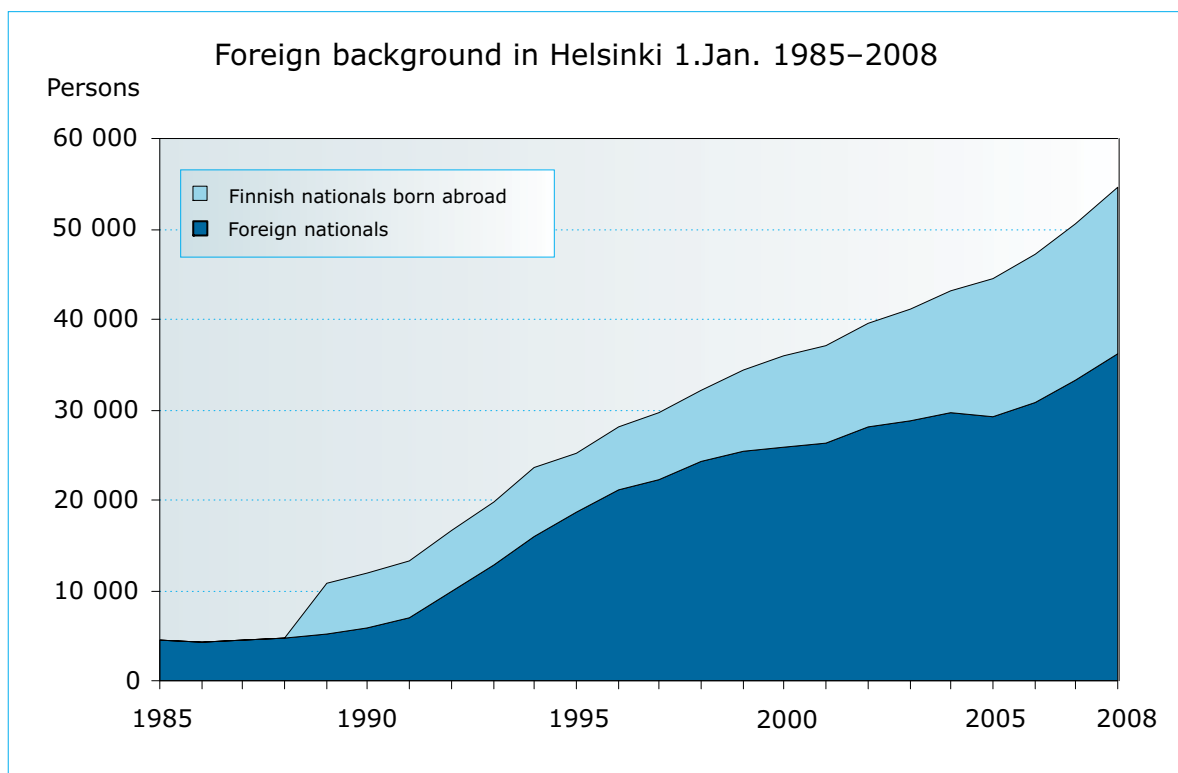




Foreigners in Helsinki 2008



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Preface

This publication is an abridged version of *Helsingin ulkomaalaisväestö vuonna 2008*, a Finnish-language statistical compilation about the foreign nationals and people with a foreign background who live in Helsinki. It presents a range of statistics on this population: numbers, employment, housing and education. These statistics are chiefly based on data supplied by Statistics Finland, the Finnish national statistical. Explanations of some terms and definitions of regions are found at the end of the publication. Publication is translated by Magnus Gräsbeck and Roger Munn.

Helsinki, April 2009

Leila Lankinen
Information Manager

1. Foreign nationals in Helsinki: number and nationality

At the turn of year 2007/2008, there were 36,283 foreign nationals residing in Helsinki, making up 6.4 per cent of the city's population. However, 54,651, i.e. 9.6 per cent, of Helsinki residents had a foreign background. The largest groups of these are Estonians and Russians.

The number of foreigners has been growing rapidly in Helsinki since the early 1990s for a number of reasons. Then, the largest group consisted of citizens of the former Soviet Union, mostly Ingrians, who had been granted the status of returning emigrants in 1990 and who subsequently moved to Finland in their thousands. At that time, considerable numbers of refugees also arrived from Somalia, and in 1993 and 1994, many people from the former Yugoslavia found refuge in Finland.

