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Living on a Prayer

Integration of International Students to Work Life
at Satakunta University of Applied Sciences
(SAMK)

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the integration of international students into the Finnish labour market, with a particular focus on the Satakunta region and Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK). The aim is to explore how SAMK can support local companies in employing international students and to propose practical strategies to improve student retention and workforce integration. The research was conducted using qualitative methods, including semi-structured and unstructured interviews with local companies, stakeholders, and SAMK staff.

The findings highlight key barriers to employment, such as language challenges, limited cultural readiness among employers, and the absence of structured support systems. Although the number of international students is increasing and the region, like the country, faces a shortage of skilled labour, only 40% of international graduates remain in Satakunta one year after graduation. Encouragingly, many companies expressed a willingness to hire international talent and recognized the benefits of multicultural teams.

The study concludes that SAMK plays a vital role in connecting international students with local employers. By strengthening career services, offering cultural training, and fostering collaboration with regional actors, SAMK can contribute to both the successful integration of international students and the long-term economic resilience of Satakunta and Finland.

Keywords: International students, employment, integration, Satakunta, SAMK, work life, language barriers, cultural diversity, retention, higher education, workforce shortage, Finnish labour market, multiculturalism, internships, career support, entrepreneurship, internationalization

FOREWORD

This thesis was born from a shared concern and hope: the concern that too many international students leave Satakunta after graduation, and the hope that this trend can be reversed. While current statistics may suggest otherwise, numbers are not fixed—they reflect systems, opportunities, and choices. And systems can evolve.

Through this work, I have had the opportunity to explore the barriers international students face in accessing employment in Finland, and more importantly, the willingness of local companies and institutions to be part of the solution. The findings show that when employment becomes more accessible, retention improves. With the right support, collaboration, and openness, Satakunta can become not only a place to study, but a place to stay, work, and thrive.

I would like to thank Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK) for commissioning this research and for its commitment to building bridges between education and employment. I also extend my gratitude to the companies, stakeholders, and colleagues who contributed their time and insights to this study.

Let this thesis be a step toward change—and a reminder that change is always possible.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND TERMS

SAMK: Satakunta University of Applied Sciences

JCI: Junior Chamber International of Finland

ELY-Centres: Elinkeino-, Liikenne- ja Ympäristökeskukset (Centres for Economic Development, Transport, and the Environment)

EU: European Union

EEA: European Economic Area

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

TE-Office: Employment and Economic Development Office

Valvira: Finnish National Advisory Authority for Welfare and Health

CIMO: Centre for International Mobility

1 INTRODUCTION

In 2023, Finland appeared as the happiest country in the world for the sixth time, according to the World Happiness Report. In 2025 it is for the eighth time. The report balances opinions of national respondents against GDP per capita, social support, life expectancy, freedom, or corruption. (YLE NEWS, 2023.)

There are, however, issues that paint a darker picture of Finland, notably in terms of employment of foreign talents. In June 2023, a newly elected Finnish government announced a proposed immigration policy reform. This reform would deeply impact probabilities of staying in Finland for many immigrants when Finland was already seen as one of the weakest countries within the OECD in terms of employment of foreigners, including people born in Finland from foreign parents (Farchy & Liebig, 2017, pp.6-7). Along with other strict policies, the most argued point of the proposal declares that a foreigner on a work visa would have to leave Finland unless they have found a new job within three months (France 24, 2023; Helsinki Times, 2023b; Hivert, 2023).

Though many companies are already hiring foreign employees, one of the main issues in Finland is the language barrier, as in skills in English for companies and skills in Finnish for foreign talents (YLE, 2021). Lack of habit of dealing with multiculturalism may also be seen as an issue here (Aalto University, n.d.; Farchy & Liebig, 2017; LEHMUSKUNNAS et al., 2020, p.4). Nevertheless, work needs to be done so that companies understand both the need to hire foreign talents to cover growing shortages in the Finnish workforce (YLE, 2023a, 2023b; Yle News, 2021a) and or to alleviate the risk for immigrants to be sent back home too quickly. Retaining and attracting internationals is a key part of the new Strategic Program for International Competence and immigration set by the Satakunta region (Satakuntaliitto, 2024).

Previous research on behalf of the Satakunta University of Applied Sciences has demonstrated the need for immigrants to integrate the Finnish workforce and questioned why international students are leaving Satakunta and or Finland after graduation (Sävel, 2022). Thus, the author of this thesis agreed with SAMK to use the results of

the above-mentioned master's thesis with the objective of finding what could be done, by SAMK and other stakeholders, to support and or motivate local companies into taking the first steps to hiring foreign talents.

This appears to be a paramount need at the time of writing when shortages in skilled employees are showing and the availability of internationals seems threatened soon, despite the growing number of international students coming to study at SAMK (Saarinen, 2022). A solution must surface for the university of applied sciences to fully be able to support both its international students; and the associated economic growth of the region and country resulting from the employment of international students. As newcomers, international students have been required to start learning Finnish and will be advised to do so for a long time, however, it seems necessary to look to the side of the companies to start facilitating access to work to international students, a.k.a. recent experts in their field of studies.

2 COMMISSIONER AND RESEARCH TASK

2.1 Satakunta University of Applied Sciences: tasks, and goals

The commissioner of this thesis is Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, -a), SAMK in short, an international university of applied sciences with campuses situated in different locations within Satakunta, a region on the South-Western coast of Finland. The role of a university of applied sciences is to support and prepare its students for working life through “research, development and innovation activities [...] promote working life and regional development and renew the economic structure of the region” through cooperation with regional businesses and actors of the working life (FINLEX, 2014, §4). Yearly, many international students come to study at SAMK, where different bachelor’s (eight starting in Fall 2025) or master’s (two starting in Spring 2026) degrees are available in English (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2025b, 2025a). Furthermore, the Junior Chamber International of Finland awarded SAMK as International Company of the year 2023 (JCI Finland, 2023a), in the public organizations category, which looked at how nominated companies handle recruitment, orientation, and engagement of international talents.

SAMK, in accordance with the rules for a university of applied sciences, has worked, as a leader or participant, on many different research programs funded by different organizations. When this thesis was written, 273 projects, finished or ongoing, could be counted for SAMK, including 65 international projects (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024f). This supports how SAMK is able to build and keep a reputation with partner businesses within the Satakunta region, as well as offer expertise in terms of international cooperation. SAMK would thus be a trusted tutor or mentor to help local companies hire international students, who are also hoping for more facility when having to find a place to work their required practical training. Finnish speaking students are easily seen as getting more opportunity, making it more difficult for foreign students to feel seen and or appreciated for their value (Sävel, 2022, p.54).

Following the results by Sävel (2022, Appendix 5c), SAMK received recommendations such as organizing more visits to companies and supporting the introduction of international students to companies, more cultural support or a direct access to a mentor or coordinator at SAMK. A more direct, personal, and supportive relationship to international students and local companies appeared to be what would be expected most of SAMK in terms of support to keeping its international students in the region post-graduation.

To be noted, in March 2024, the author of this thesis was hired by SAMK as International Facilitator. The job responsibilities are to support access to work for international students. This job belongs to the Research Centre for Human Functional Capacity (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024h), with the aim of making the people of the region, Satakunta, the most functional working age people in the country, as well as respond to the challenges of availability of labour in the region. This is part of the SAMK 2030 strategy (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024i), where place is given to strengthening opportunities for international students to find work and practical training through relationships with local companies and communities and it supports the regional Strategic Program for International Competence and Immigration (Satakuntaliitto, 2024). SAMK supports global migration and understands the need for promoting the availability of workforce, either through the increasing presence of international students, or by hiring a more diverse, international workforce to support the strategy. The goal of this thesis is to research ways to build this supportive relationship and help companies into hiring the international students of SAMK.

2.2 Usability and delimitations

The last 10 years have seen an increase in the number of foreign students coming to study in Finland, with 22,791 international students altogether in 2021 of which 7,101 were new international students coming to Finnish universities. The main areas of studies for these students are commerce, administration, and law; data processing and telecommunications; health and wellness sectors; and technology. Most international applicants and students selected for training are from outside the European economic area (EEA). (Opetushallitus, 2021b, 2021a.)

Furthermore, Satakunta is strategically important for Finland due to its geopolitical and logistical significance, industrial and economic role, and potential for green transition investments. The region is described as "Finland's security coast" due to its logistical location, industrial base, export ports, and military garrisons (Satakuntaliitto, 2024 p. 4). Satakunta is attracting clean energy-based industrial production and has financial resources for potential green investment (Satakuntaliitto, n.d., pp. 4-16). The employment and retention of international students are thus vital for addressing the demographic and workforce challenges of the region. By implementing strategic plans to attract, employ, and retain international talent, Satakunta can ensure its economic and social vitality, contributing to the overall resilience and growth of Finland.

Research by Sävel, on behalf of SAMK, under the assumption that employment influences the decision to stay or go for many international students, demonstrated that, indeed, many foreign students coming to Satakunta to study end up leaving Satakunta or Finland altogether after a short while, due to the difficulties encountered in finding a job here, despite the availability of opened jobs (Sävel, 2022, pp. 10-12, p. 64). The research furthermore highlighted needs for SAMK to develop actions to encourage students to stay in Satakunta, facilitate access to internships locally and proposed recommendations to achieve the goals set by the research (Sävel, 2022, pp. 60-63). Furthermore, a Strategic Program for International Expertise and Immigration in Satakunta found out that approximately two-thirds of immigrants are under 35, an ideal age range for workforce renewal. However, only 40% of international graduates remain in Satakunta one year after graduation (Satakuntaliitto, n.d., pp. 4-12).

Where Sävel's research was about finding what could motivate international students to stay in Satakunta, and or Finland, and if this research was agreed to be used here for its results regarding employability and companies, the aim of this thesis is to explore how local companies can be assisted in hiring internationals, especially when there is interest but also concern into doing so.

By understanding what the main challenges are for students and employers, one can look at what SAMK would be able to develop to be better able to support access to work for its international students. Hence, as the aim of this thesis was to support Sävel's (2022) thesis and give answers to noted expectations from local companies,

after determining what companies expressed as their wishes from SAMK, the research question becomes: *“how can SAMK provide the appropriate support to help companies improve the employability of its international students?”*

Figure 1, below, is a visualization of the challenges and barriers that will be explained or overviewed as the theoretical framework of this thesis, or in other words, the research phenomenon.

