

*Tiina Ristikari*

**FINNISH TRADE  
UNIONS AND  
IMMIGRANT LABOR**





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**FINNISH TRADE  
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# Table of contents

<b>PREFACE</b> .....	7
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	10
<b>TIIVISTELMÄ</b> .....	11
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	12
1. The age of global migration and ethnic discrimination in the Finnish labor markets.....	12
2. Why study trade unions and immigration and researcher motivations for the study .....	15
3. Research questions and contribution to the field of social policy.....	17
<b>THEORY</b> .....	20
1. Trade unions and immigration.....	20
1.1 Coordinated market economy .....	20
1.2 Finnish industrial relations.....	21
1.3 Immigrant groups and immigration regimes .....	24
1.4 Frames of interest representation and the who question .....	26
1.5 A theoretical model for interest representation .....	29
1.6 European experiences in trade union responses to immigration .....	31
2. Northern European trajectories of union responses to immigration .....	33
2.1 Sweden: Traditions of multiculturalism intertwined with bureaucratic structures.....	35
2.2 Norway: An exception to the rule?.....	37
2.3 Great Britain: A long path to immigrant activism.....	39
2.4 Finnish trade unions' globalization strategies.....	41
2.5 Finnish trade unions and immigration.....	48
2.6 Posted workers dilemma .....	51
3. Forms and dimensions of ethnic discrimination .....	54
3.1 Traditions of multiculturalism discourses in Finland .....	54
3.2 Intergroup interaction and diversity .....	56
3.3 Explanations and evidence for migrant inequalities in the labor markets.....	58
3.4 Theories of ethnic discrimination .....	61
3.5 Combating ethnic discrimination.....	65
3.6 Ethnic discrimination and racism.....	70
3.7 Prevalence of racism in Finland .....	73

<b>AIMS, METHODS AND DATA</b> .....	75
1. Research aims and questions.....	75
2. Methods and data .....	77
3. Conducting focus groups and analysis of the data.....	79
3.1 Focus group data analysis.....	80
<b>RESULTS</b> .....	85
1. Cooperative central organizations focus on employment.....	85
1.1 Projects and programs of the trade union central organizations .....	88
2. Finnish trade unions and the question of responsibility .....	91
2.1 Background questions .....	92
2.2 Union composition .....	93
2.3 Membership.....	94
2.4 Member services .....	96
2.5 Ethnic discrimination.....	98
3. Immigrant interest representation, a careful balancing act .....	107
3.1 Representations of immigrants.....	109
3.2 Immigrants and labor markets .....	120
3.3 Ethnic discrimination and trade unions.....	127
<b>DISCUSSION</b> .....	135
1. Alternative analysis .....	138
2. Researching sensitive topics.....	140
3. Results in the European and global context.....	143
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	147
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	157
Appendix A. ....	157
Appendix B. ....	158
Appendix C. ....	160



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I dedicate this thesis to my daughter, Julia, whose curiosity and kindness is bound to carry her to places yet undiscovered.

In Oulu, Finland, 12.12.2012

# Abstract

Across the world, an estimated 214 million people live outside their country of birth, 100 million of whom are labor migrants. The number of immigrants has also significantly increased in Finland in the last two decades. Numerous reports have highlighted the direct and indirect discrimination which immigrants experience in European labor markets, including Finland. The present study investigates the response of the Finnish trade unions to immigrant labor and ethnic discrimination in the labor markets. Using mixed methods and analyzing data from different levels of trade union movement, the study shows that while the Finnish labor unions support employment based immigration policies, the actors are divided on the issues related to immigrant interest representation.

**Keywords:** Trade unions, immigration, labor markets, ethnic discrimination

# Tiivistelmä

Syntymämaansa ulkopuolella asuu maailmanlaajuisesti noin 214 miljoonaa ihmistä, joista noin 100 miljoonaa on siirtotyöläisiä. Myös Suomessa maahanmuuttajien määrä on lisääntynyt viime vuosikymmeninä. Useat raportit ovat osoittaneet, että eurooppalaisilla työmarkkinoilla, Suomi mukaan lukien, maahanmuuttajat kokevat suoraa tai epäsuoraa syrjintää. Tämä tutkimus selvittää suomalaisen ay-liikkeen suhtautumista maahanmuuttajiin ja etniseen syrjintään työmarkkinoilla. Tutkimuksessa on yhdistetty aineistoja ay-liikkeen eri tasoilta, ja käytetty useita eri menetelmiä.

Lopputuloksena voidaan todeta, että suomalainen ay-liike tukee maahanmuuton työmarkkinasidonnaisuutta, mutta ammattiyhdistystoimijoiden suhtautumisessa maahanmuuttajien edunvalvonnan kysymyksiin esiintyy eroavaisuuksia.

**Asiasanat:** ammattiyhdistysliike, maahanmuutto, työmarkkinat, etninen syrjintä

# INTRODUCTION



## **1. The age of global migration and ethnic discrimination in the Finnish labor markets**

Across the world, an estimated 214 million people live outside their country of birth, 100 million of whom are labor migrants. Although the majority of migration takes place between developing countries, in today's Europe immigration has grown to the point that of the European Union's 380 million people, 70 million are immigrants. In the global context, at least 3% of the world's population lives outside the country they were born in (IOM, 2010). In the context of economic globalization, the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century have witnessed increasing migration, especially for employment purposes.

Within Europe, increasing competition is seen between nation states trying to attract the most qualified professionals. Changes are made to immigration policies, creating so called 'fast track' procedures through which professionals can enter foreign states more easily (Mahroum, 2001). However, not only are high skilled workers and professionals sought after and mobile; labor migration to European countries also involves the movement of unskilled immigrants. In fact, several European countries depend on the labor of unskilled foreign workers in significant sectors of their labor markets, such as agriculture, building and civil engineering and domestic service (Heikkilä, 2005). In addition to increasing labor mobility, natural disasters and poverty are driving people to search for safety in new locations (Lyytinen, 2007).

Finland has traditionally been a country of emigration. Moreover, immigration to Finland never seriously took the form of official recruitment for labor purposes. Rather, especially in the 1980s and 1990s most of the arrivals came either as UN refugees, asylum seekers, Ingrian Finns returning to Finland or persons coming through a family reunification program or having married a Finn (Heikkilä, 2005). It was not until the 1980s that immigration surpassed emigration and it was as late as the 1990s when immigration to Finland began to increase rapidly. In 2010, there were 167 000 national of other countries living in Finland, when in the year 1990 only 64 922 immigrants lived in Finland (Tilastokeskus, PX-Web-tietokannat; Migri, 2010). The largest immigrant groups in Finland originate from Russia, Estonia, Sweden, Somalia, former Yugoslavia, Iraq, Germany, the UK, the US and Vietnam (Sisäasiainministeriö, 2010).

The number of immigrants has increased in Finland in the last two decades. The reasons people move to Finland have also diversified, as more people come to Finland in search of educational and work opportunities, in addition to family and humanitarian protection reasons.

Today, approximately 4 per cent of the total Finnish population consists of persons whose native language is other than Finnish, Swedish or Same. Most of the newcomers have settled in the southern coastal region near the capital, Helsinki, making the total population of first and second generation immigrants of the capital region approximately 7.5 per cent (Sisäasiainministeriö, 2010).

In the 2000s, Finland has received approximately 1 500–4 000 asylum seekers per year, and of the residence permits granted each year, this group makes up approximately 10%. The rest of the residence permits are granted to employment or educational purposes or for family reasons (Sisäasiainministeriö, 2010).

The number of immigrants estimated to be part of the labor market in Finland is 55 000, or about 2% of the total population. Large sectorial differences exist in the numbers of immigrant workers, however. In the construction sector in the capital region, for example, Rakennusliitto (the Finnish construction union) estimates that a fifth of the workers are immigrants. Also, in the year 2008, the number of temporary migrants has been estimated to be around 40 000, although no-one knows the exact numbers because persons from the EU countries working on a temporary basis do not have to apply for a working permit (Kyntäjä, 2011).

States, like Finland, that adhere to the ideals of democracy typically state as their goal equality between citizens. The basic idea is that all citizens should be treated equally and have equal access to education, health-care, culture, labor markets and so on, regardless of their background, age, gender, religion and ethnic background. Research shows, however, that immigrants are not granted those rights and face substantial inequalities when it comes to labor markets (Johnsson & Walleto, 2001; Zorlu, 2001). A typical assumption in response to the above mentioned phenomenon is that with time the effect of ethnicity will be

diminished. In the EU-countries this assertion has been tested by looking at the case of the second generation and the results unfortunately do not look positive. While the children of migrants are born and educated in the EU member states, their chances in the labor market are still far from equal to that of children from native parents (Kraal, Wrench, Roosblad & Simon, 2009).

Numerous reports have highlighted the direct and indirect discrimination which immigrants experience in European labor markets, including Finland (Craig, 2002; Heikkilä, 2005). Not only do recent immigrants experience drastically higher rates of unemployment, but when managing to find employment their pay is often significantly lower than that of the white majority (Morissens & Sainsbury, 2005). Also, problems - from rejection of qualifications acquired in the nation of origin to institutional racism - are common experiences among immigrant job seekers. As a great majority of the welfare provisions in European countries are gained through a long-term and stable connection to the labor market, immigrants are in a particularly vulnerable position (Valtonen, 1999; Heikkilä, 2005; Pikkarainen, 2005; Forsander & Alitolppa-Niitamo, 2000).

In Finland, immigrants from especially developing countries face great difficulties in the labor market (Heikkilä, 2005). Some of the main barriers newcomers from these areas face are “high unemployment rates in Finland, the low esteem attributed to foreign work experience by Finnish employers and inadequate language skills” (Heikkilä, 2005, p. 485). Furthermore, issues related to ethnic discrimination of foreign-born job applicants are also evident in the Finnish labor market. Research by the Finnish Institute of Migration has shown that while “foreigners tend to have multiple handicaps like lower educations, more extended family structures and less working experience. These factors can only partially explain their disadvantage in the labor market, with the much more fundamental problems remaining those associated with discriminatory practices linked to ethnic and cultural prejudices” (Heikkilä, 2005, p. 485). One of the main consequences of these discriminatory practices can be witnessed by the at times extremely high unemployment rates of immigrants from developing countries, at levels above 70% (Heikkilä & Jaakkola, 2000).

In the 2000s in Finland, the unemployment rates for migrants have been approximately three times higher than the unemployment rates of Finns (Heikkilä & Pikkarainen, 2008). In addition to experiencing higher rates of unemployment, immigrants have a less secure labor market position than Finns. Among immigrants, the rates of temporary and part-time employment are higher than among native Finns (Sutela, 2005). Not even Finnish education has significantly improved the labor market status of the most vulnerable groups, like immigrants from Somalia. In addition, immigrants from Somalia have experiences of discrimination in the Finnish labor markets, more than other groups (Joronen, 2005).

## 2. Why study trade unions and immigration and researcher motivations for the study

Agencies from local and national to regional (e.g., the EU) levels are all potentially important actors in the removal of immigrant barriers to the labor market. There are numerous non-governmental actors that strongly influence, whether positively or negatively, the labor market integration process of migrants. These vital institutional actors include churches, trade unions, employers' organizations, political parties, the media, and other civil society actors. Such non-governmental partners are important in at least two ways. First, they function as direct partners in the implementation of policies. But they are perhaps even more important as political actors. "They (trade unions) may influence the political climate and political outcomes, and may be important agents in combating exclusion, discrimination, and xenophobia" (Artto, 2006).

Researchers working on immigrant barriers to labor markets have been especially calling for an investigation to the 'potential role of *trade unions* in reducing workplace resistance to the employment of foreign-born workers with a view to developing their potentially positive institutional role in labor market integration' (Valtonen, 1999, p. 64). Wrench (1986) argued that 'more than any other public or private employer, local authority or government agency, *trade unions* are a key sector where equal opportunity and anti-racism should be addressed with the utmost priority' (p. 1). Trade unions have a role in two different areas: promoting equality in the workplace in general and also within their own organization (efforts which include tackling racism among the union membership as well as their own leadership). If trade unions fail in this challenge, or decide not to take it upon themselves to support this group of workers, Wrench (1986) argues that it would have particularly severe implications for immigrant workers.

Wilkins has argued further, that unions matter for the political incorporation of immigrants through several means. Unions can for example provide material benefits, such as job stability, better wages and benefits (Zuberi 2004 in Wilkins 2005). "Greater employment and financial stability contribute to the development of political capital by providing more personal and collective resources among immigrant communities to be able to mobilize politically" (p. 3) and "union membership also significantly increases the representation of immigrant interests in unions themselves, in the workplace and more generally in society", according to Wilken (p. 3).

### ***Researcher motivation for the study***

This research project was motivated by a number of professional and personal reasons. At the profession level, during my early university studies in North America, questions about different social psychological phenomena, especially related to inter-cultural encounters were in the focus of the teaching and research of my university. I had the opportunity to be part of a research group on inter-cultural interaction already during my bachelor studies, and in my later studies, I began to want to investigate how the phenomena that we understood theoretically and could observe in the experimental setting, came to life in the real world and in different organizations. Questions about how, for example, stereotyping influences organizational culture and can lead into indirect forms of discrimination, were important to investigate for me.

My interest and understanding in inter-cultural interaction deepened from the personal experiences as a foreign student in a multiracial and multicultural university, where my own friendship group quickly grew to consist of persons from a number of different continents, not to mention countries. In this small state-run university, studying side by side were persons with varying immigration statuses and nationalities. Some of my friends were children from wealthy European or Asian parents; some had made their way through lengthy processes of changing immigration statuses, from undocumented to asylum seeking, to paper marriages. Some of us had arrived with the standard student visa programs, but upon changes in the immigration legislation experienced situations where our legal stay was in question. We had all walked through and created different types of paths, and been challenged in ways that we would probably not have been in our home countries, yet, all of us had made it to a university, learning about our chosen disciplines as well as about each other's cultural heritage, personal stories and future ambitions. The incredible diversity in the life stories was the only commonality among us, as well as the indisputable agency in the creation of the outcomes for our lives. We were all immigrants, but also so many other things.

Upon my return to Europe, my interest in the policy and systems level influences of immigration, inter-cultural encounters and discrimination grew larger. In my master's studies, I began to understand how strongly the immigration and integration systems of the Nordic countries, as well as the entire systems of the welfare production were connected to labor markets. Evidence of the inequality faced by immigrants in the labor markets had also accumulated from different perspectives and the questions about the role of different actors in easing the integration of immigrants into the labor markets began to interest me. As a daughter of a trade unionist, as a neighbor and a friend to many activists within trade unions I grew curious about the way in which this movement had reacted to immigration and the ethnic inequality in the labor markets. Since my childhood I

had understood the trade union movement as a champion of workers' rights, as a force for equality and welfare. Having grown up attending trade union meetings I felt that I was almost an insider to the movement, at least close enough to understand the importance of the movement, but having been away from Finland for almost 10 years, far enough to be able to take the required distance to the target of the study. Also, upon realizing that hardly any academic studies existed on the reaction of Finnish trade unions to immigration and ethnic inequality existed, I saw an urgent need to begin to fill this gap.

### **3. Research questions and contribution to the field of social policy**

Having argued that trade unions have a potentially important role in aiding the integration of immigrants and fighting the widely cited labor market disadvantage of immigrant workers, this thesis explores how Finnish trade unions have in practice reacted to immigration and immigrant workers' disadvantage in the labor market. Specifically in this study I attempt to answer three related questions about the Finnish unions and compare the results with other European trade unions. While the third question is the main research questions, the first two help to set the frame for the analysis of the main question.

Research questions:

1. The first research question that helps to set the frame for the main research question asks: How has the Finnish trade union movement responded to immigration? Did they resist the public authorities or cooperate?
2. How have the Finnish unions as a whole responded to immigrant representation and incorporated immigrant labor market interests in the union organization in comparison to their European counterparts in the 2000s?
3. How have Finnish trade union activists on the grounds responded to immigration and the ethnic discrimination in the labor markets? – Are the unionists insisting on equal treatment or advocating for the immigrants?

#### ***Study contribution to the field of social policy***

If we take a look at the overarching goals of social policy from the early forms of poor men's help, the minimal safety nets of last resort, to the ideology of the most advanced welfare states, we see that the goals set out for social policy have to do with increasing the welfare of the residents of nation states and helping the residents take part in the societal activities; to be socially included. As such, the greater goals of social policy have to do with the basic human rights, and with

allowing all persons residing in a certain society, be integrated in the operations of that society, no matter what the birth of origin. As such, the present study attempts to bring information regarding the ability of one of the social policy actors, the trade unions, to advance the basic ideology of social policies, the inclusion of immigrants in the Finnish society, and specifically the labor markets.

Furthermore, as the European welfare states, and the Finnish state in particular faces a significant demographic challenge as the large baby-boom generation begins to retire and the incoming generations need to fund the care of the much larger older cohorts, the question about immigrations has especially come to the fore. While experts have argued that alone immigration is hardly a solution for the funding of the welfare state and elderly care in particular, immigration can contribute to the better age balance of the Finnish society (Heikkilä & Pikkarainen, 2008).

Immigration and the responses to it, as such, are of course an important topic to study, not only from the above mentioned utilitarian perspective, but also because as a phenomena it has many human rights issues related to it, as well as because as a phenomena it is not expected to disappear, perhaps more likely to increase. Several different social political actors combine to produce the "total effect" for the immigrant integration efforts, and one of the significant actors are the trade unions. Especially in the Nordic countries, the idea that labor markets are the best "integrator" for immigrants has been argued since the arrival of immigrants, and as such, the way that the most significant actors in the Finnish labor markets have reacted to immigration is very relevant to study for a social policy researcher.

The question about how the Finnish trade union movement has as a total entity (different actor levels) responded to immigration and the well documented ethnic discrimination has also been poorly studied in Finland, and in the international comparative literature the Finnish responses are completely lacking. Furthermore, while from the immigration integration, and especially from the labor market discrimination perspectives the current study brings about new information for the national actors as well as for international comparisons, the question about trade union responses to immigration is also important for the labor union revitalization literature.

As said, trade unions are an important actor in the industrial relations systems of most European countries, and particularly so in the Nordic countries. While labor unions have in the recent decades faced challenges in their operations due to globalization, hostile political climate and unemployment causing a downward pressure on union density, their position as players in the labor markets of Europe is nevertheless significant (Hyman, 1999, 2001). Recent literature on labor unions can be divided into two main strands. One strand of research is looking into the the varying levels of union density and reasons that explain it. The other strand is analyzing union revitalization processes and strategies. The revitalization literature starts often from the premise that significant changes have taken place in the labor

markets, such as changes in the demographic structures of the workers. As such, questions related to gender, ethnicity and young people, and union services and strategies with these groups come to the fore (Jonker-Hoffren, 2008).

This current research is set in that strand of research as well, and attempts to analyze the important industrial relations questions with the help of theories and methods from social psychology, as well as social policy. While typical labor union research is founded in political science, economics and sociology, this research attempts to analyze the response of the Finnish trade unions to immigration and ethnic discrimination with the help of significant social psychological theories on attitudes and roles, and their influence on behavior, as well as theories from social policy and sociology on labor markets, diversity and discrimination.

### ***Structure of the thesis***

The present doctoral thesis is structured in the following way. Upon the already considered introduction to the topic and the research questions, the thesis goes on to present and discuss relevant theories. The theory section begins with setting the context in which the research has been conducted and discusses the coordinated market economy as well as specifically the Finnish industrial relations. Furthermore, in the processes of setting the context for the new data, the immigrant groups and the immigration regime operating in Finland are discussed.

After setting the context for the study, the thesis goes on to review the literature on unions' responses to immigration in Europe and Nordic countries, and in Finland particular. Next the thesis moves on to consider the literature on diversity, intergroup interaction and inequality. In particular the themes of multiculturalism and ethnic discrimination are discussed in relation to labor markets.

The method and results section describes the methodological choices for each research question. In particular the main research question and the method is, qualitative attitude analysis, are introduced and the application of the method discussed. The result section then goes through the research questions, and the data used to answer them, and upon presenting and discussing the results, makes some conclusions.

The last section of the thesis, the discussion section, brings the results together and attempts to deepen the analysis and provide new insights. When considering the results from the different sections the answers to the research questions become more complex and the discussion highlights the complexity. Furthermore, the discussion section provides alternative analysis for the results and considers some weaknesses in the data. The second part of the discussion section then goes on to consider the special requirements for researching sensitive topics such as discrimination, and the issues of reflexivity required from the researcher. Lastly the discussion section considers the results of the study in the European and global context.

# THEORY



## 1. Trade unions and immigration

### *1.1 Coordinated market economy*

In the international economics literature the varieties of capitalism theory has gained popularity in the recent years. According to one major theorist, on the globe there exist different varieties of capitalism, some more coordinated than others. Finland, along with Germany and Japan, are examples of coordinated market economies, where as the Anglo Saxon countries, the UK and the USA represent liberal market economies with less regulation and coordination.

In the coordinated market economies formal institutions regulate the market and coordinate the interaction of all labor market actors at all levels of the market. The relationships between the labor market actors have existed for long periods of time and for the most part they can be characterizes as cooperative. Worker representation in workplaces is established, and training and development schemes are customary. It has been argued that these long-lasting and co-operative relationships with the labor market actors have given these economies advantages in the world economy, being able to develop innovations and produce high quality products with reliable schedules.

The institutional arrangements operating in CME countries have been argued to buffer the influences of globalization and particularly the effects of increas-

ing mobility (Thelen & van Wijnbergen, 2003). As global economic forces put pressures on the national systems, that the idea holds, the institutional actors in the coordinated market economies are able to buffer and weaken the effects of globalization on the national markets. In the Finnish context this idea has, however, been questioned by researchers (Lillie & Sippola, 2010) investigating examples of what can be called good test cases, like large industrial building sites, where multinational companies benefiting from the liberalization of markets, a development of globalization, are operating in what can be called spaces of exception (Ong, 2006). These researchers argue that the operational traditions of the coordinated market economies, particularly the trade unions operational habits have influenced the way in which large industrial building sites operate, but the influence is minimized by the choice of the trade unions to treat the sites as what can be called spaces of exception, allowing for events to take place that would normally not be allowed to take place in the Finnish labor markets.

Specifically the Finnish trade unionist believe that taking the so called high road, developing solidaristic labor market policies and including immigrants in them, will offer immigrants adequate protection in the wage setting. The new workers in the industrial building sites, as well as other immigrant workers in the Finnish labor markets are integrated in the “normal” activities of the trade unions and in stead of trying to recruit them actively into the unions, the guiding idea has been to tell the immigrants of their rights and attempt to monitor the working conditions (earlier sociological literature on the high road thinking, see for example Sengenberger, 1994, on Finnish labor markets and immigrants, Lillie & Sippola, 2010).

## **1.2 Finnish industrial relations**

Globally a great variety of responses by trade unions exists towards first and second generation immigrants. These differences are partly due to the differences in the national contexts in which the unions operate. Ackers et al. (1996, p. 2.) argue that ‘National differences have created unions with distinctive religious, political and occupational forms and divisions’. These divisions can even be seen in Western Europe. In the Southern European countries unions were created within a framework of competition between the Catholic, socialist and communist confederations. In Northern Europe on the other hand, trade unions developed under a single Social Democratic or labor hegemony (Ackers et al., 1996). Of course, such a categorization hides a great deal of diversity, as the industrial relations systems of the European countries also vary significantly.

Significant differences also exist between European trade unions with regard to their socio-political position as reflected by their density levels, power in

collective bargaining and overall influence in the political system. In the Nordic countries, the rate of unionization is the highest in Europe, at 80 to 90 per cent, with a correspondingly high degree of influence (Hjarnø, 1996).

Another variable creating differences in the functions of European trade unions is the balance between 'conflict' and 'consensus' in labor market regulation. In some European countries, the different labor market partners have significant levels of interdependence in their functioning, leading to high levels of consensus building in decision-making processes. Naturally, conflict is present in all systems of industrial relations; but in certain countries, this model is seen as more normal (Nielsen, 1996).

Finnish industrial relations can be described as a highly organized labor market, with relatively high levels of co-operation and consensus between the trade unions, employers' organizations and the state. Collective bargaining covers most parts of the labor market, and corporatist, tripartite decision making and implementation is widespread. Trade unions hold the responsibility to police the legally binding collective agreements together with the labor inspectors, which gives them a great deal of formal power.

Also, in the Finnish industrial systems, the unions negotiate the wages not only of their own members, but as the agreements are extended to the entire sectors, persons who are not members of unions benefit from them as well. Via this system, called the *erga omnia*, about 95% of the workforce becomes covered by the collective agreements. Also, the unions run pension systems through which their members get paid earnings-related unemployment benefits, known as the Ghent system (Van Rie, Marx, & Horemans, 2011). The unions power is also indirectly exhibited in the general pension system of the entire nation, as representatives of unions are sitting in the boards of all the Finnish pension insurance institutions (Böckerman & Uusitalo, 2005).

Union density levels in Finland have gone through significant changes, with the 1960s holding only about 30% unionization rates (Böckerman & Uusitalo, 2005; Jokivuori, 2006). Quickly in the 1970s and 1980s unionization rates went up to their highest levels ever so far, with proximately 65% in the 1970s and above 70% in the 1980s. In the middle of the 1990s, union density in Finland reached its highest ever rate, 84%. Within these national levels, large sectorial differences are present with the traditional industrial sectors having the highest levels (Böckerman & Uusitalo, 2005). Also, the trend in union density decline that began in many other industrialized nations already in the 1980s due to union hostile political leadership pushing through institutional changes making unions work more difficult, as in the case of Britain (Blanchflower & Freeman, 1994), or more general reasons related to changes in the structure of labor markets (less manufacturing industry, more service industry), happened also in Finland,

where in ten years time union density dropped by approximately ten percentages (Böckerman & Uusitalo, 2005; Jokivuori, 2006).

There are several institutional reasons for the high unionization rates in Finland, the degradation of some of which has led to the decrease in unionization. One of the major reasons for the especially high union rates has been the Ghent system, under which the unions have organized the government subsidized earnings-related unemployment benefit system (Hyman, 1999; Scruggs, 2002; Western, 1993). The name of the system comes from the Belgium city where it was first introduced. Research studies have shown, that in countries where the Ghent system operates, unionization rates have remained higher than in the non-Ghent systems (Lesch, 2004), and as the government paid unemployment benefits basic levels have been low, the earnings-related addition has served as a big incentive to join a union (Scruggs, 2002; Rothstein, 1992; Van Rie, Marx & Horemans, 2011).

In the 2000s, an independent unemployment insurance fund came to the Finnish market and has started to take foothold as its insurance costs are significantly lower than the union membership fees of 1–2% of the salary. The introduction of this new player in the Finnish (labor) market has already had a significant impact, as workers have been joining it instead of a union, due to its lower costs (Böckerman & Uusitalo, 2005). While one of the main incentives for Finns to join a union has been the earnings related unemployed benefit, posted workers on temporary working contracts are not entitled to this benefit or other forms of unemployment protection<sup>1</sup>.

Other reasons supporting the high levels of unionization are the tax-deductible nature of the trade union membership fees and that the fees can be collected by the employer from the pay check automatically and submitted to the unions. The system as such makes the union membership easy. Also, the Finnish labor market went through drastic changes in the 1990s during a time of significant economic downturn, leading to substantial increase in job uncertainty and insecurity (or least the general perception has been one). Research has shown that the risk of unemployment in systems where unions administer earnings-related unemployment benefits may lead to higher union density (Checchi & Visser, 2001; Blaschke, 2000).

The union movement in Finland has quite a long history going back to the establishment of the Printers' union in 1894, with the employers first recognizing unions in 1940 (Böckerman & Uusitalo, 2005). The 75 unions operating in Finland are divided between three central organizations, the SAK, Akava and STTK. Blue-collar workers are represented by the SAK; the Confederation of Finnish Trade Unions and are organized according to industries. White collar workers belong

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<sup>1</sup> Also, workplace accident insurance is only available if the sending country has it in its legislation (Kyntäjä, 2008).

mainly to STTK, the Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees. Workers with academic training belong to Akava, the Confederation of Academic Professional Associations, and their unions are built around professional categories. In the last 10-20 years, the union membership among SAK has been on the decline, staying relatively stable in STTK and increasing in Akava (Böckerman & Uusitalo, 2005).

The SAK was established in 1907 and it has a colorful history (Bergholm, 2007). At the moment the SAK has 21 member unions with over 100 local branch organizations and over 3 000 union branches. The SAK employs 115 persons and it has 13 regional offices. Of its over one million members, slightly over half are men (53%) and about 47% are women. Of the total membership, 1.7% come from other countries, total of approximately 17 000 (Kyntäjä, 2011b). About a quarter of SAK's members work in the public sector and another quarter in the service sector. The rest, half of the members, work in manufacturing industries. The SAK has over 100 000 activists working with it. The foundation for the work done by SAK is the ideals of equality, democracy and solidarity (<http://www.sak.fi/suomi/tietoasaksta.jsp?location1=5&sl2=1&lang=fi>, 18.11.2011).

The STTK unions have a total of 615 000 members, of whom two thirds are women. Approximately 5 000 of the members are immigrants (Kyntäjä, 2011b). The STTK as we know it today was established in 1993 when 20 new unions joined it and its name was changed. The original STTK was established in 1946. In this merge the structure of the STTK changed significantly as the unions joining in where representing much more female workers, and the public sector in general. The ideals guiding the work of the STTK are transparency, equality, caring and freedom from prejudices ([www.sttk.fi](http://www.sttk.fi)).

The Akava consists of 34 member unions that have approximately half a million members, half of whom are women. Akava estimates that they have about 4 000–5 000 immigrant members (Kyntäjä, 2011b). Half of Akava members work in the public sector and the other half in the private sector. Approximately a quarter of Akava members are working in leadership or managerial positions, another quarter in teaching related occupations and the rest, half, in expert positions. The members join one of Akava's affiliates based on their field of study, degree, profession or position. The ideals of Akava are to be on the side of its members, to be united and unique, as well as to have expert visionary ([www.akava.fi](http://www.akava.fi)).

### ***1.3 Immigrant groups and immigration regimes***

When trying to understand the widely differing responses of trade unions towards immigrants, it is important to look further than the industrial relations systems within which they operate and to understand the immigration policies of the nation states in which the trade unions are themselves embedded. Several authors

have created typologies of such responses (e.g. Penninx, 2004). Castles (1995) has created a typology relevant in the Western European context. One type of immigration regime according to Castles can be called *differential exclusion*, where immigrants are seen as temporary workers with limited political and social rights (e.g. Germany). As such temporary workers are not expected to stay beyond a few years; this regime deems it useless if not counterproductive to invest in the integration of the immigrants.

In the *assimilationist* regime, immigrants are given full rights, but are expected to behave in ways identical to the native people. The prototypical example of the assimilation regime is France. Lastly, the *pluralist or multicultural immigration regime* accepts immigrants as full members of the society and allows them to maintain their cultural differences. Most strongly this model is applied in Australia and Canada, and in Europe significant elements of it can be found in Sweden, the Netherlands and Britain, according to Castles (1995). The Finnish ministry of Labor (the ministry most responsible for immigration related issues together with the ministry of the interior) has also since the late 1990s formed its immigration policies within a multiculturalist framework (Ministry of Labor, 2005).

The national immigration ideologies naturally influence trade union practices towards immigrants, as they are required to behave according to the equal opportunities policies in their country. The British unions have since the 1970s been operating in the context of race relations legislation, whereas in Finland it was not until 2004 that formal legislation prohibiting racial discrimination was created. Finnish trade union confederations have signed the so called 'Firenz agreement' prohibiting racial discrimination in their own work (ETUC, 2003), and since Finland is part of the European Union Finnish unions have had to abide by the Racial Equality (2000/43/EC) and Employment Equality (2000/78/EC) directives – though these were not implemented until 2003. Also, being a member of the EU, the freedom of movement of labor must naturally be respected.

Related to the immigration regime described above, the responses of trade unions towards immigrants can be affected by the types of immigrants present in their national context and the formal rights that the immigrants possess. Wrench (1996) has argued that from the perspective of trade unions, the working populations of the EU can be divided into five categories, the relevant factor dividing all potential workers (immigrants and natives) being the legal status of the worker.

Accordingly, Wrench (1996) has made the following categorization (p. 3):

1. Citizens. Living and working within their own country of citizenship.
2. Citizens of an EU member state who work in another country within the Union.
3. Third country nationals who have full rights to residency and work in a member state (Non-EU citizens).

4. Third country nationals who have a right to stay on the basis of a revocable work permit for a fixed period of time.
5. Undocumented or "illegal" workers.

This categorization can further be divided into that of white and non-white. In all categories, the non-white workers are more likely to suffer disadvantage than the white group (Wrench, 1997). Today, in Finland most migrants and their descendants are found in groups 1, 2 and 3 (refugees, asylum seekers or immigrants entering through a family reunification programs) (Coleman, 2003; Pikkarainen, 2005). Furthermore, in Finland, the legal status of the migrant is generally not an issue, and most relevant problems faced by these groups, especially those in group 3, is that of indirect discrimination (Wrench, 1996).

### **1.4 Frames of interest representation and the who question**

Labor union theorists have argued that among the membership of unions, there are groups of worker with differing interests and needs (Hyman, 1997). According to Hyman, the first group, or the elite are those who have high education and special skills. The *core* are a group of members who the trade union movement has traditionally focused on, and who have the strongest attachment to the labor market and who have the skills that are in scarcity in the labor markets. This core group usually benefits from high pay and other benefits due to its traditionally strong bargaining power. This group has been the core of the unionization, but in the recent decades has been in decline in number<sup>2</sup>.

The other groups, the so called *periphery* group, are the workers with less strong of an foothold in the labor markets, have insecure labor markets positions and have had their interests less strongly represented by the labor unions<sup>3</sup>. Lastly, the *excluded* group consists of persons who are unable to work and the unemployed. According to Hyman, due to a number of reasons, the importance of the "core" in the center of European labor markets is in the decline and the periphery and the excluded are moving more to the fore. Particularly the growth in the numbers of migrant workers in the European labor markets, the group of workers who have typically been considered in the periphery group from the perspective of trade unions, is of interest as the context of this study.

One way to analyze trade unions revitalization process and strategies is to look at the questions of labor union representation. Representation or repre-

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<sup>2</sup> E.g. full-time workers with permanent contract, especially males in the manufacturing and other industries have traditionally made up of this group.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. workers with short-term contracts, females, the youth and ethnic minorities typically belong to this category.

sentation capacity according to Jonker (2008) can be understood as a dynamic concept that comprises of external and internal representativeness where by each are influenced by several factors. External representativeness is concerned with the ability of unions to negotiate with the state and the employer side, and builds its strength from high density rates, which is in part influenced by issues such as workplace access, union run unemployment funds, union centralization and the level of corporatism.

