in which case the opinions of the group are adopted before one's own opinions (Stets & Burke, 2000). Based on this, it can be assumed that people who belong to the same group see each other as equal and see each other in a positive sense. Researchers believe that social identity theory at least partially influences opinions about immigrants. According to researchers and theory, citizens form their own opinion about which social group a person belongs to. An example of a group could be "Finnish" and "non-Finnish". The theory also supports the possibility that citizens support and view members of their own group in a better light than members of another group – without any major reason or ulterior motive. In the study, American citizens approached the issue from the point of view of their own identity group and formed their opinion about immigration based on that. (Mangum & Block, 2018, p.1-2)

In the study "Social Identity Theory and Public Opinion Towards Immigration" carried out by two North American people - the researchers examined the prejudices and fears of normal Americans towards immigrants - using the theory of social identity. The purpose of the study

was to understand the prejudices of the American population and where they arise towards immigrants. (Mangum & Block, 2018, p.2)

Status and power differences between groups influence social comparison. We tend to identify with high-status groups, though the concept of status is not always straightforward. For different people, high-status groups may vary, depending on factors like which sports team they support. Comparisons are often made with groups of lower status rather than higher ones, unless we aim to move toward a higher-status group (Turner et al, 1987). This has a clear connection to self-esteem: identifying with lower-status groups can weaken our self-esteem, while the opposite can also be true. However, it's important to note that there are differences in how strongly people commit to their social identity. Identity can be defined more by group memberships or personal characteristics, and this can vary not only between individuals but also across different situations. (Matikainen, 2020, p.89)

Although the Americans' views and the theories about them cannot be directly equated with Finnish thinking - it can still be noted that similar phenomena and prejudices also exist in Finnish identity groups. These ideas support or do not support Finns' thoughts on whether work-based immigration is seen in a positive light among Finns. Researchers believe that people form cognitive assumptions about members of other groups, which can also be influenced by an individual's subjective fear state. Examples of these fear states can be: fear of not fitting into Finnish society or fear of losing a job to an immigrant. (Mangum & Block, 2018, p.6)

It is important to highlight a few perspectives from the abundant research and discussions on the nature of social identity. Group memberships can be either assigned or acquired. This is a fairly intuitive concept in everyday life. Some memberships are given to us at birth, and this includes not only biological factors but also social ones, such as nationality. While these memberships tend to be relatively stable, they can be changed (Hogg, 2016). There are clear differences in how assigned or acquired group memberships influence social comparison. Often, comparisons are based on fixed or inherent memberships, such as gender, race, or nationality. (Matikainen, 2020, p.89)

While findings may not fully apply to Finland, certain commonalities in attitudes toward immigration are evident across groups and organizations. Mangum and Block suggest that social identity theory is significant in understanding reactions to immigration, as individuals naturally and subconsciously categorize others into groups (Abrams, 1990). In Finland, this can manifest in doubts regarding the reliability of foreign qualifications or educational

backgrounds. Subjective fears, such as challenges in adapting to Finnish society or concerns about job security due to foreign workers, can amplify these attitudes and affect trust in foreign credentials. (Mangum & Block, 2018, p.1)

2.7 Finnish job market present and future

In February 2022, there were estimated to be 2,570,000 people in Finland, which was 89,000 people more than at the same time last year, which means that Finland's employment rate was 72.7 percent. In contrast, 185,000 people were unemployed in Finland, which means that the unemployment rate was 6.7 percent. There were 1,367,000 people outside the labour force (15-74-year-olds). Unemployment in Finland in 2022 had decreased most in the region of Pohjanmaa (-27%), Lapland (22%) and Pirkanmaa (-22%). (Statistics Finland, 2022)

When talking about the Finnish labour market, it is important to highlight the sectors in which Finnish employees are divided. In Finland, the largest sectors by far are Health and Social Services, where there were approximately 415,000 employed. Next come business services with 333,000 people. In Finland, craft areas, which require less skills and educational background, are very popular areas among the population. The industrial sectors employ a large part of the working population - about 366,000 people. There are 184,000 people in the construction industry, which has declined sharply in 2023. The wholesale and retail trade employs 290,000 people per year. (Statistics Finland, 2022)

Finland is currently suffering from a large-scale skills shortage in several areas. Although 2022 could see that the number of occupations with a shortage of labour decreased, there are many sectors in need. State Secretary Elina Pylkkänen explains in the government's letter how "The figures for employment and unemployment reacts with a delay to the ups and downs of the economy and the widespread labour shortage does not abate, even if the economy draws oxygen for a few quarters". In Finland, it is healthcare and social care that is hit hardest by a labour shortage. A total of 56 occupations were included on the labour shortage list in 2022, of which 17 were health and care occupations. The construction industry comes next on the list, with 12 occupations on the labour shortage list. The transport sector, the property maintenance sector and the software sector are also suffering from large-scale labour shortages. (Valtioneuvosto, 2023)

When you think about the change in the Finnish labour markets - it is impossible to predict the concrete sanctions. However, it is possible to identify the factors that shape and influence the labour market (Kauppinen, 1994). One of the most important factors is the development of the

information and communication industry (ICT). The two significant characteristics of the ICT industry that influence change are: General technology. Second, the development of the ICT sector has been characterized by exponential growth. These two characteristics indicate that the role of the ICT sector in society is very significant and constantly growing. The development of the ICT sector offers versatile new production possibilities, which guarantee the development of new technologies. (Kauhanen, 2014)

The next factor affecting the labour market is the change in international trade. In the past, the production of a product and related tasks were located geographically close to each other, allowing companies to save costs on logistics and employees. Digitization has made it possible for companies to spread their operations geographically. (National Development Fund, n.d.) There are significant regional differences in service and labour costs. Thanks to the development of information technology, it is easy to outsource production abroad to places where production is cheaper. In this way, the company's operations can be made more cost-effective. (Kauhanen, 2014)

The last significant factor affecting the labor market is the demographic change of the population. The aging of the population has affected the change in the labor market in four ways. The decline in the working-age population creates pressure for productivity growth (Santamäki, 1990). The aging of the population also means that the demand for services in the health and care sector continues to grow. The third influencing factor is that as the aging population moves out of the workforce - the remaining part of the working population is more educated than average. The last influencing factor is the change in the values and attitudes of the workforce. (Kauhanen, 2014)

2.8 Skill based immigration in Finland

The lack of skilled labor has been an obstacle to the growth of Finnish companies for several years. This type of labor shortage can already be seen in most industries, such as the healthcare sector and the construction sector. The technology industry alone is estimated to need about 130,000 skilled workers over the next 10 years. This term, the Finnish government has presented bills supporting work-based immigration. One example is employer certification, which aims to make it easier for specialists and those working on the upper management ladder to come to Finland. In addition to facilitating immigration, one must understand the associated risks. Companies that use external labor must fulfill the obligations of employers. Foreign workers are not familiar with Finnish legislation and therefore have the greatest risk of

being exploited. Foreign workers need support and advice to avoid abuse on both sides. Immigration policy must also support a sustainable and fair model. By supporting a fair and just immigration policy – Finland can fill these labor shortages – by bringing educated and skilled labor to Finland in areas where expertise is needed. (Holopainen, 2023)

2.8.1 Work related immigration

Work-based immigration refers to permanently moving to Finland from abroad after work, which increases employment and the labor force. (National Audit Office of Finland, 2012)

Finland is facing a labor shortage due to the baby boomers' future exit from the labor market. In Finland, the birth rate has also decreased and the financial support ratio has increased year by year. One way to increase Finland's employment rate and state welfare is to bring in more work-related immigration to Finland. Currently, Finland needs an estimated 20,000 people from abroad each year. (Myrskylä, 2023) The reduced labor supply is reflected in Finland's economic growth slowing down and, in the worst case, stopping. Successful work-based immigration has positive effects on the Finnish economy. The more permanent an immigrant thinks of moving as a solution, the more likely he is to think Finland is a permanent solution. In this case, the person spends the income he earns in Finland, when the money he earns is diverted back to the Finnish market. Immigrants also increase the supply of services, which in turn creates more jobs. Most likely also when an immigrant perceives Finland as the right solution - they will most likely establish a business in Finland, creating new businesses, services and important innovation. Hiring people from different backgrounds also increases the company's innovation and international business. There is constant competition for international talent in the labor market and they have proven positive effects on both the company and the economy. In the corporate world, investments go where there are experts and innovation. International experts also enable companies to grow and compete internationally. Currently, Finland has not been successful in the competition and is constantly losing international investments and experts.