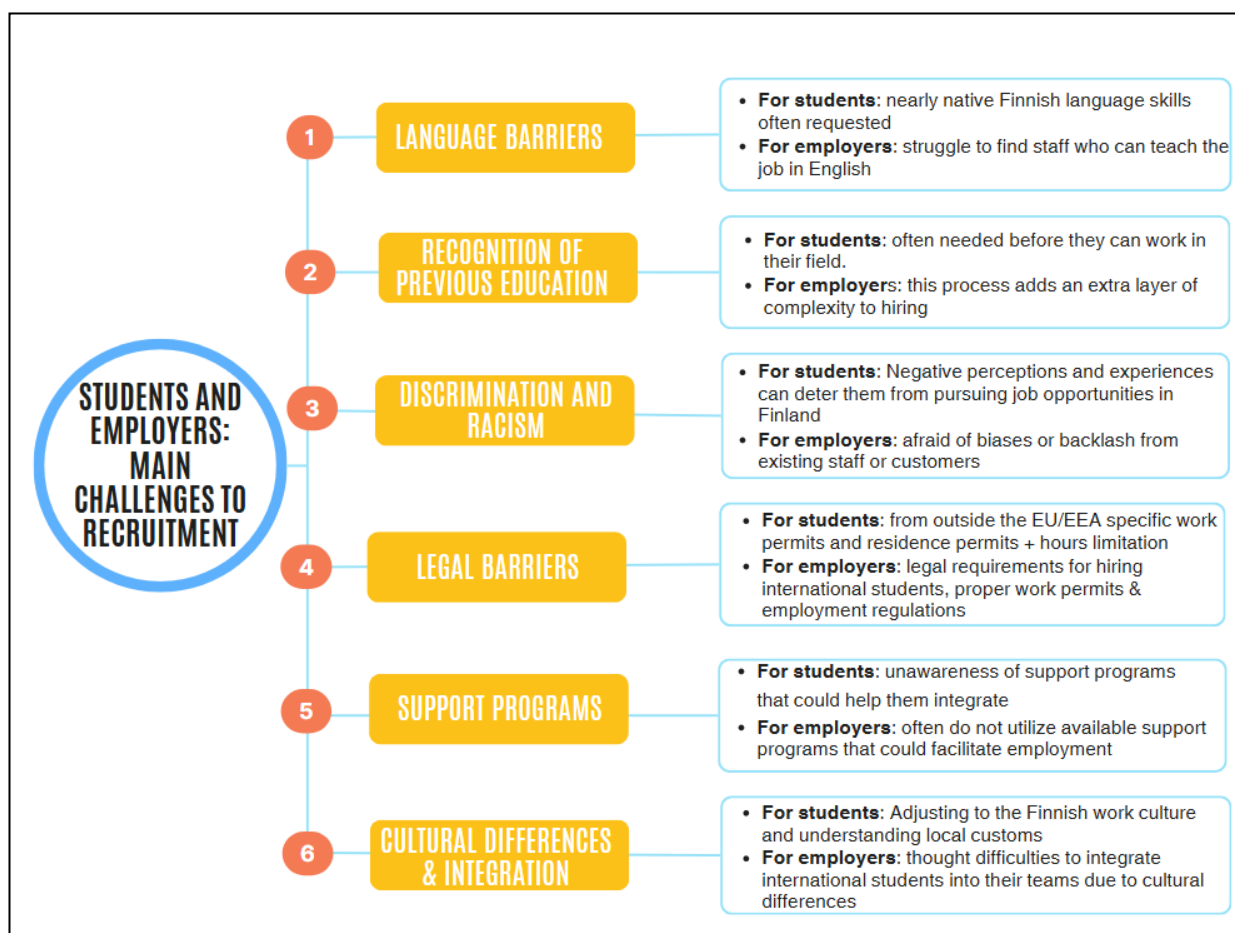


Figure 1 Students and Employers: Main Challenges to Recruitment (Plouet, 2025)

The supporting sub-questions can thus derive from the facts listed on figure 1, that show the challenges or barriers in the recruitment of international students not only for the students but also for the employers. Thus, the sub-questions become:

- What challenges do international students face when seeking employment in Finland, particularly in Satakunta?
- What difficulties do companies face when hiring international students or employees?

- What added value can be found to motivate employers from having an international team?

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research methods

In its 2030 strategy, SAMK shares the vision that “All SAMK students will be employed” (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024i). Though this vision is positive towards all students, one may wonder if all students will find the same chances of being hired in Satakunta and or Finland. Hence, the need to look at ways to coordinate and facilitate the efforts of companies into hiring international students, who most often face more difficulties in finding employment in Finland than local students, who may already be struggling. Empirical data thus needed to be gathered to explore what the barriers are in real life compared to what could be seen in the media and find out what could present as solutions or projects to improve the hiring chances of international people in Satakunta, or international students regarding this thesis.

The interview methods for this thesis were semi-structured and unstructured interviews. Semi-structured interviews permit to have a prepared set of questions, or topics, to discuss with the interviewees, without using the full list, and with the possibility to ask additional questions depending on the context. The way the conversation goes may impact the order of the questions. This method was deemed useful given the fact that all parts interviewed did not have the same experience in hiring international people or students (Saunders et al., 2009, p.320). These interviews were performed online, giving the author a better opportunity to record and transcribe the interviews for later analysis.

Unstructured interviews, a non-directive method, were also used to gather data for this thesis as it granted room for interviewees to express their opinion or awareness and share ideas to improve the situation (Saunders et al., 2009, p.321). Meetings with stakeholders and SAMK teachers, were performed face to face, or online. Some meetings were recorded for later transcription, or better recollection. While being anonymous, the SAMK teachers represented all international degree programs within SAMK except for the Sea Captain program, which has been discontinued in English after 2023.

Research was also done online to find out what other higher education establishments are doing in Finland to support access to work for their international students. This method allowed to discover certain projects or tools used that could be used by SAMK to further improve the support of international students regarding employment matters.

3.2 Research process

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine companies, where sometimes more than one interviewee was present. Of all interviewees, who will remain anonymous, one was not Finnish. The author of the thesis invited many more, but only nine were able or willing to take the interview. Reasons for refusing to answer varied, some simply did not have the time to do it, others thought that their intake was not pertinent enough for the research but saluted the importance of such a subject, and others refused because they do not hire internationals for safety reasons. Information in the results will be given without detail, not even of the business sector, though, other than healthcare, all areas of business studied at SAMK were approached.

The themes and questions of the interviews with local employers, presented in appendix 2, were thought to support not only the content of this thesis but also the understanding of the issues regarding the hiring of international people and the barriers faced by both companies and internationals. The first theme was to understand how language imports in terms of employment within companies. The second theme regarded cultural issues and how prepared companies are for different cultures. The third theme talked about labour shortages and difficulties faced by the companies in this regard, the fourth theme covered collaboration with SAMK from the companies and how collaborative efforts could be improved. The last theme was all about what, in the opinion of the local companies, SAMK could do to help them hire international students and get said students more visible in the region.

Unstructured interviews were conducted to discuss the subject with different stakeholders within Satakunta, who, again, will remain anonymous. These were not

supported by prepared questions or themes, but more discussions to receive point of views about the situation regarding the hiring of international individuals in general and discuss what ideas could be had to improve the situation and what their thoughts were about what SAMK could do to support the hiring of its international students. How SAMK could collaborate with the stakeholders was also part of the discussions. Thus, the discussions mostly covered the job market situation in 2023-24 regarding the employment of internationals but also the labour shortages in general, and what ideas or plans were held at the time, what could be done by local services, in collaboration with SAMK to support the hiring of internationals students.

Unstructured interviews were also conducted with teachers within SAMK, who again will remain anonymous. These unstructured interviews aimed at understanding what the main difficulties are for international students and what support is given to them within SAMK and from their teachers, or what the main issues international students face while searching for internship placements or for a job are. The difference between these unstructured interviews and the ones mentioned above is that those were held within SAMK, also as part of the international facilitator job as those interviews and their results were deemed necessary to plan the tasks for the job and get started. As they presented interest for this thesis, it was then authorised that the results could be used here.

4 CHALLENGES FOR INTERNATIONALS IN FINLAND

4.1 Barriers and difficulties

4.1.1 Language barriers

Language barrier, like in most countries where the official language is different to one's own, would most likely be the biggest obstacle in finding a job in the new country. In Finland, it is reported that less than one fourth of companies would be willing to hire someone who does not possess fluent Finnish language skills and that many companies in diverse fields see nearly native skills as necessary. It is however believed that lack of employment is not supporting progress with learning the new local language, as the practice of the language becomes less likely (LEHMUSKUNNAS et al., 2020; Rask, n.d..)

It is important to remember that the language of study for most international students at SAMK will be English, and that most international students arrive in Finland a few days or weeks before starting their studies, with no prior education in the Finnish language. Though Finnish will be an official part of all degrees, only the basics will be learned by most students at SAMK, other than students in healthcare who will legally be required to demonstrate language proficiency in Finnish and or Swedish, as regulated by Valvira, the Finnish National Advisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira, n.d.). One way to support Finnish learning at the workplace would be to offer Finnish courses during work time, like other development opportunities are offered in many different businesses and companies (Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, n.d.; Rask, n.d.; TE-Palvelut, 2023b).

Regarding language barrier, it is however often noticeable that many people, in many countries, will switch to English when talking to a foreign person. This, though probably coming from a good sentiment, is not the most helpful to foreigners already struggling to learn the local language. Such habits could be misleading as foreign people may think that learning the local language may not be so useful. Simple language could be an easier way to achieve good communication and allow foreigners to practice their

Finnish, when Finns would use *selkokieli* (plain Finnish). Foreigners learn Finnish from the books, when many Finns speak Finnish from the street, with different dialects or slangs in many different regions or cities, making it difficult for foreigners to follow and understand (Omma, 2020; YLE, 2015)

4.1.2 Former education, and other barriers to integration

Another barrier to hiring internationals in Finland is the recognition of previous education acquired outside of Finland. In many cases, immigrants will have to have their degrees recognised as valid in Finland before they are able to work in the field or profession of their degree or qualification. The Finnish National Agency for Education lists the regulated professions in Finland and offers guidance to ask for recognition (Finnish National Agency for Education, n.d.-b; n.d.-c, 2017). For additional help, immigrants can join, for example, the International Professionals Finland association to receive support and guidance as well (International Professionals Finland, 2024).