Internal representativeness on the other hand is influenced by democracy within the unions, the services and education provided to the membership, the policies and strategies being adopted, as well as the demographic and organizational structure of unions (Jonker, 2008). Also, reputation and legal representativeness can be considered an important aspect of labor union greater representativeness. Reputation representativeness, according to Jonker (2008), is build up from such characteristics as ethical conduct, fraud in labor unions, industrial action, cooperation with social movements, media coverage and ideological color (p. 60) and legal representativeness is based in the greater legal framework of nations, as well as legal framework set by the European Union.

A model developed by Kahnmann (2006) suggest that the response of trade unions to immigration can simply be analyzed on a continuum ranging from inclusion to exclusion. Furthermore, Kahnmann argues that there are three different ways in which unions may react. Firstly, unions may target governments in an effort to prevent social and wage dumping via labor market regulation. Alternatively or in addition, unions may try use collective agreements to set common standards, especially in wage setting. Lastly, unions may use the strategy of organizing migrant workers which in term will help them create joint action in demanding better pay.

Several institutional factors have been shown to influence unions' ability to organize workers, which in turn bring about power to external representativeness (Vernon, 2006). While considering the institutional factors as important, Hege (1997) has argued that unions should incorporate as diverse as interests into its collective identity as possible to remain socially important. For Hyman (1997) the crucial questions have been "whose interests they (unions) represent, which issues they embrace as relevant for the task of representation, and what methods and procedures they adopt in undertaking this task" (p. 515). While the traditional answers, according to Hyman are no longer effective due to "erosion of former models of solidarity, the increasing weight of competitive market forces, and the exhaustion of norms of egalitarianism", he suggests that unions need to include the traditionally peripheral group members, such as women, ethnic minorities, and part-time workers, and develop strategies that incorporate more alternative forms of work and that increase union democracy.

Frege and Kelly (2003) go on to suggest that unions need to think about building new kinds of coalitions, take on political actions and international collaboration, as well as think about organizational restructuring. Researchers concerned with trade unions and gender, have argued that while the themes and questions related to gender take on large variation in different countries, for union revitalization strategies, it is fundamentally important that a broader perspective on the core of its functions needs to develop (Kirton, 1999; Greene & Kirton, 2002; Wrench, 2004; Hansen, 2004; Green, Kirton & Wrench 2005).

Following the enlargement of the EU heated debates regarding the presumed effects of increased labor migration, in particular in the form of posted workers, took place in the Nordic countries (Dolvik & Eldring, 2006). The debates concerned mostly with questions about the low cost competition due to the inflow of the CEE (Central and Eastern European, also called the EU 8, or EEC) workers and the regulation of the national industrial relations systems. How to monitor and control the working contracts of the posted workers and those coming to the Nordic countries under freedom of service provision, and try to prevent social dumping and low wage competition? The Nordic labor market had long traditions, going back to the Viking era and the Hanseatic league, but now upon the EU enlargement, the Nordic labor markets became closer tied with that of the entire Baltic Sea region, and “brought the social actors into a situation resembling the formative days of the national industrial relations systems, forcing them to rethink established customs and institutions, and possible also encouraging a search for broader European responses” (Dolvik & Eldring, 2006, p. 229).

The inflow of migrants has been argue to be problematic for a number of reasons for trade unions operating in national contexts. The increase in the supply of labor could be seen as leading to the weakening of the trade unions bargaining positions. Particularly the entry of short term temporary or posted migrants could be seen as creating tensions in the self-interests of trade unions as well as the possible willingness to act in solidarity with the migrant workers. For long it has been argue that unions have thus been skeptical of migrant labor (Eldring, Fitzgerald & Hansen, 2011). On the other hand, “if employers have a long-standing reputation for preferring immigrants over native-born workers, then the reverse is equally true of trade unions” (McGovern, 2007, p. 228).

It has been argued by researcher that “by increasing the supply and changing the legal ramifications for hiring labor and service providers from the New Member States with domestic wage levels at some 10-25% of the Nordic levels, EU enlargement has endangered shifts in the pattern of labor demand and opened new avenues for production and manpower strategies in Nordic companies” (Dolvik & Eldring, 2006, p. 215). The types of arrangements that companies can choose from in order to fulfil their need for labor have increased (see Dolvik & Eldring, 2006) has left the national industrial relations actors, especially the trade

unions in search for new power resources and forced them to bargain for power in a new framework.

### **1.5 A theoretical model for interest representation**

In her doctoral thesis Wilkens develops a theoretical model on union response to immigrant labor. Her model is based on the Huber and Stephens (2001) political economy typology and she maps out a set of expected trade union reactions based on four cluster conditions: 1. political economic regime type, 2. economic sector, 3. union organizational characteristics, and 4. immigrant characteristics. As a precondition, Wilkens argues that for rational unions organizing immigrant members is inherently costly, more so than the native workforce. The extra costs of immigrant recruitment are accrued from the possible additional language needs, potential lack of interest for joining a union from the part of the (mostly temporary) immigrants and possible lack of familiarity of the union functions, for example. Further, the benefits of increasing membership with immigrant members have to be considered together with the possible “internal selective benefits useful only to immigrant members which may (or be perceived to) divert resources away from the general public” (p. 6).

As mentioned, Wilkens' model is based on the Huber and Stephens (2001) typology of political economic regimes. They identify four ideal types, the Social democratic welfare (SDW) regime (to which Finland belongs), the Christian democratic regimes, liberal welfare regime and the wage earner welfare state. Wilkens' model only includes the first three. Within the social democratic welfare regime benefits are imagined to be on a universal basis and income replacement levels are the most generous of the ideal types. State plays a large role in the delivery of services as well as their funding. The market economy is highly coordinated and unions have a strong status with high levels of membership density, centralized wage setting through tripartite corporatist policy making. Within the political economy regime types, the relevant factors influencing the reaction to immigrant labor are *particular labor market institutions and levels of corporatist embeddedness*. Specifically Wilkens argues that:

- a. “the greater the centralization and corporate embeddedness, the greater the union security and membership stability (not necessarily growth).”
- b. “the greater the union workplace access/representation, the less the distance between union representatives and workers, and the greater the potential for locally adopted union service and support (meeting the needs of specific groups, such as immigrants), and the easier to recruit and maintain union membership, or vice versa”.

Applying these hypotheses to the social democratic welfare regime, and specifically Finland, Wilkens argues that the combination of relative union stability and local representation would lead to openness to immigrant labor. Furthermore, the high level of corporatism, which means that unions, employers and the state decide together about important policy issues, such as immigration legislation, leads to less room for individual players to maneuver and take differing opinions. Therefore, the response of unions to immigration is expected to be highly consistent with those of other political partners and as the union movement is centralized, individual unions are expected to have homogeneous reactions. Wilkens argues that in the SDW countries, the primary reaction to immigration has been “less exclusion from welfare combined with more restrictive immigration policies” (p. 9). Unions within the SDW regime type are thus expected to:

*1. Extent a consistently open and inclusive response to immigrant labor, not differentiating significantly between immigrants and non-immigrants. (p. 15).*

Reactions to the potential of immigrant labor are also expected to differ according to economic sectors. Wilkens' model predicts that industrial sectors, due to their large existing membership in the “insider” positions, will have moderate to low propensity to organize immigrants (manufacturing low, construction moderate and craft unions averse or indifferent). Service sector unions, due to their historically low unionization rate, fast general growth and high share of immigrant labor, would have a moderate to high propensity to recruit immigrants. According to Wilkens' theory, in sectors where immigrant labor is rare, unions are likely to have a neutral/indifferent position towards them, and in industries with a large share of flexible and temporary labor, unions are expected to be averse towards organizing immigrant labor.

Of the union organizational characteristics that are expected to have an influence to immigrant organizing, the degree of centralization, “indicated by confederal concentration, which refers to the number of confederal/peak organizations in a country's labor movement, and the number of unions affiliated with each” (p. 21) would be most important. Wilkens argues that highly concentrated union movements (few confederations, many unions under a confederation) may “be prone to complacency or incrementalism when it comes to implementing the kinds of innovative organizing strategies and special programs required to reach, attract and retain immigrant members. Moreover, policies acceptable to all unions as well as government and employers require compromises and in the case of concentrated movements, this may result in more broadly open, but less radically inclusive approaches to immigrants” (p. 21).

Lastly, the characteristics of the immigrant labor themselves may influence union reactions. The costs of recruiting immigrant labor are significantly related

to the “linguistic correspondence (need for staff with special language skills), duration of residence (long term/permanent migrants seen as more desirable and less costly) and community cohesion (recruiting community or group leaders seen as having greater returns, as others would follow-up through higher receptivity due to internal community cohesion).”

Together, taking all the influencing factors and applying them to the Finnish case and assuming a rational response, one would expect that in a comparative perspective, the Finnish unions, especially in the service sector, with their high level of centralization, concentration and high level of workplace access and representation, combining with the corporatist structures should be moderate to highly open to immigrant labor, at least at the general level.

### ***1.6 European experiences in trade union responses to immigration***

In a comparative study on the trade union response to immigration after the Second World War, Penninx and Roosblad (2000), bring together expert accounts from seven countries on this topic (Switzerland, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, France, Great-Britain, and Sweden). Attempting to explain the differing responses towards immigrants, the study tests four explanatory variables. Firstly, the characteristics of the immigrant groups are assumed to have an influence on the trade unions responses, especially the membership density of immigrants within unions. Secondly, the economic and labor market conditions, which vary greatly in the studied countries. Thirdly, factors related to the society as a whole, and lastly, the position of the trade unions in the power structure of a society.

The results of the study are quite illuminating. In terms of the effect that the special characteristics of immigrant groups themselves have on the trade unions, the researchers found no strong support for the hypothesis. The same groups of immigrants in different countries have differing density levels and the unions have reacted differently to the same immigrant groups in different national context. Furthermore, no support was found for the common belief that “immigrants lack of experience with unions and industrial working conditions” (p. 200) explains the union responses.

In terms of the characteristics associated with the immigrants, what seems to matter is the status the receiving country allocates to them. Immigrants’ legal status and whether they are confined to temporary or part-time sectors (especially in the case of women) seems to explain some of the response, as unions do not consider those outside of the permanent/legal/full time categories real potential membership (Penninx & Roosblad, 2000).

After the Second World War, the build-up of nation states started from greatly varying conditions. Those countries involved in the war had massive reconstruction efforts which required labor, including migrant labor. Countries, like Sweden that were not destroyed in the war got a flying start in their economic development. By the beginning of the 1960s, however, the economic and labor market development of the studied countries was running parallel and soon the economic recession that followed from the first oil crisis in the 1970s affected them all. "The years 1974-75...form a watershed between two distinct phases: it marked the end of large-scale, labor-intensive production along "Fordist" lines, and the advent of a new profile of Western European economies, in which capital-intensive production and high-quality international services became dominant" (p. 202). The economic conditions clearly had an impact on the trade unions responses to immigration, but "apart from a general agreement to restrict new labor immigration, the parallel development in economic and labor market developments cannot explain the significant differences in attitudes to immigration of the dependents and partners of legally resident immigrants, to asylum seekers, or to undocumented immigrants" (p. 202).

If the first two variables could not explain the trade union response to immigration, the last two bring us a bit closer. The position of the trade unions in the socio-economic decision making structures of the nation seems to matter significantly. The influence that unions have in the consensual national policy making is closely related to structure of the unions and union confederations, where "strongly centralized and unified union structure is clearly more influential than fragmented union movements" (p. 202). The powerful unions are required to produce positions on a great variety of issues and even on issues that their own membership is divided. This can lead to a situation where the official position is in opposition to the grass-root level attitudes and vice versa. The results of this comparative study seem to suggest that unions that are "strongly committed to common socio-economic decision making have tied their hands much more, and tend to stick more closely to the core activities of trade unions" (p. 196). On the other hand, unions with less power at the national level, may be more free to produce opinions and take on issues that they themselves agree on and find worthwhile. "In such circumstances, decisions are also easier to make for individual unions in a fragmented union movement, (p. 203). The unions included in the study that are not strongly connected to the national decision making seem to "participate more strongly as partners in social movements in favor of immigrants, and in anti-racist policies. They take on the role more of an opposition movement against the state's and employers' policies, and against general tendencies in society" (p.196). The direction of the attitudes that the unions take on is, however, not always explained by this variable, rather, we need to look at the national contextual and historical factors for the explanations. In

bringing together the national expert accounts and analyzing several variables, Penninx and Roosblad conclude that while “trade unions may ideologically have an internationalist orientation, their actual effectiveness has to be struggled for within national context. The way dilemmas present themselves, or are presented by other actors and resolved, cannot be understood without knowledge of these national contexts. Trade unions are an inextricable part of that context, much more than they might themselves realize” (p. 206). Furthermore, they argue that “an explanation for the contrasting attitudes...can only be given in terms of the logic of the specific nationally bound traditions and experiences of unions and society at large in relation to immigration, and immigrants or foreigners” (p. 206).

## 2. Northern European trajectories of union responses to immigration

In their comparative analysis of the way in which the Nordic industrial relations actors have reacted to the increasing inflow of posted workers from the CEE countries upon the EU enlargement Dolvic and Eldring (2006) find interesting differences. Firstly, all of the Nordic countries with the exception of Sweden, with Denmark and Finland leading the way, decided to use the transition measures and postpone the full opening of the labor market for the CEE nationals. Concerns over the number of migrants, fear of a huge in-surge of Poles and others in to the national labor markets was behind the decision to use the transition measures. The large inflow of the CEE labor migrants was feared to cause social and wage dumping, as well as social tourism. While using the transition measures, Norway and Denmark, did not uphold the same kinds of strict rules that govern the working life and residence rights of 3<sup>rd</sup> country migrant for the CEE migrants, where as Finland and Iceland did <sup>4</sup>.

In terms of the numbers of permits granted for the EU 8 nationals after May 2004, one can see that the feared in-surge did not take place. By the year 2006, only less than 60 000 permits and less than 23 000 renewals had been granted in the entire Nordic region, with Norway taking the largest share, 36 000 (plus over 21 000 renewals) due to demand reasons. For Finland, Dolvic and Eldring, report 4 485 permits. As the fears of the Nordic political actors regarding the uncontrollable inflow of CEE migrants did not materialize, in 2006 when the Nordics had to decide whether to extend the transitional measures, with all of

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<sup>4</sup> *Denmark and Norway allowed for example the CEE migrants to search for work for a period of 6 months and to have the right to a residence permit as long as the working conditions were on par with the national workers.*

the countries deciding to abandon the transitions with differing schedules. In fact, in all the Nordic countries the effect of the EU enlargement on the Nordic economies was seen mostly positively and the fear rhetoric changed into concerns regarding the aging of the European populations and potential labor shortages. Concerns about the CEE countries began to take shape regarding the growth in the posting of workers and the service market sector under which new forms of wage competition was taking place (Dolvik & Eldring, 2006).

During the transition period, the use of the posted worker regime or the outsourcing of projects to subcontractors from the CEE countries that were free to provide services in the old EU countries even during the transition period, became a fairly established practice for some enterprises. While the exact numbers no-one knows, the government estimates that the numbers of posted workers have been many times the number of migrant workers<sup>5</sup>. These processes were seen as more profitable than hiring from the CEE countries under the established restrictive legal frameworks and having to remunerate according to the national standards. If the service supplier has not made a collective agreement in the host country, or the sector is not covered by a generalized collective agreement, *erga omnes*, on a temporary basis the employer can pay the posted workers salaries according to the home country standards and the worker can also pay taxes and other social security payments according to the home country, which in practice can lead to wage and social dumping (Dolvik & Eldring, 2006).

As in the Nordic countries, with the exception of Sweden, the employer organization rates are not very high, between 50-70%, Dolvic and colleagues argue, that "the task of securing immigrants proper pay rests with the trade unions" (2006, p. 220). Furthermore, they argue that even in Finland, where the system of *erga omnes* protects workers who do not belong to unions but are employed in sectors where collective agreements have been reached, serious problems with underpayment of immigrants have still occurred. In Finland, the responsibility of enforcing the collective agreements is placed in the labor inspectorates, but they are facing insufficient resources and are not able to always navigate through the often complicated webs and chains of subcontractors that can be even be 6 firms long (Dolvik & Eldring, 2006; Sippola & Lillie, 2010). As a response to the problems arising in the chains of subcontractors, the Finnish government introduced a new law, called the main contractors liability, that placed the responsibility of making sure that the working contracts are up to the collective agreements standards on the main contractor. The purpose of the law was to ensure that the main contractors would check that all subcontracting companies were following the agreements, and if failures were found, the main contractor would be liable and be fined. According to the trade unions in the construction sector, however,

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<sup>5</sup> In 2004 the estimate was 10 000, Sorainen, 2005 in Dolvik and Eldring, 2006.

the law has not been able to prevent wage dumping as the penalty fee set by the law is much too low to “scare” the large main contractors into following the law.

In Finland, a great number of Estonian firms, with a Finnish origin, have come to the market to provide services. The posted workers hired have often irregular contracts and questionable working conditions. As a result of the growth in the posting regime, as a result of the legal restrictions of the transition framework, the labor market partners decided unanimously to abandon the transitional arrangements, and in a tripartite decision process some “regulatory reforms were enacted, seeking to promote equal treatment of foreign workers, create a level playing field and equip the labor and service markets for the introduction of free movement” (Dolvik & Eldring, 2006, p. 219).

As one of the main conclusions of the Nordic comparison in 2006, Dolvic and Eldring argue that “contrary to predictions that enlargement would breed deregulation of the labor markets- which may still prove true in the longer-term, significant counteracting tendencies, including a stronger state presence in the labor market, reinvigoration of old corporatist traits, and initiatives to introduce new modes of minimum wage regulations, are notable” (p. 227). Furthermore, they argue that while the Nordic countries have followed diverging paths of regulation regarding different forms of immigration, the total volume of immigration has not been affected by the regulations, rather it has only served to produce “different forms, channels and conditions of migration” (p. 228). Since labor migration is here to stay, Dolvik and Eldring argue that the challenge for the political and labor market actors is to “develop regulations and enforcement approaches that promote proper, orderly forms of migration” (p. 228). In attempting to create inclusive labor markets, they argue that paradoxically, the “regulatory gaps between different forms of migration tend to propel growth in fluid employment relationships and precarious working and pay conditions...and that in order to avoid further social polarization and prevent xenophobia, the answer is hardly to restrict migration among the Member States” (p. 228). In terms of the Nordic trade union response, Dolvik and Eldring argue that it has been one of “re-nationalized corporatism” instead of a coordinated Nordic approach and that the the European enlargement has challenged even “the most robust trade union movements in Europe” (p. 228).

### ***2.1 Sweden: Traditions of multiculturalism intertwined with bureaucratic structures.***

During the large labor immigration period from Finland to Sweden, the Swedish trade unions were able to negotiate the automatic trade union membership for all the migrants recruited into Swedish factories (Korkiasaari & Tarkianen, 2000). As the immigration to Sweden until the 1970s was very much labor migration

due to demand factors, it was easy to the Swedish unions to organize the migrant workers right at the workplaces.

Mulinari and Neergaard (2005) have studied immigrant trade union activist in Sweden, specifically the FAI network which was established in 1997 for the large part by political refugees to Sweden from the late 1970s. "The FAI is a network mainly of radicalized trade union activists that work within the established trade unions, aiming on the one hand to organize immigrants and on the other hand to strengthen the representation and impact of immigrant members within the union. Furthermore, the FAI aims to influence the general discussions regarding ethnic segregation/integration and racism/anti-racism" (Mulinari & Neergaard, 2005, p. 6). In their case study of the FAI, which is theoretically linked to Black cultural studies, Marxism and feminist writings, Mulinari and Neergaard attempt to shed light on the barriers immigrants face in the unions, specifically the "racialized processes of subordination". They argue that while Sweden has been seen as a flagship nation of multiculturalism and has been noted for its generous refugee policy, as well as lack of ethnically segregated labor markets, this has "not prevented the emergence of a racialized labor market in which the unions strategy of subordinated inclusion has dominated" (p. 5).

The subordinated position of immigrants in the labor markets as well as in the unions is considered to be linked to issues related to *integration*, and not of *racism*. As Wrench (2004) has found in his comparative study of the British and Danish unions, the prevailing ideas of the beauty of multiculturalism combining with the need for immigrants to *adjust* and acculturate to the forms of the Danish labor markets vs. the British unions realization of the deep seated forms of institutional racism, the Swedish rhetoric seems to mimic that of its Scandinavian counterpart. Racism and sexism do not exist in Sweden, the country that invented gender equality, or so the public thinks. Just as Wrench found in the Danish case, Mulinari and Neergaard argue that in Sweden, "there seems to be a shift away from issues of discrimination and racism towards issues of improving the skills of the immigrants" - improving the human capital of immigrants (especially language skills) and not focusing on the institutional forms of racism, subordination and exclusion.

The results of the Mulinari and Neergaard (2005) case study highlight a paradox within the union rhetoric. Typically the established unionists state that it is difficult to recruit and organize immigrant members, but "on the other side when migrants organize themselves and try to actively influence and participate in the unions, several mechanism develop to stop and block their presence" (p. 7). Furthermore, several researchers as well as typical union literature states that a major reason for the lack of interests from migrants towards unions, as well as lack of willingness to become actively involved, is related to the difficult experiences migrants had with unions in their home countries, or that they simply do

not know about unions in general. Mulinari and Neergaard disagree, however. Their data shows that migrants know the rules of the game just as well, but that “the Swedish unions are highly centralized and bureaucratic organizations and as such have developed expert practices that exclude most people of being active in decision making” (Åmark, 1998 in Mulinari & Neergaard, 2005).

Furthermore, in their case study of the FAI, Mulinari and Neergaard focused on the experiences of the migrant activists with ethnic discrimination and exclusion. Central to the immigrants' experiences seemed to be the power of the unions to define what racism and exclusion are. What the interviewees stated was that “because racism is defined in narrow terms as politically articulated forms of right wing extremist organization, issues of everyday and institutional racism are outside the agenda” (p. 13). Discussing the so thought radical right wing anti-immigrant forces and adjudicating their positions can be found in the union agendas, but deeper investigation of the unions own souls is too far to the left field.

Similarly, the power of the unions and the general majority to define the vocabulary for and focus of “cultural differences” was found problematic by the FAI activists. “In the Swedish context to speak of cultural differences is to speak of the differences between what is assumed and represented as a rational, secularized, women friendly culture that those that are assumed as belonging to the nation embody and a traditional, religious and women oppressing culture (s) that those that are racialised “import” to Sweden” argue Mulinari and Neergaard (p. 16).

## ***2.2 Norway: An exception to the rule?***

While the the results of the comparative work by Penninx and Roosblad (2004) may hold for all the countries involved in the study, reports from Norwegian trade unions` efforts with immigrant workers suggest that in fact, trade unions with strong institutional position and high unionization rates may in fact, take the issues faced by migrants seriously (Eldring, Fitzgerald & Hansen, 2009).

In Norway, all the labor market actors have welcomed the demand driven entry of labor migration (Dolvik & Eldring, 2008) and in fact, Eldring and colleagues (2011) argue that in the context of increasing numbers of temporary and posted migrants from the Central and East European countries (CEE) the Norwegian trade unions have “taken an active stand on issues relating to transnational arrangements and governmental measures for regulation of low-wage competition and prevention of social dumping” (p. 1).

As a response to the increasing inflow of especially short term migrants and posted workers to Norway from the CEE countries and the subsequently feared low-wage competition, the Norwegian trade unions have reconsidered their traditional strategies in relation to some significant power resources questions.

The Norwegian trade unions began to support an Act on the general application of wage agreements, that had not for a long time been applied. The activation of the Act meant that migrants from the CEE countries had to be offered the same working conditions and wages as Norwegian workers. In practice, this meant that a statutory minimum wage was introduced in the construction industry (Alsos & Eldring, 2008), and that now those workers not members of unions are being covered by the collective agreement. From the unions part this decision was a difficult one as one of the main incentives for joining into a union has been to be covered by a collective agreement, and now this benefit was being offered to all working in the construction industry whether a union member or not. Checchi and Lucifora (2002) call this the “free rider problem” which can potentially undermine unions ability to recruit paying members. On the other hand, minimum wages do not necessarily protect labor markets from developing long term segmentation, as groups of workers, such as native Norwegian, may continue to be paid well above the minimum wage (Eldring, Fitzgerald & Hansen, 2009).

At another level of efforts, the Norwegian unions, Fellesforbundet in particular, has made efforts to prevent social dumping by recruiting immigrant workers. The work with the immigrants groups was initially introduced as help with problematic situations. The unions made the decision to assist persons who had been treated unfairly even if they were not union members in order to gain foot-hold in the immigrant communities. Also, the union and their local workers were asked not to do anything that would place the immigrants in a situation where their stay and work in Norway would be in jeopardy in order to build trust within the immigrant community. Eldring and colleagues (2009) also report that one of the key features in the success of Norwegian unions in recruiting immigrants, have been local enthusiasts who have taken their work very seriously. In some areas the recruitment programs have been especially successful such as in Oslo, where in two construction unions, Polish workers accounted for over 9% of the members in 2006 where as in 2008, already 40% of their members came from the CEE countries, mostly from Poland (Eldring, Fitzgerald & Hansen, 2009). While the unionization rates of CEE nationals are below those of Norwegians still, in the 2006, approximately 14% of Polish construction workers were unionized, which according to Eldring (2007) must be regarded as a high proportion. The Polish workers have slowly joined in on the union activities as regular members and there are even Polish persons in the union boards. In comparing the success of Danish, British and Norwegian unions recruitment of workers from the CEE countries, Eldring and colleagues suggest, that the Norwegian unions have been the most successful.

Interestingly studies on the Polish workers motivations to join unions, Eldring (2007) has found that Polish workers' political ideologies are more in favor of joining unions than opposing union membership. Also, studies regarding British

labor migrants and their reasons for joining unions suggest that these workers hold collectivist values and are concerned with social justice (Andersen & Hansen, 2008). Another significant difference in the ways in which the British, Danish and Norwegian unions have responded to the increase in the potential wage competition due to the increase of workers from the CEE countries Eldring and colleagues report is how the Danish unions have seemed to act as fairly aggressive monitors and administrators of the construction industry (i.e. more conflict and strike prone) whereas the Norwegian and UK unions have been more solidaristic in their approach, attempting to assist individuals and creating more an organizing and activist impressions, leading to higher levels of confidence among the migrant workers. Furthermore, Eldring and colleagues argue that when looking at the difference between the successes of the UK and Norwegian unions, the power and organizational strength that the Norwegian unions have more so than the UK counterparts, may have assisted them in their recruitment of migrant members.

### ***2.3 Great Britain: A long path to immigrant activism.***

The British unions and in particular the TUC's response to immigration has been well researched. The British case has shown how a national union movement can within some decades go from blatantly racist positions to one of an activist in the immigrant interest representation (Ristikari, 2006). In the European comparative literature the British unions have in the recent years been highlighted as one of the most immigrant activist type of union movement (Penninx & Roosblad, 2000; Wrench, 2000; Ristikari, 2006), and as such it is interesting to analyze the process through which the British unions have come to this point.

In the UK, during the World War Two period, the trade unions had taken a racist approach to immigration, which in turn complicated their position towards those foreign workers who had nonetheless arrived (Penninx & Roosblad, 2000). On one hand, trade unions were aware that it was of the utmost importance that migrant workers join unions, in order to protect native workers from all the threats of foreign labor (e.g. wage suppression), while at the same time, having originally taken a negative position towards the arrival of especially dark-skinned migrants, convincing the rank and file now that it was important to incorporate the workers in the union might prove difficult (Castles, 1995). Indeed, several researches have documented the 'early open racism of white trade unionists, the poor example set by trade union and Labor leaders, the early resistance by black workers to their treatment and their organization among themselves to fight racism of both employers and unions' (Wrench, 1997, p. 1).

The post World War Two British trade union movement treatment of immigrants can also easily be described as 'color blind'. Even as late as the 1970s, Vic

Feather, the then General Secretary of the TUC, made a statement that has since become one of the most commonly cited examples of this: “The trade union movement is concerned with a man or woman as a worker. The color of the man’s skin has no relevance whatever to his work” (quoted in *Sunday Times*, 3 December 1972, as cited in Wrench, 1997).

More significantly, Lee (1984) and others have shown several cases, such as the Imperial Typewriters in Leicester in 1974 and Coneygre Foundry in 1967–8, where a union withheld support from black workers who were protesting about the discrimination against them in relation to the white workers. Perhaps one of the most famous of these examples comes from Mansfield Hosiery in 1972, where Asian workers were being denied access to the ‘best paid jobs on knitting machines and the union had failed to support the Asians in their attempts over many years to gain promotion. When a strike was called in 1972 over this issue and other discriminatory practices in the payment system, the union helped the management hire 36 outside trainees, all of whom were white, for the knitting jobs’ (Wrench, 1986, p. 7). Wrench (1986) argues that the eventual success of the strike was not due to the efforts of the union, but rather to the local community organizations, political groups and Asian workers from other factories.

In the 1970s, a significant shift took place in the stance the TUC took towards immigrants. The move away from what some argue was a racist, laissez faire position to a more positive activist role was caused by a number of factors. One of the most influential reasons was that of the well-published examples of union racism, combined with an increasing frustration felt by black trade unionists. Furthermore, in 1974 the House of Commons Select Committee stated: ‘...the record of the TUC is similar to that of the CBI (Confederation of British Industry) in that both organizations have declared their opposition to racial discrimination, but have taken wholly inadequate steps to ensure that their members work effectively to eradicate it’ (McIlroy, 1982, p. 5, as cited in Wrench, 1986). Also, a significant lobby of grassroots activists in the trade unions, local councils and the Labor party had grown who were regularly voicing their opposition to racism in all its forms. Lastly, the early 1970s had witnessed a worrying growth in the National Front, and the ‘TUC having dropped its opposition to race relations legislation, now started an active campaign against racisms in the movement’ (Wrench, 1986, p. 9).

Today, within the European trade union context, the TUC might even be considered the trail-blazer in the fight against the disadvantages of immigrant and ethnic minority workers in the labor market by some stakeholders. Comparing the work of all its affiliated membership, the European Trade Union Confederation showed that in 2003, the British TUC was one of the few to have engaged in efforts to incorporate immigrant issues into collective bargaining and had produced guidelines for the negotiators on issues such as religious practices at the workplace, language training for immigrants, outlawing harassment, recognition

of foreign qualifications and so on<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, in its report to the ETUC (2003), the TUC shows that not only have the unions in the UK made special efforts to bargain on behalf of their immigrant members, but they have also been successful in reaching agreements on seven of their ten claims<sup>7</sup>. Lastly, the TUC affiliate unions have managed to negotiate with some large employers, such as Ford, GEC Marine, Grattans, Wessex Trains and DT to gain agreements such as including prohibition of harassment in the disciplinary code (BT), establishing the post of a diversity manager, targets and timing for actions against racism and discrimination (Ford) and discretionary rights for employers to bank up to ten days a year over two years to take 20 days off to visit a relative abroad. Altogether, compared to all the other ETUC affiliates, the British TUC is one of the few confederations who have taken the most activist positions towards fighting racism and creating special policies for their immigrant membership (ETUC, 2003)

## **2.4 Finnish trade unions' globalization strategies**

In Finland, the questions related to trade union response to immigration have received little academic attention. The most comprehensive undertaking related to this topic is a book edited by Helander, "Going Global, ay-liikkeen menestysresepti globaalissa ajassa?" (Going global, the recipe for success for the trade union movement in the global age) (2008a). In this book the authors approach different questions related to the Finnish trade unions experiences with globalization and internationalization. Writing about the SAK- the central organization for Finnish trade unions, Peter J. Bold illuminates the globalization strategy of the confederation (Bold, 2008).

The term globalization appeared in the confederations vocabulary for the first time in the 2000s, in the Workers' Education Associations leaflets. Though the ideas of internationalism and international collaboration had a long tradition in the SAK, the term globalization came soon to be considered a swear word (Boldt, 2008). The term globalization was connected with all the evils of capitalism, and the ideology of the SAK reflected full hearted opposition to it. On the other hand, earlier in the 1990s, the period of fast internationalization in the Finnish politics and economics, the SAK was not nearly as defensive. The SAK gave its support

<sup>6</sup> *The TUC was the only member affiliate who incorporated in their guidelines for collective bargaining all the 10 issues listed by the ETUC. Other issues included "general statements", access to training, promotion and other workplace benefits, special training for immigrants, organizing leave, religious practices and food in canteen, and religious practices and uniform or dress.*

<sup>7</sup> *The only issues that the TUC has not been successful in reaching agreements on are special training for immigrants and religious practices and food in canteens and uniform or dress.*

for joining of the ETA and EU, stating that it was better for the trade unionist to join the EU than not to. The SAK support for the EU membership was even more favorable than its Nordic counterparts, the Swedish LO and Norwegian LO.

In Norway, the LO encouraged its membership to vote against joining the EU, and in Sweden the LO did not announce its position, but supported both campaigns, for and against EU-membership, that had developed inside the confederation. Furthermore, in a pragmatic manner, after careful analysis of the effects of the single European monetary system, and upon getting some reassurances for the continuation of the existing collective bargaining and buildup of “buffer funds”, in 1997 the SAK gave its support for Finland to join the EMU. In the realm of international trade the SAK has supported its gradual liberalization and has opposed protectionism. The reasons for these positive perspectives, according to Boldt have been the Finnish experiences of gaining access to the world markets. Without foreign trade Finland would not have been able to develop its welfare state to the same extent that it has been (Boldt, 2008).

In their survey on multiculturalism “immigrants at the workplace in the health care sector in Finland” Markkanen and Tammisto (2005) include the historical development of the internationalization of TEHY, the Union of Health and Social Care Professionals. Markkanen and Tammisto argue that the first multicultural experiences from TEHY focused on positive attitudes towards development aid in the 1980s. The 1980s were then followed by the deep recession of the 1990s and the emigration of health care professionals to foreign labor markets. The late 1990s brought the joining of the EU, which came to combine with the demographic challenge and growing demand for labor.

Wrede in her analysis of the ways that globalization challenges health care professionals to protectionism, starts her analysis from the premise that an elitist logic of barring of newcomers exists in the Finnish labor markets in differing degrees. Joining to support the arguments by Kevätsalo (2004), Wrede maintains that today all trade union confederations defend their membership, the core labor force, against the competition coming from outside. This competition is not only members from other unions with the same profession, but also those in temporary or short-term contracts. Also, workers with foreign backgrounds may be considered outside competition. Wrede (2008) also argues that the role of the doctors` and nurses` unions has been more to hold the break on the opening of the health care sectors to foreign workers and that the slow warming up has been framed in the rhetoric of migration of the highly skilled health care specialists in the wake of the approaching deficiency in labor supply.