Figure 1. Residents with a foreign background in Helsinki 2008

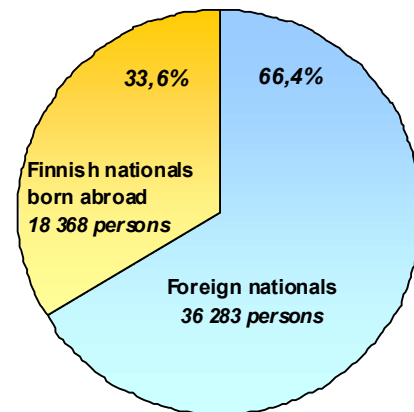
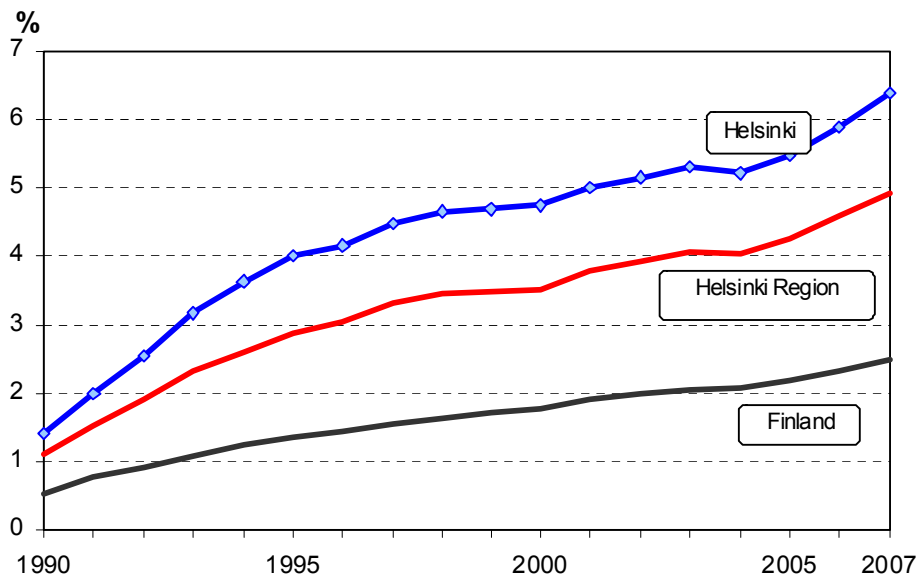


Figure 2. Proportion of foreign nationals in the population of Helsinki, the Helsinki Region and Finland, 1990-2007



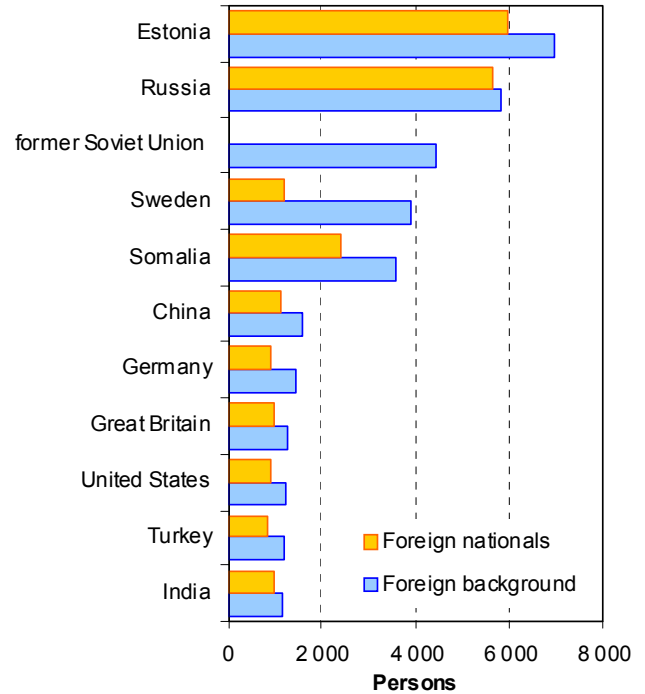
Source: Statistics Finland

The growing number of foreigners in Finland is also a consequence of internationalisation, accelerated by Finland's EU membership in 1995. After rapid growth in the early 1990s, the numbers of foreigners arriving in Helsinki, its urban region (*i.e. The Helsinki Region*) and in Finland generally has slowed. This slowdown is in part accounted for by an increase in the number of foreigners receiving Finnish citizenship.

Foreign nationals in Helsinki represent around 150 nationalities, the largest group being the Estonians, totalling 5,962. The second largest group is the Russians, followed by the Somalis.

35.7 per cent of foreigners are from EU countries, 20.6 per cent from other parts of Europe, 14.3 per cent from Africa, 22.4 per cent from Asia and 5.2 per cent from North or South America.