Furthermore, and unfortunately, it would be difficult to talk about employment prospects for foreigners in Finland without the words “discrimination” and or “racism” to also appear as barriers (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, 2025). Since August 2023, for example, it has proven difficult to not come across shows of discrimination or racism facing internationals trying to find a job in Finland on social media. Figure 2 is a sample of some of the posts gathered on LinkedIn (LinkedIn, n.d.). This is mostly in response to the new policies and announcements made by the then newly elected government regarding immigration and conditions to be able to live and work in Finland.



Figure 2 Sample of reactions about discrimination, racism, and the new immigration policy in Finland post August 2023 (Plouet, 2023)

The posts in Figure 2 demonstrate feelings of racism and discrimination in Finland, on the labour market as well as the reactions towards the new immigration policy reform propositions published since August 2023. Links for the articles shared in these posts can be found in appendix 1. As these posts appear publicly on social media, the appeal of Finland as a country to move to can be negatively impacted. This also supports the need for facilitating access to work to international students at SAMK, and throughout

Finland. It can be noted that while this information was gathered in 2023, looking at LinkedIn in 2025 does not yet show much progress.

4.2 multiculturalism and associated challenges

In 2014, the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) published a report about the hidden facts and figures of internationalization on the labour market. The report covered international experience and its value according to companies, as well as the hidden skills of international talents and benefits they offer on a team and in a company, as supported by Figure 3. (Centre for International Mobility, 2014)

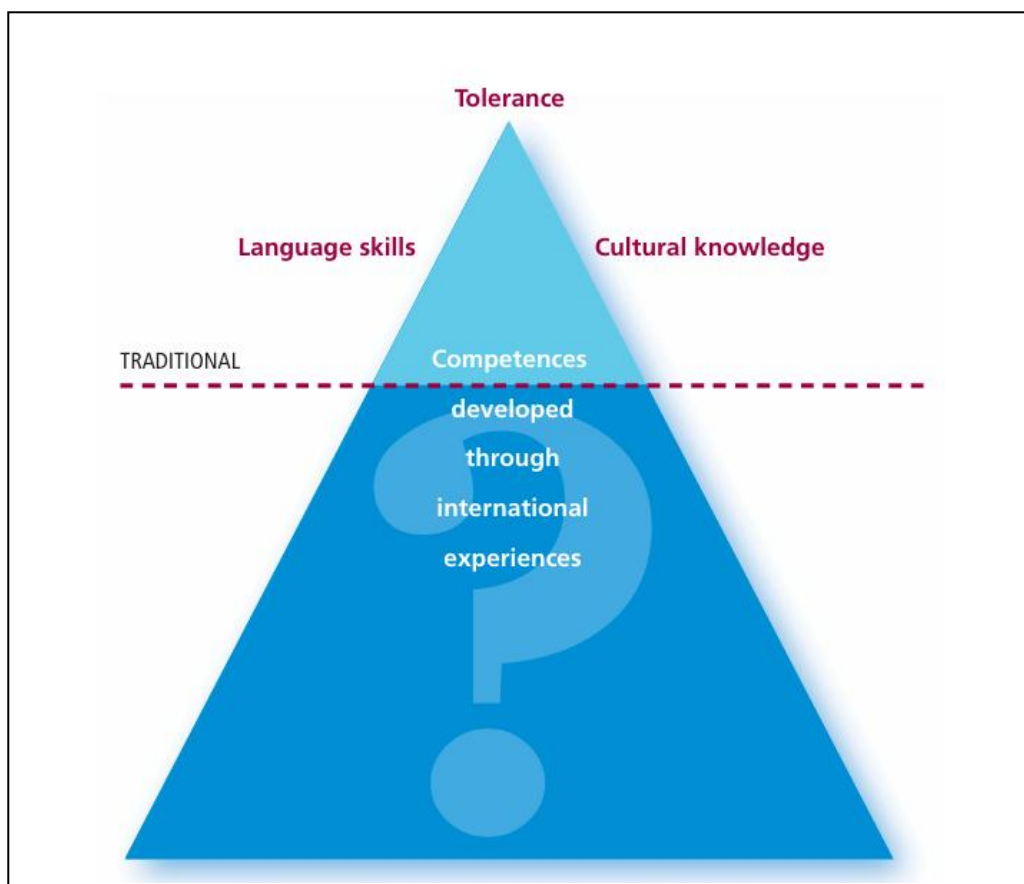


Figure 3 Competences developed through international experiences (Centre for International Mobility, 2014)

As Figure 3 exemplifies, the importance rested mostly on the fact that skills gained from international experience are hidden, and need to be better defined, better demonstrated, especially in terms of recruitment. Companies do not get to see what is on the submerged part of the iceberg, only what shows on the surface, and as the study explains, new sets of skills can prove difficult to label or identify. Numbers in the report

showed that 90 percent of companies did view international experience as a positive attribute in 2014, however, they were not able to recognize how this experience presented many of the key competencies looked for when recruiting. In 2005, however, only 36,5 percent of companies valued skills and competences earned through international experience, though only 22,3 percent of them saw no interest in this kind of experience. On the other hand, 61,2 percent of students perceived international skills as an asset. International mobility as an educational development tool and opportunity to improve one's employability was pointed out as it helps develop language skills and intercultural competencies, which may open the minds of international students and make them more tolerant. (Centre for International Mobility, 2014, pp.5-18.)

The report also relates that the presence of international talents as part of a team or company is a way to keep up with the fast-changing trends in the global world. They are most likely following what is happening in their home country, seeing what is successful, and bringing new ideas to the table. Nokia, and its sudden decline in the early 2000s is cited in the report as a good example of what the consequences of the inability to follow and react quickly to trends can be. Back in 2014, the report already highlights that in the "megatrends" era, "every job is international". (Centre for International Mobility, 2014, pp. 9-11.)

The development of the internet and social media have rendered the world much more global since the beginning of the 21st century (de Guzman et al., 2016). Thanks to that, it has become much easier to have an international outlook in a moment. People from different areas of the world can interact easily, and ideas or opinions can be shared in a fraction of a second. Location is no longer a matter in what people experience, as the world is opened to all on the global network. Hence, one can be international without even being aware of it. This is where there is value nowadays in identifying and exploiting the access to global knowledge and internationalization. (Centre for International Mobility, 2014, p.13.)

For all companies, the study highlights reliability, ability to access and handle information and problem-solving skills as the most important skills during recruitment. Communication and cooperative skills also rank highly. Regarding companies who valued international experience, value was given to language skills, the willingness to

travel for work, and experience in studying or working abroad, along with networking abilities or creativity and being opened to new experiences. Looking outside of the traditional vision of what international experience means, an extended look shows ability to work outside the box, networking abilities with the ability to adapt to different cultures and age groups, and a more global approach to life and opportunities. (Centre for International Mobility, 2014, pp.19-23.)

Through factor analysis, the study showed the three main factors identified to support international competencies: productivity, resilience and curiosity. Productivity gathers efficiency, analytical and problem-solving abilities, and credibility. Productivity is a very current word in the present work scene. Resilience defines the ability to adapt, know one's own strengths and limitations and being confident. It is often used to define good employees. Curiosity, however, though often seen as something that should not be pushed, is linked to tolerance, openness towards new ideas, intercultural awareness, teamwork and networking skills. Nowadays, as previously mentioned, with such easy access to global knowledge and trends, curiosity is a prerequisite to keep up with the times and competition. As such, the study sees curiosity as a defining virtue for future working life for the capability to notice new influences and trends, which influence most activities and present as a challenge. (Centre for International Mobility, 2014, pp 23-27.)

4.3 Understanding cultures and differences

Culture was defined as “*the whole set of signs by which the members of a given society recognize one another, while distinguishing them from people not belonging to that society*” at the 43rd session of the UNESCO International Conference on Education. What is important to keep in mind when thinking about working with international individuals is that culture influences peoples' way of life, beliefs or emotions, hence the importance of understanding different cultures and preparing for possible differences in methods, for example. (Education Sector - UNESCO, 2006)

Furthermore, as previously mentioned, many people tend to associate cultures with stereotypes, when every person is different. Nevertheless, there are characteristics that

are pronounced in different cultures around the world. What is essential, especially in the workplace, is to understand what cultures are, how they affect people, and how to work with people from different cultures respectfully. One prime example of cultural attributes is the Hofstede Dimensions, which opposes cultures on low and high scores. Hofstede used six dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity/femininity, long term vs short term orientation and indulgence versus restraint. Each of these dimensions explain what is most general with people from this or that culture or country (Hofstede, 2011, pp. 9-16). Though the Hofstede dimensions are not the only material to understand culture, a good understanding of them seems essential to start understanding how to prepare to work with people from a different culture, who will have different ways of seeing or processing things.

Other cultural dimensions to be considered are Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's Dimensions of Culture, which focused on how despite different cultures people are still alike, as in being human (Hills, 2002). Here, the value orientations differ from Hofstede as they are human nature, relationship between humans and nature, relationships between humans, preferred personality and time orientation, values that again show differences per culture (Research institute for Interculturality, 2025). This theory also questions whether one is limited to their own culture or the way they were born, or if they can transform to a different culture (Hills, 2002, pp.4-6). The author of this thesis, as an example, feels more at home in Finland than in their home country.

Nardon (2017) says that what people see or feel, their way of being, is influenced by one's surroundings, hence a place of birth, or more where one was raised is meant to shape their personality. From this, the notions of long versus immediate surroundings must be considered when looking at the professional settings. That is where someone has spent most of their life versus the new surroundings, which means need for time to get a habit, be understood, which would be required from all sides, not only the newcomer. Just like how a new employee will be given onboarding when starting a new job, to understand the new company culture and adapt to new requirements and habits. Context and behaviour are important here where someone is trying to familiarise themselves with a new environment and how the behaviour of others will influence their motivation to perform and adapt. In an *enacted context* the result of an interaction

becomes part of the experience and is determined by the persons' actions, hence a possible understanding dilemma. (Nardon, 2017, pp.41-44.)