In her article, Kyntäjä, discusses the period of pre EU eastern enlargement and how the SAK was responding to the questions of proposed increase in labor mobility. According to Kyntäjä, as the SAK was preparing for the EU enlargement, it asked the TNS gallup to study the interests Estonian workers had to cross the

peninsula and search for work in Finland. In the year 2000, 36% of the Estonian respondents said that they were either likely or very likely to come and work in Finland every so often. Of the respondents 40% said that they would also be willing to work in the gray sector (Viron työmarkkinailmasto 1/2000, SAK tutkimustieto). In the SAK the results were interpreted as 400 000 Estonians coming to work in Finland and almost half of them willing to do so without the proper tax procedures. This surge of Estonians was seen as inevitably leading to social dumping, and the growth in crime and the gray economy (Kyntäjä, 2008). Even though these scenario never materialized, the fear of it became real in the minds of the trade unionists.

In preparing for the eastern enlargement the SAK established in 2002 an info point in Tallinn. The establishment of the info point was supported by the EU Interreg-III A program that focused on the preventing the development of labor market segmentation. By offering advice and information about the work life and working conditions in Finland, the growth in the gray economy could be limited and the integration of those looking for legal ways of working in Finland could be eased. The office was to offer information and services to all persons interested in Finnish labor markets and trade unions regardless of the nationality or (lack of) membership in trade unions.

The European commission awarded the info point the European Workers Mobility Award due to its efforts to ease the mobility of workers within the EU and to offer correct and objective information that can help to avoid the growth in the gray economy and social dumping (Kyntäjä, 2008).

Salmenhaara (2008) analyzed in his article, the positions the three central organizations took in the development of the 2006 immigration policy program in Finland. Salmenhaara analyzed specifically the different and shared emphasis that the trade union central organizations proposed to the legislation. All the labor market partners were interested in having the immigration policy program have a strong employment focus, but disagreement was evident in the ways in which each of the organizations saw immigration in general. The labor market positions of each of the organizations were the main position setter in the more detailed discussions about immigration, according to Salmenhaara (2008). Not only could the divisions be seen between the employer and employees sides, but also sectoral differences were evident. Salmenhaara writes that the previously mentioned threat rhetoric<sup>8</sup> was particularly emphasized by the SAK, where as the STTK believed that Finland had no reason to be worried about the uncontrollable

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<sup>8</sup> *That a great inflow of migrants, especially from the eastern European countries was approaching, and that these migrants were willing to compromise the shared employment norms and regulations (Kyntäjä, 2008).*

inflow of migrants. Akava on the other hand focused on the potential of the growth in the knowledge capital that would come to benefit Finland.

The emphasis on the benefits gained from the immigration of highly skilled migrants, as suggested by Akava and to a certain degree by STTK, ended up in the final program as well. Akava had also suggested a strong emphasis on the integration policies, which however did not gain as much strength as the control emphasis proposed by especially SAK. The need to make sure that working conditions of immigrants of all nationalities should be the same as for Finns and that this should be controlled for was especially important for STTK and SAK, and as a result of a proposal from SAK, the police established a new unit focusing on monitoring working contracts of immigrants. According to Salmenhaara, the position taken by SAK was dual in its nature. On one hand, international collaboration was on the table but on the other hand, more control was being demanded.

In his article, Alho studied the response of the service union united (PAM) to immigration by interviewing some of the core persons working with immigration related issues in the union. According to Alho, the number of immigrant members has grown fast in the PAM, which is not surprising as we know that immigrants are mostly employed in the service sectors in Finland. PAM's work with immigrants has mostly been organized through collaboration between networks dealing with ethnic relations and public authorities. PAM was a partner in the ETMO and PETMO projects that are described in later sections. PAM also sends its representatives to the workplaces, such as ethnic restaurants in order to inform workers of trade union membership, and organizes so called trade union evenings where issues related to working conditions are explained in English and Russian (Alho, 2008).

According to Alho, PAM has decided not to work directly with immigrant organizations partly because of information sharing has been seen as working better through the established networks, and typical in the thinking of PAM is to try to see try to bring all immigrant related questions into the greater union framework and not to see immigrant questions as something separate. PAM for example does not want to establish immigrant only units within its organization as it fears that immigrants would not integrate into the greater trade union movement. PAM sees immigrants first and foremost as individuals who may have some special needs, and not as a group of people who are disadvantaged by their membership to the ethnic group. As such, PAM's philosophy is very much connected to the Nordic ideas of universality and even the statement regarding multiculturalism is build into its general strategies. While the work related to immigrants in PAM has had an ad hoc nature, much of the efforts have been produced by local enthusiasts who have had the language skills and international experiences.

According to Alho, PAM has recognized the specific kinds of problems immigrants face in relation to racism and ethnic discrimination, but as an organization has itself for example not yet hired any immigrants workers. Recruiting according

to those interviewed by Alho, happens often “inside the house” in PAM. PAM has approximately 5 000 member activists who serve as shop-stewards. Of those four to ten have an immigrant background. Also, within the 120 seat PAM executive committee, none are immigrants.

In her article, Forsander studied the role of the Finnish trade unions, and particularly the construction workers union as “gate-keepers” in the labor market. Forsander analyses the role of trade unions as the gate-keepers in the same sense as Wrench (1991) where by the gate-keepers are seen as agents who hold power and resources that are used to control access to labor markets, the ability to advance in them and as such also the questions of working life equality (Forsander, 2008, p. 332). As gate-keepers, Wrench has argued, trade unions are particularly powerful, more so than many other actors like the public authorities. The role of trade unions as gate-keepers is diverse, not only do they attempt to prevent discrimination and support equality among workers in the workplaces, but they try to do this in their own interest representation, according to Forsander. If they fail to do this, the consequences affect all workers, native Finns and those with a foreign background as well.

Forsander interviewed 11 gate-keepers, from both employer and employee sides, asking question about immigrant labor in relation to the changes in the construction sector<sup>9</sup>. Questions about the ability of firms to hire workers with the established levels of protection and wages, was also approached. From the trade unions perspective construction companies have no difficulties in finding enough labor when the negotiated levels are being offered to the workers. The employee side on the other hand holds, that firms are not able to find enough labor with the conditions that they are able to offer, and therefore are in dire need of posted and other types of temporary labor (Forsander, 2008). The question then is more about who, which kind and with what type of conditions is labor available, not so much about labor supply in general numbers (p. 344).

Forsander writes also about the diverging interests of the construction workers union and the SAK in the question about the transition period during the EU eastern enlargement. The construction workers union was originally against the transition period, but eventually came to support the position of the SAK which was in favor of the transition measures. For the construction worker union, the question about labor supply is not a question about immigrants workers as such, but about the working conditions that the workers are recruited under and the rules being applied in the labor markets in general. From the trade union perspective, especially the questions about the posted labor is about the mechanism

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<sup>9</sup> *Changes such as larger changes in the production processes, in particular in relation to increase in subcontracting and posting of workers, and the question about working contracts of immigrant workers.*

that on paper consists of legal processes, but that easily crosses the border to the illegal side, and that places workers in unfair situations based on their status and the country of origin. Companies are able to gain a competitive edge, using the established legal framework, but that avoids the national labor market processes and the negotiated standards<sup>10</sup>. Also, the question about the types of contracts that foreign workers are hired under, in practice becomes a question about monitoring and controlling the use of even the minimum established standards. The need to control the working conditions of the migrant workers, for the construction workers union is framed in the idea of exploitation of the migrant workers by the employer, and the need for the trade unions to fight for equality in the working conditions.

Terming the question about immigrant interest representation as a question about exploitation is for the construction workers union not the goal of the efforts, but rather a strategic tool, in the greater fight for the maintenance of the established power relations, in the tripartite decision making tradition. Aggressively controlling the working contracts of the immigrant workers is according to Forsander not the goal of the unions, but a tool in maintenance of the collective agreements traditions build and established by high unionization rates and militant interest representation (2008).

As part of his PhD thesis and published in another book, Alho (2011) has also studied the construction workers union's immigration strategies. Alho says that as a union it has taken a slightly differing approach to the immigrant interest representation as for example PAM. The construction workers union places efforts in the control of immigrant workers contracts, where as PAM places its efforts in the education and information services to immigrant workers. Also, where as PAM has decided to try to incorporate the migrant members in the general work of the unions, the construction workers union has decided to establish a migrants only division. Immigrant members can choose to join the migrant division<sup>11</sup>, or furthermore can join one of the local chapters. The strategic decision to established a migrant only chapter, is part of the effort to try to give the migrant questions more voice and avoid them being crowded out by other issues.

Furthermore the Working Lives Research Institute of the London Metropolitan University (2010) ran a project attempting to map trade union responses to discrimination in 34 European countries. Svanström reported the results of the Finnish unions and central organizations that took part in the project (2011). All three central organizations, as well as the construction worker union, The Trade Union for the Public and Welfare Sectors (Jhl), Trade Union Pro, Tehy the

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<sup>10</sup> *In the case of posted workers, the host country wages need to be paid, but the side costs (pension and social security) and taxes are paid to the sending country (Helsten, 2006).*

<sup>11</sup> *Called the chapter 7.*

trade union for health and social care workers, and the Trade Union of Education participated in the study. The study shows that the unions are best aware of discrimination related to gender issues and all of the participants were aware of ethnic discrimination and many of them had produced guidebooks and other information booklets regarding employment contracts and wages in foreign languages. Other forms of discrimination were beginning to be addressed in the 2000s and the unions felt that they would be getting more attention in the future.

According to the report the Finnish central organizations were aware of issues of internationality and multiple discrimination where, for example, a female with a dark skin-tone and non mainstream religious affiliation faces discrimination. Also questions related to multiculturalism such as a right to a day off on a religious holiday. Age discrimination as well as to a lesser degree discrimination based on sexual orientation had also been discussed in the participating unions and central organizations (Svanström, 2011).

One of the main results of the study that comes across several of the articles is the role of the so called “national tools” and the emphasis on the national unity as a response to globalization (Helander, 2008a, p. 12). Supporting national competitiveness has been the shared goal and strategy of all the labor market partners, and nationalism according to Helander is not only a historical relic. The collective agreements, developed in the tripartite manner, were for a long time the globalization strategies supported by the trade union movement. Tupo, the incomes collective agreement began in the so called Liinamaa 1 agreements in 1968, and the first agreements were about price and rental regulations (Valkonen & Suomen Ammattiliittojen Keskusjärjestö, 1989).

While the unions in Finland are a respected partner in the strategic tables where labor market issues are decided upon, an increasing number of labor market changes are taking place in spaces that are not controllable by the national labor market partners. As a response to globalization the call has been for the trade union movement to come back to its original nature as a movement, to create large international connections bi- and multilaterally. Such transformation back to basics would require, however, global consciousness and an awareness as part of the trade union identity and interest of geographically distant places (Helander, 2008a).

Also, as a result of globalization, the number of workers on the move, especially in unstandardized forms, such as posting, has been increasing. As the trade unions traditional strategy has been to reduce labor supply, the arrival of migrants potentially increases competition between workers. Furthermore, the less easily observable influence of globalization, the increasing requirements of flexibility, and the ideology of individualization that creates competition between workers challenges trade unions nature as a movement, the solidarity between workers and their collective identity (Helander, 2008a, p. 15; Kettunen, 2006). Other

researchers have argued (Zoll, 1996) that individualism has only been blamed by trade unions to be the cause for the reduction in membership rates, when in reality they themselves are unable to renew and change. A Finnish writer, Kevät-salo, has also argued that the Nordic trade union leadership that is approaching retirement age and are accustomed to certain ways of doing things are unable to break away from old traditions (2005).

Historically the Finnish trade union movement's connections internationally have been important to it. Finnish unions connections to its Nordic partners has always been important and in the early 1900s they even received financial assistance from other Nordic countries (Valkonen & Suomen Ammattiliittojen Keskusjärjestö 1989). Even in the recent years, the Nordic collaboration is considered significant and the most natural part of the international work. Increasingly Finnish unions are considering collaboration with EU member state's unions important and on the global scale, the connections have not been done away with either. The role of international collaboration has changed in the last 20 years, with focus moving away from questions related to solidarity, towards more of interest politics (Lehtonen, 2008). While the questions of global awareness and fairness are at least on the general agenda of the Finnish unions, researchers have argued that the national interest politics and particularly the support for national competitiveness are overpowering (Svanström, 2008). Individual unions, in particular report a lack of resources for global solidarity work, and expect the central organizations to take positions on the general questions and to be active in the ILO and other global organizations (Svanström, 2008).

## ***2.5 Finnish trade unions and immigration***

In the pioneering Finnish research on trade union reactions to immigration, the doctoral thesis of Paananen (1999) deals with the classification of immigrant workers in the Finnish labor markets and discusses the way in which the construction workers union approached immigration and immigrant interest representation in the end of the 1980s and early to mid 1990s. Paananen argues that in order for the union to consider immigrant worker issues (e.g. under-payment) the union had to turn the questions of ethnicity into questions of class-conflict where the immigrant workers were viewed as objects of exploitation by the employers. The image of immigrants as the weak and vulnerable targets of exploitation not only brought the union back to its basics of class consciousness, but it also fit well in the image of immigrants created by the media of the time. By arguing that the immigrant workers needed to be paid according to the Finnish standards, the union was able to turn the focus away from immigration and ensure that the union would not be seen as too much of an immigrant interest organization. The immigration

related rhetoric of the construction workers union was successful according to Paananen in that the union was able to look solidaristic among both the Finns and immigrants, and as a result, the union's internal cohesion only grew stronger.

Kuhanen (2008) has also explored the questions of Finnish trade union immigration strategies in his masters thesis, by interviewing representatives from three different unions from the SAK. According to Kuhanen, the unions are aware of the problems that immigrant workers face with getting proper pay and other working conditions, especially among agency workers. The way in which the unions have begun to address the immigrant workers issues have varied. In the service sector unions the approach has been to work together with the immigrants where as the more industrial sector unions have been preoccupied with questions of posted workers. Nevertheless, Kuhanen argues that the unions have felt at loss with ideas about how to best tackle the immigrant workers issues, but that the construction worker union has gone the furthest in trying to adopt methods developed and used mostly by southern European unions (activist style movements). Furthermore, Kuhanen argues that the unions opinions are divided about the need to develop separate services for immigrants, and that only the construction worker union has thus far decided to establish an immigrant only unit within the union.

As a follow up study from the Going Global project, Helander (2011) has researched the importance trade unionists give to influencing national immigration policies. Helander sent an Internet questionnaire to 334 representatives of fifteen unions in the spring of 2010 to ask about questions related to immigration. Helander asked the participants specifically about how important they felt that it was for unions to try to influence immigration policy. Another question presented in the questionnaire was about how the increase in employment based immigration has influenced trade unions ability to be affective.

According to Helander, a quarter of the respondents reported that they felt that trying to influence immigration policy was very important and another quarter did not deem it very important. For the largest share of the respondents, 40%, attempting to influence immigration policy was fairly important. Other policy categories, such as an employment policy, was considered much more important for the participants, while also sectoral differences were observable. For unions, such as the construction worker union, influencing immigration policy was more important. Also, differences in the perceived importance could be found when looking at the responses by central organization. Representatives from the SAK unions found influencing immigration policy more important than those from STTK. Least important immigration policy influencing was among unions of the Akava. Interestingly Helander also reports that participants who felt that Finnish labor market should not be more integrated to the global economy found the need to influence immigration policy most important, and vice versa.

When asked about how the respondents saw the increase in employment based immigration affecting their influence, approximately 10% of the respondents could not make the evaluation. Almost half of the respondents also stated that they did not see any affect, and about 34% felt that their influence had been reduced. Only about 7% of the respondents believed that the increase in employment based immigration had improved their influencing possibilities. The responses by the union representatives from the SAK had the most polarized answers and reported more so than unions from the other central organizations that increase in employment based immigration has influenced their ability to lobby.

Also, Kyntäjä, the immigration specialist at the trade union confederation for blue collar workers (SAK) reported recently about an interview study that she conducted with Estonian and Russian speaking immigrants regarding their experiences in the labor market and as members of trade unions (2011b). All of the participants were members of a trade union and had already been living and working in Finland for at least three years. The purpose of the study was to find out how the migrant workers perceived their own role in the labor markets, trade unions and in the Finnish society in general, as well as how they had come to join a union.

The research participants, a total of 60, were asked about their relationship to the term immigrant (*maahanmuuttaja*), and the reactions were quite varied. Several of the participants felt that the term had a very negative connotation and that they did not want to be identified as one. Some of the interviewees felt that they had already been in Finland for so long that it was not necessary to be viewed as a migrant any longer. For others, the term did not have any negative influence on their self-esteem and felt perfectly comfortable having that term attached to them.

Interestingly the participants who were active members of their societies and were successfully attached to the labor markets felt that the “Finns” did not treat them as immigrants or in any way special. These participants reported that Finns had in fact stated that “you are not a typical immigrant, you are one of us”. These results show that the term “typical immigrant” has strong negative connotations attached to it. If the person born outside of Finland is successful in the labor markets and is active in the community this person is no longer “a typical immigrant”.

The interview participants were also asked about what were their motivations for joining a union and experiences of their membership. While most of the participants reported that they had joined the union as a result of hearing about them from a friend or a colleagues, some of the construction workers had been actively recruited by the construction workers union. The reasons for joining a union were pragmatic and were related to fears about loosing ones job or experiencing difficulties in the work life. Typically the interviewees did not have much previous experiences about unions in their home countries. Lack of Finnish

language skills had caused problems for the participants in receiving information about unions and was also one of the main reasons why many of the participants had not become active in their unions. A large share of the participants had either no or very little information about the work that the unions were doing in practice and saw that the only function of unions was to inform workers of their rights, help laid off persons and those who are facing difficulties with their employer.

The interview participants were asked whether they felt that unions should organize separate immigrant groups with the unions. Large part of the participants were not in favor of separating immigrants into their own sections, as they felt that it would only isolate them more from the Finnish members and would also not ease their Finnish language training. On the other hand the participants also felt that the initial information sharing and integration could be done in the immigrants languages and that some “own activities” could be organized for the immigrant members.

According to Kyntäjä, the participants suggested that unions should develop more personalized approaches in their recruitment efforts and not only write booklets about how to join. Other criticism that the participants stated was that the unions were being too protectionist in attempting to secure benefits only to themselves. Furthermore, the representatives of the trade union movement as such were seen as staying too much in their offices and being unaware that the society is changing. Trade unions ideal of justice and fairness was also questioned as it was seen as leaving the unemployed, those with short term contracts and women on their own (p. 73).

## **2.6 Posted workers dilemma**

The question regarding the ways in which unions have responded to immigration become perhaps best highlighted when we look at the situation of some most challenging groups of foreign workers in the national labor markets, the posted workers. Large, often multinational companies, are bringing large groups of temporary labor migrants into large industrial building sites on what is called posted worker status, where by the normal labor migratory permit restrictions do not apply to them.

According to the European Posted Workers directive, the workers are to be paid according to the host country salary agreements, but numerous reports have highlighted that this is not always the case (Kontula, 2010). Due to the short term nature of the posted workers assignments in the host countries, often as short as 6 months, trade unions are faced with many practical difficulties in organizing this group of workers. Also, according to the trade unions, many of the posted workers are not interested in joining the unions or are not aware of their role in

the society (Kyntäjä, 2011). Trade unions are also used to working in a national setting, whereas the supranational companies are used to developing subcontracting chains that create exceptional situations and spaces, where the traditional forms of protection for the labor are not effective or present. The legal rights of workers become determined not by national laws, but new rules, based on ethnic hierarchies (Ong, 2006).

In the Finnish construction sector, approximately 177 000 person are employed, of whom approximately 20 000 are from countries outside of Finland. The numbers have been growing fast, and are expected to increase (Lillie & Sippola, 2010). In a case study of the building site of the Olkiluoto nuclear power plant in southern Finland, Lillie and Sippola highlight many of the inherent difficulties faced by the Finnish trade unions, as well as the shortcomings of the union responses. In the Olkiluoto building site, over 3400 men, two thirds of whom are either posted workers or other kinds of migrant labor work to build the most powerful hydropresurereactor. Of the foreign workers, about one third come from Poland and another third are mainly German and French. About 1500 subcontracting companies from 28 different countries are operating on this site (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 30.3.2008 in Lillie and Sippola, 2010). Of all the workers on the Olkiluoto site, about 30% and of the Polish workers approximately 10% belong to a union. This type of a building site is not uncommon in Europe, but is one of the first of its kind of Finland and as such represents new challenges to the Finnish industrial relations actors, namely the trade unions.

While officially in Finland the sectoral collective agreements cover all workers employed in it and set minimum standards for wages and working conditions, in reality, the breaches conducted in the contracts by subcontractors are often not sanctioned. If the subcontracting company is not party to the collective agreement via the employer organizations and the foreign worker does not belong to the union, the violation will not be handled in the labor courts, but rather belongs to the jurisdiction of the private courts (Lillie & Sippola, 2010). Also, the legal responsibility to monitor violations is placed in the hands of the labor inspectorate, but the trade unions also take part in it. The Finnish labor inspectorate has repeatedly stated that it does not have enough resources to monitor the increasingly complex chains of subcontracting (Dolvik & Eldring, 2010.). In reality the monitoring of the legal obligations is done by the construction workers union as well as some of the largest organized employers and in fact, according to the Finnish law, the main contractor has to make sure that all the subcontracting companies follow their legal obligations.

The two largest Finnish construction companies have their own control systems, in which they hold information about the subcontractors, agreements with the suppliers, the payment of tax and pension contributions, and many other documents. Trade unions then in turn have traditionally had a relatively good pos-

sibility to influence the main contractors via embargoes, where union members are encouraged to refuse work from the subcontracting companies suspected to violate the agreements. The embargos have worked because the main contractor has not wanted to hire the subcontractors under an embargo, in an effort to protect their own reputation (Lillie & Sippola, 2010). Question then has been raised regarding the trade unions willingness to use embargos or other measures to demand the host country rights for the migrant and posted workers when faced with numerous reports about violations by the employers.

Lillie and Sippola (2010) report several difficulties faced by the Finnish trade unions on the Olkiluoto site. Not only does the short-term, temporary nature, of the working contracts of the workers cause difficulties for the unions in building relationships with the workers, as well as language barriers, but also the union representatives were not used to the hierarchical and rigid organizational structure build in Olkiluoto. Also, the workers have had to sign a code of silence, whereby they are not allowed to discuss project related issues with others. The main contractor also from the beginning avoided building a relationship with the trade unions and attempted to keep the unions out of the site. Despite numerous efforts by the builders to keep the unions out of the site, the construction workers union was able to establish a network of shop-stewards on the site by the year 2007<sup>12</sup> and the metal workers union had a contact person as well as a work safety representative.

The union representatives were able to find out that numerous breaches in the application of minimum standards and other aspects of the collective agreements had been done by the subcontracting companies. Lillie and Sippola write that while being fully aware of the breaches, the unions decided to consider the Olkiluoto building site an exceptional case where the main contractor was allowed to operate against the rules of the coordinated Finnish labor market. The union decided to place the responsibility of monitoring in the hands of the labor inspectorate, conduct which was not customary to it. Representatives of the construction union stated in an interview that the effort to represent the migrant workers, especially the posted ones, was not paying out as the workers themselves were not eager to report the violations. Lillie and Sippola question, however, the union interpretation that the Polish workers were not interested in protecting their rights, as similar interpretations have been made in Sweden and shown by researchers as not always being accurate (Mulinari & Neergaard, 2007).

Furthermore, the European Migrant Workers Union, which has built name as an organization representing the interests of posted workers, especially among the Polish posted workers offered to give language and other assistance to the Finnish unions when it found out about the Polish workers difficulties with the

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<sup>12</sup> *Building had begun in 2005.*

employer. The Finnish construction workers union rejected the help from the EMWU by claiming that the entry of this new player would have only confused the situation in the site and because the style of the EMWU was more conflictual than the Finnish style normally is. Many of the Polish workers who had joined the construction workers union decided to withdraw their membership as a response to the way the Finnish union neglected to represent them. Lillie and Sippola argue, that their case study of the Olkiluoto construction site shows that the Finnish trade union movement is crippled by deeply rooted ethnocentrism and cultural chauvinism, where the worker interest representation is very much nationally bound and reflects only national labor market issues, even though in reality the emergence of the supranational actors and the mobility of labor is only on the increase.

### **3. Forms and dimensions of ethnic discrimination**

#### ***3.1 Traditions of multiculturalism discourses in Finland***

Discussions regarding multiculturalism in Finland, specifically related to the increase in immigration during the last 20 years, began with an emphasis on what was thought to be an ethnically and culturally homogeneous country (Nordberg, 2010). This myth of largely homogeneous land had been build over centuries, beginning already in the 1800s, the time of the nation building process (Puuronen, 2011). Researchers have argued that of the nation building proces in Finland was very much affected by the big thought of the time, Nationalism, which as an ideology rests of the ideas of nation states founded on people with similar collective personalities. These national collective personalities which are naturally founded upon a shared language give then rise to functioning political systems (Saukkonen, 2007).

According to historians, the period of Finnish nationalism took place in the middle of the 1800s. This period, known as Fennomania, focused on the Finnish language, our shared histories and culture (Puuronen, 2011). The focus was very much on the role of different institutions and the state in and of itself. In order to build a nation state, a uni-culture was needed, which led to the total assimilation of minorities such as the Same and Jews (Pulma, 2005). The need for the assimilative processes was articulated from several perspectives. For example, it was thought to be the responsibility of those in power to sophisticate all members of the nation state. As part of the process of building the school system and the written language, the assimilative process was institutionalized. A strong argument

during the Fennomania period was the need to build national unity, regardless of minority rights (Puuronen, 2011).

More recent discussions regarding multiculturalism and diversity have had strong emotional reactions from both, those consider themselves to be in favor of it, and by those who oppose it. Within the academic discourse, a long tradition of research has already been established, where by different forms of multiculturalism have been identified. Especially in the public conversation, it has been suggested by academics that, those who argue against the idea of a multicultural societies, are often not aware of the academic conversations surrounding multiculturalism that has been taking place over the last twenty or thirty years. In fact, the common argument against multiculturalism suggesting that migrants bring a foreign culture (non egalitarian, not women friendly) with them that will negatively affect the what is thought to be a homogeneous Finnish culture (women friendly, egalitarian), is based on the ideas of what researchers call the first form of conservative multiculturalism. This form of multiculturalism starts from the premise that all aspects of all cultures has to be respected and that cultures should be allowed to exist as they are (Kivistö, 2002). The second type of conservative multiculturalism makes a separation between the public (schools, work places etc) and the private (home) and suggests that in the public sphere all must respect commonly agreed upon rules, where as in the private sphere, everyone is allowed to practice their culture and religion as they wish.

The so called liberal model of multiculturalism takes a step away from the individual “freedoms” promoted by the conservative model and suggests that while all cultures are autonomous, all persons have to respect universal human rights, those that have been agreed upon in the United Nations declaration for Human rights. As such, all forms of violence for example (e.g. domestic, honor-related etc) are not allowed, while cultural practices are allowed to remain and not be forced to assimilate (Puuronen, 2011).

Researchers who have taken a critical stance on multiculturalism often point that as an approach it focuses on the differences between cultures and makes the differentiation more acceptable (us vs. them). As a normative goal it can lead to particularism, where the focus is on the differences rather than similarities (Barry, 2001) Focusing on differences can ease stereotyping and strengthen conflicts between groups. Also, critics of multiculturalism have pointed out that when small minority groups get politicized, the end result may be that they begin to fight against each other for scarce resources for justifying their existence, instead of joining their forces and requesting better integration policies.

### **3.2 Intergroup interaction and diversity**

Within social psychology multiculturalism has been approached more from the perspective of the study of intergroup relations. Of interest to researchers in this field have been phenomena such as intergroup interaction, stereotyping and its effects. One of the most well-known phenomena related to the interaction of persons with differing backgrounds is that of categorization. Typically people categorize others into so called in- or out-group, based on their external characteristics. Persons sharing the same external characteristics and/or identity are categorized into the in-group, and those possessing differing characteristics into an out-group (Campbell, 1958). In-group members also typically share mating-opportunities and in general have a common fate. Out-group members on the other hand are thought to possess certain trades and behaviors (Yzerbyt & Demoulin, 2010).

Categorization of persons into an out-group can have adverse consequences as the processes involve the use of stereotypes about the target group. At its most extreme, as in the case with inter group interaction with persons from differing social status, according to Allport (1958), categorization can lead to racism. If white Europeans categorize all Africans according to the negative stereotypes attached to the group, different forms of racism emerges, which in turn can lead to avoidance of contact with members of the out-group. A phenomena that social psychologist call the “out-group covariance effect”, refers to the outcome of the stereotyping of the out-group members, and the categorization of them as all possessing the same traits. Persons making judgments of the characteristics of members of their out-group thus do not differentiate the traits of the individual out-group members, but rather see them all as possessing the same traits. This phenomenon leads to the famous expression “they are all the same (Linville et al., 1996)

According to Allport the best way to improve the relationships between different groups, is through the increased contact between the members of the different groups. This theory has been termed the *Intergroup Contact Theory* (1958). If people have a chance to have contact with members of their out-group they have a chance to learn to understand each other better and the stereotypes attached to the other groups have a chance to break apart. If the contact between the two groups is properly managed, Allport argues stereotyping and prejudices should diminish.

Allport also set out certain criteria that he believed were necessary for the contact to lead to the positive outcome. The first criterion is that groups should be afforded equal status. Secondly, these groups should be offered some common goal or a task that they should solve together. Thirdly, the members of the groups should have a chance to establish real friendship and not be acting as only representatives of a group in a certain task. Lastly, the interaction should be supported

by some common authority, or customs, so that the persons can have a feeling that their interaction is approved, encouraged and not objected to.

If we take Allport's theory to the Finnish real life setting, it can be argued that the level of contact that Finns have had with immigrants, members of their out-group, will have a strong impact on the categorization of the immigrants. In certain areas in Finland, it is still the case that the population of that area consists of native Finns, and even in areas where immigrant population has been increasing, there are persons living who had no contact with immigrants for the first 50 years of their life. In terms of population diversity, there are large aerial differences in Finland still and the level of contact between immigrants and Finns is largely varying. As such, the level of categorization may vary largely, and methodologically it is important to keep in mind in the analysis of the data. As a person who has not had much contact with immigrants may have a stronger tendency to either respond to an immigrant more categorically and may even exhibit some exoticism, which is not the same phenomena as racism. While stereotyping, categorizing and exoticism are forms of othering (Löytty, 2005; Pellander, 2007) and can be seen as the pre-step to racism and prejudice, the first reactions to persons from a differing background can also be void of negative connotations.

In addition to the intergroup familiarity (contact), relative group status has also been argued to influence inter group responses (Malloy et al., 2011). Some studies have suggested that the out-group members are stereotyped as possessing homogeneous characteristics (i.e. they are all the same) because those with high status attend primarily to features that confirm the category membership (e.g. facial characteristics typical of a ethnic group, Ostrom, Carpenter, Sedikides & Li, 1993). Others have argued that it is the lack of familiarity that explains the stereotyping of the characteristics (Linville, Fischer & Salovey, 1989). Latest research has shown that in fact, the relative group status influences out group stereotyping beyond the effect of familiarity and as such explains why, for example, over the decades in the United States all the programs intending to bring the majority and minority groups into contact have not been able to eradicate racism. As long as the inherent status hierarchies are present, the inter-group interaction between the different groups is bound to be affected by the handicap on the perceptual processes (Malloy et al., 2011).

Speaking about discrimination is no easy task. Perhaps partially because of that, the focus of ethnicity and labor makers has been approached via so called *diversity discourse*. It is perhaps easier to speak about diversity, how to manage it and its potential business benefits than to take a hard look at discriminatory practices. Diversity implies something positive and changing, where as discrimination naturally has a negative connotation. Kraal and colleagues (2009) and others (Kalev, Dobbin & Kelly 2006; EC, 2005) argue that " dissemination of the concept of diversity is strongly connected to the development of management

tools in human resource networks, especially in the framework of the European strategy against discrimination” (p. 12).

Defining discrimination with more detail and analyzing the different faces that it takes is important if we want to in fact tackle it. Different forms of discrimination require different types of responses to it to be affective. Direct discrimination may have been prohibited with certain laws and campaigns, but indirect discrimination requires different levels of analysis and effort. Understanding institutional discrimination and the legal aspects of it is fundamental to understanding the reasons behind the weak attachment of migrants to European labor markets. In fact, Wrench et al argue that understanding the different forms of discrimination leads to different policy tools, for example that “acknowledgement of structural discrimination implies that affirmative action policies are necessary to reduce unjustified inequalities, in addition to policies that prevent individuals from carrying out acts of discrimination (Nilsson & Wrench, 2009, p. 39).

### ***3.3 Explanations and evidence for migrant inequalities in the labor markets***

The supply side explanations for the unequal chances of migrants dominate most discussions about why immigrants continue to be disadvantaged in the European labor markets. Poor language skills, lack of social, cultural, and economic capital explain parts of the disadvantage witnessed in the labor markets and the states have developed a mixture of integration policies intended to correct for this. An impressive amount of research has, however, documented the fact that focusing on the supply side factors has not changed the situation of migrants and has not been able to offer equal opportunities to all.

With comparable language skills and education, migrants job seekers are not treated equally to that of their native counterparts and the explanation for this has been deemed in the “demand side” factors, one of them being 'racial and ethnic discrimination' (Kraal et al., 2009). As an illustrative example, a Swedish study compared young people who grew up in middle/upper class Swedish homes, one group native white Swedish and the other adopted persons who grew up in Sweden (Rooth, 2001). The group of adopted Swedes were divided into two groups, one of persons with features resembling a typical Swedish person (fair skin, blond hair) and those who did not. The results of the study indicate an almost 7% unexplainable difference in the labor market participation for the adopted children with non-Swedish look (after controlling for education, age etc.).

Similar indirect statistical evidence is abundant from several European union member states. For example studies showing that human capital skills do not explain differences between groups: in France, Meurs et al., 2006, Silberman &

Founier, 2006, in Belgium, EUMC, 2002a, and in the UK, EUMC, 2002b. Also studies comparing access to employment and accounting for several variables such as age, gender, skills etc. have found differences between minority and majority: Belgium (VDAB, 2007), The Netherlands (in Nilson and Wrench, 2009; Langenberg & Lautenbach, 2007), the UK (Botcherby, 2006) and Germany (Burkert & Seibert, 2007).

In the last ten years direct evidence on ethnic discrimination has also accumulated. The EU directives previously mentioned (2000/43/EC) and specifically its Article 13 require that member states establish a specific body to deal with claims of discriminations and to promote equal treatment. These bodies provide private individuals with assistance as they pursue their claims of discrimination. Furthermore, these bodies keep track of specific cases and as such provide valuable information about the number and type of cases.

In Finland this body is called the Ombudsman for minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu*). In the year 2009 report the Ombudsman reports approximately 100 cases of suspected ethnic discrimination in labor markets. Several of the cases came to the ombudsman from persons with a roma heritage, and several others from berry pickers from Thailand who were put into very harsh working conditions (*Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus*, 2009). Also in the yearly report 2008 the Ombudsman writes that one of the office's main concerns from that year was the unnecessarily high language requirements by employers.