Figure 3. Largest foreigner groups in Helsinki at the turn of year 2007/2008



Source: Statistics Finland

Table 1. Foreign nationals and residents with a foreign background in Helsinki by nationality and country at the turn of year 2007/2008

	Foreign background total	Foreign nationals	Finnish nationals born abroad
Total	54 651	36 283	18 368
Europe	31 427	20 406	11 021
Africa	7 647	5 174	2 473
North America	1 596	1 088	508
South America and Caribia	1 244	793	451
Asia	11 474	8 141	3 333
Australia and Oceania	347	232	115
Unknown	916	449	467

Source: Statistics Finland

2. Mother tongues of foreign nationals and those of the broader population

Of Helsinki's entire population, 9 per cent, i.e 51,038 people, have a foreign mother tongue, the most widely spoken of which is Russian: 11,810 native speakers. The next two largest groups are Somali and Estonian speakers. They are roughly equal in number and together total 11,000 people. These three groups together account for almost half of all foreign language native speakers.

Among the various groups of foreign nationals, Russian is the most common language, spoken as a mother tongue by one-fifth. Estonian native speakers are clearly the second largest group, and English native speakers rank third. Almost five per cent of foreign nationals are native speakers of Finnish. The majority of these are citizens of countries that for many years received many Finnish immigrants, such as Sweden, the USA, Australia and the former Soviet Union. In addition, Ingrians and their descendants who moved to Finland from the former Soviet Union, more precisely from north-west Russia and Estonia, have raised the number of native speakers of Finnish among the foreign nationals.

Table 2. Foreign nationals and the whole population by mother tongue in Helsinki at the turn of year 2007/2008

Mother tongue	Persons	%	Mother tongue	Persons	%
Foreign nationals	36 283	100	Whole population	568 531	100
Finnish	1 703	4,7	Finnish	482 988	85,0
Swedish	859	2,4	Swedish	34 505	6,1
Russian	7 049	19,4	Other languages total	51 038	9,0
Estonian	4 712	13,0	<i>Russian</i>	11 810	2,1
English	2 793	7,7	<i>Estonian</i>	5 606	1,0
Somali	2 478	6,8	<i>Somali</i>	5 394	0,9
Arabic	1 123	3,1	<i>English</i>	3 608	0,6
Chinese	1 181	3,3	<i>Arabic</i>	2 371	0,4
Spanish	1 036	2,9	<i>Chinese</i>	1 810	0,3
German	992	2,7	<i>Kurdish</i>	1 422	0,3
Kurdish	806	2,2	<i>Spanish</i>	1 413	0,2
French	837	2,3	<i>German</i>	1 300	0,2
Thai	665	1,8	<i>French</i>	1 149	0,2
Turkish	589	1,6	<i>Turkish</i>	1 107	0,2
other	9 460	26,1	<i>Vietnamese</i>	962	0,2
			<i>Other languages total</i>	13 086	2,3

Source: Statistics Finland

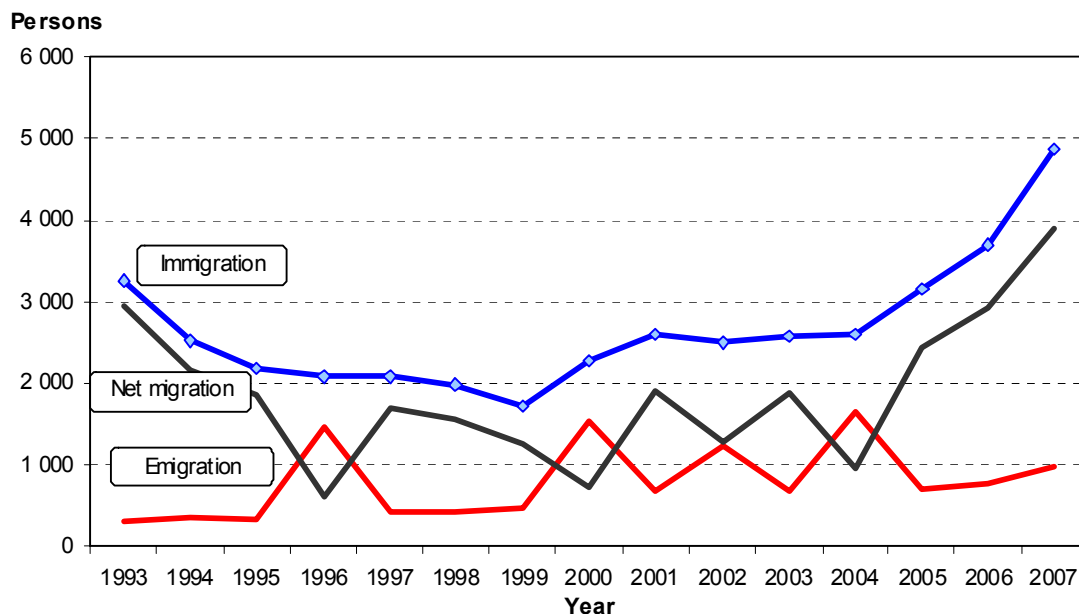
3. Migration to or from Helsinki among foreign nationals groups

Foreign migration between Helsinki and foreign countries

Characteristic of the migration of those foreign nationals residing in Helsinki is the combination of a strong inflow from abroad and a brisk migration between various parts of Finland. In 2007, 6,630 people moved to Helsinki from overseas. Of these, 73.4 per cent were foreign nationals.