4.4 Reasons to study in Finland and costs

As previously mentioned, studying in Finland can be to receive the proper recognition to practice the profession one is skilled for. Nevertheless, when searching the reasons to study in Finland online, students will most often be introduced to the renowned excellence of the Finnish education system, its innovative approach, the affordability of tuition fees compared to other countries, and what the country has to offer in terms of quality of life, like activities, career opportunities, or work-life balance (Edunation, n.d.-a; n.d.-b.; International Student Insurance, n.d.; iSchoolConnect, 2023). Entrance to higher education establishments in Finland for foreign students requires going through a process of admission, which requires providing proof of previous higher secondary school education, academic English language test results, proof of identity, and in certain cases an entrance exam is also required. Applications go through the Opintopolku (My Study Info, in English) website, which centralises applications for different establishments to process the admissions. (Edunation, n.d.-a.; Finnish National Agency for Education, n.d.-a.; Study in Europe, n.d.)

At SAMK, in 2024, the annual tuition fee for an international student not from a European Union (EU) or European Economic Area (EEA) country and without the appropriate residence permit is 9,500€ for most of the degree programs, or 10,500 for the degree programs in Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Mechatronics. International students can however benefit from scholarship to reduce the price of the tuition, like, for example, the SAMK early bird scholarship, which reduces the overall tuition fee by 1,500€ when the fee is paid before the determined date. All tuition fees paid later will be full price. There are three other available scholarships available at SAMK, which all encourage the performance of international students, either with their overall studies, or studying of the Finnish language (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024j). The value of the tuition and scholarships offered by SAMK compares to the averages in Finland (Yle News, 2017).

It should be noted that international students most often do not have close family or friends to rely on in Finland and must pay the above-mentioned tuition fees. This makes them somehow different to Finnish students or students from the European area (EU or EEA). The quality of education, however, will be the same for any student on a Finnish campus. Strong support from universities should be a must to guide international students throughout their study on campus. Advice is often given before students arrive in Finland, but a well-planned guidance should be provided to students after they have arrived, as many important steps need to be taken, like registering with a city or in the population information system, opening a bank account, or in general getting accustomed to national services and requirements (Digital and Population Data Services Agency, n.d.; Road to Finnish, n.d.; TaideYilopisto, 2022). Some universities, along with sites specialised in studying abroad, offer such guidance through check lists of what to do post arrival in the country (Aalto University, n.d.; Edunation, n.d.-a). SAMK organizes a Welcome week for incoming new international students at the start of the semester, which consists of non-academic orientation and aims at helping them familiarise themselves with both SAMK and the local services, or with mandatory administrative issues (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024d).

4.5 Internationalization efforts in Finland, SAMK and Satakunta

4.5.1 Public services

Finland has been putting effort into attracting talents from abroad and supporting the internationalization of the labour market. From Talent Boost a program supported by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and its supportive sub-programs such as Work in Finland, to Business Finland and Associations like International Professionals Finland, or in Satakunta the Multicultural Association of Satakunta (Business Finland; International Professionals Finland, 2024; Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2023b, 2023a; Satakunnan MonikulttuuriYhdistys Ry, 2024; Work in Finland, 2023) it is visible that Finland has been trying to attract internationals to work in Finland, in response to the labour shortage and demographic changes happening in the country.

Talent Boost, for example, includes different programs in cooperation with the Employment and Economic Development Office or TE-Office, meant to facilitate the internationalization of companies, or the recruitment of internationals within the company. The most relevant examples are probably the Imago program, and Workplace Finnish. Imago is a coaching program meant to help companies brand themselves positively to attract employees based on their company culture and employee reputation. The coaching offers diversity expertise to be implemented to support international recruitment for companies, which is especially interesting for companies looking to take that first step. This is supported by developing strong onboarding methods as well. Imago is free for companies of 1 to 250 employees, entrepreneurs, and public sector organizations, with no unpaid tax debt or payment defaults (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment n.d.; TE-Palvelut, 2024). Workplace Finnish, on the other hand, is a language service meant to support international employees within a small, medium, or large company, or public sector authorities. The full content of the course program is built to suit the needs of the contracting company only, with a minimum of 70 lessons, though adjustable based on the needs of the company. The size, turnover, and financial sheet of the business determine the company's contribution (ELY Centre, 2023). These programs seem, however, poorly known by companies and companies and could be better advertised to support the needs for internationalization and integration of international people in Finland.

4.5.2 SAMK and Satakunta

SAMK plays an important part in the overall internationalization efforts of the region of Satakunta. Internationalization and being able to retain international students are seen as a key factor in the success of both the region and or the country, as stated by the managing director of SAMK, Jari Multisilta (Finnish Education Evaluation Centre, 2022; JCI Finland, 2023b). In addition, SAMK has cooperation agreements with different universities both in Finland and worldwide, which offer countless opportunities for its students, international or Finnish (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024g). SAMK is also ideally placed to support the recent Satakunta Strategic Program for International Competence and Immigration, which within different scenarios of the demographic development for the region in the present (2023-24) socio-demographic

situation sees immigration as the main strength to support and revitalize the region professionally, hence economically (Satakuntaliitto, 2024, p.2).

Similarly, Satakunta offers many opportunities for collaboration as the local ELY-Centre supervises only one of the three activities supported by those centres nationwide, i.e. Business and industry, labour force, competence, and cultural activities (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, 2023). Furthermore, the association *International Professionals Finland* (International Professionals Finland, 2024) was created in Pori, and is mainly managed from Pori, which again means greater opportunities for collaboration. The Multicultural Association of Satakunta (Satakunnan MonikulttuuriYhdistys Ry, 2024), which operates as an international meeting point is dedicated to supporting the inclusion of internationals through the region and collaborates with SAMK and other actors of the region in such efforts, through language courses, for example (Saarinen, 2020).

5 EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS IN FINLAND

5.1 shortage of skilled workforce

5.1.1 Causes

In 2023, when this thesis was started, a study showed that 81% of companies strived to find the needed skills to fill their opened positions. The previous year, the record was at 70%, which shows a large progression regarding the shortage of skilled workers. Looking at the results of the study by region, Southern Finland, of which Satakunta is part, scored 83%, thus higher than the average national percentage. (Helsinki Times, 2023.) Figure 4 gives some detail of the situation, for a better overview of the areas of concern.

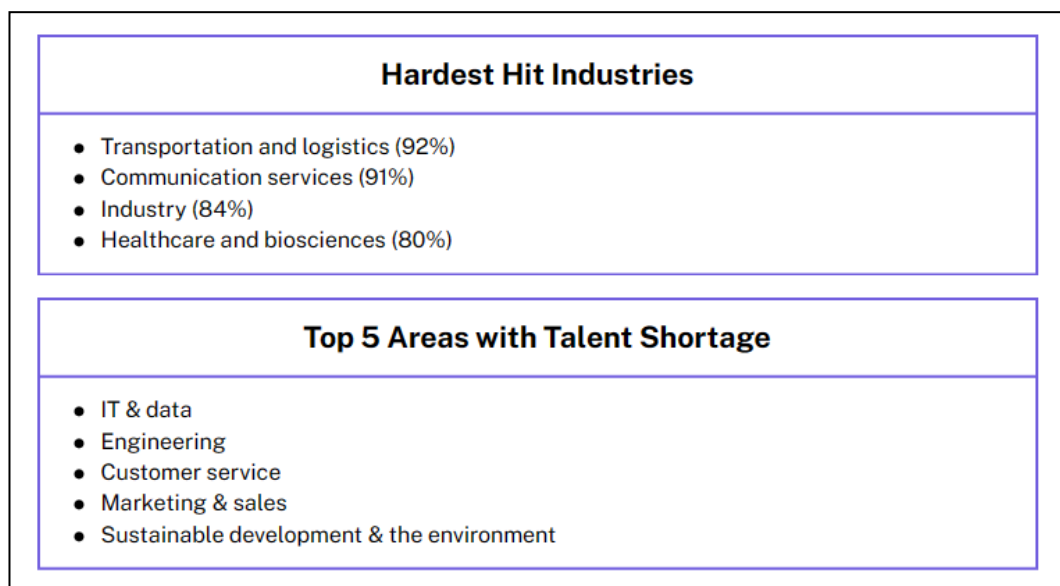


Figure 4 Overview of difficulties within the job market (Helsinki Times, 2023a)

Starting in or around 2016, a disparity had been observed in job offerings and the availability of skilled workers or positions. It had either been difficult to find suitable candidates where there was a shortage of skilled workers, or to find a job opening where there was a surplus in skilled workers, proving a disparity in the availability of work and training of individuals for which figure 4 demonstrates what should be focused on for training or education to better meet the present needs in the job market. A change of labour markets, as globalization brought new trends and changes in

consumer habit could explain this phenomenon. As some labour markets lose their attractiveness, skilled workers in those markets lose their job and find themselves unskilled for new job opportunities different to what they were trained for, or interested in. (Cedefop, 2017.)

While lack of applicants to some job openings or lack of experience seem to make the main reasons behind the shortage, hence related to education and training, other explanations to the situation could be the mobility of labour, especially with globalization and fast trends. Language skills could then also add to the problem when Finns are reportedly uncomfortable with speaking English or do not know how to (Kielibuusti Språkboost, 2023; Yle News, 2021).

Another challenging situation for the job market of Finland in 2024 is the ageing population. Though people over 50 manage to be hired in Finland with an average of 75.6% as opposed to 68.8% in the rest of Europe (Age Platform Europe, 2023), there are still stereotypes that make it difficult for people over the age of 55 (Yle News, 2024). Moreover, the low birth rate in Finland makes it a challenging situation with the potential imbalance between people too old to work and younger people able to take over. With a limited population of about 5,6 million inhabitants, the low birth rate of Finland puts it at risk when more deaths than births are estimated in the future. It is thus predicted that by 2050 the working age population in Finland could decrease by up to 76.000 people, while by 2060 the decrease could reach a massive -310.000 people compared to nowadays. (Yle News, 2021b.)

In practice, this means more difficulties for hiring, along with less taxpayers and a more fragile economy for the country (Valkonen, 2023). Such numbers leave little doubt to the need for keeping international students working in Finland, or Satakunta, after they graduate, as warned by the ETLA Economic Research Institute (Valkonen, 2023). According to a press release by E2 Research (2022), the appeal of Finland to younger generations and ageing people as well as international talents is necessary; along with consideration of the needs of all actors in all industries, the companies, and people, to be able to retain experts where they are needed and attract talents from abroad through understanding what works for all.