(National Audit Office of Finland, 2012)

2.8.2 Support measures for a foreign employee

When a foreign employee comes to Finland – he/she can experience a culture shock. When talking about work-based immigration – the employer plays a very important role in mitigating these potential shocks. By far the most important way to help foreign workers is to help them

sort permits. By relying on various support functions such as: “immigration and permit services”, companies remove themselves from the investigation of permit matters. (Finland Relocation Services, n.d)

Another important factor that helps foreigners integrate into Finnish society is language teaching. More and more tasks in Finland require knowledge of the Finnish language – only a few specialist tasks use English as a language, if the tasks allow it. Companies should offer foreign workers language training so that they can better integrate in Finland, which increases their overall satisfaction. Cultural differences can also cause shock for a foreigner. Language teaching and general cultural training ensure that shocks between cultures can be minimized. (Finland Relocation Services, n.d)

Relocation services aim to help foreign workers on a very everyday level. They help foreigners find the right kind of home, take care of their children’s school and kindergarten affairs. To find hobby opportunities and make everyday life easier. (Finland Relocation Services, n.d)

2.8.3 Recruiting process

The recruitment process refers to various actions that a company takes when searching for and hiring new employees for their company. The purpose of this process is to find people who best match what the company is looking for (Sangeetha, 2010, p.3). Successful recruitment is extremely important to the company’s success, as it also affects the company’s communication and affects the company’s external image (Tyson, 1995). Poorly managed recruitment not only affects, that person’s success in the company and the creation of results – it also affects the overall picture, what the company communicates to its customers and future applicants. (Kortetjärvi-Nurmi & Murtola, 2015)

When you start thinking about how to make successful recruitments – you need to think about the steps and what they contain. Responsible recruitment involves four main steps, the first of which is planning(Joki, 2018, p.88). The planning must include a mapping of the company’s or customer’s needs. It must disclose the company’s procedures, based on which recruitment will begin. At this stage, the image of the job of the person you are applying for and the selection criteria will be revealed. The choice of recruitment channels is also the key to successful recruitment. Recruitment can take place either internally within the company, which means that the company is looking for employees via its own website, for example. Another option is to use a staffing company, which means moving the entire recruitment process to another

company. The search can also be carried out internally or publicly. Internal search means that the company's own workforce is searched for people who meet the search criteria. A public job search, on the other hand, means that the company is looking for labour outside its own organization. (Kortetjärvi-Nurmi & Murtola, 2015, p.166)

The second step in the recruitment process is implementation. At this stage, the company must prepare a job advertisement, which can be used to attract potential applicants. A good advertisement should be very clear so that applicants can quickly decide where to apply and what. The implementation also includes answering potential applicants' questions and processing jobseekers' applications. At this stage, the people who best respond to the task generally advance. In addition to interviewing the applicants – the company should carry out e.g. aptitude test if the applicants' qualifications are unclear. (Viitala, 2004, p.243)

The selection process takes place right after recruitment. Recruitment serves as the foundation for selection by narrowing down the pool of applicants to a manageable size, leaving only the most suitable candidates for consideration. These candidates are those who either already possess the necessary skills to perform the job or can be trained to meet the job's requirements within a reasonable time frame. (Rashmi, 2010, p.11.)

The third step in the recruitment process is decision making. It includes the selection of the most suitable person(s) from among the choices. In order for the company to maintain its reputation as a responsible employer, the company must also be informative to the applicants who will not be selected. The selected persons must be informed of the selection and ensure that the applicant is still available and interested in the position. After the selection, employment contracts must be entered into for the selected persons. (Elearn, 2008, p.105)

The final step in the recruitment process is the "follow-up" phase. At this stage, the people selected for the job should be thoroughly familiar with the task to minimize failure or internalizing the wrong job image. The orientation should include introducing the new employee to the company, the work community and the work environment. Orientation for workers acquired from abroad must also include orientation about the new location and the country of residence. At this stage, if the company itself has no experience in this – "relocation" services can be resorted to. (Yakubovich & Lup, 2006, p.14)

2.9 Different channels of entry into Finland

When you come to Finland from abroad, there are several routes you can use. They are determined by the foreigner's citizenship, work, task and in what capacity - for example as a family member - the foreigner works. From the perspective of a foreign employee, it is important to choose the right work permit system - which applies to the work in question. (Sorainen, 2014, p.50)

The content of the work permit system is completely different, with different prices and procedures with different considerations. Based on the nationality of the employee, the channels are divided as follows:

1. Citizens of the Nordic countries
2. Citizens of EU countries and those comparable to them
3. Third-country citizens of countries outside the EU and EEA

In 1954, the Nordic countries signed an agreement on the common labour market of the Nordic countries. In the content of the agreement, it was discussed that Nordic citizens do not need to have a work permit when working in another Nordic country. In 1983, however, the agreement was replaced by another agreement, according to which Nordic citizens may work in another Nordic country according to the same laws and regulations as their own citizens. The purpose of the agreements is to guarantee the Nordic consensus in matters relating to the working environment. This has been attempted through the exchange of mutual experience and interaction, which is related to the training of experts. (Nordic Council, 2019) The purpose is also to share key data about the content of different work environments. They may include: occupational health care, occupational accident and occupational disease statistics, control methods and safety issues. Citizens of Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark have the right to enter Finland without a passport and stay in Finland without registering a right of residence. A Nordic citizen also has the right to bring his family with him, even if his livelihood is not secured. According to point 3 of the Aliens Act 157, a Nordic citizen does not need to register his stay during a short visit. When moving permanently to Finland, a Nordic citizen must report to the magistrate and prove his identity with, for example, a passport or an identity card issued by the police. (Sorainen, 2014, p.51-43)

The fundamental freedoms of the European Community include free movement within the EU area. The free movement of workers includes, for public policy, security or public health, to apply for a real/actual job offered and the right to stay within a Member State to perform work under regulations comparable to domestic workers in that State. Employees also have the right

to stay, for example, in Finland after the employment relationship ends under certain conditions. In national legislation, on the movement and work of EU citizens and those comparable to them. The regulations concern conditions for how an EU citizen and his family member can use their right to move and stay within the territories of the member states. (Aliens act 2004/38/EY) Restrictions based on public safety and order. These rules apply to EU citizens moving to Finland and their family members. Although these rights to move and stay in the EU area are a fundamental right for EU citizens – the procedure and the use of these rights involve complicated procedures, which are applied in different situations. According to the Aliens Act 155, EU citizens must be able to prove their identity either with a passport or with an identity card issued by the police, so that they can comply with the provisions on free movement. If an employee or a family member does not have the documents required to enter Finland - they must be given the opportunity to obtain the required documents before they are denied entry. (Aliens act 155 1206/2022, § 1) When an EU citizen stays in Finland for more than 3 months, he must register his stay. If the registration obligation is violated - the person is sentenced to pay the foreigner's violation fine. The registration application must be submitted to the police within three months of entering the country. Registration costs the applicant 50 euros. When applying for a registration certificate, a person must present a passport or identity card. In a situation where a person applies for a registration certificate based on employment – the person must also present a confirmation of the employment relationship obtained from the employer. (Heikkilä & Yeasmin, 2021, p.187)