Emigration figures tend to fluctuate more considerably over the years than do immigration figures. For example, emigration figures for foreign nationals are particularly high during Finnish public election years, when the Population Register is updated, and in turn otherwise unreported emigration is recorded. Of the 3,195 people moving abroad from Helsinki in 2007, almost one-third, 30.6 per cent, were foreign nationals.

Figure 4. Immigration, emigration and net migration of foreign nationals between Helsinki and foreign countries, 1993-2007



Source: Statistics Finland

Of those foreign nationals moving to Helsinki from abroad in 2007, 41.7 per cent came from another EU country and 14.5 per cent from the rest of Europe. Immigrants from central and western Asia accounted for 14.9 per cent, Africa for 10.3 per cent and southeast and east Asia for 10.9 per cent. Age structures of immigrating foreign nationals include 10.7 per cent 0-15 year olds, 51.0 per cent 16-29 year olds, and 28.4 per cent 30-44 year olds.

Foreigners moved abroad from Helsinki in 2007, 57.1 per cent moved to another EU country, 8.5 per cent went elsewhere in Europe, and 8.4 per cent to North America. Emigration to Asia was also frequent, with 6.2 per cent moving to southeast or east Asia and 13.1 per cent to central or western Asia. Age structures among foreign emigrants were 11.6 per cent 0-15 year olds, 38.1 per cent 30-44 year olds, roughly 33 per cent 16-29 year olds, and 13.9 per cent 45-64 year olds. The numbers of over-65 year old foreign nationals either immigrating and emigrating have been small.

Foreign migration between Helsinki and the rest of Finland

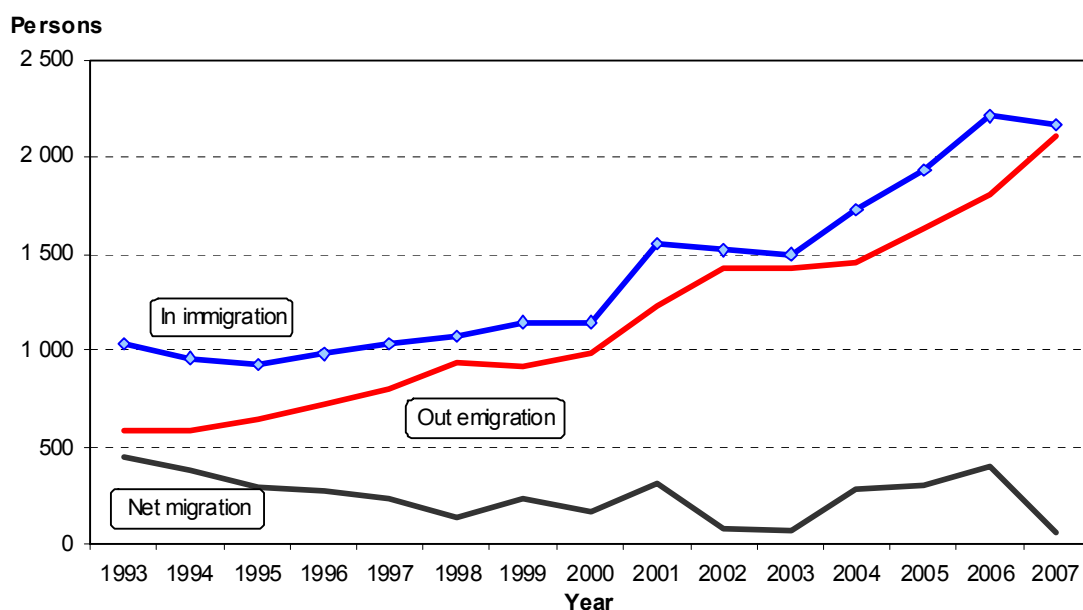
Migration of foreign nationals between Helsinki and the rest of Finland is common in both directions. Between 1993 and 2007, a total of 20,914 foreign nationals moved from other parts of the country to Helsinki, and 17,267 moved in the opposite direction. In 2007, movers-in and movers-out were roughly equal in number.

