

Rolle Alho

# Inclusion or Exclusion?

Trade Union Strategies  
and Labor Migration



Institute of Migration | *Migration Studies C 27*



**Rolle Alho**

**Inclusion or Exclusion?  
Trade Union Strategies and  
Labor Migration**

**Academic Dissertation**

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# Contents

Abstract .....	7
Tiivistelmä (abstract in Finnish).....	8
1 Introduction.....	11
2 Setting the stage .....	17
3 Literature review.....	22
3.1 Introduction to the previous literature .....	22
3.2 Trade unions' exclusion strategies .....	25
3.3 Trade unions' inclusion strategies.....	30
3.4 Placing trade unions' strategies into context: an institutional approach.....	33
3.5 Conclusion of the previous research .....	35
4 Theoretical framework.....	37
4.1 Migrants as a special labor market category.....	38
4.2 Trade union power resources' relation to labor immigration.....	39
4.3 Labor immigration strategies as upholders of trade unions' power resources .....	42
4.4 Exclusion.....	44
4.5 Inclusion .....	46
5 Case study's research questions, material, methods and ethics.....	48
5.1 Research questions.....	50
5.2 Research material and methods.....	51
5.2.1 Interviews.....	51
5.2.2 Public statements .....	56
5.2.3 Material from different events .....	57
5.2.4 Interpretation of the research material .....	57
5.2.5 Research ethics .....	61
6 Summary of the original publications .....	64
7 Results.....	68
7.1 Service Union United's strategies .....	69
7.1.1 Operating environment of the Service Union United.....	69
7.1.2 Inclusion strategies of the Service Union United .....	74
7.1.3 Exclusion strategies of the Service Union United.....	82
7.2 Finnish Construction Trade Union's strategies .....	88
7.2.1 Operating environment of the Finnish Construction Trade Union .....	89
7.2.2 Inclusion strategies of the Finnish Construction Trade Union.....	95
7.2.3 Exclusion strategies of the Finnish Construction Trade Union .....	98
8 Summary of the strategies.....	102
9 Conclusion and discussion.....	106
References .....	115
Original publications: Articles I–IV .....	129



# Abstract

## Inclusion or Exclusion? Trade Union Strategies and Labor Migration

This research identified and analyzed immigration-related strategies of the Finnish Construction Trade Union (FCTU) and the Service Union United (SUU); e.g. how the unions react to labor immigration, whether unions seek to include migrants in the unions, and what is migrants' position in the unions. The two unions were chosen as the focus of the research because the workforce in the sectors they represent is migrant-dense. The study also analyzed the experiences that migrants who work in these sectors have with trade unions. The Estonian labor market situation –including the role of Estonian trade unions– was also examined as it has a considerable impact on the operating environment of the FCTU.

The results of the study indicate that immigration is a contradictory issue for both unions. On the one hand, they strive to include migrants as trade union members and to defend migrants' labor rights. On the other hand, they, together with their umbrella organization the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK), seek to prevent labor immigration from outside the EU and EEA countries. They actively defend current labor immigration restrictions by drawing attention to high unemployment figures and to the breaches of working conditions migrants encounter.

In contrast, the employer organizations promote a more liberal state policy on labor immigration because they see it as a boost for business. Both the unions and the employer organizations ground their arguments on national interest. However, the position of the trade union movement is not uniform: unions belonging to the Confederation of Unions for Professionals and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava) embrace more liberal labor immigration stances than the SAK.

A key trade union strategy is to try to guarantee that migrants' working conditions do not differ from those of the natives. The FCTU and the SUU inform migrants about Finnish collective agreements and trade union membership in the most common migrant languages. This is important for the unions because it is not in their interest that migrants' working conditions are undercut. The interviewed migrants said that natives had more negotiating power with employers, which is often negatively portrayed in migrants' working conditions. Migrants perceive that trade unions have an important role in protecting their working conditions. However, they stressed that migrants' knowledge of unions is often very limited.

The number of migrants in both two unions studied here is increasing. Especially in the SUU, a considerable proportion of the new members are migrants. The FCTU is in a more challenging situation than the SUU because migrant construction workers often work only for short periods in Finland and are consequently

not interested in becoming union members. The unions' strategies partly differ: the FCTU was the first Finnish trade union to establish a trade union branch/local for migrant members. The goal is to facilitate migrants' inclusion in the union and to highlight the specific problems they face. The SUU, for its part, insists that such a special strategy would exclude migrants within the union organization.

Despite the unions' strategies, migrants are still underrepresented as union members and officials, which some of the interviewed migrants saw as a problem. Immigrants' perception of trade unions was pragmatic: they had joined unions when membership yielded concrete benefits.

In spite of the unions' strategies, migrants –and temporary migrants– encounter specific problems in terms of working conditions. Both unions demand more state intervention to protect migrants' labor rights because overseeing working conditions consumes union resources. However, without the unions' intervention, these problems would be more common than is currently the case. For instance, some of the interviewed migrants had received trade union assistance in claiming unpaid wages.

The study demonstrated with the help of building on Walter Korpi's power resources theory, that immigration is a power resource issue for the unions: successful immigration-related strategies strengthen unions –and vice versa. The research also showed how the unions' operating environments constrain and enable their immigration-related strategies.

This study has illuminated a previously ignored dimension: the immigrant-inclusive strategies of the Finnish trade unions.

The research material consists of 78 qualitative interviews, observation in trade union events, and trade unions' and employer organizations' public statements.

## **Tiivistelmä (abstract in Finnish)**

### **Tervetuloa töihin? Ammattiliittojen strategiat ja työperäinen maahanmuutto**

Tutkimuksessa identifioitiin ja analysoitiin Rakennusliiton ja Palvelualojen ammattiliitto PAMin maahanmuuttoon liittyvät strategiat. Tutkimuksen kohteena oli, miten kyseiset ammattiliitot suhtautuvat työperäiseen maahanmuuttoon, pyrkivätkö liitot saaman maahanmuuttajia jäsenikseen sekä mikä on maahanmuuttajien asema ammattiliitoissa. Rakennusliitto ja PAM valittiin tarkastelun kohteeksi, sillä niiden edustamalla aloilla maahanmuuttajat muodostavat merkittävän osan työvoimasta. Tutkimuksessa käsiteltiin myös Rakennusliiton ja PAMin

edustamalla aloilla työskentelevien maahanmuuttajien kokemuksia ammattiliitosta. Lisäksi tarkasteltiin Viron työmarkkinatilannetta ja ammattiyhdistysliikkeen asemaa, sillä ne vaikuttavat Rakennusliiton toimintaympäristöön ja -edellytyksiin.

Tutkimustulokset osoittavat, että maahanmuutto on Rakennusliitolle ja PAMille ristiriitainen kysymys. Yhtäältä ne pyrkivät saamaan maahanmuuttajat ammattiliittojen jäseniksi sekä turvaamaan maahanmuuttajien työehtoja. Toisaalta molemmat liitot pyrkivät keskusjärjestönsä SAK:n kanssa torjumaan työperäistä maahanmuuttoa: ne puolustavat aktiivisesti nykyisiä EU- ja Eta-alueen ulkopuolelta suuntautuvan työperäisen maahanmuuton rajoituksia vedoten Suomen korkeaan työttömyysasteeseen sekä maahanmuuttajien työehtoihin liittyviin ongelmiin.

Työnantajajärjestöt puolestaan vaativat työperäisen maahanmuuton rajoitusten purkamista, sillä ne katsovat, että lisääntynyt työvoiman tarjonta hyödyttäisi yritystoimintaa. Molemmat tahot perustelevat maahanmuuttokantaansa kansallisella edulla. Ammattiyhdistysliikkeen kanta työperäiseen maahanmuuttoon ei kuitenkaan ole yhdenmukainen: Akavaan kuuluvilla ammattiliitoilla on SAK:laisia ammattiliittoja liberaalimmat maahanmuuttokannat.

Ammattiliittojen keskeisenä strategiana on taata, että maahanmuuttajat eivät tee heikommin työehdoin samoja työtehtäviä kuin syntyperäinen väestö. Sekä PAM että Rakennusliitto tiedottavat suomalaisista työehtosopimuksista ja ammattiliittojen jäsenyydestä yleisimmillä maahanmuuttajakielillä. Tämä on ammattiliittojen tulevaisuudennäkymien kannalta tärkeää, sillä niiden intressissä ei ole, että syntyperäisen väestön ja maahanmuuttajien työehdot eriytyvät. Tutkimusta varten haastatellut rakennus- ja palvelualoilla työskentelevät maahanmuuttajat kokivat, että maahanmuuttajat ovat syntyperäistä väestöä heikommassa neuvotteluasemassa suhteessa työnantajiin, mikä heijastuu usein maahanmuuttajien työehtoihin. Maahanmuuttajien mukaan ammattiliitoilla on tärkeä rooli heidän työehtojensa turvaajina. Toisaalta he painottivat, että maahanmuuttajien tietämys ammattiliittojen roolista Suomessa on usein hyvin puutteellista.

Molemmissa liitoissa maahanmuuttajajäsenten määrä on noussut suhteellisen nopeasti viimeisen vuosikymmenen aikana, ja etenkin PAMissa huomattava osa uusista jäsenistä on maahanmuuttajia. Rakennusliitto on PAMia hankalamassa tilanteessa jäsenhankinnan suhteen, sillä ulkomaalaiset rakennustyöntekijät työskentelevät Suomessa usein tilapäisesti ja eivät sen takia liity ammattiliiton jäseniksi. Liittojen strategiat poikkeavat osittain toisistaan: Rakennusliitto on ensimmäisenä suomalaisena ammattiliittona perustanut maahanmuuttajille tarkoitettua ammattiosaston, jonka tarkoituksena on helpottaa maahanmuuttajien osallistumista liiton toimintaan sekä nostaa esiin maahanmuuttajien kohtaamia erityisongelmia. PAM sen sijaan katsoo, että tällainen erityisjärjestely eriyttäisi maahanmuuttajat muusta jäsenistöstä liiton sisällä.

Vaikka molemmat liitot ovat onnistuneet kasvattamaan maahanmuuttajajäsenten määrää, ovat maahanmuuttajat edelleen aliedustettuina liittojen jäsenenä ja toimitsijoina, minkä osa haastatelluista maahanmuuttajista koki ongelmalliseksi. Maahanmuuttajien suhtautuminen ammattiliittoihin oli käytännönläheinen: ammattiliittojen jäseniksi liietyttiin silloin kun jäsenyyden katsottiin tarjoavan konkreettista hyötyä.

Liittojen toimista huolimatta maahanmuuttajat – ja maassa tilapäisesti työskentelevät ulkomaalaiset – kohtaavat syntyperäistä väestöä useammin työehtoihin liittyviä ongelmia. Sekä PAM että Rakennusliitto vaativat valtiolta nykyistä vahvempia toimia maahanmuuttajien työehtojen turvaamiseksi, sillä maahanmuuttajien työehtojen valvominen ja suojaaminen vaatii liitoilta resursseja. Toisaalta ilman ammattiliittojen toimintaa maahanmuuttajien työehtoihin liittyvät ongelmat olisivat nykyistä suurempia. Jotkut tutkimusta varten haastatellut maahanmuuttajat olivat esimerkiksi saaneet ammattiliiton apua maksamattomien palkkojen perimisessä.

Tutkimus osoitti Walter Korven valtaresurssiteoriaa hyödyntäen, että maahanmuutto on ammattiliitoille valtaresurssikysymys: onnistuneet maahanmuuttoon ja maahanmuuttajiin liittyvät strategiat vahvistavat liittojen valtaresursseja – ja päinvastoin. Tutkimus osoitti myös miten ammattiliittojen toimintaympäristö rajoittaa ja mahdollistaa maahanmuuttoon liittyviä strategioita.

Aiemmat tutkimukset ovat painottaneet suomalaisten ammattiliittojen pyrkimystä torjua työperäistä maahanmuuttoa, jolloin tässä tutkimuksessa havaitut ammattiliittojen toimet maahanmuuttajien työmarkkina-aseman turvaamiseksi ovat jääneet huomioimatta.

Tutkimusaineisto koostuu 78 laadullisesta tutkimushaastattelusta, ammattiliittojen tilaisuuksista kerätystä aineistosta sekä ammattiliittojen ja työnantajajärjestöjen julkisista kannanotoista.

# 1

## Introduction

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Transnational mobility of people, capital, and services has considerable implications for labor markets. Mobility is therefore also a trade union issue; it poses serious challenges to trade unions, whose strategies are mainly targeted to the nation-state level (Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Hyman 2001; Roosblad 2002; Helander 2008; Jonker-Hoffrén 2012). For example, trade unions find it more difficult than before to rely on strikes as a strategy to pressure employers. This is due to the fact that firms in many sectors can use mobility as a strategic measure by relocating their production to countries where strikes, for one reason or another, are rare. Workers' mobility in itself is a critical issue for the future outlook of trade unions, regarding, for example, whether migrants join trade unions or not, and furthermore, what kind of working conditions they face.

The trade unions under scrutiny in this thesis are the Finnish Construction Trade Union (abbreviated here as FCTU) and the Service Union United (abbreviated here as SUU). For these two trade unions, firms' relocation of production to low-wage countries, or markets that are otherwise more suitable, is not a problem, unlike relocations are for some industrial trade unions in high-wage countries. This is due to the local character of the working life sectors that the FCTU and the SUU represent; construction, restaurant, or cleaning work cannot be relocated abroad unlike, for instance, the jobs of the Finnish Paper Workers' Union's members (see Jonker-Hoffrén 2012). Nevertheless, the opening up of the national labor markets changes both unions' operating environment. This is because the amount of migrant workers in both the construction sector and the service sector is considerably high (Lillie & Sippola 2011; Könönen 2012; Forsander 2013). Therefore, the trade unions representing these sectors are relevant cases when analyzing trade unions' immigration related strategies.

Trade unions' responses to newcomers in the labor markets –in this case migrants– concretely show what unions view as their mission. Unions' reactions also illustrate whom and what they represent. This PhD thesis focuses on the aforementioned trade unions' reactions to increased immigration to Finland. Do these unions welcome immigrants or do they rather see them as a threat to their position and consequently seek protection in so called welfare chauvinism that would favor natives' interests to immigrants'? Or do they strive for a broader representation of the work force that would –in addition to the natives– also include immigrants? How do migrants perceive these collective actors named trade unions? Do they think that unions defend their rights? In an extreme case, if trade unions decide to exclude migrants, they would solely be defenders of the native workers. Another option for trade unions is to try to include migrants and defend their rights, in which case their operation would be based on place and occupation regardless of nationality or ethnicity. On a more general level, these questions are related to whether trade unions are capable of responding to societal changes in a complex and globalizing world.

The impact of immigration on the national labor markets is a major global concern and a matter of ongoing dispute. Immigration is often defended with economic arguments. Many countries and working life sectors are dependent of migrant workers (Guerin-Gonzales & Strikwerda 1993; Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Milkman et al. 2010; Wrede & Nordberg 2010). Furthermore, labor immigrants are frequently seen as one possible solution to the challenges that aging populations pose to national economies (Forsander et al. 2004; Castles & Miller 2009). In this thesis the term *labor immigrant* is understood broadly, i.e. as a person who has migrated for whatever reason on a permanent or temporary basis and who works in the documented or undocumented labor market. Sometimes immigration is considered to be linked with economic innovations (Forsander et al. 2004; Florida 2005). Unrestricted transnational mobility of people is at times seen as a human rights issue (see, e.g., Rigo 2007).

On the other hand, considerable parts of the native populations in receiving countries regard immigration as a threat to their economy (e.g. Koopmans & Statham 2000; Saukkonen 2013). Resistance to immigration has become an important political factor in recent years in Europe. An indication of this was the European Parliament election in 2014, when parties opposing immigration gained increased popularity. Resistance to immigration has –in addition to economic issues– been explained by natives' perceived threats to national cultures and identities (Koopmans et al. 2005; Castles 2009, 38). In Finland, the recent success of the populist *Finns Party* has partly to do with its open resistance to those forms of immigration that the Party sees harmful to the society (Jutila & Sundell 2012; Saukkonen 2013, 89). Meanwhile, the support of the Party political Left, traditionally linked with trade unions, has decreased in Finland and elsewhere in

Europe. This raises the question on whether trade unions start to embrace these anti-immigration/immigrant voices. Or, rather, have the trade unions begun to defend workers' rights regardless of their nationality or ethnicity?

For a long time, Finland has been a society in which differences in political goals have not been large (Kettunen 2008; Lounasmeri 2010). However, as for immigration, this has not been the case for some years: differences in views on immigration are considerable and politically charged (on the differences, see Mähönen & Jasinskaja-Lahti 2013, 261). In short, immigration divides opinions. Because of this, it is important to examine the trade unions' stance on immigration issues; Finnish trade unions are influential actors in these questions (on Finnish unions' influence on immigration policy, see Salmenhaara 2008). Trade unions' strategies regarding labor immigration have a bearing on their future outlook, as well as on immigrants' position (e.g. Penninx & Roosblad 2000). The significance of the research topic is underlined with the rapid increase in immigration to Finland: the amount of foreign citizens approximately doubled between the years 2003 and 2013 (source: Statistics Finland 2014). Temporary labor migration to Finland has also increased during the last years (Alho et al. 2011; National Audit Office of Finland 2012, 9; Alho & Helander forthcoming).

In spite of these recent changes, there is relatively little research on Finnish trade unions' approaches to immigration questions. There is even less research on how migrants regard trade unions in Finland, the only scientific publication that addresses the topic –in addition to one of this thesis' publications– being a book-chapter written by the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Union SAK's immigration expert Kytäjä (2011). This PhD thesis expands our knowledge of this understudied topic. Two of the thesis' original publications are in Finnish and two in English. Therefore, the thesis brings international research on the topic to the Finnish audience and provides information on the topic for international audience.

This thesis looks at the recent situation in Finland during which the country has become a country of immigration. The history of Finnish immigration research is still comparatively short and immigration research has typically not been combined with labor market research. Trade unions have –with a few exceptions, such as Tiina Ristikari's (2013) PhD thesis on Finnish shop stewards' attitudes toward migrants and ethnic relations in the labor markets– not been on the agenda of immigration and ethnicity research. A rich tradition of trade union research exists in Finland (to name a few: Ala-Kapee et al. 1979; Lilja 1980; Kalela, 1986; Vartiainen 1986; Ilmonen & Kevätsalo 1995; Helin, 1998; Ilmonen & Siisiäinen 1998; Bergholm 2003, 2007, 2012; Hannikainen 2004, 132–140; Kevätsalo 2005; Helander 2008; Suoranta 2009; Jonker-Hoffrén 2012; Melin 2012; Uljas 2012). This line of research shows that the Finnish trade union movement has been an important societal actor that has managed to improve employees' economic

and social conditions. An important tool for the unions has been the capability of making collective agreements with organized employers. These studies also indicate that historically immigration has been –at most– a marginal issue for Finnish trade unions. However, the immigration question has not been totally absent in the history of Finnish trade unions. According to Bergholm (2012, 410–412), the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) took a restrictive stance against labor immigration in the beginning of the 1970s, and argued that the shortage of workforce should in the first instance be tackled by employing housewives and Finnish return migrants from Sweden –not by foreign labor (in post-war Sweden trade unions and women’s organizations had the same stance according to Knocke 2000, 157–182). The protectionist stance of the Finnish blue collar trade union movement and the Party political left influenced immigration policy so that labor immigration to Finland was minimal in the 1970s. Hence, in the 1970s the only professional group in which the share of foreign workers in Finland was significant was dance musicians. (Bergholm 2012, 412)

Immigration to Finland is bound to continue. It is therefore likely that immigration questions that this research highlights will be topical in the future also for those trade unions that do not consider these issues important for the time being.

Finnish trade unions’ response to immigration is an interesting research topic because Finnish trade unions, like those of other Nordic countries, are influential in international comparison (see, e.g., Andersen et al. 2007, 14; Bergholm 2007, 2012). Hence, they shape dynamics of immigration and immigration policy (Salmenhaara 2008). Consequently, they also influence immigrants’ position. Furthermore, as Finland is a relatively young immigration country, the effects of immigration are still a more open question than is the case in many older immigration countries.

At the center of this research are trade unions’ responses to immigration in the construction sector and the private service sector. The thesis identifies the main strategies of the Finnish Construction Trade Union and the Service Union United and analyzes how their operating environment influences their strategies (and vice versa). The research questions are described in detail in chapter 5.

The strategies of the FCTU and the SUU were chosen as case studies because these two unions represent working life sectors that employ most migrant workers (see Lillie & Sippola 2011; Könönen 2012; Forsander 2013). Therefore, they are so called *critical cases*, which means that they are cases in which the studied phenomenon becomes particularly clear (see, e.g., Flick 2002, 68). The strength of case studies lies in their ability to produce concrete, intensive, and context-bound knowledge (Flyvbjerg 2004, 309–404; Hirsjärvi et. al. 2009, 134; Yin 2014). This context-sensitive approach is important because, despite globalization and European integration, different trade unions in different countries still have diverse views on immigration (for differences in trade unions’ considerations, see, e.g.,

Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Milkman 2010; Bengtsson 2013). The case study logic is described in detail in chapter 5.

By focusing the analysis on the trade union level –the FCTU and the SUU– some generalizations were inevitable. The generalizations do not always do justice to the diversity of viewpoints that usually co-exist in such large trade unions. For example according to Ristikari (2013) it is not unusual that Finnish shop stewards *within* individual trade unions express different attitudes toward immigrants and ethnic relations. However, as my thesis focuses on the meso-level, i.e., union-level trade union strategy, the two trade unions under scrutiny are viewed and analyzed as single actors. This is justified because trade unions –like other political actors– need, in order to be effective and credible, to form a somewhat unitary form of action and communication to the society at large.

By *strategies* I mean actors' relatively established ways of operating. What precisely is meant with strategy in this research is described in chapter 4. As this is a qualitative study, I do not strictly define in advance which specific trade union strategies are *immigration related*: the definition is made on the basis of the research material. Accordingly, strategy in this study is the researcher's analytical tool –and not an issue that could in a straightforward manner be measured from the empirical reality. I have chosen not to give a strict definition of the trade unions' immigration related strategies from the outset, because it is not always immediately obvious which of the many structural changes in the labor market are related to immigration issues. The SUU and the FCTU's strategies are compared with each other. The unions' strategies are also contrasted to other relevant actors in immigration. These actors were: migrant workers and employers and their interest organizations, state authorities, and the Free Movement activist network. The reason for contrasting is that these actors shape trade unions' operating environment in immigration questions. The unions' operating environment in immigration questions is obviously more complex than the one revolving around the aforementioned actors and their strategies. However, even a partial consideration of the operating environment increases our understanding in the subject matter more than solely looking at trade unions' strategies would. The operating environment for its part constrains and enables trade unions' strategies. For instance, employers' strategies in immigration questions have a bearing on the outlook of trade unions (e.g. Caviedes 2010) and immigrants' perceptions on trade unions affect trade unions' possibilities of including migrants as their members. Trade unions increasingly perceive that successful *inclusion* of migrants for its part strengthens unions' *power resources* (e.g. Milkman 2010). On the other hand, trade unions have at times seen that *exclusion* of migrants is in their interest (e.g. Penninx & Roosblad 2000). By inclusion I mean processes that extend to migrant workers the same rights and benefits the native workers enjoy. By *exclusion* I mean processes that exclude migrant workers from the labor

markets and the rights and benefits enjoyed by natives. The terms inclusion and exclusion are defined more precisely in chapter 4. In this research, power resources are defined in accordance to Walter Korpi (1995, 42) as capabilities and means by which actors are able to influence their environment in their interest (a more detailed explanation is given in chapter 4).

Micro-level questions, such as migrants' perceptions of trade unions, increase our understanding of how trade unions' strategies affect the individual worker. The meso-level analysis in this research focuses on trade unions' strategies. The micro-level analysis is of crucial methodological importance here because trade unions' preconditions are related to how migrants regard unions. For example, if migrants think that trade unions do not represent them, they are not likely to join unions. Hence, the empirical research focuses on both meso and micro-levels. However, *the main focus* is on meso-level, i.e. on trade unions' strategies. Finnish and Estonian labor markets are intertwined in the construction sector. Therefore, the empirical focus in one of the thesis' four original publications tackles the Estonian labor market situation and Estonian trade union strategies.

The empirical research material covers mainly years 2005–2013. As this summary has been written after the publications of the four individual articles (which came out in 2010, 2012, 2013 and 2013), I have, on occasion, referred to newer research material when I have deemed it to benefit the thesis. The research material consists of qualitative face-to-face interviews of trade union representatives, trade unions' public statements and research material gathered from events in which unions' representatives presented their unions' strategies. In addition to the face-to-face interviews, some of the interviewed union representatives were sent follow-up questions via email, and their replies are included in the research material. I interviewed migrants and employers who have recruited migrants because their perceptions and strategies influence trade unions' operating environment. The thesis is not normative in the sense that it would take a stance regarding what the trade unions (and other actors) *should* –or *should not*– do. Instead, it explores and explains the actors' strategies. Nonetheless, critical scrutiny of the strategies potentially enables us also to reflect on what *could* be.

The structure of the thesis summary is following: Chapter 2 describes the setting in which contemporary labor immigration takes place. Chapter 3 presents the previous research relevant for this study. The theoretical framework of the thesis is constructed in chapter 4. Chapter 5 describes the research questions, material and the ethical questions related to the research. Chapter 6 presents the main arguments of the four original publications that comprise the thesis. The results of the study are presented in chapter 7. Chapter 8 summarizes the key strategies of the unions. Chapter 9 forms the conclusion and discussion of the research.

# 2

## Setting the stage

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The European Union has created a common political, social and economic space and in doing so promoted transnational mobility of workforce and service providers. The EU enlargements of 2004 and 2007 have been followed by workers' migrations from the East European EU member states to Western Europe. In the Finnish context this has been evident especially in labor mobility from Estonia. These changes have increased trade unions' and researchers' interest toward the issue (Marino 2012). An example of the increased research interest is the establishment of the "Immigration, Immigrants and Trade Unions in Europe" (or IITUE) -research network in the framework of the IMISCOE migration research network in 2011.

As for Finland, immigration from the EU/EEA countries and elsewhere has steadily increased since the 1990s (Statistics Finland 2014). The largest groups of foreign nationals, in descending order, are: Estonians, Russians, Swedes, Somalis, Chinese, Iraqis, Thai, Turks, Germans and Indians (ibid.). The share of both permanent and temporary migrants has increased in the Finnish labor market during the 2000s (von Hertzen-Oosi et al. 2009; National Audit Office of Finland 2012). The available data on the amount of migrants in the Finnish labor market is not precise, but according to the state authorities in 2010 around 140,000 workers "with foreign background" were employed in the Finnish labor market; 50,000 of them worked on a "temporary basis" in the country (ibid.). Attitudes toward immigration in Finland (much like in other Scandinavian countries) have on average been comparatively positive in a European context (Ervasti et al. 2008, 197). On the other hand, the recent discourse regarding immigration and immigrants seems to have been polarized more strongly than before on "two camps" on the positive-negative axis (Mähönen & Jasinskaja-Lahti 2013, 261).

Immigration issues are intertwined with the ways of organizing work in the construction and private service sectors. In the construction sector, the use of migrant workforce is tangled with subcontracting and transnational mobility of construction workers and enterprises (see, e.g., Lillie & Sippola 2010). In the private service sector, migrants are more active than natives in establishing enterprises (Joronen 2012). In many relatively wealthy countries native populations show little interest in working in cleaning, restaurant or construction jobs, which has increased the influx of migrants into these sectors (e.g. Massey et al. 1998, 38). Accordingly, the aim in this thesis is to understand labor immigration as part of a larger structural labor market transformation.

Immigration in Finland –like in many other countries– occurs in a post-industrial context where the labor markets are increasingly characterized by service and knowledge work. In Finland –as in many other countries– the service sector has expanded during the last decades whereas the amount of industrial work has decreased (Julkunen 2008; Bergholm 2012, 12). Labor markets are more and more characterized by flexibility and a need to meet global demands of innovativeness and competitiveness. For instance the intensified pressure of enterprises to maximize profits has increased demands on cleaners to perform their work more rapidly than before (Perrons 2004, 63–65; Tarkkonen 2010). In the construction sector, sub-contracting and competition among enterprises has intensified (Forsander 2008). In addition, construction companies and other service providing enterprises registered in EU countries can –due to free mobility within the EU– operate and compete across the EU nation-states (Lillie & Sippola 2011). Due to new technologies work is no longer as fundamentally bound to a certain location or time as earlier (e.g. Sennett 2008; Julkunen 2008; Koistinen 2014).

Trade unions' interest representation has typically been strong among relatively established workers, whose archetype for a long time was white, industrial male-worker (Hyman 2001, 30–31; Tait 2005). According to Wright (1997, 69):

“When most people think of “working class” the image that comes to mind is the white industrial worker...By large margin, the American working class now predominately consists of women and racial minorities.”

The Finnish situation is obviously not directly comparable to the American case. However, the same trends of women's increased participation in working life and the decay of industrial work have been evident for decades (e.g. Bergholm 2007; 2012). A newer trend in the Finnish context is the aforementioned influx of migrants.

In a global context, industrial work –traditionally one of the strongholds of trade unionism– has been, to a large degree, relocated to countries where trade

unions are weak or in some cases controlled by authoritarian regimes. Trade unions world-wide have had difficulties in successfully responding to these structural changes (Korpi 1998; Beck 2000; Standing 2009; Milkman 2010). Trade unions' failure to respond to these changes can be seen in a nearly world-wide decrease in unions' membership figures (for membership figures see, e.g., OECD 2015).

Newcomers –including migrants– are entering a labor market where trade unions are not as prevalent and influential as during their heyday. Contemporary labor immigration occurs in a labor market setting characterized by changes that previous research has identified as difficult for trade unions. In contrast: during the heyday of Swedish trade unions up until the 1980s new migrant workers in Sweden, especially in factories, were “commonly” asked to go to the local trade union office before signing a work contract and many migrants thought that becoming a union member was a precondition for getting a job (Knocke 2000, 166). In some cases, strong Swedish trade unions managed to establish a practice that obliged employers to encourage their new migrant workers to join unions. (ibid., 177; Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen 2000, 177). These kinds of practices are hardly imaginable in contemporary circumstances where trade unions are weaker and migration patterns more complex than during the post-war era of “traditional” labor migratory movement to the industrial sector.

In the construction sector and the private service sector immigration by default is a particularly critical issue from a trade union perspective because both sectors are labor-intensive sectors with a pressure to minimize labor costs due to an intensified competition among firms (see, e.g., Shelley 2007).

Despite these global changes in the trade unions' operating environment, the Finnish trade union movement continues to be an influential societal actor with an accepted position in the state's tripartite decision making system. The Finnish trade union movement is divided in around 80 trade unions and three central trade union organizations; Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK), the Confederation of Unions for Professionals and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava) and the Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees (STTK). The two trade unions under scrutiny in this research, namely the SUU and FCTU, are affiliated with the SAK. The employer organizations operate under the umbrella organization Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK). The SUU and the FCTU are in the Finnish context large trade unions in terms of their membership. Finnish trade unions have not been established according to political or religious divisions as is the case in many countries (see, e.g., Bergholm 2012, 79). This does not, however, mean that Party political dimensions and splits have been absent from trade unionism in Finland (ibid.) and close contacts to political parties have been important for trade unions. In the case of the SAK-affiliated unions, close links to Social Democrats and the Left Alliance (and other left-wing Parties in Finnish history) have been –and still are– of importance (ibid.; Jonker-Hoffrén 2012).

An indication of the close links is that in 2015 two of the three presidents of the SUU are members of the Social Democratic Party of Finland and the third one of the Left Alliance. Both presidents of the FCTU are members of the Left Alliance.

Finland and Estonia (which the third original publication of the thesis looks at) offer almost textbook cases of the two different approaches to market economy. To use Peter Hall and David Soskice's (2001) *Varieties of Capitalism (VoC)* approach, Finland is a *coordinated market economy (CME)*, whereas Estonia represents a *liberal market economy (LME)*.

A number of studies have applied the VoC approach in analyzing trade union strategies toward labor migration in different national contexts (see Krings 2009; Menz 2011; Johansson 2012). The thesis will show that the institutional setting has a bearing on trade unions' outlooks in Finland and Estonia as regards labor migration. The VoC approach has been criticized for overemphasizing the differences among various national industrial relations while underestimating the variety of sectoral industrial relations *within* countries (see Bechter et al. 2012). Despite this valid criticism, I utilize VoC in my research to understand the distinct labor market models of Finland and Estonia because out of all the EU countries, Finland displays the most homogenous industrial relations (least variance in the coordination logic among sectors) (ibid.). Estonia, on the other hand, is one of the most heterogeneous EU countries in this respect (ibid.). Hence, Finland and Estonia, unlike many other "mixed model" countries, fit well into the ideal type of models offered by the VoC, Finland being a CME and Estonia an LME. These national differences in the character of labor markets are manifested in many ways. For instance, as is typical for CMEs, Finland is characterized by comparatively influential trade unions and employer organizations that have high coverage as regards collective agreements. This is not the case in LME Estonia. In Finland, 95% of the workforce is covered by collective agreements, including nonunionized employees, according to the *erga omnes* principle (e.g. Böckerman & Uusitalo 2006, 284). The collective agreements bind all employers, regardless of nationality, in their applicable sectors. The collective agreements –which apply also to posted workers to Finland– determine pay, but also other issues such as working hours, pay during illness, rest periods, right to health services, holidays, and increased pay for hours exceeding regular working hours (source: Finnish Occupational and Safety Administration's webpage 18.2.2015). In contrast, in Estonia, the share of workers covered by sectoral collective agreements is only 25% (2005 Working Life Barometer Survey Estonia) and Estonia has national collective agreements in only a few industry sectors (Sippola 2009).

Finnish trade unions are by default in a more favorable situation than for example the Swedish unions as regards overseeing the working standards and pay of foreign posted workers. This is because collective agreements are not nationally binding in Sweden –unlike in Finland– and Swedish trade unions need to

enter into negotiations with foreign employers (see Dölvik and Eldring 2008, 37). A famous case in Sweden saw the Latvian construction company Laval sue the Swedish Building Workers' Union, which had called a strike in order to blockade Laval's building site. The reason for this was that Laval had refused to negotiate collective agreements with the Swedish union. Hence, Laval's posted workers were paid less than usually was the case in Sweden. Laval interpreted that its right to free movement in the EU had been impeded by the Swedish union's blockade. A Swedish court referred the case to the European Court of Justice (ECJ), where Laval won the case because, according to the ECJ, Sweden's collective bargaining system was not precise enough for the company to know its obligations in advance (Bruun 2008). In Finland, such legally complex situations regarding posted –or non-posted– migrant workers' labor standards would not be possible because, as mentioned earlier, collective agreements are nationally binding and apply also to non-unionized workers. This was confirmed in February 2015 when the Finnish Electrical Workers' Union won a legal case in the ECJ against a Polish company which had posted 186 Polish electricians to work at the Olkiluoto nuclear power plant in Finland (see YLE News Feb 12, 2015). From this standpoint posting of workers to Finland from abroad does not pose a threat to the trade unions in terms of labor standards.

Trade union density is between 62 and 67% in Finland (Ahtiainen 2011) and only between 6 and 7% in Estonia (OECD Stateextracts 2015). Since its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Estonia has followed a market liberal/neoliberal model of development with little role for trade unions (Feldmann 2008; Sippola 2009; Mrozowicki et al. 2013). The vast difference in the position of trade unions in Finland and Estonia can be illustrated by the fact that in 2013 FCTU had more members (89,000) than the entire Estonian trade union movement (46,000) (Source: FCTU and Estonian trade union confederations EAKL and TALO).

High trade union density in Finland is partly explained by the long-term state recognition of the so-called Ghent system, where employees belonging to an unemployment fund administered by a trade union receive for a certain time period a higher unemployment benefit than nonmembers (Böckerman & Uusitalo 2006). The Ghent system increases incentives to join a trade union (*ibid.*; Voxted & Lind 2012), and high density is in itself an important trade union power resource (e.g. Korpi 1978; Scheuer 2011). However, private unemployment funds have been allowed in Finland since the early 1990s, which has led to a decrease in density (Böckerman & Uusitalo 2006). In short, Finnish trade unions –irrespective of their comparatively strong position– are, like trade unions globally, challenged by difficult changes in their operating environments.

# 3 Literature review

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This chapter examines how previous literature has addressed the topic of this thesis. In the introduction of this chapter (subchapter 3.1) I present the general findings of previous research. I then provide an overview of trade union strategies regarding immigration and immigrants (subchapters 3.2 and 3.3). I divide the trade unions' strategies into exclusion and inclusion strategies. Then, I look at how trade unions' institutional setting constrains and enables their strategies (subchapter 3.4). Subchapter 3.5 concludes the previous research.

## 3.1 Introduction to the previous literature

Internationally, the cross border migration question is not a new one for trade unions and labor movements. After all, securing livelihood has been the main impetus for migration –as the classic of migration studies, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* by William I. Thomas and Florian W. Znaniecki, illustrated already in 1918. For example in the history of the U.S. trade unions immigration is an essential issue regarding who has the right to enter the country (Guerin-Gonzales & Strikwerda 1993; Briggs 2001; Watts 2002). The same applies for trade unions in “old” immigration countries in Europe such as France, UK and Sweden (Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Mulinari & Neergaard 2004). For example the French trade union confederation CGT called for the right of non-citizens to belong to professional unions as early as in 1883 (Lloyd 2000, 119). In the 1920s Belgian trade unions demanded “more and better legal rules on work permits for foreigners” (Martens & Pulignano 2008, 669).

For the migrant worker, trade union membership potentially offers economic and social protection and gives access to political and other forms of participation (Vranken 1990, 47–73; Mulinari & Neergaard 2004). For unions, the inclusion of migrants has both an ideological and a strategic component (Penninx & Roosblad 2000, 8). In this respect, trade unions have often been torn between ideas of universalist border crossing solidarity among workers irrespective of nationality, ethnicity or “race,” and protectionist stances where the national workforce’s rights are always preferred to the rights of those considered outsiders (see, e.g., Lloyd 2000, 119; Briggs 2001). The basic dilemma for unions has been/is that the arrival of new workforce –at least in theory– modifies the bargaining opportunities between labor market parts (see, e.g., Martens & Pulignano 2008, 665). As regards this dilemma the trade union movements’ stances have varied greatly as the following two historical quotes illustrate:

“In order to protect German employees, all legal possibilities must be utilized to send home foreign workers who are no longer needed. If they do not go voluntarily, regulations which permit their expulsion will just have to be applied more stringently.” (Edmund Duda, representative of the German trade union central organization DGB in 1973. Quoted in Guerin-Gonzales & Strikwerda (1993, 287–288))

“The alleged advantages that would come to the Socialist movement because of such heartless exclusion [of migrants] would all be swept away a thousand times by the sacrifice of a cardinal principle of the international socialist movement, for well might the good faith of such a movement be questioned by intelligent workers if it placed itself upon record as barring its doors against the very races most in need of relief, and extinguishing their hope, and leaving them in dark despair at the very time their ears were first attuned to the international call and their hearts were beginning to throb responsive to the solidarity of the oppressed of all lands and all climes beneath the skies.” (American trade union leader Eugen V. Debs in 1910, quoted in Watts 2002, 2)

It seems that these “age-old” questions persist: according to Ristikari (2013, 116) some Finnish shop stewards stated that Finnish trade unions should not become to be seen too much as “immigrant interest organizations” as this would be detrimental for the unions. Some shop stewards suggested that unions were being “overly positive” as regards immigrants (ibid.). Although these “traditional” trade union concerns have remained in the frame, the Finnish case is by default different from the previous eras because contemporary migration differs from historical labor immigration in form. As Penninx (2006, 10) stated:

“While migration tended to be viewed in the past predominantly as a once off movement leading to permanent resettlement (a conception that prevailed in the literature of classic immigration countries), recent migration –helped by strongly increased transport and communication facilities– has shifted to more fluid practices of international mobility in which more migrants have consecutive stays in different countries, alternate their residence between countries etc.”

From this perspective it is presumable that Finnish trade unions face –at least partly– different challenges when responding to migration than was the case of, say, the U.S. trade unions during the 19<sup>th</sup> and much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Regardless of the aforementioned qualitative change as regards migration, labor markets –despite globalization and European integration– are still by and large national institutions. We do not live in a post-national era where the national dimension of the labor markets would have lost its importance. (e.g. Soskice & Hall 2001; Koistinen 2014). Finnish trade unions have quite successfully strived to institutionalize their position in the nation-state’s tripartite decision-making bodies, by which they have been able to promote their goals (e.g. Kalela 1986; Helin 1998; Bergholm 2003, 2007, 2012; Jonker-Hoffrén 2012). Finnish industrial relations can be classified as corporatist and striving for consensus in a centralized collective bargaining system. In short, corporatism entails that interest groups, such as trade unions, are coordinated into the state’s institutionalized decision-making system (see, e.g., Lijphart 1999, 171–184). Unions in such contexts are characterized by a close relation to official state actors and employer organizations. In Finland, this has been visible, for example, in the fact that the trade union movement has been able to influence even the state’s foreign policy, a domain that is usually not considered a traditional trade union issue (see Bergholm 2003).

The continued significance of the national level is evident in how trade unions’ labor immigration strategies have been approached: many studies look at trade union movements principally as *national actors* (see, e.g., Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Marino 2012). The advantage of approaching trade union movements as somewhat homogenous national-level actors is that these studies produce a general overview of trade unions’ strategies in specific countries. An example of such a study is the much quoted anthology by Penninx and Roosblad (2000) that compared trade unions’ approaches to immigration and immigrants in seven West European countries between years 1960 and 1993. However, the weakness of these comparative cross-national studies is that they are unable to thoroughly analyze the variations in trade union outlooks and strategies *among* unions *within* countries. Sectoral and union-level differences among unions’ immigration-related strategies are substantial (see, e.g., Milkman 2010; Bengtsson 2013). An exception to the comparative macro-level studies, however, is a cross-national comparative

case study by Hardy et al. (2012) that analyzed trade union strategies in relation to migrant workers in migrant-dense sectors in Copenhagen, Oslo and North-East of England. This thesis focuses on the union level. Nevertheless, the Estonian trade union movement (the strategies of which are analyzed in one of the thesis' publications) is approached as a single entity. This is because internal diversity among the Estonian unions is not relevant for this study. However, it is worthwhile to look at the situation of the Estonian trade union movement because the Estonian labor market situation has consequences for the FCTU as this thesis will show.

*Exclusion* and *inclusion* are central concepts in political immigration research (Ataç & Rosenberger 2013, 12). They constrain and condition people's access to material, political and cultural resources (Kronauer 2009). Trade unions' strategies in immigration questions have often been analyzed through the concepts of exclusion and inclusion (e.g. in Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Marino 2009; 2012). In my thesis, I utilize these two concepts to frame unions' strategies. I use *exclusion strategies* to refer to such strategies that exclude migrants from the same rights and benefits as natives. An example of such strategy is trade unions' insistence that migrants have to seek work permits (see, e.g., Gächter 2000). Exclusion strategies are a form of *social closure*, to use Max Weber's (1978) term, understood as those processes by which social groups restrict entry of others in order to maximize their own social status and advantage.

By *inclusion strategies* I refer to such strategies that extend to migrants the same rights and benefits as to natives, or otherwise try to improve migrants' position. In the following I map the existing research literature by using the concepts *exclusion strategies* and *inclusion strategies*. I utilize these terms even in cases when the previous literature does not explicitly apply the terms *exclusion*, *inclusion*, or *strategy* but, nevertheless, refers to what I consider as exclusion, inclusion, or strategy (how I understand these concepts will be described in detail in chapter 4).

## 3.2 Trade unions' exclusion strategies

The improvement of workers' work and labor market position is considered to be the core task of trade unions. According to the classic of trade union research, "The History of Trade Unionism" (Webb et al. 1907), modern trade unions were historically grounded in skilled workers' unions, which aimed at defending their members' interests by excluding external competitors. Such exclusion strategy has been in many cases at the core of trade unions' immigration related strategies (e.g., Briggs 2001). This has been the case when trade unions have perceived immigration to increase the supply of labor and work against their members' interests. Trade unions have feared that employers exploit migrants by offering

them poor working conditions, which would create unhealthy competition from a union standpoint (e.g. Castles & Kosack 1985, 118–9; Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Frank 2012). Further, trade unions have been concerned that immigration weakens their macro-economic bargaining position vis-à-vis employers (e.g. Penninx & Roosblad 2000). In some cases, employers have employed migrants to replace striking native workers, which is one more reason why trade unions at times have seen immigration as a problem (Milkman 2000, 3; Briggs 2001). Also in Finnish history there are such examples from the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when Finnish employers sometimes turned to foreign workers in order to replace striking natives in construction sites and harbors (Stenius 1978; Bergholm 1988, 142–146; Helin 1998; Paananen 1999, 79–80). These are obviously problematic issues from a trade union perspective.

Studies that focus on exclusion strategies approach trade unions as “gatekeepers,” actors who strive to maximize their own interest by conditioning and restricting migrants’ entry into the labor market (examples of such studies: Paananen 1999; Forsander et al. 2004; Salmenhaara 2008; Wrede 2008). Unions’ exclusion strategies can be directed at affecting states’ immigration policy legislation, which in many cases entails insecurity to migrant workers and their families by connecting right to residence to having a job (see, e.g., Gächter 2000; Könönen 2015). In such cases the bargaining position of the migrant worker is by default weak vis-à-vis the employer, because losing the job might lead to expulsion from the country in question (e.g. Briones 2009; Könönen 2015). Such a precarious situation can deter migrants from organizing strikes or demanding better working conditions (Guerin-Gonzales & Strikwerda 1993). In addition to affecting states’ immigration policy, trade unions exclusion strategies can aim to influence who is entitled to enter a specific occupation and on what grounds (Gächter 2000; Wrede 2008). Trade unions’ exclusion strategies can also include the goal of keeping migrants outside of unions, as for example some trade union officials in the Californian construction sector sought to prior to the late 1990s (see Haus 2002, 91). Trade unions’ exclusion strategies as regards state’s immigration policy can entail a demand for new legislation or measures that have an excluding dimension, or, they can involve defending the status quo as regards the current excluding state regulations.

Exclusion strategies based on “race,” skin color, or gender can under no circumstances be defensible. Nevertheless, there are also examples of such exclusion strategies in the history of trade unions (Virdee 2000; Briggs 2001; Haus 2002; Watts; 2002; Moreno 2010). According to Ristikari (2013) there was –in addition to rather positive attitudes toward foreigners– evidence of ethnic prejudice and even racist attitudes among individual Finnish trade union shop stewards. In short, trade unions have not been free of prejudice and discrimination that are present in societies at large. Whether exclusion based on nationality as regards

entering or residing in a specific country is ethically defensible is an ideological and complex question: the nation-state system is simultaneously inclusive and exclusive. It builds on a hierarchical division of rights and benefits between natives and non-natives (or citizens and non-citizens). Exclusion based on nationality is, generally speaking, not considered unethical in the same manner as exclusion based on skin color, race, or other similar attributes. However, there are also critical voices emphasizing that exclusion based on nationality –for instance concerning peoples' right to free mobility among nation-states– forms a major structural constraint for global equality (e.g. Rigo 2007; Könönen 2015).

However, in some cases, trade unions can, in my view, with defensible grounds, set conditions for entry into the occupations they represent; those conditions may include skills, education and occupation. In fact, many trade unions do this quite actively. Finnish trade unions, for example, regularly seek to influence the amount of intake into education in the fields they represent. In other words, they control the entry into their field by exclusion. For example, the Finnish Medical Association, FMA, has been successful in restricting entry into the medical profession in order to guarantee work opportunities for its members (Henriksson 1992). In addition, FMA's strategy has been to strictly control the foreign doctors' right to work as doctors (Ibid.; Wrede 2008, 249–274). Through these exclusion strategies FMA has been able to protect its membership from “external” competition.

Not all trade unions have the same opportunities to apply exclusion strategies. In the construction and private service sector, exclusion strategies based on formal criteria cannot be as effective as in professions such as the medical profession. The construction and service sectors have work tasks that can be performed without formal education or native-level language skills, the lack of which can be used as a rationale for exclusion.

In addition, trade unions' exclusion strategies can be geared toward lobbying for a protectionist state immigration policy. According to the Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions (the umbrella organization under which the SUU and the FCTU operate), Estonian workers' free mobility to the Finnish labor market formed a threat to native Finnish workers when Estonia joined the European Union in 2004 (Finland had joined in 1995). The SAK successfully lobbied for a transition period that restricted Estonians' and other EU8 nationals' right to work in Finland between years 2004 and 2006 (Kyntäjä 2008; Nylund 2008). This was an exclusion strategy par excellence as it put barriers to free mobility of workers from the new EU countries. Similarly, in the 1970s the SAK successfully opposed the employer organizations' demands of importing foreign labor to Finland –despite a serious shortage of labor in certain working life sectors (Bergholm 2012, 412).

Paananen (1993; 1999) claimed that at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, the Finnish Construction Trade Union and the SAK actually strived for an exclusion of foreigners by demanding that migrants would be paid the same wages as natives.

Migrants would not have received as many work opportunities if they had been paid the same as natives. This was, according to Paananen, an exclusion strategy because it had the goal of reducing the overall amount of migrant workers by improving their working conditions. However, defending of migrants' wages was, as I see it, also an inclusion strategy as it strived to include migrants into the same wage standards as the native workers.

Salmenhaara (2008) has shown that the positions of the three Finnish central trade union organizations (i.e. SAK, the Confederation of Unions for Professionals and Managerial Staff in Finland or Akava, and the Finnish Confederation of Salaried Employees or the STTK) toward labor immigration varied on the exclusion/inclusion axis. SAK demonstrated more restrictive views on immigration than the STTK. The most liberal stance was that of Akava who represents highly educated workers. The differences in trade unions' stances toward immigration were related to the fact that highly educated people generally do not see immigration as a threat in the same manner as people with less formal education (ibid.).

However, as I see it, Akava's relatively liberal stance could stem from the fact that in the so called professional occupations (those that Akava represents), exclusion strategies toward immigrants (and other newcomers) into occupations can be applied on basis of formal criteria such as education and officially certified language skills (as the previous Finnish Medical Association's example indicated). Hence there might not be the same incentive for trade unions in highly regulated professions to strive for exclusion strategies against immigrants' geographical entry into a country as for trade unions representing less regulated occupations. Likewise, according to Ristikari's PhD thesis (2013, 116), several Finnish shop stewards suggested that the attitudes toward immigrants in trade unions varied on the positive-negative axis based on whether the immigrants were seen as competitors to natives in the sectors they represented. If the immigrants were seen as competitors, the attitudes were less positive. The shop stewards also suggested that unions representing highly educated employees held "more positive views about immigration" (ibid.).

Helander's (2011) inquiry to a group of Finnish trade union representatives indicated that the SAK-affiliated unions viewed immigration as a more concerning issue than the representatives of the STTK. The representatives that considered immigration least concerning were the representatives of the highly educated employees' Akava. Among the SAK-affiliated unions, FCTU had the representatives that were the most concerned about immigration.

According to Ristikari (2013) Finnish trade union shop stewards were aware of ethnic discrimination in the labor market. However, they were less able to identify discrimination in the labor market occupations they represented compared to other sectors. In addition, migrants were underrepresented as decision makers in Finnish trade unions (ibid.). Ristikari's results are in line with previous findings,

which show that trade unions are not free of prejudice and discrimination that exist in societies at large. Studies on Swedish trade unions have yielded similar results, showing how native union activists have at times considered migrant trade union activists as inferior (Mulinari & Neergaard 2004).

Forsander (2008) studied the attitudes of the Finnish Construction Trade Union and the Confederation of Finnish Construction Industries (in Finnish Rakennusteollisuus or RT, a construction employer organization) toward foreign labor force in the construction sector. The opening up of the Finnish construction sector to foreign competition causes difficulties for the nationally organized interest representation. This is in line with the findings of Lillie and Sippola (2010) whose research on the nuclear power plant construction site Olkiluoto 3 shows the inadequacy of the Finnish Construction Trade Union's *nationally* oriented strategies in defending migrants' rights in a transnational and multilingual setting.

As the previous results show, workers' nation-state border crossing mobility is often a difficult issue for trade unions. From this perspective, it is understandable that trade unions have strived for exclusion strategies that prevent immigrants from entering labor markets. A common theme in the studies, which focus on unions' exclusion strategies, is that they highlight what unions regard the problematic dimension of immigration.

Trade unions' strategies regarding immigration was a very little-studied topic in Finland until the early 2000s. One exception were Paananen's studies (1993; 1999) which analyzed different construction sector stakeholders' views and strategies regarding foreign work force in the Finnish construction sector. Koironen's PhD thesis (1966) very briefly tangled the position of Finnish emigrants in trade unions in Sweden. The most plausible explanation for the previous lack of interest in the topic is that immigration is a relatively recent phenomenon in Finland: until the 1990s, immigration was minimal –before that period, Finland was mainly a country of emigration (see, e.g., Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen 2000; Söderling 2011; Koikkalainen 2013, 21–30; Martikainen et al. 2013). In 1990 the share of foreign citizens was less than one percent of the population (Martikainen et al. 2013).

Except for Kyntäjä (2008), researchers, have not taken into account Finnish trade unions' inclusion strategies. Kyntäjä illustrated the inclusive role of the SAK's information center in Estonia. The information point was active between the years 2002 and 2008 and advised prospective Estonian labor emigrants to Finland.

To conclude, exclusion strategies have been part of trade unions' repertoire from the beginning of their history. There are cases where immigrants (and ethnic and "racial" minorities) have been targets of such trade union exclusion. Finnish studies on trade unions' strategies in this topic focus almost entirely on exclusion strategies. It is difficult to say why exactly this is the case. Have Finnish trade unions simply not had any inclusion strategies toward immigrants as the amount of migrants has been so low? However, previous international scholarship has

shown that trade unions have adopted inclusion strategies that involve migrants: therefore, in my thesis, I have also sought to determine whether (and how) trade unions under scrutiny apply inclusion strategies (in addition to exclusion strategies). The following section gives an international overview on what the inclusion strategies have been and how they have been explained in previous research.

### **3.3 Trade unions' inclusion strategies**

There are many examples of cases where trade unions have been able to improve migrants' economic, political and social status (Castles 1986; Vranken 1990; Martens 1999; Milkman 2006; Marino 2009; Milkman et al. 2010). Trade unions have also functioned as channels of societal participation for their members, including migrants (Vranken 1990, 47–73; Mulinari & Neergaard 2004; Milkman 2010; Ristikari 2013). Previous research has shown that migrants' background affects their motivation of joining trade unions. In a U.S.-based study, migrants from Latin America were more motivated to join unions than migrants from Asia. This was because Latinos had more positive experiences than Asians of trade unions in their home countries (Wells 2000). In Finnish context, Kyntäjä's (2011) results show that Estonian and Russian immigrants have very little knowledge about the Finnish trade unions. Furthermore, especially young immigrants had little experience of trade unions in their home countries, and older immigrants had negative views of trade unions due to their experience of the authoritarian Soviet trade unions. From these empirical experiences it can be concluded that immigrant inclusion in trade unions does not only depend on trade unions' strategies; migrants' background is a factor that needs to be taken into consideration as well, as it has a bearing on trade unions' possibilities of including migrants.

There are examples outside of Finland of trade unions changing their strategies toward immigration and immigrants from an exclusive toward an inclusive direction. In this strand of literature, trade unions are seen to react to their nearly globally diminished societal importance by striving to renew and broaden their frame of representation toward groups of workers who have often been under-represented as trade union members (see, e.g., Milkman 2000; Sherman & Voss 2000; 2006; Nash 2001; Haus 2002; Watts 2002; Krings 2009; Bengtsson 2013). According to these studies, trade unions have applied stronger and more comprehensive inclusion strategies. Trade unions in migrant-dense sectors have seen migrant inclusion as essential in order to renew themselves to better grasp the changing ethnic and national composition of the work force. In some cases, trade unions have built coalitions with immigrant associations and communities and hired migrant organizers in order to more effectively include migrants and mi-

grant right issues on their agenda (Milkman 2006; 2010). These studies are often based on experiences in the U.S. Also some trade unions for example in the UK and Norway have more systematically than before strived to get migrants to join unions (see, e.g., Hardy et al. 2012). These studies illustrate that some trade unions have been successful in renewing and broadening their interest representation to better represent the ethnic and linguistic composition of the diversified labor force. However, despite some success at sectoral and local level, the more active immigrant inclusion by trade unions has not raised the trade union density at the national level in the U.S.: between 2000 and 2011, trade union density decreased from 13 to 11% (OECD Statextracts 2015). On the other hand, it is plausible to assess that without these inclusion strategies the decline in density would have been even greater.