The ombudsman's office followed carefully public job announcements and during that year over 30 announcements were forwarded to investigation based on the suspicion of the language requirements being too high (*Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus*, 2008). During the previous year (2007), on the other hand, the Ombudsman reports a high level of cases where highly qualified foreign job seekers were unable to obtain work at their education level. The problems of requiring extremely high Finnish language skills or Finnish citizenship unnecessarily were also evident to the Ombudsman during the year 2006 (*Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus*, 2007). In Sweden operates a similar Ombudsman's office and in a study reporting the most common complaints related to labor market discrimination, the situations usually took place during recruitment (Sjögren, 2004).

Other direct evidence of discrimination has been provided by the so called "victim surveys". While these surveys show the frequent experiences of ethnic discrimination by migrants in the European labor markets, they also show that most experiences of discrimination do not get reported anywhere (Nilson & Wrench, 2009).

Another valuable source of information for gathering a precise understanding of discrimination at the European level and especially for comparative purposes are the Euro-barometer, European Social Survey and the EU-MIDIS. These large scale surveys all demonstrate the shared experiences of discrimination in Europe

as a whole. The EU-MIDIS results are perhaps the most demonstrative as it sampled only migrants and ethnic minority groups and asked about nine different areas of life. The European Social Survey and the Euro-barometer sample from the whole population so the number of migrants and minorities captured is not as large as in the EU-MIDIS. The results of the EU-MIDIS show that especially vulnerable groups for discrimination across Europe are the Roma and migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa.

Other sources of information on discriminatory practices include surveys with “gate keepers”, meaning, for example, managers and recruiters. Studies from for example Sweden and Belgium are demonstrative. In Belgium, 688 self-employed persons were asked about whether they would hire a person with a foreign nationality and eight out of ten indicated that they would not (Decoo, 2007 in Nilsson and Wrench, 2007). A study from Sweden on the other hand highlighted how the narrow definitions of competencies and qualifications as well as search practices based on searching for familiar styles of thought produce indirect discriminatory practices that in effect preclude foreign born applicants from getting hired (Nilsson, 2006). Also, studies using participant observation and field experiments (situation testing and matched pair testing, e.g. sending an application with a foreign and native name) show common practices of discrimination, especially during the recruiting processes.

An Italian study using situation testing techniques with phone calls to employers advertising for open position show that most discriminatory practices take place in the first seconds of the phone calls. When a person with a foreign name inquired about the advertised position, the answer was frequently that the position was already filled. Subsequent phone calls by researchers using an Italian name showed however that this was not the case (Nilsson & Wrench, 2009)

The EU Monitoring centre on racism and Xenophobia (2003) has further described the cumulative disadvantage or multiple vulnerabilities experienced by migrant women in the EU member countries labor markets. Women migrants, while not a homogeneous group, are over represented in fields of low pay and status, poor working conditions and insecure jobs. In addition migrant women suffer disproportionately from deskilling and underutilization of their skills and educational qualifications (Dumond & Liebig, 2005; SOPEMI, 2006).

Even though the Scandinavian countries are heralded as female friendly welfare states, the position of migrant women is far from equal to the native counterparts. In fact, the unemployment rates of migrant women are particularly high in Scandinavia and the earnings gap between migrants (men and women) to natives is very high (Adsera & Chiswick, 2004; SOPEMI, 2006). In one of the most up-to-date analysis of the labor market disadvantage of migrant women, Kofman et al. summarize the situation in the following way: “Irrespective of their educational level or skills, migrant women might be employed in low-status sectors because

of their migrants or ethnic status, and in low-paid sectors that typify the gender gap in pay. There may be little choice of occupation due to stereotyping and discrimination in which characteristics of docility and aptitude for certain tasks are imputed to migrant and ethnic minority women. Hence, migrant and ethnic minority women not only suffer from an ethnic penalty, but also from gender-specific difficulties such as lower appreciation of their capital” (Kofman, Roosblad & Keuzenkamp, 2009, p. 65).

Furthermore, in the Finnish as well as European labor markets in general, the labor force has slowly but surely divided into at least two main segments, where by the withering number of core work force has all the established forms of security (unemployment protection, permanent contracts etc) and the other group in non-standard contracts, the precariat<sup>13</sup>, which in growing numbers is made up of young persons, women and migrant workers (Beck, 2000). This growing number of the workforce in insecure working conditions is unable to speak up for itself in the same way that the core workers who do not have to fear for the non-continuation of their short term contract.

### **3.4 Theories of ethnic discrimination**

Discrimination as a research topic has gained momentum in Europe in the last 10-20 years. The problem has been approached from a number of different perspectives, from policy level approaches to social psychological explanations of the phenomenon. In the current study, the following definition of discrimination will be used: Discrimination refers to “treating people differently on the basis of their gender, race, religion, ethnicity or their membership (perceived or otherwise) in a given social group” (Kraal et al., 2009, p. 12). “Ethnic discrimination takes then place when the criterion for negative treatment is based on one's supposed belonging to an ethnic category or group” (Kraal et al., 2009, p. 12).

Discrimination is often divided into two basic types, indirect and direct. This division has its roots in legal definitions as direct discrimination is thought to be able to be traced to certain actors and situations where certain groups are being excluded unfairly. Indirect discrimination on the other hand functions in ways where seemingly neutral practices end up producing unequal results. Recruitment situations are a good way of understanding the different ways indirect and direct discrimination functions. Direct discrimination in recruitment may for example mean blatant refusal to hire a person from an “unwanted” social group, where as indirect discrimination functions through for example the use of informal net-

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<sup>13</sup> *The precarious working conditions are characterized by unwanted short term contracts, forced entrepreneurship, agency work or other in/unsecure connections to the labor market.*

works to hire individuals, which precludes persons with less social capital from having equal opportunities to be hired. A common practice of firing those who have last entered the company during difficult economic times, also produces discrimination as typically the “last in” are those with less demand and more frequently have an immigrant background (Nillson & Wrench, 2009).

Indirect discrimination is often referred to as structural discrimination. For the purposes of this study these terms can be used interchangeably. Williams (2000, p. 66) writes that “acknowledging the existence of structural discrimination means acknowledging that unjust inequalities exist, but that blame for their existence cannot be assigned to any specific, identifiable individuals”.

Another form of discrimination found operating in European labor markets is that of “opportunistic discrimination”. In this form of discrimination the foundation for the unfair treatment is not in racism or ethnic prejudices, but rather based on the knowledge that certain groups of individuals are in a weaker position in the labor markets and as a result are offered only inferior working contract compared to that of native workers. Undocumented migrants are especially vulnerable to this form of discrimination as they frequently fear the possible consequences of reporting the employers discrimination.

In most European countries operates also forms of legal discrimination. Even though laws prohibit ethnic discrimination, there are legal restrictions on the rights of certain group to access certain sections of the labor market. Most typically this form of discrimination occurs in the public sectors or in the rights of individuals to change jobs (Kofman, Roosblad & Keuzenkamp, 2009).

The different forms of discrimination highlighted earlier at times combine to produce a type of discrimination that is perhaps the most difficult to analyze due to its many layers. Institutional discrimination takes place at institutional level as its name implies and as a phenomenon is multifaceted. In certain institutional setting this form of discrimination manifests itself through a combination of blatant racist discrimination, informal practices of knowledge sharing that produces indirect discrimination and perhaps even legal discrimination. The form and shape of institutional discrimination may be quite situation specific, but common to it is that often it becomes part of a organizational culture (Wrench, 2007).

Discrimination as a term is quite often confused with that of racism as they often are used even within the same sentence. Discrimination is, however, a higher level term, where by racism is one type of discrimination. Miles (1993) argues that racism is an ideology where as discrimination is more the act or behaviors enacted by persons. Discrimination refers, according to the 2004 Equality Act, to a situation where someone is being treated less favorably than someone else was/is/would be treated in a similar situation. On the other hand, discrimination refers also to a situation where an allegedly fair decision, reasoning or practice ends up resulting in placing someone in a less favorable situation than others.

Also, discrimination occurs when a person's or group's honor or integrity is being offended by creating a threatening atmosphere or by direct acts of assault. An order to discriminate someone is also considered discrimination in the face of the law (20.1.2004/21,6§).

Social psychology as an academic discipline bridges the theories from personality psychology and sociology. As a discipline it is particularly interested in people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and how they are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others (Allport, 1985). The basic tenet in social psychology is that human being's behavior should not be explained solely by some internal predispositions, but rather that the presence of others, be it real or imagined, serves to produce similar kinds of behaviors from all humans.

North American social psychologists have for a long time been studying questions of stereotyping, power, roles and attitudes, and their affect in people's behavior. Especially attitude research has been extensively applied to questions related to working life and labor markets. Research looking at attitudes that people hold towards different occupations has, for example, been conducted for over four decades (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell & Ristikari, 2011). One of the most significant theories used to explain the barriers that groups of people face in working life, is called the *role congruity theory* (Eagly & Karau, 2002) This theory states that groups of persons have certain social roles and characteristics attached to them, and the group will be more positively evaluated the more its characteristics are viewed as being in line with the typical social roles.

As an example lets consider police officers. According to the role congruity theory, there are certain characteristics that are associated with a typical police officer<sup>14</sup>, like strong, law-abiding, and articulate. When assessing the qualifications of lets say a female applicant for a job as a police offer, the evaluation is done based on the proposed characteristics of the typical police officer, listed above. The better the match, between the female applicant and the typical police officer is deemed, the more positively the female applicant will be viewed as fitting for the position. Alternatively, the larger the incongruity between the typical characteristics of the group and the target for evaluation, the less favorable the evaluation will be.

Eagly and Karau's (2002) role congruity model has been mostly applied in the study of stereotypes of women (e.g., Spence & Buckner, 2000) and stereotypes of leaders (e.g., Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; Lord & Maher, 1993; Offermann, Kennedy & Wirtz, 1994), and the mismatch in the evaluations. In this model, stereotype content is framed in terms of *agency* and *communion*, where *communion* as a characteristic is attached to the female stereotype and *agency* to the leader and male stereotypes. According to research by Eagly and colleagues, men are there-

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<sup>14</sup> Most of the research using role congruity theory has dealt with leadership and gender, but in this case police officer is used as an example only.

fore seen as more similar to the leader stereotype than women are, producing disadvantage for women.

The production of disadvantage operates at many different levels. Because individuals get evaluated through group stereotypes (e.g., von Hippel, Sekaquaptewa & Vargas, 1995), an evaluative penalty exists for female leaders or potential leaders regardless of whether they are fitting for the leadership position or not. This penalty can for example, be realized in unfavorable performance expectations, which can lead into a circle of unfavorable performance evaluations (Eagly, Makhijani & Klonsky, 1992; Lyness & Heilman, 2006). According to the role congruity theorists, *discrimination is the behavioral outcome of these processes* (Eagly & Diekmann, 2005).

Interestingly, the harmful effects of stereotypes for women as leaders do not stem from negative stereotype characteristics, but rather from the contrary. The stereotype of women, is actually in many ways "nicer than men's", where by females are viewed as the nicer sex, also known as the women-are-wonderful effect (Eagly & Mladinic, 1994). While women's stereotype may be kinder than men's, it has not prevented workplace discrimination (Heilman & Eagly, 2008). This paradox has been explained, by the existing mismatch between the typical and desired roles and the presumed characteristics of a woman (e.g. Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Hogue & Lord, 2007; Lyness & Heilman, 2006).

According to the meta-analysis by Eagly and colleagues, the stereotype of a leader, has since the first studies on the topic been more in line with the stereotype of a male than a female (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell & Ristikari, 2011). A typical leader and males are seen as having characteristics such as assertiveness, independent and competitive, whereas a female is seen as more caring, compassionate and communal. The mismatch in the stereotypes of women and leaders thus produces discrimination in females' efforts to gain leadership positions.

It has also been argued that stereotypes influence the behavior of the prejudiced groups themselves. Stereotyping can decrease women's performance as leaders and their identification with leadership. This question has been studied using what is called the stereotype threat theory according to which, the activation of the stereotype can lead to stereotype like behavior. Classic research on stereotype threat has been with African American college students who were taking part in a made up intelligence test (Steele & Aronson, 1995). When the stereotype of African Americans as not intelligent and not mathematically talented was activated, their performance on the test was reduced. Also studies with females and leadership have shown similar effect on women's desire to take on leadership positions. (Davies, Spencer & Steele, 2005).

While most of the research applying the role congruity theory has been concerned with gender, Sy and colleagues applied it in connection to ethnicity (Sy et

al., 2010). Their research shows that similar to gender stereotypes, race affects leadership perceptions through the activation of leadership stereotypes.

An interesting question in relation to the role congruity theory is that what kinds of stereotypes of immigrants do the Finnish trade unionist hold and how well does the stereotypic image of the immigrants fit the image of a typical trade unionist or a member of a union? If the image is largely incongruent, according to the role congruity theory, the effect can be (unintentional) discrimination.

### **3.5 Combating ethnic discrimination**

The EU has enacted two directives that are intended to combat ethnic discrimination. These directives set a minimum standard for the legal protection member states must establish. The directive on Racial Equality is intended to prevent discrimination on the basis of race and ethnic origin, whereas the Employment Framework Directive on the basis of religion, age, sexual orientation and disability. More recently the EU has begun to focus specifically on migrant women's participation in the labor markets (Kraal et al., 2009).

Researchers have argued that beyond all, in order “to achieve equal chances in the labor market, anti-discrimination, equality and diversity should be combined. Equal chances are not brought about by a diverse staff alone, but require equal work conditions and career prospects as well” (Kraal et al., 2009, p. 17).

The terms equal treatment, equal results and employment equality are often used in the same paragraph, sometimes even interchangeably. These terms, however, mean different things. Equal treatment is the basic tenet of all people being treated equally regardless of their background. Employment equality often refers to equal treatment of all people regardless of background in such a fashion that all persons have equal chances to access labor markets. The idea of equal results refers, however, not only to the equal chances of gaining a place in the labor markets, but that people will have comparable levels of income and have comparable positions. Kraal et al. (2009) argue, that in order to have equal treatment we must in fact have also equal results. The policies intended to promote equal access should have build in them functions that promote also equal results in order to have real and lasting effects. This argument is by no means without controversy as it at its core requires companies and other institutions to possibly follow lines of hard affirmative action and come to face institutional discrimination. Kraal et al. (2009) argue, however, that “aiming at equal treatment alone will leave many forms of discrimination untouched”.

*Employment equity programs* have been developed as a response to the growing evidence on discrimination. Equity in this context refers to non-discriminatory outcomes in reference to ethnicity or minority status. Employment equity policies

can take the form of direct or indirect policies. Direct EEPs are policies designed to combat discrimination in a certain organization by the organizational forces themselves. Indirect EEPs on the other hand are programs designed to put pressure on other organizations to strive for employment equality. Direct EEPs have a long tradition in the US and are there known as affirmative action. In the UK where of the European countries they have been most popular direct EEPs are called positive action (Kirton & Greene, 2005). Of the continental European countries, direct EEPs as governmental initiatives are less used, with the exception of Sweden and Netherlands (Soininen & Graham, 2000). Employment equity policies have become a catch phrase for many different types of affirmative action, equal opportunities policies, positive action and even diversity management (Jain, Sloan & Horwitz, 2003). As a downside to this wide frame of reference is that the term has begun to mean different things to different people.

There are three main ways of categorizing equality efforts: 1) equal treatment, 2) equal results and 3) individual recognition. Broadly speaking, equal treatment refers to the success in preventing direct discrimination, and when all persons are treated equally, without intended preferences for individuals. Equal results on the other hand refers to a situation where no structural discrimination exists. Structural discrimination is not an easy target to discern and it usually requires looking at “patterns of inequality at the level of groups or categories” (p. 71). Individual recognition typically refers to the ideas of diversity management where the improvement of an organizations performance is thought to come about through the appreciation of the personnels diversity.

As the terminology of the EEPs is used varyingly and at times the same terms are used with different meanings, it is no wonder that they cause confusion. Some authors like to use adjectives such as hard, soft, passive or proactive to conceptualize the different meanings.

Next I shall highlight three recent classifications of employment equality policies that can be useful in evaluating the trade unions response to ethnic discrimination. Wrench, in his book *Diversity management and discrimination - immigrants and ethnic minorities in the EU*, presents a model for EEPs that he argues is a “sequence of chronological stages: organizations first pass through a “supply-side” conscious phase before they recognize the structural aspects of discrimination, and then develop a multicultural awareness and an anti-racism awareness (Wrench 2007, p. 54–55). Wrench's classification is based on a number of large projects that were carried out by the International Labour Organization (ILO), supported by the European Commission and others. Wrench's classification starts with level 1 where the organization focuses on the training of immigrants and/or other minorities and moves on to level 2 which constitutes the ingredients of level 1 with the addition of making cultural allowances (e.g. for religious customs).

At the next level, racist attitudes are attacked with information and other campaigns, focus being on the attitudes of the members of the organization. Following on, the level 4 focuses on changing the behaviors of persons not only the attitudes. Fair recruitment, anti-harassment policies and training on how to use them are being developed. The 5th level of the chronology Wrench calls the equal opportunities policies with positive action, where by the organization sets targets for their EEP and monitors them. Positive action is used to reach the targets outlined in the equal opportunities statements, where the existence of structural forms of discrimination is acknowledged. At the last stage of his model sits diversity management/main-streaming. At this level, all the previously mentioned methods may be used, in addition to which the idea of appreciating diversity is mainstreamed into the organization philosophy and becomes a standard component (Wrench, 2007).

Another comprehensive classification of employment equality policies has been done by Gill Kirton and Anne-Marie Greene (Kirton & Greene, 2005). These authors have developed not a classification of different types of policies that are hierarchically and cumulative ordered, but the model is not based on real case studies, rather policy orientations of different organizations in the United Kingdom. In their model, organizations' orientations develop from a negative organization, through the minimalist organization, to a compliant organization. A negative organization may with or without its knowledge practice discrimination, as it has no EOP or diversity policy. A minimalist organization will call itself an equal treatment organization, but has not developed any EO policies for itself. A compliant organization fulfills its legal obligations and has a formal EO policy developed by its human resources department. A so called compliant organization sets targets and follows up on their outcomes to see whether the targets have been achieved. Kirton and Greene (2007) call the organizations at the top level of their hierarchy, the comprehensive proactive organization. This type of organization includes in its EOPs all the previous levels, but it adds a social justice case to its agenda. This type of organization aims at avoiding indirect discrimination as well as direct discrimination.

Glazer (2000), a prominent American critic of affirmative action has also developed a typology of EEPs. In his model three types of organizations exist, with the first level comprising of "non-discrimination", second "soft-affirmative action" and the last "hard affirmative action". Organizations in the "non-discrimination" category tend to adhere to so called neutrality in treatment (p. 139) and focus on eliminating direct discrimination. Soft affirmative action organizations use different types of outreach programs to try and reach out to unrepresented groups. In the what Glazer calls hard affirmative action organizations, numeric targets are set for the recruitment of minorities and other under represented groups.

MacEwen (1995) has developed a model that has been successfully used to analyze the way in which trade unions understand the question of equality. Virdee and Grint (1994) and Martens (1999), among others, have studied the development of the issue of the 'equal versus special treatment' of immigrants in the UK using MacEwen's model. Martens (1999) has argued that unions 'seem to have difficulty in coming to grips with equal treatment' (p. 224), one reason being the general confusion that exists around the terms 'equal treatment' and 'equal opportunity' (Wrench, 2004). In subsequent analysis of the British trade unions response to immigration by Wrench (2004) and others (Ristikari, 2006) the model by MacEwen has then been used. Following the classification of MacEwen (1995), it is possible to identify four approaches to 'equal treatment' or 'equal opportunities'. These approaches are:

1. *The equal treatment approach*: Everyone is treated the same regardless of ethnicity. The so called 'color-blind' approach.
2. *The level playing field approach*: Recognition of the need to remove unfair barriers (e.g. discrimination), so that all have the same opportunities.
3. *The equal opportunities approach*: Aim is to increase the long-term proportional representation of minorities by having ethnic monitoring and targets. 'Positive action' to counteract effects of past inequalities.
4. *The equal outcome approach*: Quotas and 'positive discrimination' to achieve short-term proportional representation of minorities.

Wrench (2004) shows how the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) has moved in successive steps through these stages and by the mid-2000s, its policies were a mixture of stages three and four. In the 1960s the TUC believed that special treatment of immigrants was not necessary, and indeed, would be discriminatory towards the white trade union membership. However, in the 1970s the TUC began to move towards the 'level playing field' approach, as it began to develop educational and training materials on racism and equal opportunities for trade union courses (Wrench, 2004). In 1979, the TUC recommended to all its affiliated unions that they create a policy on racism, and in 1981 it published 'Black Workers: A TUC charter for Equal Opportunity', which encouraged a more active role of the unions against racism (Wrench, 2004).

By the 1980s, the TUC had already moved to creating special equal opportunities structures that incorporated elements of positive action, such as reserved or additional seats on national executive committees for members with immigrant background. National officers whose responsibility it was to deal with issues affecting immigrant workers were also trained at that time. Individual unions were also setting up separate committees to deal with race and equal opportunities and several created self-organization structures for their immigrant members (Virdee

& Grint, 1994). An Equal Opportunities Review in 1993 (as cited in Wrench, 2004) covering two thirds of the TUC membership showed that of all responding, ten had a national committee for race equality issues, nine had some immigrant full time officials, and almost two thirds had produced literature in ethnic minority languages and taken other positive action steps such as organizing conferences for members with immigrant background.

Whether the organizational EEPs make any difference is under some debate (Verbeek & Penninx, 2009). Extensive evaluations on the efficacy of EEPs have produced a range of results and in their evaluation of the literature Verbeek and Penninx (2009) refer to a recent analysis of Alexandra Kalev and colleagues of American private sector firms as a leading analysis on the question. In their analysis Kalev et al. (2006) look at the seven most common diversity programs used in America and look at what were the programs targeting their efforts at.

Kalev and colleagues set up three different approaches to increasing managerial diversity, the first being organizational change, second, behavioral change and the third so called “treating social isolation”. In the first approach, affirmative action is being used in combination with “structures of responsibility”. The second approach focuses on reducing bias with the help of educational programs. The last approach attempts to increase diversity via networking and mentoring, which are thought to be useful in seeking out qualified candidates from under-represented groups.

In their analysis of the success of the different approaches, Kalev et al write that it is the first type of approach, focusing on the organizational change that leads to the most increase in diversity. Having a staff person who's responsibility it is to create targets and monitor them, is most likely to produce the desired outcomes. Kalev and colleagues write: “although inequality in attainment at work may be rooted in managerial bias and the social isolation of women and minorities, the best hope for remedying it may lie in practices that assign organizational responsibility for change” (2006, p. 610–611).

Though the results of the EEPs are at times modest, they do show that change is possible and when organizations desire so, they do have a number of tools available to them, that have been shown to bring about the desired changes. Verbeek and Penninx conclude their analysis by emphasizing the “continuing importance of changing public attitudes through education, the mass media, politics and legislation”. In trying to solve the problems of ethnic discrimination a number of tools are needed, and both direct and indirect policies should stay high on the research and organizational agendas.

### 3.6 Ethnic discrimination and racism

When studying questions about immigrants and immigrant representations and attitudes towards immigrants, it is important to consider the question of racism. The study of racism has its roots in the Anglo countries, the US and the UK due to their historical experiences with slavery. Already in the 1850s the study of race relations existed, although at the time its focus was to justify the existing inequalities (Puuronen, 2011). It wasn't until 1899 when a black researcher W.E.B. DuBois wrote a text about the conditions of the black slaves that the slavery-critical voices became more salient (Du Bois, 1967). In the 1900s the early influential race relations scholars came from the so called Chicago School at the University of Chicago.

In the 1960s as the African American civil rights movement gathered speed, the study of race relations also increased. Famous authors of that time are, for example, Michael Banton and John Rex who wrote the texts *Race Relations* (Banton, 1967) and *Race Relations in Sociological Theory* (Rex, 1983). Although contributing to the literature of race relations in substantial ways, (eg. Historical perspective on cultural contact) their work was later criticized for not being able to produce a theory of racism that adequately considers class and unequal power relations. This criticism was mostly vocalized by the Birmingham University Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies researchers (CCCS, 1982).

The study of racism from the perspective of class grew stronger as the study of Marxism got revitalized in the 1970s and 1980s (Puuronen, 2011). Oliver C. Cox's classic *Caste, Class and Race* (1948) being one of the founding texts for that stream of research. According to Cox, within a capitalistic society, it is exploitation that causes confrontation between different races. One of today's most influential scholars on Marxist approach to racism is Robert Miles who believes that race is the ideological mask for the real financial relationships within societies. As capitalism requires the free movement of people and nation states attempt to control immigration, race and racism helps to handle the conflict between interests.

A key concept in the study of racism is that of racialization. The concept has changed and developed its meaning over time. A good definition of the concept was developed by Robert Miles in his 1989 book, *Racism*. Miles describes racialization as "a dialectical process by which meaning is attributed to particular biological features of human beings, as a result of which individuals may be assigned to a general category of persons which reproduces itself biologically... The process of racialization of human beings entails the racialization of the processes in which they participate and the structures and institutions that result" (Miles, 1989, p. 76).

In the Finnish context, racialization has frequently been used in the discussions regarding immigrants and their purported propensity to engage in certain forms of crime (Puuronen, 2011). The act of connecting rapes and young African men in discussions and proposing that this group of people are more prone to

commit sexual crimes is a brutal example of racialization that occurs in Finland (Puuronen, 2011). These false accusation not only serve to increase stereotyping, indirect and indirect discrimination, but also turn the focus away from the structural factors and from proper analysis of the causes of crimes.

Racism is also not always founded on race as such, but it can also take the shape of styles of speaking. The study of the racist speaking habits was established in the CCCS (Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Birmingham University) and the focus of their research was on the social construction of race as well as the political relations surrounding it (Puuronen, 2011). The study of racism has developed into several different subsets for example, race and colonialism (Back & Solomos, 2000), study of whiteness (Du Bois, 1967), and the feminist study of race (Carby, 2009; Hooks, 1981).

The study of everyday racism began in the 1980s when Essed (1999) began to study racism essentially as not a socially constructed phenomenon, but rather as something that is reproduced in the everyday practices. When looking at racism as a an everyday event, the focus is placed in the experiences of those who are the targets and the meaning they place upon it. According to Essed, everyday racism take shape in three different forms. Firstly, racism takes the form of marginalization, which means the setting up of unfounded barriers for the societal participation of minorities, and the representation of societal norms and values as something unchangeable. The second form that every day racism takes, is that of questioning. When members of majority groups question the social experiences of minorities, their intellectual and social capabilities the phenomenon can be described as that of everyday racism according to Essed. Lastly, everyday racism can take place when the majority force minorities to assimilate, or isolates groups or deny the existence of racism. A basic tenet in the study of everyday racism is that those affected by it, have certain knowledge about the phenomenon that those not targeted do not posses (Essed, 1990, 2002; Puuronen, 2001; Simola & Heikkinen, 2003; Rastas, 2005; Puuronen, 2011).

Current ideas about racism have been much affected by the general constructionist movement in social sciences. The idea of a single phenomenon has been replaced by the idea of a spectra of racism. As cultures and ethnicities have mixed and come in more contact with each other, the cultural multiplicities are producing new realities. Lately the study of racism has particularly focused instead of biological inferiorities to that of cultural racism. This new or modern racism is understood as the defense of the myth of a mono-culture that is represented by the majority. This mono-culture is seen as being threatened by the culture represented by the newcomers. Instead of speaking about race, the language on new racism consists of talk about the differences, religions or culture (Modood, 1997; Puuronen, 2011) and aims at representing the social groups as “natural” due to some cultural criteria. According to a French philosopher Balibar, it was necessary

to speak about new forms of racism as traditional racism had been replaced by the term “immigration”. Instead of speaking about race, the rhetoric has moved to that of culture, and this is what Balibar suggests as the basic difference between the new and old forms of racism (Wallerstein & Balibar, 1991). Some researchers have argued that it is incorrect to separate so called “biological/race” racism and that of “cultural racism” as the separations are not somehow natural and real, but rather created by scientists, and that in different settings and in different times certain characteristics of racism are more pronounced (Miles, 1993; Durrheim & Dixon, 2000; Wade, 2002; Hall, 2003).

Puuronen, a Finnish sociologist has argued that similarly as the racist groups activated in Finland in the 1990s, their ideology was not based so much on the old biological racism, but rather on the new cultural form (Puuronen, 2001). Not only are certain groups (e.g. migrants) classified into a what is thought of as a natural group based on language, religion or customs. Puuronen argues that in addition modern racism includes hierarchies where one’s own culture is considered more advanced (Puuronen, 2011). The political form of new racism Puuronen calls “cultural hygiene”, and by which he refers to the demand that immigrants must replace their own cultural characteristics with those of the new home society. This cultural hygiene is similar to the idea of assimilation, where the focus is on the cultural aspects of integration. The groups supporting the politics of new racism argue that those immigrating to a new society must leave if they do not assimilate to the so called “host society’s normal culture” (Puuronen, 2011).

Within the field of social psychology, the study of racisms in the recent years has focused on understanding of the process of stereotyping as something that occurs even outside our consciousness. The study of implicit attitudes at Harvard University, for example, has shown how much of our attitudes are processed outside our awareness (Banaji et al., 2010). Social psychologists have also moved away from the study of traditional forms of racism (i.e. racial inferiority), to that of more modern versions. Already in the 1980s, McConahay and colleagues developed what is known as the modern racism scale. According to McConahay modern racism shows up through beliefs such as “Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve” or “Discrimination against Blacks is no longer a problem in the United States”. The main argument of those studying modern or symbolic racism, is that the language of racism has become more politically correct, but that as a phenomenon it has not disappeared (McConahay, 1986; Henry & Sears, 2002).

Other terms that are related to the concept of racism are those of xenophobia, and ethnocentrism. The idea that one’s own cultural value systems, characteristics and habits are somehow more correct or better than those of other groups, describes the meaning of ethnocentrism (Puuronen, 2011). In ethnocentric thinking the imagined normal habits belonging to one’s own culture become the yardstick

through which one evaluates other persons actions (Helander, 2002; Alasuutari & Ruuska, 1998). Xenophobia on the other hand refers to a fear and anger towards those belonging to another group. Often the phenomenon is suggested to be something universal and as a natural way of reacting to those belonging to another group (Puuronen, 2011).

### **3.7. Prevalence of racism in Finland**

Sociologist Jaakkola has studied racism in Finland for over twenty years (Jaakkola, 1989, 1996, 1999, 2005, 2009). In her studies, Jaakkola has used interviews and attitude statements. According to Jaakkola's study in 1998, 12% of Finns state that they are racists. Using the same scale, the European Commission studied racism in Europe and found that 10% of Finns considered themselves very racist. (Jaakkola, 1999, p. 102). According to Jaakkola, persons with higher educational background were less racist than those with less education. Also, men, especially those under the age of 18 or over 65 were more likely to agree with the racist statements. The less contact that the respondents had had with immigrants the more they agreed with the racist statements (Jaakkola, 2009).

In the late 1990s, Virrankoski studied the attitudes of school pupils. In his study, Virrankoski found that there were large gender differences in the attitudes with boys expressing significantly harsher attitudes than girls (42% boys vs. 11% girls, agreeing that "refugees are a threat to Finland"). Furthermore, large geographical differences were also present in Virrankoski's data, with pupils in Tampere expressing much harsher attitudes than those in Turku schools (Virrankoski, 2001).

In Finland there have also been several so called "victim" studies conducted. At the university of Helsinki, Jasinskaja-Lahti and colleagues have asked migrants about their experiences with racism. Although only less than 20% of migrants had actually been victims of a racial crime, over 60% had experienced racist harassment in public spaces (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind & Vesala, 2002). The results of the Helsinki university group show also the unfortunate effects of the ethnic hierarchy existing in Finland. As research by Jaakkola has shown, clear ethnic hierarchies exist in the minds of Finns. When asked about their opinion regarding the migration of different groups of people, Finns indicated that persons from Somalia were the least preferred group. Also very unwanted, but more so than Somalis, were Arabs, Kurds, Russians, Moroccans, Turks and Black Africans (Jaakkola, 2005, p. 72).

At the lowest level of the hierarchy are migrants from Somalia according to Jasinskaja-Lahti, these group of migrants have experiences the racist crimes more often than other groups, followed by migrants from Arab countries. Just as the

hierarchies shown by Jaakkola, the migrants from Russia and Estonia, with their appearances most similar to that of Finns, have in fact, experienced the least amount of racial crimes. The records from the Finnish police indicate clearly as well, that immigrants from African countries are most likely to be inflicted by racist crimes (Väestötilasto, 2008a, 2008b). Most common victims of racist crimes are persons from Sudan, Nigeria, Morocco, Somalia, as well as persons from the Middle East, Afganistan, Iran and Irak.

# AIMS, METHODS AND DATA



## 1. Research aims and questions

The present study aims to answer three related research questions and as such draw a picture of the response of the Finnish trade union movement to immigration and ethnic discrimination in the Finnish labor markets in the 2000s.

The first research question concerns the response Finnish trade unions made towards immigration when it first became politically important. Specifically this section attempts to answer the questions: How have the Finnish trade unions reacted to immigration? Did they cooperate with the employers and the state in the employment of foreign workers, or did they resist?

The dilemma of how to respond to the potential increase in the labor force by an inflow of foreign workers often thought of as not accustomed to the working standards and wages normally demanded by the native workers in Western European countries has been a difficult one for trade unions (Penninx & Roosblad, 2000). Should the unions cooperate, or resist immigration? Historically, the unions in other countries feared that the arrival of a foreign work force could be to the disadvantage of the native workforce by bringing down wages and working conditions and by supporting obsolete industries. Also, trade unions feared that foreigners could be an alternative source of labor for employers during industrial disputes (Penninx & Roosblad, 2000). On the other hand, trade unions also realized that in certain sectors migrant labor was necessary for the important industry's future. Further, Penninx and Roosblad (2000) argue that trade unions have at least verbally adhered to a tradition of international solidarity of all work-

ers. Resisting immigration too openly could be viewed as not being in keeping with this solidarity.

The second research question follows from the arrival of the immigrant to Finland. How have the Finnish unions as a whole responded to immigrant interest representation and incorporated immigrant labor market interests in the union organization in comparison to their European counterparts in the 2000s. Not only is it important for us to understand the specific case of the Finnish unions, but how does the response of unions compare to that of the other European trade unions? Are there any differences in the responses based on the confederal affiliations, will also be analyzed by separating the answers of the unions according to their central organization affiliation.

The last, and the main research question asks: How have Finnish trade union activists on the ground responded to immigration and ethnic discrimination in the labor markets? - are they insisting on equal treatment or advocating for the immigrants? Since not long after their arrival, the labor market disadvantage of immigrant workers became evident, how have the trade unions respond to this? Treating everyone the same would only help to institutionalize the disadvantage experienced by the immigrants, but at the same time, if the union devotes extra resources to immigrant issues, this can happen at the expense of creating resentment and resistance on the part of the indigenous workers who may consider the immigrant groups to be receiving special treatment. This has been phrased as the 'equal versus special treatment dilemma' (Penninx & Roosblad, 2000).

