

Immigration and integration – the global challenge



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Among demographic events, immigration is gaining more and more political importance according to Poulain and Herm (2003). They point out that at the international level, flows of people between countries, even if only a limited number of persons are concerned, play a major role when dealing with political equilibrium between states and cross-cultural transfers. Nowadays everything that concerns international mobility has taken a huge political dimension: this is linked to the problems of immigration from developing countries, problems related to the integration of the foreign population already living in the host countries and also to the xenophobic tendencies. A key issue in building tomorrow's Europe, whatever its size is reaching an agreement on a common European policy in the field of international migration.

About 17 percent of all 160 million immigrants on earth are residing in the EU area. It is estimated that nearly 6 million European citizens reside in an EU country other than their own. In most OECD countries the number of foreigners or immigrants has risen during the

past five years. During the 1990s the foreign population grew very considerably in Austria, Germany and Switzerland, mainly because of increased inflows from Central and Eastern Europe. In the United States, the number of foreign-born persons rose by more than 40 % during 1990-2000 (Sopemi 2003; Widgren 2003).

According to Sopemi (2003) every type of migration policy has been implemented during the past two years. OECD countries have adopted a more restrictive attitude towards the entry and residence of foreigners and some countries have tightened requirements for family reunification procedures (e.g. Austria, Denmark and the Netherlands). These policies were enacted in parallel with those giving more importance to selection procedures for new immigrants, especially to those for skilled workers. The fight against illegal immigration and the illegal employment of foreigners has been reinforced on two fronts: firstly, with tighter border controls, workplace inspections and identity checks within countries. Secondly, measures involving international cooperation with sending countries

were undertaken to provide for their readmission of illegal immigrants. The integration of immigrants and foreigners remains a major issue for most OECD countries.

Joseph Marko et al. (2003) point out that integration expresses a complex concept whose meaning can differ according to a specific time, space and country, as well as political and historical circumstances. Generally, integration refers to the broader context of legal access to resources, rights, goods and services, whereas social inclusion also incorporates the foreigner's individual choice to be part of the host community's social life. The purpose of a comprehensive, long-term integration policy should be to ensure that immigrants can take an equal part in the life of society: participation and equal opportunities are, thus the key elements in such policies. From a cultural viewpoint, integration policies strive to bring immigrants into the mainstream society while simultaneously protecting minorities' ability to develop and express their socio-cultural features.

Sources

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FINN FORUM VII

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University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
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Proposals for papers relating to all aspects of Finnish and Finnish-North American society, history, and culture are welcome.

We especially invite proposals in the following areas:

- Cultural Representations and the Arts
- Landscapes and Built Environments
- Folklore and Folklife

- Economics of Intercultural Exchange and Labor Languages and Linguistics; and
- Regional and Social Change.

Proposals should not be longer than 350 words in length and should be submitted by 26 March 2004.

Papers must be based on original, unpublished research. Presentations should be no longer than 20–25 minutes, allowing for discussion.

Selected papers will be published in a Finn Forum VII proceedings.

Please send the abstract to
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Abstracts can also be sent in an email and/or as an attachment in MSWord to esc@umn.edu.



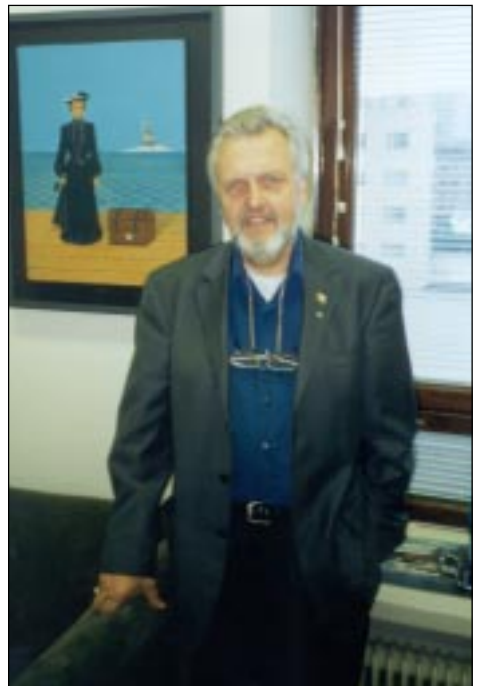
Dosentti Kimmo Lehtimäki (vas.) Tampereelta avasi Verner Lehtimäen elämää kuvaavan näyttelyn 12.3.



Davis Helberg (oik.) Eskosta, Minnesotasta, vieraili vaimonsa Karenin ja Suomessa asuvan poikansa Billin kanssa 23.6.



Taiteilija Graeme Storm (vas.) on toisen polven suomalainen uudesta Seelannista. Hän vieraili vaimonsa Jacquinin kanssa 10.7.



Lake Worthissa Floridassa asuva Suomen kunniakonsuli Peter Mäkilä (oik.) vieraili kesällä parikin kertaa.



Toimittaja Ron Erikson (vas.) Vancouverista, Kanadasta, tutustui Siirtolaisuusinstituutin näyttelyihin 31.7.



Floridassa asuvaa entistä merimiestä Kalle Nikulaa (oik.) haastateltiin Siirtolaisuusinstituutin merimiesnäyttelyn avajaisissa 31.7.

Pohjalainen siirtolaisuus – valokuvat kertovat



Pohjalaisen siirtolaisuuden näyttely avattiin Siirtolaisuusinstituutin Pohjanmaan aluekeskuksessa 10.11. Kuvassa instituutin johtaja, professori Olavi Koivukangas ja v.s. aluepäällikkö Tuula Koskimies-Hautaniemi.