Some studies argue that trade unions in many countries have opted for a more inclusionary and liberal stance in terms of immigration policy and immigrants because of a strengthened global human rights discourse (see Haus 2002; Watts 2002). In cases of low unemployment and economic growth, trade unions have often agreed to employers' demands for liberalization of labor immigration policies (Penninx & Roosblad 2000). In some cases, trade unions have spoken for more liberal state immigration policies because they have seen strict immigration policies to cause unwanted consequences in terms of undocumented immigration, which is detrimental to workers' rights. This is because it is very difficult for the undocumented to stand up for their work related rights due to fear of expulsion from the country in question. (Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Haus 2002; Watts 2002; Krings 2009) Certain unions in Switzerland, Spain, Italy, France and South Korea have adopted a strategy to assist undocumented migrants (Agtas et. al. 2007). German service sector trade union *ver.di* has opened special advisory offices for undocumented workers in Hamburg and Berlin (*ibid.*). In the Oslo trade unions have successfully managed to include non-unionized migrant workers as union members by providing them assistance (Hardy et al. 2012).

The European Union enlargements of 2004 and 2007 have increased the importance of labor immigration questions for trade unions in Western and Northern Europe due to the labor immigration flows from the new low-wage EU countries (see Alsos & Odegaard 2007; Krings 2009; Hardy et al. 2012). In this situation of free workers' mobility within the EU, trade unions have looked for strategies to include the new immigrants into trade unions and to defend migrants from exploitation in the labor market (see, e.g., Krings 2009; Hardy et al. 2012).

The desirability of special strategies toward migrants and ethnic minorities is a much debated issue in ethnic and migration studies and politics at all levels (e.g. Kymlicka 1995; Favell 2001). According to Penninx and Roosblad (2000, 1–16), when striving to include immigrants, trade unions are faced with the question of whether “special policies” toward migrants are needed. On the one hand

migrants are generally in a weaker and more vulnerable position than natives in the labor markets. If this inequality is not addressed, it might prevail. However, if trade unions opt for strategies directed especially for the benefit of migrants, native trade union members might protest. If trade unions opt for special inclusion strategies for migrants, the main question is how far-reaching these strategies should be. The most obvious special strategies toward migrants are those where unions diversify their communication to accommodate more languages. More far-reaching special strategies could be, for example, the trade unions' efforts to improve migrants' housing conditions. The most far-reaching strategies are such where unions demand improvement on migrants' cultural and religious rights, or that unions restructure their organization so that migrants can increasingly participate in a trade unions' decision making. Another example of such a special strategy directed at migrants would be that unions demand employers to grant migrants right to prayer rooms in their work places or time off during religious holidays (ibid.).

Migrants' participation in the labor markets and their membership in trade unions present new challenges to unions. Unions have to determine whether the increase in migrant numbers changes the nature of their organization and its core tasks, and, if so, whether this should merit a change in their strategies. This question has been tackled in different ways throughout the history of trade unions. For example, in the case of the central organization TUC in Britain, there has been a shift since the 1970s from "color-blind" strategies toward strategies that specifically focus on ethnic minority and migrant workers (Wrench 2000). As late as 1970, the TUC General Secretary argued that "The trade union movement is concerned with a man or woman as a worker. The colour of man's skin has no relevance whatever to his work." However, the British unions have since then increasingly adapted the stance that the special issues migrants face at labor markets and as trade union members require special strategies. In practice this has meant a more active commitment against racism, production of information in relevant ethnic minority languages and the inclusion of equal opportunity clauses in collective agreements. In addition, in the UK, individual unions have separate committees and structures to deal with ethnic minority issues. (ibid.) There are also examples from the UK, Sweden and elsewhere of migrants and "racial" minorities organizing themselves into autonomous groups within trade unions in order to tackle the specific problems they face in the labor market and in the trade union movement (Wrench 2000; Mulinari & Neergaard 2004). Such self-organization has at times been regarded by skepticism by the established trade union hierarchy. On the other hand, migrants have at times felt that self-organization has been a way to have their voices heard within the trade union movement. (ibid.) Virdee and Grint (2000) rightly relate the issue of self-organization to the theories of Marx and Weber. According to Weber (contrary to Marx), status could exist in-

independently of class and be a dimension of political organization and therefore actually a more effective basis for organization. (ibid.)

The transnational turn of labor markets has been remarkable in many working life sectors (e.g. Lillie & Sippola 2011). This change where migrants frequently cross nation-state borders and where their frame of reference is in more than one nation-state has been difficult for trade unions in terms of migrant inclusion (see Krings 2009). The transnationalization of labor markets has been especially considerable in the construction sector. Therefore, the third original publication of this thesis tackles the situation of the Estonian trade unions and labor markets as Estonian labor market is increasingly integrated into the Finnish one.

To conclude: trade unions have often assessed that the inclusion of migrants is in their interest. Ideological motives for migrant inclusion play a role, too: in many cases, unions have seen it as their role to defend workers' rights irrespective of ethnicity, nationality or labor market position –as in the case of the undocumented workers. A central question for trade unions is whether migrant inclusion demands special strategies or not, and what effects such strategies have; do they include or exclude?

### **3.4 Placing trade unions' strategies into context: an institutional approach**

In research literature, trade unions' labor immigration strategies have often been explained with unions' institutional position. Actors are parts of their environment, which enables and constrains their actions. Institutions are mechanisms and structures of social order (e.g. Berger & Luckman 1991). A central societal institution is the labor market. Key actors in the Finnish labor markets are trade unions, employers' organizations, and the state, which make decisions on labor market issues in a tripartite manner. In some questions, such as collective agreements, the state does not intervene, and trade unions' and employers' organizations are the decisive bodies. Trade unions' strategies are consequently related to the other actors' strategies. Obviously, trade unions' operating environment can look very different from the aforementioned if the state and the employers seldom accept trade unions as negotiating partners, which is for instance the case in the market liberal Estonia (see Feldmann 2008; Sippola 2009; Mrozowicki 2013).

Even with no changes in the institutional position of the actors, power relations between them can change, affecting their relative bargaining position: in Germany, for example, the long lasting decline in trade union membership

has weakened the unions' bargaining position (Dribbusch & Birke 2012). This has had a negative effect on the wage levels from the workers'/trade unions' perspective (*ibid.*). When analyzing trade unions' strategies it is therefore important to look not solely on unions' institutional position but also their power resources, which according to the research on trade unions and immigration are often related to unions' success in handling immigration questions.

Employers are generally thought to support liberal state level labor immigration policies (Caviedes 2010). This is explained by the fact that immigration increases the qualitative and quantitative supply of labor, and hence offers employers more choice in recruitment (Piore 1979; Menz 2011; Caviedes 2010). Global demand for labor, including cheap labor, is in many countries no longer met by the influx of women, young people and rural-urban migrants as used to be the case (Massey 1998, 32). As for states' immigration policies (which trade unions and employer organizations often seek to influence), a common thread can be found in their selectiveness: they make a distinction between wanted and non-wanted immigrants (e.g. Caviedes 2010, 1). These state preferences lead to a hierarchy of rights between residents in a country (Penninx et al. 2006; Könönen 2015). Penninx and Roosblad (2000) showed that the trade unions' institutional position in a given nation-state affected to a large degree unions' possibilities to influence state policies in immigration issues. Unions in strong institutional positions (in Sweden and Austria) managed to have more influence in state immigration policy than unions in weak institutional positions (France and Great Britain). However, trade unions in weak institutional positions were more independent in forming their stances as regards immigration but had fewer possibilities in affecting state policies than unions who were in strong institutional positions. Unions in weak institutional positions were more able to question nation-states' immigration policies and act against racism than unions in countries where their institutional position was strong. Coalition building in immigration issues between trade unions and NGOs was easier in countries where unions' institutional position was weak (*ibid.*).

Wrench (2004) compared British and Danish trade union strategies in immigration questions. According to him it was probable that the different labor market contexts at least partly explained the differences in union strategies in these two countries. The British conflictual industrial relations created ground for different strategies than the consensus-based Nordic model in which the Danish unions operate. The institutionally strong Danish unions acted "more passive" in improving immigrants' position and against racism than did the British trade unions that were in a weak institutional position (*ibid.*).

The political composition of national governments has been shown to have an impact on trade unions' possibilities to influence nation-states' immigration policies (see Penninx & Roosblad 2000). If parties of the political Left (mainly

social democrats) were in the government, trade unions were more capable of influencing state immigration policies than in the contrary position. This is not a surprising finding as trade unions' links to Parties of the Left have been indicated as a power resource for trade unions (see Korpi 1978). Also Krings (2009) has stressed that trade unions' institutional position affects their strategies. He utilized Soskice and Hall's (2001) *Varieties of Capitalism*-approach, which divides countries into liberal market economies (LMEs) and coordinated market economies (CMEs). Trade unions' strategies toward immigration were more restrictive in CMEs Germany and Austria than in LMEs Great Britain and Ireland. In the latter two countries, unions did not demand transition periods that restricted free mobility from the new EU countries in the beginning of the millennium (unlike the unions in CMEs). Neither did trade unions in CMEs consider the inclusion of migrants as members as important an issue as trade unions in LMEs did. Krings' explanation for this was that British and Irish unions had more incentive to act proactively toward immigrants than unions in Germany and Austria, which could rely on their strong institutional position.

Even if the aforementioned results indicate that unions' institutional position enables and constrains their possibilities in immigration questions, the institutional position does not deterministically affect their strategy. In the U.S. construction sector, for example, some union activists opted for inclusion strategies in relation to immigrants, whereas some strived to exclude immigrants from their unions (Haus 2002, 91). The union representatives' strategies were opposite even if they operated in the same institutional context. Swedish and Austrian trade unions' responses to immigration have been shown to differ even though they operate in similar institutional contexts: Swedish unions have been more active than Austrian unions in guaranteeing migrants same rights as natives (Penninx & Roosblad 2000). The differences had to do with the different immigration histories of Sweden and Austria (ibid.).

### 3.5 Conclusion of the previous research

Trade unions' have agency as regards their strategies toward immigration. However, their strategies are to some degree influenced by their institutional setting: unions that are strongly institutionally embedded have more possibilities of influencing the state in immigration questions than in opposite cases. In countries where trade unions are less institutionally embedded unions tend to have a stronger incentive to question the nation-state's immigration policies and have a stronger incentive to build direct contacts with immigrant communities and associations. The general employment and economic situation in the receiving

society also plays a role in unions' strategies. In addition, the immigration histories and the general attitudes toward immigrants in a given country shape unions' strategies. Ideological issues, such as the globalized human rights discourse, have in some cases influenced trade unions' strategies toward a more liberal direction. The previous experiences immigrants have of trade unions in their home countries affect their willingness to join a trade union in the destination country.

There are –in addition to national differences– sectoral variances in trade unions' outlook in immigration questions. In short, immigration is a dissimilar matter for unions representing different occupations. We also know that some working life sectors have, in addition to their national traits, transnational characteristics. This is the case for instance in the construction sector –a working life sector under scrutiny in this study– where nation-state border crossing mobility of workers and enterprises has become the norm. My research builds on previous studies by looking at sectoral variations in trade union strategy *within* a country. This study does not claim to produce knowledge of the “whole Finnish trade union movement” (which in itself would be an arbitrary notion): the focus is on *union level* strategies of two trade unions. Previous research has identified the transnationalization of the labor market as a challenge for trade unions. This aspect is discussed in one of the original publications of the thesis, which focuses on the labor market situation of Estonia, as Estonia is foreign construction workers' main country of origin in Finland. As the previous research shows, trade unions' strategies are essentially context-bound. This is a point that is often missed in public discourse on trade unions, where trade unions are frequently seen as a monolith, and often simplistically referred to as “the unions” without an understanding of the diversity *among* trade unions. Therefore, it is important for the researcher to pay attention to the specific context in which unions operate (as I have done in this thesis). In addition, it is not possible, based on previous research, to identify a clear-cut causal chain between institutional conditions and trade unions' strategies. These findings indicate that a case-study approach, (applied in this thesis) which pays attention to the trade unions' specific institutional context, is a justified research strategy when producing new knowledge on trade unions' strategies. Studies conducted on Finnish trade unions' strategies have almost entirely focused on their exclusion strategies. This study aims to broaden the scope by including Finnish unions' potential inclusion strategies in its framework.

# 4 Theoretical framework

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In this chapter I outline the theoretical framework of the thesis. In section 4.1 I explain the reasons for focusing on *migrants* as a specific category in the labor markets. Section 4.2 explains how I understand trade unions' power resources and their relationship to labor immigration. Section 4.3 explains the relationship between trade unions' labor immigration strategies and trade unions' power resources. The chapter argues that trade unions' labor immigration strategies and power resources are intertwined so that successful strategies strengthen unions' power resources and vice-versa. The ultimate goal of unions' strategies is to shape their operating environment to serve their interests. Sections 4.4 and 4.5 describe how exclusion and inclusion are understood in this research.

The results and theoretical approaches presented in the previous chapter have informed the research questions and the theoretical frame of the thesis. However, the conclusions I drew from the analysis of the research material have guided the theoretical framing of this study and refined the research questions during the process. This is typical for qualitative research, where the theoretical framework is not always predetermined before the study begins (e.g., Alasuutari 1994, 74). This kind of approach was especially suited for this study because Finnish trade unions' strategies in labor immigration questions has remained an understudied topic. In short, my research has been simultaneously theoretically and empirically driven.

## 4.1 Migrants as a special labor market category

Why concentrate specifically on migrants in examining the changing outlook of trade unions? Are not immigrants just one more category that changes the operating environment of the trade unions? After all, young native workers often enter the national labor markets in much larger numbers than immigrants. In addition to migrants, part-time, hired agency, self-employed and freelance workers challenge unions' interest representation (e.g. Standing 2009). In principle, internal mobility within countries increases the supply of job seekers in local labor markets in the same way as immigration from another nation-state. In other words: the diversification and increase on the supply of labor (which trade unions have often feared) is a consequence of *many* other developments besides immigration. However, four factors make immigrants a particular category:

1. Migrants' legal situation often differs from the natives (for example, there is often a requirement of work and residence permits for migrants).
2. With a few exceptions, migrants who move to Finland originate from countries where the role of the trade unions is very different from that in Finland. Previous research has shown that this has consequences on migrants' perceptions of trade unions in the receiving country (see chapter 3).
3. Migrants are generally in a disadvantaged labor market position in relation to the native population due to their lack of knowledge, skills and social networks in the receiving country. Migrants also face discrimination in the labor markets due to their background (Ahmad 2005) and are over-represented in low-paid and low-status jobs (Piore 1979; Forsander 2002; Sayad 2004; Shelley 2007; Näre 2012; Ristikari 2013; Könönen 2015).
4. Immigration is a contentious topic. The entrance and mobility of natives in the national labor markets seldom becomes a politicized topic unlike the entrance of migrants. Natives consider migrants more commonly than other natives as the "other" (e.g. Mulinari & Neergaard 2004).

The aforementioned factors clearly do not apply to all migrants: migrants are a diverse category and some of them are in a stronger position than natives. However, as a category migrants' position in the labor markets differs from that of the natives, which motivates the use of the concept "migrant." For the purposes of this study, the term "migration" refers to permanent and temporary settlement of people across nation-state borders. Natives who move back to their country of origin are not considered immigrants in this study because the position of the "remigrants", due to several factors, varies considerably from immigrants that originate from "foreign" countries

## 4.2 Trade union power resources' relation to labor immigration

In this research, trade unions are understood as goal-oriented interest organizations that depend on power resources and strategies in reaching their goals. The goals of the unions are described in chapter 7. Power resources are of central importance for unions for example when they negotiate collective agreements with employers and when they oversee that collective agreements are enforced. Based on previous research (see chapter 3), I argue that labor immigration is a question closely linked with trade unions' power resources. Labor immigration and trade unions' power resources are for example linked as regards whether unions succeed to include migrants as union members or not. From this standpoint, it is in the interest of the unions that migrants' working conditions (including wages) do not underbid the native workers' situation. Strategies and power resources are related: successful strategies strengthen unions' power resources and vice versa. Power resources for their part enable strategies. I make here use of Walter Korpi's (1998, 42) definition of power resources:

“...we will here define power resources as the attributes (capacities or means) of actors (individuals or collectivities) which enable them to reward or punish other actors.”

As the literature review indicated, dealing with immigration questions is related to trade unions' power resources: at times unions have perceived immigration to threaten their societal position, while at other times they have seen the inclusion of migrants as a way to strengthen their power resources. Consequently, Korpi's (ibid.) power resources perspective helps tackle the thesis' research questions.

Trade unions are central power resources for wage earners (Korpi 1978, 318; 1998), allowing them to promote their interests in the labor markets. Finnish trade unions, for instance, have been able to influence the improvement of wages, social security, gender equality, safety at work and other working conditions (see, e.g., Bergholm 2012). However, trade unions nearly world-wide have lost societal importance during the last decades (see, e.g., Standing 2009; Dunn 2011). Therefore, it is appropriate to question whether Korpi's view on trade unions as a central wage-earners' power resource is still valid in the contemporary world. I regard Korpi's approach useful in the context of my research because trade unions in Finland, despite a general decline in membership, continue to be influential institutional actors (see, e.g., Julkunen 2008; Kettunen 2008; Koistinen 2014). Korpi's approach is also useful because the previous research shows that trade unions often regard immigration to be related to their power resources. Finnish

trade unions' influence is demonstrated by the fact that virtually all sectors have collective agreements and more than 60% of wage earners in Finland belong to a trade union (see Ahtainen 2011). However, there are significant differences in the density among sectors: the private service sector does not have the same tradition of strong trade union organization as industry and construction sectors (e.g. Ilmonen & Jokivuori 1998). In the Finnish case, trade unions are partially a power resource also for non-unionized wage earners as the collective agreements apply also apply to them. On the other hand, the question is more complex when it comes to migrants' perceptions. As the previous research has indicated, trade unions have often tended to see the native work force as their base, which has led them to apply exclusion strategies toward migrants. Therefore, we cannot assume that migrants by default would consider trade unions as their power resource; in fact, quite the opposite might be the case. Consequently, it is fully possible that migrants would regard trade unions contrary to what Korpi's power resources theory assumes (i.e. rather as constraining than empowering actors). Therefore, I have included migrants' perceptions of trade unions in my study.

According to Korpi's power resources theory (1978; 1998), power resources can have significant consequences even if actors decide not to activate them because actors tend to set their goals in accordance to how they assess other actors' power resources. An actor in a weak position tends to set one's demands differently than an actor in a strong position. A rational actor takes into consideration other actors' power resources before acting. According to Korpi (1998, 47), "the greater an actor's disadvantage in power resources, the greater is the probability that the adversary will oppose his action." Power resources are relative and they constrain and enable actors' strategic choice. Typical power resources are a means to use violence, property in form of ownership or capital, and labor. The legitimate use of violence is usually a domain of the state; in labor markets, property and labor are the central power resources (ibid. 44).

Actors' power resources are not stable, but exposed to change. Much of the globalization literature (e.g. Beck 2000; Sklair 2001; Dunn 2011; Wompe 2013) states that changes in the international domain increasingly affect the internal balance of power within nation-states. The actors whose power resources are based on labor have generally not been able to take advantage of globalization, unlike the enterprises that are able to disseminate their operation irrespective of state borders (e.g. Korpi 1998; Leisink 1999; Helander 2004; Koistinen 2014, 27–30). Milkman (2006, 12) has argued that in the United States the sharp decline in trade union density over the past three decades has directly contributed to the growth of inequality and job insecurity. On the other hand, the matter is complex as global relocations in production have also entailed new opportunities for workers in countries previously not connected to the global economy. Furthermore, international migration has often provided workers with a possibility to improve

their standards of living. In short, globalization should not be interpreted simply as a disadvantage for workers' power resources. However, trade unions have struggled looking for viable strategies to the globalization related mobility (e.g. Dunn 2011, 63). Their problem lies in their power resources being by and large bound to the nation-state level unlike capital's power resources (see, e.g., Hyman 2001, 39; Sklair 2001; Lillie & Sippola 2011).

What exactly are trade unions' power resources? In my thesis, I draw from Korpi (1978; 1998): high level of unionization and unions' links to political parties are important factors. An important power resource is the possibility to organize strikes. Control over mass-media is another key power resource in modern societies (*ibid.*). Recent studies (Nylund 2008; Parviainen 2008, 61–63) have indicated that labor market actors' –including trade unions'– ability to influence public opinion via mass-media to their advantage is an increasingly important power resource.

Migration issues are related to trade unions' power resources: trade unions have often deemed that successful inclusion of migrants as members is in their interest because it strengthens unions' power resources. On the other hand, there are situations where unions have assessed that exclusion of migrants is in their interest. Based on the previous literature it is evident that it is not in the trade unions' interests that migrants perform same jobs with worse working conditions than natives. From a trade union's standpoint, this would lead to harmful competition between natives and migrants. This is a serious concern for trade unions as there is plenty of international evidence of migrants' poor working conditions (e.g. Piore 1979; Sayad 2004, Tait 2005; Wahlbeck 2007; Trux 2010; Näre 2012; Könönen 2015). According to Briggs (2001), it is in the trade unions' interests that migrants are trade union members in case of a strike.

When included in trade unions, migrants –like other members– strengthen unions' power resources by paying their membership fees (as indicated earlier, money is an important power resource). Power resources are not only material: human capital is an important power resource as well (Korpi 1998, 44). From this perspective, immigrants could, through their membership, potentially provide unions with their human capital and thus strengthen the unions' power resources. Indeed, migrants have been an integral part of trade unions in many older immigration countries than Finland (see, e.g., Briggs 2001). On the other hand, Korpi (1998, 44) stresses that human capital is generally not a scarce power resource. Therefore, human capital is not as easily mobilized as money and physical capital. Consequently, it can be assumed that Finnish trade unions –typically run by professional full-time salaried staff (see, e.g., Melin 2012)– would first and foremost see migrant inclusion as an economic issue, rather than a human capital one.

As earlier research (see chapter 3) has indicated, trade unions can regard migrants either as a power resource or as a threat to their power resources.

From the migrants' perspective the same applies as regards trade unions: trade unions can improve and protect migrants' position, but they can also operate in a way that hurts them. What the situation is as regards trade unions in the private service sector and the construction sector is an empirical question that I explore in my thesis. In accordance to Korpi (1998, 42), power resources are defined in this study as collective and individual actors' capacities or means. The individual actors are migrant workers whose perceptions of trade unions show how unions are looked at the individual level.

### **4.3 Labor immigration strategies as upholders of trade unions' power resources**

The concept "strategy" is commonly used to refer to organizations' or other actors' goal-oriented action or plan of action in a competitive environment. As Ohmae (1982) stated: "If there were no competitors, there would be no need for strategy." It is in the actors' interest to influence their operating environment to their own advantage. For this they need strategies. It is now necessary to explain more precisely how strategies are understood in this thesis.

Strategies are often understood as actors' official strategy papers, plans or strategy days, where actors join to discuss and set their short-term goals and methods for reaching certain – typically long-term– goals. Often these set goals do not convert to any change in the way the organizations operate. (Johnson et al. 2010) In such cases the planned strategy is not realized as concrete strategy. Therefore, in this thesis "strategy" is understood as the relatively established ways in which actors operate instead of defining strategies as aforementioned plans. In this case it is in practice impossible to give a quantified definition of what "relatively established" is. Thus, the assessment is made by me on the basis of what I consider to be constantly repeating themes in the research material. On the basis of the research material I will interpret what the strategies are by making contextual case-by-case assessments with the help of prior research-based knowledge on the topic.

I would argue that understanding strategy as a plan –as often is the case– would result in a narrow and possibly also a misleading picture of trade unions' actions. Mintzberg et al. (2009, 10) make a distinction between "strategy as a plan" and "realized strategy." In this study, strategy refers to the latter definition. This choice also stems from the fact that the FCTU does not have an explicit strategy paper on immigration questions (although some of the union's values in immigration related questions are outlined in the union's webpages). The Service Union United

has published a plan regarding immigration questions for years 2009–2015. This document states the principles, goals and directions of the union in immigration questions, but it cannot be used to assess whether it has had any effect on the union's daily operation. However, unions' various strategy papers are relevant for my research as they state their goals.

My study, in accordance with Mintzberg and Waters (1985) and Lamplé et al. (2014, 5), considers that strategy does not necessarily have to be an effect of deliberate planning. Strategies can be "emergent," which means that they can evolve without explicit planning (ibid.). In addition, sometimes an actor's deliberate non-interference in an issue can be a strategy. This is called "non-decision making" (Lukes 2005, chapter 1). As Lukes (ibid.) validly points out, sometimes a political actor's conscious non-action can be as significant, or even more significant, than interference. As regards trade unions, this could mean, for example, that unions decide not to interfere in an immigration related issue that they consider politically too risky, which might have consequences for some specific group of migrants. We could also assume from a power resources perspective that unions might assess that reaching some of their desired goals would be economically or politically too costly and hence decide not to act on some specific issue. These kinds of potential strategies of deliberate non-interference are difficult –or sometimes even impossible– for the researcher to take into account unless the unions reveal them for the researcher, or unless the non-decision making can otherwise be inferable from the research material. In some cases observing these examples of strategy as conscious non-interference would need an insider position in the unions' decision making body. Consequently, this thesis focuses on the current empirically inferable strategies, but also looks for *potential* strategies with the help of insights from previous research. On the basis of existing theory on the topic we can make well-grounded attempts to explain why the unions in focus *do not* take recourse to some specific strategies that the previous literature from other contexts has identified as possible (without looking at absence of certain strategies in a normative way to indicate that the unions *should* apply them).

As regards trade unions' interest representation, a central feature is their capacity to influence legislation, public opinion, maintain/increase membership and defend/improve working conditions in their sector. For this they need strategies. All aforementioned dimensions are intertwined: for example an increase in membership figures demands credible public image, which depends on unions' capacity to defend their members' interests. The success or failure of trade unions' strategies is ultimately related to trade unions' power resources –and hence their future outlook. As explained earlier, I make a distinction in exclusion and inclusion strategies. In the following subsections I describe how I understand the concepts *exclusion* and *inclusion*.

## 4.4 Exclusion

Exclusion and inclusion are ambiguous concepts (Askonas & Stewart 2000). It is therefore necessary to explain how they are understood in this thesis. Let us start with the concept exclusion and in section 4.5 proceed to defining inclusion. The term exclusion first entered the political and academic debates in France between the 1960s and 1980s (see Silver 1994, 532; Kronauer 2013, 21). In political and academic discourse exclusion is usually viewed as an unwanted phenomenon, which is illustrated by the vast array of publicly or privately funded “anti-exclusion” projects and initiatives.

A review by Weinberg and Ruano-Borbalan (1993) on sociological theories of exclusion concluded: “In fact, observers agree on only one point: the impossibility of having a single, simple criterion with which to define exclusion.” The term exclusion evokes the question “exclusion from what?” After all, human beings can be excluded from virtually anything: a livelihood, secure employment, earnings, property, credit, land, housing, the minimal or prevailing consumption level, education, skills, and cultural capital, the benefits provided by the welfare state, citizenship etc. (Silver 1994, 541).

The word “exclusion” implies that someone is excluding someone else (Lister 2000, 38). In this thesis, I understand exclusion as a process by an actor that hinders the entry of individuals or groups into a specific sphere. In this case the actors are trade unions, which potentially exclude workers from labor markets and trade unions, including associated rights, opportunities, resources, and interest representation. This way of understanding exclusion is based on Max Weber’s (1978/1922) term *social closure*, which refers to the processes by which the access of certain social groups to various resources is granted or refused.

However, I do not take the stance that the process of restricting entry by exclusion would necessarily *always* be morally condemnable. Hence, my understanding of exclusion departs somewhat from the conventional one. Trade unions can, in my view, with fully defensible grounds, set limits for who they represent, defend, and accept as members (i.e. exclude from their frame of reference). The central question is on *what criteria* exclusion is based. Trade unions can, in order to improve their members’ working conditions, with defensible grounds for example seek to limit the intake of students studying for entry into the sectors they represent. Limiting entry into an occupation can raise wages (White 1983, 157). In my view, it is also fully defensible that trade unions exclude workers representing other professions from their interest representation or that unions do not grant same services to members and non-members. After all, it is at the core of trade unionism to unite certain group of workers depending on certain professional criteria or *trade* (this is not to say that there have not been attempts in trade unionism to transcend these occupational interests in favor of more encompassing general

unions presented, for example, by the *Industrial Workers of the World IWW*, see, e.g., Briggs 2001, 65–67). Hence, unions inevitably exclude those who are outside a specific union’s agenda. Therefore, I do not see exclusion as such as a synonym of straight-forward discrimination or “unfairness.” For example, a requirement certain language skills can justifiably be set as a condition for entering certain positions in the trade unions or occupations in the labor market. On the other hand, if the language requirements are set unnecessary high in order to keep migrants excluded, we are witnessing a situation of discrimination (there is evidence of such practices by Finnish employers, see Ahmad, 2005). Exclusion that equals discrimination such as exclusion based on ethnicity, “race,” gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other arbitrary grounds, can be defensible under no circumstances. If trade unions denied membership based on these grounds we would witness a situation of non-acceptable exclusion.

Exclusion can be institutionalized, such as in nation-states’ immigration policy, which by default excludes entry and/or residency of many who wish to be included. As the literature review showed, trade unions have a potential to promote, defend or challenge this kind of exclusion. Trade unions’ exclusion strategies do not need to have a deliberate goal of exclusion. It is, for example, fully possible that some of the unions’ strategies exclude migrants without having such a deliberate goal. When would a migrant be excluded? In this thesis the question is related to the right to work and reside in Finland. The question is also related to exclusion/inclusion regarding trade unions, nationally binding collective agreements and work-related rights. There are obviously many other spheres of life and rights that a person can be excluded from, but as this thesis focuses on labor market issues, the focus here is on exclusion (and inclusion) in the aforementioned sphere. The archetype of the excluded migrant would be an undocumented migrant with very few –if any– work-related rights and legal protection. That said, exclusion and inclusion do not always rule each other out: for instance, undocumented workers are included in the labor market, even if they are excluded from work-related rights (see, e.g., Standing 2009, 69; Könönen 2015). Even if trade union membership ideally offers economic and social protection and gives access to political and other forms of participation for the migrant worker (e.g. Vranken 1990), a migrant trade union member might be informally excluded from full participation inside the unions’ organization (see, e.g., Mulinari & Neergaard 2004). In this case, the person would be simultaneously included and excluded –or partially included. As exclusion is such a multifaceted phenomenon it is necessary in this thesis to take into account the individual migrants’ perception of their relationship to the labor market and trade unions. In the following I describe how I apply the inter-related term *inclusion*.

## 4.5 Inclusion

In this thesis, the concept of inclusion, like exclusion, relates to the Finnish labor markets and trade unions, including associated rights, opportunities and resources. This view on inclusion leads us to ask the underlying assumptions and values behind this way of looking at the issue. In opposition to *exclusion*, the term inclusion has, generally speaking, a positive connotation.

I share Vranken's (1990) view: trade union membership ideally offers economic and social protection and gives access to political and other forms of participation. Hence, inclusion in a trade union is a potential power resource for a migrant. However, I want to avoid the risk of a patronizing approach where the interests of the migrant workers –or other actors– are defined by the researcher. I seek to avoid this risk by taking into account actors' perspectives on the basis of qualitative face-to-face interviews (described in the following chapter). As the literature review depicted, trade unions vary in their capacity to influence and outlook regarding strategies. Furthermore, migrants are not a homogenous category. Therefore, it is sound to assume that inclusion in trade unions might not necessarily be in the migrants' own interests. In fact, *not* being included in a trade union might be a desired situation for any employee. According to Milkman (2000, 13), "At the high end of, for the professionals and other highly educated middle-class immigrants...economic security and high incomes often can be achieved without union protection." She further notes, "At the other end of the class spectrum, unionization –especially if it involves short-term sacrifices– may have little appeal to low-wage "target earners" who are part of circular migration streams."

These insights into inclusion and exclusion inevitably lead us to the question what is an actor's *interest*. According to Lukes (2005, 37), "extremely crudely, one might say that the liberal takes people as they are and applies want-regarding principles to them, relating their interests to what they actually want or prefer." A diverging way of looking at what is interest, would rendering Lukes (ibid. 38) be the "radical view" according to which "people's wants may themselves be a product of a system which works against their interests." In my view, both ways of looking at individuals' interests have their shortcomings. Let us take some examples, starting with the liberal approach: In the case of the migrant worker, non-inclusion in a trade union might be an actual preference. However, the preference could be the consequence of lack of information regarding the potential benefits of trade union membership and could, in my view, in some future situation be against the migrants' interest. As regards the radical view: As I see it, if the migrants' preference of not becoming a trade union member would be based on a relatively calculated decision and awareness of the potential consequences, it would be highly problematic to claim from the outset that this preference would

be against the individual workers' own interest (which might be possible to claim if we applied what Lukes calls the radical view). In this thesis, the view on what is interest lays between the "liberal view" and the "radical view," in what Lukes (ibid. 38–39) classifies as the "reformist view," which relates actor's interests to what they prefer but acknowledges that not everyone's wants are given equal weight by the political system.

So far, we have only discussed interest from the perspective of migrant workers. We should now consider the trade unions' interests in the inclusion of migrants. Based on the of previous literature on the subject matter, I have adopted the stance that migrants' inclusion in trade unions would be in trade unions' interest (see chapter 4.2). It is of course possible that the empirical part of the thesis will show that the unions themselves look at the question differently –or give a more nuanced picture of the situation.

# 5

## Case study's research questions, material, methods and ethics

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In this chapter, I outline what is meant by a *case study*, the thesis' research questions, material, methods and ethics. My main cases are the Service Union United and the Finnish Construction Trade Union's strategies. The thesis also looks at the SAK's strategies because in many cases they are intertwined with the FCTU and the SUU's strategies. In the third publication of the thesis, the Estonian trade union movement formed a case, which was contrasted to the FCTU's strategies. Therefore, this thesis forms a *multiple case study*, which enables comparison and contrasting between the cases (see Yin 2014). I also explored the strategies and perceptions of other actors involved in immigration. The reason for this was to understand the two trade unions' operating environment, which constrains and enables unions' strategies.

This thesis acknowledges that the researcher's previous information influences, at least to some degree, the conduct of the research. In addition, theories applied in social sciences are always to some extent based on specific world-views. Hence social sciences can never be absolutely value-neutral and totally free of bias in a strict objectivist sense. For example how we look at an agent's "interest" is a question that cannot be tackled without taking sides in current moral, political and philosophical controversies (see, e.g., Lukes 2005, 81). Therefore, this research refutes the idea that social sciences can produce absolute truths as the empirical world is always open to various interpretations. However, this does not mean that we would need to adopt a hyper-relativist approach to what "reality" is, considering just about any account of "reality" valuable: a properly conducted scientific research can produce reasonably accountable and reliable knowledge by testing and through the internal control-mechanisms of science.

The case study method has gained increasing popularity in social sciences since the 1990s (Yin 2014). The strength of the case study, which is applied in this thesis, lies in its ability to produce in-depth knowledge of the studied phenomenon (e.g. Flyvbjerg 2004). According to Kuper and Kuper (1985, 95):

“[M]ore discoveries have arisen from intense observation than from statistics applied to large groups. This does not mean that the case study is always appropriate or relevant as a research method, or that large random samples are without value... The choice of method should clearly depend on the problem under study and its circumstances.”

According to Yin (2014, 16) a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident. It is typical for case studies that the cases are studied in their relation to their environment, which is seen as having a clear decisive relevance to the studied phenomenon. This is the situation in my study where the trade unions' operating environment is taken into account. The case study is a particularly useful approach when different actors' power relations are in flux (Kitay & Callus 1998). We know, based on previous studies, that immigration is a phenomenon that can set the power relations among labor market actors in flux, and that reacting to immigration can lead to trade unions applying different strategies (see chapter 3), which is a further argument for the use of the case study method as a research strategy for this thesis.

In terms of Yin (2014, 41) “the generalizations, principles, or lessons learned from a case study may potentially apply to a variety of situations.” In other words, case studies can also provide a way for making “analytic generalizations” that go beyond the specific case that has been studied by providing links from the findings to theory. Yin (ibid, 237) defines an analytic generalization as “the logic whereby case study findings can extend to situations outside of the original case study, based on the relevance of similar theoretical concepts or principles.” The lessons learned from a case study may –as was the case with many of the classics of case study research such as Allison (1971) or Whyte (1943/1993)– help us understand a broad variety of other situations (Yin 2014, 42).

Yin (2014, chapter 1) distinguishes three types of case studies on the basis of their purpose: explanatory, descriptive or exploratory. Yin, however, underlines that there does not always exist clear boundaries between these types. This is the case in my thesis as it combines these three aims. The goal is to *explore* what the trade unions' strategies are and in what kind of context the unions operate. The aim of the thesis is also to *describe* how the unions go about regarding their

strategies and how they perceive their operating environment. Furthermore, the intention is to *explain* how the unions' operating environment constrains and enables certain strategies.

## 5.1 Research questions

The main research question is: what are the Service Union United and the Finnish Construction Trade Unions' immigration related strategies? This question is answered especially in the original publication II of the thesis. However, the topic is elaborated in publications III and IV.

The main research question looks at different dimensions of the trade unions' strategies, i.e. do the unions make use of inclusion strategies and/or exclusion strategies? Are their strategies directed at the state institutions or at building direct links with migrant workers? Do the unions have specific strategies directed at migrants or are workers irrespective of nationality or native language treated the same? Are the strategies directed at the national or transnational level? What are the unions' arguments behind their strategies?

In addition, the research answers the following questions that are related to the main research question:

- How do the Service Union United and the Finnish Construction Trade Union perceive their operating environment in questions related to immigration? (answered in all of the original publications)
- How do different actors' in the SUU and FCTU's operating environment regard labor immigration and what are their strategies? (answered mainly in publication I, but also in publications III and IV)
- How do migrant workers experience their labor market situation in Finland? (answered in publication I)

These questions are justified because answering them helps us understand the trade unions' operating environment, which constrains and enables unions' strategies (as the review of the previous literature showed). The other actors' views are contrasted with those of the unions, which enables us also to see whether the actors have same or different interests when it comes to immigration.

## 5.2 Research material and methods

The research material in this study is divided into three categories. The main research material consists of qualitative face-to-face interviews with trade union representatives, which in some cases have been followed with specific questions by email to the interviewees. In two cases I conducted an email interview with FCTU representatives I had interviewed already once by sending them a list of questions. The research material also includes trade unions' (and employer organizations') public statements on immigration questions. I participated as an observer in events where trade unions' representatives spoke about their unions' perceptions and strategies in terms of immigration. In these events, I also engaged in numerous discussions related to immigration with unions' representatives. Participation in these events increased my understanding on how the union actors' regard the research topic. I received information from the unions on the membership figures and how the membership is dispersed in different language groups. Based on this information, I was able to assess how many migrant members the unions have. I also utilized data and statistics on immigration and labor markets from the OECD, European Social Survey, Statistics Finland, Statistics Estonia and other state authorities in addition to the trade unions' estimates on the amount of migrants in the fields the unions represent. The following sections describe the research material and its interpretation in detail.

### 5.2.1 Interviews

The total amount of conducted research interviews is 78. Table 1 shows their distribution among actors.

The trade union representatives were mainly full-time salaried officials employed in the unions' headquarters mainly in Helsinki, but also in the unions' regional offices of Uusimaa, Tampere (three interviews) and Turku (three interviews). I chose to interview these representatives because contemporary Finnish trade unions are –despite having democratically elected bodies and positions for activist members– professionalized organizations in which full-time salaried officials are the people who are most informed about the unions' strategy and involved in shaping it (see, e.g., Kevätsalo 2005; Melin 2012). In addition, the SUU and the FCTU are in the Finnish context large trade unions (230,000/90,000 members in 2014) where the individual members' influence is limited. Hence, I concluded that the full-time officials are suitable as informants when studying trade unions' strategies at the union level. However, many of the officials I interviewed had a background as trade union shop stewards. The interviewees included individuals at the very top of the unions' organizational hierarchy but also other salaried

**Table 1. Research interviews**

	Amount of interviews
FCTU's representatives	17
SUU's representatives	18
Migrant workers	19
The Estonian trade union movement	14
Background interviews regarding the Estonian labour market with Estonian academics	2
Employers	4
Representatives of the employer organization EK	1
State inspectors of foreign workers' working conditions	3
<b>Total amount of interviews</b>	<b>78</b>

representatives lower at the hierarchy that are involved in immigration related issues. In the case of the FCTU, research assistant Miika Saukkonen conducted two additional interviews with shop stewards. These interviews with shop stewards were valuable as they gave information on the challenges the FCTU faced when trying to mobilize migrant workers as trade union members. In the Estonian case I interviewed –in addition to the union officials– shop stewards as regards their views on labor migration and their unions' strategies (see article 3 for details). Based on the information available on the trade unions' websites it was possible to identify people in leading positions to be interviewed for my study. Additionally, I asked the interviewees to suggest other potential union officials who were informed about immigration related issues and who might accept to be interviewed. In short, I chose some of the interviewees strategically and some were included in the study by the method called *snow-ball sampling*, where participants to the study are recruited on the basis of knowledge from other participants in the study (see, e.g., Flick 2002). This turned out to be a successful strategy as all the interviewees in the trade unions were well-informed about their unions' immigration related strategies, and, furthermore had insights on immigration in general. I interviewed migrant workers in both the construction and the private service sector. They were employed as construction workers, restaurant workers and cleaners. In addition, I interviewed a representative of the employers' organization Confederation of Finnish Industries, or EK. I also interviewed employers who had hired migrants. In addition, I interviewed state authorities who monitor migrants' working conditions.

I requested the interviewees' permission to record the interviews in order to not rely solely on the notes and memories from the interview situations. With the exception of two shop stewards in Estonia and two migrant workers in Finland,

all interviewees agreed to the recording of the interviews (one of the two migrant workers gave me a permission to a recorded interview at another occasion after the non-recorded interview). My interpretation for the non-permission of recording in these interviews was that the interviewees were mistrusting as the research probed into sensitive and politicized topics such as migration and workers' rights. I promised all the interviewees that their identity will not be revealed in the study due to the sensitive questions that the study explored.

I first approached the trade union representatives by email. I contacted the Estonian trade union representatives with the help of Eve Kyntäjä, the SAK's immigration expert, who through her work knew the Estonian trade unions' key figures. In addition, I contacted some of the Estonian trade unionists with the help of information available on the Estonian trade unions' webpages. The Estonian trade union officials helped me contact shop stewards of their unions in order to interview them.

I explained the interviewees the goals of my research and asked for their willingness to participate in the study. All individuals I contacted agreed to be interviewed, except for one Finnish trade union representative, who declined due to lack of time. In order to create trust I approached the union representatives using my university email account and explained the goal of my study. I contacted some of the trade union representatives after the interviews by email when I needed clarifications to certain topics that had come up during the interviews. I have saved these emails. I did not know the interviewed trade union representatives beforehand. I interviewed one FCTU representative twice and three SUU representatives two times. The length of the interviews varied from approximately half an hour to one and a half hour. All interviews were qualitative face-to-face interviews. An exception was two interviews with FCTU officials in which I sent the questions by email.

I also interviewed migrants who worked in the sectors that the SUU and the FCTU represent: restaurant, cleaning and construction sectors. At the time of the interviews, one of the migrants no longer worked in any one of these fields, but had previous work experience from the restaurant sector. The majority of the migrants had several years of work experience in Finland. Nevertheless, some of the interviewed Estonians worked on a temporary basis in Finland. I interviewed altogether 18 migrants. With the exception of one interview that took place in Tampere, I conducted all interviews with migrants in the Helsinki metropolitan area. These interviews explored their views on working in Finland and experiences of Finnish trade unions.

I contacted some of the potential migrant interviewees through personal contacts. For instance: I received the contact details of a person working in the construction industry from a colleague of mine. He knew migrants who worked in the construction sector. I contacted them and they agreed to be interviewed.

Additionally, I contacted migrant workers directly by going to their workplaces. This was a successful method as none of the migrants rejected being interviewed. For example in one case I noticed a van with Estonian license plates parked outside a construction site in Helsinki. I concluded that the three men who sat and ate in the car were Estonian construction workers having a lunch break. This turned out to be the case. I told them who I am and that I am looking for interviewees for my research. In order to build trust I gave them my university business card, as I was a total stranger to them. I also mentioned that the interviewees' identities will not be revealed in the study. One of the construction workers accepted to be interviewed later. I interviewed him in a nearby restaurant and paid his lunch as a compensation for participating in the study. I interviewed one restaurant worker who originated from Bangladesh by going to the restaurant where he worked during off hours. He agreed to be interviewed at a later date.

In one case an SUU representative gave the contact information of one of the union's migrant members, who agreed to be interviewed. Similarly, one of the FCTU's representatives I interviewed gave me the contact information of one of their members who agreed to give an interview. I also interviewed migrant workers in cafés and libraries. I interviewed one of the migrants in my office at the university. The interviews went quite smoothly; the only problem in some cases was to find a quiet venue for the interview. For instance in restaurants and cafés there was occasional background noise. Despite this, I managed to record all the interviews with a fairly good sound quality. I told the interviewees that the recordings were going to be used only for research purposes. My assessment is that despite initial suspicion in some cases, all interviews went well as the interviewees quite openly spoke about their experiences and views. I knew one of the interviewed migrants before –the others were not familiar to me. The interviews usually lasted from approximately half an hour to one hour. There were members of the respective trade unions among the migrants but I interviewed also people who did not belong to any union.

The migrant workers' interviews required more effort to organize than interviews with trade union representatives'. The trade union representatives were easy to approach via email. Reaching the migrants was not as straightforward, as I explained above. There were also some additional practical challenges: for instance in one case I had agreed to interview a migrant worker at a construction site in the Helsinki region. When I arrived to the construction site in the morning, it turned out that the worker had to take his child to hospital. Thus, we postponed the interview for later that same day.

The 18 interviewed migrants originated from the following countries: Estonia, Russia (or the former Soviet Union), Algeria, Bosnia, Bangladesh, India/UK, Turkey, and France. They were all so called first generation immigrants, i.e. they were not born in Finland. The language used in the interviews was Finnish or English

depending on the interviewees' preferences. I did not look for migrant workers from specific countries; the criterion was that they worked in the sectors that the SUU and FCTU represent. In my opinion, the so called "happiness wall," meaning that informants seek to present their situation in a more positive fashion than is true, was not a problem in the interviews (for the concept "happiness wall," see Roos 1987). The interviewees spoke openly also about work related problems.

I interviewed three Finnish construction employers (one of them twice) who had employed migrant workers and one representative of the employers' organization the Confederation of Finnish Industries. The purpose of these interviews was to gain an understanding of the employers' views and strategies regarding labor immigration. I was interested in their experiences and motives for employing migrant workers. This was important because employers' action affects the unions' strategies. I contacted these interviewees by email, with the exception of one employer whom I knew previously. All employers I asked agreed to give an interview. I promised the employers that the information from the interviews would only be used for research purposes and that their identities and their companies' names would not be revealed.

The Estonian labor market situation and the Estonian trade unions' position affect the Finnish labor market. This is especially the case in the construction sector. For this reason, I also interviewed representatives of Estonian trade unions as the situation in the Finnish construction sector cannot be understood without an understanding of the Estonian labor market. I interviewed mainly heads of trade unions in Estonia, but also Estonian shop stewards. The total amount of interviews in Estonia was 14. These interviews were conducted in the Estonian capital with the exception of one interview in the city of Tartu. As my knowledge of the Estonian labor market situation was rather limited, I interviewed –in the beginning of the interview process– Raul Eamets, Professor of Macroeconomics at University of Tartu and Professor Allan Puur from Tallinn University. These two interviews increased my knowledge on the Estonian situation and hence facilitated the interviews with the Estonian trade union officials.

During the research process I had several discussions with two activists of the Finnish Free Movement Network (in Finnish Vapaa liikkuvuus). I was interested in their views as the network has publicly criticized the restrictive dimensions of SAK-affiliated trade unions' labor immigration strategies. Hence, they are an actor in the trade unions' operating environment; therefore, it benefited my study to take their views into account in this research. An example of such an occasion was a November 9, 2012 seminar in the Finnish parliament on immigration issues in which also a representative from the SUU gave a presentation on the SUU's views on labor immigration. The Network has also lately been asked by the Ministry of the Interior for a statement on immigration related law proposals (which is seen the Ministry's statement of July 1, 2014). My discussions with the Network's

activists and their email responses to my questions form a part of the research material. The Networks' views are contrasted to the SUU and FCTU's strategies in the fourth original publication of this thesis.

The further my understanding and knowledge regarding the research topic developed the less I was dependent on the questions I had planned in advance for the interviews. I kept conducting interviews until they did not reveal any new information that would be relevant to my research. At a certain stage, the answers and topics in the interviews started to repeat themselves. This stage is called the "saturation," which means that no additional data that would benefit the researcher emerges (see, e.g., Eskola & Suoranta 1998; Flick 2002, 64–65).

While working on my PhD thesis I was also part of a research group at University of Helsinki that studied temporary labor migrants' access to social security in Finland. The research project was funded by the Finnish Work Environment Fund and included two other researchers: Dr. Sanna Saksela-Bergholm and Dr. Mika Helander. I have not included material from this research project –which included for example field work and interviews in the farm-berry fields– to my thesis. However, my insights from this project have further deepened my understanding on the subject matter of transnational labor mobility.

### **5.2.2 Public statements**

In addition to the interviews I used trade unions' (and employer organizations') public statements as research material. Public statements are here understood as the actors' statements in mass media such as the unions' own magazines, Finnish newspapers, television and radio. Article II analyzed how immigration questions have been framed in the editorials of the FCTU and the SUU member magazines (*Rakentaja* in the case of the FCTU and *PAM-lehti* in the case of the SUU). I utilized these statements when they were of relevance to my research topic. Where and when the statements were published is presented in detail in Table 2.

By default, public statements form a different kind of a research material than interviews. In the public statements, actors communicate to a wide audience and not to a single person as in interviews. Therefore, we could assume that the interviewees might strive to give answers that they assume to satisfy the researcher (this potential is discussed in section 5.2.4)

The fourth original publication contrasted the views of the Free Movement Network to those of the trade unions under scrutiny.

**Table 2. Research material gathered from mass media**

FCTU's statements/media and date	SUU's statements/media and date	Other actors' statements (actor/media and date)
YLE Morning TV 31.5.2012	SUU's immigration policy program for years 2009–2015	SAK's immigration specialist's statement in Helsingin Sanomat-newspaper 10.3.2013
YLE News 21.6.2012	SUU's statement 28.1.2008	Confederation of Finnish Industries' representative's statement in Helsingin Sanomat 10.3.2013
FCTU's magazine Rakentaja's editorials years 2005–2010	SUU's statement 28.4.2008	EVA (Finnish pro-business think tank) report 42. 12.5.2015.
FCTU website	SUU's magazine PAM-lehti's editorials years 2005–2010	
	SUU website	

### 5.2.3 Material from different events

I also gathered research material from public events where FCTU and SUU's representatives represented their trade unions. In addition, I participated as a researcher in the aforementioned unions' (including their central confederation SAK) seminars and conferences where topics relevant to my study were presented. In these occasions, I made observations on how the unions' representatives framed and presented immigration related issues and, when possible, made notes on their comments. The information and knowledge I gained from these occasions increased my understanding on how the studied actors regard the studied phenomenon and what the unions' strategies are. The most important events are listed Table 3 (more detailed information is available in the original publications of the thesis).

### 5.2.4 Interpretation of the research material

The advantage of qualitative face-to-face interviews is that they enable the researcher to pose follow-up questions to the interviewee based on the received answers (contrary to, for instance, surveys). Research interviews should be understood as a systematic method of gathering information (e.g. Hirsjärvi et. al. 2009, 205–208). I analyzed the interviews using the qualitative content analysis method. This means that I grouped the key and occurring issues in the interviews that were relevant as regards the thesis' task. I recorded and transcribed

**Table 3. Research material from different events**

Event and date	Topic
SAK's Immigrant forum 4.-5.5.2007	SAK affiliated unions' (including SUU and FCTU) representatives discussed migrants' membership in trade unions, what unions should provide for migrants, ethnic discrimination in work places
SAK's "The effect of immigration on working conditions in Finland"- 10.12.2008	SAK affiliated unions' representatives (including SUU and FCTU) and labor market researchers discussed the effect of immigration on working conditions in Finland
Finnish Social Forum 2009	FCTU representatives presented their views on migrants' working conditions, membership in trade unions and Finnish immigration policy
Finnish Social Forum 2010	FCTU representatives presented their views on migrants' working conditions, membership in trade unions and Finnish immigration policy
Finnish Social Forum 2011	FCTU and SUU representatives presented their views on migrants' working conditions, membership in trade unions and Finnish immigration policy
SAK's Immigrant forum 2011 at the SAK's convention	SAK affiliated unions' (including SUU) representatives –including migrants active in trade unions– discussed migrants' membership in trade unions, what unions should provide for migrants, ethnic discrimination in work places
SUU's Congress 2015 (I did not attend, but material – including a live stream– from the Congress was available at the SUU's website)	Trade union and labor market issues, including immigration issues
FCTU's Congress 2015 (I did not attend, but material from the Congress was available at the FCTU's website)	Trade union and labor market issues, including immigration issues

the interviews, excluding the last interviews I made as they did not provide any new knowledge of the research topic. Some of the interviews were transcribed by research assistants. As mentioned earlier, three interviews were not recorded. I only have notes from these interviews.

How to relate to the information available in the interviews and other research material? How reliable is the research material? My thesis combines a *realist* standpoint with a *constructivist* approach. The realist standpoint makes a clear distinction between an "outer" reality and the claims made in the research material (Alasuutari 1994, 80–81). This aspiration to give as objective an account as possible of the studied phenomenon can be seen in the main research question

of the thesis, i.e. “*what* are the SUU’s and the FCTU’s immigration related strategies?” In this case “*what*” implies a factual understanding of what the strategies are. Answering this “*what*”-question induces a *realist* approach, according to which there exists a material reality –in this case trade unions’ strategies– that can be proved with factual evidence and which no one can have a valid reason to deny with good grounds. On the other hand, the thesis’ “*how*”-questions induce a constructivist understanding as I will explain later in this section.

A typical characteristic of such a realist approach is its common sense based interest on whether the informant gives honest and accurate information (e.g. Alasuutari 1994, 80–81). This question regarding the reliability of the research material is related to source criticism, in other words the question of how reliable the available information is (see Kalela 1976, 168–174). Language is not a neutral tool for information-sharing (Kalela 2012, 34). It is possible that the informants give –either accidentally or on purpose– information that is misleading or false or withhold some relevant information. In the interviews the interviewed individuals that represented the various actors were representing their organization. Hence it was possible – and even assumable – that they strived to paint a positive image of their organization. As Furåker & Bengtsson (2013, 122) have stated: “Having an assignment in an organization normally implies that one is likely to speak on behalf of it.” It is for instance possible that the interviewed trade union representatives assumed that I was –due to my research topic– concerned about migrants’ rights. Hence, it is possible that they attempted to depict their organizations as “immigrant friendly” as possible. On the other hand, the interviewees were promised anonymity. Taken this into account they could have taken a critical view on their organization without fear of negative repercussions from their organization.

I tried to avoid these potential pitfalls by conducting a relatively large amount of interviews and by utilizing triangulation of research material (for triangulation see, e.g., Denzin 1989). For instance, if the trade union representative X would have on purpose or by accident stated something that is false, this would have most likely emerged during the research process as the total amount of interviews was quite large. In addition, as I applied the method of data triangulation, I was not dependent on one single type of research material, which also facilitated the possibility of detecting false or random information. A basic principle for source criticism is that if several informants give similar information and there is no specific reason to question the given information then the given information can be considered relatively reliable (Alasuutari 1994, 93). In addition, the probability of the interviewees giving misleading information on purpose was probably reduced by the fact that I told them that I did not depend on the interviews as my only source material but combined interviews with other kinds of material. However, regarding some of the information given by the unions (and other actors), the researcher cannot check the accuracy of the data. An example of this

kind of data would be the amount of migrant members that the trade unions have. In these cases, the researcher has to rely on the accuracy of the given information.