Among foreign nationals moving to Helsinki from other parts of Finland in 2007, 28.2 per cent were EU

nationals. Asians accounted for 27.8 per cent and Africans for 19.3 per cent. Russians made up 14.0 per cent and Estonians 15.4 per cent. These migrants had a young age structure, with over half being 16-29 year olds and almost one-third 30-44 year olds. Under 15 year olds accounted for 7.9 per cent.

Among those foreign nationals moving away from Helsinki to other parts of Finland that same year, one-third of the total consisted of EU nationals, and almost half were Europeans (either EU or non-EU nationals). Asians accounted for almost 30 per cent of this migration, Estonians for 16.8 per cent and Russians for 12.1 per cent. Like their counterparts moving from elsewhere in Finland into Helsinki, those foreign nationals moving in the opposite direction were predominantly young: almost half were between 16 and 29 years old. The proportion of under 15 year olds was, however, only 8.9 per cent.

Figure 5. Migration and net migration in both directions between Helsinki and the rest of the country among foreign nationals in Finland, 1993-2007



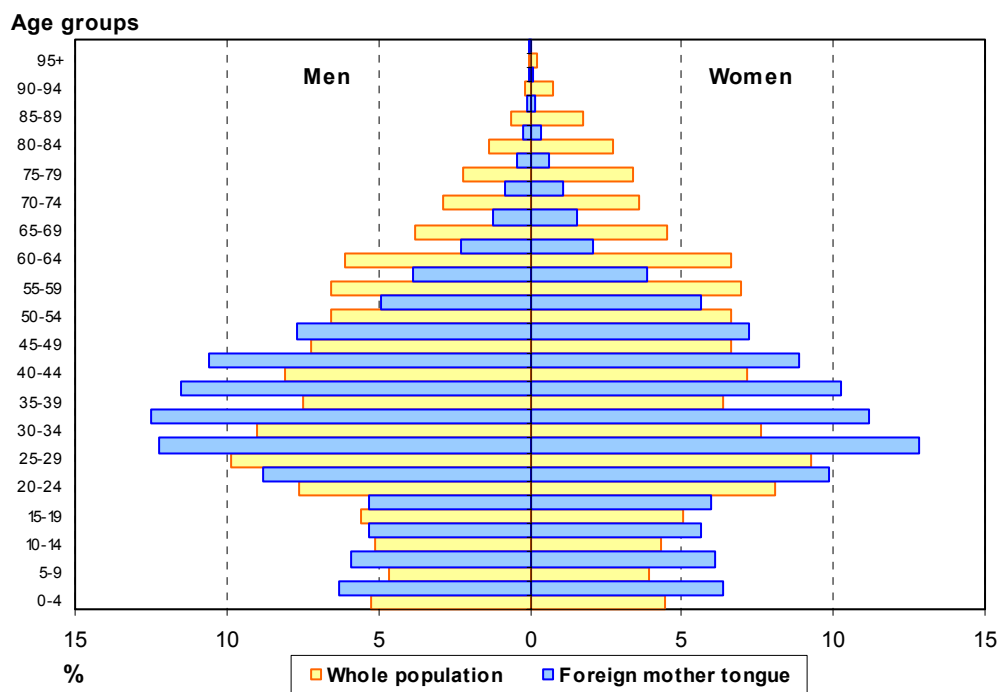
Source: Statistics Finland

4. Age structure

Those with a foreign mother tongue in Helsinki have a younger age structure than Helsinki residents overall. Among those with a foreign mother, the younger age groups, i.e. young adults and children, are the largest: 17.8 per cent are under 15 years old (13.7 per cent of all Helsinki citizens). And whereas over 65 year olds make up 14.2 per cent of Helsinki's entire population, their proportion of those with a foreign mother tongue is only 3.4 per cent.

The proportion of working-age residents (15-64 year olds) in Helsinki is 78.8 per cent among those with a foreign mother tongue, and 72.1 per cent among the population at large. Similarly, those with a foreign mother tongue also have a clearly greater proportion of young people of working age. 25-39 year olds account for 35.3 per cent of those with a foreign mother as against 24.7 per cent of the city's entire population. Foreign speakers have a smaller proportion of working-age people in the older bracket: 50-64 year olds make up 11.3 per cent of foreign speakers compared with 19.7 per cent of the entire population.