Regarding the region of Satakunta, its population has been declining, as seen in the Strategic Program for International Expertise and Immigration of the region (Satakuntaliitto, n.d., pp.7-12), with a reduction of approximately 14,200 people (-6.3%) between 2010 and 2023. The workforce (ages 15-64) shrunk by about 21,000 people (14.6%) during the same period. Forecasts indicate a further loss of around 23,200 people (-10.9%) by 2040 if current trends continue. This decline is primarily due to negative natural population growth and significant domestic migration losses.

The strategic program also informs that net immigration has averaged 640 people per year from 2010 to 2023, totalling around 9,000 people. The number of foreign-language speakers increased by approximately 6,000 people between 2010 and 2022 and is expected to double (+9,800 people) by 2040, reaching 7.6% of the total population. Approximately two-thirds of immigrants are under 35 years old, making them ideal for workforce renewal, however, when looking at international students, only 40% of international graduates remain in Satakunta one year after graduation. (Satakuntaliitto, n.d., pp.4-12.)

5.1.2 Alternatives supported by SAMK

Whether the skill shortages and ageing population create uncertainty regarding the job market, there are alternatives for international talents, including students, to find work, or be professionally active. Not limited to international talents, researching what areas of work are the most in need of skilled employees could be a way to define where training should be directed. In Finland, a lot of effort is put into anticipating the needs for the labour market, so that higher education is offered in the fields that meet the needs as closely as possible (Cedefop, 2023). In SAMK, for example, degrees offered to international students in 2024 meet most of the areas reported as suffering from skill shortages: IT, ICT and Gaming; Health Sector; Engineering; and Tourism. This is part of the SAMK strategy to meet the needs of the working life in Satakunta, with automation, robotics, and artificial intelligence as well as tourism and experience economy as focus areas of the university (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024i, 2024a).

Another alternative to being professionally active in Finland is entrepreneurship, which SAMK strongly supports as its mission emphasises (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024i). For example, each degree contains compulsory entrepreneurship studies, which can help some students develop their own business idea, with the added opportunity to build a professional network (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024b). When entrepreneurship is featured in priority 1: Sustainable Growth of the Satakunta Regional Strategy Plan *Satakunta 2050* (Satakuntaliitto, 2021), higher education and vocational education institutions in Satakunta provide Personal Enterprise Accelerator mentors to students opting for this path, which shows high interest in entrepreneurship within the region (Business Pori n.d.; Inbets n.d.; Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024c; Work & Study in West Coast Finland, 2023). However, an entrepreneurship degree only exists in Finnish at SAMK (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024). Support will still be given to international students deciding to pursue an entrepreneurship plan, nevertheless, as SAMK is highly invested in supporting entrepreneurship throughout the region and the country.

Entrepreneurship can appear as a solid alternative to the labour shortage and difficulties to find a job, as such situations can lead to employing oneself. Such can be defined as *involuntary* or *forced* entrepreneurship. It is further reported that in Finland international entrepreneurship is less growth oriented and innovative and more of a life earning endeavour. As a matter of fact, involuntary entrepreneurship is often seen as the answer to being active. The conditions pushing internationals towards entrepreneurship are most commonly insufficient language skills, hurdles to having prior education recognized in the new country, and discrimination which bring limitations to finding a job. Most international entrepreneurs, however, do not picture themselves as involuntary entrepreneurs, possibly due to the popularity of such activities in their home countries. (Leimu, 2012, pp. 167-174.)

5.2 difficulties for companies

5.2.1 Interest in hiring internationals

According to the results from Sävel (2022, pp.54-56,), there are different degrees of reasons or difficulty for companies to hire, or not, international students. Some do it regularly, others have no or little experience and expect strong Finnish language skills, but her thesis showed real interest into being able to hire them. The results show that no company interviewed was reluctant to hiring international students and acknowledged seeing added value in having a mix of national and international employees (Sävel, 2022, p.44). This is important when remembering that in Finland less than 25 percent of companies would be willing to hire someone with less than fluent Finnish skills (LEHMUSKUNNAS et al., 2020, p.7).

What remains to be seen here is what makes it difficult for companies to hire internationals despite the will to. As mentioned, language skills are most often required, sometimes to an excessive degree, as in nearly native skills. However, a study by the ELY-Centres highlights the fact that this requirement often comes from companies that have no previous experience with hiring foreigners while companies with experience show more flexibility with language requirements. This could mean that finding ways to adapt, or tailor jobs for internationals could lead to an easier introduction of international employees to Finnish workplaces (LEHMUSKUNNAS et al., 2020, p.4). The author of this thesis had a discussion with a company about hiring international students at a professional recruitment fair, when looking for companies to interview. One of the companies replied that they cannot hire internationals “at the moment” to which the author asked for the reasons.

The answer to the question was that so far, the company did not have employees who are able to teach the job in a different language than Finnish, as their staff consisted of older people with poor English skills. They had, however, started to hire younger employees, who were, at that time, not experts at the job yet, so they needed a little more time for those younger employees to learn the job so that they would be able to teach it in English if or when necessary. This company was opened to hiring internationals,

however, at the time they did not offer the right conditions to do so but showed willingness to manage it soon.

5.2.2 Legal barriers

Companies in Finland, as in any country, are obliged to make sure the person they employ, if foreign, has the proper rights to practice and work in the country, but also the qualifications of the applicant must be supported and recognised by the country, as previously mentioned (Finnish National Agency for Education, n.d.-b). Work permits are the prime legal barrier for companies to choose to hire an international employee from a country other than from the EU or EEA. Other than making sure the employee has the right to work in the country, for the kind of employment or tasks they are hired for, companies must also declare the employee and keep record of the employment for two years past the end of said employment. Furthermore, the employment must be declared to different services within the employing company, which means more pre-occupation than hiring a Finn or member of the EU or EEA (Maahanmuuttovirasto, n.d.-a; TE-Palvelut, 2023a).

Regarding international students, to ensure appropriate time for studying, a 30-hour limit per week was set, with possible exceptions, if the maximum annual timeframe is not exceeded. There is, however, no time limitation for internships as the student works the internship to earn credits, which is seen as part of the studying time. Furthermore, students from outside of the EU and EEA received a residence permit for studying, so they have a right to a part time employment to support their studies, while the internship is a mandatory requirement for finishing the degree at a university of applied sciences. (Maahanmuuttovirasto, n.d.-b.)

6 RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Target groups

SAMK was first contacted for this thesis in 2023, when the overall idea of the subject was presented. Following the first introduction, the writer met with several employees from SAMK, and a discussion brought to the final approach to be taken regarding the content of this thesis and what goal it was to fill for SAMK. This resulted in using the results from Sävel's master's thesis (Sävel, 2022) and finding the basis for appointing a SAMK representative or support person to help companies hire international students after graduation and during their studies.

Three target groups were used for interviews and to establish results. The main, or most important group was companies, as they are the ones that will be hiring, or not, international students, and it seemed essential to understand more of their needs and expectations. The second target group was local stakeholders, to discuss their opinions of the matters of internationals on the workplace and find ideas to improve the present (2024) situation. Finally, the last target group were SAMK teachers and staff, to understand what support students receive, what is required of students in all degree programs and what are the main difficulties in terms of life during studies and finding a workplace, either a part-time job, practical training or thesis contract.

Students were considered as a target group, but as the results from Sävel's thesis were deemed enough on the subject, this fourth target group was not seen as necessary, given that this thesis is more aimed towards supporting companies into hiring them, and international students are more the purpose than the target of this thesis.

6.2 Results

6.2.1 Companies

The key themes of the interviews with companies were language barriers, cultural awareness and how SAMK could facilitate the employment of international students

through a more direct form of collaboration with the companies. The questions can be found in appendix 2. Possible marks of identification were removed from the quotations in the following analysis. Those marks of identification are replaced with [...]. It is important to note that the quotations are strictly from the transcripts, which can highlight possible difficulties with English and the preference of some for using their mother language, Finnish.

The analysis of language use and its implications within the companies interviewed revealed a significant emphasis on the primary language used in each company, the necessity of language skills for different roles, and the approaches of these companies to accommodating international employees. One of the key themes was the pre-dominance of Finnish as the main language in most companies. For instance, one company noted "*Main language is Finnish [...], even though we are serving our Swedish customers.*" This highlights the strong preference for Finnish, even in contexts where other languages might be relevant. Another company echoed this sentiment, stating that "*we use mostly Finnish, and I would say almost only and kind of also sad to say, [...] we work only in Finnish here.*"

Despite this, there was a recognition of the need for English, especially in roles that involve international interaction. One company mentioned "*the group official language is English,*" indicating a shift towards English in certain contexts. Another company pointed out that "*our company language [...] it's Finnish, but we are part of [...] group which official language is English, and we use English in our work.*"

A further part of the interviews also explored the challenges and strategies related to hiring international employees. One company discussed the difficulties faced by non-Finnish speakers, stating that "*we have hired only one, not Finnish worker along the years and she had that kind of connection, that her daughter works for us.*" This highlighted the reliance on personal connections to facilitate the integration of non-Finnish speakers. Another company noted that "*we use a lot of Polish workers, but in the office, we also have had a few experiences about international engineers,*" which suggested a more common approach to international hiring.

Language training emerged as a crucial factor in supporting international employees. One company mentioned "*we offer language courses and actually at the moment, formulating the kind of language strategy that we are going to use in the near future.*" This proactive approach was echoed by another company who stated that "*we actually have been providing training for all the volunteers in English.*" These examples illustrate the efforts made by companies to bridge language gaps and support their international workforce.

Varying degrees of language proficiency required for different roles were also put to light in the interview process. For example, one company noted "*in manufacturing work, it's not necessary to know Finnish because it's mostly putting together components and assembling [...].*" In contrast, another company emphasized the need for Finnish in certain roles, stating, "*if you're in the factory, I think you need Finnish for sure.*"

The analysis of language requirement through the interviews revealed a large landscape of language use within companies. While Finnish remains the dominant language, there is a growing recognition of the importance of English, particularly for roles involving international interaction. Companies are adopting various strategies to support their international employees, including language training and tailored hiring practices. This multifaceted approach reflects the evolving needs of a globalized workforce and the efforts to create inclusive and supportive work environments.

The role of culture in the hiring processes and workplace dynamics of various companies was the following theme of the interviews, the analysis of which revealed differing perspectives on the importance of cultural considerations and the perceived benefits of a multicultural workforce.