I did not interpret the research material only with a realist approach: as mentioned earlier – depending on the research questions– my interpretation of the research material included a social constructivist approach. As Alasuutari (1994, 94) notes, to only apply a fact-based approach to the interpretation of the research material is to under-use it. The constructivist view takes as its starting point that “the world” is constructed socially by participants in everyday life. Schütz (1962, 5) stated:

“Strictly speaking there are no such things as facts, pure and simple. All facts are from the outset facts selected from a universal context by the activities of our mind. They are, therefore, always interpreted facts, either facts looked at as detached from their context by an artificial abstraction of facts considered in their particular setting.”

When interpreting the research material in terms of the actors’ operating environment I held the constructivist view –presented in the previous quote– and was interested in how the actors framed immigration questions and what kinds of meanings they gave to the phenomenon. From this kind of constructivist approach, the actors’ framing of issues cannot be purely “true” or “false” (see, e.g., Berger & Luckmann 1991). Actors’ understandings and beliefs of what is reality shape societal institutions (ibid.). In other words, actors shape what is considered a reality. Thomas and Thomas (1928, 572) stated “If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.” Accordingly, it was important to also look at how the trade unions (and other relevant actors in this study) looked at immigration related issues. In short; qualitative research material cannot be used to simply present “reality.” For example, it would be possible that the interviewed trade union representatives would categorize immigration as a cultural issue. In that case, it would not be meaningful to question whether immigration “in reality” is a cultural issue but instead look at how the trade unionists link immigration with culture and what this framing means as regards trade unions’ strategies. In other words, even if the unionists way of connoting immigration with culture might from some point of view be “false,” the framing might have tangible consequences and hence be of importance.

The validity of the research material is not always strictly dependent on its reliability in general sense, but in its usefulness in helping the researcher answer the research question. One of the thesis’ tasks has been to explore how trade unions (and other actors in the trade unions’ operating environment) frame immigration. After all, the trade unions are interest organizations, and it is their everyday

task to define and re-define “reality.” The constructivist approach is suitable for answering these kinds of questions that look at how actors construct reality.

On the other hand, in addition to the constructivist approach, it is sensible to analyze some of the topics in the research material from a purely fact-based approach. For instance a trade unionist could claim that his/her union would have carried out a certain measure in order to ameliorate migrants’ position in the labor market. It is plausible to view that this kind of statement can be true or false -in contrast to more abstract and general claims. As mentioned earlier, the reliability of this kind of a claim can be verified by the use of a large and diverse enough research material (data triangulation).

In order to give the interviewees a chance to fully explain the studied phenomenon from their perspective, I gave them a possibility to frame the studied topic on the basis of their experiences and knowledge. In addition, toward the end of the interviews, I encouraged the interviewees to add their own comments on the topic.

### 5.2.5 Research ethics

Philosopher Paul Ricoeur (2006) gives a sound guiding principle to research ethics: the researcher has to stay true to his/her goal in doing justice to the object of study. This principle also includes that the researcher does not abuse the object of study for creating propaganda or for strengthening existing prejudices.

Paying attention to research ethics has been particularly important in my research as it contains interviews on contentious and politicized topics. A key ethical principle in research involving human beings is to let people decide whether they participate in a study or not (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009, 25). All the people I interviewed were aware that they participated in this research. When I participated in trade unions’ seminars and conferences I made it clear to the participants that I was there in the role of a researcher. My name and university affiliation were visible in the sign-up sheets and other pertinent documents distributed among the seminar and conference participants. The people I communicated with in these events were aware that I participated due to my research.

In addition to trade unions’ seminars, I attended the Finnish Social Forum on three occasions. The annual Social Forum brings together civil society actors, including trade unions, to present and exchange views on societal matters. In these occasions, representatives from the FCTU and SUU presented their unions’ views and strategies in immigration related topics. I did not consider it necessary to inform the participants that I attended in the role of a researcher as these were large events open to the general public. In addition, after conducting interviews and participating in such events for some time I came across people from the

unions who I had already met. It seemed like the group of people in charge of immigration issues in the unions under scrutiny (including their central organization SAK) was relatively small. This increased the importance of not revealing who I had interviewed –or what had been said in the interviews– for the trade union actors, as it seemed like the key actors in the unions knew each other.

For a research conducted in an ethical manner, the partakers have to be informed about the potential risks in participating in a study (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009). Although this research dealt with contentious topics there were no risks for the participants (i.e. interviewees) as their identities were withheld. Neither did I reveal the names of the interviewed entrepreneurs or their companies.

I did not pay the interviewees for participating in the study. I offered to pay a coffee or a similar drink for the migrants that I interviewed in cafés or restaurants. I interviewed one of the migrants in a restaurant during his lunch break. In this case I paid his lunch as I considered this reasonable because the interviewees who participated in the study did not have any direct benefit from participating. Some of the migrants expressed a wish that my research would raise awareness of the specific problems migrants face at work. In order to dampen unrealistic hopes I saw it as my duty to point out the limited influence of social sciences in affecting societal change.

One migrant working in a restaurant asked me after the interview whether it would be possible to join a trade union without the knowledge of her employer; she was afraid of her employer's reaction if she joined a union. In this case I saw it as my moral obligation to tell her that this was possible. Depending on the interest of the interviewees regarding my research, I informed the interviewees afterwards of my publications on the research topic. I did this by sending them my publications by post or emailing them links to my research available on the internet.

Sharing a case study can involve a more diverse set of audiences than most types of research (Yin 2014, 180). This was the case as regards my research. In addition to participating in academic seminars and conferences in Finland and abroad during the research process, I was invited to various events organized by trade unions to present my research results. This gave the trade unionists a possibility to comment on my research. The questions I was posed in these events built a dialogue that increased my understanding of how the trade unions understood and framed immigration related issues. During the research process I was contacted by Finnish magazines, newspapers and radio for interviews on the research topic. I was also invited to participate as discussant in a few public panel discussions on immigration organized by civil society actors and state authorities. I agreed to give the interviews and to participate in the panel discussions. I see it as a researcher's ethical duty to engage in this kind of dialogue as it enhances

the dissemination of the research outcome outside academia. This dialogue also develops the researcher's insights and knowledge on the topic under study.

Some of the interviews were transcribed by research assistants. In these cases I informed them that the interviewees have been guaranteed anonymity and that the transcribers should not spread the information available in the interviews. I stored the interviews so that external people did not have access to them.

# 6

## Summary of the original publications

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My PhD thesis consists of four peer-reviewed publications and this summary that presents and elaborates the key findings in the articles. Two of the articles are directed at Finnish audiences and the two articles written in English are aimed to both Finnish and international audiences. The articles written in Finnish present empirical findings as regards the Finnish situation and place the findings in the context of international theory on the subject to the Finnish audience. The articles that are published in English present the Finnish experiences on the relationship among trade unions, migration and migrants to the international audience. All publications –except Article I– can be downloaded free of charge from the publishers’ websites. The articles’ key substance and role in the thesis is presented in the following.

### Article I

**Alho, R. (2010) Maahanmuuttajien kokemukset ja ammattiliittojen näkemykset työehtojen polkemisesta Suomessa [Immigrants’ experiences and trade unions’ perceptions of social dumping in Finland], in S. Wrede & C. Nordberg (eds.) *Vieraita työssä: työelämän etnistyvä eriarvoisuus [Strangers in Work: The Ethnifying Inequality in Working Life]*. Helsinki: Gaudeamus, pp. 93–121.**

This was an exploratory empirical article that mapped the situation in a field of which there is little research-based knowledge in Finland. In this article, I focused on migrant workers’ experiences in the construction, restaurant and service sectors and their experiences of trade unions. Migrants’ experiences were

relevant to look at because they shape the trade unions' operating environment and have a bearing on their strategies. Previous research has seldom dealt with migrants' experiences of trade unions (exceptions: Mulinari & Neergaard 2004; Kyntäjä 2011). In addition, I examined entrepreneurs' motives and experiences of employing migrant workers. The SUU and FCTU's framing of immigration issues in their public statements and employers' motives for employing migrant workers were examined. The strategy of both unions has been to publicly define migrant workers as exploited. This meso-level finding is in many cases –but not always– in line with the migrant workers' subjective micro-level understanding of their own situation. It was common according to the research interviews that migrants perform the *same* work tasks as natives with lower wages and fewer work related benefits than natives do. Nevertheless, the interviewed migrants were fairly content with the jobs they performed –the problems they experienced had to do with the *working conditions*. Migrant workers hoped for trade unions' strategies that would ameliorate their vulnerable position in the service and construction sectors. Many migrant interviewees stressed that trade unions should inform migrants more effectively about their role because there is lack of knowledge regarding this topic among migrants.

## Article II

**Alho, R. (2012) 'Rakennusliiton ja Palvelualojen ammattiliiton maahanmuutto- ja maahanmuuttajastrategiat' [The immigration and immigrant strategies of the Finnish Construction Trade Union and the Service Union United], *Työelämän tutkimus* 10(1): 38–54.**

As the first thesis publication showed, trade unions under scrutiny consider labor immigration a significant issue. This article identified, described and analyzed what the FCTU and SUU's strategies are (in addition to framing migrants as exploited as Article I showed); they are a combination of exclusion and inclusion strategies. Articles III and IV built on and elaborated these insights. The article included an analysis of the relationship between trade unions' strategies and the national labor market institutions and how this operating environment –characterized in Finland by institutionalized tripartism– constrains and enables the unions' strategies in immigration questions. In addition to identifying the unions' central strategies, the article introduced the central theoretical concepts of the thesis; *power resources, inclusion, exclusion, strategies*. Both unions have strategies in relation to immigration and they have a capability to influence state labor immigration policy, which is an important power resource for the unions. The unions' strategies have similarities and dissimilarities, which indicates that

unions can take recourse to different strategies even if they operate in similar institutional settings.

### Article III

**Alho, R. (2013) Trade union responses to transnational labour mobility in the Finnish-Estonian context. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*. 3(3): 133–53.**

As article II showed, both unions have developed inclusion and exclusion strategies in terms of immigration. Article III described and analyzed in detail what the FCTU's strategies are. As the majority of migrant construction workers in Finland originate from Estonia and as Estonian construction enterprises send their workers to Finland, it became essential to understand the Estonian labor market situation. Hence, the article also looked at the role of Estonian trade unions. The article argued that the (neo)liberal Estonian state policies are related to the weak position of the Estonian trade unions, which by and large are bystanders when it comes to labor migration (both immigration and emigration). The article showed why and how the Estonian situation is problematic from the perspective of the FCTU. I paid particular attention to the emergent labor market between the Finnish and Estonian capital regions. As a theoretical frame I utilized David Soskice and Peter Hall's (2001) distinction between *liberal* and *coordinated* market economies (Estonia representing the former and Finland the latter) and argued –by relying on previous theory on the subject matter– that these differing institutional settings constrain and enable different strategies. In the Estonian case, the particular historical situation of trade unions constituting a dimension of the repressive Soviet regime in Estonia still negatively confronts trade unions in the view of the general Estonian public. In other words, historical legacies matter, too, as regards trade union strategy. The article also showed that some trade union strategies in relation to immigrants have *both* inclusive and exclusive tendencies.

### Article IV

**Alho, R. (2013) Trade union responses to labor immigrants: selective solidarity. *Finnish Yearbook of Population Research* 2013 vol. 48, pp. 77–102.**

This article focused on the immigration related strategies of the SUU. As Article II showed, the SUU in accordance to the FCTU and their central organization SAK hold a restrictive stance toward the liberalization of the labor immigration policy.

The article argued that this exclusion strategy that defends current work and residence permits works has the potential outcome of working against the interests of third country immigrants. The article critically discussed the arguments that the SUU uses to defend the current restrictions on labor immigration and related work and residence permits. The SUU assesses the inclusion of immigrants as union members to be in its interest. The article also reflected on what kind of consequences the recent politicization of anti-immigration sentiments have as regards the union's strategies and how the SAK-affiliated unions have contrasting interests as regards opening up the labor markets for third country nationals. I also discussed the union's relationship to most marginalized immigrants. The article also gave a more nuanced description of the Finnish immigration context than the previous articles. Table 4 presents the topical dispersion of the articles.

**Table 4. Topics of the original publications**

	Article I	Article II	Article III	Article IV
The SUU's strategies	X	X		X
The FCTU's strategies	X	X	X	
Comparison of FCTU and SUU's strategies		X		
Migrants' experiences	X			
Entrepreneurs' motives and experiences of hiring migrant workers	X			
Employer associations' views on immigration	X			X
The SUU and FCTU's editorials on immigration		X		
Reflections on the trade union strategies' consequences			X	X
An assessment of the politicized anti-immigration sentiment on trade union strategies				X
The consequences of the Estonian labor market situation for the FCTU			X	
The Free Movement Networks' views on labor migration				X

# 7 Results

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The main task of this study is to identify the immigration related strategies of the Service Union United and the Finnish Construction Trade Union? The main research question looks at different aspects of the unions' strategies, i.e. whether the unions make use of inclusion and exclusion strategies. Are their strategies directed at the state institutions or building direct links with migrant workers? Do the unions have specific strategies directed at migrants or are workers treated equally, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity or native language? Are the strategies directed at the national or transnational level? What are the unions' arguments behind their strategies?

In addition, the research answers the following interrelated questions:

- How do the Service Union United and the Finnish Construction Trade Union perceive their operating environment in questions related to immigration?
- How do different actors in the SUU and FCTU's operating environment regard labor immigration and what are their strategies?
- How do migrant workers experience their labor market situation in Finland?

First I present and analyze the SUU's strategies and perceptions of the phenomenon under study. I then move on to examine the FCTU's strategies and perceptions. Before describing the respective trade unions' strategies, I provide an overview of the union's characteristics and operating environments. This is important because operating environments constrain and enable unions' strategies. The operating environment is presented as the different actors perceive it. The strategies of the two unions are contrasted in the concluding chapter (chapter 8). I selected the quotes from research interviews and other research material so that they represent the actors' typical, recurring ways of framing and explaining

immigration related phenomena. The translation of the quotes from Finnish to English has been done by me.

## 7.1 Service Union United's strategies

The Service Union United is a merger trade union founded in 2000 when four smaller service sector trade unions united. At the end of 2014, it had 232 381 members, 10 564 (i.e. 4.5%) of whom did not speak the national Finnish languages as their native languages (source: SUU's membership register). The SUU has approximately 250 employees (source: email correspondence with a SUU representative in May 2015). In 2015 the members pay 1.5% of their pre-tax wages as membership fee to the union (with the exception of some groups who are not obliged to pay membership fees). Membership in the union is also available to non-nationals. According to the SUU, the trade union density in the sectors it represents is around 50%. The SUU belongs to the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions, which is the umbrella organization of "blue collar" and service sector trade unions. Approximately three quarters of the SUU's members and the majority of its employees are female. The SUU represents and negotiates on behalf of wage earners who are mainly employed in low wage occupations in private service sector. The union negotiates collective agreements for its members. A majority of them work in retail, restaurant work, and cleaning. In 2013, the most common foreign languages among the membership were, in descending order, Estonian, Russian, English, Thai, Chinese, Arabic, and Turkish. The SUU defines those members who have registered some other language than Finnish or Swedish (the two official languages in Finland) as their first language in the union membership form as migrant members. The union's values stated in the SUU's Programme for years 2011–2015 are "communality," "courage," and "equality" (source: interviews and the SUU's webpages; translation from Finnish mine). In accordance, according to Ristikari (2013, 130–131), "equality" was a central concept around which Finnish trade union shop stewards framed the goals of trade unions.

### 7.1.1 Operating environment of the Service Union United

"I have very much been exploited regarding working conditions and wages. We are being exploited because we are from Estonia. Many times it is required that the working days are long. Last year I did not have a vacation [according

to the collective agreements]; it [exploitation] concerns over-time work, evening shifts, Sundays [compensation for Sunday work], Saturdays, everything.”

This quote is from an interview with an Estonian construction cleaner. She had experience of working in several different jobs in Finland. Her claims of migrant workers being exploited in the (low-wage) sectors was a recurring theme in the migrants’ interviews and the research material in general. A restaurant worker from a central African country expressed similar views:

Restaurant worker: I was the only foreigner in that work place. When we made the work contracts, the boss invited us one by one to make the contracts.

Rolle Alho: Separately?

Restaurant worker: Yes separately, but after working some time there I found out that I was the one who was being paid the minimum wage.

Rolle Alho: And do you mean that the Finns were paid more?

Restaurant worker: Yes. They were paid more money, and I was doing the same jobs they were doing.

The migrant workers I interviewed explained the breaches of working conditions often being due to migrants’ lack of knowledge of rights. In addition, the individual migrant workers’ weak bargaining position vis-à-vis the employer was seen as an explaining factor. Even when the migrant workers knew their rights, it was not necessarily enough to secure them. The majority of the migrants I interviewed expressed that the breaches in their working conditions was a problem that specifically migrants encountered. They considered this unjust. Some of the interviewees spoke of the psychological stress caused by their precarious situation in the low-wage sector. A restaurant worker from Bangladesh told that:

“If you work instead of seven hours 14 or 12 hours [in a day] and receive little money... hard work, and you are all the time in a difficult situation because you might lose your job, it affects you mentally, and in every way.”

Despite their difficulties, the interviewed migrants were fairly content with their jobs; the perceived problems had to do with working conditions –not the job in itself. Some of the interviewed Estonians who worked only temporarily in Finland were content with their wages and working conditions, which they compared to the situation in low-wage Estonia. The migrants’ relationship toward trade unions varied; some had joined a trade union, some had not joined because lack of knowledge or because they lacked motivation due to their short stay in Finland. One restaurant worker from Bangladesh underlined that migrants who do not live in Finland on a permanent basis have less incentive to join a trade union, because due to their short stay they are not entitled to incomes-related unemployment benefits (unlike those who have lived a certain time in Finland). This

is one plausible institutional explanation for migrants' underrepresentation as trade union members, because access to incomes-related unemployment benefits in case of unemployment has been shown to be a major motive for employees to join a trade union in Finland (see Ahtiainen 2011). 8 of the total 18 interviewed migrants had joined a trade union (either the SUU or FCTU). Two of them said they belonged to "some" trade union, but were not entirely sure which one (which obviously refers to a vague connection to the trade union in question). Migrants' experiences and perceptions of trade unions varied. Many of the interviewed migrants put hope on trade unions to solve the problems migrant workers face. Some of the migrants who had joined a trade union had received help in questions of unpaid wages, which they appreciated. In general, the migrant workers were of the opinion that trade unions should inform migrants more effectively about what they offer and what they stand for. On a general level, the migrants had a rather pragmatic stance toward trade unions and they did not express any anti-union attitudes; they had become union members *when* they saw it to be in their interest. However, some did not see any benefit of joining a trade union. Two of the SUU migrant interviewees had been active in trade unions. They criticized Finnish unions for not employing migrants as staff. According to them, employing migrants would be symbolically important and enhance the communication between unions and the migrant population. In accordance to this an Estonian trade union leader interviewed for this study praised Finnish trade unions for publishing information in foreign languages, but urged the Finnish unions to have more Estonians and Russians as activists and employees as this would make the unions more "reflective" toward migrants.

The Service Union United's framing of migrant workers' situation is very similar to the migrants' framing of the situation. According to the SUU, migrant workers are more vulnerable than natives regarding breaches of working conditions in the occupations the union represents. According to the SUU, this is partly due to migrants' –or in some cases their migrant employers'– lack of knowledge of work related rights, and partly due to migrants' weak bargaining position with the employers. According to the SUU's magazine 18/2008:

"Often the migrant has ended up in a situation, where (s)he is forced to agree on working conditions that are worse than those stipulated in the collective agreements."

Likewise, according to Ristikari (2013, 112), Finnish shop stewards expressed that migrants are often exploited by employers. This view was shared by the state's working conditions' inspectors whom I interviewed for this research: To their knowledge, migrant workers more often than natives face breaches of working conditions in the sectors that the SUU (and FCTU) represents. Migrant workers

are underrepresented as members in the Service Union United. Nevertheless, in absolute terms the migrant membership has increased rapidly: from around 1,000 in 2002 to close to 11,000 in 2014. The SUU assessed the number of migrants working in the sectors it represents as being around 40,000 (SUU representative's interview in 2013). This means that trade union density among migrants is lower than among the whole population in the sectors the SUU represents, which is around 50% based on the interviews. On the other hand, migrants have increasingly joined the SUU, as Table 5 shows in detail.

**Table 5. Membership figures of the Service Union United (SUU)**

Year	Total membership	Immigrant members	Percentage of immigrant members
2002	200,219	987	0.5
2003	195,689	1,198	0.6
2004	199,148	1,728	0.9
2005	205,757	2,281	1.1
2006	207,007	2,465	1.2
2007	209,557	2,729	1.3
2008	213,380	3,582	1.7
2009	221,274	4,704	2.1
2010	225,185	5,702	2.5
2011	225,298	6,638	2.9
2012	229,811	8,191	3.6
2013	231,457	9,600	4.1
2014	232,273	10,564	4.5

Source: SUU's membership register

Many SUU interviewees stressed that intensified competition in working life combined with the need to minimize labor costs has increased the pace of work and had a negative impact on working conditions in the service sector. The increased work pace and a precariousness of working life was also a central topic that was addressed in the SUU's 2015 Congress. In a similar vein, the SUU magazine (27 March 2015) claimed that hotel cleaners are given less time than before for the same cleaning tasks. The immigration question seems rather problematic from the SUU's standpoint as immigrants, who generally are in a weaker position than the natives, are entering an increasingly competitive labor market, with an increased pressure to minimize labor costs. The difficult situation of the migrants is portrayed by the fact that, according to the SUU, in 2008 almost one fifth of the

cases where the union assisted its members in work place disputes concerned migrant members (the migrant membership was only 1.5%). The interviewed state authorities in charge of overseeing working conditions at work places stated that there are specific problems regarding migrant workers' rights in small ethnic restaurants and cleaning companies.

The SUU actively and publicly states that there is "no real lack of labor" in the working life sectors it represents. The SUU's view (and the FCTU's view which is presented later) is in line with its central organization SAK's:

"Employers want to recruit foreign workforce to sectors, in which they claim there is shortage of labor. The difficulty of recruiting Finnish workers to these branches depends on the fact that wages are insufficient for living, and because working conditions are bad and work contracts part-time." (SAK immigration expert Eve Kyntäjä, Helsingin Sanomat March 10, 2013)

The SUU's and SAK's view is in contrast to the employers' organization the Confederation of Finnish Industries, or EK:

"The phenomenon [of unfilled vacancies] is among other things explained by the lack of proper labour market skills and competence, social problems such as substance abuse and the poor motivation of Finnish workers." (EK's immigration expert Riitta Wärn, Helsingin Sanomat March 10, 2013)

This same argument for the reason behind unfilled vacancies, as well as the argument of "too generous" unemployment benefits, came up in the interview I conducted with an EK official.

It is not the aim of my thesis to analyze to what extent there is a "real" lack of labor in Finland. Suffice to say that employer organizations and trade unions have different interests in the question; the trade unions under scrutiny desire to restrict the inflow of labor immigrants whereas the employer organization EK and pro-business think tank EVA (see the EVA report, January 29, 2015) urges for an increased supply of labor from abroad. In addition, according to the research material, trade unions and employer organizations related the question of labor immigration to the employment situation. As regards labor immigration regulation, in the interviews both parts accused each other of promoting particularistic interests while claiming themselves to promote a general national interest. This is a common feature of political rhetoric where political actors legitimize their demands with being equal to the common good (see, e.g., Kettunen 2008; Koskinen 2012, 307–320).

In addition to the employment issues, culture was a framework into which the interviewed SUU representatives framed immigration. The SUU representa-

tives expressed quite a positive stance on immigration and immigrants in general. Some of the interviewees indicated that dealing with “immigrant issues” implied a possibility to enriching encounters and to enhance one’s cultural competence:

“[As a consequence of dealing with immigrant members] my cultural understanding has increased ... It has somehow increased my tolerance, and that is good. Although it has been challenging. It can be said that I have taken this as a process of personal growth. If I’m honest, I think we can all improve in these matters.” (Interview with an SUU official)

Another SUU official stated that:

“I think [immigration] is on a general level a good thing that brings with it cultural diversity.”

These two quotes express an attitude that is also present in the other interviews and in the union’s membership magazine. How to explain this positive stance toward immigration and immigrants? Support for multiculturalism and tolerance have become rather widely accepted norms in many societies (e.g. Mähönen & Jasinskaja-Lahti 2013). The interviewees may wish to portray themselves as tolerant, international, and open-minded. However, the interviewees were promised anonymity, which should at least by default reduce their potential need to portray themselves in more positive light. The expressed positive stance of the SUU might also be related to gender issues. Women constitute the vast majority of its staff and almost 80% of its members. It has been shown that women express more positive attitudes toward immigrants than men (Jaakkola 2009).

The SUU’s strategies are a combination of inclusive and exclusive strategies, which are described and analysed in the following two sections.

### **7.1.2 Inclusion strategies of the Service Union United**

The goal of the Service Union United’s inclusion strategies is to include migrant workers as union members. An additional goal is to guarantee equal wages and working conditions regardless of nationality or ethnicity. We can find a historical parallel here to the official statement of the central organisation SAK’s convention in 1947, according to which the trade union movement strives for a wage policy that guarantees men and women equal wages for same work tasks (see Ala-Kapee et al. 1979, 103). After all, it was common that women were paid less than men for the same work tasks (ibid.; Suoranta 2009; Bergholm 2012). The union also stresses the importance of general integration of migrant workers

into the society, and that the state authorities should allocate more resources to secure migrants' rights at work.

The SUU's main strategy in reaching its goals has been to share information in non-native languages. The union's website, for instance, provides information on membership benefits and collective agreements in English, Estonian, Russian and Chinese. The union has also targeted direct advertising to the Russian speaking population (of whom a considerable part originates from Estonia) and to Amiedu, a vocational adult education center, which provides educational training for migrants. Some of the interviewees referred to "historical" situations that they deemed as milestones for the Finnish trade union movement as regards immigrants. One official accounted that:

"We had a boom of Chinese workers in the former Restaurant Workers' Union [one of the SUU's processor unions] sometime in the early the 1990s. We were quite proud because we had translated summaries of collective agreements even into *Chinese*. We thought that was quite remarkable."

It is indicative of the small amount of immigrants in Finland in the 1990s that the amount of Chinese members during this "boom" was only "approximately 30." It is probably also indicative that the 125-page document on the membership of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union from 1986 had no mention of immigration or immigrants. The interviewee who remembered the Chinese "boom," as well as another interviewee, mentioned that in the late 1980s, there were some migrants who worked as language teachers and were active members in TEK-ERI trade union, which was one of the trade unions that merged into the SUU in 2000. The foreign language teachers are now members of the SUU branch called PAM-lingua. These examples show that inclusion of migrants has not been a total "non-issue" in the history of Finnish trade unions –despite the remarkably low amount of immigrants well into the 1990s. However, the interviewees stressed that immigration issues have increased in importance during the 2000s due to increased immigration.

The SUU has advertised itself occasionally in "multicultural" contexts, such as the World Village Festival and at the International Cultural Center Caisa in Helsinki. In some occasions, the union has publicly taken a stance against racism. Despite the SUU's official anti-racist stance, the SAK-affiliated trade unions' migrant activists expressed at the SAK's seminars on migration (see Table 3) that racism and ethnic prejudice exist among trade union representatives at the workplace level. Ristikari (2013) came to similar conclusions. This issue was also raised by an SUU representative I interviewed in 2013. On the basis of the research material we cannot conclude how widespread this phenomenon is, but it is clear that Finnish trade unions are not free from ethnic prejudice and even racism that exists in society

at large. It is obvious that these phenomena have a negative impact on immigrant inclusion. On the other hand, visibility in “multicultural” events and public statements against racism gives a sign that the union welcomes immigrant members. The official stance of the SUU favors migrants’ labor rights and anti-racism and even implies that increased cultural diversity thanks to immigration is a positive factor. However, these attitudes are not automatically transmitted to the workplace level. The SUU’s cultural framing of immigration was not transmitted to structural changes in the union’s organization; Penninx and Roosblad (2000) have identified possible strategies for trade unions to include migrant workers. The unions could, for example, create new organizational structures to better meet the needs of their migrant members. However, the SUU has not taken such steps.

Despite the SUU’s increased efforts to communicate with migrants, we should not over-estimate the union’s visibility to migrants: in a questionnaire sent to the SUU’s migrant members (Ritari 2013), only 1.4% indicated that they had joined the union because it had been visible in the media. 1.8% of the respondents had become members because they had received an advertisement letter from the union. Only 5.1% had joined because a union representative had recommended membership. The vast majority (62.9%) had joined because a friend, a family member, or a colleague belonging to the SUU had recommended it to them; in other words not as a consequence of the union’s strategy. The most common reason migrants expressed for joining the union was the right to income-related unemployment benefit in case of unemployment, access to legal services, and advice on work-related issues. In this sense the immigrant members do not differ from native members (*ibid.*).

Despite the aforementioned communication strategies that are specifically targeted at migrants, the SUU’s strategies are by and large characterized by universalism. The union has not opted for any changes in its organizational structure despite the ethnic diversification of the labor market and the union membership. This strategy is illustrated in the following interview quote:

“I do not see it as a good option that we [the SUU] would establish some specific branches for migrant members, so that we would place them in some own bracket and keep them separated. Instead, it would be more important to find out ways to include them in our normal action.”

In this case “normal action” referred to the already existing local branches of the trade union rather than to special arrangements targeted at migrants. Instead of striving for organizational changes, which has been identified as a strategy for immigrant inclusion (see Penninx & Roosblad 2000), the union expresses that the existing union structures are sufficient for immigrant inclusion. The strategy is hence different from the approach that the Finnish trade unions often have applied as regards gender equality issues as there is a long history of womens’

organizations and sections within the trade union movement (see Ala-Kapee et al. 1979). The SUU claims that separate strategies for migrant members would in fact be to their disadvantage by separating them from the general framework of the union. In this sense, the SUU's strategy resembles what John Wrench (2004) has labeled (on the basis of his comparison of British and Danish trade unions) the universalistic model. According to Wrench:

“By the 1990s there was in the UK far greater and more established range of policies and structures than in Denmark, with self-organization structures for black and ethnic minority members within unions and positive action measures such as special training for minorities who are under-represented in union positions, and reserved seats on executive bodies. ... In Denmark, the unions held on much longer to an ‘equal treatment’ view. In terms of special policies the Danish unions embraced changes in union structures to a much lesser degree. Instead the emphasis has been more on improving ethnic minorities’ participation in unions without significant change to current structures.” (Wrench 2004, 7)

The SUU has –like the Danish trade unions of the quote above– opted for an “equal treatment” strategy, with the exception of providing more information in migrants’ native languages. The union has not opted for quotas or executive bodies for migrants in the union’s organization. According to Penninx and Roosblad (2000, 1–16), the question of special strategies (or “policies” they state it) toward migrant members is a central “dilemma” trade unions have to address. The question of whether trade unions opt for specific strategies in relation to migrants is inherently a question of whether unions should only be interested in common interests of workers irrespective of national or ethnic background, or whether they should stand up for migrants’ specific needs as union members. On the one hand migrants are in a disadvantaged position vis-à-vis the native population. The disadvantage might prevail if the challenges migrants face are not given special attention. On the other hand such strategies might raise opposition among the native members of the unions. The most obvious specific strategies toward migrants are those that have to do with information sharing in migrants’ native languages. The SUU has opted for this strategy as it has translated material to most common migrant languages. More far-reaching special strategies are agreements between trade unions and employers, which for instance ameliorate the position of migrants in questions of housing. Far-reaching special strategies directed toward migrants are also those when unions re-structure their organization so that migrants can more easily participate in the unions’ decision making, or that unions demand special rights for migrants in their work places. Such rights are for instance special places of worship and religious minorities’ right to take time off work during

their religious holidays (*ibid.*). Although the SUU representatives I interviewed often framed immigration as a cultural issue, the union's strategy does not include organizational changes to facilitate its increased migrant membership. The SUU's special strategies toward migrants are based on diversifying the union's information sharing to include more languages. As the more far-reaching strategies mentioned above are lacking, it is reasonable to label the SUU's strategy toward its migrant members as universalistic according to Wrench's aforementioned dichotomy. Nor has the SUU opted for quotas for migrants at different levels of the union's hierarchy, unlike the previously mentioned British trade unions.

Whether the SUU's universalistic strategy has been successful is a matter of definition. On the one hand migrant membership has increased relatively rapidly, which most likely to some degree has to do with the union's increased efforts. The SUU's strategy to publish material in several languages has certainly to some extent increased migrants' knowledge on Finnish labor market issues, and hence protected their position. However, migrants are still underrepresented as union activists and at all levels of the union's organization. Migrants do not hold leadership positions within the organization. In terms of Korpi's power resources theory (see chapter 4), these strategies imply that the union sees immigrant inclusion as an economic power resource instead of a human capital resource. The SUU is satisfied with the fact that migrants have joined the union in increasing numbers, something that the SUU representatives underlined in many interviews and events. However, the union has not concretely reacted to the under-representation of migrants as activists and at all levels of decision making in the union's organization (source: interviews). Unions can approach workers as providers of protective and labor market services or they can assume the characteristics of a social movement and approach workers as potential activists (Heery & Adler 2006, 48). The SUU has opted for the former strategy. However, there seems to be a change as, according to a SUU representative (email correspondence May 2015), the union currently employs four migrants (of whom one is a trainee). (According to the research material, during most of the 2000s and the early 2010s the union did not employ any migrants.) They are assigned to work with general trade union issues, i.e. not in ethno-specific tasks, which reflects the universalistic strategy of the SUU.

A central feature of the SUU's strategies is to include immigrant/immigration issues to the decision making process of the existing Finnish corporatist tripartite system, instead of for example building coalitions with migrant associations or migrant communities (which the research literature identified as one possible strategy, see, e.g., Milkman 2000). This finding is in line with previous studies according to which unions in corporatist labor market settings make use of their access to the tripartite decision making system also in immigration questions (Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Krings 2009; Marino 2012). The following interview

quote sheds light on how the SUU, as an institutionally influential actor, lobbies for its goals regarding immigration (and other issues):

“We [the SUU] can influence [issues related to immigration] in addition to taking part in discussions in the public sphere also via the public administration; we are very active toward different bodies, ministries, and the [Finnish] government. We also cooperate with NGOs.” (SUU representative)

This quote illustrates the professionalized and institutionally embedded nature of the Finnish trade union movement in general. The unions' power resources are linked to the national decision making system, and do not depend that much on mobilizing new groups of workers as members or for various forms of action. Even though the interviewee mentions NGOs, the SUU's strategy does not include coalition building to immigrant NGOs or immigrant communities. Neither has the union hired migrant organizers in order to get access into the ethnic economy, as, for instance, some U.S. trade unions have done (see, e.g., Milkman 2000; 2006; 2010; Getman 2010 115–137). The SUU interviewees argued that specifically “ethnic” (or in this case “non-Finnish”) restaurants were by and large non-unionized and out of their control. However, the union had no strategy that would be targeted at controlling working conditions or recruiting new members in these restaurants. The following three interview quotes from three different SUU representatives shed light on the question:

“We have seen that we have more important things to do than to go and check these individual [ethnic] restaurants. I believe that we are aware of the breaches in working conditions in those places but it is like we have lifted our hands, like we cannot really influence that.”

However, there had been some attempts by the SUU officials to intervene in ethnic restaurant business:

“Especially when we [the SUU representatives] go to suburbs [of Helsinki] where there are more of those places [ethnic restaurants] where everything [regarding collective agreements] is not in order, there very often we encounter that they [the employees] get very frightened when we say we are from the Service Union United. They think we are some sort of tax inspectors; no owner can be found, and very often we get the reaction “what do they want from us?” We leave our papers [information about the union] there but I doubt that we have gotten many members from those places.”

Rolle Alho: “So they equate you with authorities?”

“Yes, somehow I think this is the case. They think we are there to spy, even if we try to explain [why we are there]. Somehow a common language is not to be found.”

Another SUU representative stated that:

“We have difficulties of getting access to the restaurants owned by immigrants because we seldom have any members there. I suppose that almost all of our members in the restaurant sector work in restaurants owned by Finns.”

Some of the migrant-dense working places and sectors seem to be too resource costly to mobilize from the SUU’s perspective (as the interview quotes show). After all, there are in the capital area alone a vast amount of foreign restaurants (see Joronen 2012) and the entry into this field seems too costly in terms of resources from the union’s perspective. In addition, the second interview quote refers to the SUU’s lack of human capital (a power resource in Korpi’s (1998) terms) in the form of foreign language skills. Also according to the migrant interviews, the “ethnic” restaurant sector seems to work following a logic of ethnic networks and informal arrangements, which leave little room for traditional trade union representation. Such ethnic networks that leave little room for formally regulated employment relations have also been documented by Wahlbeck’s (2007) research on the pizza and kebab shops in Finland. It seems that we are witnessing in the context of the ethnic restaurant sector a deregulated labor market sphere where the enforcement of collective agreements is weak. Lillie and Sippola (2011) found similar evidence in their research on the work arrangements in the multinational Olkiluoto nuclear power plant construction site where trade union presence and the enforcement of national collective agreements was weak and undercut by the use of migrant workers.

From the SUU’s standpoint the “ideal migrant” is someone who works in the formal sector and is, or becomes, a member of the SUU. However, the research material does not imply that the ideal migrant would –from the SUU’s perspective necessarily– be someone who is active inside the SUU organization: the union is satisfied with passive fee-paying members as there is no strategy to increase migrants’ participation in the union’s organization. This stance is related to the professionalized *modus operandi* of contemporary Finnish trade unions, which operate in a corporatist labor market setting and rely on a large –but passive– membership represented by full-time salaried trade union officials (see, e.g., Kevätsalo 2005; Melin 2012, 15).

Instead of directly seeking access to migrants’ work places and communities, for example by hiring migrant recruiters, immigration issues are processed in various working groups with other institutionalized actors:

“To my knowledge we have not actively dealt with this question [ethnic economy]. It's more like we have been involved in several working groups with employers discussing these immigration questions. We discuss what kind of programs there should be and what the *state* should do.” (emphasis added)

Another interviewee identified lobbying Members of Parliament as a key strategy when trying to influence immigration policies. The SUU's strategies are indicative of their power resources in the Finnish tripartite decision making system. On the other hand, the absence of bilateral coalition building strategies with immigrant NGOs and immigrant communities –that some U.S. trade unions have developed– can also be interpreted as an inability to exploit these kinds of potential links for strengthening the union's power resources.

However, when contrasting trade union strategies, it is important to keep in mind that the immigration situation varies from country to country. For instance many of the identified “renewal” strategies, where trade unions have operated outside the conventional industrial relations system, are largely based on experiences from the United States (see, e.g., Milkman et al. 2010). Finland is a relatively new immigration country: until the 1990s, immigration was virtually non-existent. The immigrant population is –despite a recent increase– rather small in international comparison, i.e. around 5% of the population is foreign born (Statistics Finland 2014). Unlike the United States and other countries with long history of immigration, Finland does not have large and established immigrant communities. In other words, in order to understand trade unions' strategies as regards migration and migrants, it is necessary to look at the labor market structures *and* also take into consideration the specific immigration context. Accordingly, the same kinds of strategies are probably not always directly transferable to very dissimilar immigration contexts. However, Finland has a relatively active array of immigrant associations (Pyykkönen 2007; Saksela-Bergolm 2009); the SUU does not consider building links with these associations a power resource.

As regards legislation, the SUU has – like other Finnish trade unions – demanded the right to collective lawsuit so that the trade union could, on behalf of individual employees, sue employers who breach labor law or collective agreements. This would, according to the SUU, help the union to especially defend employees in vulnerable positions who are reluctant to legally seek their rights in relation to their employer. According to the SUU, this would help the unions protect migrants' work related rights. This demand, which has an inclusive dimension as regards migrants' work related rights, has not been successful so far.

### 7.1.3 Exclusion strategies of the Service Union United

The SUU argues that loosening up labor immigration restrictions would have a negative effect on the Finnish labor markets that suffer from unemployment. The unemployment rate was around 9% in April 2013 (Statistics Finland). Between 6 and 7% of the SUU's members were registered as unemployed in August 2013 (email response from the SUU 10.9.2013). Furthermore, the SUU interviewees indicated that some members are under-employed, i.e. work fewer hours than they would prefer.

In this situation, the SUU's strategy is to protect the status quo as regards labor immigration restrictions. The demands for opening up the Finnish labor market have come from various actors representing business interests and humanitarian reasoning (see thesis article IV). The demands have been based on two central lines; the economic argument and the humanitarian argument. The economic argument is based on the claim that Finland needs a larger labor force due to the ageing population and enterprises cannot always find suitable work force from the national labor market. The economic argument has publicly been portrayed by for instance the Confederation of Finnish Industries, which also has raised the issue of bureaucracy related to work permits as a problem for enterprises.

The humanitarian argument for less restricted labor immigration has been portrayed, for instance, by the Free Movement activist network (see thesis article IV). The humanitarian argument is based on the ideal of free movement of people as a human right. The Free Movement network also assesses that current restrictions on labor immigration actually weaken migrants' bargaining power in relation to their employer by enhancing the migrant's dependence on the employer. According to the Free Movement network's statement on their webpage (15.3.2013):

“...the current restrictions [on labor mobility regarding third country nationals that are based on the authorities assessment on demand of labor] should be abolished...The best way to combat discrimination regarding work issues is done by strengthening the foreign workers legal position...”

The SUU has actively resisted the demands for such liberalization of labor immigration policies as regards third country-nationals. The EU (and EEA and other European nationals that are covered by free mobility within EU) are exempt from the requirement of work permits. Nevertheless, on the working life sectors that the SUU represents, third country-nationals are required to apply for work permits. The availability of work permits is at the time being dependent on an assessment made by government officials, based on whether there is a need of foreign labor force on the national labor market. The idea of the assessment is to favor the national labor force in job applying.

The SUU, in accordance with its central organization SAK, actively and successfully lobbied against proposals of the center-right 2007–2011 government's goal to legislatively facilitate labor immigration from third countries. The government proposal was to end the state officials' assessment as regards the need of foreign labor when issuing work permits. The SUU's strategy was clearly an exclusion strategy against potential migrants to Finland. The state immigration policy hierarchically determines right to work on the basis of the workers' nationality, which the SUU supported. The SUU recognizes that there is, to some extent, a shortage of workforce in the labor market. The SUU general strategy for 2011–2015 identified societal challenges to which the union must react. Immigration and immigrants were mentioned in three different contexts in the document. The SUU propagates a cautious immigration policy:

“Due to the aging of the population and economic growth in big cities some sectors of working life face a lack of workforce. This problem should however, not primarily be solved by increasing the use of workforce from outside the EU/European Economic Area. Instead the [geographical] mobility of workforce in the Finnish labor market has to be facilitated by improving housing policy and social policy.”

Even if the SUU does not totally dismiss the employers' claims of lack of labor in the private service sector, the union does not embrace the proposals to liberalize state labor immigration restrictions as a solution. The SUU's resistance to liberalization of labor immigration is based on two main arguments, which are:

1. The current state restrictions on labor immigration protect the national labor force from external foreign competition for jobs and are therefore needed.
2. The current state restrictions act as a control mechanism that protects migrant workers from exploitation and are therefore necessary.

In addition to referring to the unemployment figures, the SUU indicates that some members are under-employed, i.e. work fewer hours than they would prefer. This was also a central topic addressed at the SUU's Conference in 2015. The union argues that increased labor immigration would have a negative effect on the Finnish labor markets that suffer from unemployment. Regarding the second argument: as mentioned earlier, a government officials' assessment (in Finnish *saatavuusharkinta*) of the demand of labor is conducted for some occupations to determine the right of a third country national to work. In addition to the state authorities' assessment on whether there is “lack of labor,” it includes an assessment of the employers' capability to offer working conditions that meet the collective agreements. The SUU claims that the assessment of the working conditions prior to is-

suing work permits protects migrants from being exploited by employers. Hence, according to the SUU, the current restrictions are also in migrants' interest.

Regarding the influx of migrant workers, the SUU acts like much previous research on trade unions suggest: it tries to restrict the influx in order to protect the national workforce from "external competition" (see chapter 3). The SUU openly gives priority to the national workforce's interests over potential interests of third country nationals. This strategy is in line with the exclusion strategy that its central organization SAK applied when it successfully lobbied a two-year transition period that restricted free mobility of EU-8 country nationals to Finland between years 2004 and 2006. The SUU resistance toward the 2007–2011 Government's proposal of liberalization of labor immigration was visible –in addition to the research interviews– in the SUU's public statement of June 24, 2010 and in the SUU representative's presentation in the Finnish Social Forum in 2011. On an institutional level, the union's resistance to liberalization of immigration policy was visible in the stance of its central organization SAK, which was the same as the FCTU and SUU's. SAK was one of the organizations that was invited to officially comment on the Government's proposal in the Finnish parliament. It is reasonable to assess that the SAK the SUU and the FCTU's resistance to the liberalization of labor immigration policy (in addition to the rising unemployment since 2008) played a part in the outcome: the Finnish Government gave up its proposal to liberalize labor immigration policy. Sund's assessment (2010) is in line with mine. The official stance of the Finnish Social Democratic Party was also against opening up labor immigration from the third countries (see Saukkonen 2013, 89), which illustrate the close links between SAK-affiliated trade unions and the Party political left. In short, in the case of resisting the liberalization of labor immigration, the SUU strategy was a combination of utilizing its power resources to influence public opinion and influencing politics the institutional way.

The SUU and SAK's argument that the current labor immigration restrictions limit the possibility of the exploitation of migrant workers can be questioned. Previous research (e.g. Krings 2009) has indicated that working conditions can be protected without restrictions on geographical mobility of workers, for instance through increased controls at workplace level. However, the SUU recognises that restrictions on workers' transnational mobility can compromise migrants' work rights:

"In a sense it [restricting labor immigration] is in contrast to free mobility. On the other hand, I think that the current situation has shown that we will face quite crazy situations if the society cannot regulate who works in Finland and under which circumstances. In an ideal world, restrictions [based on the need of labor] would not be needed. And here the big line between the principles of the trade union movement and international solidarity meet. But

in this imperfect world, where there is a lot of desires to do social dumping [of working conditions] via these people [immigrants] we need regulation [of labor immigration].”

Rolle Alho: So the ideal is free mobility, but *real politik* is that it is not possible to put into reality at the time being?

Yes, those are the ideals that are there in the background. But practice and reality is something else. At least for the time being.” (quote from an interview with an SUU official)

Finland is, on a global scale, a wealthy country. Its labor markets are –despite the specific problems migrants face– much less exploitative than in many non-European countries. From this perspective, it is not credible that restrictions on entry to Finland would generally be in the prospective third country immigrant’s interest, as the SUU claims. Keeping a third country immigrant outside the Finnish labor market obviously protects her/him from being exploited in the Finnish labor market. Nevertheless, barriers on entry to Finnish labor market reduce her/his freedom to migrate for work and search for new opportunities. Emigration is in some cases a power resource for the individual worker. The unions under scrutiny in my study are, for their part, blocking potential third country-immigrants’ access to this power resource.

The SUU’s arguments that aforementioned restrictions on labor immigration protect the Finnish workforce can be questioned. The economist Sarvimäki (2013) has presented a theoretical model according to which the effect of immigration on natives’ labor market position in Finland is currently likely to be low. We also know that many immigrant groups are on average more active than natives in establishing enterprises (Joronen 2012). We could hypothesize that increased immigration would actually *expand* the service sector and create more work opportunities – not diminish them, as the union argues. Nevertheless, as the SUU’s public statement above indicates, the union argues for increased mobility within the national borders, rather than labor immigration, to fill labor shortages. This seems to be in line with the preferences of the SUU members: according to a questionnaire sent to the members in 2014, only 24% of the respondents agreed “fully” or “partly” with the statement that labor immigration should be increased (SUU Member Questionnaire 2014).

No doubt unemployment is a serious societal problem in Finland. Nevertheless, demographic challenges with the ageing population put a strain on the finances of the welfare state. The economist Juhana Vartiainen, Director General of the Government Institute for Economic Research (VATT) in Finland, argues that one of the most serious problems regarding the Finnish national economy is the lack of supply of workforce (Yle News 6.6.2013). Vartiainen recommends increased immigration and argues that municipalities actively using migrants as a resource

will be successful. He claims that immigration does not have a negative effect on the employment situation, as the amount of work is not fixed; therefore –according to him–immigration does not undermine the natives’ interests. Restrictions on labor immigration have also met some criticism inside the trade union movement. Ralf Sund, the chief economist of the Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK), has argued that due to the benefits of internationalization and the demographic challenges, “(i)t is in Finland’s national interests to strive for an immigration policy that is as liberal as possible” (Sund 2010). In 2000, SAK’s economist Erkki Laukkanen wrote in the SAK’s official magazine that Finland should not restrict free mobility of workers from those countries that were going to be EU members in 2004 (contrary to the SAK’s stance). According to Laukkanen (2000), immigration from those countries posed no real threat to the native work force –unlike the SAK had claimed. However, we cannot dismiss the idea that the current restrictions on labour immigration would in some cases protect the labour market interests of the workforce in Finland (including migrants living in the country). According to Kouvonen (2012), immigration from abroad has probably slowed wage increases in the service and construction sector in the Finnish capital area.

The aim of this thesis is *not* to answer if or how labor immigration affects wage standards, and whether the arguments of the economists speaking in favor of a more liberal labor immigration policy hold true. However, *if* they are correct, then lobbying against increased immigration is a strategy that works against the interests of trade union members and the entire Finnish society –at least in the long term (the premise being that economic growth is desirable).

Based on my research it is clear that the SUU desires to be seen as a protector of migrants’ rights. Herein lies the dilemma that the SUU faces: it has to simultaneously pay attention to the perceived interests of the contemporary membership and its hardships on the labor market. The SUU does this partly by defending the existing restrictions that third country migrants face.

These nation state-based regulations on work/residence permits can cause stress and uncertainty for migrants (Briones 2009; Silfver 2010; Könönen 2015). The regulations also cause financial costs and require sometimes struggles with bureaucracy. The regulations on the right to work also make the existence of the individual migrant more precarious, because residence permits are in many cases linked to having a work permit (see Könönen 2015). The SUU does not have a strategy to improve the precarious situation of the undocumented migrants. (In an email message, an activist of the Free Movement Network estimated that there are “a few thousand” undocumented migrants in Finland.) Nor has the SUU strived to broaden migrants’ rights in terms of residence and work permits in general. However, the SUU has certainly increased labor market protection for those approximately 10,000 migrants who have joined the union for example by providing information and legal aid in work-related disputes. It has also offered a channel of

societal influence for those migrants who are active in the union's organization. As collective agreements in Finland are universally binding, they also, at least in principle, protect migrants who are not union members, or who do not work in a workplace where unions are present. Nevertheless, while protecting migrants through these measures, the SUU actively defends the immigrant excluding tendencies of the nation-state and its hierarchical rights based on workers' nationality.

The SUU's resistance to liberalization of labor immigration is understandable in the current political climate in Finland, characterized by relatively high unemployment and the rise of a populist anti-immigration political alternative offered to the voters by the political Party called the *Finns*. The overall societal context and attitudes toward immigrants cannot be dismissed when explaining the strategies of societal actors (e.g. Caviedes 2010, 3). The SUU's position reflects a protectionist stance, which prioritizes the Finnish workforce's (including EU and EEA citizens who need no work permits) right to work in Finland over the right of a prospective third country immigrant. This is probably quite a successful strategy toward the part of the population that perceives immigration as a threat, as it gives the impression that the union protects the natives (and migrants with the right to reside in the country) –whether this impression is correct or not. However, this strategy can be criticized for cynicism or *real politik*, as the labor market implications of immigration have been assessed to be minor (see Sarvimäki 2013). On the other hand, as mentioned, according to Kouvonon (2012), immigration to the capital area has probably to some degree slowed down wage development in the sectors that the FCTU and SUU represent. As the introduction of chapter 7 indicated, a central value stated in the SUU's Programme for years 2011–2015 was “equality”. The strategies of the SUU do promote equality between natives and migrants at the *national* level. However, the strategies have also a dimension of hindering equality at the *global* level by promoting current restrictions regarding third country nationals' right to work and residence. The goal of the SUU's immigration related strategies is to inform migrants about their work related rights, recruit migrants into the union, and to work against a split in wages and working conditions between natives and migrants. In terms of labor immigration, the union's strategies aim at opposing liberalization of the state's labor immigration policy. All these goals are understandable from a power resources-perspective.

The research material on the SUU consisted of different sources: interviews, the SUU's public statements, and material from various events where the union's representatives were present. The different material shows a consistency: the same strategies, stances and goals can be identified from the different sources; the union's various actors do not give contrasting views on immigration. The analysis of the research material also shows that the SUU has a capability to learn and adjust to the new reality of increased immigration; this is demonstrated, for example, by its efforts to inform migrants in their native languages. The union

also seems to approach immigrant/immigration issues more systematically than in the early 2000s as it has published an official strategy plan on immigration issues for years 2009–2015.

## 7.2 Finnish Construction Trade Union's strategies

The Finnish Construction Trade Union represents employees in the construction sector and has approximately 90,000 members. Organized interest representation of construction workers dates back to the pre-independence of Finland in the 1880s (Helin 1998). The FCTU has been one of the most influential trade unions in the history of the Finnish blue collar trade union movement and has been able to protect and improve its members' working conditions regarding pay, working time, safety at work and other work related issues (ibid.; Bergholm 2012). Its members include "carpenters and other building construction workers, employees engaged in civil engineering projects, workers in the painting and decorating, flooring and asphaltting trades, construction product industry employees, building technology professionals and waterproofers" (FCTU's website 16.2.2015). The union negotiates collective agreements for these branches. The collective agreements stipulate the wages and work related rights and benefits the employers have to guarantee to their employees. The members pay 1.7% of their pre-tax wages as the union membership fee (with the exception of some groups who are not obliged to pay membership fees). Membership in the union is also open to non-nationals. Traditionally the FCTU has had, in international comparison, a rather high coverage of representation of construction workers (Helin 1998; Lillie & Sippola 2010). The union does not have statistics on the dispersion of the native languages of its migrant members but estimates that the most common migrant languages are Estonian and Russian (source: interviews). More than 90% of its members are male. The collective agreements it signs with the employers' representatives are binding for all enterprises and workers in the sector it represents, including migrant workers of all categories. Nevertheless, the opening up of the Finnish construction sector to foreign enterprises and workers has changed its operating environment drastically, which has implications for the union's strategies and power resources as I will show in the following sections. According to the FCTU, its core goal and value is to defend employees in the construction sector in Finland. (source: interviews and the FCTU's webpages)

### 7.2.1 Operating environment of the Finnish Construction Trade Union

“We [the Finnish Construction Trade Union] do not want such markets of cheap labor as there are in some European countries as regards constructing.” (quote from an interview with an FCTU representative)

This interview quote states the central challenge that transnational mobility poses for the Finnish Construction Trade Union: the union has difficulties in guaranteeing the “same pay for same work” -principal to natives and migrants, which is the union’s key goal. It considers the increasing transnational mobility under current circumstances as a threat to its power resources. This consideration is shared by many trade unions in Northern and Western Europe, especially after the EU accessions of 2004, when several low-wage countries from the former Eastern Bloc became EU members (e.g., Hardy et al. 2012). The FCTU stresses that it is not against the use of foreign workers *as such*, but opposes those practices where employers undercut working conditions by using foreign labor.

Mobile workforce in itself is not a new phenomenon in the Finnish construction sector: throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, employers have employed geographically mobile native construction workers due to the fluctuating demand of work force (see Helin 1998; Hannikainen 2004). For example, according to state policy between the 1940s and the 1970s, unemployed natives had sometimes to choose between losing their unemployment benefits and agreeing to work in specific construction sites where the pay and working conditions were not up to the usual standards (Helin 1998; Nenonen 2006). Often these sites were far from the place of residence of the unemployed and the housing conditions were poor. In 1969, around 14,000 workers were employed in such sites, which were poorly unionized (Helin 1998, 310). Mobility in terms of *emigration* has also been a common feature in Finnish construction sector. Construction workers often emigrated to Sweden in the 1960s. Throughout history Finnish construction workers have also been employed in various construction projects abroad, for example in the Soviet Union. (Helin 1998.) This issue came up in many of my interviews: several FCTU’s representatives mentioned that labor migration is a common feature of the construction industry and pointed out that Finnish construction workers have been employed in various construction projects in foreign countries throughout history. Internationally, as well, labor migration has been part of the construction industry (e.g. Milkman & Wong 2000, 169–198). However, labor migration in its *current form and degree* is a new phenomenon that challenges the FCTU.