In Finland, the Aliens Act regulations on work were changed at the beginning of 2014 with the combined permit directive. The purpose of the new rules was to simplify and harmonize the entry procedures for workers from third countries. The changes did not have a major impact on the content of the permit examination itself, but the legal position of people who will work in Finland and have the right to work was significantly improved. (Council of European Union, 2024) Residence/work for those who come to Finland from third countries to work are in principle subject to a permit. Which permit is given to each applicant - is determined by the nature of the work or the nature of the assignment. The most traditional permit for foreigners to work is the worker's residence permit. However, a residence permit issued for work purposes may be sufficient for certain predetermined tasks. The majority of foreigners who work in Finland do so on the basis of a residence permit. Other permits that allow third-country nationals to work are: worker's residence permits, visas and visa waivers, i.e. the exemption clause on the right to work. (Koikkalainen et al, 2012, p.147)

2.10 Settlement of a foreign employee in Finland

When you bring workers from abroad to Finland - it is also important to think about what methods can be used to facilitate their settlement in a foreign country. First of all, it is important to think about the legal status of these people. In 1994, when the EU was founded, the legal status of foreigners in these countries improved significantly. Every foreigner who lives as a guest in an EU country - gets the right to vote in his home country after 2 years of stay on the same grounds as the country's native residents.(InfoFinland, n.d) Currently, every person in Finland, regardless of nationality, has the following rights: equality, non-discrimination, cultural rights, the right to income, care and the right to social security according to the law. In Finland, according to the constitution, everyone has the right to support themselves through the work they choose. The right of foreigners to earn a living is, however, somewhat regulated in Finnish legislation. The regulation on restriction of economic activity applies to situations where the reason for a foreigner's entry or stay in the country is the exercise of economic activity. Citizens of non-Nordic countries and EEA countries do not have a general right to enter the Finnish labour market. The right to business activities is based on the granted permit that allows them to stay in the country. (Finnish Immigration Service, n.d.-a)

People who move to Finland permanently must also register in the population register and apply for their home municipality. A person who permanently moves to Finland must submit a written notification of the move to the Finnish magistrate no later than one week after the move. A person who registers in the national register receives a social security number and his details are forwarded to the national pension institution. Citizens of the Nordic countries must also register with the magistrate by proving their identity with a passport or other identity document issued by the person in charge.(Digital and Population Data Services Agency, n.d) According to the Population Act, a foreigner whose stay in Finland lasts for at least one year must submit a relocation notification, even if the person does not move to Finland permanently. According to the Residence Act, a person's residence is determined solely by where the person lives. Registration of a move to Finland in the population information system is the basis for the right to obtain a social security number. Persons who are permanently resident in Finland automatically receive a social security number. Anyone who temporarily moves to Finland also has the option of getting a social security number. In Finland, you can submit a social security number application in a tax stay application without having to visit the register separately. (Verohallinto, n.d.-a)

2.10.1 Obtaining Finnish citizenship

According to subsection 1 in the constitution Finnish citizenship is determined by birth and parents' citizenship. Finnish citizenship can also be obtained with an application – in this case, certain conditions must be met. Finnish citizenship can be granted to a citizen of another country when: he/she has reached the age of 18 or is married when the application is decided.(Finnish Immigration Service, n.d-b) Or if he has an actual apartment in Finland and has been in Finland for a certain time (period of residence). Also when the person has lived in Finland continuously for 6 years without interruption (accumulated period of residence). The person has not committed a criminal offence. The person has not neglected, for example, maintenance obligations or public law payment obligations. A person can reliably figure out how to make a living. The person has satisfactory knowledge of Finnish or Swedish. In Finland, citizenship can be granted even when all border conditions are not met. At the same time, no person will be naturalized if there is reason to suspect that the person is applying for citizenship solely to be covered by the Finnish social insurance. The application for citizenship is submitted to the police station in the home municipality. In 2024, the fee for processing the application was approximately 490 euros – payment is mandatory for the application to proceed from the police station.(Finnish Immigration Service, n.d-b) The final decision on the granting of citizenship in Finland is made by the Swedish Migration Agency. However, Finnish citizenship also includes certain obligations. A Finnish citizen abroad is entitled to the same support from Finnish representatives. He also has the right to vote in Finland. All Finns have an obligation to participate in the national defense. Men over the age of 18 must serve in Finland. (Suomi.fi, n.d.-a)

2.10.2 Housing and other rights in Finland

In Finland, every citizen has the right to housing. This is supported by the section of the constitution, according to which it is the authorities' task to promote everyone's right to housing and to support the possibility of self-organization of housing. According to the constitution, every foreigner also has his own right to make decisions and the right to live independently in the country and choose his place of residence.(Aliens Act, 41 §) Residence or arranging it is not a statutory factor when granting a residence permit. In Finland, housing and housing costs are linked to the assessment of the income requirement, which in turn is linked to obtaining a residence permit. In Finland, the housing policy principle of securing reasonable housing is followed, which avoids inequality between regions. In Finland, low-income earners also receive

support in the form of housing. Low-income earners have the opportunity to apply for government-funded housing allowance granted by the AP Fund in Finland. In 2018, 34% of immigrants living in Finland received housing allowance from the state.(Jauhiainen & Raivonen, 2020) Living in Finland is determined for the most part with the support of the Home Municipality Act. However, it is possible that the housing allowance is linked to the study allowance which can be granted according to the Student Support Act. In connection with the residence permit, the housing allowance is considered a benefit that compensates your costs and is counted with other income. (Suomi.fi, n.d.-b)

In Finland, the basic rights of all employees include occupational health care, which is independent of accommodation. The requirements for occupational health care do not cover residence in Finland. The Work Environment Act obliges every employer in Finland to provide occupational health care to its employees with the help of health care personnel to prevent health risks. The purpose of the law in Finland is to promote the prevention of work-related illnesses and accidents. Promotes health and safety at work and the work environment. Promotes employees' health and ability to function at different stages of their created between the employer and healthcare.(Työsuojelu, 2024) According to the law, occupational health must include the following: a survey of health risks in the workplace. Health checks based on health risks in the workplace. Activities that maintain working capacity and first aid preparedness in the workplace and direct employees to rehabilitation.(Suomi.fi, n.d-c) However, the statutory healthcare mentioned above does not include general healthcare. However, employers can, if they so wish, agree with service providers on broader services such as: specialist doctors and laboratory services. The employer's right includes receiving compensation for the costs of the healthcare he provides. When importing labour from abroad, it is important to take into account that not all persons who have come to Finland have the right to residence-based healthcare, which the employer could replace. (Kela, n.d.)

2.10.3 Taxation of foreigners in Finland

Finland has a progressive tax system. This means that a person is taxed according to how much income he earns during the year. The higher a person's income - the higher the tax rate. In a country like Finland, where taxation is a challenging topic of discussion, you have to make sure that the employee coming from abroad also understands what it is about. In Finland, an employee's tax liability is determined by how long the person has been in Finland and whether the employer is Finnish or foreign. The so-called "normal taxation" that applies to foreigners is as follows: If the employer is a Finnish company, which has a permanent office or a permanent

representative in Finland, the taxes must be paid as follows. If the person is in Finland less than 6 months - he pays 35% withholding tax or 510 euros/month or 17 euros/day.(Verohallinto, n.d-b) If a person stays in Finland for more than 6 months – he is taxed in the same way as a native Finn. In this case, a tax return must also be submitted to the Tax Administration in Finland. If the employee's employer is abroad and the person is in Finland for a maximum of 6 months - then Finland does not tax the employee.(Tax Law 503/2010, 2 § 2) However, the condition is that the employer does not have a permanent office in Finland or that it is not a temporary job, when the clause is canceled by an international agreement. If the person has been in Finland for more than 6 months, but the employer does not have an office in Finland, the employee must apply for withholding tax, as the foreign employer in Finland has no obligation to collect withholding tax. (Veronmaksajat, 2023)

As in the previous paragraph, the author describes a case where people come to work for a Finnish employer for less than 6 months – in this situation, the employee is called a "Limited Taxpayer". This means that the employee pays 35% withholding tax to Finland, which also includes benefits.(Verohallinto, n.d-c) Withholding is then the employee's final tax, which is taken when the salary is paid. In this case, you also do not need to submit a tax return to the Finnish government. In addition to withholding tax, 7% compensation is taken from the employee's salary for social security contributions and insurance premiums. If the employee has an A1 certificate in Finland, which shows that the employee is insured in a country other than Finland – he does not need to pay the 7% social security and insurance premium. (TVK, n.d.)