Figure 6. Age structure of the whole population and those with a foreign mother tongue at the turn of year 2007/ 2008



Source: Statistics Finland

5. Families and nativity

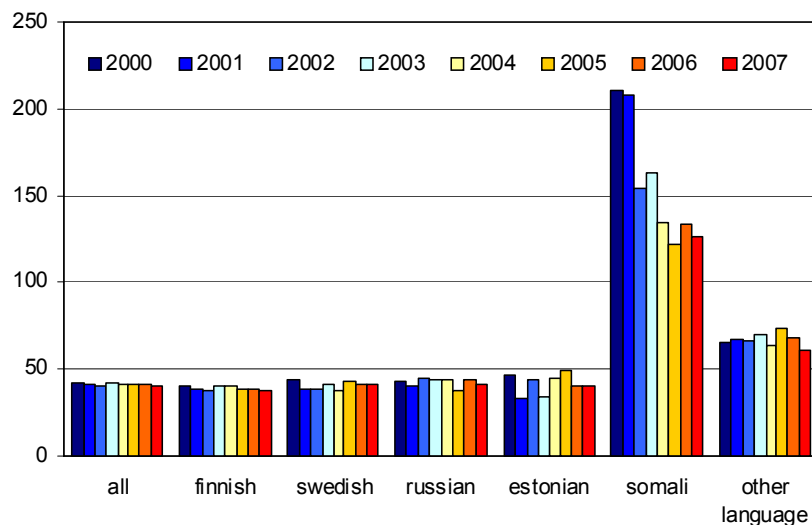
At the turn of year 2007/2008, 37.1 per cent of those with a foreign mother tongue were registered as married. Of all marriages in Helsinki in 2007, 26.2 per cent involved at least one foreign national. Marriages between two foreign nationals totalled 11.8 per cent.

In 2008, there were 13,099 families in Helsinki in which at least one of the spouses was a foreign national, and those families typically had more children. Thus, in the same year, while Helsinki families in general had on average 0.82 children, foreign national families had 1.01 child.

Also, the proportion of childless families among, foreign national families is smaller. Of families with two foreign national adults, 44.3 per cent were childless. The proportion of big families is greater among foreign national families, over 8 per cent of which have at least three children under 18 – versus 5.2 per cent among all families.

In 2007, there were 40.1 children born in Helsinki per one thousand women aged 15-49 years. For those with a foreign mother tongue, the fertility rate of the same age group was higher. And mothers with a foreign mother tongue also bear their children at an earlier age, on average, than mothers in the overall population. Nativity varies depending on nationality.

Figure 7. Fertility (births per one thousand among 15-49 year-old women) by mother tongue of the mother in Helsinki 2000-2007



Source: Statistics Finland

6. Housing

Rented housing is much more common among foreign nationals than other Helsinki residents. At the turn of year 2006/2007 in Helsinki, 78.5 per cent of households with at least one foreign national lived in a rented home, compared with 47.3 per cent of households overall in the city.

Crowded housing (*Norm 4: more than one person per room unit, kitchen excluded from the number of rooms*) is also more common among foreign nationals than among the rest of the population, the overall percentages being 31.1 of foreign nationals for the former and 9.6 per cent for the latter in Helsinki. Households of foreign nationals on average have 26.4m² of floor space per person as against 34.1m² in Helsinki households overall. This difference is partly explained by the fact that foreign national households are, on average, bigger than other households, and that this kind of crowded housing is typically more common among big households.

7. Employment and unemployment

At the turn of year 2006/2007, the employment rate among people with a foreign background in Helsinki was 50.3 per cent. The number of persons with a foreign background in the labour force was 26,041 people.

At the same time, the unemployment rate among people with a foreign background in Helsinki was 19.2 per cent. The number of unemployed persons in Helsinki is 4,990, which is quarter of all foreign-background jobless in Finland. The employment situation varies strongly with nationality.

Table 3. People with a foreign background by main occupation at the turn of year 2006/2007

	Helsinki	Helsinki Metropolitan Area	Helsinki Region	Finland
Labour force	26 041	43 189	47 784	104 607
Employed	21 051	35 153	39 149	84 266
Unemployed	4 990	8 036	8 635	20 341
<i>Employment rate (15-64 year olds), %</i>	50,3	52,4	53,1	52,1
<i>Unemployment rate, %</i>	19,2	18,6	18,1	19,4

Source: Statistics Finland

According to Statistics Finland's data for the turn of year 2006/2007, immigrants coming from other EU countries had been the most successful at finding a job; African immigrants and those from the Middle East had been least successful. Among people with a foreign background, women's unemployment rate was 21.1 per cent and men's 17.6.

More generally, long-term unemployment is especially prevalent among elderly and poorly educated immigrants having a refugee background. On the other hand, even an extensive education does not necessarily guarantee work for people with a foreign background in the way it does others.

Regardless of education, those people of working age whose first language is neither Finnish nor Swedish are more likely to be unemployed. At the turn of year 2006/2007, no less than 27 per cent of foreign-background 15-64 year olds with a high-level education did not have a job. The higher the education, the greater this difference becomes. Among those native speakers of a foreign language having a postgraduate, one-third was out of work.