There are no reliable statistics about the number of migrant workers in the Finnish construction sector. Nevertheless, according to the FCTU’s estimates, the amount of migrant workers has increased rapidly in the 2000s. In 2013, up to 20–25% of the employees in the construction sector in Finland were migrants. Ac-

According to the construction employers' organization the Confederation of Finnish Construction Industries (CFCI), the amount of migrant construction workers doubled between 2006 and 2010. The migrant workers are concentrated to the capital area of Helsinki and in 2010, 64% of the workers undertaking facade renovations in Helsinki were of foreign –mainly Estonian– origin (source FCTU). According to the FCTU, Estonians form the largest foreign national group, and there is also a considerable amount of migrants from the other former East Bloc countries. Migrant workers in the construction sector form, according to the FCTU, a heterogeneous group in terms of their employment status: they are posted workers, but also hired agency workers, self-employed, undocumented workers, or workers directly employed by Finnish, Estonian (or other nationality) employers. Furthermore, it is common that the workers' status shifts from a category to another. There are no statistics on the dispersion of the workers in these different categories. From the FCTU's perspective, this heterogeneity of work statuses complicates overseeing of working conditions. This shift that is related to subcontracting and toward fragmentation of the labor markets, is by no means a new phenomenon (see, e.g., Saloniemi 1999) and it precedes the influx of migrant workers to the Finnish construction sector. For the FCTU, the long subcontracting chains, where migrants seem to be overrepresented in small companies at the lower end of the chains, further complicates the issue of controlling working conditions. Labor immigration occurs in a labor market setting that causes difficulties for the FCTU in terms of possibilities of overseeing that collective agreements are followed. The FCTU assesses that it is possible that the amount of Estonian and other migrant workers will continue to increase in future (email response from an FCTU official on 6.8.2012). Migrants in the Finnish construction sector usually originate from low-wage countries, which, according to the FCTU, cause them to accept lower wages than the natives would accept. Furthermore, differences in perceptions of trade unions considerably challenge the FCTU's traditional strategies:

“For us [FCTU] it is a big challenge to get these people [migrant workers] to join the union. There are many reasons why they do not join us. One is that they are not permanently here [in Finland]. Then there is a difference in living standards so that they perceive wages that we perceive poor as good wages. So in fact they pretty much are content with those circumstances that they are offered. They just want to do their job in peace and they do not care how it [the wage difference between natives and migrants] affects our [the Finnish] labor market. Another reason is that there is no tradition of belonging to a trade union in their home countries.

This interview quote indicates that the FCTU and the migrant workers in some cases have conflicting interests, which poses a challenge for the FCTU: the wages

that the FCTU defines as poor are not poor from the migrant construction workers' stand point, which in turn complicates the FCTU members' situation raises the question on what repercussions this has for the FCTU members' position. In order to understand the situation that the FCTU is facing since the opening up of the national labor markets, it is necessary to analyze the role of Estonia as the major sender of construction workers and construction enterprises to Finland.

Estonian mobility to Finland is facilitated by both countries now belonging to the EU, the Schengen Area, and the Eurozone. During the last few years, a *translocal* labor market has emerged in the Helsinki–Tallinn area, and Estonians are now the largest group of foreign nationals in Finland (Statistics Finland 2011). The term translocal is often applied in migration and cultural studies in order to grasp the local to local connections, instead of highlighting the global/local dimension of globalization (e.g., Brickel & Datta 2011, 10; Ma 2002). The emergence of a translocal labor market has been further facilitated by the linguistic closeness of Estonian and Finnish languages and by the short distance between the two countries: the 80 kilometers between Tallinn and Helsinki can be crossed by a ferry in less than two hours.

The work of Estonians in the Finnish construction sector is characterized by their commute between Finland and Estonia. This is problematic for the FCTU, as transnationally commuting workers rarely become members. The difficulty is increased by the fact that the Estonian construction sector is without trade union presence and no construction trade union exists in Estonia.

The FCTU shop stewards indicated that recruitment of new members was challenged by foreigners working in their own groups and often having a foreign employer. This is related to the aforementioned subcontracting of construction work that has been a feature in Finland since the 1990s (see Saloniemi 1999). In other words, the labor immigration question is intertwined with new “flexible” work arrangements. The union's difficulties recruiting migrants were increased by a lack of a common language between union representatives and migrants. However, in this respect the FCTU representatives considered the Estonian workers as a relatively easy target group to communicate with, owing to the closeness of the Estonian and Finnish languages. The shop stewards also expressed that Estonian workers in some cases feared their employer's reaction if they joined the FCTU, or had reservations toward unionism, as trade unions were part of the repressive Soviet regime in former Estonia. This view was shared by other FCTU interviewees. The Estonian trade union representatives had a similar interpretation and claimed that mobilizing workers into Estonian trade unions is difficult due to the negative image trade unions in Estonia still have from the Soviet era. According to an Estonian trade union leader I interviewed in 2012, the construction workers in Estonia can in principle join the Forest Workers' Union, but the union had only “maybe five” construction workers as members. This means that

Estonian construction workers generally do not have a tradition of belonging to a construction trade union. According to the same interviewee, the Estonian service sector has in practice “zero density,” i.e. very weak trade union presence. Trade union density in Estonia has decreased to only between 6 and 7% (OECD Stateextracts 2015). The situation of trade unions is similarly weak in other former East bloc states which are sources of migrants to the Finnish construction sector. Consequently, a migrant arriving to the Finnish construction sector is rarely a member of a trade union. Despite the difficult situation, the FCTU has in absolute terms managed to increase its migrant membership, as Table 6 indicates:

**Table 6. Membership figures of the Finnish Construction Trade Union**

Year	Total membership	Immigrant members	Percentage of immigrants in membership
2002	80,870	376	0.5
2003	80,212	465	0.6
2004	80,659	601	0.7
2005	80,922	657	0.8
2006	82,096	816	1.0
2007	84,954	1,251	1.5
2008	83,526	1,788	2.1
2009	88,031	1,441	1.6
2010	86,821	1,926	2.2
2011	86,945	2,585	3.0
2012	88,917	3,477	3.9
2013	87,388	3,800	4.3
2014	85,089	4,100	4.8

Source: The FCTU membership register.

Despite the increase in migrant members, in 2012 only 4% of the members had registered some other language than the native languages Finnish or Swedish as their first languages (i.e. are categorized as migrants by the union). This is a low figure given that up to 20–25% of the construction workers are immigrants according to the FCTU. The low figure is problematic for the union as regards its power resources.

Neither the FCTU nor the state authorities have control over the commuters’ working conditions. The FCTU also points out considerable problems in the housing conditions of foreign construction workers. In some cases, the apartments or habitations are owned by the employers or agencies, who demand overpriced rents.

In addition, employers can, within the law, exert downward pressure on wages, as the collective agreements (which are nationally binding in Finland) stipulate only the minimum wage levels in different wage brackets. In the Nordic countries minimum wage requirements in the collective agreements are usually considerably lower than actual wages (Friberg et al. 2014, 40). Many Finnish construction workers are not prepared to accept wages that only match the minimum of the collective agreements, whereas a migrant worker coming from a low-wage country often considers the same wage more acceptable. In addition –based on the migrant interviews– a migrant worker sometimes has no option but to accept working conditions that are poor by Finnish standards due to his/her weak power resources in relation to the employer. In some cases –rendering the interviews– the migrants had no choice but to accept undocumented work, as the employer strived to save labor costs.

In line with the FCTU's view, the migrants interviewed for my study stated that in the construction sector employers strive to minimize labor costs by undercutting migrants' wages and working conditions. This view was shared by the interviewed state inspectors of working conditions according to whose experience migrant workers more often than natives face breaches of working conditions in the construction sector. The issue is complicated by signs of an ethnic hierarchy of wages also *among* the different migrant groups. An Estonian construction worker claimed that for a job that a native Finnish worker receives 14 euros/hour, an Estonian would receive at most 12–12,5 euros/hour, whereas a Russian, Latvian or Ukrainian worker would be paid no more than 8,5–10 euros/hour. In a similar vein, some of the interviewed FCTU officials claimed that Estonian migrants were more aware of Finnish collective agreements –and also more willing to defend their rights– than workers from more remote countries such as Rumania and Bulgaria from which immigration is a more recent phenomenon. According to a FCTU representative, Bulgarian and Rumanian workers are “grossly exploited” in the Finnish construction sector (email correspondence February 2015). Ethnic stratification according to different wages (for the same job) has been reported also in previous research: in Spain, according to Shelley (2007, 67), Ecuadorian, Filipino and Moroccan cleaners were said to be paid 8–10 euros/hour, whereas Bolivian cleaners would work (or have to work) for only 4 euros/hour. The explanation for different wages was in this case that Bolivians were generally undocumented whereas the former groups were not, which weakened the Bolivians bargaining position. A variance of working conditions between migrants of the *same* nationality in accordance to residence status (documented/undocumented) has been found in New York City among Dominican workers (Grasmuck 1984). In such cases the diversification in wages becomes not only a matter of a split between natives/migrants wages, but a question of differentiation among

migrants of different nationalities and migrants within a national group, which further complicates the issue of labor immigration for trade unions.

The term “exploitation” the FCTU uses to classify migrants’ situation does not, however, always grasp the migrants’ subjective interpretation of their situation. The macro-level trade union interpretations of what is exploitation do not always overlap the micro-level interpretations the workers have of their own situation (see, e.g. Hyman 2001). This is principally evident in the case of migrants originating from countries where wages are remarkably low. In this research, this was visible in commuting Estonian workers’ experiences. They were so called “target earners” (see, e.g., Piore 1979, 95) for whom Finland represented a better working life and better earning opportunities than their home country Estonia –much like Sweden did for those hundreds of thousands of Finns who emigrated to Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s (for emigration to Sweden, see Helin 1998; Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen 2000; Bergholm 2012). In a similar vein, according to the Estonian trade union leaders I interviewed, the main motives for Estonians to work in Finland were: unemployment in Estonia, better pay in Finland, and a more “civilized” behaviour of Finnish employers toward employees (compared to Estonian employers).

Due to their temporary stay, the Estonian commuters were not motivated to join the FCTU, even if they held nothing in principle against joining a trade union. One commuting Estonian construction worker expressed satisfaction with his wages although he was aware that the Finns were paid somewhat higher wages than the Estonians in the construction sector. The acceptance of the situation was due to his frame of reference, which was the lower Estonian wages. According to the Estonian migrants, long working hours and low wages characterize working life in Estonia. In contrast to the temporary migrants, there was clear dissatisfaction among the migrants working on a *permanent* basis in Finland. This is probably an effect of change in migrants’ expectations on what qualifies as satisfying working conditions. Such dissatisfaction was expressed, for instance, in the following quote from a Russian construction worker who had lived seven years in Finland:

“I knew the job at least three times better than him [the Finnish colleague], who had no skills or did not know anything! I asked him “what is your wage?” He said 12 [euros/hour]. What the hell, why was it 12? He said it was according to the collective agreements. Anyhow I was paid some 8 euros according to the collective agreement. And there was no point to start talking to the employer [regarding underpayment/undercutting of wages], because he would only have said, that “dude, if you are dissatisfied, I got more than enough of these Estonians [who can replace you].”

This interview quote illustrates the weak power resources of the migrant worker in relation to the employer and refers to a potential reserve of other migrant

workers whose existence dampen the potential demands of individual migrant. The construction sector employers interviewed for this study pointed out that employing migrants can in some cases reduce labor costs, which increases the firms' competitiveness. The employers also explained that Estonian workers have a "better" work motivation than the Finns. An employer for instance stated that "If there are some complaints [regarding work] they usually stem from the Finns [and not the Estonians]." In a situation where constructions firms compete for financially savvy customers (both in the private and public sector) and the price of labor is a key cost, employing migrants is a rational employer strategy when it reduces costs.

So what are the FCTU's strategies in this situation where working conditions the union has fought for are diversified according to ethnic background, and where the inclusion of migrants seems to be a challenge for the union? The next two sub-sections answer this question.

### **7.2.2 Inclusion strategies of the Finnish Construction Trade Union**

The central goal of the FCTU's strategies is to guarantee that the wages and other working conditions are the same for native and migrant workers. As in the case of the SUU's goals, we can here find a historical parallel to the SAK's official statement from the 1940s according to which men and women have to be paid same wages for same work tasks (see chapter 7.1.2).

The union has adopted strategies that are directly targeted at mobilizing migrant workers. The FCTU has translated information material regarding collective agreements, trade union membership and working life in general into foreign languages. The union's website provides information aimed at migrant workers (both members and nonmembers) in common foreign languages spoken in the Finnish construction sector (Estonian, Russian, Polish and English). The FCTU has also advertised union membership in Russian language media in Finland. The FCTU organized in 2014 together with the SUU, six other SAK-affiliated trade unions, and the SAK an event aimed at providing migrants (including nonmembers) information about trade unions and work-related issues (see the union's member magazine *Rakentaja* no. 11/2014). Providing information is the most rudimentary form of action that a trade union can apply toward migrants (Penninx & Roosblad 2000). However, the FCTU has in addition opted for some more far-reaching inclusion strategies. Namely, the union has employed one native Russian-speaking official in order to facilitate the unions' communication with Russian speaking construction workers. Hiring foreign language speaking personnel has been identified as a key strategy for migrant mobilization (Milkman 2010; James & Karmowska 2012). The importance of diversifying communication to new languages is highlighted in the

construction sector and sectors where the lingua franca is not English (unlike, for example, in the IT sector). This issue came up for example in one of the speeches at the SUU's 2015 Conference, where a shop steward referred to the difficulty of communicating with migrant workers who speak neither Finnish nor English. The FCTU has also given assistance to non-unionized migrant workers who have encountered problems while working in Finland. The union has not opted for quotas for migrants in the different levels of the union's hierarchy (which has been identified as a potential trade union strategy, see Wrench 2004; Holgate 2005). Nevertheless, the FCTU has made organizational changes in order to include and inform migrant workers. The union established in 2004 a special trade union branch for its members with a "foreign" background. This strategy is unique in the Finnish context as no other Finnish trade union has chosen such a solution. The branch operates in the capital area mainly in Estonian and Russian languages as the majority of the migrant construction workers speak these languages. According to the union's membership magazine (11/2014), in 2014, the branch had also members from other East European countries and Pakistan. The rationale of the migrants' branch is to diminish language barriers for migrants who do not speak Finnish or have limited Finnish skills, to get involved in the union, and to bring up special concerns migrants face in working life. However, the migrant members can, if they wish, instead of the "foreign" branch join one of the "native" union branches. According to an FCTU representative:

"Immigrants and posted workers face particular problems here in Finland and these problems are easily lost in the routines of a large branch with 2,000 to 2,500 members. We could have established only some section for migrants in some already existing branch, but this seems to function well like this. There are definitely problems that are important for immigrants and posted workers. This branch can in a considerable fashion concentrate on these issues and build that [immigrant] network." (interview quote)

The rationale is similar to that having special branches for women within the Finnish trade union movement: to bring up special concerns of a group of workers that are in a disadvantaged position in the labor markets (see Ala-Kapee et al. 1979). Two of the migrant interviewees were active members of the FCTU's migrants' branch. In their view, a specific branch for migrant members improves migrants' possibilities to participate as activists in the trade union movement. In addition to the special branch for migrant members, the FCTU established an information office in the capital of Estonia in 2009 where it advises prospective Estonian emigrants to Finland about work-related rights and membership of the FCTU. The center is a continuation of the SAK's information center that operated in the same premises between years 2002–2008 and had similar goals. The in-

formation office has, according to the FCTU, led to some 150 Estonians joining as FCTU members. In addition to functioning as a channel for recruiting members, the goal of the information office has been to prevent undermining of Estonian migrant workers' working conditions and other labor rights by sharing information to prospective migrants. According to the interviews, the FCTU also gave financial assistance to the former Estonian Construction Trade Union. This was not a successful strategy, as the Estonian Construction Union went bankrupt in the early 2000s, which highlights the trade union's difficulty in the implementation of transnational strategies. Regarding legislation, the FCTU has –such as the SUU (see chapter 7.1.2) and other Finnish trade unions– demanded the right to collective lawsuit, so that individual trade union members would not personally bear all the risk when suing employers. This change in legislation that, according to the FCTU, would have an inclusive dimension as regards migrants work related rights, has not come true so far.

The FCTU has backed its demands for new control-oriented legislation –including more effective legal enforcement– by an active media strategy that has problematized the use of foreign workforce by connecting it with breaches in working conditions and a threat to its members' interests. The union demands that the state should take more responsibility regarding the control of working conditions. This demand is an inclusion strategy as it strives to include migrant workers into the same rights as the natives. The demand is logical as the union experiences that overseeing migrant workers' working conditions consumes additional resources. Juha Kauppinen, the regional head of the FCTU in the Oulu region, wrote in March 2011 in a FCTU document that advertised candidates for the union's 2011 Congress:

“Free mobility of workforce has made it possible for EU-citizens to come and work in Finland, enabled grey economy and the influx of often criminal business operations and workforce into our labor markets, which the building capitalists take full advantage of...The Finnish Construction Trade Union has in addition to defending the memberships' interests had to deal with this issue by boycotts [of construction sites] and other means, even if it should be the responsibility of the state and authorities to take care of this issue. What happens to the Finnish construction worker in this hassle?”

The FCTU also strives for visibility in mass media in order to pressure construction employers to pay migrant workers according to collective agreements:

“The [mass] media is absolutely crucial. There are employers who do not fear the judicial system. But if a listed company gets caught with work-related breaches because of shady arrangements in its construction site, it could mean

that their share value decreases. Then the shareholders would react. So the [mass media] is absolutely crucial.” (interview quote, FCTU representative)

An example of a case in which the FCTU assisted migrant workers –and which received much visibility in the Finnish media– was the case where 12 Chinese stonemasons had been severely underpaid while working in Finland between 2001 and 2003 (for media coverage see, e.g., Hämeen Sanomat 9 Dec 2005; Taloussanomat 20 Nov 2007; YLE News 27 May 2012).

To conclude, the FCTU considers the inclusion of migrant construction workers to be in its interest. The goal is to include migrants as union members and into the Finnish collective agreements (which legally apply to migrant workers –including workers posted from abroad). The inclusion of migrants is a crucial power resource issue for the union as the amount of migrant workers has rapidly increased to a considerable share of the total work force in its sector. The union has reacted to this change by adjusting its national strategies (e.g. migrants’ trade union branch), but also by creating a new transnational strategy in relation to Estonia, which is migrant construction workers’ main country of origin in Finland. These strategies for their part have increased migrants’ inclusion as FCTU members and activists. Previous research has argued that the FCTU, regardless of the transnationalization and opening up of the national borders, still targets its strategies in the frame of the nation-state (Lillie & Greer 2007; Lillie & Sippola 2011). The nation-state frame remains the principal goal of the union’s strategies. However, there is a change in orientation as FCTU has included a transnational strategy to its repertoire as regards Estonia.

### **7.2.3 Exclusion strategies of the Finnish Construction Trade Union**

The FCTU has been an outspoken opponent to the political demands to loosen restrictions for third country nationals to enter the Finnish labor markets. This, no doubt, is an exclusion strategy. The union has opposed liberalization of state labor immigration policy for instance via its central organization SAK, who opposed 2007–2011 Government’s proposal to ease up restrictions for labour immigration from third countries. The SAK was one of the organizations that were called to a parliament hearing. The FCTU’s leaders also publicly opposed such liberalization for example in Social Forums of 2009, 2010, and 2011. The resistance to liberalization of labor immigration could also be seen in FCTU’s second President Kyösti Suokas’ statement in the FCTU’s Congress in 2015:

“The current restrictions regarding work permits [for third country nationals] have to be maintained. There are half a million unemployed in Finland. Recruiting workers [to the construction sector] from the developing countries

would only increase the number of unemployed. The further away the workers come from the more difficult becomes the overseeing of working conditions. If the workers come for example from China via a state employment agency, no one can oversee the real wages or other working conditions. This we [the FCTU] already have experience of. The politicians' claims that overseeing of working conditions of third country nationals would be improved while the work permit regulations would be removed is nonsense. In reality no one would do anything [in order to protect the third country nationals working conditions]."

The demands (and demanders) of liberalization of labor immigration policy were described in the previous chapter. The FCTU's argument for opposing such liberalization is that there is no lack of workforce in the construction sector, and that there are problems regarding migrant workers' working conditions. The union assesses that increased labor immigration would have a negative effect on the working conditions in the Finnish construction sector. The interests of the native workforce (including immigrants living in Finland) are seen as more important than those of the new potential immigrants from third countries, whose entry the FCTU seeks to minimize. However, the union has virtually no means to curb labor immigration from other EU and EEA countries. Due to free mobility between these countries, the Finnish construction sector has experienced a rapid increase in the number of migrant workers. Nevertheless, the FCTU has some indirect ways to restrict, to some degree, labor immigration from other EU countries. As an institutionally strongly embedded trade union, the FCTU has power resources to influence state jurisdiction. This is a strategy that the union uses to its benefit. An illuminating example of its strategy is the successful lobbying of the *tax number*. According to the FCTU, cooperation with the employers' organization, the Confederation of Finnish Construction Industries, and personal contacts with Jukka Gustafsson, a social democrat MP, were essential for successful lobbying (YLE News/Morning TV May 31, 2012). The tax number is an exclusion strategy that also has an inclusive dimension as it forces (at least in principle) the migrant worker into the Finnish tax system. The tax number proves that the individual construction worker has registered with the tax authorities. It aims at curbing undocumented work in the construction sector by simplifying monitoring. The majority of undocumented construction workers are natives, although a growing number of foreigners have been entering the undocumented labor market (Cremers 2006).

The tax number has been compulsory for all construction workers since 2012. The number has to be attached to the identification and must always be visible when working on a construction site. The foreign applicant (if s/he comes from outside the EU/EEA) must be able to present the authorities a valid residence permit and a work contract in order to receive a tax number.

Baltic Business News and an Estonian construction entrepreneur, Haakan Nomm (Baltic Business News 21 March 2012) argued that the tax number is “designed to force Estonians out of the Finnish construction market.” The FCTU estimated that the tax number might initially “to some degree” reduce the amount of Estonian workers in the Finnish construction sector (email response from an FCTU leader, August 2012). In other words, the FCTU is fully aware of the exclusion potential of the strategy as regards migrant workers (who with some exceptions are not FCTU members). One of the FCTU leaders assessed that the tax number will imply more work opportunities for Finnish construction workers (YLE News 21 June 2012). This means that a strongly institutionally embedded trade union with enough power resources –such as the FCTU– can to some degree influence transnational labor mobility in its favor *even in an era of free mobility within the EU*.

The FCTU has the legal right to pressure with boycotts those employers who breach the collective agreements. When a boycott occurs, FCTU members are asked not to work for the boycotted firm. The goal of this pressure strategy is to force the employer to respect the collective agreements. The FCTU mostly uses this strategy to target foreign construction enterprises (see the third original publication of this thesis). Previous research (Lillie & Sippola 2010) has also shown that the FCTU actively uses boycotts against foreign construction enterprises that the union knows or suspects of breaching collective agreements. The strategy of using boycotts is a central part of the history of the FCTU (Helin 1998) and by no means a strategy that is developed for the current situation. Although this control-oriented strategy has a dimension of protecting collective agreements, the boycotts in some cases temporarily push migrant workers out of work. This means that the strategy has *both* inclusive and exclusive consequences for migrant workers. According to a FCTU representative:

“The boycott of a construction site is quite often rather difficult to explain because they [the migrant workers] sometimes perceive that the idea is to kick working men and women out [of work]. They often comment this to us. But after they have worked for some time in here in Finland their understanding of the importance of wages that are according to the collective agreements increases. It is related to the fact that when one has lived in Finnish culture and work life the understanding grows. But very often the actions of the union are met with fear [by migrants] and that they do not even want to tell us [FCTU] about those things [work related issues]. But the most information we get about underpayment comes from foreigners themselves. So, in a certain way they understand and trust that we are on their side.” (interview quote)

As the interview quote illustrates, in some cases a conflict of interests can occur between the FCTU and the migrant workers. The FCTU has brought up its difficulties

in controlling the working conditions and demanded that the government officials need to have more resources to control migrants' working conditions in particular.

The FCTU stresses that it is not against the use of foreign workers *as such*, but opposes those practices where working conditions are undercut by the use of foreign labor. This stance is in accordance with the viewpoint of Finnish trade unions on a general level that immigration is a reality, which should be accepted as long as the process does not lead to new inequalities in the labor markets based on ethnicity or nationality (Alho 2008; Ristikari 2013). According to the FCTU, the increase of migrant workers is a consequence of a deliberate employers' strategy, which aims to produce "cheap labor" for the labor markets. Also according to the employers and migrants interviewed for this study, there exists a phenomenon in the Finnish labor market where current wages and working conditions are undermined by the use of migrant workers. In defending the exclusion strategies toward labor immigration from third countries, the union faces challenges as it desires to be seen as an "immigrant friendly" actor. Therefore, the FCTU representatives made a point of emphasizing during the research interviews and public seminars that the FCTU is not "against migrants." According to the FCTU, migrants' work does not pose a problem as long as it does not undermine the Finnish collective agreements. Nevertheless, the tendency in the construction sector to minimize labor costs by undercutting migrant workers' wages and working conditions is a problem for the FCTU's as regards the union's power resources. The union perceives that labor immigration under current circumstances undercuts collective agreements. As the introduction to chapter 7 indicated, the goal and mission of the FCTU is to defend employees working in the construction sector in Finland. The union's strategies are in accordance with this value. However, the union's strategies have a dimension of national protectionism as they favor the national workforce's right to work in Finland over third country nationals' right. On the other hand, it is understandable that the FCTU does not want to open up the construction sector for further labor immigration as current labor mobility from the EU countries poses problems for the union. The analysis of the research material indicates that the FCTU has a capacity to learn and adjust to increased labor immigration by adopting new strategies. The FCTU seems to deal with immigrant/immigration issues more systematically than in the beginning of the 2000s as it has, for instance, established a specific branch for migrant members, an information center in Estonia, and employed a Russian speaking official.

# 8

## Summary of the strategies

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This following table summarizes the SUU and FCTU's key strategies regarding immigration. The table is a simplification: as the previous chapters illustrated, the strategies are more diverse and complex than presented here. The purpose of the table is to help the reader easily grasp the central findings of the research. The assessment of the concrete values of the unions' strategies is made by me.

As the table indicates, the differences of the two union's strategies lie in their inclusion strategies, which have partly different means (although the same goal and values, i.e. to include migrants). The unions' strategy to curb labor immigration from third countries is similar. The following chapter summarizes and discusses the findings of the thesis.

**Table 7. Summary of the strategies of the Service Union United and the Finnish Construction Trade Union**

Strategies	Service Union United	The Finnish Construction Trade Union	Service Union United	The Finnish Construction Trade Union	Service Union United	The Finnish Construction Trade Union
Goal of the strategy	<p>Include migrants in trade unions (inclusion strategy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increase membership</li> <li>– Protect the collective agreements and power resources of the union (non-unionized and underpaid labor is not in its interests)</li> </ul>	<p>Include migrants in trade unions (inclusion strategy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increase membership</li> <li>– Protect the collective agreements and power resources of the union (non-unionized and underpaid labor is not in its interests)</li> </ul>	<p>Protect migrants' working conditions (inclusion strategy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Protect migrants</li> <li>– Ensure that working conditions do not differ between natives and migrants. This strategy combines solidarity toward migrants and is also in the interests of the SUU members.</li> </ul>	<p>Protect migrants' working conditions (inclusion strategy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Protect migrants</li> <li>– Ensure that working conditions do not differ between natives and migrants. This strategy combines solidarity toward migrants and is also in the interests of the FCTU members.</li> </ul>	<p>Oppose liberalization of labor immigration from third countries (exclusion strategy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Protect the working conditions in the Finnish construction sector by hindering the entrance of "additional" work force from third countries</li> <li>– Guarantee that the national workforce has access to jobs</li> </ul>	<p>Oppose liberalization of labor immigration from third countries (exclusion strategy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Protect the working conditions in the Finnish service sector by hindering the entrance of "additional" work force from third countries</li> <li>– Guarantee that the national workforce has access to jobs</li> </ul>

Means of the strategy	<p>Service Union United</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Share information about trade unions and labor rights in most common migrant languages (a universalistic strategy: no organizational changes in terms of increased migrant membership)</li> <li>– Occasional participation in “multicultural” events</li> <li>– Some direct advertising to the Russian speaking population</li> </ul>	<p>The Finnish Construction Trade Union</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Share information about trade unions and labor rights in most common migrant languages (a particularistic strategy: a special union branch for migrant members and an information center in Estonia)</li> <li>– The FCU has recruited one Russian speaking person in order to facilitate communication with Russian speaking migrant workers</li> <li>– Some direct advertising to the Russian speaking population</li> </ul>	<p>Service Union United</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Empower migrants by increasing their knowledge about their rights (e.g. by sharing information in migrants’ languages)</li> <li>– Public statements against racism and ethnic discrimination</li> <li>– Visible presence in multicultural events</li> <li>– Protect migrant members’ rights in disputes with employers</li> <li>– Demand more efforts from the state to protect migrants’ working conditions</li> <li>– Lobbying Members of Parliament</li> </ul>	<p>The Finnish Construction Trade Union</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Empower migrants by increasing their knowledge about their rights and union membership (e.g. by sharing information in migrants’ languages and by establishing a branch for migrant members)</li> <li>– Raise public awareness about the specific problems migrants face in the construction sector</li> <li>– Protect migrant members’ rights in disputes with employers</li> <li>– Use of boycotts against employers who do not follow collective agreements (the strategy has both an inclusive and exclusive dimension)</li> <li>– Lobbying Members of Parliament</li> </ul>	<p>Service Union United</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Emphasize in public that migrants are more vulnerable than natives as regards breaches in labor rights and argue that liberalization of national labor immigration policy would increase these problems</li> <li>– Use current unemployment figures to defend current restrictions</li> <li>– Define migrants as exploited</li> <li>– Make use of existing tripartite institutional channels to influence state legislation</li> </ul>	<p>The Finnish Construction Trade Union</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Emphasize in public that migrants are more vulnerable than natives as regards breaches in labor rights and argue that liberalization of the national labor immigration policy would increase these problems</li> <li>– Use current unemployment figures to defend current restrictions</li> <li>– Define migrants as exploited</li> <li>– Make use of existing tripartite institutional channels to influence that current restrictions are not lifted</li> <li>– Lobby politicians</li> <li>– The FCU has also lobbied successfully for control-oriented measures that facilitate monitoring of migrant workers working conditions and right to work in Finland (e.g. the tax number)</li> </ul>
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Outcome of the strategy	Service Union United	The Finnish Construction Trade Union	Service Union United	The Finnish Construction Trade Union	Service Union United	The Finnish Construction Trade Union
	<p>Migrants are increasingly joining the SUU, although for the time being migrants are underrepresented at all levels of the SUU's organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The SUU has provided a platform for societal participation for a group of immigrants</li> <li>– Gives a sign that migrants are welcome in trade unions</li> </ul>	<p>Migrants are increasingly joining the FCTU, although temporary labor migration from abroad is a difficult issue for the FCTU in terms of migrant inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– migrants still underrepresented as members and in the union's organization</li> <li>– The special strategies directed at migrants facilitate migrant inclusion by diminishing language barriers</li> <li>– The FCTU has provided a platform for societal participation for a group of immigrants</li> <li>– Gives a sign that migrants are welcome in trade unions</li> </ul>	<p>The breaches in collective agreements that migrants face in private service sector persist. However, without the SUU's strategies these problems would be more widespread</p>	<p>The breaches in collective agreements that migrants face in the construction sector persist. However, without the FCTU's strategies these problems would be more widespread</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– FCTU has managed to raise migrants' awareness of their rights, however, knowledge of rights is not always enough for the migrants to secure them. Estonian migrants seem to be more aware of their rights now than migrants from the new EU countries Rumania and Bulgaria</li> </ul>	<p>The SUU has for its part contributed to the fact that the restrictions for third country nationals to enter the sectors the SUU represents have not been lifted (an exception was when labor immigration to the Helsinki region was liberalized in 2013 despite SUU's resistance. At times the current restrictions cause uncertainty and costs for immigrants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– For the part of the population that sees immigration as a threat, defending these restrictions is probably a positive factor</li> </ul>	<p>The Finnish Construction Trade Union</p> <p>The FCTU has for its part contributed to the fact that the restrictions for third country nationals to enter the sectors the FCTU represents have not been lifted. At times the current restrictions cause uncertainty and costs for third country immigrants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– For the part of the population that sees immigration as a threat, defending these restrictions is probably a positive factor</li> <li>– For the part of the population that sees free mobility as value in itself, these restrictions can give an impression of unwanted national protectionism</li> </ul>
Values of the strategy	Inclusiveness, equality between natives and migrants	Inclusiveness, equality between natives and migrants	Equality of working conditions regardless of nationality or ethnicity	Equality of working conditions regardless of nationality or ethnicity	To favor the national workforce's access to jobs	To favor the national workforce's access to jobs

# 9 Conclusion and discussion

The main goal of my dissertation has been to answer what the Service Union United (SUU) and the Finnish Construction Trade Union's (FCTU) immigration related strategies are. The dissertation has also explored the unions' operating environments and how they affect the unions' strategies (and vice-versa).

Immigration is an important issue for the SUU and the FCTU: both unions have adopted strategies in terms of immigration and they have explicit stances on the issue. This means that these unions are capable of shaping the complex reality of increased labor immigration, which is, after all, quite a new phenomenon in Finland.

The significance of the immigration question is especially visible in the case of the FCTU, whose power resources are challenged by the EU enlargements of the 2000s. Temporary labor immigration, transnational mobility of construction enterprises, and structural changes due to increased subcontracting pose veritable challenges to the FCTU. The key goal of both unions' strategies is to guarantee that same wages and other issues covered by collective agreements concretely apply for natives *and* migrants. Another goal of the strategies is to include migrants living in Finland as union members while defending current state restrictions on labor immigration. Membership in both unions is open to migrants irrespective of nationality. All these goals are understandable from a power resources perspective.

Some of the unions' strategies are clearly a result of conscious planning, such as the FCTU's decision to establish a trade union branch specifically for migrants. The SUU is fully aware of the FCTU's strategy, but has not favoured such a solution; hence, the SUU's non-action in this question should also be interpreted as a strategy. However, some of the strategies, such as both unions' strategy to diversify their communication to new languages, does not seem to be a consequence of one deliberately planned decision. That strategy seems to be an "emerged" strategy

(to use Mintzberg's 2009 term) that has evolved step by step due to a need to respond to the linguistic diversification of the operating environment.

Have the unions been successful in reaching their goals? It is reasonable to assess that the unions' strategies have protected migrant workers' rights; however, migrants still face specific problems regarding work related rights in the Finnish labor market. The unions in question have also for their part successfully opposed liberalization of Finnish labor immigration policy in terms of third countries. Are the strategies in balance with the unions' stated values? A central stated value for the unions in question (including their umbrella organization SAK) is equal working conditions for same work. The unions' strategies strive for equality as regards same working conditions irrespective of nationality or ethnicity for workers in Finland. From this standpoint, the strategies live up to the stated values. However, the unions' strategies do not question, but actually defend, the state work and residence permit regulations that apply for third country nationals living in Finland and in some cases hinder inclusion. In addition, if we look at *equality from a global perspective*, it can be argued that the unions' strategy of minimizing labor immigration from third countries actually hinders equality on a global level as the current state regulations restrict workers' right to choose in which country to work and reside.

I have emphasized the need for a contextualized analysis that takes into account the trade unions' operating environment. The case study design was a suitable research strategy as it enabled us to see that two trade unions that operate in a similar institutional setting can take recourse to partly different strategies. In other words, trade unions have choice in immigration related issues and their strategies are not entirely predetermined by the institutional setting. The case study design also enabled us to see that the unions in question are not passive adaptors to their operating environment –which is a complex field of actors' contrasting and overlapping interests and strategies– as the unions actively seek to influence their operating environment by their strategies. The method, however, has also some weaknesses. *Some* of my conclusions fully relied on the information and interpretations provided by the trade union representatives I interviewed. For example the FCTU representatives claimed that the union in some cases assists also non-unionized construction workers in Finland with their work-related problems. There are some such cases that have received media-coverage and can be verified. The research material, however, does not allow assessing how common –and to what degree– the union assists non-unionized migrants. In other words, it is not entirely clear whether we are witnessing here a *strategy* or some sporadic action. However, in most cases there was enough evidence to clearly identify the strategies (or the lack thereof).

The effect of the strategies is also difficult to assess with precision: for example, I have made the assessment that the unions' strategy of translating information

into migrant languages has increased migrants' knowledge of trade unions and labor rights. The migrant interviews support this claim. However, here again it is impossible to assess precisely the extent to which these union efforts actually have improved migrants' position. On the other hand, answering these questions of causality has not been the main task of my research: the main task has been to identify the unions' strategies and explain their relation to the unions' operating environment.

The FCTU and the SUU's opposition of liberalization of labor immigration policy as regards immigration from third countries is understandable because they assess that labor immigration under current circumstances has to some degree a deteriorating effect on the working conditions and the employment situation in the sectors they represent.

Here we should, however, be cautious of making causal inferences between the (possibly) deteriorated working conditions and immigration in the sectors the SUU and FCTU represent. Is migrants' increased participation in these sectors actually a cause or effect of deteriorated working conditions? Or is it so that both phenomena under current circumstances strengthen each other? Or could it be that there is no causal link in one way or another? These are questions that this research does not answer but which need future scrutiny. However, regardless of whether the unions' assessment is correct, we have to go back to what Thomas and Thomas (1928, 572) stated "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." In this case this means that irrespective of whether labor immigration under current circumstances has a deteriorating effect on the employment situation and working conditions, the unions' assessment has real consequences because they resist increased labor immigration on the basis of their assessment.

Neither the SUU nor the FCTU used any cultural or religious arguments when defending current immigration restrictions; they opposed easing up restrictions on labor migrants' entry by referring to the unemployment figures and a lack of mechanism for proper control of migrants' labor rights. This is in contrast to the Estonian trade unions which, in addition to economic arguments, opposed increased labor immigration citing cultural aspects. This is most likely related to the specific immigration history of Estonia during the Soviet occupation.

The unions constantly argue that labor migrants are exploited by employers. On the one hand, this strategy has an inclusive dimension as the unions combine it with a demand that migrants' working conditions should be at the same level as the natives'. On the other hand, the framing has an excluding dimension as the unions' use it for defending the restrictions on third country nationals' entry into the Finnish labor market (my assessment is in line with Paananen (1999) regarding the situation in the Finnish construction sector in the beginning of the 1990s). This is in line with the goals of their umbrella organization SAK. The unions do not

share the view of those economists who claim that increased labor immigration does *not* have a negative effect on the receiving labor markets (see chapter 7).

We can witness a historical continuity in the SAK-affiliated trade unions' restrictive stance toward labor immigration that goes back to at least the 1970s when SAK succeeded to defend labor immigration restrictions (see Bergholm 2012, 410). Likewise, at the turn of the millennium the SAK successfully lobbied for transition periods against free labor mobility from the new EU countries for years 2004–2006 (see Nylund 2008). On the other hand, it is important to underline that almost all of the EU-15 countries imposed temporary labor immigration restrictions for citizens of the new EU countries (see, e.g., Castles & Miller 2009, 198). Hence, when placed in international context, the insistence of such restrictions does not come across as particularly strict. The restrictions on labor immigration have met some criticism from *within* the trade union movement (see Laukkanen (2000) and Sund (2010) in chapter 7.1.3). Apparently the protectionist line in the SAK-affiliated trade unions has been stronger than the more liberal views in terms of who has the right to work and reside in Finland. However, at the risk of stating the obvious, it is important to underline that the laws regulating immigration are passed by the Parliament –not the trade unions. However, this thesis and previous research (Nylund 2008; Salmenhaara 2008; Bergholm 2012) shows that the unions' influence the legislative process regarding labor immigration.

The nation-state remains the main framework for trade unions' strategies on labor immigration, which is in line with previous findings of unions in Western Europe (see Penninx & Roosblad 2000, 187). However, the FCTU had added a transnational dimension to its strategic repertoire by opening an information center in the Estonian capital. Yet, influencing migration questions at the EU-level –compared to the national dimension– is a marginal issue for the FCTU and the SUU.

The SUU and the FCTU have not challenged –but rather defended– work/residence permit requirements, which in some cases result in insecurity and financial burden to migrants (see Könönen 2015; Silfver 2010). Therefore, these unions are not proactive actors that demand *new* rights for migrants, which is in contrast with some countries where unions operate more as social movements (see chapter 3). This finding is in line with previous research of Penninx and Roosblad (2000) who argue that when unions are strongly embedded in the state's decision making bodies (like the Finnish trade unions) they seem to have little incentive to challenge state policies in immigration questions.

Despite the exclusion strategies toward labor immigration, the SUU and FCTU also have inclusion strategies at their disposal by which they strive to defend migrant workers. Based on the interviews with migrant workers these strategies for their part have benefited migrants in vulnerable positions. For example

some of the interviewed migrant workers had received trade union support in work disputes. The inclusion strategies are aimed at informing migrants about work related rights and trade union membership. The SUU and FCTU have attracted an increasing amount of migrants as their members. However, migrants are still numerically underrepresented in these trade unions as members, trade union activists and employees and, furthermore, absent in leadership positions in trade unions. According to Ristikari's (2013), this is the norm in Finnish trade unions at large.

However, between years 2006 and 2011 migrant membership in *all* Finnish trade unions increased between 71 and 77% (see original publication III of the thesis.). In short, immigrants are increasingly joining trade unions. Especially in the case of the SUU, a considerable part of the new members joining the union are migrants (see Table 5). It remains to be seen whether workers with an immigrant background will be in influential positions in Finnish trade unions in future. Will migrants' influence in trade unions increase, like women's influence has (see Bergholm 2012), or will migrants remain in the margins of the Finnish trade union movement? This is a question that is obviously not entirely dependent on the trade unions' strategies and stances –but also on the migrants' own motivation and capabilities. Neither the SUU nor the FCTU has adopted quotas for migrants in the unions' decision-making bodies in order to deal with migrants' underrepresentation. In this question the unions' stance resembles the Danish trade unions' universalistic model, which in turn differs from the British trade unions' strategy (for example, allocating reserved seats for ethnic minorities in the unions executive bodies) (see Wrench 2004 in chapter 3.4.).

Despite the increase in migrant membership in the SUU and the FCTU, the most vulnerable migrant workers, such as the undocumented and the majority of temporary labor migrants, are by and large out of the SUU and the FCTU's reach. However, the question of undocumented migrants is quite new in the Finnish context and it remains to be seen whether trade unions will take a stance and develop strategies on this question. In spite of this, as more migrants join trade unions, it is reasonable to assess that trade unions in general increasingly have become a power resource for migrant workers in Finland.

Migrants' experiences of trade unions vary, but both migrants and trade union representatives agreed that migrants need more information about trade unions. There was, for instance, uncertainty among the migrants about the benefits of trade union membership. In addition, some migrant workers claimed that there are employers who do not want their employees to join trade unions, which weakens the unions' possibilities of attracting migrants as members. On a general level, the migrants' stance toward trade unions was quite pragmatic: membership in unions was an alternative when it was seen to yield some concrete advantage. In this regard, there is no reason to believe that migrants would differ from the

native population. Those migrants who worked only temporary in Finland were not motivated to join a trade union due to the shortness of their stay, which is in line with Lillie and Sippola (2010), who came to similar conclusions in their case study on a nuclear power plant construction site in Western Finland. The temporary nature of the migrants' work poses serious challenges to the FCTU from a power resources perspective. The SUU has been in a more favourable situation regarding migrant inclusion as migrants in its sector seem to be in Finland on a more permanent basis than the construction workers.

The FCTU has been more active than the SUU in implementing new inclusion strategies toward migrants. In addition, the FCTU, more actively than the SUU, attempts to control migrants' working conditions at work place level. This is probably because the FCTU perceives to be in a more difficult situation than the SUU regarding labor immigration. The SUU's lack of more far-reaching strategies probably has to do with the fact that its migrant membership has increased relatively rapidly even without such measures. The reason for the FCTU's more active stance could be historical as Finnish construction workers have a long history of working abroad, something that came up in the interviews (and has also been documented by Helin 1998, 252–253). The reason could also be structural: construction sites might be easier to control than, say, small restaurants and cleaning companies. The explanation could additionally have to do with the FCTU's historical legacy of strong workplace presence at construction sites (see Helin 1998). This historical legacy might facilitate the FCTU's search for new strategies on immigration. These strategies have facilitated migrants' inclusion in the FCTU. Meanwhile, the SUU opts for universalistic strategies that do not differentiate native and migrant members (with the exception of targeting some advertising to immigrants and translating some of its official communication to most common migrant languages).

Based on my research, there exists a phenomenon in Finland where labor costs and work-related rights are undermined specifically by the use of migrant workers despite the fact that collective agreements apply to unionized *and* non-unionized workers and employers. Both unions have called for more state intervention in controlling migrants' working conditions, which is understandable because breaches in migrants' work conditions is not in the unions' interest and consume their resources. In the third original publication of the thesis, I examined the weak situation of the Estonian trade union movement. The Estonian unions are bystanders when it comes to labor migration questions (including emigration and immigration) and, for example, no construction trade union exists in Estonia. This has a negative bearing for the FCTU's strategies regarding possibilities for transnational trade union co-operation.

The dissertation showed that previous research on Finnish trade unions and their responses to immigration and immigrants has focused on trade unions' exclu-

sion strategies with the exception of one book chapter, which also looked at one inclusion strategy (Kyntäjä 2008). There is no doubt that trade unions still make use of their “gate-keeping” potential when it comes to labor immigration. However, this thesis has contributed to scholarship by demonstrating that Finnish trade unions have adopted –in addition to exclusion strategies– inclusion strategies.

The thesis also showed that the Estonian trade union movement, suffering from lack of members and other power resources, is a bystander when it comes to affecting migration; it can execute neither exclusion *nor* inclusion strategies (unlike the Finnish trade unions). This finding points to a large *national variety* among European trade unions’ possibilities to influence labor migration. The Estonian labor market situation and the weak role of the Estonian trade union movement have a bearing on the FCTU’s situation.

The power resources approach by Korpi (1978, 1998) proved to be a suitable approach in analyzing trade unions’ power resources as the trade unions under study do perceive immigration being related to their power resources. Nevertheless, the SUU and the FCTU have not used strong and comprehensive inclusion strategies aimed at mobilizing migrants as trade union members unlike some of the previously mentioned U.S. trade unions have. The most plausible explanation for this lies in the strong institutional position of the Finnish unions. Earlier research (e.g. Marino 2009; 2012) has indicated that trade unions in strong institutional positions, with access to the corporatist state decision making, tend to target their strategies at government policy (Penninx & Roosblad 2000). This is by and large the case with the SUU and FCTU which both have access to the state decision-making bodies and capitalize on that access to influence immigration policy regarding labor immigration. Both unions also rely on public statements to shape public opinion.

The concepts “exclusion” and “inclusion” are commonly applied in research on trade unions, immigration and immigrants (e.g. Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Haus 2002; Watts 2002; Marino 2012). My thesis contributes to the theoretical understanding of the research topic by showing that a trade union strategy in an immigration related issue can in some cases have *both dimensions* (i.e. boycotts of construction sites and the compulsory tax number that has to be visible for construction workers, which the FCTU successfully lobbied for, see section 7.2). This finding does not mean that the concepts of exclusion and inclusion should be abandoned in this type of research; instead it *underlines the importance of looking closely at the concrete implications of each strategy from different actors’ standpoint, including the context in which the strategies take place*. The thesis supports previous research findings (Lundh 1995; Penninx & Roosblad 2000) in showing that trade unions can at the same time make use of exclusion and inclusion strategies by simultaneously trying to restrict labor immigration *and* aiming to improve the situation of immigrants already in the country.

Research often raises new questions. In this case, an important question stems from the fact that migrants are underrepresented at all levels in the two trade unions of my study –as members, as trade union activists and as union employees. Why so? Based on my research, it is not possible to give a straightforward answer –but rather state well-formed hypotheses. The underrepresentation of migrants is most likely partly explained by their insecure labor market position. On the other hand, in the seminars I attended for this study, the migrant trade union activists brought up the issue of prejudice and even discriminatory attitudes toward migrants among trade union shop stewards. Ristikari's (2013) results also suggest that this phenomenon exists. There is also a lack of awareness among migrants regarding trade unions in Finland, and in many cases migrants' knowledge of the unions stem from their countries of origin, which is very different from the Finnish situation. The major constraint for the interviewed non-unionized migrant workers to join trade unions was their *temporary stay* in Finland, which decreased their motivation for joining a trade union. As mentioned, migrants in the undocumented labor market are de facto outside of trade unions current frame of operation. These factors most likely explain to some degree migrants' underrepresentation in unions. Nevertheless, the reasons for underrepresentation could be further explored with future qualitative or quantitative studies.

Another important future research question would be why the Confederation of Unions for Professionals and Managerial Staff in Finland, the central trade union umbrella organization that represents highly educated employees, is more liberal than the SUU/ FCTU/ SAK when it comes to labor immigration (as was shown previously).

As the fourth publication of the thesis stated; access to work permits for cleaners was eased for third country nationals in the Finnish capital area at the end of 2012 despite an opposition from the SUU and the SAK. In practice this opened up the cleaning business for cleaning companies to recruit workforce from third countries. It would now be important to examine how this liberalization has affected the position of migrants in the cleaning sector: has it lead to increased exploitation of migrants and worsened the working conditions as the unions in question have claimed it would, or, has the liberalization actually empowered migrant workers as the Free Movement Network has propagated it would do? Or, is there no change in one direction or another?

As this is a thesis in Social Policy, it has not been possible to extend the scrutiny of the historical dimension of the Finnish trade unions to the degree that perhaps would have been ideal. Even if the amount of immigrants has been minimal until the 1990s, previous research (Helin 1998; Suoranta 2009; Bergholm 2012) shows that the increase in the supply of new work force (that immigrants now represent) is not a new one for trade unions: in fact the question has been at the core of trade unionism from the “very beginning” as has been shown by Webb et al. (1907) at

the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Broadening the scope of research to cover the historical stances of Finnish trade unions toward workers coming from outside the established base of the unions could help us better explain and understand contemporary trade union strategies in relation to immigrants and immigration.

The strategies of the Service Union United and the Finnish Construction Union are capable of improving the vulnerable situation of migrant workers. In addition, migrant membership has increased in both unions in absolute terms. These trade unions have, for their part, counteracted the split between native and migrant workers' working conditions. By doing so, they have probably also counteracted tensions between natives and migrants.

For the trade unions under scrutiny prospective labor immigration from third countries –which they seek to minimize– renders the question of international solidarity an “on your doorstep” question in terms of labor immigration. Despite the SUU and FCTU's inclusion strategies to protect and empower migrants, when it comes to who has the right to work in Finland, a distinction between “us” and “them” based on nationality, still shapes trade union strategy. After all, they are still bound to the nation-state, which is their immediate operating environment.

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### Article I

Alho, R. (2010) Maahanmuuttajien kokemukset ja ammattiliittojen näkemykset työehtojen polkemisesta Suomessa [Immigrants' experiences and trade unions' perceptions of social dumping in Finland], in S. Wrede & C. Nordberg (eds.) *Vieraita työssä: työelämän etnistyvä eriarvoisuus [Strangers in Work: The Ethnifying Inequality in Working Life]*. Helsinki: Gaudeamus, pp. 93–121.

### Article II

Alho, R. (2012) Rakennusliiton ja Palvelualojen ammattiliiton maahanmuutto- ja maahanmuuttajastrategiat [The immigration and immigrant strategies of the Finnish Construction Trade Union and the Service Union United], *Työelämän tutkimus* 10(1): 38–54.

### Article III

Alho, R. (2013) Trade union responses to transnational labour mobility in the Finnish-Estonian context. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*. 3(3): 133–53.

### Article IV

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## 5

# Maahanmuuttajien kokemukset ja ammattiliittojen näkemykset työehtojen polkemisesta Suomessa

*Rolle Alho*

Talouden globalisaatio ei luo kysyntää pelkästään niin sanotuille huippuosaajille vaan myös statukseltaan matalamman työn tekijöille (ks. esim. Penninx ym. 2006; Sassen 2001; 2006). Näin tapahtuu myös Suomessa, jossa työperäinen maahanmuutto kasvaa. Tässä luvussa tarkastellaan erityisesti rakennusalaa ja yksityisiä palvelualoja. Koska ne ovat keskeiset maahanmuuttajia työllistävät alat Suomessa, niitä tutkimalla voidaan lisätä ymmärrystä suomalaiseen työelämään muotoutumassa olevan työperäisen maahanmuuton dynamiikasta. Palvelualojen ammattiliiton (vastaisuudessa PAM) mukaan vuonna 2008 yksityisillä palveluiloilla työskenteli yli 16 000 maahanmuuttajaa (PAMin lausunto 28.4.2008). Rakennusalalla työskentelevien maahanmuuttajien ja tilapäisesti maassa työskentelevien työntekijöiden määrästä ei ole olemassa tarkkaa tietoa, mutta Rakennusliiton mukaan Suomessa työskenteli vuoden 2007 aikana yli 30 000 ulkomaalaista rakennustyöntekijää (*Helsingin Sanomat* 15.3.2009) ja

vuoden 2007 lopussa noin kymmenen prosenttia rakennusalan työvoimasta oli ulkomaista (*Rakentaja 20/2007*). Kansainvälisesti veratenkin alat työllistävät Suomessa runsaasti ulkomaalaistaustaista työvoimaa. Molemmat alat reagoivat herkästi suhdanteisiin, joten työvoiman tarve niillä vaihtelee suuresti taloussyörien mukaan. Rakentamisessa tai palveluissa ei myöskään voi juuri leikata työvoimakustannuksia siirtämällä tuotantoa halvemmän työvoiman alueille, koska työt täytyy tehdä paikallisesti. Rakennusyritykset ja palvelualojen työnantajat ovat sekä historiallisesti että kansainvälisesti käyttäneet usein kantaväestöä pienipalkkaisempia maahanmuuttajia ja siirtotyöläisiä puskurityövoimana, jota palkataan tilapäisesti ja tarvittaessa. Suomessa maahanmuutto on verrattain uusi ilmiö, joten täällä maahanmuuttajien sijaan puskurityövoimana on käytetty nuoria ja naisia, nykyisin myös vuokratyöntekijöitä.

Markkinatalous luo yhdysvaltalaisen maahanmuuttokysymykseen erikoistuneen sosiologi Douglas Massey ja hänen kollegoidensa mukaan (1998) pysyvän tarpeen työntekijöille, jotka työskentelevät epämieluisissa työoloissa, matalilla palkoilla, suuressa epävarmuudessa tai työssä, jossa etenemismahdollisuudet ovat heikot. Monissa maissa maahanmuuttajat tyydyttävät tämänkaltaisen työvoiman tarvetta, koska perinteisiä halpatyöntekijöitä eli naisia, nuoria ja maaseudulta kaupunkiin muuttajia ei ole enää tarpeeksi tarjolla työmarkkinoiden ulkopuolella (Massey ym. 1998, 32). Maahanmuuttajien tarkasteleminen lähtökohtaisesti puskurityövoimana on makrotaloudellinen ja rakenteellinen näkökulma. Rakenteellisten teorioiden puutteena on kuitenkin taipumus kuvata maahanmuutto ja maahanmuuttajat yksipuolisesti talouden muutosten seurauksina, vaikka myös maahanmuuttajien omat kokemukset, tavoitteet ja toiminta muokkaavat työmarkkinoita ja työelämää. Rakenteellisen näkökulman sijaan olenkin valinnut niin kutsutun mikronäkökulman, jossa tarkastellaan maahan muuttaneiden rakennus-, ravintola- ja siivousalan työntekijöiden omia kokemuksia Suomessa työskentelystä. Subjektiiivinen ulottuvuus on tärkeää muistaa kuvattaessa yksilön asemaa työssä. Kun maahanmuuttajien tilanne määritellään ulkoapäin, kadotetaan

helposti yksilön toimijuus eli hänen kykynsä toimia itsenäisesti, tehdä päätöksiä sekä parantaa omaa elämäntilannettaan.