The literature on ethnic discrimination in the labor markets and society in general has expanded, and unions have acknowledged its existence (Alho, 2010). However, the question of deeper definitions and experiences with ethnic discrimination within unions has been less studied, therefore, this question concerns also with: what do unions consider ethnic discrimination?

In addition to the general response of unions to immigrants, the way in which the representatives of the unions construct the image of immigrants influences the way in which immigrants are given opportunities to part take in the work of unions themselves. The question about the immigrant image construction and the kinds of attitudes held towards immigrants is studied in relation to the organizational culture of the unions. How is immigrant agency viewed and when speaking about immigrants, what type of an image is being created? In using social psychological theories, the image of an immigrant is studied in relation to the organization of the unions themselves.

## 2. Methods and data

The present study uses mixed methods (Creswell & Clark, 2006) and consists of three separate sets of data that are triangulated to produce a coherent answer to the research questions. The Finnish data is collected from three separate sources and in the conclusions discussed in perspective with data from other European countries. Both *quantitative* and *qualitative* research methods are used in a four-step fashion. Although these approaches are relatively different, since the 1980s social scientists have begun to combine them successfully (Raunio, 1999). By triangulating the results of both types of investigation, the reliability of the results will increase and a very rich set of data will be created.

The first part of the study consists of a literature review on Finnish trade unions and immigration. Since the academic literature on this topic is fairly limited, an analysis of the public statements and other documents related to immigration of the Finnish trade unions was done. The material that the analysis is based on includes secondary literature, as well as public statements and program documents made available online by the Finnish unions' confederations. Rather than analyzing all the individual unions, the analysis focused on the statements by the trade union confederations in Finland. In Finland three different confederations exist. SAK, The Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions, represents most of the blue collar workers' unions, while STTK is the Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees and Akava is the Confederation of Unions for Academic Professionals in Finland. The documents were gathered by searching the internet sites of the three confederations for all documents including the keyword "immigration" or a version of that word. Appendix A lists the documents included in the analysis.

The public statements and program documents of the central organizations are submitted to a content analysis, where by the reoccurring themes are focused on in an attempt to answer the first research question: How have the Finnish trade unions responded to immigration since the arrival of immigrants? Did they resist or support the entry of new comers into the Finnish labor markets?

The second phase of the proposed study employs quantitative methods to find out how, *as a whole*, the Finnish trade unions responded to the new potential members. This set of data is being used to answer the research question 2. The responses of all the member organization of SAK, Akava, and STTK to immigrants and ethnic discrimination were collected through an online survey. A total of 16 SAK member unions, 12 STTK member unions and 21 Akava member unions were surveyed on a number of topics related to their responses to immigrants and ethnic discrimination in the labor market.

The third part of the study attempts help answer the third research question, and with qualitative data help to analyze the conceptualization of immigration and ethnic discrimination by the trade union representatives "on the ground"

(i.e. shop stewards and other member representatives). The attitudes that the union representatives hold towards immigrants, labor market difficulties faced by immigrants as well as ethnic discrimination in the labor markets is investigated. This data-set is collected through focus groups, done with shop-stewards and other member representatives. The participants of the focus groups were invited from the capital region as well as from more rural areas, in order to get a wider perspective on the responses.

Focus groups are a type of group interviews, in which the researcher does not ask questions in the typical interview style. Rather, the researcher initiates the discussion between the group participants. The researcher brings to the focus group the main themes around which the conversations between the group members are to take place (Morgan, 1996). The benefit of using this type of research methods is in its ability to bring forward new ideas. The pre-existing ideas and expectations of the researcher are left aside and the real experts can influence the results freely. Also, using focus groups can enrich the researchers knowledge of how people in the field talk about the issues of interest. This method is especially recommended when the topic is not thoroughly studied.

**Table 1.** Data and method used to answer different research questions.

Research question	Data used to answer the question	Method of Analysis
1. How has the Finnish trade union movement responded to immigration? Did they resist the public authorities or cooperate?	Central organizations public statements and program documents, and previous research by others	Content analysis of public statements & literature review
2. How have the Finnish unions as a whole responded to immigrant interest representation and incorporated immigrant labor market interests in the union organization in comparison to their European counterparts?	Online survey to all Finnish unions and ETUC survey to its member unions	Frequency distributions and comparisons between central organizations and between Finnish data and ETUC results
3. How have Finnish trade union activists on the ground* responded to immigration and ethnic discrimination in the labor markets?	Focus group data	Qualitative attitude analysis

\* The term "trade union activist" is used interchangeably with the term "trade union representative", "trade union representative on the group", "shop-steward", as the persons taking part in the focus-groups was for the most part shop-stewards or other union or local chapter representatives.

### 3. Conducting focus groups and analysis of the data

Billig has proposed (1993) that in the study of attitudes, discussion groups are a particularly useful way of producing data, as attitudes get naturally criticized and defended in group settings. In groups, the special rhetoric and contested nature of attitudes come to the fore and decipherable for the researcher. Furthermore, the data produced by group discussions can be analyzed as a culturally produced material or even as cultural structures. The group discussion is therefore understood to represent some greater cultural meanings, and help to bring to the fore the socially and culturally constructed nature of attitudes (Matikainen, 2007). As attitudes are expressed in language, and language is based on cultural resources, one can argue that in the qualitative study of attitudes as constructions of an image, using group discussions is a particularly useful way of getting at the culturally shared beliefs of a certain organization.

A fundamental assumption behind the data analysis is that as the trade union representatives speak about immigrant and ethnic discrimination, they create certain structures of the phenomenon, and build a picture of what they consider to be a typical immigrant and the phenomenon of ethnic discrimination. This picture and the structures that the trade union representatives produce in the discussions and reproduce in their daily interactions in the workplace influences how the entire organization views immigrants and ethnic discrimination, and the kinds of attitudes that the organization holds towards them.

Group discussions can of course take many different kind of form and shape but for the current study, the focus group method was selected. Focus groups as a research method are a specific type of group interview that is developed for the collection of data (Morgan, 1997; Krueger & Casey, 2000). As such, it does not offer methodological advice for the analysis of the collected data, and in fact, it produces data that can be analyzed using several different kinds of methods, depending on the interests of the researcher. Another essential component of focus groups, which gives it special status and separates it from other types of group interviews, is that the group interaction is the source of the data and of particular interest. Also, the role of the researcher in the creating the group interactions is active, helping to direct the discussions, and as such the method separates itself from any informal gathering of persons (Morgan, 1996).

The crucial element separating focus groups from just any group discussion is that the participants are selected based on some criteria determined by the researcher and that the participants have something in common (experiences, membership in some organization etc.) (Krueger & Casey, 2000). The topic of the discussion is also selected and predetermined by the researcher who also moderates the discussions and makes sure that the groups stay enough on the topic for the data between groups to be able to be compared and contrasted.

The focus group method is particularly suited when the researcher is interested in gaining “insight into the sources of complex behaviors and motivations” (Morgan, 1996, p. 139). The interaction between the participants, normally 6-10 persons, highlights the consensus as well as the contested aspects of the topics under discussion, and naturally within the process the participants give reasoning for the opinions they hold as well as question those of others. During this process, new aspects of the phenomenon under investigation come about as the participants explain themselves to others. This aspect of the focus groups has been termed the “group effect” .

Not only does the fact that more persons are present at a focus group interview than at a single interview bring about some so called synergies, but as Morgan and Kruger (1993) have argued, during a focus group, the participants not only ask for reasoning for statements from their interaction partners, but they also provide explanations for their own view points. Focus groups also bring about information regarding the level of agreement and disagreement among the participants, and also offer the participants a chance to consider and contrast alternative ideas presented to them. Lastly, not only is the researcher able to analyze the discourses taking place in the focus groups, but he/she also has the ability to ask the participants to explain themselves further which can ease the process of analysis further.

### **3.1 Focus group data analysis**

Data produced with the help of focus group interviews lends itself to several different types of analysis. Depending on the particular interest, it is possible to use the transcribed interviews in multiple ways. As the starting point of this study is to understand the conversations, the language and the reasoning, of the trade union representatives regarding immigration and ethnic discrimination, a helpful analytical approach is that of discourse-analysis (Blommaert, 2005). Discourse-analysis in and of itself can be understood and used in a multitude of ways, but perhaps the most important contribution it can offer to this study is the idea that discourse is a social act, and that words, speech acts or their structures can reflect certain ideologies and they are always set in a certain context (Fairclough, 2003). Discourse analysis can further be broken down into a number of differing approaches. As the interest of this part of the study is on attitudes trade unionist hold towards immigrants, and the kinds of representations trade unionists produce of immigrants, as well as ethnic discrimination, a helpful methodological approach in the analysis is that of *qualitative attitude analysis*, a “relative” or a subset of the discourse-analysis method.

### *Qualitative attitude analysis (QAA)*

The methodological approach called “qualitative attitude analysis” is an approach that includes both theoretical assumptions and practical components. The goal of the approach is to help decipher the meanings and evaluations people give to ideas presented to them. Of particular interest is also the conditions, roles and positions people make their evaluative statements under (Vesala & Rantanen, 2007). Qualitative attitude analysis as a method has similar starting points as that of discourse analysis, particularly that of rhetoric discourse-analysis developed by Billig (1996). Common to both of these methods is their focus on the argumentation and its analysis in the prevailing context and with the help of *concepts* that define the cultural settings (Vesala & Rantanen, 2007, p. 11).

As a method, qualitative attitude analysis begins with the production of the “argumentation data”, with the help of semi-structures interviews. Participants are given a stimulus to respond to. This stimulus can be a statement or a claim, or some type of a controversy. The same stimulus is presented to different participants, and as such the interviews are structured. In this study, the data was produced in a focus group setting with the help of several pre-selected “cues” or statements.

Secondly, the qualitative attitude analysis method proceeds with the data analysis as a process of commenting on the data and making justified analytic claims. The analysis is done at two levels, first of which is a classificatory analysis, which means making categories and indexes of the observations through a fairly literal reading of the material (Mason, 1996). As a basis of this classification process is that of a search for similarities and differences. The idea that comments carry justifications and conceptual meanings that can further be divided into groups, is central to the first step of the method.

Following the classificatory first step, the method goes on to produce an interpretative analysis. In this interpretative process the researcher takes some distance to the literal reading of the material and tries to observe the material using different theoretical focus points (Vesala & Rantanen, 2007). The idea that the argumentation is analyzed through different frames, such as that of personality psychology, social or cultural contexts is central to the method. Even though attitudes as such are often thought to represent something of an individual's internal mental structure, within the qualitative attitude analysis method attitudes can also be understood as a relationship between an individual and his or her environment, and the representations that the individual makes of the environment. Within relational social psychology the concept of an attitude is understood fundamentally as a relation between an individual and his/her environment (Bateson, 1972).

Furthermore, Billig, the theoretical father of the qualitative attitude analysis, has argued that attitudes can be understood to as a position or a standpoint on a controversial question. Billig believes that attitudes come out in a social context

more so than are some kind of internal personality characteristics (Billig, 1991). The proponents of qualitative attitude analysis argue further, that attitudes can be understood through the evaluative process humans make. As people argue their position on a certain topic, the evaluative stamp or *value* they give to something tells about the attitude they pose toward that something. Fishbein (1997) takes this even further and argues that attitudes are simply a person's either positive or negative evaluation of the target. Eagly and Chaiken, as well as most of the mainstream attitude researchers have on the other hand argued that attitudes are a type of an internal "hypothetical construction" that cannot in and of itself be observed, but rather has to be deciphered from the other information available to us (1993).

Billig has also argued that attitudes can be studied as something shared within social groups. As, for example, groups representing certain occupations or shared interests join in communication, shared social attitudes can be observed. Similar to the basic methodological principles of discourse-analysis, the idea of an attitude can be understood as position taking (Jokinen, 2002). Positioning or "stance taking" refers to social action taken in public discussions.

For the purposes of this study, the definition of an attitude produced by the developers of the qualitative attitude analysis is used. An attitude is a "phenomenon that is formed and built in a social reality and can be shared to differing degrees. It is also a communicative phenomenon which is used to signal messages and is used in social interactions....Internal content of an attitude refers to the valuation of a target....Valuation is the positive or negative assessment given to the target, be it any socially or culturally meaningful concrete or abstract, special or common phenomenon" (Vesala & Rantanen, 2007, p. 28, translated from Finnish to English by the author).

An attitude, as understood by the founders of the qualitative attitude analysis, can be studied as a recognizable phenomenon in an argument. It is also possible for an individual to reflect and produce different kinds of opinions in different social settings, as by definition attitude is socially and contextually bound and by varying the context or the social situation a person may end up producing a different type of an opinion. A single speech act as such does not represent an attitude, but the series of communicative events with evaluative components is interpreted as an attitude.

In the interpretative analysis of the attitudes, an important aspect to consider is that what, who and how the valuation is being done. The social interaction and the interaction context with its multilevel nature is a starting point for the interpretative analysis. As such, several different types of concepts and interpretative angles can be used within this method. The expression of an attitude can also be framed as an effort to affect the listener, perhaps to give a certain impression to the interviewer.

Taken together, within the qualitative attitude analysis method, an attitude is seen as a “relational concept that describes an individual’s behavioral and communicative attachment to the social world” (Vesala & Rantanen, 2007, p. 23). In the context of this study, attitudes towards immigrants are understood as socially constructed representations of the image of a typical immigrant, not only as some internal construction of positive or negative feelings towards a member of an immigrant group.

When using the QAA, the research material can be organized first by looking for variation and grouping similar stances together (classificatory analysis). Criteria like the strength of the opinion, indirect or direct nature of the expression can be used further to group the data. Central to the classification is to consider the justifications given to the attitudes, as people may hold the same attitudes despite having a completely different justification for it. The subject and the target of the attitude expression has to further be analyzed, as the speaker may take on different roles during the interaction, and may at times be commenting about different targets than what was originally suggested by the interviewer.

Attitudes can be compared and contrasted as that may also happen naturally in the data collection setting. In the interpretative analysis, the researcher produces what Geertz (1973) has called “thick descriptions” of the material, rather than only making classifications of it. A useful analytic tool in the interpretative analysis can also be the idea of creating frames (Goffman, 1974) or by analyzing the rhetoric positions taken by the participants. Researcher can not only create cognitive frames (producing different meanings by looking at data from different cognitive angles) but also analyze the data with the help of primary and secondary frames. Gitlin (1980, p. 6) has nicely defined frames as “principles of selection, emphasis and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters.” Interpreting a set of statements made by a participant as an attitude can already be seen as creating a primary frame. Reinterpreting the statement further in the process of taking different contextual angles, for example, can then be understood as a secondary frame. In the analytic process it is furthermore at times also possible to accept several different interpretations of the material even if it means using different frames (Vesala & Rantanen, 2007).

One of the main tasks of the researcher using qualitative attitude analysis approaches is to determine what are the relevant frames and interpretations for the data. The relevance can be justified by something standing out from the material itself, something new and unexpected. Also, the relevance can be justified by existing theories or interests related to the research questions (Vesala & Rantanen, 2007).

A good example of the way QAA can be used to study attitudes of representatives of a certain group toward immigrants can be found in the founding text of

the method, called “Argumentation and interpretation – the qualitative attitude analysis approach” (Vesala & Rantanen, 2007). In that text, Pyy (2007) uses qualitative attitude analysis to study the attitudes that the workers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church hold towards Muslim immigrants. In her study Pyy used interviews in the typical qualitative attitude analysis method style to look at the ways in which Muslim immigrants are constructed by the church representatives<sup>16</sup>. Pyy found that the Muslim immigrants were constructed as other religion holding immigrants and not as targets of religious conversion. On the other hand, Muslim immigrants were also seen as aid targets, a situation in which the religious affiliation of the group could be left aside. Several borders in the aid work of the church community were however present, due to the differing religious affiliation. Muslims were for example allowed to gather in the church premises as long as it was not for the reason of religious practice. The work of protecting religious freedom was placed in the hands of the state and its bureaucrats and not that of the Evangelical Lutheran church. While the church employees had a positive attitude towards the right of Muslims to practice their religion, they rejected the idea of campaigning for the right of Muslims to have the right to pray in their workplaces. The results of the study by Pyy are in line of the results of the study by Pitkänen and Kouki (1999), who also found that less than half of public officers thought that Muslims should be allowed to have a have a day off on their religious holidays.

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<sup>16</sup> *The method is later described in detail in the methods section of this study.*

# RESULTS



## 1. Cooperative central organizations focus on employment

In order to answer the first research question about “how the Finnish union movement reacted to immigration since the arrival of immigrants, did they resist it or support it?”, a basic content analysis of the union confederations’ public statements and program documents, as well as a review of limited existing academic literature is done. The public statements and program documents were located from the three central organizations websites and they are used to answer the basic question about resistance vs. support as well as to see what the reasoning behind the positions taken is.

Though immigration to Finland began in noticeable numbers in the 1980s, and accelerated in the 1990s, the first official trade union statements on the issue can be found from the late 1990s and early 2000s. The arrival of the first significant groups of immigrants in the early 1990s coincided with one of the most serious economic recessions in Finland’s history. At that time the trade unions confederations were preoccupied with the massive unemployment and other economic issues, and it should perhaps not come as a surprise that no immigration related statements are available from early 1990s.

The first ‘immigration and asylum’ program in Finland was approved in 1997. Finding the 1997 legislation inadequate by 2004, the Ministry of labor set up a working group whose task was to develop a second immigration and asylum program, this time focusing on increasing the amount of employment-based immigration. All labor market partners were invited to give their position on

the plan before it was finalized and approved. In March, 2006, together with the employers' organizations, the three trade union confederations made a statement regarding their position on the proposed new legislation (Työmarkkinajärjestöjen yhteinen kannanotto, 2006).

In their combined statement, the labor market partners stated their common goal of improving the overall society's and the work places' attitudes towards immigrants, as well as developing better conditions for a 'multicultural work-life'. According to the labor market partners, ten years ago, when Finland decided to join the EU, with the support of the labor market organizations, it accepted the basic principle of freedom of movement of people.

While accepting the principle of freedom of movement, in 2006, the three organizations believed that Finland faced a serious risk of labor shortages due to the aging population, and as a solution to this problem, the labor market partners highlight the need to first and foremost increase the employment levels of native Finns, as well as the immigrants already present in Finland. In addition, they pointed out that employment-based immigration was needed to supplement, not to replace, the Finnish labor force.

In order to ease the employment of foreigners, the labor market partners suggest that a better system of accrediting degrees gained abroad as well as retraining of foreigners was needed. Also, the partners believed that it is important that the foreign-born workers feel welcomed and are allowed to maintain their own culture and identity while respecting Finnish laws. For their part, the labor market partners committed to 'easing the development of a positive atmosphere at the workplace and to prevent preconceptions, ignorance and racism' (Työmarkkinajärjestöjen yhteinen kannanotto, 2006).

In addition to this common statement, each of the three Finnish trade union Confederations have made their own statement with slightly different emphasis on the issue. Akava, the Confederation of Unions for Academic Professionals, emphasized in its statement the need for Finland to attract more highly educated immigrants (Björkbacka, 2006). According to Akava, in order for Finland to continue performing well in the global markets, it needs to have a more multicultural labor market. Highly educated workers could improve the knowledge base of the Finnish labor market and increase innovation (Piekka, 2006). Akava also argued that immigration to Finland has to be balanced and controlled, with only few short-term permits allowed, so that foreign professionals may plan a permanent stay in Finland. Preventing the ethnic segregation of the Finnish labor market was also important to Akava, as well as calculating the costs of immigration, such as schooling, housing, and social and health care. Akava suggested changes to the Finnish immigration law in such a way that more foreign students and researchers could enter with increasing ease (Björkbacka, 2006).

STTK, the Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees, also stated in its declaration support for ‘the controlled and sustainable internationalization of the Finnish labor market’ (STTK, 2005). They highlight though, that ‘multiculturalism is not a goal of itself, rather a consequence from internationalization’ (STTK, 2005). STTK emphasized the need to make sure that the work contracts of foreign workers are legal and observed, as they saw this group’s protection as more difficult than that for indigenous workers. STTK stated that while important, working to prevent racism and discrimination is difficult. They cited research from Sweden which shows that the darker the skin color of an immigrant the harder it is for that person to find work. This, STTK thinks, should be kept in mind when recruiting workers from other countries. Most importantly, STTK argued for the need to consider carefully what level of resources it is reasonable to dedicate to the recruitment of foreign workers compared to attempting to keep the Finnish workforce in Finland and improving the employment rates of all potential workers (native and immigrant) already present in the country (STTK, 2005).

SAK, the Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions, representing most of the blue collar workers’ unions, has expressed the view that Finnish immigration policy should have a clearer employment focus. This increased employment-based immigration should be done in a controlled fashion, ensuring that migrants are treated fairly. SAK also agreed with the Ministry of Labor (now the ministry of employment and the economy) working group that “*regulation of immigrant labor based on the availability of labor in the Finnish economy should remain in place, while widespread unemployment continues*” (SAK, 2005, p. 2 emphasis added). In order to combat gray economy and the use of irregular foreign workers, SAK proposed various measures, including a regulation system ‘requiring employers of foreign workers to be entered in the tax withholding register’ (SAK, 2005, p. 2). Altogether, SAK was interested in first and foremost protecting the labor market from an increase in the gray economy as well as ensuring that the indigenous workers do not lose jobs as a consequence of immigration.

In the 2000s, the Finnish trade unions emphasize the need to increase the employment of native Finns and the need to consider how difficult it is for foreigners, especially with darker skin tones, to find gainful employment. Though the statement made by the labor market partners highlighted the need to tackle immigrant discrimination, other issues such as preventing the growth of the gray economy or segmentation of the labor market were emphasized. The acceptance of increased employment-based immigration seemed to be strictly on the grounds of predicted and already present labor shortages in certain sectors of the labor market. Though Akava spoke directly about the need for Finland to create a more multicultural labor market, their idea of multiculturalism appeared to be limited to increasing the number of representatives from highly educated groups.

Salmenhaara has also analyzed the development of the immigration and asylum program and the negotiations that took place behind the writing of the program, particularly the lobby of the three different central organizations, as mentioned in the literature review of this thesis. Salmenhaara (2008) argued that all the organizations were in favor of the program to have a clear employment focus and the differences in the details were the result of the different groups of workers that each of the organizations represent. Salmenhaara writes that the threat rhetoric, regarding the large in-flow of migrants especially from the eastern European countries<sup>17</sup> was particularly emphasized by the SAK, whereas the STTK believed that Finland had no reason to be worried about the uncontrollable inflow of migrants. Akava on the other hand focused on the potential of the growth in the knowledge capital that would come to benefit Finland.

Salmenhaara writes that the emphasis on the need to recruit highly skilled migrants as suggested by Akava and to a certain degree by STTK, ended up in the final program. Akava had also suggested a strong emphasis on the integration policies, which however did not gain as much strength as the control emphasis proposed by especially SAK. The need to make sure that working conditions of immigrants of all nationalities should be the same as for Finns and that this should be controlled for was especially important for STTK and SAK, and as a result of a proposal from SAK, the police established a new unit focusing on monitoring working contracts of immigrants. According to Salmenhaara, the position taken by SAK was dual in its nature. On one hand, international collaboration was on the table but on the other hand, more control was being demanded.

### **1.1 Projects and programs of the trade union central organizations**

In addition to making public statements and lobbying at the legislative levels, the three central organizations have also made efforts to develop programs with the emphasis on easing immigrants' labor market integration. One of the first common programs designed and ran by the central organizations was a networking project called Mosaiikki-erinlaisuuden etu (Mosaic, the benefit of differences) as well as a research project supporting it. The idea of the Mosaiikki project was to increase equality in the workplace, and to acknowledge the benefits of diversity in the workplace. Both the workers' unions and the employers' organizations took part in the development of the project (STTK, 2006).

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<sup>17</sup> This discussion about the fear of the large in-surge of migrant labor with the SAK is described in the article by Eve Kyntäjä in the book "Going Global- trade unions success strategies in the global times (2008).

The three trade union confederations have also made other common efforts to ease the integration of immigrants into the labor market and the trade unions, especially in the 2000s. Together the three confederations have produced 'A Guide for Immigrant Workers', which covers issues such as 'the Finnish labor market model', how to join a trade union, why it is important to be a member of a trade union and contact information for the central organizations and the individual trade unions (SAK, 2002). Also, a common publication titled 'The Finnish Trade Union Movement – what every employee should know' was produced in association with the SAK information point in Tallinn, Estonia. This publication covers issues such as the achievements of the trade unions movement, how collective agreements and trade unions work and the benefits of trade union membership. This publication is available in English, Estonian, Russian, Polish and Finnish (STTK, 2005).

Analyzing the content of the three trade union confederations' publications separately it seems that in the early years of increasing immigration, the SAK took the most active role in integrating immigrants into its work. SAK reported in 2006 that approximately 12 000, or one per cent, of its members are immigrants (SAK, 2006), whereas such figures were not available for the other confederations.

SAK believed that for a number of reasons immigrants are not familiar with the trade union movement (e.g. lack of such a movement in their own country, or the illegality of being a member of such an organization in their native country) and therefore it found it important to provide immigrants with information regarding the role of trade unions in Finnish industrial relations as soon as they arrive in Finland (SAK, 2006). Some of the SAK affiliates have produced recruitment materials in the most common immigrant languages (Russian, Estonian and English) (SAK, 2006).

Since 2002, SAK has had a multicultural working group whose responsibility it is to advance the development of multiculturalism in the organization, as well as to communicate with immigrant organizations. Furthermore, SAK has coordinated two major projects intended to promote tolerance and multiculturalism in the workplace. The first of these projects, called 'ETMO' – Multiculturalism as a Resource – was developed as part of the European Union EQUAL projects in the years 2001–2005. The central objective of the project was to '(come up with ideas), develop, produce and try out such methods, materials and training and good practices that would promote tolerance and multiculturalism at workplaces and improve the employability of immigrants' (Sintonen, 2005). The partners in the project were six trade unions, and employers' organizations and labor authorities. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the project a major research study was incorporated as part of it, conducted by the research department of SAK.

The second such project, coordinated by SAK, called 'PETMO – how to initiate multiculturalism into a workplace – was also funded by the EU through the EQUAL

scheme, and it followed on from the work done with the ETMO project. The aim of the PETMO project was to create the readiness and expertise to develop diversity within working communities, to promote multicultural understanding and to improve the employability of immigrants (Sintonen, 2004). The ultimate goal of the PETMO project was to develop a training program for diversity initiators for different work places.

As described above, the early rhetoric of the Finnish trade union confederations in their public statements was cautiously supportive of immigration, with preference on the employment focus of the immigration program. The main concerns for the central organizations were the need to prevent the growth in the gray economy and to make sure that the immigrant labor is not coming to replace the native Finnish workforce. While the employment based immigration was supported by all three of the central organizations, differences in their rhetoric were also evident. Akava, the central organization representing the academically educated workers focused on the recruitment of the highly skilled migrants and the need to develop proper integration programs. SAK and STTK, on the other hand, lobbied for increasing control efforts with the purpose of preventing the growth of the gray economy and segmentation of the labor markets.

### *Summing up*

If we analyze the public statements and results from Salmenhaara in the Hyman “who” framework (1997), it appears that the central organizations have developed many types of programs intending to ease the labor market integration of immigrants. The main group of immigrants that the central organizations seem to discuss in their statements are the labor migrants. Questions about humanitarian immigration, illegal migration and other forms of migration do not seem to be on the agenda to the same extent for the central organizations.

The results of this study support parts of the hypothesis developed by Wilkens. The context that the Finnish unions operate, the combination of relative union stability and local representation, Wilkens argued would lead to openness to immigrant labor. Furthermore, Wilkens argued that the high level of corporatism would lead to less room for individual players to maneuver and take differing opinions. While the results from Finland show that among the main lines of the immigration program the different labor market partners were able to agree, some differences in their positions also existed. While none of the central organizations were resisting employment based immigration, the central organizations did have differences in their emphasis. Lastly Wilkens argued that policies acceptable to all unions as well as government and employers require compromises and in the case of concentrated movements, this may result in more broadly open, but less radically inclusive approaches to immigrants” (p. 21). The results from Finland

support this hypothesis, in that the development of the immigration program of 2004, as argued by Salmenhaara (2008) can be seen as a set of compromises that was in no way radically inclusive in its nature.

## 2. Finnish trade unions and the question of responsibility

In order to answer the second research question: How have the Finnish unions as a whole responded to immigrant interest representation and incorporated immigrant labor market interests in the union organization in comparison to their European counterparts? - an online survey was developed and sent to all Finnish trade unions. The results of the survey were compared to a survey conducted by the European Trade Union Confederation in order to gain a bit of an idea of the other European trade unions' efforts with immigrants.

In 2003 the European Trade Union Confederation sent a questionnaire to all of its member confederations, altogether 24 confederations covering all the European Union states with the exception of Greece, but including Norway, the Czech Republic and Poland. The questionnaire's purpose was to investigate trade union practices in Europe in relation to migrant and ethnic minority workers. Detailed questions related to membership, services, labor market challenges and success with representing immigrant interests, were asked. The picture that emerges from the responses is one that acknowledges significant difficulties faced by immigrants in the European labor markets, as well as a range of national responses to it. The Finnish response to the survey was given by a representative from SAK only; the other two central confederations were not surveyed.

The Finnish survey was designed using the Survey Monkey online survey making software ([surveymonkey.com](http://surveymonkey.com)) and it was sent to all member unions of the SAK (27 unions), Akava (34 unions) and STTK (20 unions). Altogether 59 responses were collected from different unions, 16 from SAK affiliates, 21 from Akava and 12 from STTK; with a response rate of 73% (not all respondents indicated their union).

The survey was sent to the person responsible in each union for immigration related issues. If no such person could be identified from the union's website, the survey was sent to the person responsible for membership issues. Further, if no staff member with membership responsibilities was identifiable, the survey was sent to the head of the union.

The several of the survey questions were identical to those asked by the ETUC, in order to compare the Finnish case in better detail with the European counterparts. The survey questions were categorized as "beginning" - questions related to the person responding to the survey, "union and its composition" - questions related to the paid staff and elected leadership of the union, "membership" - questions related to immigrant members in the union, "services" - questions

related to services provided to the immigrant membership, and lastly “ethnic discrimination” – questions related to experiences and attitudes towards ethnic discrimination in the Finnish labor markets.

## **2.1 Background questions**

In order to compare the survey respondents with those persons taking part in the focus groups and to make sure that the respondents were at least theoretically familiar with the union they were representing (i.e. had been working for the union at least for few years), the survey began with background questions identical to those in the focus groups. The respondents were asked about which union they are employed by, what their position is and for how long they have been in this position.

The results of the background questions show that the respondents on average had been working for the union they were representing for a significant period of time, and could be expected to be fairly familiar with the union’s structures and motivations.

The results of the survey show that around 30% of the respondents had worked from one month to 4 years for the current union. Another 30% of the respondents had been employed for 4–10 years by the current union, and about 37% had already over 10 year tenure at the same union. 22% of the respondents had been serving in the same capacity up to two years, about 60% from 2 years to 10 years, and 8.6% for 10–15 years and 8.6% for more than 15 years.

The participants were also asked about how long they have been working in the current position. According to the survey results 25.8% of the respondents had been employed in the current position for less than two years, 58.6% for two to ten years and 15.5% for more than 10 years.

The respondents were also asked about their education, and 46.6% had a university or college degree, 19% had a upper trade school degree, and the rest 3-12% had either middle school or less (3.4%), lower secondary school (12.1%), trade school (5.2%), high school diploma (5.2%) or polytechnic degree (8.6%).

All together, the background questions show that a great majority of the participants had been working for the union they were representing for a significant period of time and furthermore had been serving in the same position for several years.

## 2.2 Union composition

In terms of the union structures and staff responsibilities, the survey asked about the number of staff members that the union had with responsibilities related to immigration issues. According to the survey results, more than half of the unions, 54% had no staff members with work responsibilities related to immigration. 16% of the unions had a single staff member, 12% had 2, 8% had 3, and 4% had 4, 2% had 5, 6 or 8. In Akava affiliated unions, on average 1.6 persons were employed with immigration related responsibilities (43% of unions had none), where as SAK affiliates had 1 person on average (and over 60% of the unions had no such staff) and STTK affiliates had 0.55 persons on average (58% had none).

The respondents were also asked what they considered to be the most important aspect of their work related to immigration as an open ended question. The most common answer the respondents gave was *“increasing the labor market knowledge of immigrants”* and *“member recruitment”*. Some respondents also expressed *“attitude changing and multicultural work”*, as well as *“education among general membership and immigrants”*.

At the European level, the ETUC survey showed that almost all confederations, 22 out of 24 have staff with a particular responsibility for issues affecting migrants and ethnic minority workers. The number of staff ranged from 30 to just one. Overall the most important area of their work was seen as producing policies on discrimination and integration. Campaigning at a political level on these issues and combating prejudice among the broader membership followed as second.

The surveys asked also about the nationality background of the persons working in the positions that include dealing with immigration related issues. According to the survey results, in Finland, in 94% of the unions, the persons with immigration related work responsibilities were all Finnish nationals from origins. In 4% of the unions, those with immigration related responsibilities were both, Finnish and foreign born. In 2% of the unions, all of these staff members had foreign national origins.

In Akava affiliated unions, 96% of the persons working with immigration related issues were all of Finnish origin, where as in SAK affiliates the figure was 85% and STTK affiliates 92%.

From the ETUC affiliates, 15 confederations have information on the number of paid staff coming from the migrant and ethnic minority communities, the number ranging zero to 18%. Almost half of the confederations had taken measures to increase this number.

The Finnish unions were also asked about the number of immigrants they employ in any capacity. According to the survey results, 72% of the unions had no persons born outside of Finland in the payroll. Further, 12% of the respondents indicated that the union had employed a single person born outside of Finland, or

that they did not know the answer to this question. Altogether 2% of the unions had employed two immigrants and another 2% had 4 individuals. In the Akava affiliated unions, 87% of the unions had only Finns in their payroll, where as in STTK and SAK affiliates 77% had only Finns. From the ETUC affiliates, 15 confederations have information on the number of paid staff coming from the migrant and ethnic minority communities, the number ranging zero to 18%. Almost half of the confederations had taken measures to increase this number.

The Finnish unions were also asked about how many persons born outside of Finland hold managerial positions in their union. According to the survey results 88% of the respondents indicated that they had no immigrants in managerial positions, 10% did not know the answer to the question and 2% had a single foreign born manager. In the SAK affiliated unions, 15% did not know whether they had any foreign born managers, and the rest had none. For the STTK affiliated unions 7% had some foreign born managers, 23% did not know whether they had any, and the rest, 70% had none. For Akava affiliates, 4% of the unions did not know the answer to the question and the rest indicated "none".