In the first paragraph about taxation, the author talked about a scenario where the employee does not pay his tax to Finland. In Finland, the Finnish tax liability of a foreign employee is suspended when the employing company is registered abroad and the company does not have an office in Finland. A representative of the company or a person working in a senior position, who is permanently in Finland, can also set up an office. Even if the employee does not pay his tax to Finland in this case - he still has to pay the health and pension insurance to Finland. Health insurance premiums do not need to be paid to Finland if the work assignment lasts less than 4 months. If the employer has a permanent office in Finland - the employee must pay tax to Finland, regardless of the situation. In special situations, a permanent office in Finland can also be established through a long-term construction, installation or assembly project.(Verohallinto, n.d-d) In Finland, the tax administration determines whether factor X constitutes a permanent establishment in Finland. If it is a temporary job – the employee is then obliged to pay his tax to Finland, because the tax agreement prevents the payment of tax abroad. The idea of the tax agreement is to prevent the possibility that the employee has to

pay his tax twice to Finland and to the country of residence.(Rantalainen, 2022) Temporaryworkers must apply for advance tax in Finland within one month of starting work in Finland. Foreign employers are required to register their temporary workers in Finland during the first month of work, and they must report the wages paid to the workers to avoid abuse of the legal status of workers imported from abroad. In the case of temporary employees, when they do not have a permanent office in Finland, the company is not obliged to collect tax from the salary of the employee, who works in Finland. For this reason, the responsibility for managing the payment of taxes remains with the employee, who must report to the tax administration on which taxes must be paid and must apply for a Finnish social security number. (Act on the Finnish Tax Administration, 2010)

3 Research methodology

3.1 Research onion

The research onion is a model that illustrates the various factors involved in selecting data collection methods. By examining each layer one at a time, with each being significant, a researcher can ultimately reach a clear conclusion about the research approach. This framework is intended to assist in making informed decisions and simplify the process, such as determining whether interviews or statistical data should be employed for the study.(Saunders et al, 2003)

Starting from the outermost layer, the model begins with philosophies, which define the overarching research worldview - commonly including positivism, interpretivism, or pragmatism. The strategies layer then focuses on the research methodology, such as experiments, case studies, or surveys. Further in, the choices layer addresses the methodological options, including mono-method, mixed methods or multi-method. Finally, at the core is the data collection and analysis layer, where the specific techniques for gathering and interpreting data are defined, ensuring coherence with the decisions made in the outer layers. (Melnikovas, 2019)

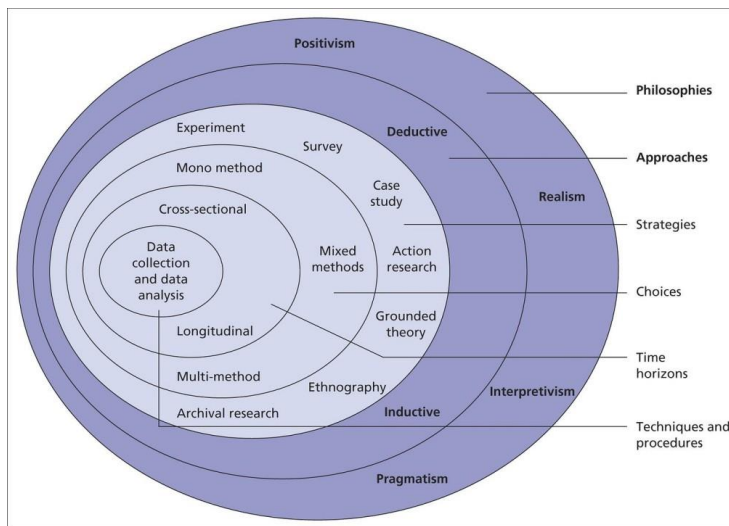


Figure 4. Research onion (Alturki, 2021)

3.2 Research approach

The research method selected for this thesis is qualitative research. This approach is a scientific methodology that aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the qualities, attributes, and significance of the subject matter. (Leavy, 2014) Qualitative research focuses on exploring phenomena in depth and detail, capturing the complexity of human experiences and social contexts. Unlike quantitative research, which emphasizes numerical measurement and statistical analysis, qualitative research seeks to provide rich, narrative descriptions and interpretations. (McLeod, 2019) In this study, the method relies on qualitative data, aiming to generate profound insights without employing numerical indicators. This data is typically collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis, allowing researchers to gather detailed information about participants' perspectives, behaviors, and interactions. By analyzing this data, researchers can identify patterns, themes, and meanings that contribute to a deeper understanding of the research topic. (Corbin & Strauss, 2015)

3.3 Data collection

In this study, the author conducted semi-structured interviews and applied purposive sampling to determine the respondents as several studies adopted this approach in similar topics or research problem (Mousa et al., 2024; Shahzad & Elenurm, 2020). Purposeful sampling is a non-random sampling technique where researchers select participants or data points based on specific characteristics or qualities relevant to the study's goals. Instead of choosing

participants randomly, you pick individuals who can provide rich, relevant, and valuable insights related to your research question. (Palinkas, 2015, p.1)

The research for this thesis was conducted by organizing three interviews with individuals who play a central role in IT recruitment in the Pirkanmaa region. These interviews were carried out anonymously to ensure the confidentiality and comfort of the participants, allowing them to speak freely and provide candid insights. The combination of interviews enriched the data, providing a well-rounded understanding of the current landscape.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in the fall of 2023 and the spring of 2024. A total of three theme interviews were conducted. The respondents to my thesis interviews were clients of Adecco, which ensured that the information shared was both reliable and crucial for this research. Their insights provided valuable perspectives on the current state of IT recruitment and the role of work-related immigration in the industry. The interviews conducted were semi-structured, focusing on several key themes: the willingness of companies to recruit employees from abroad, the commitment of workplaces to the process, and the challenges associated with integrating foreign employees into the Finnish work culture. This approach allowed for flexibility in the interviews, enabling participants to discuss their experiences and viewpoints in depth while still covering the essential topics relevant to the research. By engaging with Adecco's clients and utilizing semi-structured interviews, the study was able to gather comprehensive and nuanced data. This method not only highlighted the practical realities of IT recruitment in Pirkanmaa but also provided a thorough understanding of the broader implications of work-related immigration for Finnish companies.

These methods were chosen to capture the qualitative dimensions of the research topic. The interviews offered detailed, narrative accounts and allowed for probing questions, while the survey provided structured data that could be systematically analyzed. This approach ensured a robust and nuanced exploration of the subject matter, enhancing the reliability and depth of the findings.

Respondents	Age	Sex	Position
Respondent 1	52	Female	IT Company's HR
Respondent 2	41	Female	IT Consultant
Respondent 3	40	Male	IT Consultant

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

3.4 Data analysis

In this thesis, the author has chosen to employ thematic analysis for categorizing and analyzing the responses from the Teams live interviews. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative research method that allows for the identification, analysis, and reporting of patterns (themes) within data (see, shahzad et al., 2024; Shahzad and Arslan, 2023). It is particularly beneficial for this study on the integration of work-related immigrants into our company, as it provides a systematic yet flexible approach to handling the qualitative data obtained.(Jowsey, 2021, p.1)

By categorizing data into themes, thematic analysis ensures that the analysis remains aligned with the research questions, providing clear and focused findings. The process of identifying common themes across different responses enhances comparability, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the integration process (Guest et al, 2012, p.6). By using thematic analysis, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the integration experiences of work-related immigrants within our company, highlighting key areas for improvement and offering actionable recommendations.(Jowsey, 2021, p.2-3)

4 Results

4.1 Challenges in Work-Related Immigration

A common theme across all interviews is the significant challenges faced by companies when recruiting international talent. These challenges include cultural differences, language barriers, and bureaucratic hurdles that make hiring and integrating foreign professionals difficult.