One of the primary themes was the varying significance of culture in hiring decisions. Some companies downplayed its importance, as one stated "*I don't think actually that that is such an issue with like, that it would be any issue with us.*" This suggested a focus on other factors over cultural fit. Conversely, another company emphasized the value of cultural awareness, noting that "*culture is important. It's always important to find out if a candidate is a good fit for us and if we are a good fit for them.*" The

interviews also highlighted the benefits of a diverse workforce. One company remarked that "*It changes also us and new perspectives are given to us and everything is going better,*" indicating that cultural diversity can enhance workplace dynamics and improve language skills. Another company supported this view, stating that "*working with different cultures brings value also for the working community.*"

However, there are challenges associated with cultural integration. One company pointed out, "*there may be a need to train employees, the ones already here,*" suggesting that existing staff may require training to better understand and work with colleagues from different cultural backgrounds. Another company noted the potential for misunderstandings, stating "*there is so much room for misunderstanding, misinterpretation.*" Some companies had already implemented or were considering cultural training programs. One company mentioned that "*it's really useful when I think about it, to invest in cultural trainings as well,*" highlighting the proactive steps being taken to mitigate cultural clashes. Another company suggested that universities could play a role in preparing international students for the Finnish working environment.

The interview process also touched on the practical aspects of cultural integration. One company noted "*we have pretty clear workplace rules and of course we expect the same rule that everyone works with the same rules,*" indicating that clear guidelines are expected to help manage cultural differences. Another company emphasized the need for flexibility, stating, "*people need to, you know, I think if you come as a foreign student, you need to realize that if you come from a culture that is too flexible, maybe prepare for something to be a little more fixed.*"

The analysis of this cultural theme revealed a nuanced view of culture in the workplace. While some companies do not prioritize cultural considerations in their hiring processes, others recognize the value of a diverse workforce and the need for cultural training. The benefits of cultural diversity were acknowledged, but there were also challenges that needed to be addressed through clear guidelines and training programs. This multifaceted approach reflected the evolving nature of the global workforce and the efforts to create inclusive and supportive work environments, and demonstrated difference in the level of habits of working with international people within a company or team.

Recruitment challenges and strategies for the companies represented the following theme of the interviews, the analysis of which revealed the complexities of hiring processes: the availability of job postings, and the consideration for making job offers accessible in multiple languages. One of the primary themes was the difficulty of recruitment, particularly for certain roles. For instance, one company noted that "*recruiting has not been a difficulty for us, but of course it's not a guarantee for the future.*" This indicates that while some companies have had success in hiring, there are concerns about future challenges. Another company highlighted the specific difficulties in hiring blue-collar workers, stating "*we needed to hire or something like 20, 25 people fast. We couldn't get it by ourselves; we needed to hire HR companies.*" This demonstrated that sometimes companies are not the only actors in recruitment, and needs should be clearly defined when there is more than one deciding actor.

The availability of job postings online was another key theme. Most companies utilized various online platforms to advertise their vacancies. One company mentioned "*we post on Duunitori which is I think the biggest job board in Finland currently and we also use LinkedIn for all white-collar positions.*" This demonstrated the reliance on digital platforms to reach potential candidates. Another company added "*Jobs are posted on TE-Office and sometimes we use the recruiting firm Talent Centre,*" indicating a multi-channel approach to recruitment, which again implies the need to clearly define what the company is looking for and what the limits are.

Language considerations in job postings were another challenge within this theme. Several companies acknowledged the importance of making job offers accessible in both Finnish and English. One company stated that "*we have been thinking about it because as I was talking earlier, we had a small crisis about finding labour.*" This suggested that language accessibility can play an important role in attracting a broader pool of candidates. Another company noted that "*we make it accessible, but actually when I think about the technical salesperson ad, we only published it in Finnish,*" highlighting the challenges of balancing language requirements with job-specific needs. There was also a recognition of the need to adapt recruitment strategies to attract international candidates. One company pointed out that "*we do realize that in the future we have to focus more and more, you know, outside of the Finnish borders,*"

indicating a strategic shift towards international recruitment. Another company mentioned "*we have international applicants, and we can process them when they get there, so, we are not deleting them from the file just because they, for example, put their application in English,*" showing a willingness to accommodate non-Finnish speakers.

The analysis of this theme revealed a multifaceted approach to recruitment. Companies face varying levels of difficulty in hiring, particularly for specialized roles. The use of online platforms is widespread, but there is an ongoing discussion about the importance of language accessibility in job postings. Additionally, there is a growing recognition of the need to attract international candidates and adapt recruitment strategies accordingly. This comprehensive approach reflects the dynamic nature of the job market and the efforts to create inclusive and effective hiring processes.

The last theme discussed in the interviews was cooperation between various companies and SAMK, focusing on how the latter can support companies in hiring international students. The analysis revealed the current state of cooperation, suggestions for improvement, and the potential benefits of enhanced collaboration.

One of the primary themes was the existing cooperation between companies and SAMK. Several companies mentioned their interactions with SAMK, such as participating in meetings and events. For instance, one company stated that "*... for example, this week we had this [...] meeting where we are thinking about how students from some courses are doing research work for these mobile robots.*" This indicated active engagement in collaborative projects. Another company noted that "*we have this, twice a year we have this meeting with the representative of SAMK,*" highlighting regular communication.

Furthermore, suggestions for how SAMK can better support companies in hiring students were discussed. One company suggested that "*it would be good to have someone to contact directly,*" indicating the need for a dedicated contact person at SAMK to facilitate communication and match students with job opportunities. Another company emphasized the importance of proactive planning, stating, "*being more proactive with this kind of things to you know think, think these kinds of things ahead.*" Several

companies expressed interest in custom pathways and targeted events to enhance cooperation. One company mentioned that "*we have this platinum program here,*" which offers students summer jobs, thesis work, and other opportunities. This structured approach could be beneficial for other companies as well. Another company suggested that "*having a more kind of targeted event that would be interesting especially for us,*" indicating a preference for focused interactions with students. Furthermore, many of the employers interviewed proved interested were there a way to share job opportunities directly with students via SAMK.

The importance of cultural training and support for international students is another important part of this theme. A company noted that "*cultural training like we talked about, I don't know if it's in SAMK field of expertise, but it is something that would be good.*" This suggested that cultural training could help both students and companies navigate potential challenges. Another company pointed out the need for better Finnish education, stating "*Better Finnish education. maybe one tip for both the international students and maybe the Finnish local students would be to have this kind of like a Finnish conversational club.*" There was also a recognition of the need for more active promotion and matchmaking by SAMK. One company stated that "*SAMK should somehow also advertise themselves,*" indicating that increased visibility and promotion could attract more companies to collaborate. Another company suggested that "*the university could do this kind of matchmaking and help us find the right kinds of students,*" highlighting the potential for SAMK to play a more active role in connecting students with companies.

The analysis of this theme reveals a multifaceted approach to cooperation between companies and SAMK. While there are existing interactions, there is room for improvement in terms of proactive planning, targeted events, cultural training, and active promotion. Enhanced collaboration could benefit both companies and students, creating more opportunities for international students and supporting the needs of local businesses. This comprehensive approach reflects the evolving nature of the job market and the efforts to create inclusive and effective hiring processes.

6.2.2 Opinions from local stakeholders

Interviews with stakeholders of the Satakunta region, including educators, employers, and service providers, who offer insights into the challenges and potential solutions for improving the employment prospects of international students, provided detailed examination of the support services available for international students in Pori and Rauma, focusing on their integration into the local workforce.

The primary theme across the interviews was the need for enhanced support for international students in securing employment. One interviewee emphasized the importance of sharing success stories and best practices among companies to demonstrate the benefits of hiring international employees. They stated that "*We wanted to share some success stories that hey they are good workforce they are happy to work here, and the work team has also welcomed them very nicely.*" This approach would aim to dispel fears and misconceptions about hiring foreigners, which are often based on unfounded rumours. These stories could serve as powerful testimonials, showcasing the benefits and feasibility of employing international talents. Another interviewee suggested that "*We have many international companies that are working in international environments. They are all from France, from Germany, from Japan.*" which shows possibilities to take advantage of.

Language barriers were a significant concern discussed in the interviews. An interviewee highlighted the need for companies to offer language courses to their international employees, noting that "*Companies can just order language courses for their international employees and that the courses will be really thought through to fit the needs for that one company in particular.*" This aligned with the broader emphasis on continuous learning in Finland and could help international employees integrate more effectively.

The importance of practical training and thesis opportunities for international students was another recurring theme. One interviewee acknowledged the challenge of finding companies willing to offer these opportunities, despite the recognized need for a skilled workforce. They expressed frustration, stating, "*So many times, I have heard*

that everybody's talking, that they need to have foreign people, or they need to have workforce. But then when it comes for foreign expert, it somehow not materializes." Networking and guidance are crucial for international students, as they may not be familiar with the local job market and networking practices. Another interviewee suggested that one stakeholder could play a role in connecting students with companies, acting as a middleman to facilitate these relationships. They proposed "*We can be somehow the player to connect this coordinator [from SAMK] and the companies."*

One of the Interviewees emphasized the importance of visibility and example-setting by public services and large employers in the region. By hiring international students and making these efforts visible, these entities can encourage other employers to follow suit. They asserted that "*If they want to make great diversity in their organizations, they have to lead it. It doesn't happen occasionally or by chance, but you must create role models*". An interviewee discussed the need for employers to adapt their expectations and practices to better accommodate international students. They emphasized that practical training with international students can create success stories that not only benefit the students but also provide positive publicity for the companies involved. This approach could help convince more employers to hire international students by showcasing the mutual benefits of such collaborations. They supported this notion, stating that "*If I can manage in healthcare, where people's lives depend on my understanding of the language, then someone wanting to hire someone for an IT firm can check again their requirements for how good Finnish language they actually need."*

Another interviewee highlighted the necessity for mutual education. They stated that "*I think it has to be two-sided education. So of course, your people should learn the language. But of course, our companies in there, they need to learn the other language as well and multicultural environments."* This emphasized the importance of not only teaching international students Finnish but also encouraging local companies to become more comfortable with English and multicultural interactions. This dual approach could help bridge the communication gap and foster a more inclusive work environment.

The analysis also showed the potential for entrepreneurship among international students. An interviewee pointed out that some organizations [...] offer valuable advice and support for new entrepreneurs, which can be particularly beneficial for international students looking to start their own businesses. They stated that "*They give advice on how to start a company and what it needs and helps them with the business idea.*" This support could empower international students to pursue entrepreneurial ventures and contribute to the local economy.