Unions were also asked about how many foreign born persons they have in their representative bodies, and results show that 14% of the unions had some (1 or more, the question did not ask for the number) foreign born persons in their representative bodies, where as 60% did not have any, and 26% of the respondents did not know whether they did or not. In the Akava affiliated unions, only one reported having foreign born persons in their representative body, where as for the SAK affiliates 8% had some and of STTK affiliates 15% had some.

### **2.3 Membership**

The survey asked a number of questions related to the immigrant members in the unions. Questions such as the number of immigrant members, possible strategies to increase the numbers and the type of background questions unions collected from their members.

All the unions were also asked to indicate how many immigrant members they had. According to the results, almost 30% of the respondents indicated that they did not know how many immigrant members they had, and another 30% had more than 80 immigrant members. Furthermore, 10% of the unions indicated 0 immigrant members and about 15% had up to 10, and lastly about 15% of the unions had between 10 and 80 immigrant members. For the STTK affiliates, half of the unions did not know the number of immigrant members, and the rest number categories each had 7%. In the SAK affiliates 46% of the unions had more than 80 immigrant members, 15% had 1-5, 15% had 0, 8% had 40-60 and another 8% 20-40 immigrant members, with all unions knowing the number

of immigrant members. In the Akava affiliates 31% did not know the number of immigrant members, 27% had 80 or more, 9% had 0, 23% had 1-10, 1 had 21-40 and another single union had 40-60.

The results of the ETUC survey showed that twelve confederations, half the total, had information on the proportion of total membership who are migrant- or ethnic minority workers. Among the ETUC survey respondents, 1% to 35% of the membership had an immigrant background, although the definitions confederations use vary greatly. The information also suggests that the union density of migrants and ethnic minorities is below the average.

According to the ETUC survey respondents, slightly more than half, 13 out of 24 confederations, have a strategy to increase the proportion of migrant and ethnic minority members and in some cases “have invested substantial resources and political commitment in doing so”. In practical terms, 11 confederations have produced recruitment material in other languages.

The Finnish survey asked also whether the union had a strategy to increase the number of immigrant members; 83.3% indicated that they did not and the rest, 16.7% said yes. Of the Akava affiliated unions, 82% , of SAK affiliates 75%, and of the STTK affiliates 92% did not have such a strategy. Also, when asked whether their union had a strategy to activate the existing immigrant membership, 81.3% said “no” and about 18% said “yes”. For the STTK affiliates, 16% had such a strategy and of SAK affiliates 33% did also, where as of the Akava affiliates only 9% did have such a strategy. Those unions that had a strategy to increase immigrant membership were asked to write about the efforts they are making. Most commonly the strategy included developing recruitment materials in foreign languages and also increasing shop floor level recruitment. Those unions that made efforts to activate the existing immigrant membership indicated that this was done through educational programs targeted for immigrants.

The Finnish survey asked also whether the union collected background information (e.g. native language) from their immigrant members. This question has not only a practical meaning, but it suggests something about whether unions are interested in identifying different groups among its membership. According to the results, in Finland, 66.7% of the unions do not collect any background information, where as 31.3% indicated that they do (2.1% did not know if they do or not). Of the Akava affiliates 68% did not collect any background information, and in SAK affiliates 41% did not collect, 8% did not know the answer, and 51% did collect background info. Of the STTK affiliates 16% did collect such information, and the rest did not.

Finnish unions were also asked about their attitudes towards collecting data on their immigrant members. According to the survey results, 10% of the unions indicated that they were in principle opposed to collecting data on their immigrant membership and for about 15% practical difficulties was making it impossible,

and 18% of the unions also had practical difficulties but had managed to collect some background information. At 4.2% of the unions, background information was available at the local levels and almost 19% had substantial information collected. Almost a third of the respondents indicated that they did not know what their unions attitudes were regarding collecting background information from immigrant members.

At the European level, some union confederations had concerns about whether and how to hold information about members who are migrants or members of ethnic minority communities. However, only two confederations said that they were opposed in principle to collecting such information. For most confederations practical difficulties are the main reason why the information is limited.

## **2.4 Member services**

The next section of the survey included several questions about the services unions provided for immigrant members. Firstly, unions were asked about the recruitment materials they had for immigrant members. According to the results, 50% of the Finnish unions said that they had recruitment materials in other languages and the other 50 % indicated that they did not have. If the respondent indicated that his/her union had recruitment material in other languages, they were asked to write in an open ended format, which languages their materials cover. The most common language covered by recruitment materials was English, with 14 unions having such materials, secondly Swedish with 13 unions. Seven unions had recruitment materials in Russian, five in Estonia, three in Polish, and one in each of Chinese, Spanish, German and French. Of the ETUC survey respondents 11 unions have recruitment materials in other languages. In the STTK affiliated union 33%, and in SAK and Akava affiliates 50% had recruitment materials in foreign languages.

Secondly, the Finnish unions were asked about whether they have a committee that handles immigration related questions. The results show that 93.3% of the unions do not have a committee responsible for immigration related issues and 6.7% do. Of the Akava affiliated unions 9% had such a committee, where as of the SAK affiliates none reported having one, and of the STTK affiliates, 8% did have.

Unions were also asked about whether they have educational programs or other services available only for their immigrant members. The results show that 35.6% of unions do not have any educational programs, legal or other information services available for immigrants and the rest, 64.4% have. Of the Akava affiliates, 68% offered such programs, and of the STTK affiliated unions 50% indicated having such programs, as well 67% of the SAK affiliates. When asked whether these legal or other information services were available for illegal immigrants, 23.3%

of the respondents indicated “yes” and 76.7% said “no” (of Akava 21% “yes”, SAK 33% “yes”, and 8% “yes” of the STTK affiliates).

Unions were also asked who these services were for; members only or all who asked for it. According to the respondents, in 88.9% of the unions, these services were not available for immigrants who are not members of the unions, and in the rest, 11.1% these services were available to non-members also. Interestingly all Akava and STTK affiliated unions said that the services were only available for members, whereas for SAK affiliates, 44% said that the services could be offered to non-members also.

Unions that indicated having legal or other information services for immigrants were asked to write about the specific types of services. While the question was specifically about services to immigrants, the open ended answers pointed out that the services offered to immigrants were the same services offered to all members. All members were treated and serviced the same was the most common answer type.

The ETUC survey also asked about the services provided for immigrants. According to the ETUC survey, three quarters of the ETUC union confederations, 18 out of 24, provide legal or advice services linked to the specific position of migrants and ethnic minorities, with just over half of this number providing it to all who ask, while the rest limit it to members only. Eleven confederations also provide advice to workers in the country illegally, with this being a crucial part of union work in both Spain and Portugal.

The ETUC survey results indicate that two-thirds of the confederations, 16 out of 24, have a special committee for issues concerning migrants and ethnic minorities. These committees normally meet quarterly and their composition varies between confederations ranging from elected committees of activists to paid union experts. Several confederations can point to concrete results which have come from these committees.

The Finnish unions were asked also if they had publications intended to increase immigrants’ knowledge of the Finnish labor markets. The results show that 62.2% of the unions have no such publications, whereas 13.% have leaflets and posters, 15% have special publications, 20% internet publications and 6.7% have normal or “other” publications. Unions that had materials intended to increase immigrants labor market knowledge, were typically using the materials from their central organizations. No union mentioned having developed material of their own. Of the ETUC union confederations 88% had publications dealing with immigrants in the labor markets.

Of the Akava affiliates, 27% had some type of publications for the purpose, and of the SAK and STTK affiliates 50% indicated having such publications.

In terms of immigration related services targeted for the greater membership, the unions were asked whether the union had anti-discrimination training

for the greater membership. According to the respondents, 80% of the unions indicated that they did not have and the rest, 20% said “yes”. The few unions that had anti-discrimination training, seemed to include it in their shop-steward training programs. Furthermore, some unions indicated that at the moment they did not have such training, but were in the process of developing it. Among the STTK affiliated unions 33%, as well as of the SAK affiliated unions 17% and Akava affiliates 14% indicated that they had such trainings.

Similarly asked, the ETUC survey respondents indicated that 12 of the 24 confederations had anti-discrimination training for the wider membership. Also, the Finnish survey asked if the unions had any statutes, declarations or policies related to immigration. The results show that in Finland, 90% of the unions did not have any statutes, declarations or policies related to immigration, and about 10% said they have. Results of the ETUC survey showed that 13 confederations have something in their statutes on combating racism, including, in some cases a clear commitment to a multi-ethnic society. A larger number, 18, have a general declaration on immigration policy and/or anti-racism. Sixteen of the survey confederations have also a policy on immigration. Among the Finnish unions affiliated with the different confederations some differences are evident with 0% of STTK affiliates having such declarations, 17% of SAK, and 9% of Akava affiliates having some.

In the Finnish survey, the respondents were asked to indicate whether their union had handled any cases of suspected ethnic discrimination. About 80% of the respondents said they had not had any such cases. A little more than 16% had had 1-2 cases and almost 5% had handled 3-5 cases. The respondents were also asked to tell about the cases of suspected ethnic discrimination and how they had been handled. The open ended questions did not, however, give much detail of the cases that could be analyzed.

## **2.5 Ethnic discrimination**

The survey respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on a number of questions on ethnic discrimination and other labor market difficulties that immigrants face in Finland<sup>18</sup>. The first question inquired about how common ethnic discrimination is in general in the Finnish labor markets? As shown in table 2, a bit over 9 % of the respondents believed that ethnic discrimination is “very common”, where as a bit over 60 % indicated “some”, 14% believed it is “very rare” and 7% do not think it occurs at all. Interestingly, when asked how common ethnic

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<sup>18</sup> *The respondents were asked to indicate their opinion of the questions as the representatives of the union, not as personally held views in the case that their personal opinion was different from that of the opinion they thought their union had.*

discrimination is in their own labor market sector, a bit over 25 % believed that it does not occur at all and almost 50% believed that it is “very rare”. No respondent believed that ethnic discrimination is “very common” in their sector and 25% indicated that it occurs “some”.

**Table 2.** How common do you think ethnic discrimination is in the Finnish labor markets in general, column a, how common do you think ethnic discrimination is in the labor market sector of the union, column b.

How common is ethnic discrimination	% of unions, Finnish labor market in general	% unions, unions labor market sector
Very common	9	0
Some	60	25
Very rare	14	50
Does not take place	7	25

As shown in table 3, only STTK affiliated unions believed that ethnic discrimination occurs in the Finnish labor markets in general often (very common), 33% of the STTK affiliated unions believed this to be the case. However, in the unions' own labor market sectors, none of the STTK or other confederal affiliates believed ethnic discrimination to be very common. For the SAK and Akava affiliates, around 80% believed that ethnic discrimination occurred somewhat in the Finnish labor markets in general and around 20% considered it to be rare or non-existent. Of the STTK affiliates on the other hand over 30% considered ethnic discrimination to occur only rarely or non at all in the labor markets in general.

**Table 3.** Numbers in parenthesis indicates the % change from the response from labor markets in general to the response regarding the unions own sector.

Level of ethnic discrimination	SAK - LM general	SAK - own sectors	STTK - LM general	STTK - own sectors	Akava - LM general	Akava - own sectors
Very common			33%	(-33)		
Some	83%	42% (-41)	33%	22% (-11)	79%	21% (-58)
Rare	17%	42% (+25)	22%	55% (+23)	16%	47% (+31)
None		16% (+16)	12%	22% (+10)	5%	32% (+27)

When asked specifically about the unions' own labor market sectors, the frequency of the "some" category dropped and the frequency of the "rare" and "non" increased significantly. The increase in the rare category was the largest for the Akava affiliates, 27% points, followed by SAK (16%) and STTK (10%) affiliates. The increase in the "rare" category was also largest for Akava affiliates, with 31% points, followed by SAK (25%) and STTK (23%).

The survey respondents were also asked about other difficulties immigrants face in the Finnish labor markets besides ethnic discrimination. Questions about other difficulties that immigrants face in the labor markets in general, began with a question to indicate all that they think apply from a list of proposed difficulties. As shown in table 4, 77 % of the respondents believed that immigrants face higher rates of unemployment than Finns do. Also, 56 % of the unions indicate lower salaries (vs. Finns), 54 % slower career progression (vs. Finns), 16 % lower initial qualifications, and 16 % work place harassment.

**Table 4.** What are the major difficulties immigrants face in the Finnish labor markets (choose all that you think apply) and in the unions own labor market sector?

Type of labor market difficulty, immigrants vs. native Finns.	% of unions, Finnish labor market in general	% unions, unions labor market sector
Higher unemployment rates	77	28
Lower salaries	56	26
Slower career progression	54	26
Lower qualifications	16	16
Work place harassment	16	2
No particular problems	0	16

The respondents were also asked about the same potential difficulties in their union's labor market sector. Interestingly, when asked about the unions own labor market sector, the number of unions reporting the problems faced by immigrants decreased quite significantly. In their own labor market sector, 28 % of the respondents believed that immigrants had higher rates of unemployment, 26 % lower salaries, 26 % slower career progression, 16 % lower qualifications and 2 % work place harassment. In their own labor market sector 16 % of the respondents believed that immigrants do not face difficulties at all.

At the European level, the ETUC survey responses indicated that almost all the confederations, 21 out of 24, agreed that migrants and ethnic minorities faced particular problems in the labor market, with higher levels of unemployment being identified most frequently, followed by lower pay and slower promotion. For women, lower pay was the problem most commonly reported.

When asked specifically about the difficulties immigrant females experience in the Finnish labor markets similar percentages as for immigrants in general emerged. Of the respondents, 63% believed that immigrant females have higher rates of unemployment (vs. Finnish females), 54% said lower salaries, 53.5% slower career progression, 21% lower qualifications, 19% work place harassment, and 2% indicated that immigrant women face no labor market difficulties at all.

Following the questions about the difficulties immigrants face, the respondents were asked to indicate the reasons for the difficulties. According to the results, 90% of the respondents believed that immigrants had language difficulties and 53% indicated lack of acceptable qualifications. Also, 58% believed that one reason was “lack of knowledge of the system” and 44% “lack of social networks”. “Prejudice of the Finnish nationals” was believed to be a reason by almost half of the respondents, 49%, and 23% indicated “restrictions on legal rights to employment”, 19% difficulties to access social services (e.g. employment office) and 19% lack of residency permit. Total of 9% of the respondents said that they “don’t know” the reasons for the difficulties and 0% said that immigrants face “no labor market difficulties”.

When asked about the same list of potential reasons for the labor market difficulties in the respondents own labor market sector the following percentages emerged. Of the respondents, 61% indicated “language difficulties”, 42% lack of acceptable qualifications, 28% prejudice of the Finnish nationals, 49% lack of knowledge of the system, 9% lack of residency permit, 12% restrictions on legal rights of employment, and 12% difficulties to access social services (e.g. employment services). About 7% of the respondents indicated that they did not know the reasons for the difficulties and 9% believed that immigrants face no labor market difficulties in their own sector.

As shown in table 5, the percentage of unions citing certain reasons for the labor market difficulties of immigrants reduced for all potential explanatory factors, when comparing the frequencies from “labor markets in general” to “union’s own labor market sector”. Similar pattern, as in the previous questions about frequency of ethnic discrimination and other labor market difficulties, between the number of unions citing the difficulties in the Finnish labor markets in general and in the unions own labor market sector emerged here as well.

The results of the ETUC survey were quite similar to the Finnish ones. Immigrants’ labor market difficulties were explained in most countries by a combination of factors: language difficulties, was the most frequently cited factor. However, no confederation thought it was the only reason for the difficulties migrants and ethnic minorities faced. The other reasons identified most frequently were lack of accepted qualifications, prejudice in the host country and problems in understanding the system.

**Table 5.** Reasons for the difficulties immigrants face in the labor markets, labor markets in general and unions' own sectors.

<b>% of unions, Finnish labor market in general</b>	<b>% unions, unions labor market sector</b>	<b>Reasons for the immigrants labor market difficulties</b>
90	61	Language difficulties
53	42	Lack of acceptable qualifications
49	28	Prejudice of the Finnish nationals
58	49	Lack of knowledge of the system
19	9	Lack of residency permit
19	12	Difficulties to access social services
23	12	Restrictions on legal rights of employment
9	7	I don't know
0	9	No labor market difficulties

### *Summing up*

As no academic studies have previously attempted to analyze the question of immigrant interest representation by Finnish unions and within Finnish unions, and as no statistics about the number of immigrant members within Finnish unions exist, the current study attempted, in an exploratory fashion, gain some insights regarding these questions. While the results do not provide any causal explanations or even correlations, and many methodological problems limit the generalizability of the results<sup>19</sup>, some interesting patterns that could be further investigated do emerge. The following sections highlight some of the main results in relation to the research questions.

In answering one of the main research questions “How have the Finnish unions as a whole responded to immigrant interest representation and incorporated immigrant labor market interests in the union organization in comparison to their European counterparts?” the survey questions related to union composition, membership and services should be considered.

The results of the survey shows that in terms of the union composition, and the extent to which immigrants have been able to gain access to the payroll of unions, that in most unions immigration related issues are handled by native Finns, and that most unions have, in fact, not hired any immigrants. Also, almost 90% of the Finnish unions do not have any immigrants in managerial positions. In terms of the unions' representative bodies, the situation is slightly better, with only 60%

<sup>19</sup> *As some of the respondents did not indicate the union they represented, it would for example be difficult to draw conclusions about the sectorial influences. Furthermore, as the total number of responses was quite low, the ability study causality was largely limited.*

of unions reporting no immigrant representatives. Also, for a large number of the unions, a person responsible for immigration related issues was either not determined or that person had number of other duties also. As described in the theoretical section of this document, research of employment equity programs has shown, that having a staff person whose responsibility it is to create targets for the improvement of equality, and to monitor them, is most likely to produce the desired outcomes. In terms of the results of the survey, it seems that if the unions wanted to produce larger organizational change towards the immigrant interest representation, they would need to have a dedicated person whose responsibility it would be to target and monitor, as many of the unions did not have such a person.

In terms of the number of immigrant members within the unions, about a third of unions reported having more than 80 immigrants. The results do not tell more in detail what the estimated actual number for those unions are unfortunately. Another slightly less than a third of the unions did not, however, know the number of immigrant members and approximately 10% of Finnish unions reported having no immigrant members.

Similarly, quite a high number, half in fact, of the ETUC survey respondents indicated that they did not know the number of immigrant members. For the union confederations that did know the numbers, the percentage of migrants of the entire membership ranged from 1-35%. While the number of immigrant members for a large number of unions was not very high, still only 18% of the Finnish unions had a strategy to increase the number of migrant members, where as for the ETUC survey respondents, the number was 50%. Also, over 80% of the Finnish unions had no strategy to active the existing migrant members.

In terms differences between the unions, separated into their confederal affiliations, some differences can be observed. Particularly in terms of services, the SAK affiliated unions seem to be most liberal with to whom they are willing to provide their services. Almost half of SAK affiliated unions expressed their willingness to provide services to non-members also, where as among the Akava and STTK affiliates, none were willing to do so. On the other hand, the types of services that unions provided, the SAK and STTK affiliates were more likely to have publications that intended to increase immigrants labor market knowledge than the Akava affiliates. On the other hand, in other types of services, such as recruitment materials, of the STTK affiliated union 33% had materials in other languages, and of the SAK and Akava affiliates 50% had them. Overall, seems that while differences are fairly small, the SAK affiliated unions reported having the most services for immigrants and the most immigrant members.

The question about whether the Finnish unions are advocating for the immigrant groups or insisting on equality among membership from the survey perspective shows that the only services that have some “immigrant only” target-

ing, are the recruiting materials that are in foreign languages; which half of the Finnish unions reported as having. In terms of the educational programs, legal or other services provided to immigrants, almost 90% of the unions provided them only to their own members. Furthermore, the services and educational programs were for the most part not designed particularly for the immigrant members, but were intended to serve all the members. The results are in line with one part of the hypothesis created by Wilkens (p. 15), that unions within the SDW regime are not differentiating significantly between immigrants and non immigrants.

In comparison to the European survey results, three quarters of the ETUC union confederations, 18 out of 24, provide legal or advice services linked to the specific position of migrants and ethnic minorities, with just over half of this number providing it to all who ask, while the rest limit it to members only. The results show clearly then a difference, in the ideology that guides the service provision and design, between the Finnish unions and the majority of the European union confederations. While the Finnish unions for the most part prefer to provide the same services to all of its members and design the services with the idea that they should meet the needs of all members, the majority of the European union confederations have designed services and educational programs with the intension of focusing of immigrants and ethnic minority specific questions.

The universalistic service provision of the Finnish unions is a logical continuation of the Nordic welfare state's universalism in its production of welfare services and surely it can be argued that the Nordic welfare state system has been able to produce equality among its citizens better than many of the liberal or conservative welfare states (Esping-Andersen, 1999). On the other hand, we know that immigrants face very specific problems in the Finnish labor markets, especially related to ethnic discrimination, and the question raised by some researchers about the universal services being able to tackle the immigrant specific questions is valid. Furthermore, as it seems that within the Finnish union organizations, the voice of immigrants from the position of an employee or a manager is hardly being heard, the question about whether immigrants' preferences in the design and provision of services are being considered can also be asked.

To answer the second research question then "How have the Finnish unions as a whole responded to immigrant interest representation and responded to ethnic discrimination in comparison to their European counterparts<sup>20</sup>?" the answer can be offered by analyzing the unions efforts with regard to immigrants labor market difficulties and particularly ethnic discrimination in the Finnish labor markets.

The results of the survey show that the Finnish unions are quite aware that ethnic discrimination occurs in the Finnish labor markets, and its prevalence by

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<sup>20</sup> *This question here combines aspects of the research questions 2 and 3, and is not the original form of either question.*

the majority of unions was thought to be of medium level. Only about 20% of the unions thought that ethnic discrimination hardly exists or does not exist. When asked, however, how common ethnic discrimination is in the respondent's own labor market sector, the frequencies reduced quite significantly. The phenomenon was therefore recognized more often in the labor markets in general, but less so in the unions' own labor market sectors. A similar pattern emerged also in response to the potential difficulties immigrants face in Finnish labor markets in general and the unions' own sectors.

When looking at the survey results and separating the union responses according to the confederal affiliations, some differences can be observed. In terms of the evaluations of the frequency of ethnic discrimination and other difficulties faced by immigrants in the labor markets, the STTK affiliates believed ethnic discrimination to be fairly common in the Finnish labor markets in general, where as unions affiliated to the two other confederations, SAK and Akava, saw ethnic discrimination at its most as occurring somewhat. All the unions regardless of their confederal affiliation saw ethnic discrimination as more common in the Finnish labor markets in general than in their own labor market sectors, most pronouncedly so the affiliates of Akava.

Furthermore, while we know from research also that female migrants have often cumulative disadvantage in the labor markets, the number of unions recognizing different forms of labor market disadvantage was the same for immigrants in general as well as for female migrants. At the European level, the ETUC survey responses indicated that almost all the confederations, 21 out of 24, agreed that migrants and ethnic minorities faced particular problems in the labor market, with higher levels of unemployment being identified most frequently, followed by lower pay and slower promotion.

In analyzing the results regarding the reasons for the labor market problems, the percentage of unions citing certain reasons for the labor market difficulties of immigrants reduced for all potential explanatory factors, when comparing the frequencies from "labor markets in general" to "union's own labor market sector". This pattern is similar as in the previous questions about frequency of ethnic discrimination and other labor market difficulties. Also, while ethnic discrimination was recognized as one of the main reasons causing disadvantage for immigrants, other reasons related to the migrant characteristics were seen as more common.

The results of the ETUC survey were quite similar to the Finnish ones. Immigrants' labor market difficulties were explained in most countries by a combination of factors: language difficulties was the most frequently cited factor. However, no confederation thought it was the only reason for the difficulties migrants and ethnic minorities faced. The other reasons identified most frequently were lack of accepted qualifications, prejudice in the host country and problems in understanding the system.

The results of the survey raise the question of whether the union employees responsible for immigration related issues are accurately identifying the level of ethnic discrimination in their own field being less than that in general in the Finnish labor markets. We know that there are large sector differences in the number of migrant workers and the media has highlighted the problems of certain fields more than others (e.g. construction) and as such it could be argued that certain sectors probably have more ethnic discrimination as others. On the other hand, the pattern of “less problems in our sector” appears also in relation to all potential problems faced by immigrants, and as such the question, about the possibility of union representatives “passing the puck” and thinking that the problems are more common elsewhere, consequently not requiring immigrant specific services and efforts from ones own union, can be asked. Researchers studying gender related issues in labor markets have also reported similar tendencies in different actors placing the problems outside ones own workplace and as such the phenomenon would not be unusual (Kinnunen & Korvajärvi, 1996).

Also, in relation to the explanations for immigrant disadvantage in the labor markets, Wrench (2004) has argued in comparing the Danish and British unions’ explanations for immigrant disadvantage in the labor markets, that Danish unions have focused much more of the immigrants characteristics, such as language and educational qualification deficiencies, where as the British unions explanations are founded much more in the analysis of structural forms of discrimination and injustice. The results of this study show that the Finnish unions explanation for the immigrants disadvantage are similar to those of the Danish unions in that the immigrant related characteristics are identified much more frequently as causing the difficulties immigrants face in the Finnish labor markets than that of ethnic discrimination.

In comparing the Finnish unions’ services for immigrants to those of their European counterparts, it seems that the Finnish unions fall slightly behind. Furthermore, if we analyze the immigrant interest representation in the unions through the framework of MacEwen, it seems that the Finnish unions are operating in the framework of equal treatment, where by all services are designed to meet the needs of all members in a universalistic manner.

Researchers who have analyzed the different forms of ethnic discrimination have highlighted how as a phenomenon discrimination is multifaceted and can come about in direct and indirect ways, intentionally and unintentionally (Koenig et al., 2011). In order to be able to identify the phenomenon in the labor markets, one starting point would be make sure that the voice of immigrants themselves is being heard. One way to do this would be to establish a committee whose responsibility is to investigate migrant related questions, as many of the ETUC survey respondents had done. Also, in some countries’ unions and even among some Finnish unions, there are immigrants only chapters (Forsander, 2008) with

the idea that these groups are able to make the voice of immigrant groups better heard in the large, and at times, bureaucratic organizations. This idea in the Finnish context has sometimes been rejected with the argument that immigrants themselves want to integrate into the union structures and do not want separate immigrant only groups (Kyntäjä, 2011). The argument is very valid and different unions have taken differing views on this issue. However in large, at times possibly hierarchical and bureaucratic organization as some of the Finnish unions and the union movement as such, in order for the immigrant views to be heard and immigrant interests represented it would be important for the special characteristics of this diverse group to be considered especially in the recruitment programs as well as in the seat division of the unions representative bodies. If the unions do not have immigrants in their payroll in general or in the managerial positions, the ability of the unions to represent the interest of immigrants can be very difficult, even if the intentions are the best (Holgate, 2005).

### 3. Immigrant interest representation, a careful balancing act

The purpose of the focus groups was to help answer the main research question, to find out how do the Finnish trade union activists on the grounds respond to immigration and the ethnic discrimination in the labor markets. In order to answer that question, the focus group participants, consisting of trade union activists on the ground were asked to discuss different aspects of immigration and ethnic discrimination.

The first part of the focus groups looked into the attitudes the trade union representatives hold towards immigrants<sup>21</sup>. Specifically, what kinds of representations of immigrants do the trade unionist on the ground produce? In order to gain an insight regarding the attitudes the shop-stewards and other trade union representatives hold and what kinds of immigrant representations they produce, the participants were asked to respond to three different cues. Firstly, the participants were asked to describe what comes to their mind when they hear the term immigrant?

Secondly, in order to understand how the participants, as representatives of a trade union, view immigrants and how they think that the trade union movement, as the construction they themselves see it as, views immigrants, another cue, "immigrants as trade union members", was presented to them for discussion.

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<sup>21</sup> *Attitude is understood here as described in the method section as a phenomenon recognizable in a social context. The definition of the concept is elaborated further in the "focus group data analysis" section.*

Lastly, in order to fine-tune the discussion and get deeper at the attitudes held towards immigrants, the participants were asked to consider the idea of immigrants in the trade union management positions. Considering immigrants as leaders or managers, as potential superiors to themselves, was thought to bring about possibly new dimensions to the representation of an immigrant. The results of the first section of the focus groups are analyzed through the theoretical framework of the role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

The last two sections of the focus groups were designed to help decipher the way that the trade union activists see ethnic discrimination operating in the Finnish labor markets. How do the shop stewards and member representatives conceptualize ethnic discrimination and how would they identify it in the work place? What do the representatives on the ground think is the general attitude of their union towards immigrants and ethnic discrimination? Also, the participants were asked to evaluate how common they think ethnic discrimination is at the Finnish work places. The results are analyzed in the framework of equality vs. advocacy.

The focus groups consisted of representatives from five different trade unions. The unions were invited from fields where immigrant representation is already significant. Unions were invited to take part in the study and were allowed to arrange for the focus group composition themselves, as this method seemed to yield the largest number of participants. The focus groups took place in the premises of the unions themselves, in order to ensure that the participants would find their way and feel comfortable to share their thoughts. The researcher had described to the contact person from each union which type of participants were suitable (i.e. No management or leadership; shop stewards and other member representatives or office staff were welcome).

Altogether 5 unions, representing unions from the three different central organizations, and labor market fields such as health and social care, service, public and private sectors took part, with total of 34 persons. The average age of participants was 41.3 years old, with an average of 20 years of work experience. The participants had worked for their current union an average of 9 years. Approximately 75 per cent of the participants were married (married or in a common-law marriage) and on average the participants had 1.18 children.

All focus groups were recorded using an electronic recording device. The audio files were then transcribed into text files verbatim for the analysis using the qualitative attitude analysis method, described in the methods section of this document.

### 3.1 Representations of immigrants

Upon the introductions and beginning informalities in the focus groups, the participants were requested to describe what came to their mind as they heard the term immigrant<sup>22</sup>. In several of the groups, the initial reactions to the term were anecdotes from personal experiences. Participants shared stories of personal or professional contacts with immigrants and included in them an evaluative component (positive or negative). Anecdotes such as a smiley bus driver on the morning line, or perhaps a co-worker from an Asian country were shared. Alternatively, in some groups the conversations began with representations of a typical immigrant combined with an evaluative aspect.

At its most positive end, immigrants brought to the participants minds concepts such as *"A future life-line"*, *"the payer of my pensions"*, *"polite"*, *"positive resource"* and *"hard working"*. On the other end of the spectrum, for some participants the initial reaction to the term immigrant was extremely negative *"pizza-baker"*, *"a Niger is not a human"*, *"in our location X we have a good situation because there are not so many of them"*. While the initial reactions to the term reveal quite polarized attitudes towards immigrants, and brought out anecdotes from personal and professional lives, the conversations quite quickly took on more abstract form to build a representation of a typical immigrant and to the analysis of the term in and of itself.

#### *Immigrant agency and rhetoric of exploitation*

In the initial descriptions of an immigrant the term refugee appears in great frequency, and is almost used as a synonym. Descriptions of an immigrant that carry the most negative connotations were almost without an exception in reference to a person with a refugee status. Several participants commented on how the term "immigrant" appeared in the Finnish language the first time when refugees from African countries first arrived and, therefore, while acknowledging that there are several different reasons for someone to migrate to Finland, the participants' first reaction to this term was to associate it with refugee status. In earlier times as persons moved for work or personal reasons, no particular term was attached to them, but in the Finnish context, the term was thought to have appeared in the language at the same time as the first larger groups of refugees came to Finland.

► *"...if I think back to my own history, an immigrant is a refugee, but of course it isn't so in reality..." (A female from the capital region).*

<sup>22</sup> *The discussions were held in Finnish, and the term used was "maahanmuuttaja". This is the standard term for an immigrant in the Finnish language.*

While the term immigrant, through a group analysis, was taken to describe a more varied group of people than only those with a refugee status it was not uncommon for the participants to “catch themselves” even later on from speaking about immigrants again as a unitary group with solely refugee background.

► *“Yeah, I was again thinking about a refugee, it always turns back, so the first ideas come back” (Later on in the conversation about immigration, a female from the capital region).*

It is perhaps unsurprising that for the focus group participants the first associations to the term immigrant were related to refugees. As the participants discussed, the term immigrant (*maahanmuuttaja*) was introduced to the Finnish language around the same time as the first larger groups on refugees arrived from Somalia to Finland in the 1990s. Not only was the group of Somali refugees perhaps more visible and different looking than the groups of immigrants arriving prior to them and as such had left a lasting impression on people, but researchers have also argued that the image of immigrants in general in the last twenty years represented by the media is one of refugees (Raittila, 2009). Indeed, when discussing the definitions of immigrants a commonly shared belief was that representing immigrants as only refugees was a mistake and that people move to Finland for many reasons.

A common rhetorical angle in the discussion regarding immigrant representation was to speak about the “commonly held beliefs”, and avoid presenting a subjective opinion. Speaking at a general attitudinal level, the participants felt that in the society at large, only refugees were considered immigrants and that other persons moving to Finland were not in fact migrants, they were simply “new-comers”. Common knowledge states that the immigrant status is defined narrowly in the society and that only those whose appearance is different from the native Finns and who have moved to Finland due to humanitarian reasons are in everyday conversations considered an immigrant.

Not only did in the first discussions regarding an immigrant build a representation of refugee, but they carried an initial negative emotive evaluation, whether personally shared or only perceived as existing in the society. The term immigrant in general was considered to have a negative overtone and/or to bring in mind difficulties experienced or caused by immigrants. Even if a participant did not share the view him/herself, immigrants and the term in itself was seen as carrying negative connotations. Common rhetoric related to the negative overtone was that of explaining it with the perceived difficulties faced by immigrants in Finland. The negative charge to the term was not openly related to negative attitudes toward immigrants, but rather as general difficulties or trouble all immigrants face as exemplified by the following quotations:

- ▶ *"Yes, it (the term immigrant) can have a little negative echo", (A male from capital region).*
- ▶ *"They have quite a lot of problems...they run to the local (trade union) offices", (A female from northern Finland).*
- ▶ *"Also, to my mind come first like to "X's" mind, the difficulties, when having to move from one's own country to another one there are always problems at the personal level, related to finding work, or cultural differences or racism". (A male from the capital region).*

Paananen (1999) has argued that already in the 1990s, the Finnish trade unions, particularly the construction workers union's rhetoric regarding immigration was one filled with images of difficulties and trouble. Paananen argued further that by speaking about immigration and immigrant workers in terms of difficulties faced in the labor markets and at its most extreme exploitation by the employer, the trade union movement was able to leave the questions of ethnicity aside and deal with the immigration issues from the perspective of solidarity among labor. By turning immigration into a question of exploitation the unions were able to come back to basic questions of interest representation, the conflict of labor versus capital, and as such were not seen by the trade union members as catering too much to the immigrant workers. This rhetoric was successful in the 1990s in building unity among the entire union membership, and can still be identified from the discussions of today's trade union representatives.