Tulkitsen seuraavassa haastatteluja analysoimalla työhön liittyvää tilannetta sellaisten työntekijöiden näkökulmasta, joiden edut ja ongelmat ovat usein muiden kuin heidän itsensä määrittelemiä. Tutkimuksen ensisijaisena aineistona ovat 18 Suomessa työskentelevästä maahanmuuttajasta tekemäni laadulliset teemahaastattelut.<sup>1</sup> Haastateltavia valitessani määrittelin ”maahanmuuttajiksi” sekä Suomessa pysyvästi että tilapäisesti työskentelevät ulkomaalaistaustaiset työntekijät. Käsitteellä ”työ” viitataan tässä tutkimuksessa palkkatyöhön. En ole lähestynyt haastateltavia ensisijaisesti tietyn kulttuurisen tai etnisen taustan perusteella vaan olen muodostanut itselleni mahdollisimman kokonaisvaltaisen kuvan haastateltujen työntekijöiden kokemuksista ja työmarkkina-asemasta. Olen kiinnostunut myös siitä, jäsentävätkö haastatellut asemansa maahanmuuton ja etnisyyden näkökulmasta. Aikaisempi tutkimus on esittänyt, että maahanmuuttajat hyväksyvät kantaväestöä heikommat työehtonsa muun muassa siksi, että he katsovat olevansa kantaväestöä heikommassa neuvotteluasemassa (Power & Hardman 1978). Väitänkin, että tässä luvussa käsitellyillä aloilla maahanmuuttajien työehtojen polkeminen on yhteydessä heidän kantaväestöä heikompaan neuvotteluasemaansa työmarkkinoilla ja työelämässä.

Maahanmuuttajien kokemukset syntyvät suhteessa niihin työmarkkinoiden toimijoihin, jotka vaikuttavat maahanmuuttajien työmarkkina-asemaan ja heidän työehtoihinsa. Tästä syystä analysoin maahanmuuttajien omien kokemusten lisäksi näiden alojen järjestäytynyttä edunvalvontaa edustavien Rakennusliiton ja PAMin tulintoja maahanmuuttajien asemasta työelämässä. Ammattiliittojen näkemyksistä olen kerännyt kahdenlaisia tutkimusaineistoja. Ensimmäisenä olen käyttänyt PAMin ja Rakennusliiton jäsenlehtiä sekä niiden muita julkisia kannanottoja. Toiseksi olen osallistunut kolmeen työmarkkinoita ja maahanmuuttoa käsittelevään tapahtumaan, joiden esitelmät, alustukset ja puheenvuorot ovat osa tutkimusaineistoa. Tapahtumat olivat: Euroopan ammatillisen yhteistyöjärjestön

(European Trade Union Confederation – ETUC) tutkimusinstituutin vuonna 2007 järjestämä kansainvälinen konferenssi,<sup>2</sup> Suomen Ammattiliittojen Keskusjärjestön SAK:n vuonna 2007 järjestämä maahanmuuttajafoorumi<sup>3</sup> sekä SAK:n järjestämä maahanmuuttoa ja työmarkkinoita käsitellyt seminaari<sup>4</sup>. Koska ammattiliittojen lisäksi työnantajat ovat keskeisiä työmarkkinoiden toimijoita, tulkitsen myös heidän näkemyksiään. Tarkastelen niitä kuitenkin suppeammin eli haastatteleamalla kolmea virolaisia rakennustyöntekijöitä palkanutta yrittäjää. Näkökulmani on aineistolähtöinen, eli olen välttänyt tulkintoja ohjaavia ennako-olettamuksia. Tällaisessa laadullisessa aineistolähtöisessä tutkimuksessa edetään induktiivisesti yksittäisistä havainnoista yleisempiin väitteisiin (esim. Eskola & Suoranta 1998).

Tutkimuskysymyksiäni ovat olleet, miten haastatellut maahanmuuttajat kokevat Suomessa työskentelyn ja miten he selittävät työmarkkinoilla kohtaamansa epäkohdat. Lisäksi olen selvittänyt, mitkä ovat ammattiliittojen käsitykset ja tulkinnat maahanmuuttajien työehtojen polkemisesta ja ovatko ne yhteneväisiä maahanmuuttajien kokemusten kanssa. Entä mitkä ovat haastateltujen kokemukset ammattiliitoista ja mitkä ovat ammattiliittojen edellytykset edustaa maahanmuuttajia? Jako ”ammattiliittoon” ja ”maahanmuuttajiin” on osittain keinotekoinen, sillä osa haastatelluista maahanmuuttajista on ammattiliiton jäseniä ja siten osa ammattiliittoa. ”Ammattiliiton näkemyksillä” viitataan kuitenkin tässä tutkimuksessa liittojen virallisiin kannanottoihin enkä yksittäisten jäsenten näkökulmiin.

Tarkastelen seuraavassa aluksi Suomessa työskentelevien maahanmuuttajien kokemuksia työehtojen polkemisesta. Erityisryhmänä käsittelen Viron ja Suomen välillä liikkuvien virolaisten työntekijöiden käsityksiä aiheesta. Tämän jälkeen analysoin Rakennusliiton ja PAMin kannanottoja sekä tarkastelen, millaisia kokemuksia haastatelluilla maahanmuuttajilla on suomalaisista ammattiliitoista. Lopuksi käsittelen työehtojen polkemisen yleistä merkitystä sekä yksilön että suomalaisen työelämän näkökulmasta. Pohdin lisäksi maahanmuuttajien suhdetta ammattiliittojen jäsenyyteen sekä ammattiliittojen edellytyksiä edustaa maahanmuuttajia.

## Maahanmuuttajien kokemukset työehtojen polkemisesta

Haastatellessani maahanmuuttajia he nostivat toistuvasti esiin niin sanottuihin materiaalsiin työehtoihin, kuten palkkoihin, työaikoihin tai ylityökorvauksiin, liittyviä ongelmia. Käsittelen niitä seuraavassa ja tarkastelen erityisesti, miten haastatellut itse selittävät kohtaamansa ongelmat. Haastateltujen keskuudessa oli tavallista, että ulkomaalaisuuden katsottiin selittävän, miksi juuri häntä kohdeltiin epäoikeudenmukaisesti. Eräs venäläistaustainen Suomessa seitsemän vuotta asunut rakennustyöntekijä kuvaa ulkomaalaiseen taustaansa liittyvää työehtojen polkemista seuraavasti:

Vaik mä osasin varmaan hommia kolme kertaa enemmän kun hän [suomalainen työntekijä], siis se ei osannut eikä tiennyt mitään! Mä kysyin, et ”mikä on sun palkka?” niin se vastas 12 [euroa/tunti]. Mitä helvettiä, et mikä se on 12? Se sano, et no se on ihan sen TES:n [työehtosopimuksen] mukaan. Mulle taas TES:n mukaan tulee joku 8 euroo. Tiiätsä? Eikä ollut mitään järkee rupee sille työnantajalle puhumaan [syrjinnästä/alipalkkauksesta], koska se sanois vaan, et jätkä, jos sä oot tyytymätön, niin mulla on näitä virolaisia vaikka kuinka paljon! (H 12.)

Edellä siteeraamani rakennustyöntekijä vaihtoi myöhemmin työnantajaa, mutta hän ei – kuten lainauksesta ilmenee – reagoinut työpaikalla työehtojen polkemiseen heikon neuvotteluasemansa takia. Haastateltu toteaa myös, että työnantajan on helppo löytää korvaavia työntekijöitä. Tästä syystä työntekijän on vaikea esittää vaatimuksia työnantajalle.

Suomeen pakolaisina Afrikasta (H 6) ja Bangladeshista (H 14) saapuneet ravintolatyöntekijät kertoivat työskennelleensä suomalaisomisteisessa ravintolassa pienemmällä palkalla kuin heidän kanta-väestöön kuuluvat samaa työtä tehneet kollegansa. Haastateltu (H 6) kertoo, että työnjohtaja neuvotteli palkat jokaisen työntekijän kanssa erikseen:

H 6: Olin ainoa ulkomaalainen siinä työpaikassa. Kun me teimme työsopimuksen, johtaja kutsui meidät yksitellen tekemään sopimukset.

RA (Rolle Alho): Yksitellen?

H 6: Kyllä yksitellen. Ja työskenneltyäni jonkin aikaa sain selville, että minä olin se, jolle maksettiin minimipalkkaa.

RA: Ja tarkoitatko, että suomalaisille maksettiin enemmän?

H 6: Kyllä. Heille maksettiin enemmän rahaa, vaikka tein samaa työtä kuin he tekivät. (Rolle Alhon suomennos englannin kielestä.)

Tässä neuvottelutilanteessa, jossa palkat neuvoteltiin erikseen yksittäisten työntekijöiden sekä työnjohtajan tai työnantajan välillä, Suomeen vastikään muuttanut henkilö oli heikoilla, koska ei tuntenut oikeuksiaan työntekijänä. Algeriasta lähtöisin ollut, ravintola-alallakin työskennellyt rakennusalan työntekijä (H 7) kertoi, että hänen kokemuksensa mukaan maahanmuuttajaa pyritään ”aluksi” harhauttamaan työehtoihin liittyvissä asioissa. Monet haastatellut ovat myös kokeneet, että tietoa on mutta sitä ei ole ollut mahdollista käyttää. Venäläistäustainen rakennustyöntekijä (H 12) pitää maahanmuuttajien haavoittuvaa asemaa epätasa-arvoisen työelämätilanteen osasyynä:

[U]lkomaalaisilla ei oo mitään vaihtoehtoa, tai ei mitään chanssia, mahdollisuutta käyttää sitä [suomalaiseen työelämään liittyvää] tietoo hyväkseen. Ainoastaan siinä tapauksessa, [että] se virolainen on tehnyt jo tarpeeks kauan duunii tälle työnantajalle, ja jos työnantaja todella arvostaa häntä, niin vain siinä tapauksessa työntekijä voi laatia omat ehdot [työnteolle]. Muutenhan siinä käy niin, että jos työntekijä rupee avaan suunsa, niin hänelle sanotaan morjens [irtisanotaan] ja palkataan uusi [ulkomainen työntekijä]. (H 12.)

Haastattelulainaus osoittaa, että työelämän tuntemus ei välttämättä anna suojaa haavoittuvassa tilanteessa. Myös Algeriasta lähtöisin

oleva rakennustyöntekijä (H7) selittää maahanmuuttajan taipumusta hyväksyä kantaväestöä heikompia työehtoja vaihtoehtojen puutteella. Valintojen vähyttä lisää hänen mukaansa heikentynyt sosiaaliturva: ”Ei oo vaihtoehtoja. Siis töitä nyt tekee vaikka mitä, koska niillä [maahanmuuttajilla] ei ole vaihtoehtoa. Kato, kaikki [sosiaali]tuet nyt [nykyään] on vähän tiukemmin, asiat on tiukemmin, ja kaikenlaista.”

Bosniasta turvapaikanhakijana tulleen siivoojan (H3) mukaan Suomessa siivousalalla maksetaan ensimmäistä kertaa työmarkkinoille tulevalle maahanmuuttajalle vähemmän kuin kantaväestöön kuuluvalla siivoojalla, mutta palkkaero korjaantuu myöhemmin. Suomessa yhdeksän vuotta asunut Virosta tullut rakennussiivooja, jolla on myös muuta työkokemusta, kertoo viihtyvänsä työssään rakennuksella mutta on myös kohdannut työehtojen polkemista:

Mua on käytetty tosi paljon hyväksi koskien työehtoja, palkkaa. Meitä käytetään hyväksi, koska olemme Virosta. Monta kertaa vaaditaan, että työpäivät on pitkät. Viime vuonna multa jäi loma saamatta; se koskee ylityötunteja, se koskee iltahommia, se koskee sunnuntaita, lauantaita, kaikkea. (H1.)

Rakennussiivoojan (H1) kokemuksen mukaan isot yritykset ja julkinen puoli ovat parempia työnantajia työehtoihin liittyvissä asioissa, koska niissä asiat hoidetaan organisoidummin kuin pienissä yrityksissä. Aikaisempi tutkimus on yhteneväinen tämän väitteen kanssa, sillä sen mukaan työehtojen polkemiselle on isoissa ja etenkin julkisen alan työpaikoissa vähemmän mahdollisuuksia kuin pienissä yrityksissä, koska ensin mainituissa se on vaikeampaa kätkeä (ks. esim. Brannen ym. 1976; Batstone ym. 1983; 1984; Grint 1986; 1991).

Haastattelemani työntekijät ovat työskennelleet pääosin pienissä yrityksissä yksityisellä sektorilla, ja osa yrityksistä toimii isompien yritysten tai julkisen puolen alihankintayrityksinä. Sekä haastatteluissani esiin tulleiden tietojen että viranomaistietojen perusteella maahanmuuttajien työehtojen polkeminen on ongelma

nimenomaan pienissä yksityisyrittäjissä. Uudenmaan työsuojelupiirin työsuojelutarkastajan mukaan esimerkiksi ravintola-alalla isoissa ketjuravintoloissa ay-liike ja työpaikkakohtaiset organisaatiot pitävät huolen siitä, että lakeja noudatetaan – toisin kuin pienissä ravintoloissa (ks. Alho 2008). Toisaalta julkisen ja yksityisen sektorin rajaa on usein käytännössä vaikea vetää. Valtio ja kunnat ostavat taloudellista tehokkuutta tavoitellen aiempaa enemmän palveluita yksityiseltä puolelta. Vuonna 2007 julkisuuteen nousseessa tapauksessa ryhmälle puolalaisen aliurakointiyrittäjien puolalaisia työntekijöitä maksettiin alle kahden euron tuntipalkkaa Helsingin Musiikkitalon rakennustyömaalla (*Helsingin Sanomat* 21.12.2007). Työehtosopimusten mukainen palkka olisi ollut noin 11 euroa tunnissa. Puolalainen yritys toimi kuitenkin suomalaisen yrityksen alihankkijana, ja Musiikkitalon tosiasiallisia rahoittajia ovat valtio ja Helsingin kaupunki. Maahanmuuttajien työehtoihin liittyviä ongelmia ei siis voi pitää yksinomaan yksityisen liiketoiminnan ilmiönä.

Kaksi haastatelluista oli ammatiltaan kokkeja, joista toinen on lähtöisin Turkista (H8) ja toinen Bangladeshista (H14). Kumpikin viittaasi haastattelussa työehtoihin liittyviin epäkohtiin, joita esiintyy maahanmuuttajien omistamissa ravintoloissa. Molemmat nimesivät nämä epäkohdat ”hyväksikäytöksi”. Englanniksi haastateltu henkilö (H14) käytti termejä ”abuse” ja ”exploitation”. Kummankin mielestä nämä ongelmat koskettavat erityisesti vähän aikaa maassa asuneita maahanmuuttajia. Työsuojelupiirin edustajan ja PAMin edustajien mukaan työehtojen polkeminen (esimerkiksi alipalkkauksena) on varsin yleistä tällaisissa niin kutsutuissa etnisissä ravintoloissa Suomessa (Alho 2008). Östen Wahlbeckin (2007) tutkimus ”kebab-taloudesta” Suomessa antoi samanlaisia tuloksia. Toisaalta toinen Bangladeshista lähtöisin oleva ravintola-alan työntekijä (H17), jolla on usean vuoden kokemus työskentelystä maahanmuuttajien omistamissa ravintoloissa, ei ole kokenut minkäänlaisia ongelmia työehtojen kanssa. Hänenkin mielestään alalla poljetaan työehtoja, mutta hän jatkaa, että on pitkälti yksilöstä kiinni, minkälaiset työn ehdot työntekijä pystyy itselleen turvaamaan. Tällaisessa tilanteessa työn-

tekijän ja työntajan suhde on käytännössä henkilökohtainen eikä yhteiskunnallisesti säännelty. Virosta lähtöisin oleva rakennustyöntekijä (H4) kertoo kokemuksista, joiden perusteella työehtojen taso liittyy usein myös kansalaisuuteen. Hän mainitsee, että rakennusalan palkkahierarkiassa virolaiselle työntekijälle maksetaan samasta työstä jonkin verran vähemmän kuin suomalaiselle mutta kuitenkin enemmän kuin ukrainalaiselle, latvialaiselle tai puolalaiselle työntekijälle. Rakennustyöntekijän mukaan samasta työstä, josta suomalaiselle maksetaan rakennusalalla 14 euroa tunnissa, maksetaan virolaiselle korkeintaan 12–12,5 euroa ja venäläiselle, latvialaiselle tai ukrainalaiselle korkeintaan 8,5–10 euroa. Keskusrikospoliisin rikostarkastajan kokemus on samansuuntainen, sillä hänen mukaansa ulkomaalaisuuden vuoksi on maksettu alemmaa palkkaa nimenomaan siivous-, ravintola- ja rakennusaloilla (*Utispäivä Demari* 27.6.2008).

Suomessa työskentelevällä maahanmuuttajalla on työssä samat lailliset oikeudet kuin kantaväestöön kuuluvilla. Edellä kuvatuissa tapauksissa nämä oikeudet eivät toteutuneet ja maahanmuuttaja on perusteetta asetettu työehdoiltaan heikompaan asemaan kuin kantaväestöön kuuluva. Useat edellä esitetyt työehtojen polkemistapaukset täyttävät juridisesti etnisen syrjinnän tunnusmerkit. Syrjintää on katsottu ilmenevän työmarkkinoilla sekä työnhakuun liittyvissä tilanteissa että työpaikalla. Martin Scheininin (1996, 8) mukaan syrjintä on ihmisen asettamista eriarvoiseen asemaan sellaisin perustein, jotka eivät ole hyväksyttävissä. Etnistä syrjintää on tämän määrittelyn mukaan se, että henkilö joutuu tai hänet asetetaan huonompaan asemaan etnisen tai kansallisen alkuperänsä vuoksi.

Haastatelluista 18 maahanmuuttajasta yhdeksällä on ollut henkilökohtaisia kokemuksia ulkomaalaistaustan mukaan eriytyneistä työehdoista. Lisäksi kuusi tällaista syrjintää henkilökohtaisesti kokemattomista haastatelluista tuntee kuitenkin tapauksia, joissa maahanmuuttaja on asetettu työehdoiltaan kantaväestöön kuuluvaa työntekijää heikompaan asemaan. Useat haastatelluista painottivat, että työhön liittyvät epäkohdat, ongelmat ja hyväksikäytön kokemukset painottuvat työuran alkupuolelle.

Työehtojen polkemisesta huolimatta useimmat haastatellut ilmaisivat olevansa tyytyväisiä työhönsä. Ongelmana ei näyttäydä itse työ, vaan työn tekemisen ehdot. Jokainen tätä tutkimusta varten haastattelemani pysyvästi Suomessa asuva ja työehtojen polkemista kohdannut henkilö on silti kokenut tilanteen epäoikeudenmukaisena. Suomeksi haastatellut kuvasivat kokemiaan epäkohtia sanalla ”hyväksikäyttö”. Englanniksi haastatellut taas käyttivät sanoja ”exploitation”, ”abuse” tai ”misuse”, jotka suomeksi käännettyinä tarkoittaisivat ”hyväksikäyttöä”, ”väärinkäyttöä” tai ”riistoa”. Vaikka edellä käsitellyt epäkohdat täyttävät etnisen syrjinnän tunnusmerkit, on perusteltua kyseenalaistaa, kuinka vahvasti ilmiötä on syytä hahmottaa etnisyys-käsitteen avulla. Useimmat haastatelluista selittivät työmarkkinoilla kokemansa (tai tietämänsä) työehtojen polkemisen sillä, että heidän haavoittuvaa asemaansa, valintojen vähyyttä tai työlainsäädännön puutetta on hyödynnetty taloudellisesti. Monet heistä painottivat, että suomalaisen työelämätietouden ja erilaisten valintojen vähyys maahanmuuton alkuaikoina lisäsi mahdollisuutta joutua huonoon asemaan työmarkkinoilla. Toisaalta eräät haastatellut kokivat, että työlainsäädännön tuntemisestakaan ei ollut apua heikossa neuvotteluasemassa. Haastatteluissa hyväksikäytön ja riiston kokemukset liittyivät enimmäkseen muodollisiin työehtoihin, kuten palkkaan ja työaikoihin, mutta joissakin haastatteluissa nousi esiin myös halpatyöhön liittyvä tunne vaihdettavuudesta ja työsuhteen epävarmuudesta: ”Työnantaja käytti hyväkseen, ja ei tullut minikäänlaista työvuorolistaa, että aina elettiin päivä kerrallaan” (H8). Bangladeshilainen kokki kuvasi puolestaan epävarmuuden kokemusta seuraavasti:

Työajat... jos teet seitsemän tunnin sijaan 14 tai 12 tuntia työtä [päivässä] ja saat vähemmän rahaa... kovaa työtä ja olet koko ajan rajussa tilanteessa sikäli että saatat menettää työsi, se vaikuttaa sinuun henkisesti. Joka tavalla. (H14b.) (Rolle Alhon suomennos englannin kielestä.)

Maahanmuuttajien työehtojen polkemista ei ole siis syytä hahmottaa pelkästään talouspoliittisena työmarkkinakysymyksenä, sillä halpatyöhön liittyvällä epävarmuudella on edellisen lainauksen kuvaamalla tavalla myös psykologinen ulottuvuus. Maahanmuuttajien kokemukset työehtojen polkemisesta nivoivat yhteen työsuhteiden heikot materiaaliset ehdot sekä epävarmuuteen liittyvän henkisen rasituksen. Epävarmuus työn jatkumisesta pakotti joustamaan työehdoissa (vrt. H 7, H 12), ja heikot materiaaliset työehdot loivat henkistä kuormitusta. Haastateltujen joukosta löytyi myös päinvastaisia kokemuksia, joita käsitelen seuraavassa osiossa.

### **Pendelöivät virolaiset – elämää kahdessa maassa**

Haastattelin tutkimustani varten viittä vironvirolaista työntekijää, joita käsitelen seuraavassa omana ryhmänään. Kutsun heitä pendelöijiksi. Viittaen käsitteellä toistuvaan työssäkäyntiin kahden valtion rajojen yli. Pendelöijät muodostavat oman kategoriansa haastateltujen joukossa kolmesta syystä. Ensiksikin, he ovat Suomessa lähinnä työnsä takia eli he ovat niin sanottuja työperäisiä maahanmuuttajia. Monet muut tätä tutkimusta varten haastatellut henkilöt olivat tulleet maahan pääasiassa avioliiton tai parisuhteen tai pakolaisuuden tai turvapaikanhaun myötä. Toiseksi, heidän asumisensa Suomessa on tilapäistä ja kausittaista. He ovat työskennelleet lähinnä toimisto- tai rakennussiivouksen parissa tai rakennustyöntekijöinä. Kolmanneksi, he eivät omasta mielestään ole kokeneet sellaisia työehtoihin liittyviä epäkohtia, jotka he liittäisivät maahanmuuttajan statukseen.

Tulkitsen tämän virolaisryhmän tilannetta *transnationalismin* käsitteen avulla. Transnationalismilla viitataan sellaisiin tilanteisiin, joissa maahanmuuttajat säilyttävät siteensä omaan lähtömaahansa, jolloin lähtö- ja kohdemaasta muotoutuu heille yhtenäinen sosiaalisen toiminnan kenttä (Margolis 1995, 29). Transnationalismin

näkökulma korostaa siirtolaisten liikkuvuutta ja heidän kykyään kommunikoida eri valtiollisten ja kulttuuristen rajojen yli (esim. Hannerz 1996; Vertovec 1999). Transnationalismiin liitetään myös kuulumisen, kodin, paikan ja identiteetin kokemusten monimuotoistuminen, kun viestintä ja ihmisten liikkuvuus ylittävät valtiolliset rajat (Morley 2001).

Pendelöijät pitävät tiivistä yhteyttä Virossa oleviin ystäviin ja perheenjäseniin sähköpostitse ja puhelimitse. Kaikki viisi ovat työskennelleet Helsingissä ja kaikki ovat matkustaneet säännöllisin väliajoin, tiheimmillään joka viikonloppuna, Viroon perheen ja ystävien luo. Eräs haastateltu rakennustyöntekijä (H5) sanoo olevansa Suomessa ”jo seitsemättä tai kahdeksatta” kertaa työssä. Toinen rakennustyöntekijä (H4) kertoo työskennelleensä Suomessa jaksoittain ”noin neljä vuotta”. Joka toinen viikonloppu hän on matkustanut Viroon pidennetylle viikonloppulomalle.

Pendelöijät tunnetaan myös ammattiliitoissa. Rakennusliiton jäsenlehdessä *Rakentajassa* (10/2006) kerrotaan virolaisesta rakennustyöntekijästä, ”jonka voi sanoa käyvän Tallinnasta töissä, niin lyhyeksi työviikko Suomessa jää”. Viron ja Helsingin seudun välillä pendelöiviä virolaisia oli Helsingin kaupungin maahanmuutto-osaston arvion mukaan vuonna 2008 kaikkiaan noin 10 000. Pendelöijien tilanteessa on yhtymäkohtia suomalaisiin niin sanottuihin reppumiehiin, joita nykyään usein kutsutaan projektimiehiksi. Tällaisia liikkuvia työntekijöitä on Suomessakin pitkään ollut erityisesti rakennusalalla. He ovat kulkeneet työpaikan mukana joko maan sisällä tai kysynnän mukaan myös Suomen ja naapurimaiden välillä. Viime vuosikymmeninä suomalaisia rakennusalan työntekijöitä on lähtenyt myös kokonaan ulkomaille. Kuten suomalaiset ”reppurit” ja projektimiehet, myös virolaiset pendelöijät valitsevat tai joutuvat valitsemaan liikkumisen työn perässä pysyvän muuttamisen sijaan.

Haastatellut ovat tulleet Suomeen työhön täällä aiemmin työskennelleiden ystävien suositusten perusteella. Ystävillä on ollut myönteisiä kokemuksia Suomessa työskentelystä. Haastatelluista yksi rakennustyöntekijä työskenteli virolaisessa rakennusliikkeessä,

joka on suomalaisen yrityksen alihankintayritys. Muut neljä työskentelivät suomalaiselle työnantajalle. Pendelöijät kertoivat työskentelevänsä Suomessa ennen kaikkea Suomen Viroa korkeamman palkkatason takia. Suomi edustaa heille ”parempaa työntekopaikkaa” pitkälti samalla tavalla kuin Ruotsi niille suomalaisille, jotka muuttivat sinne 1960- ja 1970-luvulla. Paremman palkan lisäksi Suomessa työskentelyn eduiksi suhteessa Viroon haastatellut kertovat lyhyemmät työpäivät, luotettavan palkanmaksun, ylityökorvaukset, paremman työturvallisuuden rakennustyömailla sekä demokraattisemman työkulttuurin. Pääkaupunkiseudulla noin neljä vuotta työskennellyt rakennustyöntekijä (H 4) mainitsee, että Virossa työpäivät rakennuksilla voivat olla 10–12-tuntisia, kun Suomessa vastaavasti ”selviää” 8 tunnilla. Yliopisto-opinnoista Virossa välivuotta pitänyt toimistosiiivoija (H 18) kuvailee Suomea Viroa ”työntekijäystävällisemmäksi” maaksi. Hänelle kokopäivätoiminen toimistosiiivoisuus Suomessa on tapa kohentaa omaa taloudellista tilannetta.

Yhdysvaltalainen työmarkkinatutkija Michael J. Piore (1979, 95) käyttää edellä kuvatuista instrumentaalisella tavalla työhön suhtautuvista ihmisistä käsitettä *tavoitteellinen ansaitsija* (*target earner*). Hän viittaa käsitteellä tietyssä kohdemaassa tilapäisesti työskenteleviin maahanmuuttajiin, jotka ovat valmiita työskentelemään sellaisissa tehtävissä ja sellaisilla työehdoilla, jotka eivät houkuttele kantaväestöä (ks. myös Nordberg, luku 11 tässä teoksessa). Heille tilapäinen työskentely kohdemaassa on keino nostaa sosioekonomista statustaan lähtömaassa. Viron ja Suomen maantieteellinen, kulttuurinen ja kielellinen läheisyys yhdistettynä suureen eroon maiden välisessä palkkatasossa ja työehdoissa tekee Suomesta vetovoimaisen työskentelymaan.

Ansaitsemisen mahdollisuus ei kuitenkaan sulje pois epäkohtien esiintymistä. Eräs haastateltu rakennusmies (H 4) kertoo, että virolaiselle maksetaan rakennustyössä Suomessa jonkin verran vähemmän palkkaa kuin suomalaiselle (samasta työstä). Hän ei kuitenkaan kuvaa palkkaeroja epäkohtana. Hänelle on omien sanojensa mukaan ensisijaista, että hän pystyy ansaitsemaan

Helsingissä kahdessa viikossa sen, mitä hän kuukaudessa ansaitsisi vastaavassa työssä Tallinnassa.

Pendelöijien kuva Suomessa työskentelystä on ylipäätään myönteinen. Kantaväestön näkökulmasta pendelöijien työsuhteen palkka- ja työehdot voivat olla heikot, mutta maassa tilapäisesti työskentelevän työntekijän perspektiivistä ne voivat silti olla houkuttelevat. Tällainen ”vähempään tyytyvä” ja kantaväestöstä poikkeava asennoituminen tekee pendelöijistä työntajille ”houkuttelevaa työvoimaa”, kuten tätä tutkimusta varten haastatellut rakennusalan yrittäjät kuvasivat. Molemmat pendelöiviä virolaisia palkanneet yrittäjät olivat sitä mieltä, että pendelöivien motivaatio rakennustyöhön on ”parempi” kuin kantaväestöön kuuluvilla rakennustyöntekijöillä. Esimerkkinä paremmasta työmotivaatiosta mainitaan joustavampi suhtautuminen työaikoihin, suomalaisiin verrattuna vähäinen alkoholin käyttö sekä korkeampi kynnyks valittaa epämiellyttävistä työoloista, kuten huonosta säästä. ”Jos jotain [työntekoon liittyvää] napinaa tulee, niin se on yleensä suomalaisten taholta [eikä virolaisten]”, kertoo virolaisia pendelöijä palkannut yrittäjä (H 21). Tällaiset kokemukset ja asenteet työnantajien keskuudessa eivät ole uusia. Seppo Paanasen (1993, 92–93) 1990-luvun alussa tekemä, ulkomaista työvoimaa rakennusalalla käsittelevä tutkimus antoi jo viitteitä siitä, että työnantajat liittivät virolaisiin ja venäläisiin rakennustyöntekijöihin kantaväestöä enemmän positiivisia ominaisuuksia. Tällaisia ominaisuuksia olivat esimerkiksi suomalaista työntekijää pienempi palkka, luotettavuus ja ahkeruus. Lisäksi ulkomaisten rakennustyöntekijöiden eduksi katsottiin, että he suostuivat myös siivoamaan, ”mihin perinteisesti pitäisi hankkia rakennusnainen tai siivousliike” (Paananen 1993, 92). Myöhemmässä työperäiseen maahanmuuttoon liittyvässä suomalaisessa mediakeskustelussa vastaavalla tavalla filippiiniläisiin sairaanhoitajiin on liitetty työnantajaa miellyttäviä ominaisuuksia, kuten ahkeruus ja nöyryys (ks. Simola 2008).

Toisaalta haastattelemillani yrittäjillä on ollut kokemuksia siitä, että myös pendelöijät käyvät ajan myötä vaativammiksi suhteessa työnantajaan. Tässä mielessä heidän vaatimustasonsa ”suomalaistuu”.

Nykytilanteessa on kuitenkin aina mahdollisuus rekrytoida uusia pendelöijiiä, joiden avulla vaatimustasoa voidaan hillitä. Eräs pendelöijistä (H 5) mainitsi, että hänet korvattiin virovenäläisellä työntekijällä, kun hän ei suostunut tekemään työtään ilman verokorttia. Eräs yrittäjä (H 20b) kertoo, että Viroon rekisteröityjen työvoimanvuokrausyritysten kautta on mahdollista vuokrata ammattitaitoista ja kantaväestöä huomattavasti halvempaa virolaista työvoimaa. Hän tiesi myös kertoa helsinkiläisellä työmaalla sattuneesta tapauksesta, jossa kantaväestöön kuuluneita työntekijöitä korvattiin halvemmilla romanialaisilla työntekijöillä.

On syytä painottaa, että aineistoni pendelöijät eivät edusta koko tilannetta. Yksikään haastatelluista pendelöijistä ei nimittäin työskentele Suomessa Viroon rekisteröityneen työnvoimanvuokrausyrityksen kautta. Suomeen virolaisia työntekijöitä välittäneiden yritysten – joista osa on suomalaisten omistamia – työehtojen noudattamiseen on liittynyt ongelmia. Monet näistä yrityksistä ovat maksaneet suomalaisiin työehtosopimukseen nähden liian pieniä palkkoja (ks. Kyntäjä 2008). Työnvuokrausyritysten kautta Suomessa työskennelleiden virolaisten kokemukset Suomessa työskentelystä saattavat siis olla hyvinkin toisenlaiset kuin edellä käsiteltyjen haastateltujen kokemukset.

Maahanmuuttajat ovat ammattiliittojen näkökulmasta tärkeä ryhmä työehtojen valvonnan näkökulmasta, sillä niiden intresseihin ei kuulu kantaväestön ja maahanmuuttajien työehtojen eriytyminen. Ei ole kuitenkaan itsestään selvää, että maahanmuuttajat ovat kiinnostuneita liittojen jäsenyydestä. Tarkastelen seuraavassa osiossa ammattiliittojen tulkintoja maahanmuuttajien asemasta sekä erilaisissa tilanteissa olevien maahanmuuttajien kokemuksia ammattiliitoista.

## Ammattiliittojen näkemykset maahanmuuttajien asemasta työelämässä ja maahanmuuttajien suhde ammattiliittoihin

Aikaisemman tutkimuksen perusteella Rakennusliitto ja PAM jäsen­  
tävät maahanmuuttajien tekemän matalapalkkatyön useasti riis­  
ton ja hyväksikäytön käsitteiden avulla (ks. Paananen 1993; Alho  
2008; Forsander 2008). Tässä osiossa pohditaan, voidaanko näiden  
ammattiliittojen käyttämien riiston ja hyväksikäytön käsitteiden  
avulla todella kuvata haastateltujen maahanmuuttajien kohtaa­  
mia epäkohtia. Jo tämän luvun pohjana olevat aineistot osoittavat,  
että sekä Rakennusliiton että PAMin näkökulmasta maahanmuut­  
tajat ovat kantaväestöä heikommassa neuvotteluasemassa työmark­  
kinoilla. Rakennusliiton puheenjohtaja on ilmaissut asian niin, että  
”ulkomaalaisille työntekijöille liian usein etsitään tariffipalkkoista  
pienin kuviteltavissa oleva palkka, joka vielä pyritään alittamaan”  
(*Rakentaja* 1/2005). PAMin jäsenlehdessä (4/2005) mainitaan, että  
yksityisillä palvelualoilla ”ulkomaalaisten törkeästä hyväksikäytöstä  
on runsaasti kokemuksia”. PAM on myös nostanut esille esimerkiksi  
Kiinasta Suomeen rekrytoitujen siivoojien työsuhteisiin liittyviä  
ongelmia (ks. esim. *PAM-lehti* 18/2008). Rakennusliiton jäsenleh­  
dessä taas todetaan: ”Ulkomaalaisia työntekijöitä riistetään kaikkein  
pahimmin” (*Rakentaja* 5/2006). Tällaisia tulkintoja esitettiin esimer­  
kiksi vuoden 2008 jäsenkampanjan yhteydessä. PAMin toinen vara­  
puheenjohtaja painotti maahanmuuttajien haavoittuvaa asemaa:  
”Usein maahanmuuttaja on joutunut tilanteeseen, jossa hänet on  
pakotettu hyväksymään selkeästi alan työehtoja huonommat ehdot.”  
(PAMin tiedote 28.1.2008.) Myös kansainvälisesti ay-liike määrittää  
maahanmuuttajien tekemän työn pitkälti käsitteellä ”exploitation”,  
joka suomeksi kääntyy ”riistoksi” tai ”hyväksikäytöksi”. Esimerkiksi  
vuonna 2007 järjestetyn eurooppalaisen ammatillisen yhteistyöjär­  
jestön konferenssin eri maiden ay-edustajat hahmottivat ulkomai­  
sen halpatyövoiman tilanteen nimenomaan *exploitation*-diskurssin  
avulla (Workplace Europe 13.–15.3.2007).

Aikaisempi tutkimus esittää, että Rakennusliiton tapa määrittää ulkomainen työntekijä riiston kohteeksi ja toimet tämän riiston estämiseksi ovat keinoja suojella oman jäsenistön etuja ulkomaisen työvoiman tuottamalta palkkakilpailulta (Paananen 1993; Forsander 2008). Tällainen tulkinta on yksinkertaistava, sillä ammattiliitot eivät ole yhden näkemyksen valtakoneistoja vaan järjestöjä, joissa useat vastakkaisetkin motiivit, arvot ja ideologiat muokkaavat ja suuntaavat niissä toimivien ihmisten toimintaa. On myös ongelmallista olettaa, että ”oman edun” ajaminen on lähtökohtaisesti ristiriidassa riiston tai hyväksikäytön estämisen kanssa.

Rakennusliiton ja PAMin kannanotot kuitenkin esittävät maahanmuuttajien työehtojen ajamisen edunvalvontakysymyksenä, joka nähdään koko jäsenistön intressien mukaisena työehtojen puolustamisena. Maahanmuuttajien heikkojen työehtojen pelätään heijastuvan suomalaisille työmarkkinoille laajemminkin. Tosin maahanmuuttajien työehtoihin liittyviin epäkohtiin puuttumista perustellaan myös moraalisiin ja humanitaarisin argumentein. Rakennusliiton tiedotuspäällikkö toteaa, että ”ulkomailta tulleiden työntekijöiden auttaminen on joka tapauksessa inhimillisesti oikein että suomalaistenkin kannalta järkevää” (*Uutispäivä Demari* 27.1.2009). Maahanmuuttajien yhdenvertaisuus työelämässä esitetään ay-lehdissä sukupuolten tasa-arvon ajamiseen rinnastuvana edunvalvontakysymyksenä (Simola 2008).

Moraalifilosofiassa ja poliittisessa filosofiassa käsitteellä *exploitation* viitataan yleensä epäoikeudenmukaisena ja tuomittavana pidettävään sosiaaliseen tai taloudelliseen suhteeseen. Sekä Rakennusliitto että PAM käyttävät riiston ja hyväksikäytön käsitteitä kuvaamaan maahanmuuttajien työehtoihin liittyviä epäkohtia pikemminkin normatiivisessa ja moraalisisessa mielessä kuin ”oikeaoppisessa” marxilaisessa merkityksessä. Marxilaisesta lähtökohdasta palkkatyösuhde perustuu kapitalismissa aina riistolle ja ainoastaan riistoaste vaihtelee (ks. esim. Desai 2008). Ammattiliitot eivät kuitenkaan lähtökohtaisesti ja johdonmukaisesti määritä kaikkea palkkatyötä riistoksi. Ay-liikkeen globalisaatiostrategioita tutkinut Mika Helander (2008, 374)

esittäkin, että suomalainen ay-liike on post-marxilaisessa vaiheessa, jossa ”toimintaa ohjaavat pragmaattiset edunvalvontalähtökohdat markkinatalouden yhteiskunnallisessa kehikossa”.

Ammattijärjestöjen tavassa käyttää riiston ja hyväksikäytön käsitteistöä on eroja. PAMin jäsenlehdessä kritisoidaan miedommin maahanmuuttajien ”hyväksikäyttöä”, kun taas Rakennusliiton jäsenlehdessä tuomitaan moraalisisista lähtökohdista nimenomaan maahanmuuttajien ”riisto”. Myös aikaisempi tutkimus on kiinnittänyt huomiota siihen, että Rakennusliiton kannanotoissa käytetään riiston käsitettä (ks. Paananen 1993; Forsander 2008). Erisävyisten käsitteiden valinnalla saattaa olla yhteys näiden kahden ammattiliiton erilaiseen poliittiseen historiaan, sillä Rakennusliitto edustaa radikaalimpaa vasemmistolaisuutta kuin PAM (Rakennusliiton historiasta ks. Helin 1998; Bergholm 2007). Ero tulee esiin esimerkiksi liittojen julkisissa kannanotoissa sekä niiden jäsenlehdissä tai liittojen puheenjohtajien puoluetaustassa. Yhteistä molemmille liitoille kuitenkin on, että ne käyttävät näitä käsitteitä pragmaattisesti, ei tiukan teoreettisesta näkökulmasta. Käsitteillä kuvataan todellista tilannetta, jossa maahanmuuttaja työskentelee joko alle suomalaisen työehtojen tai suomalaista työntekijää huonommin työehdoin ilman hyväksyttävää perustetta. Näin riiston ja hyväksikäytön raja sijaitsee ammattiliittojen mukaan sillä tasolla, jossa niiden neuvottelemien työehtosopimusten asettamat minimistandardit ovat.

Voidaan kysyä, miten ammattijärjestöjen työmarkkinasuhteiden makrotasolle viittaavat tulkinnat suhtautuvat maahanmuuttajien kokemuksiin. Haastateltujen maahanmuuttajien suhtautuminen ammattiliittoihin ja niiden mahdollisuuksiin ratkaista maahanmuuttajien kohtaamia epäkohtia oli hyvin vaihteleva. Joukossa on työntekijöitä, joilla on pitkälle vietyjä näkemyksiä siitä, miten esimerkiksi Rakennusliiton tai PAMin tulisi toimia. Kaksi haastatelluista on myös toiminut luottamusmiehenä. Heille ammattiliittoon kuuluminen on yhteiskunnallisessa ja ideologisessa mielessä ”itsesäänselvyyttä”. Joukossa on myös haastateltuja, jotka eivät ole nähneet minkäänlaista syytä liittyä ammattiliittoon.

Haastatelluista maahanmuuttajista kahdeksan kuului haastatteluajankohtana ammattiliittoon (joko Rakennusliittoon tai PAMiin, kaksi ei ollut varmoja, mihin ammattiliittoon kuului) ja kymmenen ei kuulunut mihinkään liittoon. Rakennustyöntekijöistä kaksi työskenteli pienyrittäjinä rakennusalalla, mutta he olivat aikaisemmin työskennelleet palkansaajina samalla alalla. Kumpikaan heistä ei ollut kuulunut Rakennusliittoon. Saatavilla olevien lukujen perusteella maahanmuuttajien keskimääräinen ammatillinen järjestäytymisaste vuoden 2006 lopussa oli arviolta 26 prosenttia (Alho 2008).<sup>5</sup> Tämä on melko alhainen luku verrattuna kantaväestön noin 70 prosentin järjestäytymisasteeseen. Maahanmuuttajien kantaväestöä alhaisempi ammatillinen järjestäytymisaste koskee myös tässä luvussa käsitellyjä aloja (ks. Alho 2008; Forsander 2008). Seuraavassa tarkastellaan joitakin haastatteluissa esiin tulleita seikkoja, jotka antavat ainakin osittaisen selityksen, miksi maahanmuuttajat liittyvät kantaväestöä harvemmin ammattiliittoihin.

Pääosa virolaisista haastatelluista oli ainoastaan väliaikaisesti Suomessa työskenteleviä pendelöijä. He eivät olleet kokeneet tarpeelliseksi liittyä suomalaiseen ammattiliittoon. Vain yksi viidestä oli liittynyt liittoon, ja hänkin vasta neljä vuotta Suomessa työskennellyään. Haastateltujen joukossa oli myös kaksi rakennussiivojaa, jotka kertoivat kuuluvansa ”johonkin ammattiliittoon” mutta eivät tienneet, mihin niistä. Tämä kuvaa etäistä suhdetta liittoon.

Haastateltujen kokemukset (tai kokemusten puute) lähtömaiden ammattiliitoista vaikuttivat siihen tapaan, jolla he suhtautuivat ammattiliiton jäsenyyteen Suomessa. Esimerkiksi joillakin entisen Neuvostoliiton alueelta muuttaneilla työntekijöillä oli negatiivisia kokemuksia sikäläisistä ammattiliitoista, joita he eivät pitäneet työntekijän vaan valtion ja poliittisen järjestelmän etuja ajaneina järjestöinä. Lisäksi monet maahanmuuttajat ovat tulleet maista, joissa ammattiliittojen merkitys on vähäinen ja joissa niihin ei ole tapana kuulua. Myös sillä on merkitystä, miten työntekijä olettaa työnantajan reagoivan ammattiliiton jäsenyyteen. Ravintola-alalla työskennelleen, afrikkalaisesta valtiosta lähtöisin olevan työntekijän mielestä

ammattiliitot ajavat työntekijän etua, ja hän harkitsee liittymistä. Toisaalta hän pelkää, että työnantaja reagoisi negatiivisesti liiton jäsenyyteen:

RA: Kuulutko ammattiliittoon?

H 6: Kun juttelin sen naisen kanssa siellä ammattiliitossa [PAM], niin hän kertoi että mikäli saan uuden työn, minun kannattaa liittyä jäseneksi. Olen hakenut kesäksi työtä enkä tiedä mitään näistä ammattiliitoista, mutta se nainen [PAMissa] kehotti minua liittymään, eli jos saan uuden ravintolatyön, aion liittyä jäseneksi.

RA: Aiot siis liittyä?

H 6: Kyllä, mutta pelkään silti työnantajan suhtautumista [ammattiliittoon liittymiseen]. (Rolle Alhon suomennos englannin kielestä.)

Pelko työnantajan negatiivisesta suhtautumisesta liittoon kuulumiseen ei ehkä ole aiheeton, sillä erään virolaisen rakennussiivoojan (H 19) kertomuksen perusteella ainakin rakennusalalla on työnantajia, jotka eivät halua työntekijän kuuluvan ammattiliittoon.

Haastatellut maahanmuuttajat eivät itse ilmaisseet mitään erityistä ammattiyhdistysvastaisuutta, mutta jotkut arvostelivat ammattiliittoja tehottomasta tiedottamisesta sekä siitä, että ammattiliitot eivät juuri ole palkanneet maahanmuuttajia toimitsijoiksi. Heidän mielestään maahanmuuttajat tarvitsevat perustietoa liitoista ja niiden roolista. Afrikkalaisesta valtiosta kotoisin oleva ravintolatyöntekijä (H 6) kuvasi, miten maahanmuuttajatyöntekijän tietämättömyys ja pelko lisäävät työnantajan valtaa:

Me [maahanmuuttajatyöntekijät] emme tiedä oikeuksiamme. Pelkäämme, koska tiedämme, että ei ole ketään kenelle voimme kertoa ongelmistamme. Ja tiedätkö: pomot tietävät että me emme tiedä, ja he käyttävät tilannetta hyväksi. (H 6.) (Rolle Alhon suomennos englannin kielestä.)

Muutamit haastatelluista liittyivät ammattiliittoon vasta työelämässä kokemiensa epäkohtien vuoksi. Etnisen syrjinnän tunnusmerkit täyttävistä kokemuksista kertoneet haastatellut eivät syrjinnän tapahtuessa olleet ammattiliiton jäseniä, joten he eivät hakeneet apua ammattiliitosta. Ainoastaan yksi etnistä syrjintää kokeneista oli ottanut yhteyttä juristiin. Maahanmuuttajien ja ammattiliiton suhteessa ristiriitaista on se, että ammattiliiton jäseniä eivät ole ne maahanmuuttajat tai muut työntekijät, joilla on vain vähän tietoa työhön liittyvistä oikeuksista ja velvollisuuksista ja jotka ovat marginaalisessa asemassa työmarkkinoilla. Työntekijöiden suhtautuminen ammattiliittoihin on suhteessa heidän henkilökohtaiseen työhistoriaansa sekä siihen kontekstiin, missä he tekevät työtä (ks. esim. Tomlinson 2005). Kärjistetysti voidaan sanoa, että jäseniä eivät ole ne, jotka eniten saataisivat hyötyä ammattiliiton jäsenyydestä esimerkiksi työehtojen rikkomistapauksissa. Tähän ryhmään kuitenkin nimenomaan kuuluisivat maahan muuttaneet matalan statuksen alojen työntekijät.

Suomessa ei ole julkaistu tutkimusta maahanmuuton vaikutuksista palkkoihin ja työehtoihin. Ammattiliittojen edustajien väitteet maahanmuuttajien työehtojen polkemisen negatiivisesta vaikutuksesta palkkakehitykseen edellä mainitussa SAK:n järjestämässä seminaarissa perustuvat heidän omiin arvioihinsa. Mikäli kuitenkin PAMin ja Rakennusliiton edustajien arviot pitävät paikkansa, voitaisiin marxilaisesta näkökulmasta väittää maahanmuuton ja ulkomaisen työvoiman käytön lisänneen riistoa yksityisellä palvelualalla ja rakennusalalla ainakin sillä tavalla, että 1990-luvun laman jälkeinen taloudellinen kasvu on hyödyttänyt pääomaa palkkatyöntekijöiden kustannuksella.

Toisaalta yksilötasolla voidaan kysyä, kokeeko kantaväestöä heikommin työehdoin työskentelevä maahanmuuttaja itsensä riistetyksi. Vaikka suomalaisten työmarkkinoiden yleisen palkkatason ja työehtojen perusteella voitaisiin Suomessa tilapäisesti työskentelevä virolainen tai esimerkiksi puolalainen rakennustyöntekijä määrittää riistetyksi, kyseinen henkilö ei välttämättä itse koe tilannettaan riistoksi. Hän voi nimittäin verrata omaa palkkatasoaan kotimaansa

huomattavasti matalampaan palkkatasoon. Yhtä henkilöä lukuun ottamatta tätä tutkimusta varten haastatellut työntekijät ovat tulleet maista, joiden palkkataso on huomattavasti alhaisempi kuin Suomen. Tämä pätee yleisesti suurimpaan osaan työn perässä Suomeen muuttajia. On muistettava, että jokainen maahanmuuttaja on myös maastamuuttaja. Tutkimukseni yhteydessä se tarkoittaa, että maahanmuuttaja suhteuttaa tekemänsä työn (ainakin aluksi) myös tilanteeseensa lähtömaassaan. Näin tekivät esimerkiksi tässä tutkimuksessa käsitellyt pendelöivät virolaiset. Lisäksi kun maahanmuuttajien työttömyys on Suomessa noin kolme kertaa korkeampi kuin kantaväestön, huonoillakin työehdoilla tehty työ voi olla sekä taloudellisesti, psykologisesti että sosiaalisesti houkuttelevampaa kuin työttömyys (ks. myös Ahmad, luku 4, sekä Himanen & Könönen, luku 3 tässä teoksessa).

## Lopuksi

Tässä luvussa on tarkasteltu sekä maahanmuuttajien kokemuksia että kahden ammattiliiton virallisia näkemyksiä maahanmuuttajien työehdoista sekä yksityisillä palvelualoilla että rakennusosalalla. Työnantajanäkökulmaa olen hahmottanut haastattelemalla virolaisia rakennustyöntekijöitä työllistäneitä yrittäjiä.

Haastatellut maahanmuuttajat käyttävät kohtaamistaan epäkohdista joko englanninkielisiä sanoja ”exploitation”, ”abuse” ja ”misuse” tai suomalaista sanaa ”hyväksikäyttö”. He yhdistävät työehtojen polkemisen etenkin valintojen vähyyteen työmarkkinoilla, mikä liittyy erityisesti Suomessa olon alkuvaiheisiin, sekä heidän neuvotteluasemansa heikkouteen. Haastatteluaineisto vahvistaa aikaisemman tutkimuksen (Power & Hardman 1978) esittämän väitteen maahanmuuttajien taipumuksesta hyväksyä kantaväestöä heikompia työehtoja heidän heikon neuvotteluasemansa vuoksi. Tutkimuksen aineisto antaa myös viitteitä siitä, että työehtojen polkeminen

keskittyy pikemminkin pien- kuin suuryrityksiin. On syytä painottaa, että haastatteluissa esiin nousseet ongelmat liittyivät työn tekemisen ehtoihin eivätkä työtehtäviin tai toimenkuvaan.

Varsinkin Suomessa pitkään asuneet maahanmuuttajat pitävät alle suomalaisten työehtojen tehtyä työtä ammattiliittojen tapaan hyväksikäyttönä ja riistona. Maahanmuuttajien ja ammattijärjestöjen tulkinnat riistosta ja hyväksikäytöstä ovat siis osittain yhteneväisiä, ja osalla maahanmuuttajista on selkeästi ammattiliittoihin kohdistuvia odotuksia. Virolaisten pendelöijien haastatteluista ei välity riiston tai hyväksikäytön kokemuksia ammattijärjestöjen kuvaamalla tavalla, sillä heille työskentely Suomessa on vaihtoehto Viron pitkille työpäiville ja matalalle palkkatasolle. Jotkut haastatteluista maahanmuuttajista painottivat jatkuvaa pelkoa tulla korvatuksi ”vähempään tyytyvällä” työntekijällä sekä tilanteen henkistä kuormittavuutta. Työehtojen polkeminen ei aiheuta ainoastaan taloudellisia seurauksia, sillä työntekijä kokee sen myös merkkinä vähempiarvoisena työntekijänä pitämisestä.

Onko ammattiliitoilla edellytyksiä edustaa maahanmuuttajia? Edellä on käynyt selväksi, että maahanmuuttajien työehtojen polkemisen takia kysyntää järjestäytyneelle edunvalvonnalle on, sillä yksittäisen maahanmuuttajan mahdollisuudet puolustaa oikeuksiaan voivat olla hyvinkin rajalliset. Tästä lähtökohdasta ammattiliitoilla voisi olla tärkeä rooli maahanmuuttajien työehtojen puolustajana ja kohentajana. Maahanmuuttajien osallistumista ay-liikkeeseen voidaan perustella myös sopeutumisen ja vaikuttamismahdollisuuksien näkökulmasta, sillä suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa ay-liike kuuluu keskeisiin vallankäyttäjiin. Toisaalta haastatteluaineisto osoittaa, että ay-liikkeen (tai viranomaisten) kontrolli ja suoja eivät välttämättä ylety epävarmoihin työmarkkina-asemiin. Mikäli valtio ja ammattiliitot eivät kykene suojaamaan maahanmuuttajien työehtoja, suomalainen työsopimusjärjestelmä voi rapautua ja siten työelämän laatu voi heikentyä. Kansallisuuden tai etnisyyden perusteella eriytyneet työehdot voivat myös aiheuttaa erityisesti taloudellisen taantumien aikana etnisiä jännitteitä työmarkkinoilla. Tämänkaltainen

argumentaatio edustaa eräänlaista ”kansallisen edun näkökulmaa”, mutta kuten haastatteluaineistoni osoittaa, maahanmuuttajien työehtojen polkeminen on ongelma myös yksittäisen maahanmuuttajan näkökulmasta.

Tässä luvussa on sivuttu myös etnisen syrjinnän käsitettä, mutta se kuvaa ainoastaan osittain edellä kuvattuja työehtojen polkemistapauksia. Työehtojen polkemista löytyy nimittäin yhtä lailla etnisten ryhmien sisältä kuin niiden väliltä.

Haastatellut maahanmuuttajat ovat tietyllä tavalla sopeutuneet suomalaisille työmarkkinoille, mutta samaan aikaan he joutuvat matalapalkka-aloilla eräänlaiseen marginaaliin. Vaikka laadullisen haastatteluaineiston avulla ei voida mitata ilmiöiden edustavuutta, lienee maahanmuuttajien halpatyöhön liittyvistä epäkohdista puhuttaessa kuvaavaa, että lähes viidennes vuonna 2008 PAMissa selvitettyinä olleista erimielisyysasioista koski maahanmuuttajia. Jäsenistöstä heitä oli kuitenkin ainoastaan 1,5 prosenttia. Uudenmaan työsuojelupiirin vuonna 2006 tekemät tarkastukset osoittivat niin ikään, että maahanmuuttajien työehtoihin liittyy yleisesti ongelmia (Alho 2008).

Tässä luvussa kuvatut työehtojen polkemisen käytännöt ovat omiaan ”ohjaamaan” maahanmuuttajia halpatyövoimaksi suomalaisilla työmarkkinoilla. Maahanmuuttajan työskenteleminen matalapalkkaisessa matalan statuksen työssä ei sinänsä ole osoitus etnisestä epätasa-arvosta. Sen sijaan eriarvoisuutta on saman työn tekeminen eri työehdoilla kuin kantaväestöön kuuluva henkilö. Niin ikään kysymyksessä on eriarvoisuus, mikäli maahanmuuttaja on päätenyt esimerkiksi koulutustaan alempaan työmarkkina-asemaan etnisen taustansa takia tai mikäli hänen sosiaalinen nousunsa yhteiskunnassa estyy etnisyyden vuoksi. Tämä vaikuttaa negatiivisesti maahanmuuttajan yhteiskunnallisen aseman muovautumiseen.

