

## Foreword

This review of the skills and labour market integration of immigrants and their children in Finland is the second in a new series conducted by the International Migration Division in the OECD Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs. It builds on previous country-specific reports by the OECD in the series *Jobs for Immigrants* (Vols. 1, 2 and 3).

In recent years, the integration of migrants – and in particular of refugees – has been high on the policy agenda in many countries, and Finland is certainly no exception. Finland does not have a long history of hosting international migrants. But with a compound annual growth rate of 7% over the past 25 years, the growth of this population has been amongst the fastest in the OECD.

The large number of asylum seekers that arrived in Finland in 2015 put integration squarely on the agenda, and the country was quick to develop a number of innovative integration policies in response. Some, such as the Social Impact Bond, have attracted attention from across the OECD. Asylum seeker numbers have fallen dramatically in recent years – from 32 000 in the record year of 2015, to just over 2 100 first time applications in 2017. Not everybody will obtain asylum and need to be integrated. Nevertheless, accommodating the stark rise and fall in arrivals presents its own difficulties; raising questions of how best to respond to the integration needs of this large cohort without scaling up the integration system on a permanent basis. In this context, careful monitoring of the training offered to migrants, and outcome this training achieves, will be essential – to ensure that bottlenecks do not form, that no migrant falls through the cracks, and that resources are targeted to where they are most needed.

This review examines the skills and labour market situation of immigrants and their children in this, the Finnish context. The remainder of the report is structured as follows: the report starts with an assessment and recommendations. Chapter 1 presents an overview of the context in which integration in Finland takes place – the background and composition of Finland's foreign-born population, as well as the labour market and the integration policy context. Chapter 2 then moves beyond averages, to delve

deeper into the integration outcomes of Finland's foreign-born population; providing a closer examination of the relative integration success of Finland's migrant groups, as well as the pathways they take to integration. Chapter 3 sets out the core services at the heart of early integration efforts in Finland. It outlines some of the bottlenecks that currently compromise the efficiency of these services and takes a closer look at the relationship between early settlement patterns and integration outcomes. Chapter 4 looks at the opportunities migrants have to demonstrate their skills – translating them for the Finnish labour market and gaining their first foothold in employment. Finally Chapter 5 provides a closer look at the challenges facing some of Finland's most vulnerable migrants – in particular, migrant women and their children.



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