“Finnish language is still an important factor – if the company does their business in Finnish, it’s hard to recruit people from abroad.” (Respondent 1)

“There is the problem of language and how foreign workers would adapt to Finland’s structured and goal-oriented work culture.” (Respondent 3)

“Integrating into society outside of work is a challenge, especially in rural Finland.” (Respondent 1)

“They are used to livelier places to live in, and the transition to a quieter, less multicultural environment can make settling into Finnish life more difficult.” (Respondent 2)

“Our legislation is very hard, especially when you come from outside Europe. Policies should be made to be easier.” (Respondent 3)

Language, cultural integration, and complex immigration policies present substantial barriers for companies in Finland seeking to hire international professionals. Interviewees highlighted that Finnish remains the dominant language for many companies, which complicates recruitment efforts when hiring from abroad, especially for roles that require internal communication in Finnish. Furthermore, Finland’s structured, goal-oriented work culture poses challenges for international employees, and companies often express concerns about how well these individuals will adapt, particularly if they lack language proficiency or familiarity with Finnish work norms.

Social integration is equally challenging. Interviewees pointed out that, especially in rural regions, foreign professionals and their families often struggle to feel connected to the local community, which can lead to isolation and affect their overall satisfaction and retention. This difficulty is especially pronounced for those coming from more culturally diverse backgrounds, who may find it hard to settle into Finland’s quieter, less multicultural environments.

Additionally, restrictive immigration policies in Finland create further complications. The strict legislation, long processing times, and limited awareness of available immigration services make it challenging for companies to efficiently hire non-EU professionals. Interviewees also noted a lack of government initiatives to streamline this process, placing the onus on companies to navigate these complexities alone. This bureaucratic burden can ultimately deter companies from pursuing international hires, despite the potential benefits.

4.2 Talent and skill gaps

All three interviewees agree that Finland's local IT workforce is not currently meeting the demands of the rapidly evolving industry. The need for high-level, specialized skills is outpacing what Finnish educational institutions and training programs are producing, which creates a growing dependency on international talent.

“Finnish schools and companies produce more low- or mid-level coders and IT specialists. We need more high-demand special skills, like SW, 3D, CAD, and SAP4HANA, which currently come from Eastern Europe and Asia.” (Respondent 2)

“Fields like AI are evolving faster than our ability to produce local talent, so companies have no choice but to look internationally to find the expertise they need.” (Respondent 3)

“Without international workers, many companies in the Finnish IT sector would struggle to operate at the level they need to keep up with global competition.” (Respondent 1)

“Those highly skilled professionals are more often coming from countries like India, Russia, or Eastern Europe, where education systems are producing exactly the kinds of talents Finnish companies are looking for.” (Respondent 1)

“Even though companies know they need these skills, they are reluctant to hire from abroad because the relocation process is complicated and time-consuming. Cultural differences and language barriers also add another layer of uncertainty for companies.” (Respondent 3)

“We simply don't produce enough skilled professionals locally. Companies are starting to realize that international talent is the only way forward if they want to keep growing and competing on a global scale.” (Respondent 2)

“Business Tampere,” can help facilitate the immigration and recruitment of foreign professionals, but the services are “very unknown.” (Respondent 1)

The Finnish IT sector faces a critical skills gap, particularly in advanced, specialized areas. Interviewee 2 noted that while Finland effectively produces low- to mid-level IT professionals, there is a pressing need for high-demand skills in software development, advanced design tools, and alternative energy technologies, which are not sufficiently addressed by local training programs. Consequently, many of these skills are sourced from international professionals, primarily from regions like Eastern Europe and Asia. Interviewee 3 further highlighted the rapid evolution of fields such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, stating that Finland lacks the local talent to meet industry demands, forcing companies to seek expertise abroad.

Both Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2 underscored the necessity of international talent for the sector's growth. Interviewee 1 emphasized that without these professionals, Finnish companies would struggle to maintain competitiveness in the global market. However, despite the clear need, recruitment remains challenging. Interviewee 3 pointed out that companies are often hesitant to hire internationally due to inefficient relocation processes and concerns over cultural integration. He noted the logistical burdens companies face in managing the complexities of bringing foreign professionals to Finland, including the administrative effort involved in settling them.

Nevertheless, there is a growing recognition within the Finnish IT sector of the importance of international recruitment as a solution to the skills shortage. Interviewee 1 remarked that companies are beginning to understand that relying solely on the local workforce is no longer viable. Although some government and private initiatives, such as "Business Tampere," aim to facilitate this process, many companies remain unaware of these resources, hindering their ability to leverage them effectively. Without necessary reforms in immigration policies and improved support systems, the gap between the demand for specialized skills and the availability of local talent is likely to persist, posing a significant challenge for the sector's future success.

4.3 Collaboration with government and external partners

There is a notable lack of effective government support and collaboration for work-related immigration in Finland, which impacts the ability of companies to efficiently recruit international talent.

“Government does not give any pressure on this topic. Our legislation is very hard, especially when you come from outside Europe. Policies should be made to be easier.” (Respondent 3)

“The immigration policies are complicated and not well-suited for rapid recruitment of international professionals. This makes it challenging for companies to quickly fill skill gaps with foreign talent.” (Respondent 2)

“The government’s role in facilitating work-related immigration is minimal. There is a need for more proactive policies that can support the dynamic needs of the IT sector.” (Respondent 2)

“Private companies and some local services, like 'Business Tampere,' can help with immigration and recruitment, but these services are very unknown to most companies.” (Respondent 1)

“Most companies rely heavily on private firms to handle immigration processes due to the lack of comprehensive government support. These private firms often become the primary resource for navigating the complexities of bringing in international talent.” (Respondent 1)

“Companies may use local services, but these are not well-known, and many companies struggle to find the right support. The lack of clear and accessible resources can make the immigration process more cumbersome.” (Respondent 3)

“The current state of support for international recruitment is fragmented and insufficient. A more coordinated effort between government and private sectors could significantly improve the situation.” (Respondent 1)

“If the government were to streamline policies and increase support for international recruitment, it could help companies overcome the current barriers and better meet their talent needs.” (Respondent 2)

The lack of proactive government policies poses a significant barrier to work-related immigration in Finland. Interviewees noted that current legislation is complex and often unyielding, particularly for professionals from outside Europe. Interviewee 1 emphasized that the government's insufficient involvement creates challenges for companies attempting to navigate these policies. Interviewee 2 elaborated on the cumbersome nature of immigration

regulations, which hinder swift recruitment of international talent to address skill gaps. This bureaucratic complexity ultimately prevents companies from responding effectively to their immediate hiring needs.

Furthermore, Interviewee 3 highlighted the minimal governmental support for facilitating work-related immigration, calling for more proactive policies to meet the evolving demands of the IT sector. In the absence of robust government support, companies often turn to local services for assistance, such as "Business Tampere." However, Interviewee 2 pointed out that these services remain largely unknown to many organizations, limiting their effectiveness in aiding recruitment efforts. Interviewee 1 noted that private firms have become primary resources for navigating immigration processes due to inadequate government assistance.

Despite the availability of local support services, Interviewee 3 remarked on the challenges companies face in locating the right resources, which adds to the complexity of the immigration process. The overall situation reflects a fragmented and insufficient support system for international recruitment. Interviewee 3 advocated for a coordinated approach between government and private sectors to enhance the effectiveness of recruitment efforts. Interviewee 1 also emphasized that streamlining policies and improving governmental support could alleviate existing barriers and help companies better meet their talent needs, highlighting the potential for significant improvement through collaborative efforts.