Rakennusalat ja yksityiset palvelualat ovat työvoimavaltaisia aloja, joissa kilpailuetua haetaan työn hinnalla. Tässä mielessä vähemmän tyytyvä tai tyytymään joutuva maahanmuuttaja on palkkakustannuksia laskeva tekijä. Työelämän eriarvoisuus ja epävarmuus

näyttäytyvät ehkä maahanmuuton ja työmarkkinoiden globalisoitumisen myötä uudessa muodossa, mutta pyrkimys työn hinnan halventamiseen ei ole uusi käytäntö. Marxin mukaan tämä ilmiö liittyy keskeisesti kapitalistiseen tuotantotapaan. Maahanmuuttajien työehdoilla haetaan taloudellista hyötyä, ja samaan on Suomessa historiallisesti pyritty esimerkiksi naisten työvoiman avulla (naisten alipalkkauksesta ks. Ala-Kapee ym. 1979; Hannikainen 2004). Esimerkiksi työmarkkinatutkija Anu Suoranta on todennut (2002, 115) 1920-luvun teollisuudesta: ”Halpatyövoimaksi taas luokittui nais työvoima, ei niinkään työtaitojen tai ammattiominaisuuksien perusteella vaan pikemminkin sukupuolensa määräämänä.” Halpatyötä teettäessä työehtojen polkeminen kosketti kaikkia työntekijöitä. Tästä esimerkkinä on 1920-luvun tulitikkuteollisuus, jossa ”uusien koneiden käyttäjät vaihdettiin miehistä naisiksi. Vaihto oli yrityksen taloudellisesta näkökulmasta looginen, sillä naisille maksettiin vain kolmannes miesten palkasta” (Suoranta 2009, 69). Tämän tutkimuksen valossa vastaavanlaista taloudellista kilpailuetua haetaan nyky-Suomessa laiminlyömällä maahanmuuttajien työehtojen noudattamista.

## Viitteet

1. Maahanmuuttajien haastatteluja on kaikkiaan 19. Olen haastatellut yhtä henkilöä kahdesti. Haastattelut on yhtä lukuun ottamatta tehty pääkaupunkiseudulla, ja haastattelukielet ovat olleet suomi ja englanti.
2. Workplace Europe: towards trade unions without borders. ETUI-REHS, Elewijt, Belgia 13.–15.3.2007.
3. SAK:n maahanmuuttajafoorumi, 4.–5.5.2007.
4. ”Maahanmuuttajien vaikutus työehtoihin.” SAK, Helsinki 10.12.2008.
5. Kaikki alat mukaan laskettuna. Maahanmuuttajiksi määritin kaikki Suomessa virallisesti asuvat, muuta kuin suomea, ruotsia tai saamea äidinkielenään puhuvat henkilöt.

## Lähteet ja kirjallisuus

### *Maahanmuuttajatyöntekijöiden haastattelut (ammatti/sukupuoli/lähtömaa/haastattelun päivämäärä)*

- H 1: rakennussiivoja/nainen/Viro/8.1.2008.  
H 2: rakennustyöntekijä/mies/Ranska/8.1.2008.  
H 3: rakennussiivoja/mies/Bosnia/20.12.2008.  
H 4: rakennustyöntekijä/mies/Viro/25.1.2008.  
H 5: rakennustyöntekijä/mies/Viro/22.1.2008.  
H 6: ravintolatyöntekijä/nainen/valtio Afrikassa (valtion nimi salattu anonyymiteetin takaamiseksi)/15.12.2005.  
H 7: rakennustyöntekijä/mies/Algeria/14.12.2007.  
H 8: kokki/mies/Turkki/23.11.2005.  
H 9: rakennustyöntekijä/mies/Venäjä/17.1.2008.  
H 10: ravintolatyöntekijä/mies/Turkki/15.12.2005.  
H 11: ravintolatyöntekijä/mies/Intia/Iso-Britannia/19.12.2005.  
H 12: rakennustyöntekijä/mies/Venäjä/20.12.2008.  
H 13: rakennustyöntekijä/mies/Viro/4.12.2006.  
H 14a: kokki/mies/Bangladesh/28.9.2005.  
H 14b: (sama henkilö kuin 14a) 6.10.2005.  
H 15: toimistosiiivoja/nainen/Viro/25.1.2008.  
H 16: rakennustyöntekijä/mies/Viro/6.6.2006.  
H 17: ravintolatyöntekijä/mies/Bangladesh/11.12.2008.  
H 18: toimistosiiivoja/nainen/Viro/5.11.2008.  
H 19: rakennussiivoja/nainen/valtio entisen Neuvostoliiton alueella (valtion nimi salattu anonyymiteetin takaamiseksi) 8.1.2008.

### *Muut haastattelut*

- H 20a: rakennusalan yrittäjä/mies/Suomi/18.12.2006.  
H 20b: sama henkilö kuin 20a/2.2.2009.  
H 21: rakennusalan yrittäjä/mies/Suomi/14.12.2007.  
H 22: rakennusalan yrittäjä/mies/Suomi 14.12.2007.

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*Helsingin Sanomat* 21.12.2007.  
*PAM-lehti* 18/2008; 4/2005.  
*Rakentaja* 20/2007; 10/2006; 5/2006; 1/2005.  
*Uutispäivä Demari* 27.1.2009.  
*Uutispäivä Demari* 27.6.2008.

### *Ammattijärjestöjen seminaarit ja konferenssit*

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Rolle Alho

## Rakennusliiton ja Palvelualojen ammattiliiton maahanmuutto- ja maahanmuuttajastrategiat

### Abstrakti

Artikkelissa analysoidaan Rakennusliiton ja Palvelualojen ammattiliiton (PAM) maahanmuutto- ja maahanmuuttajastrategioita. Sekä Rakennusliitto että PAM toteuttavat protektionistista maahanmuuttostrategiaa vastustamalla työvoiman maahanmuuton rajoitusten höllentämistä. Maahanmuuttostrategioita lähestytään artikkelissa Max Weberin sulkeuma-käsitteen avulla. Molemmilla ammattiliitoilla on myös inklusiivisia maahanmuuttajastrategioita, joilla ne pyrkivät saamaan maahanmuuttajia jäseniksi. Näitä strategioita lähestytään trade union renewal -teorian näkökulmasta. Strategioiden onnistuminen tai epäonnistuminen heijastuu ammattiliittojen valtaresursseihin ja sitä kautta niiden tulevaisuuden näkyymiin. Tutkimusaineisto koostuu ammattiliittojen edustajien haastatteluista, Rakennusliiton ja PAMin jäsenlehtien pääkirjoituksista ja muista julkisista kannanotoista sekä ammattiliittojen tilaisuuksissa käydyistä keskusteluista ja niissä tehdyistä havainnoista.

### Johdanto

Usein esitetään, että ammattiyhdistysliike yrittää torjua tai vähintäänkin säännellä maahanmuuttoa. Tätä selitetään sillä, että ammattiyhdistysliike pelkää maahanmuuttajien lisäävän työvoiman tarjontaa ja sitä kautta työntekijöiden välistä kilpailua työpaikoista (Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Haus 2002; Marino 2009). Ulkomaisen työvoiman asemaa Suomessa 1980- ja 1990-lukujen vaihteessa tutkineen Seppo Paanasen (1993, 67) mukaan ”kaikkialla läntisessä maailmassa ammattiyhdistysliike on suhtautunut nuivasti siirtolaisiin”. Useissa tutkimuksissa (Vranken 1990; Martens 1999; Milkman, Bloom & Narro 2010) on kuitenkin esitetty myös tulkintoja siitä, miten ay-

liikkeet ovat toimineet maahanmuuttajien aseman kohentamiseksi, ja siten on virheelistä kuvata ay-liikkeen historiallista suhtautumista maahanmuuttoon ja maahanmuuttajiin yksinomaan torjuvaksi (Lundh 1995; Haus 2002). Ruotsin ammattiyhdistysliikettä tutkineen Lundhin (1995, 151–184) mukaan maahanmuuton sääntelyä 1960-luvun lopulla vaatinut ruotsalainen ay-liike esitetään usein ei-ansaitusti kielteisessä valossa. Kriitikot keskittyvät ainoastaan ay-liikkeen maahanmuuttopolitiikan sääntelyvaatimukseen sivuuttaen ay-liikkeen toimet maahanmuuttajien aseman kohentamiseksi.

Lundh korostaa (1995, 151–184), että on syytä erottaa toisistaan ay-liikkeen *maahan-*

*muuttopolitiikka* ja *maahanmuuttajapolitiikka*. Maahanmuuttopolitiikat ovat maahanmuuton sääntelyyn liittyviä politiikkoja, kun taas maahanmuuttajapolitiikat viittaavat jo maassa oleviin maahanmuuttajiin liittyviin politiikkoihin. Tässä artikkelissa keskeisenä lähtökohtana on vastaava jaottelu, mutta *politiikka* korvataan sanalla *strategia*, sillä se viittaa paremmin liittojen konkreettisiin käytäntöihin. Artikkelissa eritellään ja verrataan Rakennusliiton ja Palvelualojen ammattiliiton (vastaisuudessa PAM) strategioita maahanmuuttoon liittyvissä kysymyksissä. *Strategialla* tarkoitetaan suhteellisen vakiintuneita käytännön toimintamalleja. Strategiaa ei siis käsitetä tässä tutkimuksessa – niin kuin se usein ymmärretään – yksinomaan viralliseksi julkilausutuksi toimintasuunnitelmaksi tai kannanotoksi. Tutkimuksessa vastataan kysymyksiin miten liitot tulkitsevat maahanmuuton ja ulkomaisen tilapäistyövoiman lisääntymisen vaikuttavan niiden toimintaympäristöön, minkälaisia maahanmuuttoon ja maahanmuuttajiin liittyviä strategioita liitoilla on sekä minkälaisia yhteneväisyyksiä ja poikkeavuuksia liittojen strategioilla on? Lopuksi pohditaan, miksi liitot käyttävät valitsemiaan strategioita sekä arvioidaan strategioiden toimivuutta. Artikkelin teesi on, että sekä Rakennusliitto että PAM pyrkivät ylläpitämään eksklusiivista (poissulkevaa) maahanmuuttostrategiaa vastustamalla työvoiman maahanmuuton rajoitusten höllentämistä, mutta molemmilla liitoilla on myös inklusiivisia (sisään sulkevia) maahanmuuttajastrategioita, joilla ne pyrkivät saamaan maahanmuuttajia ammattiliittojen jäseniksi ja kohentamaan heidän asemaansa työmarkkinoilla. Eksklusiivisia strategioita lähestytään Max Weberin *sulkeuma*-käsitteen avulla, inklusiivisia strategioita *trade union renewal*<sup>1</sup> -teorian (mikä tässä artikkelissa käännetään *uudistamisteoriaksi*) näkökulmasta. Artikkelissa analysoidaan myös, miten maa-

hanmuutto- ja maahanmuuttostrategiat liittyvät yhteen ammattiliittojen *valtaresursseihin*, joita lähestytään Walter Korven (1978, 1998) *valtaresurssteorian* pohjalta.

Rakennusliitto ja PAM on valittu tutkimuskohteiksi, koska rakennus- että yksityiset palvelualat ovat keskeisiä maahanmuuttajia ja Suomessa tilapäisesti työskenteleviä ulkomaalaisia työllistäviä aloja. PAMin edustajan arvion mukaan Suomessa yksityisillä palvelualoilla työskenteli vuonna 2010 palkattuna 16 000–20 000 maahanmuuttajaa (sähköpostivastaus 16.6.2010). Ulkomaalaisilla työntekijöillä on merkittävä rooli siivous- ja ravintolalalla (Könönen 2011, 53–67). Rakennusliitto arvioi, että vuonna 2010 Suomessa työskenteli 20 000–30 000 ulkomaista rakennustyöntekijää, jotka muodostivat 10–20 prosenttia työvoiman kokonaismäärästä. Järjestäytyneitä rakennusteollisuuden työnantajia edustavan Rakennusteollisuus RT ry:n mukaan ulkomaisten rakennustyöntekijöiden määrä on kaksinkertaistunut vuosien 2006 ja 2010 välisenä aikana (Rakennusmedia 29.11.2010).

### **Maahanmuutto ja maahanmuuttajat – uhka vai mahdollisuus ammattiliitoille?**

Ammattiliitot ovat kollektiivisia työpolitiikan ja työelämän toimijoita, joiden on jatkuvasti tarkasteltava toimintaansa ja toimintaympäristönsä muutoksia. Toimintamahdollisuuksien näkökulmasta keskeisiä voimavaroja ovat järjestäytymisaste sekä tehokkaat keinot torjua työnantajien mahdollisuuksia olla noudattamatta työehtoja. Käsitteellistän tällaiset voimavarat Walter Korven (1978, 1998) teorian mukaisina *valtaresursseina*. Kuten edellä todettiin, ammattiliitoilla on vakiintuneita toimintatapoja, strategioita, joita ne hyödyntävät edunvalvonnassaan. Ymmärrän strategiat valtaresursien ylläpitämisen näkökulmasta. Strategiat edellyttävät valtaresursseja ja toisaalta niillä pyritään myös ylläpitämään valtaresursseja. Tässä teoreettisessa osiossa tarkaste-

1 Vaihtoehtoisesti englanninkielessä käytetään *trade/labor union-revitalization* -käsitettä.

len seuraavaksi ensin dynamiikaltaan erilaisia strategioita ja lopuksi esittelen tarkemmin Korven valtaresurssiteoriaa.

## Sulkeumastrategiat

Weber (1978, 43–44) viittaa sulkeuma-käsitteellä (engl. closure) yhteiskunnallisten ryhmien taipumukseen rajata ulkopuolisten sisäänpääsyä ryhmään omien etujensa maksimoimiseksi. Sulkeuma-käsite soveltuu myös maahanmuuttoon liittyvään tutkimukseen, sillä historiassa on esimerkkejä ammattiyhdistysten käyttämistä sulkeuma-strategioista suhteessa maahanmuuttoon ja maahanmuuttajiin (esim. Penninx & Roosblad 2000). Työelämä- ja työmarkkinatutkimuksissa sulkeumalla tarkoitetaan yleisesti niitä keinoja, joilla eri ammattikunnat yrittävät suojata omaa asemaansa ulkopuoliselta kilpailulta (Murphy 1988). Maahanmuutto lisää työvoiman tarjontaa, mikä – ainakin periaatteessa – saattaa heikentää ammattiyhdistysliikkeen neuvotteluasemaa suhteessa työnantajiin. Näin ollen ammattiyhdistysliikkeet ovat ajoittain eri maissa turvautuneet sulkeumastrategioihin suhteessa maahanmuuttoon (Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Haus 2002; Watts 2002).

Jotkin ammattiyhdistysten käyttämät sulkeumastrategiat ovat olleet suoranaisesti syrjiviä, ja esimerkiksi osassa yhdysvaltalaisista ay-liikettä ilmeni vielä 1970-luvulla ja 1980-luvun alussa avoimen vihamielistä suhtautumista maahanmuuttajiin (Milkman 2006, 114–144). Mulinari ja Neergaard (2004) ovat nostaneet esille ruotsalaisessa ammatillisessa keskusjärjestö LO:ssa ilmenneitä etnisen syrjinnän muotoja, jotka ovat estäneet maahanmuuttajia osallistumasta täysipainoisesti ammattiyhdistystoimintaan. Ongelmana on ollut esimerkiksi se, että maahanmuuttajat määritellään ruotsalaisessa ay-liikkeessä usein heidän maahanmuuttajuutensa kautta, eikä heidän ulkomailla hankkimaansa ammattiyhdistyskokemusta aina arvosteta (emt.).

Paanasen (1993, 68) mukaan suomalainen ay-liike vaikutti tehokkaasti sekä viranomaisiin että työnantajiin 1980-luvun loppupuolella ja ”kykeni osittain estämään ulkomaisen työvoiman mihinnousun”. Suomen lähihistoriassa esimerkki sulkeumastrategian käytöstä on SAK:n kannattama, vuosina 2004–2006 voimassa ollut siirtymäaikalaki, joka rajoitti uusien EU-maiden kansalaisten mahdollisuutta työskennellä Suomessa. SAK:n mukaan Virosta kohdistui tuolloin Suomeen työmarkkinoita uhkaava työvoiman muuttopaine, jota vastaan tarvittiin työvoiman maahanmuuttoa rajoittava siirtymäaikalaki (Nylund 2008, 189–204).

## Inklusiostrategiat

Ammattiyhdistyshistorian tutkimuksen klassikot Sidney ja Beatrice Webb totesivat jo vuonna 1897, että ammattiyhdistysten strategiat eivät voi koskaan perustua yksinomaan sulkeumien käyttöön (Webb & Webb 1926 [1897], 560–561). Ammattiyhdistysten tulee myös kyetä vetoamaan työntekijöihin sekä saada heitä liittymään jäseniksi. Tämän takia tässä tutkimuksessa tutkimusongelmaa lähestytään sulkeumastrategian lisäksi *uudistamisteorian* avulla. Uudistamisteoria perustuu näkemykseen siitä, että ay-liike on useimmissa maissa jonkinasteisessa kriisissä ja sen on löydettävä uusia ratkaisuja selvitäkseen globalisaatioon liittyvistä ammattiyhdistysliikkeiden vaikutusvaltaa uhkaavista haasteista (esim. Behrens, Hamann & Hurd 2006, 12–29). Teoria pohjautuu pitkälti niihin kokemuksiin niistä inklusiivisista ja innovatiivisista strategioista, joita pääasiassa yhdysvaltalaiset ammattiliitot – etenkin Kaliforniassa – ovat onnistuneesti käyttäneet laajentaakseen jäsenpohjaansa vastaamaan työvoiman koostumuksen etnistä muutosta muun muassa palvelu- ja rakennusalalla. Uudistamisstrategioita ovat lisäksi allianssien rakentaminen maahanmuuttajien omiin järjestöihin ja yhteisöihin. (Esim.

Milkman 2010, 7–11.) Allianssien tarkoituksena on nostaa maahanmuuttajien kohtaamia erityisongelmia poliittiselle agendalle sekä maahanmuuttajien inklusion kautta vahvistaa ay-liikkeen valtaresursseja.

Vertaileva ammattiyhdistystutkimus on perinteisesti perustunut maakohtaisiin vertailuihin, joissa ammattiliittojen strategisia valintoja on selitetty eri maiden institutionaalisisilla eroilla. Näissä institutionaalisisa tutkimuksissa ammattiliittojen strategiat on nähty kansallisten työmarkkinasuhteiden johdannaisina eikä ammattiliittokohtaisille strategioiden erottelulle ole juuri jäänyt sijaa. Perinteisissä vertailevissa tutkimuksissa on kiinnitetty vain vähän huomiota ammattiliittojen mahdollisuuteen tehdä toisistaan poikkeavia strategisia valintoja kansallisella tasolla. Uudistamisteoria ei sulje pois kansallisten työmarkkinasuhteiden merkitystä (kuten ammattiliiton suhdetta valtioon ja työnantajiin), mutta se painottaa ammattiliittojen mahdollisuutta tehdä toisistaan poikkeavia strategisia valintoja (Marino 2009, 23; ks. myös Frege & Kelly 2004, 31–32.) Esimerkiksi maahanmuuttajien määrän lisääntytyä rakennus-alalla 1990-luvulla Yhdysvalloissa rakennusalan ay-aktiivit käyttivät vastakkaisia strategioita: toiset pyrkivät saamaan maahanmuuttajat ammattiliiton jäseniksi, toiset yrittivät estää heidän jäsenyyttään (Haus 2002, 91).

Suomessa ammatillinen järjestäytymisaste on laskenut laskutavasta riippuen 1990-luvun alun ”ennätyslukemista” lähes 80 prosentista 62 ja 67 prosentin välille vuonna 2009 (Ahtiainen 2011). Lisäksi maahanmuuttajien ja ulkomaalaisten tilapäistyöntekijöiden järjestäytyminen ammattiliittoihin on kanta-äestöä vähäisempää (Alho 2008; 2010; Lillie & Sippola 2010). Näin ollen myös suomalaisissa ammattiliitoissa maahanmuuttajien inklusio muodostaa niiden tulevaisuuden kannalta strategisen kysymyksen. Pauli Kettunen (2010, 49) toteaa suomalaisen ay-liikkeen globalisaatioon liittyvistä nykyhaasteista, että ”jälleen ajankohtaistuvat tehtävät, jotka ammattiyhdistysliikkeen varhaisina

vuosikymmeninä hallitsivat päiväjärjestystä: järjestäytymisagitaatio sekä laaja-alaisempaa solidaarisuutta luovien järjestömuotojen etsintä”. Uudistamisteoriassa keskeistä on nimenomaan Kettusen mainitsemien laaja-alaisempaa solidaarisuutta luovien järjestömuotojen etsintä, joita uusien työntekijäryhmien, kuten maahanmuuttajien, inklusio vaatii.

### Valtaresurssinäkökulma

Strategiat eivät ole itsetarkoitus. Viime kädessä niiden toimivuus tai toimimattomuus heijastuu ay-liikkeen valtaresursseihin. Onnistuneet strategiat vahvistavat valtaresursseja ja epäonnistuneet heikentävät niitä. Ammattiliittojen menestys niiden vallan institutionalisoimisessa puolestaan vahvistaa niiden neuvotteluasemaa suhteessa työnantajiin (ja valtiovaltaan). Korpi (1998, 37–69) määrittelee valtaresurssit sellaisiksi piirteiksi – kyvyiksi ja keinoiksi – joiden avulla toimijat voivat palkita tai rangaista toisia toimijoita. Ammattiyhdistykset ovat palkansaajien tärkeimpiä valtaresursseja ja niiden keskeisin tehtävä on palkansaajien etujen ajaminen työmarkkinoilla ja yhteiskunnassa. Ammattiyhdistysten valtaresursseja ovat palkansaajien korkea järjestäytymisaste, poliittinen työväenliike ja ay-liikkeen tunnustettu asema neuvottelijaosapuolena suhteessa työnantajaan sekä mahdollisuus käyttää lakkoa työtaistelukeinona. Valtaresurssien jakautuminen vaikuttaa eri osapuolten mahdollisuuksiin vaatia etuoikeuksia ja etuja. (Korpi 1978.)

Valtaresurssien avulla ammattiliitot pyrkivät ajamaan läpi niiden perimmäisiä tavoitteita, kuten korkeampia palkkoja, työsuhteturvaa, hyviä työehtoja ja rajoituksia työnantajan valtaan suhteessa työntekijään (Martin & Ross 1999, 3). Valtaresurssinäkökulmasta katsottuna ammattiliittojen intressissä on, että maahanmuuttajat liittyvät jäseniksi ja että työehdot eivät eriydy etnisiin perusteisiin. Maahanmuutto- ja maahanmuuttajastrategi-

oiden onnistuminen tai epäonnistuminen liittyy ammattiliittojen valtaresursseihin ja sitä kautta liittojen valtasuhteisiin työnantajiin sekä valtiovaltaan.

## Tutkimusaineisto ja -menetelmät

Tämä artikkeli on tapaustutkimus, joka koostuu kahdesta tapauksesta eli Rakennusliitosta ja Palvelualojen ammattiliitosta, PAMista. Tapaustutkimukset ovat arvokkaita, sillä yksittäisiin tapauksiin keskittymällä voidaan saavuttaa konkreettista kontekstiin sidottua tietoa (Flyvbjerg 2004, 309–404). Kyseisellä tutkimustyyppillä tuotetaan ”intensiivistä tietoa yksittäisestä tapauksesta tai pienestä joukosta toisiinsa suhteessa olevia tapauksia” (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2009, 134). Tapaustutkimukselle ominaiseen tapaan tutkimusongelmaan pureudutaan hyödyntäen useita eri aineistoja ja menetelmiä. Metodologisesti kyseessä on siis menetelmällinen ja aineistollinen *triangulaatio* (emt. 233). Aineistoa on kerätty haastattelemalla, havainnoimalla ja käymällä läpi ammattiliittojen tekstejä. Triangulaation vahvuutena on, että käyttämällä useita menetelmiä ja aineistoja saadaan syvempi ja laajempi ymmärrys tutkittavasta ilmiöstä (esim. Flick 2002). Tutkimusaineisto koostuu pääasiallisesti vuosina 2005–2011 tekemistäni Rakennusliiton ja PAMin edustajien kvalitatiivisista teema-haastatteluista (Rakennusliitto 15, PAM 16 haastattelua). Kaksi Rakennusliiton edustajan haastattelua olen suorittanut sähköpostitse. Haastateltujen joukossa on molempien liittojen ylintä johtoa, mutta myös päivittäisessä työssään maahanmuuttoon ja maahanmuuttajiin liittyvien asioiden kanssa työskenteleviä liittojen palkattuja työntekijöitä.

Tutkimusaineisto koostuu lisäksi kahdeksalta ammattiliittojen edustajalta sähköpostitse pyytämistäni tiedonannoista liittyen tutkimusaiheeseen. Olen myös haastatellut kolmea Uudenmaan työsuojelupiirin ulkomaisen työvoiman työehtojen tarkastajaa työehtokysy-

myksistä. Mediaseuranta koostuu liittojen jäsenlehdistä vuosilta 2005–2010, joiden pääkirjoitukset olen kategorisoinut temaattisesti sen mukaan, miten niissä suhtaudutaan maahanmuuttoon ja ulkomaiseen tilapäistyövoimaan. Tätä aineistoa olen käsitellyt kvantitatiivisesti. Lisäksi olen käyttänyt tutkimusaineistona liittojen internet-sivuja ja muita julkisia kannanottoja. Olen myös tehnyt havaintoja tilaisuuksissa, joissa liittojen edustajat ovat esitelleet tutkimukseni kannalta olennaisia aiheita. Näissä tilaisuuksissa käymäni keskustelut sekä tekemäni äänitykset ja muistiinpanot ovat osa tutkimusaineistoa. Haastattelemalla ja havainnoimalla on ollut mahdollista saada syvempää ja yksityiskohtaisempaa tietoa tutkittavasta ilmiöstä kuin pelkästään analysoimalla liittojen virallisia kannanottoja olisi ollut mahdollista. Havainnoinnin suurin etu on, että sen avulla voidaan saada *välitöntä, suora* tietoa yksilöiden, ryhmien tai organisaatioiden toiminnasta ja käyttäytymisestä (Hirsjärvi ym. 2009, 213).

Tutkimuksen aineiston analyysi perustuu teoriasidonnaiselle teema-analyysille. Olen tulkinut aineistoa hahmottamalla ja jäsentämällä sitä teoreettisesta viitekehyksestä muodostettujen teemojen avulla. Näistä lähtökohdista olen etsinyt aineistosta puhetta sulkeuman käytöstä, inklusiosta sekä valtaresurssien hyödyntämisestä ja ylläpitämisestä. Eri aineistoja olen käsitellyt eri tavoin. Haastattelujen ja liittojen kannanottojen teema-analyysin toteutin laadullisin tutkimusmenetelmin. Hyödynsin tähän analyysiin laadullista sisällönanalyysiä, jossa kuvataan puhutun ja kirjoitetun kielen muotoa ja sisältöä kirjoittamalla aineistosta yhteenve-toja. Aineistoa on analyysivaiheessa jäsen-nelty mainittujen teoreettisten lähtökohtien mukaan, mutta aineistoa kerätessä haastatelluille annettiin mahdollisuus kertoa kokonaisvaltaisesti tutkittavaan ilmiöön liittyvistä kysymyksistä haastateltavan oman tietovarannon ja aikaisemman kokemuksen pohjalta (esim. Helander 2004; Hirsjärvi ym. 2009). Aineistosta ei ole ainoastaan analysoitu liit-

tojen strategioita, vaan myös liitojen laajempaa tilanteenmäärittelyä suhteessa maahanmuuttoon, maahanmuuttajiin ja ulkomaiseen tilapäistyövoimaan, koska liittojen tilanteenmäärittely on suhteessa niiden strategioihin.

## Rakennusliiton maahanmuuttostrategia

Rakennusliiton historiassa taistelut työehdoista ovat olleet yleisiä, ja liiton toiminta on usein ollut militanttia verrattuna moneen muuhun suomalaiseen ammattiliittoon (esim. Helin 2004; Bergholm 2007; Lillie & Sippola 2010). Liiton jäsenistä 94 prosenttia on miehiä. Arvioitu järjestäytymisaste rakennusalalla vuonna 2009 oli 71 prosenttia (Ahtiainen 2011). Taulukosta 1 ilmenee Rakennusliiton jäsenmäärän kehitys vuosina 2002–2010. Rakennusliitossa maahanmuuttajajäseniksi määritellään muut kuin suomen tai ruotsin äidinkielekseen ilmoittaneet jäsenet.

Vieraskielisten jäsenten osuus on nousut Rakennusliitossa suhteellisen nopeasti. Luottamusmiehistä ja työsuojeluvaltuutetuista arviolta noin 60 eli 1,7 prosenttia on ulkomaalaistaustaisia (Rakennusliiton edustajan sähköpostivastaus 31.8.2011). Rakennusliiton liittovaltuustossa ei ole maahanmuuttajia. Määrittelystä riippuen yksi tai kaksi Rakennusliiton palkatuista työntekijöistä on maahanmuuttajataustainen.

Rakennusliiton edustajat sijoittavat ulkomaiseen työvoimaan liittyvien kysymysten ajankohtaistumisen 2000-luvun ensimmäisille vuosille. Heidän puheessaan termillä *ulkomainen työntekijä* viitattiin käytännössä Suomessa *tilapäisesti* työskentelevään työntekijään. Maassa *pysyvästi* asuvat rakennus-

alalla työskentelevät maahanmuuttajat eivät ole liiton mukaan ongelma, sillä he liittyvät Rakennusliittoon ”siinä missä suomalaisetkin” (Rakennusliiton 2. pj. SAK:n seminaarissa 10.12.2008). On kuitenkin painotettava, että kategorioiden *tilapäinen* ja *pysyvä* ero on käytännössä häilyvä. Ongelmaksi Rakennusliitossa määritellään ulkomaisen tilapäistyöntekijöiden työehdot, jotka ovat usein Suomessa työsopimuslain vastaisesti heikommalla kuin kantaväestön. Seuraavaan haastattelusitaattiin kiteytyvät Rakennusliiton keskeiset ongelmat suhteessa ulkomaiseen tilapäistyövoimaan.

*Meille [Rakennusliitolle] on kyllä todella iso haaste, että saadaan nämä porukat [ulkomaiset työntekijät] liittymään liittoon. Siinä [liittymättömyydessä] on varmasti monta syytä. Yksi on tietysti se, että nämä eivät ole pysyvästi täällä, että ne on vaan keikalla. Sitten tämä elintasokuilu on kuitenkin olemassa, eli ne palkat mitkä niille mielletään heikoksi, he mieltävät hyviksi. Että he itse asiassa hyvin pitkälti tyytyy niihin olosuhteisiin mitä tarjotaan, ne pitävät niitä hyvinä. Ne haluavat vaan rauhassa tehdä työnsä eikä välitä siitä kokonaisuudesta miten tämä sitten vaikuttaa meidän [Suomen] työmarkkinoihin. Sitten tietysti varmaan, kun sitä järjestäytymisen perinnettä ei varmaan ole kotimaassa olemassa. (Rakennusliiton edustajan haastattelu)*

Sitaatista ilmenee, että ulkomainen rakennusalan työntekijä on Suomessa yleensä *tilapäisesti* eikä siksi ole kiinnostunut ammattiliiton jäsenyydestä. Toiseksi hän tulee Suomeen hyödyntääkseen Suomen lähtömaata korke-

**Taulukko 1. Rakennusliiton jäsenmäärän kehitys vuosina 2002–2010**

Vuosi	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Jäsenmäärä	80 870	80 212	80 659	80 922	82 096	84 954	83 526	88 031	86 821
Vieraskielisiä jäseniä	376	465	601	657	816	1 251	1 788	1 441	1 926
Vieraskielisten jäsenten osuus	0,5 %	0,6 %	0,7 %	0,8 %	1,0 %	1,5 %	2,1 %	1,6 %	2,2 %

Lähde: Rakennusliiton jäsenrekisteri

ampaa palkkatasoa ja saattaa sen takia tyytyä suomalaista työntekijää matalampaan palkkaan. Kolmanneksi työntekijän henkilökohtaista ansaintastrategiaa ei ohjaa sen mahdollinen vaikutus Suomen työmarkkinoihin. Lisäksi liiton edustajat kokevat, että jäsenhankintaa vaikeuttaa se, että ulkomaiset työntekijät tulevat usein maista, joissa ay-toiminta on historiallisesti ollut hyvin erilaista (esim. Viro tai Venäjä). Sama ongelmalähtöinen näkemys tulee esille Rakennusliiton jäsenlehti *Rakentajan* pääkirjoituksissa. Vuosina 2005–2010 *Rakentajassa* oli 123 pääkirjoitusta, joista 24 käsitteli tai sivusi rakennusalan ulkomaista työvoimaa. Kaikissa näissä pääkirjoituksissa asiaa lähestyttiin ongelmaakeskeisesti. Rakennusliiton edustajien mukaan ulkomaisten työntekijöiden käyttö on tietoisista työnantajastrategiaa, jolla pyritään alentamaan työn hintaa. Useissa haastatteluissa ulkomaisia esimerkkejä sääntelemättömästä vierasperäisen työvoiman käytöstä käytettiin varoittavana esimerkkinä:

*Me ei haluta mitään semmoisia halpatyömarkkinoita Suomeen, rakentamisen osalta, niin kuin joissakin Euroopan maissa esimerkiksi on. (Rakennusliiton edustajan haastattelu)*

Rakennusliitto vastusti Matti Vanhasen toisen hallituksen esitystä (HE 269/2009) vähentää kolmansien maiden (muut kuin EU ja ETA-maat ja Sveitsi) sekä alueella laillisesti oleskelevien, työntekoon oikeutettujen kolmansien maiden kansalaisten rajoituksia päästä Suomen työmarkkinoille. Esitystä vastusti myös PAM (ja SAK). Rakennusliiton perustelu vastustukselle oli, että rakennusalalla on työttömyyttä sekä puutteita ulkomaisten työntekijöiden työehtojen valvonnassa. Tämä kanta tuli esille esimerkiksi Rakennusliiton puheenjohtajien alustuksissa Suomen sosiaalifoorumissa vuosina 2009, 2010 ja 2011. Työvoiman maahanmuuton rajoitusten purkamisen vastustaminen on sulkeumastrategiaa, jolla liitto pyrkii suojaamaan omien jä-

sentensä etua ulkomaiselta kilpailulta työstä. Toinen sulkeumastrategia on työmaiden saartaminen. Rakennusliitolla on laillinen oikeus pysäyttää työnteko työmaalla, jos se epäilee tai tietää, että kyseisellä työmaalla ei noudateta työehtoja. Saarto puretaan, kun Rakennusliitto on saanut työmaalta sitä tyydyttävät tiedot ja / tai työehdot on korjattu lakisääteiselle tasolle. Saarrot kohdistuvat pääosin ulkomaille rekisteröityihin yrityksiin ja sen myötä myös niiden ulkomaisiin työntekijöihin. Rakennusliiton kotisivuilla 22.11.2010 oli 85 saarretun rakennusalan yrityksen nimet. Nimistä päätellen 65 näistä 85 yrityksestä oli rekisteröity Vieroon, loput Suomeen, Puolaan ja Ukrainaan. Aikaisemmassa (vuosia 2005 ja 2006 koskevassa) tutkimuksessa (Lillie & Greer 2007, 562) osoitetaan myös, että Rakennusliiton saarrot kohdistuvat pääasiassa ulkomaille rekisteröityihin yrityksiin. Rakennusliiton edustaja pohtii saarron problematiikkaa seuraavasti:

*Se [työmaan saarto] on varsin usein aika hankala selittää, koska hehän [ulkomaiset rakennustyöntekijät] kokevat, että onko tässä nyt sitten tarkoitus potkia työmiehiä ja työnaisia ulos työmailta. Siinä tulee usein kommentteja Rakennusliiton toiminnasta ulkomaisilta työntekijöiltä. Mutta kun he ovat jonkin aikaa työskennelleet täällä Suomessa, niin se ymmärrys kyllä kasvaa siitä, että mikä sen [työehto]sopimuksen mukaisen palkan merkitys on. Kyllä se liittyy siihen, että jos on pitempään katsonut suomalaista kulttuuria ja suomalaista työelämää, niin se ymmärrys kasvaa. Mutta kyllä hyvin usein tulee sellaisia reaktioita, että liiton toimintaa jopa jossain mitassa pelätään, että ei haluta niitä asioita kertoa. Mutta suurin osa tiedoista jota me [Rakennusliitto] saadaan alipalkkauksesta tulee kuitenkin ulkomaalaisilta työntekijöiltä itseltään. Kyllä he sitten kuitenkin vissillä tavalla ymmärtävät ja luottavatkin siihen että me kuitenkin ollaan heidän asialla. (Rakennusliiton edustajan haastattelu)*

Saarrolla valvotaan työehtojen toteutumista ja sitä kautta myös yhdenvertaisuuden toteutumista kantaväestön ja ulkomaalaisten työntekijöiden välillä. Saartojen kääntöpuolella on, että ne saattavat loitontaa ulkomaisia työntekijöitä ammattiliitosta sitaatissakin kuvatulla tavalla ja täten vaikeuttaa jäsenhankintaa tulevaisuudessa (vrt. Haus 2002, 145). Lyhyellä aikavälillä saarto saattaa näyttäytyä eksklusiivisena sulkeuma-strategiana. Sillä on kuitenkin myös inklusiivinen ulottuvuus, sillä se kohentaa ulkomaisten työntekijöiden työehtojen tasoa vastaamaan suomalaisia standardeja. Saarrolla on myös pelotevaikeus, kuten Rakennusliiton edustaja kuvaa:

*Kyllä niillä on täällä Suomessa tällainen kaikista surkeimpia firmoja siivoava vaikeus. Varmaan on jonkinlainen pelotevaikeus. Että se toimii kokolailla hyvin kyllä. (Rakennusliiton edustajan haastattelu)*

Rakennusliiton maahanmuuttostrategia perustuu sulkeumaan (työperäisen maahanmuuton rajoitusten puoltamiseen). Saarto ei lähtökohtaisesti ole ulkomaalaisiin yrityksiin kohdistuva toimenpide, vaan keino taivuttaa työehtosopimusta rikkova yritys sitä noudattamaan. Mutta koska saarrot pääasiassa kohdistuvat ulkomaisiin yrityksiin ja sitä kautta ulkomaisiin työntekijöihin, voidaan niitä pitää keskeisenä osana Rakennusliiton ulkomaisen työvoiman (väärin)käyttöön kohdistuvaa strategiaa. Toisaalta liiton maahanmuuttajastrategia rakentuu inklusiivisten keinovalikoimien pohjalle. Käsittelen niitä seuraavassa luvussa.

### Rakennusliiton maahanmuuttajastrategia

Rakennusliiton strategiat eivät perustu yksinomaan sulkeumien käyttöön. Liitolla on myös strategioita, joilla se pyrkii neuvomaan maahanmuuttajia ja ulkomaalaisia tilapäistyöntekijöitä työhön liittyvistä oikeuksista sekä liiton jäsenyydestä. Rakennusliitto

poikkeaa kahdella keskeisellä tavalla muista suomalaisista ammattiliitoista. Ensinnäkin se on perustanut vuonna 2009 toimipisteen Tallinnaan, jossa neuvotaan Virosta tulevia työntekijöitä suomalaisista työehdoista sekä Rakennusliiton jäsenyydestä. Tätä tutkimusta varten haastatellun Tallinnan toimipisteen edustajan mukaan kesäkuuhun 2011 mennessä 150 virolaista rakennusalan työntekijää on liittynyt Rakennusliiton jäseneksi. Lisäksi virolaisia on liittynyt jäseniksi toimipisteen internet-sivujen kautta. Toiseksi Rakennusliitto on ainoana suomalaisena ammattiliittona perustanut oman ammattiosaston maahanmuuttajille ja ulkomaisille tilapäistyöntekijöille – tosin jäsenet voivat halutessaan liittyä vaihtoehtoisesti myös ”kantaväestön” ammattiosastoihin. Osaston virallinen nimi on *Rakennusalojen ulkomalaiset ammattilaiset* ja kutsumanimi *Osasto 7*. Tähän pääkaupunkiseudulla toimivaan osastoon kuului vuonna 2010 noin 1 500 pääasiassa viroa tai venäjää äidinkielenään puhuvaa jäsentä. Osastossa on 10–20 aktiivista, jotka osallistuvat ay-toimintaan (Rakennusliiton edustajan haastattelu). Tavoite on helpottaa näiden työntekijöiden toimimista ammattiosastossa, sillä Osastossa 7 voi kommunikoida viroa tai venäjän kielellä. Strategiana on lisäksi ollut kehittää toimintamuotoja, joiden puitteissa maahanmuuttajat ja ulkomaiset tilapäistyöntekijät saisivat tuoda esiin omaan asemaansa liittyviä erityisongelmia:

*Maahanmuuttajien ja lähetettyjen työntekijöiden ongelmat täällä Suomessa ovat omiaan, ja ne helposti sitten hukkuvat jonkun 2000–2500 jäsentä omaavan osaston arkirutiineihin. Olisi voinut kuvitella, että joku jaosto olisi sitten perustettu johonkin ammattiosastoon, mutta tämä näyttää toimivan hyvin kuitenkin näinkin. Todellakin on ongelmia, jotka ovat maahanmuuttajille ja lähetetyille työntekijöille tärkeitä. Tämä osasto [Osasto 7] voi huomattavasti keskittyä niihin asioihin ja rakentaa sitä verkostoa. (Rakennusliiton edustajan haastattelu)*

Maahanmuuttajastrategioihin kuuluu myös aineiston kääntäminen vieraille kielille. Liitto on palkannut venäjänkielisen toimitsijan, ja venäjänkieliselle väestölle on kohdennettu jonkin verran mainontaa. Lisäksi Rakennusliitto on yhdessä Rakennusteollisuus RT ry:n kanssa vuosina 2004, 2007 ja 2011 julkaissut oppaat, joiden avulla pyritään ”selventämään ulkomaalaisten Suomessa koskevia pelisääntöjä ja ehkäisemään häiriöitä työpaikoilla” (vuonna 2011 oppaan julkaisuun osallistui myös ammattiliitto *Pro*). Vuonna 2006 liiton edustajat jalkautuivat Helsingin satamaan tiedotamaan Suomeen saapuville virolaisille rakennusalan työntekijöille toiminnastaan. Tätä tutkimusta varten haastateltujen Rakennusliiton luottamusmiesten mukaan keskeinen työpaikatason ongelma on yhteisen kielen puuttuminen. Kielivaikeudet koetaan maahanmuuttajien ja ulkomaisten tilapäistyöntekijöiden järjestäytymistä vaikeuttavaksi seikaksi. Rakennusliiton strategiana on tuoda valtamedian kautta esiin liiton näkemystä ulkomaisten tilapäistyöntekijöiden työehtoihin liittyvistä ongelmista:

*Media on aivan ratkaiseva. On työnantajia, jotka ei pelkää oikeutta eikä syytteitä eikä mitään. Mutta se, että jos pörssiyhtiö jää ikävästä pelistä kiinni, et sen työmaalla on järjestetty väärää peliä, niin sehän käytännössä tarkoittaa sitä, että pörssikurssille saattaa tapahtua jotakin. Kyllä osakkeenomistajat äänestää jaloillaan. Eli median teho on aivan ratkaiseva. (Rakennusliiton edustajan haastattelu)*

Rakennusliiton edustajat painottivat, että heillä ei ole mitään ulkomaisia työntekijöitä vastaan, mutta ulkomaisen työvoiman käyttö on tietoista työnantajien strategiaa, jolla pyritään laskemaan palkkakustannuksia. Ongelmaan nivoutuvat rakenteelliset kysymykset, kuten pitkät alihankintaketjut, vuokratyö, työnantajien kansalliset rajat ylittävä toiminta sekä viranomaisten vajavaiset resurssit valvoa työehtojen noudattamista (vrt.

Lillie & Greer 2007; Lillie & Sippola 2010). Näitä Rakennusliiton esittämiä väitteitä tukevat haastatellut Uudenmaan työsuojelupiirin ulkomaisen työvoiman yksikön edustajien näkemykset. Rakennusliitto on ehdottanut tiettyjä lakimuutoksia, joilla sen mukaan olisi vaikutus harmaan talouden torjuntaan ja sitä kautta ulkomaisen työvoiman työehtojen tehokkaampaan valvontaan (muun muassa ammattiliitojen kanneoikeus). Strategiaan ei sen sijaan kuulu yhteistyö maahanmuuttajayhdistysten kanssa.

Olen edellä esittänyt Korven valtaresurssi-teoriaan tukeutuen, että ammattiyhdistysliikkeen valtaresurssit ovat riippuvaisia sen jäsenistä eli järjestäytymisasteesta. Rakennusalan ulkomaisten *tilapäistyöntekijöiden* ammatillinen järjestäytyminen on käytännössä hyvin vähäistä. Ulkomaiset työntekijät tekevät lisäksi joko ”omasta tahdostaan”, tiedon puutteen tai heikon neuvotteluasemansa vuoksi työtä heikommin työehdoin kuin kantaväestö. Rakennusliitto pelkää, että tämä heijastuu negatiivisella tavalla rakennusalan työehtoihin Suomessa. Liiton on vaikea tavoittaa tällaisia työntekijöitä, saati sitten houkutella heitä liittymään liittoon. Useimmiten heidän suhteensa ammattiliittoon jää käytännössä olemattomaksi.

### **PAMin maahanmuuttostrategia**

Yksityisillä palvelualoilla ei ole samanlaista vahvaa järjestäytymisen perinnettä kuin rakennusalalla (Ilmonen & Jokivuori 1998, 137–163). Vuonna 2009 järjestäytymisaste PAMin edustamilla aloilla oli 50 prosenttia (Ahtiainen 2011). Keskusjärjestö SAK:hon kuuluva vuonna 2000 perustettu Palvelualojen ammattiliitto on pääasiassa matalapalkkaisia työntekijöitä edustava ammattiliitto. PAM perustettiin yhdistämällä Liikealan ammattiliitto, Hotelli- ja ravintolahenkilökunnan liitto, Kiinteistötyöntekijöitten liitto ja Teknisten erikoisammattien liitto. Liiton jäsenistä noin 80 prosenttia on naisia. Taulukosta 2 ilme-

nee PAMin jäsenkehitys vuosina 2002–2010. PAMissa maahanmuuttajajäseniksi määritellään muut kuin suomen, ruotsin tai saamen äidinkielekseen ilmoittaneet jäsenet.

Maahanmuuttajajäsenten määrä on noussut PAMissa suhteellisen nopeasti, joskin lähtötaso on ollut huomattavan matala. Jäsenmäärän suhteellisen nopeasta kasvusta huolimatta PAMin jäsenrekisterin mukaan vuonna 2011 luottamushenkilöistä ainoastaan 14 eli 0,4 prosenttia ilmoitti äidinkielekseen muun kuin suomen tai ruotsin kielien. Luottamushenkilöinä toimivien maahanmuuttajien määrä ei ole lukumääräisesti juurikaan noussut 2000-luvulla, sillä PAMin edustajan mukaan heidän määränsä vaihteli neljän ja kymmenen välillä vuosina 2002–2007 (ks. Alho 2008, 319–320). Liittoon ei ole palkattu yhtään maahanmuuttajatyöntekijää eikä liiton edustajistossa ole maahanmuuttajia. PAMin maahanmuuttopoliittisessa ohjelmassa vuosille 2009–2015 todetaan seuraavasti: ”Palvelualoilla olevien jäsenten suvaitsevaisuuden edistämällä ja rasismien vastustamisella parannetaan työpaikkojen ja koko suomalaisen yhteiskunnan ilmapiiriä ja turvallisuutta”.

PAMin jäsenrekisterissä yleisimmät ”vieraat” äidinkielet ovat venäjä, viro ja englantti (tarkemmat tiedot kielijakaumasta ks. Alho 2008). Maahanmuuttajien järjestäytymisaste on yksityisillä palvelualoilla kantaväestöä alhaisempi. Vuonna 2010 se oli 28–29 prosenttia mikäli PAMin edustajan arviota 20 000 PAMin alalla työskentelevästä maahanmuuttajatyöntekijästä pidetään lähtökohtana (ks. sivu 2), sillä samana vuonna PAMissa oli noin 5 700 maahanmuuttajajäsentä ( $5\,700 / 20\,000 = 0,285$ ).

Kaikkien tätä tutkimusta varten haastattemieni PAMin edustajien mukaan työnantajat – sekä kantaväestöön kuuluvat että maahanmuuttajat – käyttävät maahanmuuttajien heikkoa neuvotteluasemaa hyväksi polkemalla heidän työehtojaan. Tätä tutkimusta varten haastatellut työsuojeluviranomaiset vahvistavat nämä väitteet. Varsinkin niin sanotut etniset ravintolat ovat PAMin mukaan työehtojen toteutumisen suhteen ongelmallisia, ja ammatillinen järjestäytyminen on niissä käytännössä olematonta (Alho 2008; Alho 2010).

PAM vastusti johdonmukaisesti Vanhasen II hallituksen esittämää EU- ja Eta-alueen ulkopuolelta tulevan työvoiman maahanmuuton esteiden purkamista. Vastustus kävi ilmi esimerkiksi tämän tutkimuksen haastateluissa, PAMin maahanmuuttopoliittisessa ohjelmassa 2009–2015, PAMin puheenjohtajan tiedotteessa 24.8.2010 sekä PAMin edustajan esitelmässä Sosiaalifoorumissa 2011. Perusteet olivat samat kuin Rakennusliitolla. Haastateltu PAMin edustaja totesi liikkuvuuden rajoittamisen olevan solidaarisuuden periaatetta vastaan, mutta esitti rajoitusten olevan perusteltuja niin kauan kuin maahanmuuttajien työehtoja poljetaan yleisesti:

*Tietyissä mielessä siinä [työvoiman maahanmuuton rajoittamisessa] on ristiriitoja vaapaan liikkuvuuden näkökulmasta. Toisaalta minun mielestä nykytilannekin on jo osoittanut sen, että meille syntyy aika hulluja tilanteita jos yhteiskunta ei voi millään tavalla säädellä, että ketkä, ja miten, töitä tehdään Suomessa. Ideaalimaailmassa tällöistä [työvoiman] tarveharkintaa ei tarvittaisi, ja siinä kohtaa tämä suuri linja eli ay-liikkeen periaatteet ja kansainvälinen solidaarisuus*

**Taulukko 2. Palvelualojen ammattiliiton jäsenmäärän kehitys vuosina 2002–2010**

Vuosi	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Jäsenmäärä	200 219	195 689	199 148	205 757	207 007	209 557	213 380	221 274	225 185
Vieraskielisiä jäseniä	987	1 198	1 728	2 281	2 465	2 729	3 582	4 704	5 702
Vieraskielisten jäsenten osuus	0,5 %	0,6 %	0,9 %	1,1 %	1,2 %	1,3 %	1,7 %	2,1 %	2,5 %

Lähde: PAMin jäsenrekisteri

yhtyy. Mutta tämmöisessä epätäydellisessä maailmassa, jossa on paljon haluja harjoittaa sosiaalista dumppausta niiden ihmisten kautta, niin tässä tarvitaan säätelyä.

*RA: Eli ideaali on se vapaa liikkuvuus, mutta reaali politiikka on, että siihen ei vielä voida mennä?*

*Niin, kyllä minä näkisin, että ne ovat ne ideaalit, jotka on siellä taustalla olemassa. Mutta käytäntö, todellisuus, realiteetit on jostain toista. Ainakin tässä vaiheessa. (PAMin edustajan haastattelu)*

Sosiaalisella dumpkauksella viitataan yleisesti työnantajastrategiaan, jossa heikossa asemassa olevia työntekijäryhmiä käytetään minimoimaan tietyn alan työvoimakustannuksia työehtoja polkemalla. PAMin edustajat eivät kuitenkaan arvele maahanmuuttajien alipalkkauksen vaikuttaneen heikentävästi palkkakehitykseen PAMin edustamilla aloilla (PAMin edustajien haastattelu). Tosin tästä poiketen SAK:n 28.10.2008 järjestämässä ”Maahanmuuttajien vaikutus työehtoihin” -seminaarissa PAMin edustaja arveli, että maahanmuuttajien kantaväestöä heikommalla työhhdot ovat hillinneet palkkojen nousua yksityisillä palveluilla. PAMin edustajan mukaan Rakennusliitolla on ollut vaikeampi tilanne ulkomaiseen työvoimaan liittyen:

*Rakennusliitolla on ollut hankalampi tilanne ylipäättänsä siinä suhteessa [liittyen ulkomaiseen työvoimaan]. He ovat aika voimakkaasti tehneet sitä kenttätyötä, kun palkkaukseen liittyvät ja muut työhhdot ovat olleet huonolla tolalla. Meillä [PAMissa] ollaan tehty tätä normaalina edunvalvontatyönä täällä toimistoissa ja on pyritty esimerkiksi koulutuksen keinoin käymällä näissä opilaitoksissa [jossa opiskelee maahanmuuttajia] kertomassa minkälainen suomalainen työmarkkinajärjestelmä on ja pyritty lisäämään sitä tietoisuutta. (PAMin edustajan haastattelu)*

## PAMin maahanmuuttajastrategia

Palvelualojen ammattiliiton edustajat hahmottavat maahanmuuttoon ja maahanmuuttajiin liittyvät kysymykset etupäässä kieli- ja kulttuurikysymyksinä, joihin tulee pyrkiä vaikuttamaan yhteiskunnassa koulutuksen, tietoisuuden ja asenteiden tasolla:

*Meidän [PAMin] fokus on niissä hyvien suhteiden edistämässä, ei erillisessä maahanmuuttajatoiminnassa. Minä olen itsekin yrittänyt toimia sen puolesta, että meillä ei olisi jotain erillistä ”maahanmuuttajatoiminnan” otsikkoa jossakin. (PAMin edustajan haastattelu)*

PAMin maahanmuuttopoliittisessa ohjelmassa vuosille 2009–2015 todetaan, että ”PAM toimii ennakkoluulojen, syrjinnän ja rasmin ehkäisemiseksi työpaikoilla, työelämässä ja yhteiskunnassa”. Keskeisenä strategiana on osallistuminen maahanmuuttoon ja ”monikulttuurisuuteen” liittyviin viranomaisen ja järjestäytyneen kolmannen sektorin yhteistyöverkostoihin. Toisin kuin tietyt yhdysvaltalaiset ammattiliitot, PAM ei ole – kuten ei Rakennusliittokaan – solminut yhteyksiä maahanmuuttajayhteisöihin ja -järjestöihin. Tässä mielessä PAMin ja Rakennusliiton strategiat poikkeavat aiemmin mainituista uudistamisstrategioista.

PAMin maahanmuuttajastrategia poikkeaa keskeisellä tavalla Rakennusliiton vastaavasta maahanmuuttajajäsenille suunnatun ammattiosaston suhteen. PAMin edustaja kommentoi kysymystä ”omasta” ammattiosastoista tietyille maahanmuuttajaryhmille seuraavasti:

*Minä en näe sitä kyllä hyvänä, että me [PAM] perustettaisiin erikseen jotain maahanmuuttajien osastoja, että me pantaisiin heidät johonkin ikiomaan lokeroon ja pidettäisiin erillään, tärkeämpää olisi nimenomaan miettiä ne konstit, jolla me saadaan heidät mukaan tähän meidän normaaliin toimintaan. (PAMin edustajan haastattelu, oma alleviivaus)*

PAMin strategiana on integroida maahanmuuttajat jo olemassa oleviin rakenteisiin ja kehittää tiedottamista kääntämällä aineistoa, kuten työehtosopimuksia ja työelämäoppaita, vieraille kielelle. Lisäksi PAM on järjestänyt vieraskielisiä tiedotustilaisuuksia maahanmuuttajajäsenilleen sekä vuonna 2010 lähettänyt PAMia koskevaa informaatiota PAMIin kuulumattomille palvelualalla työskenteleville maahanmuuttajille. Liiton edustajat myöntävät kielivaikeudet ammattiyhdistysedustajien – mukaan lukien luottamusmiehet – ja maahanmuuttajien välisessä kanssakäymisessä. Ongelmat eivät kuitenkaan rajoitu kielivaikeuksiin. Useat SAK:hon kuuluvissa ammattiliitoissa toimivat maahanmuuttajataustaiset aktiivit esittivät SAK:n maahanmuuttajafoorumeissa vuosina 2007 ja 2011, että kantaväestöön kuuluvien luottamusmiesten joukosta löytyy henkilöitä, joilla on negatiivisia asenteita maahanmuuttajia kohtaan. Tällaisten asenteiden esiintyminen heikentää inklusiivisten strategioiden onnistumista. Tutkimusaineiston mukaan tämä ei ole yksinomaan PAMia tai Rakennusliittoa koskeva ongelma, sillä vastaavia asenteita esiintyy myös muiden SAK:hon kuuluvien ammattiliitojen kentällä (ja suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa laajemminkin).