This analysis of discussions with local stakeholders brought light to a comprehensive approach to supporting international students in Satakunta. By sharing success stories, offering tailored language courses, providing practical training opportunities, guiding students in networking, and improving the visibility of initiatives like stakeholder services, a more inclusive and supportive environment could be created for international students. These measures could help international students integrate more effectively into the local workforce and community, ultimately benefiting both the students and the local economy. As one of the interviewees aptly put it, "*Companies need to realize that are you in there for the most qualified person who can do the job and do it well, or are you just wanting someone who can speak the language? Because then that's discrimination in a way.*" This statement encapsulated the need for a shift in mindset among employers to prioritize skills and qualifications over language proficiency alone.

6.2.3 Within SAMK

Looking within SAMK, the author interviewed several members of staff, including teachers and counsellors, or members of staff working on projects related to international students. The first theme, or area of research, was to understand what kind of roles those members of SAMK staff have, what the tasks implied and how those enabled them to appropriately support international students, especially regarding employment matters. The analysis of that theme revealed several key points regarding the responsibilities and challenges faced by these educators. The following analysis is based on notes made by the author during the interviews, which means that there are no quotations as there was no transcript of the interviews.

The first theme discussed with the majority of the SAMK interviewees was the primary role of tutoring. They appear to offer academic guidance, assisting students with course selection and project management, and ensuring they remain on track with their studies. Regular meetings are sometimes held to monitor the progress of students, although the interviews revealed a lack of clear guidance for tutor teachers, leading to a somewhat random approach to tutoring. A suggestion for more specific instructions, possibly in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, was made to provide a common understanding of the tutor teacher role. Student counsellors play a crucial role in addressing issues that teachers cannot solve, particularly those related to career paths. The relationship with student counsellors is however noted to be more efficient with Finnish students, while international students tend to ask their tutor teachers directly for assistance. This indicates a need for better integration and support systems tailored specifically for international students. Communication with teachers, however, appeared to be primarily through email.

The interviews highlighted several challenges faced by international students, particularly in relation to work opportunities and integration within the academic and local community. A significant issue is the location and lack of professional opportunities in Satakunta, which affects the ability of students to stay and work. There is some integration through SAMK projects, but as international students often seem to remain within their own nationalities, it seems difficult to mix with Finnish students.

Early admissions were requested by educators, to give students more time to obtain residence permits, increasing their likelihood of starting their studies on time. It has been observed that students often transfer to other degrees due to a lack of understanding of their current program or the desire to start immediately. Hybrid teaching is available only for specific courses.

Financial difficulties were another issue noticed by staff working closely with international students. Some students ask for support with finding a part time job and financial issues are common, with some students unable to support themselves, leading them to leave for more international areas. Another issue these discussions highlighted was the need for more interaction between international students and Finnish students, which

could need facilitating. It was argued that when there are Finnish students in an international group, more effort should be made for less cultural cluttering than what is visible at present, in other words, that international students seem to mostly interact within their own culture. More interaction between international and local students was seen as a solid way to support the integration of international students, and help them understand the culture and Finnish habits better.

Language skills are a critical requirement, particularly for studies related to healthcare, as Valvira (Valvira, n.d.) made it a legal requirement that to operate, one needs to speak Finnish fluently, as people have the right to receive care in their own language. At the same time, the physiotherapy degree opens doors internationally, making it challenging to convince students to learn Finnish, which is essential for their integration and retention. Despite the efforts from SAMK, students report insufficient Finnish education. Working with the local Welfare services is challenging due to limited efforts to hire international students. Employment opportunities are mostly in elderly or basic care for the students in healthcare, raising concerns about fairness for the elderly dealing with language barriers. Teachers perceive fewer cultural challenges than language issues.

At the time of writing, it was noted that there was also a lack of placement opportunities for Finnish students, which was exacerbated for international students due to attitudes and potential bias. Many international students were reported to move to Helsinki or other bigger cities, where language is not as limiting as in Satakunta. This, however, makes the continuance of their studies at SAMK more difficult. Economic problems are prevalent, especially in Satakunta, where the situation is more challenging. Some students transfer their studies to join family members in larger cities. Although there are various supports in Pori and Rauma, the smaller sizes limit opportunities. Company cooperation was said to be improving, but there is still a preference for hiring local students, despite their difficulties too in the current economic crisis (Yle News, 2025).

Another subject discussed with SAMK staff was the difficulties international students face in finding practical placements, particularly due to language barriers. Following what was talked about in parts three and four, employers seem reluctant to hire

English-speaking trainees, and there is a general perception that international students still need education. Healthcare students often leave Satakunta due to limited job opportunities beyond elderly care. Students also move from Satakunta due to a lack of activities and community. The biggest challenge currently is finding summer jobs, with limited availability and no comprehensive database of companies willing to hire students. One staff member argued that the use of anonymous CVs remains problematic, as employers can often identify applicants based on their work experience or estimate their nationality. While the process could be beneficial if done well, there are many uncertainties regarding the desired results, and even an invitation to an interview is no guarantee unless the local mentality changes.

The analysis of the talks with SAMK members of staff shows that the main issues for international students include location and professional opportunities, financial difficulties, language barriers, and limited job and placement opportunities. These challenges are compounded by attitudes towards international students and the need for better support and resources to facilitate their integration and success. Addressing these issues is essential for improving the overall experience and success of students at SAMK.

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 Support given elsewhere in Finland

Following the research on this subject and after the proposal made to the commissioner, the author of this thesis originally aimed to see a coordinator position for the employment of international students opened at SAMK, and she now wishes for the renewal of the International Facilitator position to help offer more support to both companies and international students in their efforts to find the right candidates or find a workplace in the region. International students have now become aware of such a position within SAMK, and the removal of such a position could demonstrate a lack of support to students who have received support, and negatively impact the overall opinion of SAMK for international students.

Other Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences throughout Finland are also working on supporting international students with access to work. Many examples could be followed or modified to meet the needs of our university and its international students. The Aalto University, for example, started the "ACT Early" initiative which provides career guidance and early support in the academic journey of students, to help them navigate the Finnish labour market (Aalto University, 2022). Other examples come from the Universities of Turku and Tampere which also facilitate networking events and connections with local businesses and industries (Pan, 2022; Tampere University, 2024). These activities aim at supporting students build a professional network and find employment opportunities, and though similar activities are organized at SAMK, these could be organized more regularly with a more in-depth approach and preparation of the companies to deal with international students.

Many universities in Finland also have dedicated career services which offer workshops, counselling, and resources to help students with job searches, CV writing, and interview preparation (Career Services | ELAB, n.d.; Centria University of Applied Sciences, n.d.; Häme University of Applied Sciences, n.d.; Karelia University of Applied Sciences, n.d.; Tampere University of Applied Sciences, n.d.; Vaasa University of Applied Sciences, n.d.). While SAMK supports career development, SAMK does not have a proper career development team or service directly dedicated to supporting students with questions related to employment or career development. These kinds of services in other universities seem efficient and give students a clear understanding of who to turn to for questions. The international facilitator could be part of such a team, for the support of international students, which would also offer a better opportunity for collaboration with the student counsellors listed on the career support page of the SAMK website (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, 2024e). Furthermore, career services present a clear point of contact not only for students within the university, but for employers and alumni altogether.

Career services and collaboration with companies are particularly important to provide internships and part-time job opportunities to students in 2025 (Aalto University, 2022; InfoFinland, 2025; Pan, 2022). Internship subsidies are also provided by some universities, like the University of Turku (University of Turku, n.d.), which helps find companies willing to take on an international student. Some universities, like Tampere

University (Tampere University, 2024), also encourage students to collaborate with companies on their theses, providing real-world experience and potential job offers. The university verifies itself the eligibility of thesis subjects, which gives students more confidence in picking a subject to defend.

Hence, the creation of career services at SAMK could be beneficial to students, both local and international, as this would help them find the right contact within SAMK for matters related to employment or recruitment more easily, as was already recommended in the past about the recruitment of international students (Tomberg et al., 2022, p.25) . This reasoning could also be applied to companies, if the career services are well advertised on the SAMK website and in the region of Satakunta. One of the main points highlighted in the results from Sävel was having a “one stop shop” person in SAMK they could easily turn to regarding their employment needs and or opportunities, but this could be more than a mere person.

Finally, language and Cultural Integration are again often seen as one of the main barriers for international students. Different universities and universities of Applied Sciences make programs and courses available to help international students learn Finnish and understand the local culture, which can be crucial for job integration (InfoFinland, 2025; Pan, 2022). These efforts collectively aim to enhance the employability of international students and help them integrate smoothly into the Finnish labour market, and SAMK could aim to offer the same opportunity to work on the language and culture of the welcoming country to further facilitate the professional integration of international students.

6.3.2 Improvements within SAMK

Based on the results from the research and following what is done by other universities, there are several recommendations that can be made within SAMK. SAMK, for example, uses a digital recruitment tool designed to offer international talents (students) to companies hiring for internships, summer jobs or part-time jobs (Valkama, 2022). This tool, YourAgent (Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, n.d.-b) could be evaluated by asking for feedback from the users. This would permit a measurement of the

efficiency of the tool. This could be a way to fulfil the interest of employers to be able to share opportunities directly with students.

To support the last statement, it can be mentioned that other universities and universities of applied sciences in Finland use web supported tools to make job offers available to students directly. Centria, one of the SAMK collaborators, is posting opportunities for jobs or internships on their website while waiting to find the appropriate tool for their use (Centria University of Applied Sciences, 2025). The university of Turku uses JobTeaser (University of Turku, 2025) to which students can register and build job search based on their studies and interests. This service provides students with job opportunities, events, exclusive content, while being directly linked to the career services of the university.

Another thing that would strengthen and highlight the support of SAMK to employers would be more publication of the support available to international students as well as their needs: part time jobs, thesis and theses opportunities. There is a need to make the region more aware of the needs for international students, to see a change in the mentalities. The more the public and the companies can see what SAMK is doing to support the integration of its international students, the more chances there is for people to think about it and see support is available for them.

7 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

7.1 Reliability

Reliability applies to the measurement of results, and thus the efficiency of the research to reach results (Inyang, 2017, pp.7,8). Regarding the reliability of this thesis, the use of material selected from online information and official sources, along with social media posts related to the employment situation in Finland at the time of writing of this thesis was seen as relevant to reflect the general feelings caused by the added pressure of the then proposed immigration policy reform and support the already existing conditions faced by immigrants on the Finnish labour market. Some of the online material was selected because it was a direct testimony from Finns or foreigners in Finland and was deemed relevant for this research.