At the turn of year 2006/2007, 26 per cent of foreign-background Helsinki residents worked in the public or social services sectors, particularly in health and welfare provision. A quarter of foreign-background residents worked in business services and 23 per cent worked in the retail trade, or hotels and restaurants.

8. Educational background and level of education

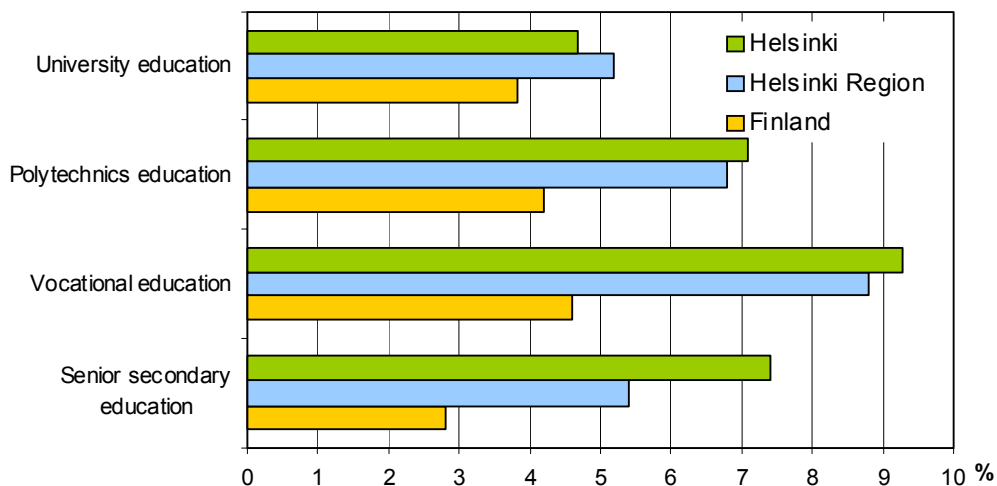
At the end of 2006, the proportion of 15-year-old or older foreign-language Helsinki residents having a secondary or higher degree was 42 per cent. 8.4 per cent had a secondary general education and 13.7 a secondary vocational education. 19.9 per cent had tertiary education.

In 2006, secondary general education schools in Helsinki had 1,272 students with a foreign (i.e. other than Finnish or Swedish) mother tongue; in other words 7.4 per cent of all students at this level. Secondary vocational education establishments had 2,098 such students, that is 9.3 per cent of students in this category.

At tertiary level vocational training in Helsinki, the 1,432 polytechnic students with a foreign mother tongue made up 7.1 per cent of students in their category.

In 2006, universities in Helsinki had a total of 2,263 students with a foreign mother tongue, i.e. 4.7 per cent of all university students.

Figure 8. Proportion of students with a foreign mother tongue (other than Finnish or Swedish) in degree-oriented education in 2006



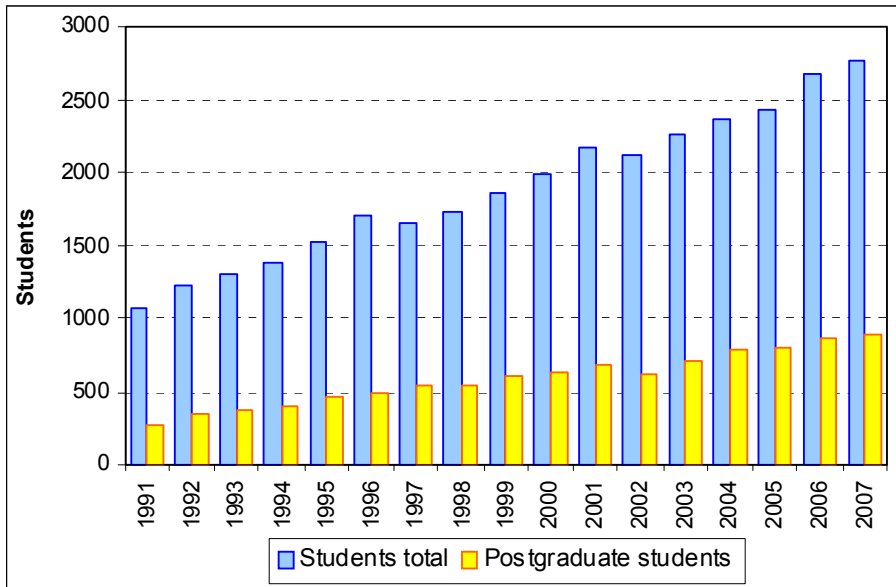
Source: Statistics Finland

The most common mother tongue among non-Finnish- or non-Swedish-speaking students at the seven polytechnics in Helsinki was Russian, followed by English, Estonian, Chinese and Swahili. Foreign students at these polytechnics represented 42 different mother tongues.