4.4 Retention and integration of international talent

Once international employees are recruited, retaining them poses additional challenges that companies need to address to maintain a stable and effective workforce.

"Some companies might have programs for this kind of activity, but most companies do not have formal strategies to ensure long-term retention of international employees."

(Respondent 1)

"Only a few companies have dedicated programs for integrating and retaining international talent. While some offer onboarding processes and support for the employee's family, these are exceptions rather than the norm." (Respondent 3)

"Retention of international employees can be challenging because many companies do not have formal strategies in place. The integration process is often ad hoc, and without structured support, it's difficult for international employees to feel settled." (Respondent 2)

“Finland’s relatively low salaries compared to other countries make it difficult to retain top talent, especially those with specialized skills. International employees might find more attractive opportunities elsewhere.” (Respondent 2)

“Retention can be a challenge if salaries are not competitive with those offered by other countries. Specialized skills are in high demand, and international talent might be tempted by higher salaries abroad.” (Respondent 3)

“To retain international employees, companies need to offer competitive compensation. Without it, even the best integration programs may not be enough to keep employees from seeking better opportunities elsewhere.” (Respondent 1)

“Companies need to develop more comprehensive programs and strategies for the retention of international talent. This includes not just integration support, but also competitive compensation.” (Respondent 2)

“If Finnish companies want to keep their international talent, they need to address the salary disparity and offer competitive packages that can match or exceed what is available in other countries.” (Respondent 3)

“Retention strategies should include comprehensive onboarding and support programs, as well as competitive salaries. It’s about creating a supportive environment where international employees feel valued and see long-term potential.” (Respondent 1)

Retention of international talent in Finnish companies is hindered by the lack of formalized retention programs and competitive salary offerings. Interviewee 2 noted that while some organizations may have programs aimed at retaining international employees, most companies do not implement structured strategies for long-term retention. Interviewee 1 highlighted that dedicated programs for integrating international talent and their families are scarce, indicating that many companies fall short in providing comprehensive support. Interviewee 3 echoed these concerns, emphasizing the challenges international employees face when integrating into the workplace without systematic support.

Moreover, salary competitiveness plays a critical role in retention. Interviewee 1 pointed out that Finland's relatively low salaries compared to other countries pose significant challenges in retaining highly skilled talent, particularly when international employees have access to more attractive opportunities elsewhere. Interviewee 2 reiterated this by stating that without

competitive salaries, retention becomes increasingly difficult, especially in high-demand fields where specialized skills are sought after. Interviewee 3 stressed that competitive compensation is essential; otherwise, even the best integration efforts may fail to keep employees from pursuing better offers.

To effectively address these challenges, Interviewee 2 called for companies to develop more comprehensive retention strategies that encompass both integration support and competitive compensation. Interviewee 1 underscored the necessity for Finnish companies to reassess their salary structures to remain competitive in attracting and retaining international talent. Interviewee 3 further suggested that effective retention strategies should integrate both financial incentives and supportive environments, where international employees feel valued and can envision long-term career potential. This holistic approach is essential for creating an environment conducive to the retention of international professionals.

4.5 Diversity and inclusion

The IT sector in Finland is recognized as one of the most diverse industries due to the global demand for specialized skills. However, challenges remain in effectively managing diversity and fostering an inclusive environment.

“The IT sector is more diverse by nature because we are dealing with international talent to fill specialized roles that are not readily available locally.” (Respondent 1)

“While the IT sector is diverse, diversity initiatives often take a back seat if they conflict with operational needs, such as the necessity for Finnish language skills.” (Respondent 3)

“Companies recognize the importance of diversity, but when it comes to day-to-day operations, if diversity efforts interfere with other critical needs, like language requirements, they tend to be deprioritized.” (Respondent 2)

“There is minimal government support for making workplaces more inclusive for international talent. Companies are largely left to manage diversity and inclusion initiatives without significant external assistance.” (Respondent 3)

“Companies have to navigate diversity and inclusion efforts on their own, as there isn’t much in the way of government-provided support or structured programs to assist in making workplaces more welcoming for international employees.” (Respondent 1)

“The lack of coordinated efforts or support from the government means that companies are often left to their own devices when it comes to integrating and supporting international employees. This can result in varied levels of success and commitment to diversity and inclusion.” (Respondent 2)

“There needs to be more structured support from the government to help companies implement effective diversity and inclusion programs. This could involve providing resources, guidelines, or incentives for companies to promote a more inclusive work environment.” (Respondent 3)

“Creating a more inclusive workplace requires not just internal effort but also external support. The government could play a role in facilitating this by offering more guidance and resources.” (Respondent 1)

The Finnish IT sector exhibits a higher level of diversity compared to other industries, largely due to its reliance on international talent to fill specialized roles that are not readily available in the local workforce, as noted by Interviewee 2. However, despite this inherent diversity, challenges arise in prioritizing diversity initiatives within companies. Interviewee 3 pointed out that operational necessities, such as the requirement for Finnish language skills, often overshadow diversity efforts. Interviewee 1 echoed this sentiment, indicating that while companies recognize the importance of diversity, practical considerations can lead to these initiatives being deprioritized in day-to-day operations.

Furthermore, support for fostering inclusion is limited, placing the onus on companies to manage diversity and inclusion initiatives largely on their own. Interviewee 2 highlighted the minimal government support available for creating inclusive workplaces, which underscores a significant gap in resources and guidance. Interviewee 1 emphasized that the lack of structured support means companies must navigate these challenges independently, often resulting in inconsistent success in diversity and inclusion efforts. Interviewee 3 noted that the absence of coordinated government support leads to varied levels of commitment to these initiatives among companies.

To effectively address these challenges, there is a need for a more proactive approach from both companies and government bodies. Interviewee 2 called for structured support from the government to assist in implementing effective diversity and inclusion programs, suggesting that resources and guidelines could enhance corporate efforts. Similarly, Interviewee 1 stressed the importance of external support in creating inclusive workplaces, indicating that

government involvement could play a vital role in facilitating these efforts. Overall, increased collaboration and support are essential for improving diversity and inclusion within the Finnish IT sector.

4.6 Future of immigration in the IT sector

All interviewees agree that work-related immigration will increasingly become a critical component of Finland's IT sector. As technological advancements and skill requirements continue to evolve, the reliance on international talent is expected to grow.

“As technology progresses and the demand for specialized skills intensifies, Finnish companies will have no choice but to turn more towards international talent to fill these critical roles.” (Respondent 2)

“The trend is clear: as technology continues to advance and new skill sets become necessary, Finnish companies will increasingly rely on international professionals. The current local workforce is not producing enough specialized talent to meet these demands.” (Respondent 1)

“To stay competitive, Finnish companies must adapt to global work cultures and remove language barriers. The government also needs to simplify immigration policies to make it easier for companies to hire international professionals.” (Respondent 3)

“For Finland to successfully leverage international talent, there needs to be a significant overhaul of immigration policies. These policies should be streamlined and made more supportive to help companies recruit and retain skilled professionals from abroad.” (Respondent 2)

“The Finnish government needs to provide clearer guidelines and more support for companies that are hiring international workers. Without such support, companies may struggle with the bureaucratic hurdles and complexities involved in the immigration process.” (Respondent 1)

“Looking ahead, it's crucial for companies to not only address the administrative challenges but also to embrace cultural changes. This includes removing language barriers and creating inclusive work environments to attract and retain international talent.” (Respondent 3)

“The future of work in the IT sector will undoubtedly involve more international collaboration. Companies that proactively address these challenges and adapt their practices will be better positioned to compete globally.” (Respondent 1)

The increasing demand for international professionals in the Finnish IT sector is driven by local skill shortages, as articulated by Interviewee 2, who emphasized that technological advancements and the need for specialized skills necessitate a greater reliance on international talent. Interviewee 1 echoed this sentiment, noting that the current local workforce is insufficient in producing the specialized talent required to meet the evolving demands of the sector. This highlights a consensus that local educational and training systems may not adequately prepare individuals for the rapidly changing landscape of the IT industry.