In discussing immigrants as potential union members, through a positive rhetoric of accepting immigrants as members, a picture of a helpless person who is easy to take advantage of emerged repeatedly. While the personal attitude towards immigrants was often stated as open, it came to be coupled with willingness to help the immigrant. To be open to immigrant members, and to immigrants in general, in the minds of the trade union representatives often meant being willing help the immigrant who was facing difficulties and lacked agency to deal with the difficulties on his/her own.

- ▶ *"I think (the union) responds positively (to immigrants), we have only those few immigrants and they (employer) have tried to take advantage of the fact that they didn't know, and then they come to ask me if it is right, and I think really positively and I myself have a positive attitude and gladly take care of their position there that the employer would not think that here is a good chance to go around the laws" (A female from eastern Finland).*

Not only did the personal positive attitude, but also the trade union solidarity with immigrants, couple with that of the weak position of immigrants in the Finnish labor markets. Immigrants were seen as being easy targets for an unscrupulous employer and a protective attitude towards immigrants was articulated frequently:

► *"I myself see that we are quite solidaristic that we (unions) take immigrants in quite well and try to give help even if they are not members, we try to help them adjust to Finland and give information so that they don't get cheated" (A female from capital region).*

Seeing immigrants as targets for exploitation by the employer and the rhetoric of immigrants not knowing the rules of the Finnish labor markets was supported by anecdotes from the media as well as professional experiences. In the representation of a typical immigrant, their agency was questioned frequently:

► *"Wasn't it so a couple of years ago that these stone men...they got paid about a euro per hour and there they were hammering the stones, so that I guess they are really easy to take advantage of" (A male from northern Finland).*

Some participants felt that their union was solidaristic with immigrants, more so than other unions, and was "doing a lot to help them". Participants from some unions also felt that their union held particularly immigrant friendly attitudes because of their field, where the workers had a code of unity among each other and had made a promise to serve the clients to the best of their ability despite any background differences between them. The rhetoric of immigrants as easy targets of exploitation by the employer combined with the earlier discussion on all the difficulties immigrants faced in the labor markets in general, and allowed for the solidarity among all workers against the employer, bringing the trade union activists back to the basic questions of solidarity.

While research shows that immigrants do face particular difficulties in the Finnish labor markets (Heikkilä, 2005), research does not show that immigrants have less agency in dealing with the difficulties than native workers do (Vasta, 2004). While the rhetoric of solidarity among workers regardless of the background may help to create unity among the trade union members, and ease the fears about unions appearing as immigrant interest organizations, the rhetoric of immigrants as agency-less actors does not serve to create better working conditions for immigrants or even match reality in the Finnish society. In fact, by building an image of immigrants as persons lacking agency in the face of employer mistreatment may indirectly inhibit the natural process of immigrant advancement in the labor markets (Eagly et al., 2011).

### *Classes, castes and culture (of difference)*

Although the initial representations of an immigrant focused on the group of migrants with refugee status, a common understanding that, in deed, immigrants consist of persons with varying backgrounds and reasons for the move was evident. Some of the participants even strongly rejected the idea that one can speak of a “typical” immigrant. For these participants, the only commonality immigrants share is that they have moved to a new location:

- ▶ *“I guess an immigrant is a common term, but they are not a unitary group. For me comes to mind many different kinds of groups that some are actively by themselves searching for education or work, but the reasons for moving are so many, that at times I feel bad when people speak about immigrants as being one group, in the background are cultures and many different things”.*

Following from the conversation regarding the multitude of reasons to migrate to Finland, discussions about the “classifications” of different groups of immigrants was observable. According to the participants of the study, within the Finnish society, a distinct hierarchy or classification of immigrants is easily discernible, as shown here in a conversation:

- ▶ *Female 1. “When we think about the work places, it is clear that immigrants have been placed in castes, it is so that if the coworker is from France, it is quite different, than if it is from Somalia. So it is. No-one just speaks about it”.*
- ▶ *Female 2. “The French coworker is probably a bit better educated anyway”.*
- ▶ *Female 1. “ yes yes, and it is the same in normal life, if the neighbor is an American, we don’t think of him the same way as an immigrant, because there are still these attitudes”.*

Not only is the previously mentioned tendency to associate immigrants with refugee status recognizable from the discussion above, but also the inherent status hierarchies between immigrant groups. The negative term immigrant is only associated with the Somali migrant, but an American or French person is free from the negative connotation and association with the term as such. The hierarchical nature of the status differences between groups is even better illustrated by the next quote, where by a female participant from the capital region summed up what she considered to be a commonly held view, a view that she herself shared as well:

- ▶ *“There are at least 2 or 3 levels among immigrants. These who just stand around the market place and won’t work, and those who search for work, and then those*

*on the "top" who are given everything. It is the Somalis and these kinds of losers who have created this kind of negative image. These German doctors, they are not immigrants. They are working here".*

While not all participants attached such direct negative evaluations to immigrants on the "bottom of the hierarchy", the participants commonly shared the idea that it is the "culture" of the new-comers that is the defining feature producing the classifications. This idea was illustrated particularly well by the following statement made by a male participant from the capital region:

► *"There is a huge difference with an immigrant and an immigrant. That how close the culture is, how close to our own value systems. Some Inkerian, Estonian immigrant has a completely different starting point, than some Somali".*

This socially shared, but rarely outspoken classification, or as one of the participants phrased it "caste-making" is a well-documented phenomenon in Finland and elsewhere. As discussed in the introductory chapters of this thesis, previous research has highlighted the existing hierarchies among immigrant groups in Finland (Puuronen, 2011; Jaakkola, 2000). Within this societal ranking, immigrants from Somalia are commonly placed at the bottom of the ranking with migrants from the nearby countries standing on the top. Americans, French or Germans, according to the shared views of the participants in this study, do not even need to take part in this classification. They have spots outside the immigrant representations.

► *"We don't even consider these immigrants, these that come through marriage, and these that come from Britain, USA or Germany, or some other European countries, we think of it as positive, can even look up to them, we don't think of them as immigrants." (A female from southern Finland).*

The defining variable in the hierarchies the participants in this study found was that of "culture" and specifically perceived "cultural differences". The participants spoke at a philosophical as well as practical level about the many differences between Finns and those who have moved here after birth. This difference talk took the form of both positive and negative cultural differences between "the others and us".

► *"I don't have anything against Russians, it is just that their culture is so different, I just want to stress that" (A male participant from eastern Finland).*

► *"I have as customers a lot of these ethnics, and it is so that their culture is so different..." (A male participant from Northern Finland).*

As seen in the quote above, the participants used a rhetoric of cultural differences and avoided making statements against the “culture” itself. The participants used a cultural relativist rhetoric in explaining the differences between groups of immigrants and between Finns and immigrants. By taking a culturally relativistic position the participants avoided making direct negative statements about immigrants, but at the same time they created an image the “other” who they believed to have different behavioral norms compared to the assumed unitary Finnish culture.

As an aspect of culture, religion was considered to affect the responses immigrants elicit from the natives. Immigrants with a Christian belief systems were believed to be culturally closer to native Finns and as such have an easier way into the society, as exemplified by the quote by a male participant from the capital region:

► *“If you remember how it was when the people from Chile came, from a western society, Christians, and they were taken in completely differently than the Vietnamese who really quickly got themselves employed, they were much better received than Somalis who come from a different religion and completely different culture, the reception is different depending on where you come from.”*

While most of the conversation regarding the representations of an immigrant took the form of “commonly shared beliefs”, the discussions regarding “culture” were more openly shared as personal opinions. As the first quotations regarding culture as the difference producing agent show, the participants even spoke using the “I” pronoun and did not hesitate to personally share the societal understandings.

### *In no place to choose*

When focusing the group discussions more toward the representation of immigrants from the vantage point of a trade unionist, and relating it to the question of immigrant membership within unions, new features of the attitudes towards immigrants emerged. While many of the participants felt that the unions and they themselves personally were very open to the membership of immigrants within the unions, a rhetoric regarding unions being in no position to choose their members emerged. As the unionization rates in Finland were on a general decline, unions had to take in anyone willing to join according to the participants as exemplified by the following two quotes:

► *“Just like X just said, as the unionization rates get lower and lower, and we have to take, or have to take is the wrong word, or will take immigrants as members as well” (A female from capital region).*

► *“If you think about whether we can choose members, at this moment we live in a situation where the door is open to everyone who comes. The rules already say that we cannot choose, whether to take or not” (A male from capital region).*

While many of the participants said that they personally have nothing against immigrants joining their union, the issue was phrased as unions generally having no choice but to accept immigrants. The hesitant or unfavorable relation to immigrant membership, while often not personally openly shared, was attributed to the “non-spoken” but easily recognizable attitudes towards immigrants in the society.

► *“The (union) official stance is that employment based immigration should increase...but then, I think, we go to the local level and to our membership and if I say it out-loud, there is the same kind of attitudinal-disability, like with the rest of Finns, that no-one speaks about, but let's say that attitudes and prejudices exist” (A female from capital region).*

“Questionable” or negative attitudes held by the coworkers, patients, clients, employers and others towards immigrants was also common knowledge within the groups. While the union itself officially held a “positive attitude” towards immigrant members, the attitudes held by others were seen as more negative or questionable. Unions were seen as having to be careful not to become viewed too much as “immigrant interest organizations” as this would be detrimental for the greater unity among the membership.

In one of the focus groups, some participants felt that unions were being overly positive about immigrants and responded to them like to “*quota-gays*”. Some of these participants suggested that immigration was today’s “hot topic” and being involved in some kind of immigrant related issue or organizing some multicultural event would “bring you points”. While some participants suggested that unions were being too positive in their response to immigrants other participants saw that the trade union movement was no less racist than the rest of the Finnish nation in their positions.

*“This is no racism free zone, we are no less progressive or conservative on this issue than the rest of Finland”,* said one male participant from the capital region.

Also, several participants proposed that depending on the labor market sector and how much competition for work there is in that field, trade unions would hold differing views towards migrants. Unions representing fields where the labor market situation was such that immigrants were viewed as competitors to Finns, would tend to hold less positive attitudes to immigrants. Also, differences in the education level of union membership were seen as predicting different attitudes to immigrants. Unions representing highly educated person were suggested to hold more positive views about immigration.

### *Openness to newcomers and the question of targeting*

Several of the groups' discussions about the response that Finnish trade unions have taken towards immigrants included open dialogue about how unions could open up themselves more to immigrants. Specifically some participants called for the workplace/local associations to create a more welcoming atmosphere to newcomers, Finns and foreigners in general.

► *"It is true that if someone accidentally comes to one of our associations meetings, it is real 'killing the farmer-style'<sup>23</sup>, he or she will never come back, so boring are these events. Someone tells others what should be done and others nod their heads... We should really open up our working culture. So strange are our events."*

Another female participant agreed with the former comment and said:

► *"I have been in our organization for a long time and they are (the meetings)'warm only to the insiders', that if some outsider comes there, then most of the regulars just look and think what is "he or she" doing there"...at their best they are like some secret society meetings".*

The trade union activists identified a mismatch in the intentions of the local actors and the image of the chapters. While the intention of the local actors was seen as "meaning to do good", to represent the interests of the workers in the local negotiations as well as create recreational events, to the outsiders their organizational culture was seen as closed off from newcomers. From the perspective of the local actors, however the local chapters were viewed mistakenly as "warm only to the insiders" when in reality all new members were warmly welcome.

While realizing that a more open atmosphere would be a welcomed change into the working culture of the local units, several participants also maintained that they did not see it necessary to create special programs or campaigns to recruit immigrants into their ranks. These participants saw that it was essential to use the same procedures with immigrants as all other potential members and in every way to follow the same rules as with the Finnish membership.

Questions about recruitment programs specifically designed for immigrants were not overtly supported; rather that within the existing campaigns all different groups of potential members should be targeted. One rationale for the general campaigning was a fear that an overt openness to immigrants would be dangerous for the future of the union movement as the majority of the Finnish workers were not as welcoming to immigrants, and therefore, this openness was seen as something that "could come to cost the union movement" (A male participant from eastern

<sup>23</sup> In Finnish "talonpojan tappolinja".

Finland). On the other hand, the idea that all members and potential members should be treated similarly was used to explain for the universalistic approach.

*Immigrants in the management of unions; a glass ceiling in the bureaucratic structures*

When prompted to discuss the idea of immigrants as trade union managers or actors in the decision making bodies, several reasons why it would not happen in practice in the near future emerged, while as an idea it was frequently supported from a utilitarian perspective. In almost all groups some discussion about the usefulness of having a person with an immigrant background in the management and leadership positions of their union took place. This discussion typically included arguments like the benefit of having additional language skills and cultural understanding. Immigrants were seen as a *"big resource, should be more of different kinds of people as different ideas bring us forward"*, as one female participant from the capital region put it. The positive response to the idea was frequently supported by the unions' practical use for some of the special skills an immigrant was thought to have.

- ▶ *"In some of the unions they already have immigrants working for them, and we have noticed that it is a really useful to have the Russian language skills, for example" (A female from capital region).*

Similarly another participant said:

- ▶ *"I think it would be really good, it would be really useful to have someone who would probably see a lot of room for improvement" (A female from capital region).*

As the participants were discussing the idea of immigrants as union members, and the participants being ground level representatives of unions, taking a utilitarian perspective is perhaps not surprising. Seeing unions as benefiting from the special skills possessed by the immigrants could be viewed as a fairly neutral attitudinal position and would be difficult for anyone to object to. Even the participants who held the most overtly negative attitudes towards immigrants were in favor of having immigrants join unions as long as this would not require extra efforts on the unions' part.

While seeing the utility of an immigrant worker and for some, the value of different points of view as such, the view that it would be difficult for immigrants to rise up to leadership positions of the trade union movement was commonly shared. The idea of an immigrant being in the management of a union was seen as fairly impossible in the near future, due to the structures of organizations.

Typically, the argument holds, it takes several years of involvement in the trade union movement before anyone reaches the management positions. Even in the case of the Finnish members, someone would begin his/her union career while studying and through the local associations make his/her way into the local- and later into the national offices. As this line of argument holds, it would be difficult for anyone newly into a union to make their way into management. In a somewhat similar line of argument, some participants maintained that the number of immigrants was too small to warrant immigrant representation in the management or to even make it possible.

On the other hand, in some groups participants also voiced the opinion that the leadership of the unions is no less racist than the rest of the membership and while it would never be spoken out loud, it would be impossible for an immigrant to be hired by the management of their union. While the participants of the focus groups represented unions from fields with significant immigrant numbers, a common reference for the only immigrant they knew working within their own union premises was the person responsible for cleaning.

In one focus group a discussion about the age structures of the current leadership was also mentioned as an explanation why newcomers (Finns or immigrants) were not welcomed into the leadership. Specifically, within the trade union leadership, it was suggested, exists persons who belong to the so called "selfish generations" who were not willing to let go of their positions and let new people take over. These "*stone-sledge pullers*" were seen as having a good intention to serve the union, while not realizing that there would be new people capable of handling the demands.

While most of the participants held either the view that immigrants would be useful for unions and that more of them should be in the rank and file, or that some "structural issues" were holding immigrants out of the management and leadership positions, another line of arguments was also presented in one group. Some participants in one union had the view that, unions themselves would receive immigrants with open arms if only immigrants were "*smart enough to ask*". These participants further suggested that a possible reason why immigrants were received so openly is because "*they are so flexible*". This quality was not seen as desirable for a union representative, however, as "*in these kinds of positions it is necessary to be tough*" as one female participant from northern Finland argued. A good trade unionist was seen as strong-willed and firm, where as an immigrant was viewed as lacking agency (earlier examples) and weak. A large role incongruity was therefore present in the representations of the two roles and explaining the lack of fit for immigrants in union leadership.

### 3.2 Immigrants and labor markets

The second part of the focus group discussion dealt with issues of immigrants' labor market difficulties and how the union representatives see that unions should respond to it. The results are analyzed in the framework of equality vs. advocacy.

#### *Immigrants in the segmented labor markets; unwanted jobs and overqualified immigrants*

As mention in the previous sections of the thesis, the Finnish media has publicized the precarious labor market situation of certain groups of immigrants widely. The difficulties that immigrants in particular face were commonly related to the job entry and recruitment phases. Immigrants were seen as being often discriminated against by the employer when they were trying to get employed. A number of anecdotes of stories told by the media were shared, where direct discrimination by the employer was evident. The negative attitudes held by employers was seen as a consequence of the equally negative attitudes held by Finns in general, which in a business protectionist sense leads to employers not wanting to hire immigrants.

► *"This is like what X says, I know a couple of cases where someone had changed the name to a Finnish name and then had gotten interviews. Had had such a foreign sounding name that no. As soon as he changed his name to Matti Virtanen<sup>24</sup> he got an interview. Getting employed is much more difficult." (A female from southern Finland).*

While a common census among all the groups was that immigrants in general had difficulties in their labor market entry, the existence of a privileged group highly skilled migrants was acknowledged. This group of migrants was considered to have special skills that were in scarcity and as such had been especially recruited by the employers and not good representatives of the immigrant group all together.

For the typical immigrants (e.g. with current or previously held refugee status) at the most extreme the labor market situation was considered "a catastrophe". What made the situation catastrophic or problematic was the mismatch between the qualifications of the immigrant job seekers and the jobs that were being offered to them.

► *"In the Helsinki city metro, we have as cleaners, engineers or people with doctorate degrees from Somalia. I think that this is horrendous." (A male from southern Finland).*

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<sup>24</sup> *Matti Virtanen is a very common Finnish male name, like "Jack Jones" in the English language.*

Immigrants were seen as being forced to take up so called first entry jobs, that native Finns rejected, such a cleaning work. Getting hired to positions that matched the qualifications acquired in the country of origin was seen as extremely problematic for immigrants.

Finnish labor markets were seen as having segmented into at least two levels where by jobs with low wages and physical labor made up the bottom level. These jobs, such as cleaning and other service work, was seen as suffering from labor shortages, and as such were open to immigrant workers. The desire of any group of workers, native Finns or immigrants, to accept these jobs was questioned, however, and the need for trade unions to concentrate on policy and taxation reforms that would make these sectors more desirable was presented:

► *“There is plenty of work, if there would be people only who would do them, I mean that it is the same for us, meaning the native barefooted Finns, that there is no point to say that there is no work if you are only willing to do any work. Wages are what they are and that is the job of unions to take care of the low wage sectors, but no point to say that there is no work, and this is the same for immigrants and us.” (A male from eastern Finland).*

In addition to problems with the acceptance of the qualifications from the county of origin, the unfair Finnish language requirements set by employers were seen as causing the problems for the labor market entry of immigrants. While in many professional categories the need for fluent Finnish was acknowledged, immigrants were seen as being forced to take the unwanted jobs as consequence of the unnecessarily high language requirements.

#### *To advocate or not to advocate? Plethora of possibilities and call for action*

As the unfair language requirements and especially the inability of immigrant workers to get hired in to positions matching their academic qualifications were seen as some of the most significant problems faced by migrants in the Finnish labor markets, the response of the trade unions was largely divided upon whether the union movement should do something about it. On one hand, the situation was viewed as unfair and unequal, and the need to, for example, establish information sharing programs that would target refugees was considered valid. These kinds of “early intervention” programs that would offer information about the rules of the Finnish labor markets to newly arriving immigrants, especially refugees were favored. A plethora of other potential actions that could be and were being taken by unions were also discussed. The unionists suggested, for example, more literature on trade unions and the commonly agreed upon rules of the Finnish labor markets, educational programs (e.g. Finnish language), coordination with

reception centers to ease refugee integration into unions, investigating working conditions at work places and upholding rules, special service centers for refugees, and campaigning to improve the attitudes of Finns towards immigrants.

While the union representatives were not short of ideas for action, quite critical self-reflection was also present where by the unionists spoke of need to go from speeches to action.

- ▶ *“it would be so important to not only say that it we should do these things but we should also do it” (A female from capital region).*

The critical self-reflection and the need to transform words and ideas into action was openly discussed and supported by those in favor of taking this activist role. The immigrant specific problems in the labor markets were seen as requiring the extra advocacy.

Not only did those in favor of actively representing the interests of immigrants see the need to work actively with other organizations in creating better employment possibilities for immigrants, but the idea that the most significant change was achievable in the “top tables” of the collective bargaining and ministry policy reform groups was also argued.

- ▶ *“...this is one question that the trade union movement could influence if it was deemed important, these other decisions, that are made in the tripartite tables, finance political and other agreements, they influence the labor market policies” (A male from capital region).*

The most powerful platform for interest representation as well as the proactive nature of the Finnish trade unions was seen as being connected to the work done with in the ministry cabinets and the tripartite negotiations. These legislative platforms were seen as the most powerful places to push for changes that were deemed as requiring the action:

- ▶ *“If we think about it, we are lobbying in many different settings, just like with our members questions, the Finnish trade unions are in many ways involved in many proactive things, like the development of our educational systems, and that way we are involved in the working groups of the ministry of education and we bring up these needs.” (A male from capital region).*

For those participants who were in favor of special immigrant advocacy, the work was seen as important at both the legislative sector and in the enhanced collaboration with other organizations. For this advocacy favoring division, the question

was to get the immigrant interest represented in these negotiations, idea which was seen as fairly improbable even if supported by the participants themselves.

Other participants who did not agree with the idea of trade unions investing efforts to improve the labor market situation of immigrants had numerous arguments on that behalf. One of the main arguments against especially campaigning for the immigrants' labor market position was the universalistic approach to member interest representation. Some unions clearly were in favor of incorporating all members' interest into a general lobby, rather than designing actions to represent particular groups only. The idea that all members should be equal was seen as guiding these strategies:

- ▶ *"Well, I don't know, because all members should be equal, so I would not begin to separate it, and if it is about immigrants that we should do something, something extra. We have to create the possibilities employment in general...I don't think that it is the job of the trade union movement to create jobs only for immigrants, but in the same way as for everyone else" (A female from southern Finland).*

Agreeing with the above stated, another participant stated:

- ▶ *"It's like we don't have anything special for immigrants just like we don't have for any other groups...but that we don't organize for another other occupation group either, our idea is that they would integrate into our organization, integrate into our local chapters, that is like our goal."*

The only group seen as a target for separate action was students, foreign and native Finnish. The idea that students were at the core of the member recruitment efforts was prevalent. Even within unions that were against targeted interest representation, students were seen as a group whose special needs were being considered:

- ▶ *"We don't do anything special for any groups; just students are a different thing, foreign students too." (A female from capital region)*

Alho, who has analyzed the immigration strategies of the construction workers union and the service sector union, has also written that Finnish unions are divided on the issue of immigrant interest representation. Some unions have decided to establish immigrants' only chapters and have argued that this is the best way to get the voices of immigrants heard and their special concerns to the tables. The construction workers union has followed this strategy, whereas the service sector union has decided to try to incorporate immigrants into its general union structures and interest representation. This approach is argued to be in

line with the Nordic welfare state model that follows the universalistic service production strategies.

According to Alho's results, unions have taken differing approaches to the question of advocacy, but interestingly the results of this study show that also within unions, there exist differing opinions on this question. Within a single union, some participants very strongly in favor of special immigrant advocacy programs and groups, and others opposed it with the idea of equality among membership or other arguments.

### *Fatherland is a fatherland*

Not only was the separate immigrant labor market interest representation rejected because it was seen as better serviced and belonging to the general member representation, but also because the questions regarding immigrant labor market situation was seen as *immigrant problems* that should be tackled by other actors. Several reasons for why other actors should be charged with immigrants problems were offered, ranging from nationalist "fatherland is a fatherland" explanations, to fears of unions being viewed as only "immigrant interest organizations".

The idea that each nation should care for its own citizens only was argued by some of the participants, as the nation was seen as having special responsibility to represent the interests of its native born citizens:

- ▶ *"We live in Finland and were born in Finland so I think that the nation should first create work for us and then for others, I don't have anything against migration but the bottom line is that fatherland is a fatherland." (A male from eastern Finland).*

The nationalist argument was often followed by the idea that unions would face difficulties in recruitment if they became seen as representing immigrants' interests only. Finnish nationals were seen as not approving if unions would line up with immigrants too much. Also, some of the participants agreed personally with this ideology and used themselves as examples:

- ▶ *"I agree with the previous speaker and at least if I think for myself, that if the union starts to say favorably<sup>25</sup>, that oh yeah, here these come and coddle<sup>26</sup> the immigrants, the union will soon notice that "Smith"<sup>27</sup> is not paying his union dues." (A male from northern Finland)*

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<sup>25</sup> Translation from Finnish expression "lässyttää"

<sup>26</sup> Translation from Finnish expression "paapoa"

<sup>27</sup> Smith is referring to the last name of the participant who used his own last name in the sentence to clarify that he was referring to himself.

The question of immigrants' and native Finns' interests in employment possibilities was also analyzed through examples of small local employment market areas. In areas with especially high unemployment rates, the entry of new, even Finnish workers, for example through labor subcontracting agencies, was seen as problematic in the context of existing unemployment and tax-contributions following the subcontracted worker.

► *"If I think about unions and at my own work place, these subcontracted workers, I don't understand that if for example to our X-working place come these workers from somewhere from Helsinki because they don't pay their taxes to our town and I think that this attitude that we take workers from somewhere else because we have unemployed persons, we should take them first and then people from somewhere else, so I would think that this is a little bit similar (to the question of immigrant labor market situation representation)." (A male from eastern Finland).*

The question about attempting to improve immigrants labor market questions was then also seen as a complicated question about local employment situations, and fairness towards the existing population, not only in terms of ethnicity. If a given town has already unemployed persons, it was not seen in the town's interest to accept workers from other towns, who would pay their taxes in the registered place of residence, which in the case of seasonal workers often remains to be home municipality and not the municipality of employment.

Furthermore, while the idea of immigrants' labor market interest representation was not seen as the responsibility for unions by all participants, the question was not thrown away in general, but was seen as belonging to other actors, like the state in general:

► *"Yeah, I don't think that it is somehow the unions' job to start to push for these kinds of things, that I think that there are other persons, the state, who should protect and take care." (A female from Northern Finland).*

Especially the state and its actors were seen as having the responsibility to take an open and inclusive approach to interest representation as well as to consider the needs of smaller groups, such as immigrants. The main role of the unions was then seen as representing the interest of its own membership.

### *Frames of representation, wages vs. broad inclusion*

One of the main results from their comparative study on the response by European trade unions to immigrants by Penninx and Roosblad (2000) was that in countries where trade unions hold significant political power, the unions have been less

mobilized on immigrant issues because they are involved in so many other "more significant" questions, such as those of wage determination, pension policies and so on. The results of this study also support this hypothesis, as exemplified by a comment from a female from the capital region

- ▶ *"...as we have said several times already, there are only so few of them (immigrants), because we have this big group for whom we have to get this salary increase, so we cannot really start to focus on this". (A female from capital region).*

In addition to the questions about salaries and other policy lobbying, the general member recruitment was seen as requiring the most significant efforts from the unions, whereas the question of immigrants' labor market issues was seen as a separate issue. Unions' hands were seen as full with the large questions such as wages and other issues related to the working life, and the immigrant questions were seen as more marginal in nature. Furthermore, the participants presented frequently a historical analysis of the question about Finnish trade union movement's internal representativeness. Looking at the question from a recent historical perspective, and considering the perspective of the periphery and excluded groups (Hyman, 1997), a male participant from the capital region for example argued, that it has been suggested, that the Finnish trade union movement is only interested in the "core" and specifically in the paying members:

- ▶ *"Since the 1990s recession, the trade union movement has been accused of not being interested in unemployed persons. They are only interested in their own paying members, and not those who are on the other side of the line, like helping immigrants get employment... what kind of line do we want to draw on our duties? I claim that, historically we have wanted to draw that line very close, to furthering the interests of our own members only".*

While taking this critical perspective the participant did not agree with the position himself. According to him these questions are crucial for the unions' internal renewal and at the heart of the Nordic welfare state ideology:

- ▶ *"This whole Nordic welfare state is founded on that idea that we take care of each other and not only think selfishly about ourselves and it has been proven in all statistic that the Nordic welfare state, that caring for others and considering the needs of others is in the interests of the entire nation, that we are doing very well here comparatively, so I really did not mean that I would agree with that myself, but it is unfortunately common and history has proven that we often take on the position that let others deal with the others, we only take care of our own". (A male from capital region)-*

The trade union representatives were openly discussing the difficult question of trade union internal representativeness and frequently disagreed with the positions the union movement had taken on the questions of social security of the periphery groups in the labor markets. The question of union internal representativeness was seen as at the heart of the universalistic ideology of the Nordic welfare state, and as such, the focus of unions on only the core members of the labor markets was seen as problematic.

### **3.3 Ethnic discrimination and trade unions**

The last section of the focus groups dealt with questions of ethnic discrimination and the discussions focused on how trade union activists conceptualize ethnic discrimination and how common they saw that ethnic discrimination is in the Finnish labor markets.

When asked, “what is ethnic discrimination and how do the trade unions speak about it, if at all?” in most of the focus groups a lengthy period of initial silence took place. The previous discussions had already been taking place for over one hour so perhaps the participants were surprised to have one more topic to be covered or tired already, or simply needed more time to think about this topic, but interestingly in all the groups the initial silence lasted for a noticeable amount of time.

#### *Dimensions of discrimination*

The first descriptions of ethnic discrimination were examples of direct forms of discrimination, such as unequal treatment when it comes to salaries, shifts, or work responsibilities. For discrimination to be considered ethnic discrimination, the cause for the behavior was seen as being based prejudices of nationality, or differing looks or religion. Prejudices were seen as caused by too little contact with persons from other countries. The term “ethnic” in relation to discrimination was seen as relating to particularly obvious differences in appearance. Ethnicity as a term was especially connected to the African continent and the idea that persons from for example Sweden, could be ethnically discriminated against was seen as improbable:

- ▶ *“Ethnicity in my opinion is based on, or comes from somewhere Africa, so that people from Africa can be ethnically discriminated. When someone is clearly from another continent, and has completely different habits and different starting points and like you cannot ethnically discriminate someone from France. That is how I understand it.”(A female from capital region).*

Other forms of direct discrimination were seen in bullying behavior, where a single individual, be it a coworker, employer or a customer harasses another individual. Bullying behavior was seen as existing in direct forms of action as well as more indirect forms.

Discrimination, be it related to ethnicity or any other characteristic was seen as most commonly occurring in indirect forms. The way in which discrimination was enacted was not seen as being related to the specific type of discrimination (e.g. ethnic, gender, sexual orientation) but rather seen as a continuum of behavior where-by another person is excluded from the normal functioning of a workplace. Several different forms of exclusion were acknowledged, from the so called “hallway parliaments” where other persons were being spoken about without them being present, to excluding the target from the collegiality and the normal workplace conversations.

While indirect ethnic discrimination was seen as being more common than the direct forms, a large question about being able to prove that discrimination had occurred was raised. Proving indirect discrimination was seen as largely impossible, and all different groups of workers were seen as being victims of it, including Finnish workers. While the employer or boss was seen as being responsible for dealing with all types of discrimination, being able to prove that unfair treatment had occurred was seen as challenging.

The idea that not all persons get along with everyone and people have natural preferences for coworkers and friendships, and that in Finnish working places the excluding behaviors simply happens undercover, was largely supported. This was seen as making the job of preventing indirect forms of discrimination more difficult:

- ▶ *“I think that in the workplaces there is less this kind of verbal discrimination. In Finland we do it by being silent, by exclusion”. (A female from southern Finland).*

Similarly in another group a participant stated:

- ▶ *“I guess that discrimination shows up quite easily in that someone gets left out from things, and no one wants to be like a work-partner. The person feels like no one wants to work him/her. But it happens the same for Finnish people in working communities, there are people that no-one wants to work with.” (A female from southern Finland).*

In addition to considering that also Finnish people get excluded by their coworkers, the idea that ethnic discrimination happens in the Finnish labor markets was reduced with the proposal that situations where the newcomer feels left out can be caused by cultural misunderstandings and discomfort and uncertainty about

how to behave with persons from other countries, and not by intentional discriminatory behavior. As the entry of immigrant workers to the Finnish working places has been such a recent phenomenon, Finnish coworkers were seen as not always knowing how to behave around an immigrant.

► *"I think that there can be discrimination, but I think that quite a lot of things can happen because of misunderstandings, that we speak about something, about the same thing but on both sides we don't know what the other person means." (A female from southern Finland).*

While the idea that persons did not know how to behave around immigrants in general was acknowledged, the participants even recognized this in their own behavior. The unintentional nature of mild forms of exclusion was particularly associated with the intercultural encounters.

Further, as the term ethnic discrimination was seen as becoming a "popular word" and also due to media's attention on some blatant cases of it, people in general had begun to feel like they have to be "on their toes" and "try hard to be equal towards everyone". The experience of being aware of there being persons with immigrant background at one's work-place has also caused some participants to "become overly sensitive at some point". While the intention was to make sure that one would not unintentionally discriminate, the effort felt uncomfortable and uneasy, and caused some to "spy on" one's own behavior.

In addition to discussing the direct forms of discrimination, indirect and sometimes called structural forms of it were also brought to the fore. For example, phenomenon researchers call "partial hypercyclicity"<sup>28</sup> (Lindley, 2005) was brought up using the example of the Vietnamese refugees in the 1980 and 1990s.

► *"I remember, and know, that when the Vietnamese came, they barely had time to go to Finnish language courses when the employers took them already to work. Then when the recession came, right away they were kicked out, supposedly because of lack of Finnish language skills". (A female from capital region).*

The participants recognized that immigrant workers were particularly likely to be affected by the economic cycles, and when companies had to reduce the number of employees, immigrant workers would be the first ones to be made redundant. The "last in- first out" phenomenon is well known in the Finnish labor markets and as immigrant workers experience difficulties in getting hired in the first place,

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<sup>28</sup> *Hypercyclicity is "a situation where ethnic minority unemployment rises more rapidly than white unemployment during recession but then fails to fall more rapidly during recovery" (Lindley, 2005, p. 187).*

they have often been the “last ones in” and as such become to first ones to get laid off. This system of protecting the core workers, those with the most secure positions in the labor markets has been supported by the labor unions generally, and while research shows that ethnicity has in deed an additional impact on hiring and firing cycles (Lindley, 2005) by speaking about the “last in-first out” strategies, the question of ethnicity becomes marginal. While the participants recognized that immigrants were in particularly vulnerable positions in times of economic downturn, the phenomenon was explained away with the more widely identified system of hiring and firing.

### *Framework of equality in strategies and agreements*

While the discussions about ethnic discrimination produced definitions and examples of different types of ethnic discrimination from direct to indirect and even structural forms, the overarching preference to discuss discrimination was through the framework of equality. The idea, that for the individual unions, the operative concept for the questions of discrimination in the union strategies and agreements was in reality that of equality, was strongly suggested. Equality as a concept was understood very broadly, and as a strategic tool it included all different aspects such as gender, ethnicity and disability.