PAMin mukaan maahanmuuttajien kohdalla työhön liittyvät oikeudet eivät toteudu yhtä hyvin kuin kantaväestön kohdalla. PAM on Rakennusliiton tavoin esittänyt, että ammattiliitojen kanneoikeus osaltaan kohentaisi tilannetta. Tämä seikka ilmenee esimerkiksi PAMin maahanmuuttopoliittisesta ohjelmasta. PAMin edustajat eivät – toisin kuin Rakennusliiton edustajat rakennusalan ulkomaalaisten työntekijöiden suhteen – tulkitse tilannetta suomalaisia työmarkkinoita uhkaavana seikkana. PAMilla ei ole strategiaa esimerkiksi etnisten ravintoloiden kysymyksiin liittyen, vaikka niissä ilmenevät työehtorikkomukset tiedostetaan. PAM ei pyri aktiivisesti saamaan näiden ravintoloiden työntekijöitä jäsenikseen. PAMin edustajat nostivat esille tätä tutkimusta varten tehdyissä haastatte-

luissa maahanmuuttajien työehdoissa ilmenevät epäkohdat. Tästä huolimatta saartoja ei käytetä osana strategiaa. PAM ei koe, että sen kannattaa kohdentaa resursseja yksittäisten etnisten ravintoloiden käytäntöjen tarkistamiseen:

*On nähty, että meillä [PAMilla] on suurempiakin haasteita kuin se, että me lähdetään näitä yksittäisiä paikkoja [etnisiä ravintoloita] ratsaamaan [tarkastamaan]. Luulen, että se [työsuhteissa ilmenevät puutteet] tiedostetaan, mutta on ikään kuin nostettu kädet pystyyn, ”että ei me oikein pystytä puuttumaan tähän hommaan”. (PAMin edustajan haastattelu)*

PAMin edustajat kokevat jäsenhankinnan etnisissä ravintoloissa erittäin vaikeaksi. Aikaisemmissa tutkimuksissa (esim. Milkman 2000; 2006; 2010; Getman 2010, 115–137) on kuitenkin osoitettu, että oikeanlaisella kampanjoinnilla – kuten maahanmuuttajien hyödyntämisellä jäsenhankinnassa – myös ”vaikeasti tavoitettavien” maahanmuuttajien rekrytoiminen on mahdollista. Vuosina 2005–2010 Rakennusliiton jäsenlehti *Rakentajan* joka viidennessä pääkirjoituksessa otettiin kantaa ulkomaiseen työvoimaan ja maahanmuuttoon liittyviin kysymyksiin. Vastaavasti PAM-lehden pääkirjoituksissa ainoastaan 5 prosentissa otettiin kantaa näihin kysymyksiin. Ero heijastaa Rakennusliiton PAMia suurempaa huolta kansallisten työmarkkinoiden avautumisesta. Molemmat liitot esittävät, että valtiovallan tulisi ottaa nykyistä suurempi vastuu työehtojen valvonnasta. Tämä säästäisi liittojen resursseja sekä estäisi osaltaan työehtojen eriytymistä etnisiin perusteisiin.

### **Rakennusliiton ja PAMin strategioiden vertailu**

Nykytilanteessa Rakennusliitto ja PAM vastustavat työperäisen maahanmuuton rajoitusten höllentämistä, koska niiden mukaan

Suomessa on riittävästi työvoimaa tarjolla ja työehtojen valvonta on puutteellista. Liittojen maahanmuuttostrategia perustuu sulkeumastrategiaan. Niiden maahanmuuttostrategiasa Suomen (tai muun EU- tai ETA-maan) kansalaisen oikeus työhön menee potentiaalisen EU- / ETA-alueen ulkopuolelta tulevan maahanmuuttajan edelle. Molemmat liitot haluavat rajoittaa heidän työskentelymahdollisuuksia Suomessa.

Toisin kuin PAM, Rakennusliitto käyttää aktiivisesti saartoja ulkomaiseen työvoimaan liittyvissä kysymyksissä. Tämä heijastaa Rakennusliiton PAMia militantimpaa historiaa ja sen erilaista tilanteen tulkintaa (vrt. Helin 2004; Bergholm 2007; Lillie & Sippola 2010). Saartojen käytöllä on haittapuolensa, mutta rakennushankkeiden työehtoja olisi vaikea valvoa ilman tämänkaltaisia työtaistelutoimia. Rakennusliiton saarrat kohdistuvat pääasiassa ulkomaille rekisteröityihin yrityksiin ja epäsuorasti myös niiden ulkomaisiin työntekijöihin. Saartoja ei kuitenkaan voi suoranaisesti määrittää maahanmuutto- tai maahanmuuttajastrategiaksi, vaan niiden käyttö nivoutuu vahvasti Suomessa *tilapäisesti* työskentelevän ulkomaisen työvoiman työehtokysymyksiin. Saarroilla on paitsi eksklusiivinen myös inklusiivinen puolensa, sillä niiden käyttö voi osaltaan estää työehtojen eriytymisen etnisiin perustein. Inklusiivisuuden / eksklusiivisuuden suhteen voidaan myös kysyä, onko Rakennusliiton Osasto 7 inklusiivinen strategia, mikäli se pitkällä aikavälillä johtaa maahanmuuttajien eriytymiseen ay-liikkeesä. Toisin sanoen strategia, joka on lyhyellä aikavälillä inklusiivinen, voi pitkällä aikavälillä tuottaa myös eksklusiivisia tuloksia. Tämän takia liittojen on jatkuvasti arvioitava strategioidensa tarkoituksenmukaisuutta.

Molemmilla liitoilla on yksittäisiä keinoja, joilla ne ovat pyrkineet rekrytoimaan maahanmuuttajia jäsenikseen. Maahanmuuttajajäsenten määrä on noussut molemmissa liitoissa 2000-luvulla, vaikka niillä ei ole varsinaista maahanmuuttajiin tai ulkomaisiin tilapäistyöntekijöihin kohdistuvaa

jäsenhankintastrategiaa (vrt. Lillie & Sippola 2010). Maahanmuuttajien jäsenyys ei kuitenkaan välttämättä ole osoitus kokonaisvaltaisesta inklusiivisuudesta, sillä molemmissa liitoissa maahanmuuttajat (ja ulkomaiset tilapäistyöntekijät) ovat aliedustettuina liittojen henkilökunnassa ja luottamustehtävissä. Lisäksi tutkimusaineisto osoittaa, että maahanmuuttajat ja ulkomaiset tilapäistyöntekijät muodostavat aiempaa suuremman osan kyseisten alojen työntekijöistä. Jäsenmäärän absoluuttinen nousu ei sinänsä osoita aikaisempaa korkeampaa järjestäytymisastetta.

Rakennusliiton Tallinnan toimipistettä sekä Osasto 7 voidaan kuitenkin pitää eräänlaisena yksittäisenä jäsenhankintastrategiana. Maahanmuuttajat ovat molemmissa liitoissa aliedustettuina kaikilla tasoilla, joskin Rakennusliitolla on työpaikkatason luottamushenkilöinä jonkin verran enemmän maahanmuuttajia kuin PAMilla. Toisaalta luvut eivät ole täysin vertailukelpoisia, sillä PAMin tiedot perustuvat jäsenrekisteriin ja Rakennusliitosta saadut tiedot Rakennusliiton luottamusmiesten arvioihin. Liitot eivät kuitenkaan näe maahanmuuttajien inklusiivisuudessa samanlaista strategista potentiaalia kuin ne yhdysvaltalaiset ammattiliitot, jotka ovat omaksuneet kattavia maahanmuuttajiin liittyviä uudistamisstrategioita. Kettusen (2010, 49) mainitsema järjestäytymisagitaatiota ja laaja-alaisempaa solidaarisuutta luovien järjestömuotojen etsintä ei juurikaan kuulu liittojen strategiaan. Molempien liittojen maahanmuuttajastrategiat ovat kuitenkin jossain määrin aikaisempia vuosia systemaattisempia. Lisäksi niiden vaatimus yhtäläisistä työehdoista riippumatta työntekijän etnisestä tai kansallisesta taustasta on inklusiivinen strategia. Taulukossa 3 hahmotetaan liittojen strategioiden yhtäläisyyksiä ja eroja.

PAM edustaa strategiaa, jossa maahanmuuttajille ei ole, toisin kuin Rakennusliitolla, erityisjärjestelyjä. Liittojen toimintaympäristöt poikkeavat toisistaan. Rakennusalalla toimivan ulkomaisen työvoiman *tilapäisyys* vaikeuttaa Rakennusliiton jäsenhan-

kintaa, kun taas PAMin edustamilla aloilla ulkomaalaistaustaiset työntekijät asuvat Suomessa pysyvämmiin ja ovat näin ollen helpompi kohderyhmä jäsenhankinnan kannalta. Valtaresurssinäkökulmasta maahanmuuttokysymys on ongelmallisempi Rakennusliitolle, jonka jäseniksi ulkomaiset maassa tilapäisesti työskentelevät työntekijät hyvin harvoin liittyvät. Ylläpitääkseen valtaresurssiaan nopeasti muuttuvassa toimintaympäristössä Rakennusliitto on tehnyt tiettyjä organisatorisia muutoksia. Se on esimerkiksi perustanut oman ammattiosaston vieraskielisille jäsenille, toisin kuin PAM, joka ei koe sen valtaresurssien olevan uhattuna. PAMille maahanmuutto näyttäytyy pitkälti kulttuurisena ja kielellisenä kysymyksenä, kun taas Rakennusliitto korostaa ulkomaalaisten tilapäistyöntekijöiden työehtojen valvontaan liittyviä ongelmia.

### Lopuksi

Erottamalla Lundhin (1995) tavoin maahanmuutto- ja maahanmuuttajastrategiat toisistaan on mahdollista hahmottaa tarkasteltu ilmiö kokonaisvaltaisemmin kuin keskittymällä pelkästään jompaan kumpaan strategiaan. Tässä tutkimuksessa myös osoitetaan,

että maahanmuutto- ja maahanmuuttajakysymyksissä ammattiliitoilla on mahdollisuus tehdä toisistaan poikkeavia ratkaisuja.

Tutkimuksen teoreettisista malleista sulkeuma kuvaa molempien liittojen maahanmuuttostrategiaa niiden vastustaessa työperäisen maahanmuuton rajoitusten purkamista. Sen sijaan sulkeuman-käsitteellä ei voida kuvata kummankaan liiton maahanmuuttajastrategiaa. Sekä Rakennusliitolla että PAMilla on inklusiivisia strategioita, joilla ne pyrkivät tavoittamaan maahanmuuttajia (Rakennusliiton tapauksessa myös maassa tilapäisesti työskenteleviä ulkomaalaisia). Näitä strategioita ovat esimerkiksi tiedottaminen vierailta kielillä, ja Rakennusliiton kohdalla myös venäjänkielisen toimitsijan palkkaaminen. Liittojen valtaresurssien kannalta on johdonmukaista käyttää inklusiivisia strategioita suhteessa maahanmuuttajiin ja ulkomaisiin tilapäistyöntekijöihin, sillä liittojen intressissä on valtaresurssinäkökulmasta saada heidät jäseniksi. Sulkeumastrategian oikeutus maahanmuuttostrategiana on normatiivinen kysymys. Rajoitusten hyödyllisyys valtaresurssinäkökulmasta on oma empiirinen kysymyksensä. Toisaalta tulee muistaa, että maissa, joihin kohdistuu suurta maahanmuuttopainetta (kuten Ranska, Italia, Espanja ja Yhdysvallat), ammattiliitot ovat alkaneet 1990-luvulta läh-

**Taulukko 3. Rakennusliiton ja Palvelualojen ammattiliiton maahanmuutto- ja maahanmuuttajastrategiat**

	Rakennusliitto	Palvelualojen ammattiliitto
Maahanmuuttostrategia	– Vastustaa työperäisen maahanmuuton rajoitusten höllentämistä (sulkeumastrategia)	– Vastustaa työperäisen maahanmuuton rajoitusten höllentämistä (sulkeumastrategia)
Maahanmuuttajastrategia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Erityisstrategioita: Osasto 7 ja Tallinnan toimipiste</li> <li>– Painotus työehtojen kontrollissa</li> <li>– Tiedottamista vierailta kielillä</li> <li>– Nostanut ulkomaalaisten tilapäistyöntekijöiden työehtoihin liittyviä ongelmia yhteiskunnalliseen keskusteluun</li> <li>– Vaatimus samapalkkaisuudesta etnisten ryhmien välillä</li> <li>– Lakimuutosten esittäminen: esim. ammattiliittojen kanneoikeus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Universalistinen strategia: ei maahanmuuttajiin liittyviä erityisstrategioita, mutta tiedottamista vierailta kielillä</li> <li>– Painotus koulutuksessa, kielikysymyksissä (ei niinkään kontrollitoimenpiteissä)</li> <li>– Nostanut maahanmuuttajien työehtoihin liittyvät ongelmia yhteiskunnalliseen keskusteluun</li> <li>– Vaatimus samapalkkaisuudesta etnisten ryhmien välillä</li> <li>– Lakimuutosten esittäminen: esim. ammattiliittojen kanneoikeus</li> </ul>

tien kannattaa aikaisempaa avoimempaa maahanmuuttopoliittikkaa. Ammattiliitot katsovat, etteivät tiukat maahanmuuton rajoitukset ole hyödyllisiä niiden valtaresurssien kannalta esimerkiksi sen takia, että rajoituksilla on taipumus tuottaa dokumentoimatonta maahanmuuttoa lieveilmiöineen (Haus 2002; Watts 2002.) Myös suomalaisessa tutkimuksessa (Könönen 2011, 52–67) on esitetty, että Suomen nykyinen työlupajärjestelmä itse asiassa heikentää maahanmuuttajien mahdollisuuksia vaikuttaa omiin työehtoihinsa. Matti Vanhasen toisen hallituksen esitys liittyen työperäisen maahanmuuton rajoitusten lieventämiseen ei edennyt eduskuntakaudella 2007–2011 lakimuutokseksi. Lisäksi hallitusohjelmassa vuosille 2011–2015 todetaan, että kyseistä höllennystä ei tulla tekemään. Tämän tutkimuksen aineiston ja aiempien tutkimusten (Paananen 1993; Salmenhaara 2008) mukaan on selvää, että ammattiliitot (ja työnantajajärjestöt) vaikuttavat poliittiseen päätöksentekoon myös maahanmuuttopoliittisissa kysymyksissä. Rakennusliiton ja PAMin sekä niiden keskusjärjestö SAK:n – jonka näkemystä lakimuutoksesta kuultiin eduskunnassa – kielteinen kanta vaikutti todennäköisesti asiaan.

Maahanmuuttajien suhteellisen pieni määrä Suomessa verrattuna esimerkiksi Yhdysvaltoihin saattaa selittää sen, että Rakennusliitto ja PAM eivät ole ottaneet käyttöön kokonaisvaltaisia maahanmuutta-

jiin liittyviä uudistamisstrategioita aiemmin mainittujen yhdysvaltalaisen ammattiliitton tapaan. Toinen strategia selittävää tekijä saattaa olla suomalaisten ammattiliittojen kansainvälisesti verraten vahvat valtaresurssit. Vahvassa institutionaalisessa asemassa olevat ammattiliitot eivät hanakasti tee organisatorisia muutoksia (Lillie & Sippola 2010, 108). Esimerkiksi Yhdysvalloissa maahanmuuttoon liittyvien ammattiliittojen uudistamisstrategioiden käyttöönottoa on edeltänyt huomattava jäsenmäärien lasku (Milkman 2010). Sekä Rakennusliiton että PAMin absoluuttiset jäsenmäärät ovat kasvaneet 2000-luvulla. Kuvaavaa molempien liittojen toiminnalle on, että ne suuntaavat valtaresurssiaan suomalaisen yhteiskunnan perinteisiin instituutioihin (lainsäädäntöprosessiin, työnantajiin, viranomaisiin ja valtamediaan) eikä uusia alliansseja ja suoria yhteyksiä maahanmuuttajaväestöön juurikaan haeta. Strategisten valintojen kääntöpuolena on innovatiivisten strategioiden puute, joita uusien työntekijäryhmien – kuten maahanmuuttajien – nykyistä kokonaisvaltaisempi inkluusio edellyttäisi. Maahanmuuttoon liittyvät kysymykset vievät ay-liikkeen perimmäisten kysymysten äärelle, kuten kenen etua ajaa, mitä on solidaarisuus, onko solidaarisuudella rajoja ja keitä ovat ”me”? Sekä PAMissa että Rakennusliitossa nämä kysymykset ovat asialistalla, mutta varsinkin Rakennusliitolle kansallisten työmarkkinoiden avautuminen tuottaa ongelmia.

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# Trade Union Responses to Transnational Labour Mobility in the Finnish-Estonian Context

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This article examines trade union strategies in relation to labor migration in Estonia and Finland, drawing on face-to-face interviews with trade unionists and official union statements. The study considers the national trade union strategies located in two separate but interconnected localities that represent different approaches to market economy. Previous research suggests that the national industrial relations system is a key factor in explaining unions' labor migration strategies. Unions operating in liberal market economies are claimed to be more open toward immigration and more inclusive toward immigrants than unions in coordinated markets. This study analyzes the extent to which this theory holds in the context of Estonia and Finland—Finland representing a coordinated market economy and Estonia a liberal market economy. Furthermore, the analysis examines how the emergence of a translocal labor market, resulting from the geographical vicinity and linguistic affinity between Finland and Estonia as well as from free mobility within the EU, is reflected in trade union approaches to labor migration. The study finds that Finnish trade union strategies influence labor mobility, whereas Estonian trade unions remain bystanders in the issue.*

## **KEY WORDS**

*Labor markets / migrant workers / strategy / trade unions / translocal linkages / transnational labor mobility / varieties of capitalism*

## **Introduction**

**T**rade unions always operate in a specific institutional context, which is related to the nation state (e.g., Penninx and Roosblad 2000). Consequently, this article on trade union strategies in relation to transnational labor mobility in Finland and Estonia considers the particular institutional features of the two national contexts as enabling and constraining structures within which trade unions act.

According to “conventional wisdom,” trade unions attempt to restrict immigration in order to keep the supply of labor low, whereas employer organizations strive for liberal labor migration policies as a means to guarantee a suitable inflow of labor force into the labor markets. Recent research has, however, provided a more nuanced picture regarding trade union strategies. According to this strand of literature, trade unions have in many cases diverted from restrictive strategies during the last two decades (Haus 2002; Holgate 2005; Menz 2011, pp. 263–264; Watts 2002). In practice, this has meant agreeing to—and in some cases promoting—liberalization of immigration policies (Briggs 2001; Haus 2002; Krings 2009; Menz 2011; Milkman 2010; Watts 2002). Many

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trade unions have also allocated increasing resources to organizing migrants and ethnic minorities, who they view as a source of organizational strength (Menz 2011, pp. 263–264; Milkman 2010). The shift has also been explained by unions increasingly questioning the effectiveness of restrictive immigration policies, but also as a consequence of the internationalization of human rights concerns (Briggs 2001; Haus 2002; Watts 2002).

The selected approach in this article extends the work of David Soskice and Peter Hall (2001) on varieties of capitalism (VoC) approach with Walter Korpi's (1998) theory regarding institutionalization of power resources concerning the distribution of power in capitalist societies. The VoC approach distinguishes two ideal types of categories of political economy: *liberal market economies* (LMEs) and *coordinated market economies* (CMEs). Of the two countries under scrutiny, Estonia represents an LME and Finland a CME. In LMEs, the coordination logic of market relations tends to be more dependent on demand and supply conditions in competitive markets, whereas in CMEs, the markets tend to be more institutionally regulated (Soskice and Hall 2001, pp. 1–68). This leaves more influence for trade unions and, e.g., employer organizations in CMEs compared with the situation in LMEs. This article will show that this distinction is related also to trade unions' strategies as regards transnational labor mobility.

The extent to which the interplay between the labor market partners is institutionalized, as well as the extent to which the state is a party in that interaction, varies remarkably between countries, constraining and enabling the avenues available for trade union action. Trade unions gain access to political actors and bargain with employers through practices of institutionalized coordination of markets. Power resources related to the coordination of markets are essential as regards the bargaining power that trade unions can mobilize in relation to employers and the state (Korpi 1998, p. 54). In the absence of bargaining power and access to lobbying, trade unions have to take recourse in alternative strategies. However, capitalist markets function both at the national and transnational level. Analysis of the context for trade union action needs to take into consideration not only such transnational market dynamics but also the related translocal linkages resulting, for instance, from the rise of translocal recruitment patterns. Also, transnational institutional forces reshape national political economies and influence the national power resources that are wielded by trade unions. In this article, the term *translocal* will be applied as it often is in migration and cultural studies, i.e., in order to grasp the spatial cross-border local-to-local spatial dynamics, instead of highlighting the global/local dimension of globalization (e.g., Brickel & Datta 2011, p. 10; Ma 2002). Schein and Oakes (2006, p. 20) argue that translocality “deliberately confuses the boundaries of the local in an effort to capture the increasingly complicated nature of spatial processes and identities as place-based rather than exclusively mobile, uprooted or ‘traveling’”. A concrete example of a translocal phenomenon is the emergence of a translocal labor market between the capital areas of Helsinki and Tallinn. The term *transnational* refers to state border-cutting practices by nonstate actors such as enterprises or individual workers (e.g., Sklair 2001).

There are, however, national differences in the coordinating power resources to which trade unions have access. These become visible in trade union responses to migration and migrants. Trade union influence on migration policy is mediated through institutionalized labor market relations. Furthermore, historical legacies of migration (Penninx & Roosblad 2000, p. 184–186; Roosblad 2002; Roosblad & Marino 2008) as

well as histories of translocal linkages constitute vital conditions structuring trade union strategies aimed at influencing a specific labor market. Here, too, there is a linkage to power resources: Menz (2011, p. 26) argues that “past choices of migration regulation in Europe inform current policy design in terms of options, choices, debates, and perceptions of problems and possible regulatory solutions.” Reflecting the assumption of such path dependency in migration and labor policies, it can be assumed that in countries like Finland, policy design creates specific windows of opportunity for trade unions, but that in countries like Estonia, where coordinating mechanisms are largely absent, trade unions lack such possibilities.

Analysis of trade union responses to migration is of societal importance: the viability of trade union strategies around questions of mobility has a bearing on the unions’ own future. Furthermore, the strategies potentially also impact the situation of the individual migrant worker, and have implications for the labor market at large.

This article argues that even in the era of emerging transnational labor markets, the national industrial relations system shapes the strategies of trade unions in Estonia and Finland as regards transnational labor mobility. The main research question is: how do trade unions in Finland and Estonia perceive and react to the phenomenon of transnational labor mobility from Estonia to Finland? The study also addresses how these trade unions perceive and react to transnational labor mobility on a *general level*, i.e., not just labor mobility from Estonia to Finland. In addition, the article discusses the extent to which previous theory on trade union strategies regarding labor migration holds in the context of Estonia and Finland.

In this article, trade unions are understood as rational actors whose strategies have certain goals. The term *strategy* refers to trade unions’ goal-oriented and relatively well-established ways of operating. The analyzed cases are the *Finnish Construction Trade Union* (in Finnish *Rakennusliitto*, *FCTU*) and the Estonian trade union movement.<sup>1</sup> The analysis recognizes that trade union strategies are nowadays influenced by both translocal linkages and transnational institutional aspects, made possible by, for instance, free mobility in the EU. Estonia and Finland are neighboring countries whose translocal linkages are shaped by close contact since the fall of the Soviet Union, linguistic affinity, easy and relatively cheap access, and a partially shared transnational institutional framework, as both countries belong to the European Union, Schengen Area, and the Eurozone (i.e., have the same currency). Even before the fall of the Soviet Union visibility of Finnish television in Estonia provided an alternative to Soviet propaganda for many Estonians (e.g., Zetterberg 2007, p. 713). In sum, this study considers Finnish and Estonian trade union strategies located in separate but linked localities that are examples of different approaches to market economies with dissimilar opportunities for trade unionism.

The article is organized as follows. The first section introduces the analytical approach to trade union strategy vis-à-vis migration and migrants. The second section outlines the research design that underlines the need to consider national, transnational, and translocal dynamics in the formation of trade union strategies and presents the contrastive case study. A presentation of the empirical findings follows, with focus on how differences in market economies are reflected in trade union power resources and strategies. The last section concludes by summarizing, explaining and discussing the key findings, arguing that even in the era of transnationalization of labor markets, national contexts continue to play a role, as the institutional contexts may or may not create windows of opportunity for trade union action.



### **Analyzing trade union strategies in an institutional context: the coordination of market economies and trade union power resources**

Migration requires that unions assess their boundaries regarding solidarity, in terms of how ethnic and linguistic diversity and the issue of nonnationals are encompassed into a union's existing organization, often historically represented by native, white, male workers (e.g., Mulinari & Neergaard 2004; Ristikari 2013). For unions, the inclusion of migrants has both an ideological and a strategic component (Penninx & Roosblad 2000, p. 8). From the perspective of the individual migrant worker, trade union membership can ideally offer economic and social protection and give access to political and other forms of participation (Vranken 1990, pp. 47–73).

Recent research emphasizes that trade union strategies regarding labor migration are partly determined by the national labor market model, although trade unions have choice regarding their implementation (Bengtsson 2013; Hardy et al. 2012; Haus 2002; Krings 2009; Lillie & Greer 2007; Marino 2012; Penninx & Roosblad 2000; Watts 2002; Wrench 2004). A number of studies apply the VoC approach in analyzing trade union strategies toward labor mobility and migrant workers in different national contexts (Johansson 2012; Krings 2009; Menz 2011). Although much of the earlier research employing the VoC approach has focused on the strategies of firms, the analytical approach in itself takes into account the macro-characteristics of national political economies and the role of key institutional factors such as labor relations (Hancké et al. 2008, p. 5). Recent research (Bechter et al. 2012) has criticized the VoC approach of methodological nationalism for overemphasizing the differences of various national industrial relations while underestimating the variety of sectoral industrial relations *within* countries. Despite this valid critique, I am utilizing VoC in this article because Bechter et al. (2012) find that of all 27 EU countries, Finland exhibits the most homogenous industrial relations (least variance in the coordination logic within sectors). Estonia for its part is one of the EU's most heterogeneous countries in this respect (*ibid.*). Hence, Finland and Estonia, unlike many other “mixed model” countries, fit well into the ideal type of models offered by the VoC, Finland being a CME and Estonia an LME.

A key insight arising from studies of trade union strategies from the VoC perspective is the uncovering of systematic differences in trade union strategies between countries representing different approaches to capitalism. According to Torben Krings' (2009) four-country VoC-inspired analysis of unions in LME countries, Britain and Ireland appear to be “more open” toward migrant labor than unions in CMEs, Germany and Austria. Unions in the United Kingdom and Ireland have been inclined to assess that labor standards are best protected by enforcement of rights, rather than restrictions on transnational workforce mobility. They have allocated increasing resources to the mobilization of migrants into unions, seeing them as a potential power resource for regaining lost membership and societal influence. Unions in Germany and Austria, which have a stronger institutional connection to the national industrial relations system, have been inclined toward supporting more restrictive immigration policies and have placed less emphasis on reaching out to migrant workers, as these unions do not have the same incentives to reach out to migrant workers owing to their relatively strong institutional position (*ibid.*).<sup>2</sup>

The present study builds on these insights about how different institutional contexts give rise to systematic differences in trade union strategies. However, I develop

the VoC approach with a more systematic consideration of trade union power resources and argue that the institutional interplay of labor market partners is a key feature of the coordination of markets (see Korpi 1998). Finland and Estonia offer almost textbook cases of the two different approaches to market economies: CME Finland is characterized by comparatively influential trade unions and employer organizations that have high coverage as regards collective agreements, whereas this is not the case in LME Estonia. Trade union density is also higher in CMEs than in LMEs (Soskice & Hall 2001, p. 59). Finland confirms this, as 95% of the workforce is covered by collective agreements, and nonunionized workers are protected by collective agreements on the *erga omnes* principle (e.g., Böckerman & Uusitalo 2006, p. 284). In contrast, the share of workers covered by sectoral collective agreements is only 25% in Estonia (2005 Working Life Barometer Survey Estonia), and Estonia has national collective agreements in only a few industry sectors (Sippola 2009). Trade union density is between 62 and 67% in Finland (Ahtiainen 2009) and only 8% in Estonia (OECD Stateextracts 2012). This high density in Finland is partly explained by the long-term state recognition of the so-called Ghent system, where employees belonging to an unemployment fund administered by a union receive higher unemployment benefit than nonmembers (Böckerman & Uusitalo 2006). The Ghent system increases incentives to join a trade union (*ibid.*; Vøxted & Lind 2012), and high density is in itself an important trade union power resource (e.g., Scheuer 2011). However, private unemployment funds have been allowed in Finland since the early 1990s, which has led to a decrease in density (Böckerman & Uusitalo 2006). Finnish unions have traditionally gained access to government decision-making via “blue collar” trade unions having links to the left wing political parties (Bergholm 2003). Such political clout is another vital power resource for trade unions. The Finnish labor market system has during the last decades been characterized by a relatively high degree of trust and institutionalized cooperation between the labor market parties and the state (*ibid.*). Trust and institutionalized cooperation constitute immaterial power resources, in that they increase the political clout of trade unions and give them windows of opportunity for societal influence.

Estonia has followed a market liberal/neoliberal model of development with little role for trade unionism (Feldmann 2008; Mrozowicki 2013 et al.; Sippola 2009). The vast difference in the position of trade unions in Finland and Estonia can be illustrated by the FCTU having more members (89,000) than the entire Estonian trade union movement (46,000) (Source: FCTU and Estonian trade union confederations). In addition, the countries have very different migration histories, as will be shown later. The rise of a translocal labor market linking Helsinki and Tallinn is an important aspect of the cases explored here.

### **Analysis of trade union strategies**

In the research literature, trade unions are seen to be facing a series of choices, or “dilemmas” regarding immigration (Penninx & Roosblad 2000). Here we divide trade union strategies as regards migration and migrants into two categories:

1. Mobilizing strategies.
2. Strategies along the governmental dimension.



Studies that emphasize mobilization strategies regarding migrants/ethnic minorities (e.g., Milkman 2010; Nash 2001; Sherman & Voss 2000) fall under the so-called trade union revitalization/renewal literature that focuses on unions' proactive efforts to regain their lost societal impact/power resources by, for instance, targeting "new" potential—often underrepresented—demographic groups such as migrants. This school pays attention to situations where trade unions operate as social movements rather than administrative agents. This type of unionism is sometimes called "social movement unionism" or "community unionism," owing to its emphasis on building new contacts and links outside "traditional" labor relations and beyond the workplace. Immigrant mobilization strategies aimed at trade union "renewal" also include "the recruitment of new staff that, in terms of orientation and previous work experience, can lend weight to the change process" (James & Karmowska 2012, p. 204).<sup>3</sup>

Strategies of the second category, i.e., strategies along the governmental dimension, include administrative efforts at all levels of government where unions actively draft or promote legislation regarding the regulation of the industrial relations framework (e.g., Behrens et al. 2006, pp. 11–29). These strategies can be inclusive or exclusive, or have dimensions of both.<sup>4</sup>

### **A contrastive case study design of two translocally linked cases**

The empirical research on which this analysis is based was organized as a contrastive case study. Case studies offer concrete context-bound knowledge (Flyvbjerg 2004). According to Kitay and Callus (1998), case studies are the best method of researching power relations and complex social interactions, particularly when these are in flux. A central feature of case studies is triangulation of data, which enables a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under research (Flyvbjerg 2004). Following the case study logic and taking into account the need to triangulate data, several types of data were collected parallel with the analysis. The research process and the empirical material are described in detail in the endnotes.<sup>5,6</sup>

As trade union movements in the two contexts are very different, direct comparisons are not only meaningless but impossible. Instead, the two cases offer a means to contrast the findings concerning each case, thus producing more situated accounts and interpretations. In this study, the FCTU is approached as one case and the Estonian trade union movement forms another case. As regards Estonia, the choice of including several trade unions in the study instead of one, and looking at the Estonian trade union movement as an entity, is motivated by the weak position of Estonian trade unions. The FCTU is chosen as a case because the construction sector is one of the most immigrant-dense sectors of the labor market. Furthermore, the construction industry forms a highly interesting case because its structural changes, such as subcontracting, are intertwined with questions of international mobility of workers and employers (e.g., Lillie & Greer 2007).

As mentioned earlier, Estonian mobility to Finland is facilitated by both countries now belonging to the EU, the Schengen Area, and the Eurozone. The emergence of a translocal labor market has further been facilitated by the linguistic closeness of Estonian and Finnish and by the short distance: the 80 km crossing between Tallinn and Helsinki can be covered by ferry in under two hours. In the last few years, a translocal labor market has emerged in the Helsinki–Tallinn area, and Estonians are now the

largest group of foreign nationals in Finland (Statistics Finland 2011). In the Finnish capital area, an estimated one-third of construction workers are of foreign—mainly Estonian—origin (Source: the FCTU). For instance, 64% of the workers undertaking facade renovations in Helsinki in 2010 were of foreign origin, Estonians forming the largest foreign group (*ibid.*). A large share of the Estonian workers, especially in the construction sector, commute between Estonia and Finland, looking for job opportunities, higher wages, and generally a better quality of working life (Alho 2010). The translocal Helsinki–Tallinn labor market can be compared with other European border regions where migrants from countries with lower wages and living standards frequently cross national borders for work in the wealthier country (*cf.* Krings 2009). The average monthly gross wages and salaries for a full-time worker in year 2011 were 839 Euros in Estonia, whereas in Finland the figure was 3111 Euros (Statistics Estonia/Statistics Finland). In 2011, Finnish purchasing power parity was approximately twice as high as that of Estonia (OECD Statextracts 2012).

According to FCTU estimates, there are 170,000 workers in the construction sector, of whom 100,000 are employees, 20–25% of them migrant workers, *i.e.*, 25,000–30,000 workers. FCTU estimated in January 2013 that the Estonians were the largest foreign group with 10,000–20,000 workers (Hufvudstadsbladet Jan 19, 2013). The majority of this category works on a temporary basis in Finland. They are posted workers, but also hired agency workers, self-employed, or workers directly employed by Finnish or Estonian employers. There are no statistics on the dispersion of these workers in these different categories. According to FCTU sources, it is possible that the amount of Estonian and other foreign workers will continue to increase in future (*e-mail response from an FCTU official on Aug 6, 2012*). The aforementioned figures are high in a country where the foreign-born population living permanently in the country is only a little more than 5% of the total population.

In earlier research, particular trade union histories and identities are recognized—in addition to the national industrial relations system—as variables influencing trade union strategy (*e.g.*, Marino 2012). In Estonia, the low membership is related to the difficulty Estonian trade unions have in re-identifying themselves after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is also related to the variance in degree of trust in trade unions in the respective countries. According to the European Social Survey (*for 2010*), two out of three Finns trust that trade unions have at least some influence over decisions that affect working conditions, while fewer than one in five do so in Estonia. Indeed, nearly 40% of Estonians state that they work in workplaces where there are no unions present (*ibid.*).

The effect of immigration on receiving countries has been one of the most conflict-ridden issues in European societies (*e.g.*, Ervasti *et al.* 2012, p. 4). The migration histories of the two countries are marked by their political and economic histories. During the period 1945–1991, when Estonia was annexed to the Soviet Union, hundreds of thousands of migrants from other parts of the Soviet Union were relocated to the country. For native Estonians, the non-Estonian-speaking migrants who came to form nearly 40% of the country's population presented a threat of cultural Russification (Zetterberg 2007). During the same time period, immigration to Finland was virtually nonexistent, gradually booming only in the 1990s and 2000s. As previously stated, evidence exists that such national experiences affect the collective memory and perceptions of actors involved in migration management (Menz 2011, pp. 23–75). These experiences might influence actors such as trade unions to perceive immigration as a threat or as



an opportunity. Despite a strengthening public anti-immigration political discourse (Haavisto 2011, p. 200), attitudes toward immigration in Finland (much like in other Scandinavian countries) have on a general level been comparatively positive in a European context (Ervasti et al. 2008, p. 197).

### **The Finnish Construction Trade Union: control-oriented strategies combined with some mobilizing strategies**

The FCTU holds one key power resource by default, as construction work cannot be relocated to low-wage countries in order to save costs, as in some industry sectors. Its potential for defending national labor standards and rights is strengthened by the high density of union membership in the Finnish construction sector: the interviewed FCTU representatives claimed that in 2007 around 70% of employees working “permanently” in the sector were FCTU members. The FCTU also has an institutionalized access to tripartite negotiating, giving it ample opportunities for influence.

Despite its historically strong position, the FCTU fears that the transnationalization of the national labor markets adversely affects the labor market situation from its standpoint, in terms of decreased wages and other forms of competition from abroad. This fear is shared by many trade unions in Northern and Western Europe, especially after the EU accessions of 2004, when several former Eastern Bloc countries became EU members (e.g., Hardy et al. 2012). The FCTU has the goal of preventing the formation of a two-tier labor market based on nationality or ethnicity, a question that is linked to the FCTU’s power resources. Trade union strategies have to be understood in relation to employer strategies. In this regard, it is fruitful to refer to the transnational practices that enterprises have adopted. In the context of Estonia and Finland, construction enterprises can circumvent Finnish national regulations by operating in the Finnish construction sector via Estonia and other EU countries where employer costs are lower than in Finland (cf. Lillie & Sippola 2011). Furthermore, even if collective agreements apply to all workers in Finland irrespective of nationality, there is evidence of underpayment of migrants due to lack of monitoring of working conditions (Alho 2010). In addition, employers can, within the law, exert downward pressure on wages, as the collective agreements (which are nationally binding in Finland) stipulate only the minimum wage levels in different wage brackets. Many Finnish construction workers are not prepared to accept wages that only match the minimum stipulated in the collective agreements, whereas a migrant worker coming from a low-wage country might consider the same wage more acceptable.

The work of Estonians in the Finnish construction sector is characterized by cross-border commuting in an emerging translocal labor market between the respective countries. This is problematic for the FCTU, as commuting workers rarely become members. Neither the FCTU nor the state authorities have control regarding their working conditions. The FCTU defines immigrant construction workers as exploited. According to Paananen (1999), the FCTU labeled foreign workers as exploited at the shift of 1990s out of economic self-interest, so that it could defend its demands to restrict the amount of foreign workers with a moral and altruistic argument.

Evidence certainly exists of underpayment and other problems regarding the working conditions of migrant workers in Finland (Wrede & Nordberg 2010). The FCTU

also points out considerable problems in the housing conditions of foreign construction workers. In addition, the apartments or habitations are in some cases owned by the employers or agencies, who apply overpriced rents. Nevertheless, the term *exploitation* does not always correspond to the *subjective* experience of those migrant workers in whose country of origin the living and working conditions are at a lower standard (cf. Krings 2009; Piore 1979).

Previous research has argued that the FCTU—notwithstanding the transnationalization and opening up of the national borders—still targets its strategies in the frame of the nation state and has difficulty coping with the transnational practices applied by employers (Lillie & Greer 2007; Lillie & Sippola 2011). The FCTU stresses that it is not against the use of foreign workers *as such*, but opposes those practices where working conditions are undercut by the use of foreign labor. This stance is in accordance with the viewpoint of Finnish trade unions on a general level that immigration is a reality and should be accepted as long as the process happens in a controlled fashion and does not lead to inequalities in the labor markets based on ethnicity or nationality (Alho 2008; Ristikari 2013).

Many of the interviewees expressed that labor migration is a natural part of the construction industry, and some referred to historical examples of Finnish construction workers being employed in various construction projects abroad. They also highlighted that the FCTU has been successful in defending migrant workers—in some cases even nonmembers—with regaining withheld wages or other work-related benefits. The FCTU emphasizes that they, together with the Finnish authorities, do not have sufficient resources to control whether posted workers in reality pay taxes to their home country. According to the FCTU, this situation gives a comparative advantage to foreign enterprises. The FCTU is in a challenging situation as regards the traditional trade union demand of *equal pay for equal work*. So, what are its strategies in this situation?

The FCTU has outspokenly resisted political demands over loosening restrictions for *third country nationals* to enter the Finnish labor markets. Its argument is that there is no lack of workforce in the construction sector, and that there are problems regarding the working conditions of migrant workers (Alho 2010). However, as regards intra-EU and The European Economic Area labor immigration, the FCTU has no direct means to *exclude* foreign workers or enterprises from entering the Finnish construction sector. In addition, it has little means to *include* temporary labor migrants as members, who are generally not interested in membership, owing to their temporary stay. However, as an institutionally strongly embedded trade union in a CME context, it has power resources to influence the jurisdiction, as it perceives to be in its favor, in questions of transnational labor mobility. An illuminating example of its strategy is the successful lobbying of the *tax number*. According to the FCTU, its cooperation with the employers' organization, *the Confederation of Finnish Construction Industries RT*, and its personal contact with the social democrat MP, *Jukka Gustafsson*, were essential for successful lobbying (YLE News/Morning TV May 31, 2012). The tax number is an interesting example, as it represents an *administrative* strategy that has both *inclusive* and *exclusive* elements regarding foreign workers. The tax number proves that the individual worker has registered with the tax authorities. It has been compulsory for all construction workers since September 2012. The number, which facilitates monitoring, has to be attached to the identification and must always be visible when working on a construction site. The foreign applicant must be able to present a valid residence permit (if they come from



outside the EU/EEA) and a work contract in order to receive a tax number. The FCTU has also the legal right to pressure those employers who do not follow the collective agreements by boycotts (Alho 2012; Lillie & Sippola 2011, p. 298). When a boycott occurs, FCTU members are asked not to work for the boycotted firm. This pressure strategy, the goal of which is to force the employer to respect the collective agreements, is most often targeted at foreign construction enterprises (ibid.). Although the majority of undocumented workers in construction are natives, growing numbers of foreign workers are entering the undocumented labor market (Cremers 2006). In this situation, the FCTU has pushed for legislation that facilitates control and monitoring. The employers' association agrees with the FCTU that undocumented work has adverse socioeconomic effects. The employers' association also has self-interest in preventing social dumping, as its member enterprises are negatively affected in cases where foreign enterprises undermine Finnish collective agreements.

The FCTU has backed its demands for new control-oriented legislation—including more effective enforcement—by a media strategy that has problematized the use of a foreign workforce. During recent years, the FCTU has also successfully advocated other legislation that facilitates the control of particularly foreign workers and enterprises.

Trade union strategies vis-à-vis immigration and migrant workers are often divided on the inclusion/exclusion axis (e.g., Penninx & Roosblad 2000). Many strategies can with good reason be placed in either category. However, strategies—such as the tax number—often have complex indications, and they comprise both inclusive and exclusive elements. For instance, requiring the tax number *includes* the foreign workers in the regulated Finnish labor market, and as a consequence also includes them in some forms of social security, whereas it—at least in principle—*excludes* undocumented foreign workers from the labor market. According to an Estonian construction entrepreneur, *Haakan Nomm*, the tax number means that “the wild west era in the Finnish construction sector is coming to an end” (Baltic Business News Mar 21, 2012), the “wild west era” referring to uncontrolled work from Estonia. Baltic Business News (ibid.) argues that the tax number is “designed to force Estonians out of the Finnish construction market.” The FCTU assesses that the tax number might initially “to some degree” reduce the amount of Estonian workers in the Finnish construction sector (e-mail response from an FCTU leader, August 2012). In other words, the FCTU is aware of the protectionist implications of the strategy. One of the FCTU leaders assesses that the tax number will imply more work opportunities for Finnish construction workers (YLE News Jun 21, 2012).

The strategies of the FCTU are control oriented and have a strong administrative bias. Notwithstanding the increasing share of Estonian and other foreign workers, the FCTU does not perceive migrant workers as a source of renewal or revitalization as the US unions do. There are no large-scale comprehensive mobilization campaigns, nor is there a discourse that would interpret migrants as a source of renewal. The lack of extensive mobilization campaigns is explained partly—as previous research (Lillie & Sippola 2011) also suggests—by mobilizing efforts being costly, as a large share of migrant construction workers are *temporarily* in Finland. An additional explanation for the lack of such mobilization campaigns could be institutional and path dependency related, namely the Ghent system, where unions have by default been attractive to employees because of the administration of unemployment funds. According to Frege and Kelly (2006, p. 7), union strategies are most strongly oriented toward mobilization in countries where the institutional position of unions is weakest. Finnish trade unions

have—in an institutionally strong position—gained a high density without needing to divert excessive resources to direct mobilization.

The FCTU perceives the increasing transnational mobility under current circumstances as a threat rather than an opportunity for strengthening its power resources. One central strategy of the FCTU is its demand for more state intervention in controlling working conditions. The demand is logical, as monitoring working conditions consumes union resources. The FCTU has also emphasized that more young people should be educated into the construction sector. This demand is also logical from a trade union perspective: it is by default less costly for the FCTU to mobilize workers permanently living in the country than foreign workers whose stay is characterized by temporariness. The FCTU shop stewards interviewed for this research indicated that recruitment is challenged by foreign workers working in their own groups and often having a foreign employer. The difficulties were enhanced by the lack of a common language, although Estonian workers were seen as a relatively easy target group, owing to the closeness of the Estonian and Finnish languages. The shop stewards also expressed that Estonian workers in some cases feared their employer's reaction if they joined FCTU, or had reservations toward unionism, as trade unions were part of the repressive Soviet regime in the former Estonia.

There has been some change in strategy, as the FCTU has allocated increasing resources to servicing and raising awareness of migrant workers in recent years. Primarily, this has meant hiring a Russian-speaking official, translating more information material into foreign languages, and establishing a trade union branch for its members with a “foreign” background (the branch operates mainly in Estonian and Russian). The FCTU has also established an information office in the capital of Estonia, where it informs prospective Estonian emigrants to Finland about work-related issues and membership of the FCTU. The information office has, according to the FCTU, led to some 150 Estonians joining as FCTU members. The FCTU also gave “some” financial assistance to the Estonian Construction Union. This was not a successful strategy, as the Estonian sister union went bankrupt in the early 2000s, which highlights the difficulty of transnational trade union strategies. As regards strategy, it is important to note that—owing to the universally binding collective agreements in the Finnish CME context—even those trade union strategies that are not *explicitly aimed at migrants* can defend and ameliorate the position of migrant workers.

The FCTU faces challenges regarding increased transnational mobility, although its position has been facilitated by its comparatively strong power resources, a relatively favorable economic situation in the Finnish construction sector, and also its increased efforts in mobilizing and informing migrant workers. Nevertheless, according to Kouvonen (2012), wage development was slowed down between 2006 and 2010 in the capital area of Helsinki in the construction and cleaning sectors which “appears to be related” to the fact that these sectors employ a remarkable share of migrant workers.

However, wages have not fallen in the Finnish construction sector. Furthermore, construction sector unemployment figures are lower and wages higher in the capital area, despite the fact that it employs more migrant workers than other parts of the country. From this perspective, it can hardly be argued that the influx of foreign workers into the Finnish construction sector would have to lead to a large-scale social dumping, although the phenomenon poses veritable challenges for the FCTU.



According to the FCTU, migrants who live *permanently* in Finland join the FCTU to the same degree as native Finns. Thus, the challenge regarding organizing migrants is *temporariness* and not ethnicity as such, although linguistic and sociohistorical aspects pose some difficulties for the successful recruitment of migrant workers. Migrant workers are also—despite still being underrepresented as FCTU members—increasingly joining the FCTU, as Table 1 indicates.

**Table 1** Membership figures of the Finnish Construction Trade Union (FCTU).

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total membership	80,870	80,212	80,659	80,922	82,096	84,954	83,526	88,031	86,821	86,945	88,917
Immigrant members	376	465	601	657	816	1,251	1,788	1,441	1,926	2,585	3,477
Percentage of immigrants in membership	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.5	2.1	1.6	2.2	3.0	3.9

**Source:** The FCTU membership register.

Nevertheless, the estimated number of foreign construction workers was between 25,000 and 30,000 in 2010, and the number of migrant members was approximately 3,500 in 2012. On the basis of these figures, the density of migrant construction workers is somewhere between 12 and 14%, which is far below the national average in Finland.<sup>7</sup>

### The Estonian Trade Union Movement: immigration as a threat, emigration as a problem

In order to understand the situation of Estonian trade unions, it is necessary to give a brief overview of Estonian history and industrial relations. During the Soviet occupation of Estonia, trade unions formed a part of the Soviet regime. The Communist party controlled unions and membership was virtually compulsory. Social security and access to various consumer goods required trade union membership, which further enhanced membership, and trade union density was close to 100% (cf. Feldmann 2008).

When Estonia gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, the old Soviet-era unions were not suited for a market economy: they were designed for a totally different epoch and purpose. According to the Estonian informants, trade unionism retains image problems from the Soviet-era, as many Estonians even today associate trade unionism with repression. It has been hard for unions to tackle this image and portray themselves as genuine interest organizations. (interviews; Sippola 2009). After its independence, Estonia implemented radical market liberal policies (Feldmann 2008). The changes affected also Estonian industrial relations so that there has been little room for trade unions to influence the development in Estonia (ibid.).

According to the informants, the ethos of the last two decades has been individualistic. Collective action, such as trade unionism, has been met with suspicion. Some

of the interviewees also pointed to rifts inside the union movement that have impeded the search for viable strategy. Trade union density in Estonia has been in steady decline during the last two decades and was 8% in 2012, far below the OECD average (OECD Stateextracts 2012). There has, however, been some rise in density in sectors such as transport, aviation, and seafaring (interviews). The low density is also related to Estonian trade unions having little influence in Estonian society. Employers rarely accept trade unions as negotiating partners, and tripartism is virtually nonexistent. Social dialogue between unions and employers is further hindered by the low representativeness of the *Estonian Central Employers' Organization (EETK)* among employers (Feldmann 2008, pp. 332–333). In other words, unions generally lack organized negotiation partners.

During the Soviet occupation, immigration was an effect of the Soviet invasion, as hundreds of thousands of migrants from other parts of the Soviet Union migrated into the country. A suspicion toward immigration was echoed in the interviews conducted for this article. Some of the interviewed Estonian union officials feared that Estonian culture would be threatened by immigrants, who in some cases would not adapt to or integrate into Estonian society. Some expressed a fear that immigrants might be an economic burden on Estonian society. This stance is also visible in the following quote from *The Estonian Trade Union Confederation proposals for policy formation in 2011–2015* (emphasis added).

“Estonia needs, in both the private and state sectors, a wage policy that prevents the qualified work force from leaving Estonia *as well as avoiding the need to bring in migrant workers, which in the longer term would be a big additional burden for the whole of society.*”

In the interviews, the Estonian union officials also referred to the “traditional” trade union fear of employers using immigrants to undercut working conditions. These Estonian fears are also visible in the previously mentioned European Social Survey, which indicates that Estonians have a rather cautious view on immigration. This is despite the demographic challenges currently faced by Estonia related to the aging population and emigration (on these challenges, see e.g., Söderling 2011, p. 71). According to the interviewees, the Estonian state should place more emphasis on vocational training for Estonians in those industry sectors that lack labor, instead of facilitating immigration (the same vision as that advocated by the FCTU).

The question of large-scale immigration into Estonia will remain rather hypothetical for the foreseeable future, as Estonia is a low-wage country by European standards. As regards labor mobility, the main issue for the Estonian trade unions is *emigration*, not *immigration*. The interviewees explained emigration as a response to the low wage levels and working conditions, and the generally weak position of the employee in Estonia. We find accounts of nineteenth century trade unionists perceiving—based on neoclassical economic reasoning—that emigration would be beneficial for organized labor, as it decreases the supply of labor (Clements 1955). In contrast, the interviewees rather perceived emigration as a problem for the Estonian nation in terms of the nation losing a considerable share of its “active” population (although some claimed that emigration to Finland had put some upward pressure on Estonian wage levels). The interviewees also argued that migration or commuting to Finland poses difficulties for social and family life, as many of the workers have families in Estonia who they seldom see. The informants pointed out that work in Finland meant downward occupational mobility for many Estonians, despite the higher wages. Several interviewees expressed the hope



that Estonian workers might be influenced by trade unionism in Finland and hence be more supportive of trade unions when/if returning to Estonia.

The Estonian trade unions had no strategies in relation to transnational labor mobility, with the exception of publicly opposing increased immigration and striving for better working conditions and social security, which the interviewees claimed would deter Estonians from working in Finland. Some individual union officials shared knowledge and experience regarding issues on labor mobility with trade unionists in other countries.

Neither the unions nor their central organizations have strategies targeted at immigrants in Estonia, unless Russian speakers are defined as an immigrant group, as the unions publish information in both Estonian and Russian. In the difficult situation where union density has decreased to 8%, the main concern for the Estonian trade union movement seems to be the question of *how to organize Estonians* into unions. There is a circle between the low density and the lack of societal influence: unions experience difficulty in attracting and holding on to members owing to their lack of power resources, which in turn are weakened by a diminishing member base. In the interviews conducted in 2012, the informants expressed some hope regarding *the Baltic Organizing Academy* (established in 2012), which involves support given by Scandinavian trade unions to Estonian and other Baltic trade unions in terms of resources for organizing the work force as trade union members. It remains to be seen whether this kind of action can strengthen the weak power resources of the Estonian trade union movement.

The interviewees had no statistics or data on the amount of migrants working in the sectors their unions represent, and the issue of immigration did not seem to be a central concern. The main concern of the unions was the weak position of the Estonian trade union movement. Some union officials claimed that an uncertain number of migrant workers posted from Russia were working in the shipyards. One interviewee referred to a case of Ukrainians overstaying their tourist visas and working undocumented in Estonia. Some of the interviewees claimed that there were an unknown number of migrant construction workers from the former Eastern Bloc countries, an assessment shared with the Estonian tax authorities, which had identified “illegal” workers from Bulgaria, Ukraine, and Latvia on construction sites (Baltic Times Mar 30, 2012). Some migrants were said to be working in banking and IT, i.e., in sectors without a trade union presence in Estonia.

The Estonian trade union movement has no influence over questions of transnational labor mobility. Estonian trade unionists have a perception of the phenomenon, but it can hardly be argued that Estonian unions would have a strategy toward this question, as their action is limited to sporadic public statements and information sharing by individual trade unionists in Estonia and abroad. Nevertheless, a concrete information sharing strategy by the Estonian Transport Workers Union was evidenced when it informed its members working as bus drivers in Finland to join Finnish bus drivers in a strike in Finland. The lack of a coherent strategy reflects the generally weak power resources of Estonian trade unions. On the basis of the research material, the main question for the Estonian unions seems to be how to mobilize Estonian workers into unions, and how to become accepted as a negotiation partner by the state and employers (who sometimes dismiss trade union claims with a reference to a small trade union membership). In questions of transnational mobility, the Estonian trade union movement is a stakeholder rather than an actor.

## Conclusions and discussion

Previous research by Krings (2009) suggests that the national model of industrial relations system of coordinated market economies/liberal market economies is of central importance as an explanatory factor regarding the strategy of trade unions, so that trade unions in a CME context (in this research, Finland) would be fairly restrictive towards immigration, whereas unions in LMEs (in this research, Estonia) would advocate a more liberal stance, with a stronger emphasis on reaching out to migrant workers. This holds to a large extent for the case of Finland, as regards the Finnish Construction Trade Union (FCTU), but not for the Estonian case.

The FCTU has reacted to the opening up of the national labor market in a rather protectionist manner, which is in accordance with Krings' model. Nevertheless, it is important to underline that the FCTU perceived *temporary forms of work from abroad* as a problem, in contrast to *permanent labor immigration*, which it did not consider a problem. Labor migration is increasingly temporary in character, and immigration, or transnational mobility, now takes place in a postindustrial and fragmented labor market setting. The inclusion of an Estonian migrant working temporarily in Finland for an Estonian subcontractor appears challenging from a traditional trade union perspective that assumes permanent residence in the country, as was more often the case in earlier waves of migration. The inclusion of migrants from Estonia (and other post-Soviet states) is also challenging because Estonians do not come from a country with a well-organized union movement and seldom hold union membership in their home country.

In terms of the opening up of the national labor market, the FCTU fears losing control of working conditions, which would have a negative effect on the unions' power resources. For the FCTU, reacting to labor mobility is an attempt to defend the *coordinated market economy* from being transformed into a *liberal market economy*, in which its institutional position and power resources would be threatened. As has been shown in this article, this is a rather difficult task, which is illuminated, for instance, by the difficulty of controlling the working conditions of commuting Estonian workers. The strategies of the unions can be framed on the basis of the distinction between *mobilizing strategies* and strategies along the *governmental dimension* and (see page 144 ) in the manner illustrated by Table 1.