To effectively respond to this rising dependence on international professionals, significant changes in immigration policies and corporate infrastructure are essential. Interviewee 3 pointed out that Finnish companies must adapt to global work cultures and eliminate language barriers while the government must simplify immigration policies to facilitate the hiring of international talent. Interviewee 2 stressed that an overhaul of immigration policies is crucial for companies to successfully recruit and retain skilled professionals from abroad, indicating that without these changes, Finnish companies may struggle to leverage the benefits of international talent.

Moreover, Interviewee 1 highlighted the importance of clearer government guidelines and support for companies navigating the complexities of the immigration process, reflecting a broader concern regarding bureaucratic challenges. Interviewee 3 further emphasized the necessity of embracing cultural changes within companies to create inclusive work environments that attract and retain international employees. This need for practical and cultural adaptations is reinforced by Interviewee 2, who asserted that the future of work in the IT sector will involve increased international collaboration, positioning companies that proactively address these challenges as more competitive on a global scale.

5 Discussions

The findings from this study highlight several critical aspects of work-related immigration in Finland’s IT sector, addressing the research questions posed.

The study identifies multiple determinants influencing the recruitment of foreign workers. Key among these are the significant skill gaps in the local workforce, particularly in specialized

areas such as software development, AI, and advanced design tools. The rapid evolution of technology outpaces the capacity of Finnish educational institutions to produce the necessary high-level skills, compelling companies to look internationally. Additionally, the structured and goal-oriented work culture in Finland, coupled with the dominance of the Finnish language in business operations, presents both a challenge and a determinant in the recruitment process. Companies must weigh these cultural and linguistic barriers against the pressing need for specialized skills.

When hiring employees from outside Finland, companies must consider several factors to ensure successful recruitment and integration. These include the complexity of immigration policies, the need for efficient relocation processes, and the importance of cultural and social integration support. The bureaucratic hurdles and long processing times associated with Finnish immigration policies are significant barriers that companies must navigate. Furthermore, providing comprehensive onboarding and support for the employee's family is crucial for long-term retention and satisfaction. Competitive compensation packages are also essential to attract and retain top international talent, given Finland's relatively lower salary levels compared to other countries.

Kauhanen (2020) explores the barriers companies face in hiring foreign workers, such as complex application processes and concerns about integration and compliance with local regulations. These findings are strongly supported by the questionnaire respondents, who also cite these barriers as significant obstacles in their recruitment efforts. Both sources highlight the need for simplifying immigration policies and providing better support for companies. The respondents, however, offer additional insights into the practical aspects of retention, such as the importance of competitive compensation and comprehensive onboarding programs, which are crucial for maintaining a stable and effective workforce.

The research by Akava Works (2024) underscores the essential role of labor migration in supporting Finland's economic development, advocating for strategic reforms and government support to facilitate this process. This perspective is echoed by the questionnaire respondents, who stress the need for streamlined immigration policies and better governmental assistance to address skill shortages. Both sources agree on the necessity of labor migration for economic sustainability. However, the respondents provide a more detailed account of the bureaucratic hurdles and the lack of effective government support, which they experience firsthand, highlighting a gap between policy recommendations and practical implementation.

The competencies and skills sought in international hires are primarily driven by the gaps in the local talent pool. High-demand skills such as software development, 3D design, CAD, and SAP4HANA are particularly valued. Additionally, expertise in rapidly evolving fields like AI and machine learning is critical. Companies are increasingly looking to regions like Eastern Europe and Asia, where educational systems produce the specialized skills needed. The ability to adapt to Finland's structured work culture and proficiency in English, if not Finnish, are also important considerations.

Saukkonen (2017) identifies a critical gap in the Finnish educational system, which fails to produce enough highly skilled IT experts, necessitating the recruitment of talent from abroad. This aligns with the findings from the questionnaire respondents, who also highlighted the shortage of specialized IT professionals in Finland. Both sources emphasize the importance of international recruitment to fill these gaps. However, while Saukkonen focuses on the educational shortfall, the respondents additionally point out practical challenges in the recruitment process, such as cultural differences and language barriers, which complicate the integration of foreign workers into the Finnish work environment.

The challenges in hiring international employees are multifaceted. Cultural differences, language barriers, and the complexity of immigration policies are significant obstacles. The lack of government support and the minimal role of structured programs to facilitate work-related immigration exacerbate these challenges. Companies often rely on private firms and local services like "Business Tampere" to navigate the immigration process, but these resources are not widely known or utilized.

To address these challenges and the skill gap, Adecco and similar organizations can play a pivotal role. By providing comprehensive support services that streamline the immigration process, offering competitive compensation packages, and developing robust integration programs, Adecco can help companies overcome the barriers to hiring international talent. Additionally, advocating for policy reforms and increased government support can create a more conducive environment for work-related immigration, ultimately helping to bridge the skill gap in Finland's IT sector.

Study by the Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava) emphasizes the positive economic impact of increased work-based immigration across various sectors (TEK, 2021). This supports the notion that improving immigration policies and support systems can significantly benefit Finland's IT sector.

Similarly, a study by the Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava) emphasizes the positive economic impact of increased work-based immigration across various sectors. This supports the notion that improving immigration policies and support systems can significantly benefit Finland's IT sector.

In contrast, research conducted by the University of Jyväskylä on migrant integration in the Finnish labor market found that comprehensive support programs, including language training and cultural integration initiatives, significantly improve retention rates of international employees (Stewart. 2020). This suggests that Finland could benefit from implementing similar support systems to enhance the retention of international talent in the IT sector.

Additionally, a report by TEK (Academic Engineers and Architects in Finland) highlights the challenges faced by immigrants in the tech sector, including discrimination and the need for better recognition of foreign qualifications (TEK, 2021). This finding supports the emphasis in this study on the importance of competitive compensation packages and inclusive workplace practices in retaining international talent.

5.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, the research contributes to the understanding of the intersection between labor force shortages, immigration policies, and business practices within the context of a rapidly evolving industry. It supports existing literature on labor market gaps in specialized fields, particularly in high-tech sectors like IT, and highlights the growing reliance on international professionals to fill skill shortages. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of integration and retention strategies in bridging the gap between recruitment efforts and the successful long-term incorporation of foreign talent into the workforce. The findings also provide a theoretical basis for examining how governmental policies can either hinder or facilitate the recruitment of international professionals, contributing to broader discussions about immigration reform and its impact on the economy.

From a practical standpoint, the research offers valuable insights for Adecco as it seeks to better understand the needs of its clients and enhance its recruitment services. First and foremost, Adecco can utilize the findings to streamline its recruitment processes for international talent, making them more efficient and tailored to the specific needs of Finland's IT sector. This includes advocating for policy reforms that would ease the relocation process and mitigate the logistical challenges that companies face when hiring international workers. Additionally, Adecco can collaborate with clients to help them address the cultural and

integration barriers that many international employees encounter, thus improving the retention of this talent. Practical solutions such as creating more comprehensive onboarding programs and offering relocation support services could help clients retain skilled international professionals in the long term.

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of addressing salary competitiveness and developing attractive compensation packages, which could be a key service Adecco offers to its clients. By consulting companies on salary benchmarking and creating competitive packages, Adecco could help reduce turnover rates and make their clients' job offers more appealing in the global talent marketplace.

In addition, Adecco can further leverage this study to expand its partnerships with government and local services to facilitate international recruitment. By making clients aware of programs like Business Tampere and collaborating with these services, Adecco could streamline immigration processes and provide more holistic recruitment solutions, thus positioning itself as a proactive partner in the recruitment and retention of international talent.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research Potential

While this study provides valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by Finnish companies in recruiting international talent for the IT sector, there are several limitations that should be acknowledged.