It should be noted, however, that as this reflected a situation at a moment in time, though it could appear as what Silverman (Silverman, 2022) describes as anecdotalism, it is indeed a reflection of the situation and feelings about the situation, from either the interviewees or people in general as seen through social media. The reader should remember that situations can change and by the next year it may have already improved, hopefully, rather than worsened. Thus, information was used as was at the time of writing and is then reliable, though the aim of this thesis was to create a change to the results gathered by this research. Hence, the reliability is relevant for the time of writing, despite hopefully different results were the same research made and questions used in the future, despite normally expecting similar results to the first results in a comparable environment (Inyang, 2017).

It is important to note here that the results gathered for this research applied to Finland and Satakunta in 2023-25 and thus the same results could not or should not be expected in other countries or at other times. Furthermore, if interviewees were kept anonymous, no such need was seen for information selected from social media, for example, where information was posted publicly. All information used within this thesis was verifiable at the time of writing, though in the future some posts may have been removed or blocked. Information about the job market, shortages and other topics covered in this

thesis were presented as was at the time of writing. It can be argued that what is posted on social media is not a valid reflection of the official situation in Finland, however, it is a valid reflection of what the population was feeling. This is what the author of this thesis tried to convey at the time of writing, i.e. the societal atmosphere of the period of writing and the urgency for change based on what people need, more than what is being done officially. The title of this thesis “*Living on a Prayer*” thus replicates this feeling as in wondering what will happen tomorrow or what the chances to remain in Finland will be if no job can be found.

7.2 Validity

Saunders (Saunders et al, p. 603, 2009) defines validity as “the extent to which data collection method or methods accurately measure what they were intended to measure” or “the extent to which research findings are really about what they profess to be about.” The research questions of this thesis are specific, actionable, and grounded in real-world needs. The main research question “*how SAMK can support companies in hiring international students*” is clearly defined and well relevant to the Finnish demographic and labour market challenges. The supporting sub-questions are well-aligned and guide the structure of the thesis effectively.

The methodology is well-justified and suitable for the research goals. The use of qualitative methods (semi-structured and unstructured interviews) is appropriate for exploring perceptions, barriers, and opportunities. Furthermore, the inclusion of multiple stakeholder groups (companies, SAMK staff, regional actors) strengthens the data relevancy. The theoretical and contextual foundation supports the research findings and recommendations. The thesis integrates relevant theories on cultural dimensions, language barriers, and internationalization. It also references national and regional strategies, which make the work contextually justified.

The data collection and analysis are methodologically sound and ethically conducted. The thesis includes relevant qualitative data from interviews, with clear thematic analysis and maintains anonymity and ethical considerations. The conclusions are well-

supported by the data and offer real-world applicability. The findings are directly tied to the research questions and offer practical, actionable, evidence-based recommendations for SAMK and regional stakeholders, which reflect both the challenges and opportunities identified.

The author of this thesis discussed limitations as transparently as possible, to enhance the credibility of the work. The thesis acknowledges its temporal and geographical limitations (focused on Satakunta and 2023–2025). It also reflects on the subjectivity of qualitative data, as evidenced by Gournelos et al. (Gournelos et al., 2019, pp. 101-102), and the evolving nature of immigration policy. As such, this thesis aims to contribute meaningfully to policy and practice in the integration of international students and improvements on the job markets.

8 DISCUSSION

As this part of the thesis can be more personal, the tone here will change, and the personal pronoun “I” will be used instead of “the author of this thesis”. One of the main themes from this research that I believe would require more investigation is cultural training. Cultural training would offer numerous benefits for both employees and organizations. Based on the results, it improves communication by helping employees understand different communication styles and cultural nuances, thereby reducing misunderstandings and enhancing clarity. Enhanced collaboration is another benefit, as cultural training promotes better teamwork and equips employees with skills to resolve conflicts arising from cultural differences. Increased inclusivity could be fostered by creating a welcoming environment where all employees feel valued and respected, encouraging the inclusion of diverse perspectives. These are themes I have tried to defend on my LinkedIn page, by posting, regularly, or when time permits, *International Facilitator Insight* posts (Plouet, 2024), addressed to local companies from Satakunta. It is, however, difficult to measure the reach and impact of such posts.

As much as I was satisfied to see some of the companies were valuing the effects of different cultures within their company, the lack of real interest or knowledge from some of the companies about the challenges cultural differences can bring seemed questionable, though I could not lead the conversation further and had to accept the responses as they were given. It seems important to note, however, that boosted employee morale is achieved by helping international employees feel integrated and supported, which reduces stress and anxiety. Enhanced productivity results from a reduced time spent on resolving cultural misunderstandings, which allows employees to focus on their tasks. Better customer relations are facilitated by improved cultural sensitivity, to ensure effective communication and service quality for customers from diverse backgrounds. (Culture Mosaic, 2024; Developing Cross Cultural Communication | Research Article, n.d. ; IntelligentBee, n.d.; Roy, 2024.)

While the request to support companies understand the requirements of working with people of different cultural backgrounds was expressed by some employers, this is not something SAMK would easily be able to deal with alone, and this would require a

more structured collaboration with the local services in Satakunta, some of which are able to provide such services. While I have met many different service representatives of the region while working as the International Facilitator for SAMK, I cannot find that the collaborations that follow those meetings are as efficient as if plans were made to properly find ways to plan actions and see real progress. The efficiency of collaboration must be strengthened.

Another subject I wish to discuss here is directly related to SAMK, where, as both an international student and a member of staff, I have noticed a lack of consistency in the overall communication or information channels available within SAMK. As the international facilitator, I am to communicate with companies to discuss needs and opportunities for our international students. Several other members of staff already have contacts with different companies, and it is very difficult to know what has already been discussed with other members of staff. This makes it difficult to keep consistent, when some employers may have already expressed unwillingness to deal with international student issues, but there is no way of knowing.

I have started to discuss the partnerships built with SAMK with the new Partnership Manager, to find out which companies can be contacted or not and inform her of which companies I am contacting myself. But I believe that the use of a tool such as a CRM would make it much easier to know what has been done or said, by whom, about which employer. I believe that when we have someone directly building relationships with companies, it would be important that other members of staff that will be working with companies can easily mark their interactions so that all actions are visible and no misstep is taken. This is only my opinion, but I believe it would be good to protect the relationships SAMK is building with companies by giving all SAMK staff members access to what the relationships are, and what has been discussed or agreed with the companies.

9 FEEDBACK

Please find below the feedback received for this thesis, from Mr. Ari-Pekka Kainu, Head of International Affairs at SAMK.

Hi Marion,

Thank you for your effort to look and open different kind of options how to improve and also what SAMK is already doing. I think your thesis very much cover challenges, also some barriers, which we noticed, us, who are working very nearly in these cases.

I'm a bit more positive than average, and that's why I also see different kind of possibilities in a long run. And I noticed that Finland is not so bad, comparing other European countries. For example, the situation is not so bad if you compare it globally:

<https://tilastoneuvos.vipunen.fi/2024/09/30/ulkomaalaisten-opiskelijoiden-tyollistyminen/>

Sorry, this is in Finnish, but I think you handle it well, or they have English version as well:

Suomessa korkeakoulututkinnon suorittaneista ulkomaalaisista opiskelijoista työllistyy Suomeen 55 %. Luku on kansainvälisessä vertailussa suhteellisen suuri. Suomen työllistyneiden osuus on ollut nousussa viime vuosina. Yli puolet työllistyy korkeakoulututkintoa vaativiin tehtäviin. Suuri osa työllistyneistä muuttaa Uudellemaalle. Erityisen hyvin Suomeen työllistyy ammattikorkeakoulujen terveysterveys- ja hyvinvointialalta valmistuneet (71 %), myös ICT-alalta valmistuneet työllistyvät hyvin (63 %).

Also, good to remember that many (more than 30%) of foreign students come to Finland only for certificate, quality education, not really for looking job in Finland after graduation. With European level degree certificate, they can get better job in their home country or other country where they can manage in English. Also, many of graduated students want to continue Master studies after Bachelor in other university in Europe or in Finland, directly after getting bachelor's degree. From SAMK point of view, it's very challenging to recruit 'right' students if 30% already are looking for only quality education and another 30% wants to continue studies for Master level. For UAS Master studies, it means that first they need to work 2 years after Bachelor studies. These talented students we lost abroad or to traditional universities to other part of Finland.

I'm satisfied your thesis work, you have covered most important obstacles to this work and especially challenges in Satakunta region.

Thank you, and all the best for your graduation.

Best Regards,

Ari-Pekka Kainu
Kansainvälisten asioiden päällikkö
Kansainvälisyyspalvelut

Satakunnan ammattikorkeakoulu | Satakunta University of Applied Sciences

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APPENDIX 1:

Links to articles shared in Figure 1

- [Ilkka Niemelä to the Finnish Government: Innovations and sustainable growth will be lost if immigration policies are implemented | Aalto University](#)
- [Nimetön työnhaku paljasti syrjinnän Helsingissä: Ulkomaalaisen kuuloiset pääsivät harvemmin haastatteluun - Kaupunki | HS.fi](#)
- [Finnish police report record rise in hate-crime cases | News | Yle Uutiset](#)
- [Post | Feed | LinkedIn](#)
- ["Tip of the iceberg": Doctors report colleagues' racist Facebook posts, discriminatory decisions \(yle.fi\)](#)

APPENDIX 2:

This interview is about finding ways for SAMK to support companies and companies into hiring international students.

1. What language is used in your company? Is there more than one?
2. Is language important within your company or could someone manage without any Finnish, or limited Finnish skills?
3. Do you or have you had experience hiring international students?
 - If yes, could you talk about the results, satisfaction, dissatisfaction?
 - If no, could you give the reasons why?
4. Is culture an important factor in your opinion and please explain why?
5. Are you aware of the high shortages in skilled labour in Finland? Is recruitment easy for your company? Please explain.
6. Do you publish your job offers in Finnish or English?
7. Would you be willing to share relevant job offers with SAMK directly, to offer opportunities to students directly?
8. Do you have any form of cooperation with SAMK?
9. In your opinion, what could SAMK do that would be helpful for your company to hire international students more easily?