**Table 2** Trade union strategies regarding transnational labor mobility.

	Finnish Construction Union (FCTU)	Estonian trade union movement
Mobilizing strategies	Emerging (more effort to inform and include foreign workers as members)	No mobilizing strategies directed at migrants
Strategies along the governmental dimension	Strong: the union has the possibility to influence legislation and regulate labor mobility. Emphasis on regulating mobility	None, except for sporadic public statements

As the table indicates, the FCTU has to some degree changed its strategies toward a more inclusive and mobilizing direction. The FCTU has realized that control-oriented measures are not enough to control the labor market situation as regards the diversification of labor mobility patterns, of which the emergence of a translocal labor market



between Finland and Estonia is a prime example. This change in strategy does not undermine Krings' theory that trade unions in CME countries apply and advocate more restrictive strategies than unions in LMEs. Instead, the change in the FCTU's strategy should be interpreted as the Finnish construction sector opening up to competition from abroad, and the union reacting to this by adding some new inclusive strategies to its repertoire.

Nevertheless, the VoC approach should be applied cautiously in relation to trade union strategy as regards labor mobility for two reasons. First, even in CME countries such as Finland, *specific sectors*, such as construction—besides being challenged by translocal commuting and other forms of temporary migration—are not as strongly coordinated according to the national logic as in the past (as also the findings of Bechter et al. 2012 indicate). Second, the particular context-bound migration histories of the nations where trade unions operate influence unions' stance toward labor mobility, as has been especially shown in the case of Estonia.

Despite the emergence of a translocal labor market between the capital areas of Helsinki and Tallinn, the FCTU can still influence labor mobility through *national* arrangements, e.g., by negotiating nationally binding collectives (that apply even to migrant workers in Finland), by influencing national jurisdiction, and by being able to some degree to attract migrant workers as members. One can with good reason assess that the FCTU's strategies have, for their part—in spite of the problems—hindered a large-scale social dumping of working conditions through the use of foreign workers; wages in the construction sector have increased in the capital area of Finland despite the large and increased foreign workforce (see Kouvonon 2012 for wage levels).

The results underline the importance of concrete trade union strategies that cut across national borders (such as the information point in Estonia) in addition to national strategies. To some extent, these strategies improve the vulnerable situation of migrant construction workers in Finland. The results demonstrate the practical difficulties of imposing translocal trade union strategies across two, fundamentally different, institutional settings. To begin with, there is no counterpart to the FCTU in Estonia. Nevertheless, the FCTU—which operates in an increasingly translocal and transnational context—can, despite these challenges, influence the process of labor mobility somewhat to its favor owing to its nationally strong institutional position.

Estonia can no doubt be characterized as an LME—or even a neo-liberal market economy. However, the Estonian trade union movement does not hold a liberal stance toward immigration, as a trade union movement in an LME would be inclined to do according to Krings (2009). The Estonian trade union movement has an outspokenly restrictive stance toward immigration. Neither do the Estonian unions have any strategies aimed at mobilizing immigrants. On the basis of the interviews conducted with Estonian trade union officials, it is evident that the particular immigration history related to the Soviet invasion of Estonia plays a role. The interviewees perceived immigration to Estonia as an economic and cultural threat, not as an opportunity. Indeed, the historically rooted fear of the Russification of Estonia, combined with the historical legacies of politically controlled Soviet-era trade unionism, contributes to a difficult outlook for Estonian trade unions as regards dealing with labor mobility. It seems that the restrictive stance is also explained—in contrast to the argument about the liberal migration strategies of LME trade unions—by the very *weak* position of the Estonian trade union movement. It is not likely that the Estonian trade union movement would have sufficient

power resources to influence the circumstances under which immigration to Estonia would take place, or have resources for mobilizing immigrants into unions. Instead, the Estonian trade union movement appears to be an outsider as regards migration policy and is still looking for avenues through which to institutionalize power resources to gain increased influence in the coordination of national labor markets. For a broader European context, the lesson from this study is that—despite a deepened European integration—there is an immense variance in trade unions' possibilities of influencing transnational labor mobility.

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## End notes

- <sup>1</sup> The article also briefly discusses the role of the other national actors in the migration process: employers, migrant workers, and the state, as their strategies affect the possibilities of trade unions (and vice versa).
- <sup>2</sup> The previous also applies on a more general level to union strategies toward the entire workforce—not exclusively migrant workers—as unions in antagonistic LME labor markets generally resort more to membership, mobilization, and grassroots initiatives than unions in more coordinated or corporatist institutional settings (Marino 2012; Wrench 2004).
- <sup>3</sup> Although trade union renewal strategies focusing on migrant/ethnic minority mobilization have had some success at local and sectoral levels, they have not been able to raise the general trade union density at the national level in the US: between 2000 and 2011 trade union density decreased from 12.9 to 11.3% (OECD Statextracts).
- <sup>4</sup> An example of an exclusive administrative trade union strategy could be efforts for tightening the regulation of work permits for migrants, or actively resisting the liberalization of immigration policy. An example of an inclusive administrative strategy could be a strategy working for the legalization of undocumented migrants. In the Finnish case, trade union administration of unemployment funds is an administrative strategy which has a strong inclusive element, as via legislation it increases incentives for an employee to join a union.
- <sup>5</sup> Data was collected between September 2005 and January 2013. The main type of data consists of key informant interviews with trade union representatives in Estonia and Finland. The focus in the semistructured interviews was on the perceptions and the strategies of the trade unions related to the cross-national mobility of workers and on the general labor

market/trade union situation in Finland and Estonia. In Finland, the interviewees were selected among representatives of the Finnish Construction Trade Union. The 16 interviewed Construction Union officials consist mainly of persons in leading positions, but also 5 shop stewards were interviewed. The author of this article has conducted all interviews, with the exception of two interviews that were conducted by research assistant Miika Saukkonen. The 18 representatives of Estonian trade unions included the presidents of both central organizations, presidents of their member unions, 5 shop stewards, and the leader of a trade union local in Tallinn. For practical reasons, one of the interviews was conducted with three interviewees and another with two interviewees. Hence, the total number of interviews in Estonia is 14. All interviews in Finland and Estonia were recorded with the exception of one interview with two shop stewards in Estonia. The shop stewards' enterprises and identities are withheld. Some of the interviewees were contacted via e-mail afterward in order to answer additional questions. The Estonian Trade Union Confederation (EAKL) consists of blue collar trade unions, whereas the Estonian Employees' Unions' Confederation (TALO) represents white collar trade unions. The European Social Survey and statistics from Statistics Finland, Statistics Estonia, and OECD were also used as research material. The Estonian interviewees represented the following trade unions:

- EAKL (two interviews, the second interview included a shop steward and leader of a local trade union branch in Tallinn)
- TALO (two interviews)
- EAKL branch in the city of *Tartu*
- Estonian Communication and Service Workers' Trade Union
- Estonian Seamen's Independent Union
- Federation of Estonian Metal Workers' Unions
- Estonian Transport and Road Workers' Association (two interviews)
- Estonian Professional Association of Engineers
- Estonian Broadcasting Professionals' Union
- Two shop stewards in a Finnish enterprise
- A shop steward in an Estonian enterprise
- A shop steward in a multinational enterprise

<sup>6</sup> Data supplementing the interviews include public statements of the unions published in their journals, websites, and the Finnish and Estonian media in general. Data were also gathered at seminars and conferences where the representatives of the trade unions presented topics related to the research questions. An example of such an occasion is the *Finnish Social Forum* in Helsinki (years 2009–2011). I also interviewed Professor Allan Puur from Tallinn University and Professor of macroeconomics Raul Eamets from the University of Tartu as academic experts on the Estonian labor market structure and demographic challenges.

<sup>7</sup> However, an unknown share of the Estonian workers is self-employed and hence not potential trade union members. Alho (2008) has calculated that in 2006 the Finnish trade unions had 15,220 migrant members, and the density of migrants belonging to trade unions was 26%, which is far below the national average of almost 70%. The number of migrant members in Finnish trade unions has, however, increased and totaled, according to trade union estimates, between 26,000 and 27,000 in 2011 (Kyntäjä 2011). Hence, between 2006 and 2011, the increase of migrant members was between 71 and 77% (during the same time period the immigrant population increased by 43% in Finland).

In other words, in an era when the share of workers belonging to a trade union has decreased, migrants are increasingly joining unions. Nevertheless, migrants are still underrepresented in leading positions, representative bodies, and as employees in Finnish trade unions, including the FCTU (Alho 2010; Ristikari 2013).



# Trade Union Responses to Labour Immigrants: Selective Solidarity

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## Abstract

*The Finnish service sector trade union Palvelualojen ammattiliitto or Service Union United has the largest amount of migrant members of all Finnish trade unions. It walks the narrow line between defending the perceived interests of its members from the ‘threat’ of labour immigration, and simultaneously trying to act as an immigrant-friendly force. This qualitative case study analyses the outcomes of the union’s strategies in questions related to immigration. The outcomes affect different immigrant groups in a different manner. Furthermore, the established quasi-state character of the Finnish trade union movement affects both the strengths and weaknesses of its strategies. The politicized anti-immigration views in the Finnish society indirectly to some degree impact trade union strategies. Results suggest that the lay distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ based on nationality still shapes trade union strategy in a way that can be labeled selective solidarity.*

**Key words:** immigration, trade union strategy, immigration policy, inclusion, exclusion, migrants

## Introduction

Labour immigration is a contested topic in many European countries. On one hand, it is seen as one of the solutions to the challenges welfare states face regarding ageing populations. Both at the nation-state level and in the business world, ethnic diversity is often positively associated with economic growth and the spread of new, valuable ideas (e.g. Florida 2002; Trux 2010). Pro-migrant NGOs stress that the right to migrate is a fundamental human right. On the other hand, the financial crisis since 2008 has negatively affected labour markets (Bartsch and Scirankova 2012). In these uncertain times, vast sections of the native populations perceive labour immigration as a critical issue. Perceptions regarding immigration – whether positive or negative – are shaped by personal experiences in neighbourhoods and labour markets, but also indirectly by the strategies of different institutional actors.

This article looks at the types of outcomes trade union strategies have around questions related to the immigration process. The term “strategy” refers to trade unions’ goal-oriented and relatively well-established ways of operating. The term “immigration process” is

understood broadly as both the processes related to entry into Finland and the integration of immigrants already living in the country.

Trade union responses to migration have gained increased societal importance following the European Union enlargements of 2004 and 2007 (Krings 2009; Marino 2012, 6). The enlargement processes have increased internal EU mobility, which has implications for trade unions in the receiving countries (Alsos and Odegaard 2007; Krings 2009). Previous research has shown that trade unions can be influential actors in shaping national immigration policy (Menz 2011). They also influence immigrants' position in the receiving society by facilitating or hindering their inclusion (Penninx and Roosblad 2000; Milkman 2010; Marino 2012; Ristikari 2013).

The trade union under scrutiny in this article is the *Service Union United* (in Finnish, *Palvelualojen ammattiliitto*, later also referred to as SUU or the union). This union was selected because, with its 230,000 members, it is the largest Finnish trade union in terms of membership, and in absolute terms it has the largest migrant membership of all Finnish trade unions (around 9,000). Furthermore, the service sector is one of the key sectors as regards the employment of immigrants (Könönen 2012). The union defines as migrants those members who in the union membership form have not declared as their first language one of the national languages (Finnish, Swedish, or Sami).

This article critically elaborates the outcomes of two central SUU strategies during the period 2000–2011, as identified in earlier research. Firstly, the SUU actively opposes the liberalization of immigration policy (Alho 2012). Secondly, the SUU has opted for a universalistic strategy toward its migrant members, with no organizational changes regarding the union's structure in combination with emphasizing cultural and linguistic aspects of immigration (Alho 2008, 2012). The article builds on these insights by reflecting on the types of outcomes the aforementioned SUU strategies have. Additionally, I include newer research material from 2011–2013. The outcomes are assessed with regard to wider labour market impacts, their effects concerning the union's members, and the position of migrant workers. The article also assesses the relationship between the strengthened politicised anti-immigration sentiments in Finnish society and trade union strategy.

Trade union strategies are not formed in isolation: in addition to trade unions, employer organizations are influential actors regarding immigration and their choices affect the outlook of trade unions (Menz 2011). Therefore, their views are contrasted with those of the SUU. In addition, the article contrasts the arguments of the Finnish *Free Movement* activist network with SUU's, as the network has publicly criticized the immigration policies that the union strives for. Furthermore, the Finnish political parties' views on immigration are contrasted with the SUU's, since the parties have a bearing on the strategic choices of the SUU (and vice versa).

The main focus of the article is the assessment of trade union strategy outcomes. The research question is, what types of outcomes do the strategies of the SUU regarding immigration and immigrants have? The outcomes are assessed in relation to the national labour markets, the position of the union itself, and the position of the migrant. In addition, the article assesses the credibility of the arguments by which the SUU explains its strategies.

In the research literature, the immigration question is perceived as difficult for trade unions, as immigration entails an increase in the workforce in receiving labour markets, which native workers might perceive as a threat to their position (Caviedes 2010; Guerin-Gonzales 1993; Kühne 2013, 60–78; Marino 2012; Penninx and Roosblad 2000; Roosblad 2002). Scholarly debates on trade union strategies in relation to immigration have varied between pessimistic accounts that emphasize working class divisions and racism that impede solidarity toward migrants (see e.g. Virdee 2000) and interpretations that point to how trade unions increasingly assess the inclusion of migrants as a power resource (Milkman 2010; Haus 2002; Watts 2002; Bengtsson 2013). In short, trade unions' response regarding migration has varied between inclusion and exclusion on the basis of national versus international solidarity. The idea or goal of “global working class solidarity” expressed by many actors in the early days of trade unionism and the labour movement (see e.g. Briggs 2001) is a notion that trade unions have never been able to effectively implement. Despite Marx' insistence on workers having no country, trade union practice has seldom been able to move beyond the frame of national identity and national interests (Hyman 2001, 39).

Globalization, European integration, and the transnationalization of labour markets notwithstanding, the *national institutional context* in which trade unions operate affects their strategic choices on questions regarding migration (Penninx and Roosblad 2000; Krings 2009; Marino 2012; Alho 2013). Therefore this article begins with a brief introduction to the Finnish institutional context in terms of labour markets, followed by a description of the migration setting. The second section outlines the research design. This is followed by a presentation of the empirical findings. The last section concludes by summarizing and analyzing the key findings.

## **The Finnish labour market context**

This section describes the labour market setting within which the Service Union United operates, as this context has been shown to enable and constrain trade union strategy (Marino 2012; Penninx and Roosblad 2000; Wrench 2004). Understanding the relationship between actor and structure is essential in order to make sense of societal action. Consequently, trade union strategy is not deterministically influenced by “external” forces such as globalization or the transnationalization of the labour markets.

The Finnish labour market system can be classified as corporatist and striving for consensus in a centralized collective bargaining system. In short, corporatism entails that interest groups such as trade unions are coordinated into the institutionalized decision-making system (see e.g. Lijphart 1999, 171–184). Trade unions in such contexts are characterized by a close relation to official state actors and to state policy. In Finland, this has been visible, for example, in the fact that the trade union movement has been able to influence even the state’s foreign policy, a domain that is usually not considered a traditional trade union issue (see Bergholm 2003). Finnish trade unions also gain influence by having links to (mainly) left-wing political parties (ibid.). An indication of the close links is that two of the presidents of the SUU belong to *The Social Democratic Party of Finland* and one to *The Left Alliance*. In the Finnish presidential elections in 2012 the union financially supported the candidates of these parties in addition to the candidate of *The Greens of Finland* (information publicly available on the web pages of the Finnish *National Audit Office*). The aforementioned close links to the state and politically established parties are important trade union power resources (e.g. Korpi 1978). These links also enable trade unions to shape the political agenda on questions regarding migration (e.g. Krings 2009; Penninx and Roosblad 2000, 14). Paradoxically, a trade union’s strong and established institutional position can include a weakness in terms of a lack of progressive strategies (e.g. cooperation with social movements) that might improve the situation of migrants (ibid.,196).

The Service Union United is a merger trade union established in 2000. It belongs to the *Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions – SAK* (later SAK), which is the umbrella organization of Finnish “blue collar” trade unions. It represents trade unions in industry, transport, private services, and the culture and journalism sectors. Approximately three quarters of the SUU’s members and the majority of its employees are female. The SUU represents and negotiates on behalf of wage earners who are mainly employed in the low wage areas of the private service sector. The majority of its members work in retail, restaurant work, and cleaning.

## **The Finnish migration context**

Immigration to Finland has increased rapidly since the beginning of the 1990s and the topic has recently become highly politicized (e.g. Haavisto 2011; Jutila and Sundell 2012; Saukkonen 2013). For instance the success of the Euro-critical and populist *The Finns Party* has largely been explained by its anti-immigration stance. This is not to say that the rise of the *The Finns Party* should solely be explained by its stance toward immigration; the party’s success is strongly related to deep-lying disappointments with the established parties (see e.g. Jutila and Sundell 2012). Nevertheless, several *Finns Party* MP’s have spoken against certain immigrant groups’ right to be in the country, and implied links between immigration, crime, and abuse of the welfare system. Despite these voices, consecutive Finnish governments have accepted that the

country has become a country of immigration. This is observable in the Government programs of the 2000s, which emphasized the economic gains of labour immigration and integration of migrants into society. It is also noteworthy that despite the politicization of anti-immigrant stances, nationally comparative research indicates that attitudes expressed toward immigration have on average, in a European perspective, been rather positive in Finland (see Ervasti et al. 2008).

Language and integration programs for immigrants have been financed by the state since the 1990s (e.g. Forsander 2002). Immigrant associations and other NGOs also play a significant role as channels of integration (Pyykkönen 2007; Saksela-Bergholm 2009). Traditionally reasons for immigration to Finland have been based on marriage or “humanitarian” reasons (Säävälä 2013). Studying has also been an important motivation for migrating to Finland since a relatively long time. Recently work-related migration to Finland has increased (Ritari 2013). The percentage of foreign-born population living in the country is a little over 5% (Statistics Finland 2013). However, this figure does not take into account short-term labour immigration, which has increased (von Hertzen-Oosi et al. 2009; Alho 2011; Helander, Alho and Saksela-Bergholm 2011). The largest groups of foreign nationals are, in descending order, Estonians, Russians, Swedes, Somalis, Chinese, Thai, Iraqi, Turks, and Indians (Statistics Finland 2013). The labour market disadvantage of immigrants has been documented (e.g. Ahmad 2005; Alho 2008, 2010; Forsander 2002; Könönen 2012; Wahlbeck 2005; Wrede and Nordberg 2010). Foreign nationals’ unemployment rate is approximately three times higher than that of natives, although there are large variations by nationality (Statistics Finland 2013).

The citizenship of the immigrant affects his/her position: EU, European Economic Area, Swiss, and Liechtenstein’s citizens do not need work permits in order to work in Finland, in contrast to migrants who are not citizens of these countries, the so called third country nationals. However, restrictions on entry into different labour market sectors vary. Third country nationals’ access to work permits for “white collar” jobs is not assessed by government officials in terms of the “need of labour,” whereas this is the case as regards “working class” occupations, which the Service Union United (and SAK) represents. In the weakest labour market position are migrants who have no legal right to reside in the country (*sans-papier* or *undocumented migrants*). According to the Free Movement activist network, which (in addition to the NGO Finnish Refugee Council) supports the undocumented, the amount of undocumented people in Finland is “probably a few thousand” (email response 14.8.2013).

## European approaches to trade unions, migration and migrants

The way in which trade unions react to migration and migrants indicates something about their identity and frame of solidarity. Their strategies in these questions have varied significantly across countries and unions. Rinus Penninx and Judith Roosblad (2000) have argued on the basis of experiences gathered from seven West European countries from 1960 to 1993 that the institutional position of trade unions in the national labour market context affects their strategic repertoire towards immigration and immigrants. Penninx and Roosblad distinguish between *a position from below* and *a position from above* in the outlook of trade unions. The former refers to trade unions in a weak institutional position with little means to influence state policies, whereas the latter refers to unions that have strong opportunities to influence state policies. Finnish unions no doubt belong to the latter category.

Unions that have a strong institutional link to the state (position from above) tend to support and follow the policies advocated by the state, whereas unions in a weaker institutional position (position from below) are in a more independent position and therefore able to challenge state policies in terms of migration and migrants (Penninx and Roosblad 2000). Marino (2012) has in a similar vein showed that in relation to xenophobic parties' electoral success in Italy and the Netherlands in 2000–2008, Italian trade unions, which are not as structurally embedded as the Dutch unions are, actually strengthened their commitment to migrants' rights, whereas the Dutch unions' emphasis on these issues decreased. The Italian unions were more able than their Dutch counterparts to confront the worsening political climate towards immigrants. This was because Italian unions are less institutionally embedded than the Dutch unions and rely more on immigrant inclusion. Italian unions' stronger ideology based on "universal solidarity" and "equality of all workers" also played a role (*ibid.*).

According to John Wrench's (2004) comparative study on trade union responses to immigrants and ethnic minorities in the United Kingdom and Denmark in 1999–2002, the differences found were due to the antagonistic British labour market context versus the more consensual Danish labour market setting. According to Wrench,

"By the 1990s there was in the UK far greater and more established range of policies and structures than in Denmark, with self-organization structures for black and ethnic minority members within unions and positive action measures such as special training for minorities who are under-represented in union positions, and reserved seats on executive bodies. ... In Denmark, the unions held on much longer to an 'equal treatment' view. In terms of special policies the Danish unions embraced changes in union structures to a much lesser degree. Instead the emphasis has been more on improving ethnic minorities' participation in unions without significant change to current structures" (Wrench 2004, 7).

Earlier research (Alho 2008) showed that the strategies of the Service Union United resemble the Danish universalistic model.

## Research design

This qualitative case study covers the period from the establishment of the Service Union United in 2000 to 2013. Several types of empirical research material have been combined. The main material consists of 18 semi-structured and recorded qualitative face-to-face interviews with full-time officials of the SUU. The interviewees were given the opportunity to assess how immigration affects their trade union and what it implies for Finnish society. They were also asked to reflect on the position of migrants in the labour market and the kinds of strategy the SUU has implemented on questions regarding migration and migrants.

The interviews were analyzed with the method of qualitative content analysis, with the attempt to identify core themes and meanings presented by the interviewees (see e.g. Flick 2002). Some of the interviewees were contacted by email afterwards with additional specifying questions that the interviews raised. Research material was also gathered at seminars and conferences where SUU's representatives presented their views on issues regarding immigration and immigrants. Combination of various kinds of data and methods increases the results' credibility in a qualitative study and gives the researcher deeper insights to the studied phenomenon in comparison to being dependent on one single method or data (ibid.). Following the case-study logic (e.g. Flyvbjerg 2004) and taking into account the need to triangulate data, several types of data were collected parallel with the analysis during the time period 2005–2013, which facilitates an assessment of the development of SUU strategies.

In addition to the interviews, public statements of the SUU were analyzed. Examples include: the Strategy paper of the SUU for 2011–2015; the Immigration policy strategy paper of the SUU for 2009–2015, and information available on the union's website. A report on migrant members' experiences (Ritari 2013) forms part of the research material, as does a study based on a questionnaire sent to the SUU members in 2010. This article also looks at the statements of the Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions – SAK, because SUU's and SAK's strategies are often intertwined, and the SUU is one of the trade unions that shapes the SAK's strategies.

The aforementioned material was contrasted with statements regarding immigration made by the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK), which is the largest and most influential employer organization in Finland. A representative of EK was interviewed for this study. In addition, the views of the Finnish Free Movement activist network on immigration policy have been contrasted with the SUU's. These arguments were gathered from discussions and email exchange with two activists representing the network, and public statements made by the network. As immigration is currently a politically sensitive topic, the interviewees were guaranteed anonymity.

The interview quotes and other citations included here have been chosen to represent the most common and typical themes in the research material. They have been translated

from Finnish by the author. In order to gain insights and to help to put the Finnish trade union context in an international context, the author participated in an international conference on the challenges of labour migration organized by the European Trade Union Institute ETUI in Belgium in 2007. The main insight from this conference was that transnational labour mobility is an important issue for trade unions Europe-wide.

Previous research (Mulinari and Neergaard 2004) has underlined the importance of distinguishing between rhetorical and concrete forms of action in terms of trade union strategy. Likewise, Czaika and Haas (2013, 41–42) point out that stated migration policies do not automatically lead to their implementation. For instance, public declarations of politicians of their intention to drastically curtail immigration are not necessarily matched by actual policies, and immigration continues at high rates (*ibid.*). This article builds on these insights. Accordingly, it is important to study – in addition to public statements – the concrete legislative proposals the SUU has advocated or resisted, and the actual organizational changes (if any) that it has implemented in its own union structure. It is also essential to assess the concrete outcomes that these different forms of action have for the migrant workers and society at large.

## **Results: What are the strategies and what outcomes do they imply?**

Previous research has indicated that SUU lobbies against employer and political demands for loosening up restrictions on third country nationals entering the Finnish labour market. The demands are backed up by references to unemployment levels and to the “exploitation” of migrant workers in Finland (Alho 2012). The following interview quote sheds light on how the union, as an institutionally strongly embedded actor, lobbies for its goals regarding immigration (and other issues):

“We [the SUU] can influence [issues related to immigration] in addition to taking part in discussions in the public sphere also via the public administration; we are very active toward different bodies, ministries, and the [Finnish] government. We also cooperate with NGOs.”

The union’s [and SAK’s] close contacts to the Social Democratic party, and to a lesser extent the Left Alliance, are also of importance as channels of influence. Concerning immigration this is visible in the fact that the Social Democratic Party’s official stance is against loosening up restrictions for labour immigration from third countries, which is in accordance with the SUU’s and SAK’s policy. (However, some eminent Social Democrats such as Pilvi Torsti (2010) have spoken in favour of more liberal labour immigration policies.) It is important to note that a reference to the EU is absent as a channel of influencing immigration questions in the interview answers of the SUU officials, which was also true for the research material in general. The continued importance of the national level is highlighted by the fact that all Finnish trade unions combined have

only one permanent representative in Brussels. Previous research has also indicated that migration policy in practice remains a nation-state issue (Koopmans and Statham 2005, 43; Menz 2011: 257–268). Likewise, the *Finnish Construction Trade Union*, another union for which immigration is an important issue, directs its strategies related to immigration foremost to the national level and not the EU-level (see Alho 2012).

The unemployment rate in Finland was around 9% in April 2013 according to Statistics Finland. Between 6 and 7% of the SUU's members were registered as unemployed in August 2013 (e-mail response from the SUU 10.9.2013). Furthermore, the interviewees indicated that some members are under-employed, i.e. work fewer hours than they would prefer. The union argues that increased labour immigration would have a negative effect on the Finnish labour markets that already suffer from unemployment. In this section, these SUU demands are critically scrutinized and contrasted with those of other actors involved in shaping immigration policy and/or debate such as the Confederation of Finnish Industries EK and the activist Free Movement network.

The Service Union United's strategies on immigrant inclusion have been in accordance with the model applied by the Danish trade unions (Alho 2008). No changes in union structure have been made in terms of immigrant inclusion. There are no strategies that could be labeled as positive discrimination in terms of ameliorating migrants' under-represented position within the union structure. The union's approach to these questions is universalistic. These two central approaches, i.e. resisting the liberalization of labour immigration and a belief in an universalistic union organizational structure, have not changed based on research material gathered in 2011–2013. The union's universalistic policies have not altered the migrants' marginal position as regards influence *inside* the union's structure during the 13 years of its existence. One may ask why there are no special union structures for migrants, as there is a long history of special branches for other historically underprivileged groups, such as women and young people, in Finnish trade unions (see Ala-Kapee et al. 1979). The Finnish Construction Trade Union – which has opted for a Russian/Estonian-speaking branch for its immigrant members – has proportionally more activist migrant members than the SUU, which might be related to the lowering of language barriers achieved by this kind of targeted arrangement (see Alho 2012). As many as 53% of the SUU's migrant members expressed that they have faced “quite big” or “very big” problems regarding language skills in working life (Ritari 2013: 19). One can ask whether it is plausible to expect that a member with weak native language skills would engage in trade union activity, when we know that being credibly able to articulate one's standpoints is the core of trade union activism (e.g. Lipset 1955).

From the SUU's standpoint the “ideal immigrant” is someone who works legally in the country and who is, or becomes, a member of the SUU (and vice-versa). However, the research material does not imply that the ideal immigrant would necessarily be someone who is active inside the SUU organization: it suffices to be a passive member.

This stance is related to the *modus operandi* of Finnish trade unions, which operate in a corporatist labour market setting and rely on a large passive membership represented by full-time salaried trade union officials (see Kevätsalo 2005).

In a questionnaire sent to SUU members in 2010, 6% considered themselves “trade union activists” (Ahtiainen 2011: 37). Nevertheless, only 0.4% of SUU’s migrant members held “positions of trust” as union activists in 2011 (Alho 2012).

Migrant members are not only under-represented as trade union members and activists, but also totally absent in leading positions in the SUU’s organization. The situation is similar in other Finnish trade unions (see Ristikari 2013). One plausible explanation for the underrepresentation is that the majority (around 60%) of the migrant members have lived in Finland for less than seven years (see Ritari 2013: 6). There might be a time lag of immigrant integration because Finland is a young immigration country.

It is also clear that the vast majority of migrant members come from countries with very different traditions and outlooks regarding trade unions in comparison with Finland (e.g. Russia, Estonia, Thailand, Somalia, and Turkey). In some countries, trade unions are not genuine democratic interest organizations, or getting involved in them involves risks. Previous research (Alho 2008) has indicated that there is a lack of knowledge about the role of trade unions in Finland among immigrants, and also in some cases fear of a negative employer reaction to joining a trade union. Nevertheless, we should not dismiss the role of discrimination and even racism as an explanation for migrant under-representation. Alho (2012) and Ristikari (2013) have found evidence of racism and ethnic prejudice among trade union representatives at the workplace level. This finding was confirmed in an interview made with a representative of the SUU in 2013. It is obvious that these phenomena also have a negative impact on immigrant inclusion. The official stance of the Service Union United speaks in favor of migrants’ labour rights and anti-racism and even implies increased cultural diversity related to immigration to be a positive factor. However, these attitudes are not necessarily transmitted to the workplace level.

The SUU has approximately 9,000 members who have registered a language other than Finnish or Swedish as their first language in the SUU’s membership form (July 2013), which is 3.9% of its total membership of 229,000. The most common foreign languages among the membership were, in descending order, Estonian, Russian, English, Thai, Chinese, Arabic, and Turkish. It is evident that migrants (also non-nationals) are welcomed as members of the union. This is visible in the multilingual approach that the union has partially adopted in its official communications, i.e. on its webpages. The union has also translated some collective agreements into foreign languages and shared information in “multicultural” contexts such as the *World Village Festival* and at the *International Cultural Centre Caisa* in the capital of Finland. One of the union’s branches in Helsinki has recently started providing Finnish lessons to a small group of migrant members. Immigration and immigrants are on the union’s agenda. This is also

visible in the publishing of an Immigration Strategy for 2009–2015. Furthermore, a General strategy paper for 2011–2015 identifies societal challenges to which the union must react. Immigration and immigrants are mentioned in three different contexts in the paper. The Strategy paper propagates a cautious immigration policy:

“Due to the aging of the population and economic growth in big cities some sectors of working life face a lack of workforce. This problem should however, not primarily be solved by increasing the use of workforce from outside the EU/European Economic Area. Instead the [geographical] mobility of workforce in the Finnish labour market has to be facilitated by improving housing policy and social policy”

The program also claims that a “multicultural society” increases the need for language and social skills, and that special attention should be directed to the recognition of the work-related skills of workers with a migrant background.

A central aspect in the SUU’ immigration policy programs the stance against ethnic discrimination and racism, and a demand for the state to improve strategies that facilitate the integration of immigrants into Finnish society. It stresses that collective agreements also apply to migrants working in Finland. Despite increased efforts, we should not over-estimate the union’s visibility to migrants: in the questionnaire sent to the SUU’s migrant members (Ritari 2013), only 1.4% indicated that they had joined the union because it had been visible in the media, and 1.8% of the respondents had become members because they had received an advertisement letter from the union. Only 5.1% of the members had joined because a union representative had recommended membership. The vast majority (62.9%) had joined because a friend, family member, or a colleague belonging to the SUU had recommended them do so; in other words not as an outcome of the union’s strategy. The most common reason expressed for joining the union was the right to income-related unemployment benefit in case of unemployment, access to legal services, and advice on work-related issues. In this sense the immigrant members do not differ from the native members (Ritari 2013). Furthermore, the effects of increased emphasis on language questions should not be over-estimated either: the SUU (and other blue collar trade unions) still face difficulties in servicing their members in non-native languages including English (Alho 2008; Kyntäjä 2011).

The interviewed SUU representatives expressed quite a positive stance on immigration and immigrants in general. Some of the interviewees indicated that dealing with “immigrant issues” implied a possibility to enrich encounters and enhance ones’ cultural competence:

“[As a consequence of dealing with immigrant members] my cultural understanding has increased ... It has somehow increased my tolerance, and that is good. Although it has been challenging. It can be said that I have taken this as a process of personal growth. If I’m honest, I think we can all improve in these matters.” (Interview with an SUU official)

Another official said:

“I think [immigration] is on a general level a good thing that brings with it cultural diversity.”

These two quotes express an attitude that is also present in the other interviews and, for instance, in the official printed magazine that the union distributes to its members, raising interesting questions. How to explain this positive stance toward immigration and immigrants? Support for multiculturalism and tolerance have become rather widely accepted norms in many societies (e.g. Mähönen and Jasinskaja-Lahti 2013). Nowadays no organization that wants to be taken seriously in Finland wishes to appear outright “anti-immigrant”, not to mention racist (with the exception of some political activists). There might be a bias for the interviewees and union activists in general to portray themselves as tolerant, international, and open-minded. Nevertheless, the interviewees were promised anonymity, which should at least by default reduce the incentive for this kind of bias.

The expressed positive stance of the SUU can also be related to gender issues. The SUU is a largely female trade union, with women constituting the vast majority of its staff and almost 80% of its members. It has been shown that women express more positive attitudes toward immigrants than men (Jaakkola 2009).

## **Immigration as a solution to “lack of labour”?**

In addition to the Free Movement network, the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK) has lobbied for the liberalization of immigration policies from third countries. In contrast to the Free Movement network, its arguments have been economic rather than humanitarian. EK claims that immigration policy needs to be liberalized because of “lack of labour” and “excessive” bureaucracy related to work permits. The main dividing line between the SUU (and SAK) and the employers’ organization in terms of immigration policy is their view on the existence of a lack of labour. The SUU questions the employers’ strong claims regarding lack of labour. It insists that when vacancies are not filled, this is due to poor wages and other working conditions. On the basis of the research material the strategy of the employers is to highlight the “lack of labour”, whereas the SUU and SAK downplay these claims. They also offer different solutions to it in contrast to the employers. The opposing explanations are apparent in the following two quotes, which highlight the different interests of employer organizations and trade unions concerning the perceived amount of labour force, and how this question is critically related to the contemporary immigration question:

“The phenomenon [of unfilled vacancies] is among other things explained by the lack of proper labour market skills and competence, social problems such as subsistence abuse and the poor motivation of Finnish workers.” (EK immigration expert Riitta Wärn, Helsingin Sanomat newspaper 10.3.2013)

This same view regarding the reason for unfilled vacancies, in addition with a claim of “too generous” unemployment benefits, was manifest in the interview made with an EK official for this article. In contrast, according to the SAK’s expert on immigration issues:

“Employers want to recruit foreign workforce to sectors, in which they claim there is lack of labour. The difficulty of recruiting Finnish workers to these branches depends on the fact that wages are insufficient for living, and because working conditions are bad and work contracts part-time.” (SAK immigration expert Eve Kyntäjä, Helsingin Sanomat 10.3.2013)

An interviewed SUU representative in a leading position argued 2013 in a similar vein that:

“It is in the policy of the National Coalition Party [a Finnish right-wing party] and EK [the largest Finnish employer organization] to argue that by increasing the labour force [i.e. by immigration] all problems in Finland will be solved. And that is one way to deteriorate working conditions. Our [SUU’s] basic task is to defend working conditions that is why we are against it [loosening up restrictions for labour immigration]”.

In accordance with the statement by SAK, many SUU interviewees stressed that intensified competition and a need to minimize labour costs has increased the pace of work and had a negative impact on working conditions in the service sector. It is not the aim of this article to analyze to what extent there is an actual lack of labour in Finland. Suffice to say that employer organizations and trade unions have different interests in the question, which they publicly relate to the immigration question.

## **The “invisible” migrants**

According to the interviews made with SUU representatives in 2013, the question of undocumented immigrants has been discussed “on some occasions” among union officials. The union has not made any public statements regarding those migrants who work “illegally” in Finland, although it has recently joined an EU-financed international project, “Fine Tune”, which assesses the situation of the undocumented. The interviewees also mentioned some preliminary talks within the union to organize “some kind of an information point” for undocumented migrants, in cooperation with other trade unions. The union has together with the SAK, with a couple of thousands euros, helped to finance a medical clinic for undocumented migrants (e-mail response from an SAK official 1.10.2013). The interviewees claimed that undocumented migrants have not contacted the union. The question regarding the undocumented is by and large outside the SUU’s (and other Finnish trade unions’) reach. This underlines their weakness in acting outside the established industrial relations framework in concrete support of the most vulnerable and “invisible” workers in society.

The Free Movement-network provides various kinds of support to migrants with or without legal permission to reside in Finland and lobbies for the rights of the undocumented. According to the network, the restrictive immigration policies supported by the SUU/SAK toward third country nationals exhibited by Finland (and many other countries) actually push migrant workers into exposed situations and the underground economy. This is because in some sectors of working life, work permits are issued on the basis of “lack of labour”. In this assessment, made by government officials, a job-seeker registered in the Finnish (and EU/EEA) labour market should be given preference to a job-seeker from a third country. In addition, residence permits are in some cases dependent on having a job and a certain income. In contrast to the Free Movement network’s viewpoint, the SUU claims that this legislation is needed because it manages immigration so that employers cannot practice “social dumping” through the use of migrant workers. The SUU (and SAK) argue that these restrictions protect the migrant worker because they give government officials the means to check that working conditions are in order. According to the Free Movement network, these measures actually weaken a migrant’s bargaining power in relation to their employer. The following section assesses the validity of these arguments.

Concerning undocumented migrants, the SUU is a rather conservative actor, and has not taken concrete action in favour of this vulnerable group, which trade unions have done in some countries where they have more of a social movement character (see Caviedes 2010: 27; Haus 2002; Menz 2011, 264; Watts 2002). Nevertheless, direct comparisons cannot be made, since we have to bear in mind that in Finland undocumented migrants are quite a recent phenomenon and their amount is small in an international comparison. Labour immigration is a widely debated topic, but the position of the undocumented has not been widely politicized so far, which may at least partly explain the lack of action among Finnish unions.

A large share of the undocumented works in the cleaning sector (Könönen 2012). The so-called ethnic restaurant sector is also by and large outside trade union presence in Finland. The SUU has no strategies to organize this sector, which it sees as difficult to access (Alho 2008; 2012). It has not hired migrant organizers in order to get access into the ethnic economy, as have, for instance, some US trade unions (see e.g. Milkman 2010). Typically for the SUU, instead of directly seeking access to the ethnic economy, by for instance hiring migrant recruiters, the ethnic economy’s working conditions are discussed in various working groups with other institutionalized actors:

“To my knowledge we have not actively dealt with this question [ethnic economy]. It’s more like we have been involved in several working groups with employers discussing these immigration questions. We discuss what kind of programs there should be and what the state should do.” (emphasis added)

The previous interview quote is from 2005. In the interviews made in 2011 and 2013, the interviewees assessed that the problems regarding working conditions in the ethnic economy still persist. From this perspective dealing with the question in an institutional state-directed manner has not provided a solution. The union does not challenge state restrictions on third country nationals entering Finland. Quite the opposite: the SUU, together with SAK, actively (and successfully) lobbied against proposals of the 2007–2011 government to legislatively facilitate labour immigration from third countries (Alho 2012; Sund 2010).

It is obvious that these restrictions regarding work permits that are dependent on the assessment of demand of labour work to the disadvantage of the third country nationals as they imply economic costs and bureaucracy. They also generally make the existence of the individual migrant more precarious, because residence permits are in many cases linked to having a work permit (see Könönen 2012). Uncertainty around getting access to work/residence permits has also been shown to cause psychological stress for applicants (Könönen 2012; Silfver 2010). One interviewed SUU official claimed to be aware of these undesired outcomes, but defended the restrictions because “there is no real lack of workforce in Finland” (interview in 2013).

Despite the opening up of the national labour markets the SUU’s lobbying strategies and claims are targeted at the *national* level. According to the research material, possibilities of influencing EU-level decision-making remain marginal and is limited to co-operation and information sharing with Nordic and other international trade union confederations. This is visible both in the research interviews and for instance in the 33 page SUU’s official Strategy paper 2011–2015, in which goals and claims are directed only at the nation-state level. No demands or goals are made in the broader European or global context. The question of supra-national strategy is complicated due to the fact that the interests and cultures of trade unions in different national contexts are often very different (see Lehtonen 2008). It is not surprising that the SUU’s claims and strategies are directed at the nation-state level, as previous research has shown that the nation-states remain the most important targets of non-state actors’ claims making in the immigration field (Koopmans and Statham 2005, 43).

## **Credibility of the exploitation and unemployment arguments for restricting immigration**

### **The exploitation argument**

The argument put forward by the SUU and SAK that current labour immigration restrictions limit the possibility of the exploitation of migrant workers is questionable. Working conditions can be protected without geographical restrictions on the mobility of workers, for instance through increased controls at workplace level (e.g. Krings 2009). A government officials’ assessment (in Finnish *saatavuusharkinta*) regarding

the demand of labour is conducted for some “working class” occupations concerning the right of a third country national to work. It includes, in addition to assessing the “lack of labour”, an assessment regarding the employers’ capability to offer working conditions that follow legal requirements. This assessment could certainly be made when issuing work permits without making an evaluation about the “lack of labour”, which undermines the argument regarding the assessment’s protective capacity.

Furthermore, Finland is, on a global scale, a wealthy country. Its labour markets are – despite the specific problems migrants face – much less exploitative than many working life sectors in poorer countries. From this perspective it is not credible that restrictions on entry to Finland would be in the prospective third country immigrant’s interest, as the SUU and SAK claim. With the risk of stating the obvious: keeping a third country immigrant outside the Finnish labour market surely protects her/him from being exploited in the Finnish labour market. Nevertheless, barriers on entry to Finnish labour markets prevent her/him from exiting home country labour markets, which globally compared are in many cases characterized by much worse working conditions than those in Finland.

Paananen (1999) has argued that the Finnish Construction Trade Union labeled foreign workers exploited in order to be able to defend continued restrictions on labour immigration. They simultaneously gave a humanitarian impression while working against the influx of foreign work force. On the basis of my research material, it is not possible to make a similarly strong claim regarding the motivations of the SUU and SAK as to why they define migrants as exploited. There have also been severe cases in Finland of breaches of the labour rights of migrants working in the service and construction sectors (Alho 2008, 2010). Studies based on migrants’ experiences confirm that migrants are more vulnerable to mistreatment in these sectors compared to natives (Alho 2008, 2010; Könönen 2012). Trade union officials are fully aware of this phenomenon (Helander, Alho and Saksela-Bergholm 2011). Furthermore, state labour inspectors confirm that immigrants more often than natives face labour law breaches (Alho 2008).

In other words, framing migrants as exploited cannot be dismissed as solely a trade union strategy aimed at defending continued restrictions of entry to Finland. Nevertheless, the exploitation-framing contributes to the SUU’ and SAK’s interests as they perceive it, as it gives an altruistic and humanitarian tone to the continued restrictions.

### **The unemployment argument**

It is also questionable to defend – in SUU’s terms – the aforementioned restrictions on labour immigration with the argument that they protect the Finnish workforce. The Finnish economist Sarvimäki (2013) has presented a theoretical model according to which the effect of immigration on natives’ labour market position is currently likely to be low. However, Kouvonen (2012) assessed that the high proportion of immigrants in the Helsinki area has “probably to some degree” slowed down wage development in the service and construction sectors.

We know that many immigrant groups are on average more active than natives in establishing enterprises (Joronen 2012). We could hypothesize that increased immigration would actually *expand* the service sector and create more work opportunities – not diminish them, as the union argues. Nevertheless, as the public statement of the SUU above indicates, the union argues for increased mobility within the national borders, rather than labour immigration, to fill labour shortages.

No doubt unemployment is a serious societal problem in Finland. Nevertheless, demographic challenges with the ageing of the population put strains on Finnish welfare states' finances. The economist Juhana Vartiainen, Director General of the Government Institute for Economic Research (VATT) in Finland, argues that one of the most serious problems regarding the Finnish national economy is the lack of supply of workforce (Yle News 6.6.2013). Vartiainen supports increased immigration and argues that municipalities actively using migrants as a resource will be successful. He stresses that unemployment and immigration are not related, as the amount of work is not fixed; therefore immigration does not work against the natives' interests.

Restrictions on labour immigration have also met criticism inside the trade union movement. The Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK's) chief economist, *Ralf Sund*, has argued that due to the benefits of internationalization and the demographic challenges “(it is in Finland's national interests to strive for an immigration policy that is as liberal as possible)” (Sund 2010).

If these economists' arguments hold true, lobbying against increased immigration is a strategy that works against the interests of SUU members and the entire Finnish society (with the premise that economic growth is desirable). However, we cannot either dismiss the idea that the current restrictions on labour immigration would in some cases protect the labour market interests of the workforce in Finland (including migrants living in Finland) in the short term. As mentioned above, immigration from abroad to the capital area has probably to some degree slowed wage increases in the service and construction sector (Kouvonen 2012). The “lack of labour” assessment for third country nationals was lifted in the *Uusimaa*-region (the capital area) regarding cleaning jobs at the end of 2012, despite resistance from the SUU and SAK. The interviewed SUU representatives said in 2013 that it was still too early to assess what labour market outcomes this liberalization has had.

## **The rise of “pro” and “anti”-immigration politics and their impact on trade union strategy**

Trade unions are political actors that pay attention to the societal climate. Attitudes toward immigration and immigrants were changing in an immigration-friendlier direction in Finland until 2007 (Haavisto 2011). However, the recent rise of the anti-immigrant

Finns Party (up from 4% in the 2007 parliamentary elections to 19% in 2011) is a factor to which other political actors pay attention. It is reasonable to claim that these political currents have to some degree modified the other political parties' stances toward a more cautious direction as regards immigration. For instance, the right-wing government of 2007–2011 did not enforce its plans for liberalizing labour immigration from third countries, even though it held a majority in parliament. The rising unemployment since the year 2008, and the opposition of the left wing parties, The Finns Party, and blue collar trade unions including the SUU, no doubt affected this outcome.

It is easier for voluntary activist groups such as the Free Movement network to challenge state immigration policies than for a large and well-established trade union such as the SUU to do so. The latter is dependent on the acceptance of a large share of the native working population. For instance, the Finns Party's success is strongest among those parts of the working class that the SUU and SAK represent.

However, trade unions also shape, and not only reflect, perceptions regarding labour immigration in the public sphere. Therefore it is probable that the SUU's rather negative framing regarding liberalizing labour immigration not only reflects a popular critical stance toward the phenomenon, but also strengthens it, as institutional actors shape the opinions of ordinary citizens. Nevertheless, the SUU does not interpret or present immigration as a cultural threat, a phenomenon that has been visible among various actors in many parts of Europe in the 2000s (e.g. Citrin and Sides 2008; Koopmans et al. 2005).

Many commentators have argued that Finnish society is for the time being divided into "two camps", positive and negative, regarding immigration, immigrants, and multiculturalism (e.g. Jasinskaja and Mähönen 2013). Interestingly, we can identify both of these approaches in the research material concerning the SUU. The union's stance is characterized by ambivalence. The union to some degree assesses the organization of migrants already living in Finland as a power resource. It has applied some concrete measures in order to obtain tangible outcomes in this regard. These aspects have most likely contributed to migrants increasingly joining the union. Furthermore, they symbolically imply that migrants are welcomed as members. The migrant membership has increased from around 1,000 in the year 2002 to approximately 9,000 in 2013. The SUU assesses the number of migrants working in the sectors it represents as being around 40,000 (interview in 2013). This means that trade union density among migrants is far lower than among the whole population in the sectors the SUU represents, which is around 50% on the basis of the interviews.

The analysis of the research material indicates that it is not possible to give one single straightforward answer to the "classical question" as to whether the trade union under scrutiny is *for or against* immigrants. The answer depends on the category of immigrants referred to. The SUU's strategies imply different outcomes for different groups of immigrants.

## Discussion

The SUU's resistance to liberalization of labour immigration is understandable in the current Finnish political climate, characterized by high unemployment and the rise of a populist and anti-immigration political alternative offered by the Finns Party. The union's position reflects a protectionist stance, which places the Finnish workforce's (perceived) interests above those of the prospective immigrants from third countries. This is probably quite a successful strategy toward the part of the population that perceives immigration as a threat, as it gives the impression that the union protects the natives. Nevertheless, this strategy can be criticized for cynicism or *Realpolitik*, as the labour market implications of immigration are assessed to be minor (see Sarvimäki 2013). It must also be pointed out that labour recruitment from abroad is already fully possible owing to free movement within the EU (in addition to the EEA, Nordic countries not belonging to the EU, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein). With the exception of the construction sector (see Alho 2013) labour import has been modest, even though Finland has been a member of the EU for nearly two decades. Furthermore, Finland imposed no transition periods for the entry of Rumanian and Bulgarian citizens into the Finnish labour market, when these countries joined the EU in 2007. Immigration from these low-wage countries to Finland has been minimal. Neither has the recent massive unemployment in Southern Europe led to significant labour migration to Finland, even though citizens of these countries are free to enter the Finnish labour market. These facts speak against the fears of large-scale labour market impacts of liberalizing labour immigration, which the SUU, together with the SAK, have actively raised to public discussion.

To the part of the population that does not perceive immigration as a threat, the strategy of associating immigration with negative labour market effects in the manner of SUU/SAK (and parts of the party political left that they are linked with) may give an impression of trade unions as defenders of a narrow, short-term self-interest. Nevertheless, it has to be pointed out that restrictions on labour immigration are not in an international comparison exceptionally strict in Finland.

Portraying immigration as a labour market threat can also have negative outcomes for how natives perceive immigrants living in the country. On the other hand, it is likely that the restrictive stance toward increased immigration has some support among the immigrant population. There are international examples of immigrants resisting immigration, because they perceive it as a threat to their societal position (Briggs 2001). Nevertheless, there are also studies that point to immigrants favouring liberal immigration policies (e.g. Rouse, Wilkinson and Garand 2010). This kind of research is lacking in Finland, but we may assume immigrants' perceptions in this question to vary just like within the population as a whole.

The position of the union does not portray "global working class solidarity", as it makes a distinction between "us" and "them" on the basis of nationality. The nation-

state is the cognitive and actual frame of reference for the union. The SUU acts like a union in a “position from above”, to use the term of Penninx and Roosblad. It does not challenge the status quo regarding state immigration policy, or the populist discourse that interprets labour immigration as a threat, in a way that for instance the less institutionally embedded Italian trade unions have done.

The SUU’s strategies reflect the ambivalence existing in Finnish society regarding immigration. Despite its rather negative outlook regarding further labour immigration, the union has publicly spoken against racism and discrimination. It has made some efforts to serve its members in an increasing multilingual manner. It has also emphasized that the state should improve its integration policies directed at immigrants. Despite being symbolically important, these are expressions of solidarity that cost little and require no structural changes that would increase migrants’ participation inside the union. The union has not challenged – but actually defended – work/residence permit requirements, which in many cases entail insecurity and costs to migrants. The union’s emphasis on relating immigration with culture and language issues has not altered ethnic power inequalities inside the union organization. According to Mulinari and Neergaard (2004), the culturalization discourse regarding immigrants in the Swedish trade union movement hides the structural inequalities in the trade union movement and at the state level. Concerning the Finnish context, the powerful positions in the SUU are, as in other Finnish trade unions, held by native Finns, whereas migrants are with a few exceptions passive members.

Positions of authority in trade unions provide income and/or a varying degree of societal, in some cases political, influence for their holders. Furthermore, trade unions are hierarchical organizations, in which those in positions of power often use different means to preserve and increase their power (e.g. Kevätsalo 1986; Michels 1911). From this standpoint it is reasonable to question whether the holders of these positions would actively engage in measures that concretely enhance the newcomers’ (in this case migrants) position inside their organization. Processes of power redistribution may meet considerable resistance in trade unions (Penninx and Roosblad 2000, 11–12). In other words, there are obvious incentives for social closure (for social closure see Weber 1922/1978) in order to monopolize the aforementioned resources within the trade unions. Consequently migrants’ own motivation is crucial, as power is seldom given away.

Finland is a young immigration country and most of the migrant members of the SUU have lived in the country for less than seven years (Ritari 2013). Reaching a position of authority in a large trade union usually requires years, in some cases decades, of activity in the trade union movement. The coming years will show whether the trade unions will act as a veritable channel of influence for the migrant population, something that, by and large, they are not at present. Migrant associations have played a more significant role in this respect (Pyykkönen 2007; Saksela-Bergholm 2009).

The union's strategies imply close links to the state. There are interesting parallels between the SUU's/SAK's stance toward the Finnish state's immigration policy, and the Finnish trade union's position toward official Finnish foreign policy. According to Bergholm (2008), the Finnish trade union movement has only with rare exceptions questioned or challenged state foreign policy. This is still the case today. For instance, top trade union leaders take part in official state visits to economically important countries. This relates to the quasi-state character of the Finnish trade union movement and is visible in the weakness of unions in defending the most vulnerable migrant workers such as the undocumented, or those working in the ethnic restaurant sector, which is virtually without a trade union presence. The solidarity of the union reaches those migrants who are relatively well integrated in the Finnish labour market. However, the strong link to the state has led to ample opportunities for trade unions to reach their goals in terms of working conditions. Their strong power resources have, for instance, contributed to the by international terms relatively high wages in the service sector. These wages also apply to immigrants, including non-unionized migrants (except for the undocumented who rarely can make any claims toward their employer). In this regard, the majority of migrants working in the occupations that the SUU represents benefit from the union.

Prospective immigration from third countries renders the question of international solidarity a more critical issue than was the case in previous decades. Finnish trade unions have historically interpreted international solidarity as a sort of "development aid", which means supporting weak trade unions in the third world or other poor countries. International solidarity is now, however, because of intensified globalization, a more critical "on your doorstep" question in terms of labour immigration.

It is useful to contrast immigration to Finland with internal mobility in the country. Immigration to Finland is minor compared to the mobility of people inside the country. In fact, in 2012 internal migration between Finnish municipalities was around nine times higher than immigration to Finland (Statistics Finland 2013). The Service Union United does not frame this kind of geographical mobility as a problem even if it by default leads to the same kind of "competition for jobs" as mobility from outside the Finnish state borders. For an employed/unemployed person in the Finnish labour market, an internal native immigrant moving to their location represents in principle the same kind of "threat" as an immigrant from abroad. One could even argue that internal immigration (which the union advocates instead of immigration to fill labour shortages) forms a more serious form of labour market competition from the perspective of the individual SUU member, as the immigrant often lacks the kind of socio-economic capital that is appreciated in the Finnish labour market (Forsander 2002). In sum, the lay distinction between "us" and "them" based on nationality still shapes trade union strategy in a way that can be labeled as selective solidarity.

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Rolle Alho

# Inclusion or Exclusion?

## Trade Union Strategies and Labor Migration

This research identifies and analyzes immigration-related strategies of the Finnish Construction Trade Union (FCTU) and the Service Union United (SUU); e.g. how the unions react to labor immigration, whether unions seek to include migrants in the unions, and what is migrants' position in the unions. The study also analyzes the experiences that migrants who work in these sectors have with trade unions. The Estonian labor market situation—including the role of Estonian trade unions—is also examined as it has a considerable impact on the operating environment of the FCTU.

The results of the study indicate that immigration is a contradictory issue for both unions. On the one hand, they strive to include migrants as trade union members and to defend migrants' labor rights. On the other hand, they, together with their umbrella organization the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK), seek to prevent labor immigration from outside the EU and EEA countries. They actively defend current labor immigration restrictions by drawing attention to high unemployment figures and to the breaches of working conditions migrants encounter.

The research material consists of 78 qualitative interviews, observation in trade union events, and trade unions' and employer organizations' public statements.

Cover: Jouni Korkiasaari



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