In 2007, the universities of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area had a total of 2,769 foreign students studying for a degree, 896 of whom were postgraduates. These foreign students made up 4.3 per cent of all university students in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. 53.8 per cent of that number were Europeans, 31.4 per cent Asians, 5.7 Africans and 4.0 per cent North Americans.

At the University of Helsinki has the largest number of foreign students in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The foreign nationalities providing the largest number of degree-oriented students were Russians, Estonians, Chinese and Germans. The proportion of foreign students at the university is still small, only 3.9 per cent. However, the proportion of postgraduates among foreign students is considerable: 37.8 per cent in 2007.

Figure 9. Foreign students studying for a degree at the universities in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, 1991-2007



Source: Statistics Finland

Sources

Statistics Finland, population statistics
Statistics Finland, education statistics
Statistics Finland, employment statistics
Statistics Finland, housing statistics
Statistics Finland, census data
Ministry of Education, Kota database
Ministry of the Interior, Immigration Unit, Immigration Statistics
Ministry of Labour, Job Statistics
Helsinki University's statistics

Explanatory notes

The **statistically recorded population** are those with a fixed abode in Helsinki on the day of reference regardless of their nationality. Foreign nationals are considered to have a fixed abode in Finland if their stay is understood to be or has already lasted for at least a year. Asylum seekers receive a fixed abode only when their applications have been approved. Thus, refugees having been granted political asylum are included in the population of the municipality where they have been received; likewise quota refugees. Staff of embassies, trade missions or consulates and their family members are not included in Helsinki's population unless they are Finnish citizens.

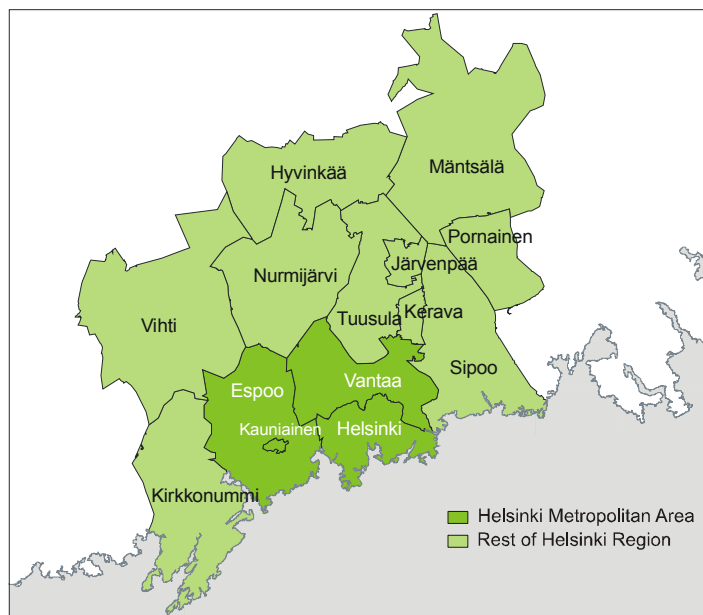
Country of birth is the country wherein the mother had permanent residence at the time the child was born. Those born abroad may include Finnish nationals, just as those born in Finland may include foreign nationals.

Those with a foreign mother tongue include all who do not speak Finnish, Swedish or Same (the three official languages of Finland) as a mother tongue. The mother tongue is recorded statistically when the parents register the name of the child.

In these statistics, **foreign nationals** are people with a fixed abode in Finland but without Finnish citizenship. The term citizenship defines those who are a citizen, i.e. national, of a country. Usually, citizenship comes with being born in a country, although it can be changed after moving to another country. Some countries allow dual citizenship, which enables people to have two or even more citizenships while retaining their initial citizenship. In the context of this publication, if one of the citizenships is Finnish, the person is recorded as a Finnish citizen. People with more than one citizenship are recorded as citizens of the country whose passport they used when arriving in Finland.

People with a **foreign background** include not only foreign nationals but also Finnish nationals (i.e. Finnish citizens) who have been born abroad. Foreign nationals also include some children born in Finland. Finnish nationals born abroad include both people born abroad in Finnish families and that have [later](#) moved back to Finland and people having received Finnish citizenship, i.e. via the process of naturalisation, after moving to Finland.

Regions



The Helsinki Metropolitan Area consists of Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen and Vantaa.

The outer ring consists of Hyvinkää, Järvenpää, Kerava, Kirkkonummi, Mäntsälä, Nurmijärvi, Sipoo, Pornainen, Tuusula and Vihti.

The Helsinki Region consists of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the outer ring.