- ▶ *“Equality is one of our basic values, always has been. Equality in all different dimensions”. (A female from southern Finland).*

In the individual unions’ equality framework, ethnicity was approach through the term multiculturalism, and not as the term ethnicity. Multiculturalism then was seen as being a category implicitly considered and integrated in all equality and other strategies, just like questions of environment:

- ▶ *“It is more like something that has to be considered, when we make strategies or other programs or lay down principles that multiculturalism has to be thought about. Not really more than that”. (A female from capital region).*

Agreeing with the previous speaker, a male participant stated:

- ▶ *“Yes, it is the same kind of thing like environmental protection; we always mention it, somehow think about it as obvious.” (A male from capital region).*

In terms of collective agreements, ethnic discrimination as a phenomenon was not mentioned but integrated in the equality framework according to the participants. In the equality reports required by some collective agreements no

specific question about ethnic discrimination exists. If cases of discrimination exist, they become questions for the judicial system, not of collective agreements. In the collective agreements and union strategies the question of equality then becomes mostly operationalized in the question of equal wages. While the goal of the equality framework is to include as many different groups under it, the daily operationalization and measurement of the strategies effectiveness culminates in the question of salary equality, “same salary for same work”.

### *Role of central organizations*

While within individual unions, the question of ethnic discrimination was considered under the heading of equality, the role of central organizations for the more detailed analysis of questions of multiculturalism and ethnicity in particular was suggested. At the individual union level, the leadership was not seen as preoccupied with immigration related questions, rather it was seen as being in the domain of the central organizations. As with the question of improving the labor market status of migrant workers, the question was not dismissed as unimportant, but rather as other questions having more of priority.

► *“In our field, these questions (ethnic discrimination) these are spoken about at the central organization level, that in the SAK they have their own committee and a single union may be part of some project but I don’t know if we should have some program of our own.”*

The question about having enough resources to deal with specifically ethnicity related questions was also brought up in the discussion about the role of the central organizations. The individual unions ability in terms of their resources, whether they wanted to take on the ethnicity related questions was debated in addition to the need to do so.

### *Summing up*

As discussed above, for the trade union representatives on the ground, the term immigrant was largely synonymous for refugee, even though many participants rationally rejected the idea of immigrants being a unitary group. Immigrants, even if seen as a resource and as a positive addition to the Finnish society, were seen as facing difficulties in the Finnish labor markets and their agency in dealing with the difficulties was frequently questioned. In addition to being seen as a group that is easy to take advantage of, they were also seen as flexible, characteristics that were quite opposite of the image of a good or typical trade unionist. In order to be a good trade unionist, union manager or a leader, the person was seen as

needing to be tough and assertive, qualities that were not identified among “immigrants”. A large role incongruity was therefore present in the representations of the two roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

According to the creator of the role congruity theory, the mismatch in the stereotypical characteristics can produce disadvantage and even discrimination (intentional and/or unintentional) and the production of disadvantage operates at many different levels. Because individuals get evaluated through group stereotypes an evaluative penalty exists for the migrants if evaluated for the position of a trade union manager, regardless of whether they are fitting for the leadership position or not, according to the theory. Interestingly, the harmful effects of stereotypes do not need to stem from negative stereotypic characteristics, but rather from the contrary. This paradox has been explained, by the existing mismatch between the typical and desired roles and the presumed characteristics. Even if immigrants were viewed positively, as a life-line or positive addition to the society, the typical characteristics associated with immigrants are very different from the typical characteristics associated with a trade unionist. The way that role incongruity operates has been shown in studies of leadership and gender (Eagly et al., 2011, see section on the theory of role incongruity), but the effect has also been supported with studies on leadership and ethnicity (Sy et al., 2010).

The behavioral consequence of this even potentially unintentional stereotyping is that of indirect discrimination. The unintentional and perhaps even unconscious nature of the process of indirect discrimination can be well seen in the following quote by a participant:

► *“Well, we do not have any ethnic discrimination here, as we do not have any immigrants working inside these walls”.*

As immigrants are not seen as possessing the characteristics of a good or typical trade unionists, their chances of getting hired into the unions are largely reduced, which even as unintentional behavior according to the role congruity theorists can be seen as indirect discrimination. Just because there are no immigrants working for a union, or for any organization does not mean that discrimination has not existed. The results do not suggest that discrimination exists within union structures, rather the point here is to explain the number of different ways that indirect discrimination can operate.

The participants of the study, themselves, explained the lack of immigrants in the leadership positions by the organizational culture and structure, where-by reaching the higher level positions would require more time and more immigrants. Also, the open-mindedness of the existing leadership to hiring of persons with migrant background was debated.

Furthermore, as the results above showed, the difficulties that immigrants face in the Finnish labor markets were very well known to the shop-stewards. Especially problematic was seen the mismatch between the qualifications of the immigrant job-seekers and the positions that they were able to acquire, and the other types of problems faced by immigrants were largely seen as the result of negative attitudes towards immigrants. Ethnic discrimination was identified as taking the shape of direct, indirect and structural forms, and particularly the indirect forms of discrimination were seen as frequent in the labor markets. A question about the difficulty of proving discrimination was also raised. Proving indirect discrimination especially was seen as very challenging, as all different groups of workers were seen as being victims of it, including Finnish workers.

While the existence of the phenomenon of ethnic discrimination was recognized in many different forms, for the individual unions, the operative concept for the questions of discrimination in the union strategies and agreements was in reality that of equality. Equality as a concept was understood very broadly, and as a strategic tool it included all different aspects such as gender, ethnicity and disability.

The question about whether to advocate for the immigrants or to insist on the equal treatment of all members divided the participants. While those who were in favor of immigrant advocacy suggested a number of different ways of being able to realize it, the most influential platform for immigrant interest representation was seen in the tripartite negotiations or in the ministry cabinets.

Other participants suggested that above all, the ideology guiding all union work should be the equality of members' interest representation and individual groups should not receive special consideration. Previous research has shown that Finnish unions have taken differing approaches to the question of advocacy, but interestingly the results of this study show that also within single unions there exist differing opinions on this question. Within a single union, some participants very strongly in favor of special immigrant advocacy programs and groups, and others opposed it with the idea of equality among membership or other arguments.

In addition to the universalistic interest representation argument, a number of other reasons against the special immigrant interest lobby were presented ranging from nationalist arguments of "fatherland is a fatherland" to the responsibility of other actors to take up on the immigrant specific questions. Furthermore, the results of the study supported partly the argument by Penninx and Roosblad (2000) that in countries where trade unions hold significant political power, the unions have been less mobilized on immigrant issues because they are involved in so many other "more significant" questions, such as questions of wage determination, pension policies and so on. For some of the participants, the immigrant advocacy was clearly secondary to the questions of wage determination, but not to all.

Interestingly, one result from this study is also that Finnish trade unionists can be very self-reflective and even self-critical in analyzing the response that the Finnish union movement has taken towards the members of the periphery and excluded groups (Hyman, 1997). While the ideology of universalism within the Nordic welfare state was strongly supported, as it was understood as taking care of all members of the society, even the excluded ones, the trade union movements' interest to represent those outside the core historically was questioned.

Within the MacEwen (1995) framework of equality, the results from these focus groups show that the movement is largely divided between The *equal treatment approach*, where everyone is treated the same regardless of ethnicity, the so called 'color-blind' approach, and the *level playing field approach*, where there exists a recognition of the need to remove unfair barriers (e.g. discrimination), so that all have the same opportunities. While the participants could be seen as divided between these two approaches, it could be argued that none of them were openly in favor of the more radical approaches that would require the use of quotas and such in order to achieve the increase in the representation of minority groups either on a short or long term schedule.

# DISCUSSION



Following the delayed and cautious response to the increase in immigration in Finland in the 1990s, the Finnish trade unions confederations have begun to address the disadvantages faced by immigrants in the labor market. Initiatives such as the ETMO and PETMO projects have been developed since 2000, with the aim of easing the participation of foreign-born workers in the Finnish labor markets.

Furthermore, as highlighted by the comparative analysis of the Nordic responses to increased temporary migration, the Finnish trade union confederations general efforts to lobby for the workers, through the use of collective agreements need to be considered when analyzing the unions' response to immigration. In the highly organized Finnish labor market, the employers are very accustomed to reading the collectively negotiated wage tables when determining appropriate salaries, and trade union representatives are present in almost all workplaces to oversee the treatment of all workers. Also, the legal framework for agreements, through the *erga omnes* principles, at least on paper serves to protect all workers whether they belong to a union or not.

Following the equal opportunities framework of MacEwen (1995) described earlier, it could then be argued that the Finnish trade unions confederations have made public statements exemplifying the 'level playing field' approach, where recognition of the need to remove unfair barriers exists, and some steps have been taken to overcome them. Though programs directed at improving the position of immigrants in the labor market have been designed, no targets or monitoring schemes have been devised to attempt to increase the representation of immi-

grants in the union movement itself, which would exemplify reaching stage three in MacEwen's classification.

If we use the MacEwen classification to analyze the response of Finnish unions to ethnic discrimination in light of the survey results, it appears that the Finnish unions favor strongly the idea of universalism in all their service production and that their approach to discrimination is very much a color blind approach, the first stage in the model.

If we, however, analyze the response of Finnish unions to ethnic discrimination with the help of the focus group data, the picture becomes such more complicated. The results from the focus groups show that within and between unions, there are diverging ideas and ideologies regarding discrimination. While none of the participants in the study were in favor of radical methods that would help change the position of immigrants quickly, a much more complicated picture of the reasons used to justify the positions emerged, than suggested by the survey results.

Furthermore, when considering the research question about trade unions response to ethnic discrimination, the survey results would lead us to think that the disadvantage in the labor markets faced by immigrants is seen largely by the unions as a result of characteristics related to the immigrants, such as deficiencies in language skills and educational qualifications, and that discrimination as a phenomenon is not used to explain the disadvantage to the same degree as the foremost researchers do. However, the focus group results show that the trade unionists were very aware of the ways in which ethnic discrimination operates and were explaining the difficulties faced by immigrants in the Finnish labor markets largely by the indirect discrimination taking place.

These results highlight a classic dilemma between quantitative and qualitative research. While the quantitative results here produce a picture of unions that simplify the reality of immigrants in the labor markets, the qualitative results then, serve to produce a much more complex picture. This result is not unusual when using mixed methods, but again serves to highlight the benefit of doing so. This result is also a valid reminder for those of us who do comparative research with the help of quantitative data. We know from psychology that human behavior is complex, and while the task of social scientists on one hand is to try to reduce the complexity and explain things, it is also important that we do not begin to simplify phenomenon too much, and as such produce and reproduce stereotypes. Stereotyping, as argued in this study, can as its behavioral consequence lead to discrimination.

If we then consider the results of this study in light of the hypothesis developed by Wilkens (2005), we find at least partial support for the model. Wilkens argues that the combination of relative union stability and local representation would lead to openness to immigrant labor. Furthermore, the high level of corporatism leads to less room for individual players to maneuver and take differing opinions.

As we saw in the analysis of the first research question, the central organizations did not resist the inflow of migrants and were largely in agreement about the need for Finnish immigration policy to have an employment focus, in line with the hypothesis.

Wilkens hypothesized also that individual unions would have homogeneous reactions to immigration, and that unions would not differentiate significantly between immigrants and non-immigrants. The results support the hypothesis at least to the extent that the basic response to immigration has been openness, but regarding the differentiation between non-immigrants and immigrants, the result is more complicated as argued above.

Lastly, Wilkens also proposed that highly concentrated union movements may "be prone to complacency or incrementalism when it comes to implementing the kinds of innovative organizing strategies and special programs required to reach, attract and retain immigrant members". Moreover, according to Wilkens, "policies acceptable to all unions as well as government and employers require compromises and in the case of concentrated movements, this may result in more broadly open, but less radically inclusive approaches to immigrants". If we combine the model developed by MacEwen to test this hypothesis, it appears that Wilkens was right. The response of the unions has not been radical and in many ways the central organizations responses are a result of compromises.

Hyman (1997) has argued that the representativeness of labor unions can be analyzed through the questions of "who's interests are unions representing?". Framing the question of union internal representativeness through the "who" questions gives us a good frame, especially in terms of comparative analysis. The results of this study suggest that in addition to the question of "who", it is important also to analyze: how are the potential groups perceived? How are the "whos" constructed and how accurate are these perceptions? Before any group's interests can be represented it is necessary to avoid any limitations in the perceptual processes.

The results of this study suggest, that for the central organizations, the discussion about immigration are largely considered in the framework of labor migration, where as the shop-stewards' image of immigrants is strongly associated by the image created by the media, and consists of the image of a vulnerable and flexible refugee. The agency of the typical immigrant was questioned and a large incongruity in the roles of an immigrant and that of a good or typical trade unionists emerged. The results of the survey showed that within unions, immigrants are not present in the general payroll or in the management positions. The result is not surprising in light of the role incongruity. If, when hiring persons for a union, the image of the person who is being sought after is one of an assertive and independent person, the image of an immigrant, in the minds of the trade unionists was quite the opposite.

The above results do not suggest that the union representatives would have been overtly against the hiring of immigrants, quite to the contrary, the idea was supported by utilitarian perspectives, but even the participants of the focus groups acknowledged that the union structures and organization culture serves to inhibit this from happening.

If we then look at the results of this study in a comparative perspective, and compare the Finnish unions responses, for example to the TUC of Britain, which has been highlighted as one of the most immigrant activist type union movements, some similarities can be found in the early responses of the unions towards immigration, but quite significant differences are present in the treatment of the questions of discrimination. When comparing the response of Finnish unions to that of the TUC, we see that though the British unions had to respond to the issue of significant immigration 50 to 60 years earlier than the Finnish unions did, they adopted very similar initial positions. In both cases, the early attitude towards immigrants was cautious, and concerns regarding the position of the indigenous workers predominated. From the literature review and analysis of the statements of the Finnish trade union confederations, it becomes evident that for a significant period of time after the arrival of the first immigrant groups in Finland (1980s and early 1990s), the unions made no, or few, public statements about this. Similarly, in the UK, in the early 1900s when the trade unions were more powerful than today, they also, for a significant period following the arrival of the immigrants made no formal public references to it. Following the Second World War, the British unions realized that it was in their interests to support the arrival of immigrants, as a significant labor shortage would otherwise have prevented recovery from the war (Wrench, 1986) and as a result made statements in support of it. Similarly, in the mid-2000s in Finland, as the country was facing the prognosis of increasing labor shortages, the trade unions were taking a positive position towards increased employment-based immigration, with the reservation that the number of immigrant arrivals be connected to the needs of the labor market.

## **1. Alternative analysis**

The analysis of the results in this study followed very much the methodologies typical of the social psychology and well as social policy, and used as its reference theories of inequality and labor markets. It could be argued that other frames could have produced different types of results, or at least different emphasis. As we saw, for example, from the first reactions to the term immigrant, some of the participants of the focus groups produced statements characterizable as traditional racism. As such, one frame for the analysis could have been that of different

forms of racism, from traditional to implicit. Nevertheless, as a research result, that “among the Finnish population one can find racism” would not have been new or novel. Previous research has shown that racism exists among all nationalities, including Finns, and that Finns even recognize these attitudes in themselves. Furthermore, we know from previous studies that Finns, as compared to other Europeans show less xenophobia and other hostilities towards immigrants (Ervasti, Fridberg & Hjern, 2008 ). While it is important to study racism as it is exhibited in different organizations and institutions, and the different types of racism, from institutional and structural to more private forms, it is also important to examine the social psychological process, like role congruity, related to discrimination that are less easily identifiable and study the ways in which they influence policies adopted in organizations.

The focus group results of this study are based on a small sample of trade unionists in Finland and as such are not representative of the entire trade union movement. While the intention is not to generalize the results to all members of the Finnish trade unions, it can be argued that as a phenomenon, the way in which role incongruity operates is generalizable and had the same study been conducted with another organization, such as the employer organizations, similar kind of results would probably have been found. The image of immigrants in Finland has so strongly been build as one of a refugee lacking agency and one filled with negative connotations, that it would be surprising to find that people did not hold these perceptions.

When speaking about racism and discrimination, it is imperative to keep in mind the different forms these phenomena can take. As Rex argued already in the 1980s, racism can exist regardless of the beliefs or predispositions individuals or societies posses. To conquer discrimination it isn't enough to seek those who commit acts of direct discrimination or who promote racist ideologies as discriminatory practices can be strengthened within institutions and systems even if the persons operating in them are not racists themselves (Rex, 1986). In a multicultural society, equal opportunities are the goal of the legal framework as well as that of different institutions. Nevertheless, members of minority groups do not have the same chances to succeed in the labor markets and education. Even if an organization or an entire society sets it as its goal to fight against discrimination, it isn't going to vanish even within a long time frame (MacDonald, 2006; Pitcher 2009). All human institutions operate with certain histories and acknowledging the concept of structural discrimination is one of the first steps at searching for those more difficult to identify forms of inequality.

Another line of analysis could have been to look at the gender differences in the attitudes and immigrant constructions. This analysis would probably have been fruitful and could have offered some new insights into the question of unions divisions on these issues. Alho has, for example, found that the female dominated

service sector union has taken a very universalistic approach to immigrants' interest representation, whereas the male-dominated construction worker union has taken a more militant control approach that includes a separate immigrants-only chapter. Also, previous research on attitudes towards immigrants has shown strong gender effects, with females showing more positive attitudes towards immigrants than males.

While the question of gender is very important, as the researcher was not able to determine the exact composition of the focus groups, and as the survey did not ask for the gender of the respondents, analyzing gender effects with this data would have been problematic.

Another angle for the analysis could have been to investigate the regional differences in the focus group interviews. Previous research has shown that large differences exist in the attitudes that Finnish people hold towards immigrants. While without a doubt differences in the attitudes towards immigrants are present in all societies and within Finland, persons from rural areas and small towns are more likely to have negative attitudes towards immigrants, it is nevertheless important to keep in mind that the range of reactions towards immigrants is not more of pure like or dislike, but attitudes can in fact be a mixture of rational and emotional misgivings that combine to produce even differing pictures in differing settings. Furthermore, the way in which people react to immigrants has also largely to do with the amount of contact they have had with immigrants and especially whether they have any immigrant friends. In small towns and rural areas in Finland, thus far, the number of immigrants' residents is still very small and the history of immigration to Finland is so short, that special care has to be taken when investigating these reactions. From a methodological perspective, investigating the attitudes towards immigrants with samples very familiar with immigrants and other samples less familiar, and making conclusions about attitudes held, needs to be done cautiously. It would be especially problematic to try to make causal explanations or generalize based on the areal differences with focus group data such as in this present study, as the research set up was largely for qualitative analysis with the aim of analyzing the reasoning behind the attitudes and responses.

## **2. Researching sensitive topics**

Researching sensitive topics like discrimination and racism demands special care at all different phases of the study. No-one wants to be called a racist and no organization wants to be told that they are exhibiting indirect discrimination. Such labels are not comfortable and can even be dangerous and lead to legal actions. Furthermore, as discussed above, not all persons in Finland have the same level

of contact with immigrants and not all newness and discomfort around meeting persons from far away countries is racism. Sometimes the first reaction towards immigrants on a likert type of scale can even be negative, not because the "judge" is against immigrants, but also because the first reactions can even be less thought through or even just an emotive response that after some further probing turns into a relatively positive attitude. When researching attitudes towards immigrants, reactions to ethnic discrimination and other equally sensitive topics, it is especially important to look for those long chains of justifications and reasons, and not only at the first impressions, as exemplified in the analysis of the reasons some persons were against immigrant interest lobbying. While some of the participants' first reactions to the idea of trade unions lobbying for the improvement of immigrants labor markets was to reject the idea, a number of complicated justifications for the response could be found that, in fact, showed the deep understanding of questions about taxation and local labor markets.

For a researcher, getting persons to speak about the difficult topics can sometimes be challenging. As mentioned already in the focus group results section, the trade union representatives were from a researchers perspective a very suitable group for focus group interviewing as they were very open to discussing all topics presented to them and not only open to discussions, but also able to reflect on their own position within the greater movement, the movements historical stands, and be self-critical in terms of the entire movements' working culture. It is not unusual for researchers to have difficulty with getting participants to give only the polished and politically correct answers to the questions. In fact, several times the same question about how open where the participants to speak about the sensitive issues, and whether they were only giving the politically correct answers was raised in the research seminars that this work was presented.

While the participants of the present study where probably very committed members of their respective unions and as such interested in the wellbeing of the union they represented, they were nevertheless very open to discussing the sensitive topics presented to them. In all groups, some discussion about whether the researcher was interested in hearing the personally held views or the official opinions took place and in fact, this line of discussion lead often to the union critical or union-reflective discussions. As a side observation outside the specific research questions, the ability of the trade union activists to speak openly about the problems they saw in their own union or within the union movement, as such, is interesting to note. Perhaps not in all working environments can the participants speak as openly about their personal opinions and make such critical statements in front of other members of the community.

It has been argued that for social sciences, the key word for good research is reflexivity (Finlay, 2002). Since the possibility of social science research producing something entirely objective and culturally universal has been questioned and the

impact of interpretation on all research has been acknowledged, sensitivity and reflexivity have risen to the fore. Reflexivity has been conceptualized in a number of different ways and it has come to mean different things for different people. Finlay (2002a) has suggested that reflexivity has five variants or components, that have come from different research traditions. Reflexivity, according to Finlay, consists of: introspection (e.g. self-dialogue), inter-subjectivity reflections, mutual collaboration (e.g. participant as co-researcher), social critique (e.g. questions about power between the researcher and the subject), and discursive deconstruction (e.g. discussing the ambiguity in language). Good research therefore should aim to include these different aspects of reflexivity and researchers willingness to report, analyze and discuss the type of knowledge being produced by the study, as well as the researchers own ideology and starting point for the research. In the study of ethnic relations such as the current research, it is especially important to highlight that from the perspective of immigrant integration in to the Finnish society, the questions about the attitudes held by the so called gate-keepers of the labor markets, needs to be considered in the context of the other actors in the society that affect the outcomes as well as the varying levels of contact between the two groups (immigrants and trade unionists).

While the trade unions and their crass-root level actors influence the climate of the work places and society at large, as well as play a role in the building of the national legislative framework, there are also other actors who impact the labor market outcome of immigrants probably at least equally. These other actors are naturally the governmental institutions, as well as the employer organizations, and other non-governmental organizations such as churches. As such, reflexivity in the context of this study also could be argued to mean the positioning of the research question in the larger contextual framework and keeping in mind the interests of the researcher (e.g. advancing the integration of immigrants in to the Finnish labor markets and the prevention of ethnic discrimination) are to a certain degree the product of the personal experiences and cultural ideologies of the current time. According to Sieber (1993) doing ethical research means being aware that the cultural needs of the participants may not be the same as those of the researcher. Therefore, for the current study the analytical framework is intending to produce not only knowledge about the research questions at hand, but also the methodological context the knowledge was produced. In Hertz's words (1997), reflexivity involves an intensive scrutiny of "what I know" and "how I know it".

Pietarinen (1999) has written about the basic ethical principles all researcher must adopt and bases his arguments on the early philosophers such as Aristotle. Pietarinen argues that the main task of a researcher is to produce trustworthy information about the existing reality. In order for the information to be trustworthy, it not only has to be "accurate" and "truthful" (Lötjönen & Karjalainen, 1998) but also it has to be critically justified according to Pietarinen. This principle not

only refers to the methods of data gathering, but also to that of data analysis. If the information produced by a researcher is not critically justified, the information that is produced serves little purpose to advance the discipline at hand. Borrowing from the philosopher Habermans, Pietarinen argues also that the critical social research has a function as an "emancipatory interest", where by forces that are at times out of awareness control the behavior of human beings or groups of people. Ethnic discrimination as a phenomena, for example, can be seen as a force that is not easily discernible and as such identified, and as a social scientist, the goal of critical research is, for example to show how it exhibits itself in different environments and what can be done to reduce its existence.

While the principle of critical examination is according to Pietarinen one of the main virtues in the ethics of a researcher, he also argues that respecting the dignity of each person or group of persons has also always to be considered. The line between "critical examination" and "criticism of an organization" consisting of human beings has to be made by each researcher and kept separate. While a researcher may indeed see room for great improvement in, for example, an organizations working culture, the criticism has to be stated while keeping in mind the moral value of each group of human beings. Furthermore, in addition to the respect required in the reporting of the research results, an ethical researcher has to consider the special relationship between the researcher and those participating in the research. The participants of a research willfully give information and expect that this information is used in a trustworthy way to advance the scientific questions at hand (Kuula & Tiitinen, 2010). Furthermore, the trust relationship between a researcher and the participants can allow for significant benefits for the researcher, as in the case of material for a Phd thesis. As such an ethical researcher must as a moral directive consider all the virtues of research and keep high integrity.

### **3. Results in the European and global context**

Previous research on the temporary migration and particularly posted workers has highlighted the question of unions` response to immigrants from the industrial relations perspective in the context of the deepening internationalization of European labor markets. This line of research has highlighted the need for the national unions to broaden their horizons and actions to match better the multinational landscape of the labor markets. Literature of union organizational change suggests that as long as unions are enjoying the stable and secure position in the national settings their renewal becomes difficult. New kind of leadership is required that can push for organizational changes (Voss & Sherman, 2000). Lillie and Sippola (2010) argue that some unions have already reached this point, and

as an example they show the German construction workers union, IG Bau which established the European Migrant Worker Union (EMWU) in an effort to better represent the interests of the temporary migrant workers from Eastern European countries.

Research analyzing trade union responses to immigration and effort to recruit migrants into the union ranks have noted that in the Finnish discussions the successful practices of many unions abroad has been mainly neglected. From the coasts of the USA as well as from Great Britain, we have numerous examples of successful organization of migrant workers in fairly union hostile settings (see for example, Milkman & Wong, 2000; Holgate, 2005; Wills, 2008, 2009).

Furthermore, this line of research has argued, that in the increasingly multinational labor markets, especially in certain industrial sectors, like construction, the question about immigrants affect on working conditions, salaries of the native work force or increasing the gray economy starts often from a false premise of national protectionism. In today's global economy labor market protectionism, however, is not seen the answer as people are on the move regardless of efforts to control migration. Control efforts serve only to create path alternatives for the workers. When analyzing the control mechanisms from the perspective of the immigrants, especially in the labor markets, we need to analyze carefully the conditions of the employment that the immigrants are coming into and how the permits are affecting their lives and life choices.

Particularly important is to analyze the connection between the legal rights to residency and employment, as for example, in the case of temporary residency permit being connected to a employment contract with a single employer. Being a trade union member hardly helps when a migrant is afraid of losing the right to residency if the employment contract ends, now matter how much discrimination or abuse is taking place at the workplace. Therefore, when considering the strategies that trade unions develop in relation to immigrants, in order to predict their effectiveness in relation to trade unions' ability to recruit migrant workers, it is crucial that the unions are aware of the ways in which the legal frameworks they lobby for affects immigrants.

A good example of this is the long lasting demand from the trade unions, that working permits for immigrants coming from countries outside the EU should go through a demand evaluation, to see whether there is demand for such labor or whether there are Finnish persons unemployed in the field. If getting an employment permit via the demand consideration, the immigrant's residency right is tied to the employment permit to the employer, not the labor market sector, for instance. In circumstances of discrimination or even abuse, the immigrant is faced with a situation where s/he has to deliberate between reporting the mistreatment to the authorities and face the loss of the employment and residency permit or to accept the situation.

Trade unions response to the dilemma above, has sometimes been that while they are against all kinds of discrimination or development of double labor markets, they still see that freeing up employment permit process to the third country nationals without the demand consideration would increase the supply of labor in fields where Finnish people experience unemployment. Over supply of Finns or immigrants in any field in their perspective is not favorable to anyone besides the employer where-by wages and other working conditions would have downward pressure. In the Finnish case, immigration specialist have, however, questions this threat of having large inflow of migrants from countries outside of the EU (Könönen & Himanen, 2011) and have in fact argued, that most of the people applying for the permits under this scheme are refugees or others who are already in the country, and who have found an employer who would be willing to hire them. As the proposal to do away with the demand consideration in the employment permit decisions has come from the employer side, a question whether the trade unions are opposing it as a question of power resources struggle, has been raised. From the immigrants perspective, however, and as a question related to the immigrants image of the unions as a protectionistic organization, it is might be worth for the unions to reconsider their perspective on the issue.

Similarly, another example of the perhaps unintended affects of the what can be called protectionistic tendencies can be seen in the EU eastern enlargement process. The Finnish unions demanded for the transition measures during the EU enlargement period, which has been argued to have lead to increase in posting, worker rental agencies and subcontracting of workers. The intention of the trade unions was to protect the Finnish labor markets from an uncontrollable supply of workers as well as to make sure that Finnish labor inspectorate was up to the task of preventing the growth of the gray economy and segmentation of the labor market. While the intention was without a doubt in line with the interest politics of unions, the end results, which has been suggested to have been an increase in non-standard employment contracts, via posting and subcontracting, was perhaps also not desirable.

When analyzing the response of Finnish unions to immigration in the context of the European Union, we see that in many unions of the continental European countries, the European Union's globalization strategy, and particularly the Lisbon strategy, according to which the European union has to become to most innovative and competitive labor market area in the world, has been set against of what is seen as social development. As the competitiveness rhetoric has taken steam and governments have invested in the so called innovation policies (information technologies, worker mobility etc.) and attempted to create more flexibility in the labor markets, many of the European social partners have respondent with demands of creating a more social Europe and have come to the streets to protest in that accord (Helander, 2008a).

The Nordic unions, and in particular the Finnish unions, have also been in favor of the development of a more social Europe, but have also not been against in the development of national competitiveness. According to Helander, Finnish trade unions have worked together with the large employers to modernize and rationalize production processes especially in an effort to strengthen Finnish export industry, and in fact, the response of Finnish trade union movement to globalization, according to Helander, has been framed by a national perspective and the union movement has not been opposed to the development of national competitiveness strategies. Kettunen (2006) has argued the state developed innovation and competitiveness policies are a type of nationalist response to globalization. Globalization can then be seen as causing more nationalistic responses than perhaps originally theorized.

Helander has also argued that the Finnish unions are operating in a “post-Marxist” stage, where-by pragmatic interest representation is guiding the actions of union (2008b, p. 374). The unions strategies can be seen as proactive in the efforts to influence policy making and international agreements, instead of solely reacting to the problems and protesting proposals made elsewhere. According to Helander, the Nordic unionists see their work as more proactive due to its pragmatic nature than the work of their southern European counterparts. As it is no longer possible to influence the global capital on the shop-floor, it is perhaps not surprising that Helander argues that the Marxist traditions and class consciousness is no longer the defining feature of the unions international collaboration.

As Helader has argued, Finnish unions view their pragmatism as proactive form of action. With pragmatism the unions are referring to their work at the policy level interest representation. The current research supports the findings from Helander, as within the focus groups, the most important issues related to immigrants labor market situation, such as unfair language requirement were seen as worth while to bring to the collective agreement tables (TUPO). One of the main results of this study can be seen in the way in which the Finnish trade union movement has placed an extensive focus on the external representativeness, and in some ways seems to be most comfortable with the interest representation in the tripartite negotiations and views it as the most powerful arena for making changes.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A.

The following documents were included in the analysis of the trade union confederations public statements regarding immigration. The documents were gathered by searching the internet sites of the three confederations for all documents including the keyword "immigration" or a version of that word.

1. Björkbacka, P. (2006). 'Ulkomaalaiset työntekijät toivotettava tervetulleiksi', Akavalainen, 3, pp. 20–21.
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4. SAK, Akava and STTK (2002). Guide for Foreigners Working in Finland. SAK.
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6. SAK, Akava and STTK (2002). Guide for Foreigners Working in Finland.
7. SAK, EK, STTK and Akava (2007). Mahmoud, Mertsu ja Maija, Monimuotoinen työyhteisö ja syrjimätön työn arki. Edita.
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9. STTK (2005). 'Vastaus lausuntopyyntöön, työryhmän ehdotus hallituksen maahanmuuttopoliittiseksi ohjelmaksi', [www.sttk.fi](http://www.sttk.fi).
10. STTK (2010). STTK:n jäsenliitoille toteutettu maahanmuuttokysely, [www.sttk.fi](http://www.sttk.fi).
11. Sintonen, A. (2004). ETMO- monikulttuurisuus voimavarana työyhteisössä. SAK.
12. Työmarkkinajärjestöjen yhteinen kannanotto (2006). 'Ulkomaalaiset Työntekijät Tervetulleita', [www.sak.fi](http://www.sak.fi).

## Appendix B.

Background information for the focus-group participants. Original form was written in Finnish, here an English language translation.

### Background information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

### Family situation (Circle best match)

1. Married, common-law marriage or registered partnership
2. Separated
3. Divorced
4. Widow
5. Single

Number of children \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children under 18 years of age \_\_\_\_\_

### Education (Circle best match)

1. Primary school or less
2. Middle school
3. Lower trade school
4. High school diploma
5. Higher Trade School
6. University of applied sciences degree
7. University degree

**How many years have you been working in the labour markets?**

---

**How many years have you been working for your current union?**

---

**What is your position in the union and how long have you been working in that position?**

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**In what other positions have you been working in the current union?**

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**In what other union have you been working earlier? In what position and for how long?**

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## Appendix C.

An informed consent for focus group participants

### Tutkimussuostumus

Tämän tutkimuksen aiheena on Suomen ammattiyhdistysliikkeen suhtautuminen maahanmuuttoon. Tutkimuksemme toteutetaan useissa osissa, joista ensimmäiseen osaan olette osallistumassa. Tutkimuksemme ensimmäinen vaihe selvittää ammattiyhdistysliikkeen liittotasolla toimivien henkilöiden ajatuksia maahanmuutosta, käyttämällä ryhmähaastattelu- menetelmää. Tämä ryhmähaastattelu kestää noin 90 minuuttia jonka aikana haastatteluun osallistuvat henkilöt keskustelevat aiheesta. Tutkimuksen toteuttaa Tampereen yliopiston ja valtakunnallisen TyöVerkko tutkijakoulun jatko-opiskelija ja Siirtolaisinstituutin tutkija Tiina Ristikari. Tutkimuksen ohjaajana toimii Professori Jouko Nätti Tampereen yliopistosta. Tutkimusta ovat rahoittaneet Palkansaajasäätiö sekä TyöVerkko tutkijakoulu.

Ryhmähaastattelussa esille tulleet asiat raportoidaan tutkimusjulkaisuissa tavalla, jossa tutkittavia tai muita haastattelussa mainittuja yksittäisiä henkilöitä ei voi välittömästi tunnistaa. Haastattelut nauhoitetaan ja kirjataan tekstitiedostoiksi ja samalla muutetaan haastateltavien ja muiden haastatteluissa mainittujen henkilöiden nimet peitenimiksi. Tämän jälkeen haastateltavien nimet ja osoitetiedot hävitetään. Haastattelun salassapito turvataan niin, että siitä tehtyä äänitallennetta käsittelevät tutkimusapulaiset ja tutkijat allekirjoittavat vaitiolositoumuksen. Lisätietoja tutkimuksesta saa ottamalla yhteyttä:

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**Paikkakunta ja päiväys** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tutkimukseen osallistujan allekirjoitus** \_\_\_\_\_