One of the primary limitations of this research is the small sample size of only three interviewees. While their insights are valuable, having a broader pool of respondents from diverse companies and roles within the IT sector would have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and solutions surrounding international recruitment. A small sample size can lead to biases in the data and may not fully represent the views of all stakeholders within the sector. Therefore, the findings should be viewed as indicative rather than conclusive, particularly when considering the diversity of experiences within the wider IT industry in Finland.

Additionally, the study's focus on the Finnish context limits its generalizability to other countries or regions facing similar issues with international talent recruitment. The challenges faced by Finnish companies, including immigration policies and cultural integration, may differ in other countries, which means the findings should be carefully interpreted in a broader international context.

Another limitation is the absence of perspectives from international workers themselves. This research primarily highlights the challenges faced by employers in recruiting foreign talent, but it does not provide insights from the employees who are directly impacted by the recruitment and integration process. Future research could benefit from including interviews or surveys with international professionals to explore their experiences and perceptions regarding recruitment practices, cultural adaptation, and retention efforts. This would help create a more holistic view of the recruitment process and provide recommendations that are more attuned to the needs of international talent.

Looking ahead, there is considerable potential for future research in this area. One promising avenue for future studies would be to explore the long-term effects of international recruitment on employee retention and organizational success in the IT sector. This could involve longitudinal studies that track the careers of international professionals over time and assess their integration, satisfaction, and career progression within Finnish companies. Furthermore, research could explore the effectiveness of different retention strategies, such as salary competitiveness, onboarding programs, and cultural integration initiatives, in reducing turnover and fostering a stable workforce.

Another key area for future research could focus on policy reform and its impact on the international recruitment process. Given the significant role of immigration policies in shaping recruitment strategies, studies that assess the effectiveness of policy changes in easing the recruitment and relocation of international talent would be invaluable. Additionally, further research could investigate the collaboration between private companies, recruitment agencies like Adecco, and government bodies to create a more streamlined and supportive immigration and recruitment ecosystem.

Finally, future research could also investigate the role of technology in facilitating international recruitment and integration. As the demand for tech talent grows, exploring how digital tools and platforms can assist in recruitment, remote work arrangements, and integration processes could offer innovative solutions to current challenges.

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Appendix 1. Interview Protocol

The Version in English

1. Are companies in Finland actively using services for work-related immigration in the IT sector?
2. What challenges do companies face when it comes to work-related immigration in the IT sector in Finland?
3. Are there any specific barriers that hinder the effective utilization of immigration services by companies?
4. From your perspective, what specific skills are currently in high demand in the IT sector in Finland?
5. How do these demanded skills align with the skills of the workforce available locally, and to what extent do companies rely on international talent to fill these gaps?
6. Do companies in Finland actively collaborate with government agencies or external partners to facilitate work-related immigration in the IT sector?
7. How important is networking and collaboration in addressing the talent needs of the IT industry in the country?
8. How do government policies in Finland impact the recruitment and immigration of IT professionals?
9. Are there any specific strategies or programs in place to ensure that skilled immigrants choose to stay and contribute to the Finnish IT sector?
10. What is the general sentiment within the IT industry in Finland regarding the use of international talent?
11. How do companies address the need for continuous training and development, especially for international employees, to adapt to the dynamic nature of the IT sector?
12. Are there initiatives to upskill or reskill the existing workforce, including international hires? Diversity and Inclusion:

13. To what extent do companies in the IT sector in Finland prioritize diversity and inclusion in their workforce, especially concerning international employees?

14. Are there initiatives to create a more inclusive and diverse work environment for both local and international talent?

15. How do you foresee the role of work-related immigration evolving in the Finnish IT sector in the coming years?

16. Are there any emerging trends or changes in the industry that might influence the approach to international recruitment and immigration?

Appendix 2. Interview Protocol

The Version in Finnish

1. Käyttävätkö yritykset Suomessa aktiivisesti työperäisen maahanmuuton palveluita IT-alalla?
2. Millaisia haasteita yritykset kohtaavat, kun on kyse työperäisestä maahanmuutosta IT-alalla Suomessa?
3. Onko olemassa erityisiä esteitä, jotka vaikeuttavat maahanmuuttopalveluiden tehokasta hyödyntämistä yrityksissä?
4. Miltä näkökulmastasi näyttää tällä hetkellä kysytyt taidot IT-alalla Suomessa?
5. Miten nämä kysytyt taidot vastaavat paikallisesti saatavilla olevan työvoiman taitoja, ja missä määrin yritykset tukeutuvat kansainvälisiin osaajiin näiden aukkojen täyttämiseksi?
6. Tekevätkö suomalaiset yritykset aktiivisesti yhteistyötä valtion viranomaisten tai ulkopuolisten kumppaneiden kanssa helpottaakseen työperäistä maahanmuuttoa IT-alalla?
7. Kuinka tärkeänä verkostoituminen ja yhteistyö nähdään IT-alan osaajatarpeiden täyttämässä Suomessa?

8. Miten Suomen hallituksen politiikat vaikuttavat IT-ammattilaisten rekrytointiin ja maahanmuuttoon?
9. Onko olemassa erityisiä strategioita tai ohjelmia, joilla varmistetaan, että osaavat maahanmuuttajat jäävät ja antavat panoksensa Suomen IT-alalle?
10. Mikä on IT-alan yleinen suhtautuminen kansainvälisen työvoiman käyttöön Suomessa?
11. Miten yritykset vastaavat jatkuvan koulutuksen ja kehittämisen tarpeeseen, erityisesti kansainvälisten työntekijöiden kohdalla, jotta he sopeutuvat IT-alan dynaamisiin muutoksiin?
12. Onko olemassa aloitteita nykyisen työvoiman taitojen päivittämiseen tai uudelleen kouluttamiseen, mukaan lukien kansainväliset palkkaukset?
13. Kuinka suuressa määrin IT-ala Suomessa priorisoi monimuotoisuutta ja osallisuutta työvoimassaan, erityisesti kansainvälisten työntekijöiden osalta?
14. Onko olemassa aloitteita luoda inklusiivisempi ja monimuotoisempi työympäristö sekä paikalliselle että kansainväliselle osaajalle?

15. Miten näet työperäisen maahanmuuton roolin kehittyvän Suomen IT-alalla tulevina vuosina?

16. Onko alalla havaittavissa uusia trendejä tai muutoksia, jotka saattavat vaikuttaa kansainvälisen rekrytoinnin ja maahanmuuton lähestymistapaan?

Data Management Plan

Thesis Data Management Plan

1. Description of the Thesis Data The research data consists of semi-structured interviews with three IT recruitment professionals in Pirkanmaa, conducted anonymously in fall 2023 and spring 2024. The interviews focused on:

- Companies' willingness to recruit employees from abroad
- Workplace commitment to the recruitment process
- Challenges in integrating foreign employees into Finnish work culture

2. Data Storage and Retention The data, comprising anonymized text-based interview transcripts, is stored digitally in .docx and .pdf formats. It is securely stored on the researcher's password-protected computer and backed up in encrypted cloud storage. Access is restricted to the researcher, and all data will be permanently deleted post-thesis completion.

3. Handling of Personal and Sensitive Data Collected personal data includes age, gender, and professional role. All data is anonymized, with identifying information removed. Participants were informed via a privacy notice. Data is securely stored and will be permanently deleted after the thesis is completed.

4. Ownership of the Data The researcher owns the data and results. Adecco Finland provided contextual input and access to participants but does not own the data. Any further use requires the researcher's permission.

5. Further Use of Data After Completion of the Thesis Anonymized data will be transferred to Adecco Finland for potential further research. Participants were informed about this possibility. An agreement with Adecco Finland ensures secure handling and exclusive use for agreed purposes.