

International labour recruitment in Finland: How to use our massive home advantage?

Quivine Ndomo,

2024



The idea of home advantage

- Students are an exponentially growing category – relatively higher stay rates in Europe*

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Granted permits	5,246	3,225	5,837	8,383	12,795

/ **2 things:** What are the best practices behind that growth and how do we adopt them in integration work?

- HEI's internationalisation strategies
- The student permit regime*





The idea of home advantage

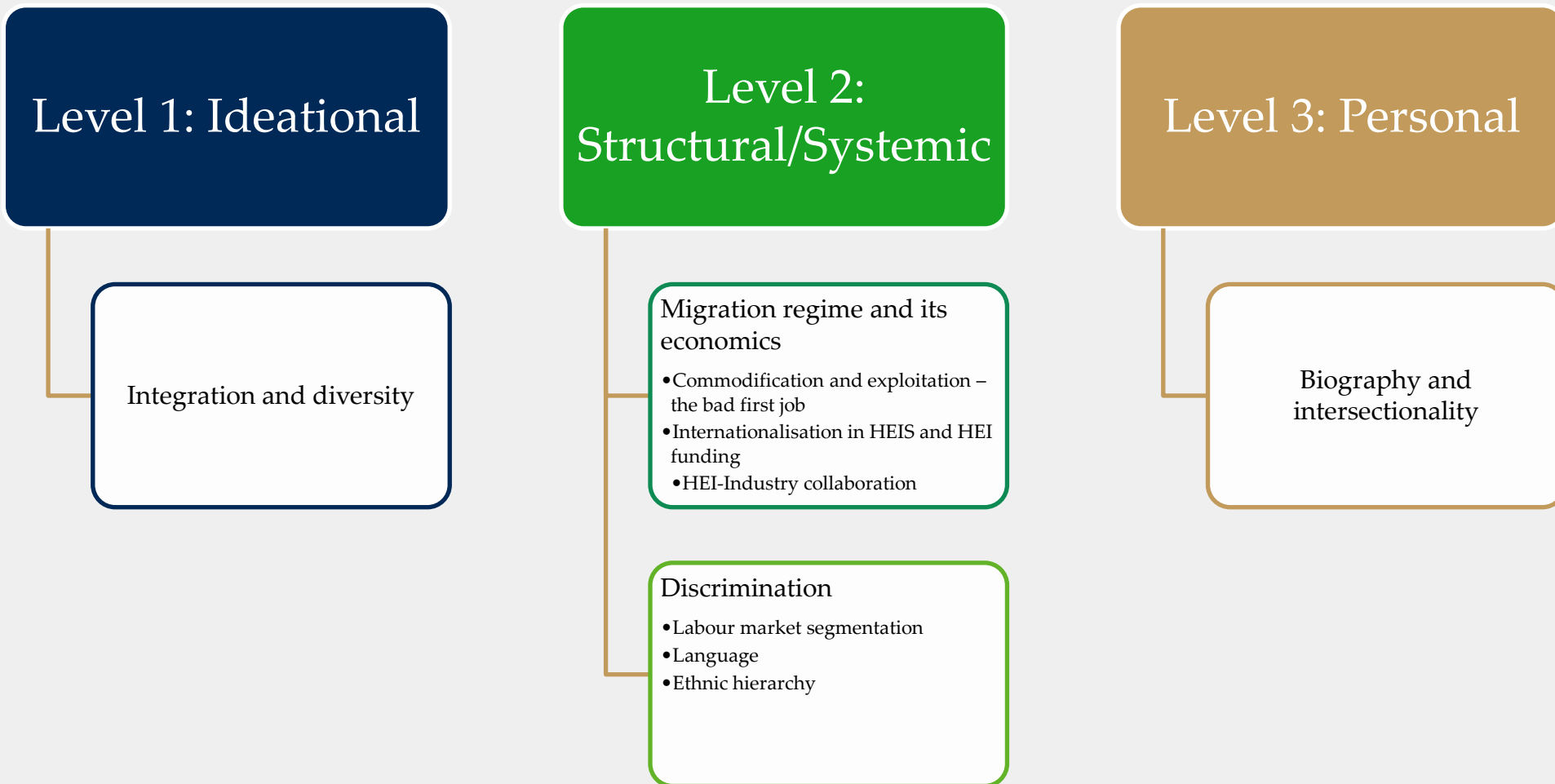
Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Granted permits	5,246	3,225	5,837	8,383	12,795

- / 8% of international students are Master's degree students (Ballo et al., 2024)
- / Mathies and Karhunen (2021) show that the higher the degree the lower the likelihood of staying in Finland after graduation
 - Meaning integration fails where it matters the most – Finland keeps migrants who do not have an option – is this a good thing at all? What could be the dangers of this?





Integration of international students: Hurdles





Ideational hurdles: Integration and diversity

- Two-way integration in Finland is theoretical empty rhetoric
 - / Migrants integrate themselves in unidirectional outside-in process through their own agentic capacities such as resilience and reworking. They react to failed integration through individual level resistance that's low in impact
- The rhetoric of diversity is dishonest and continues to subscribe to age-old value schemes of classification – women migrants are inferior, 'black migrant are inferior etc.





Solution?

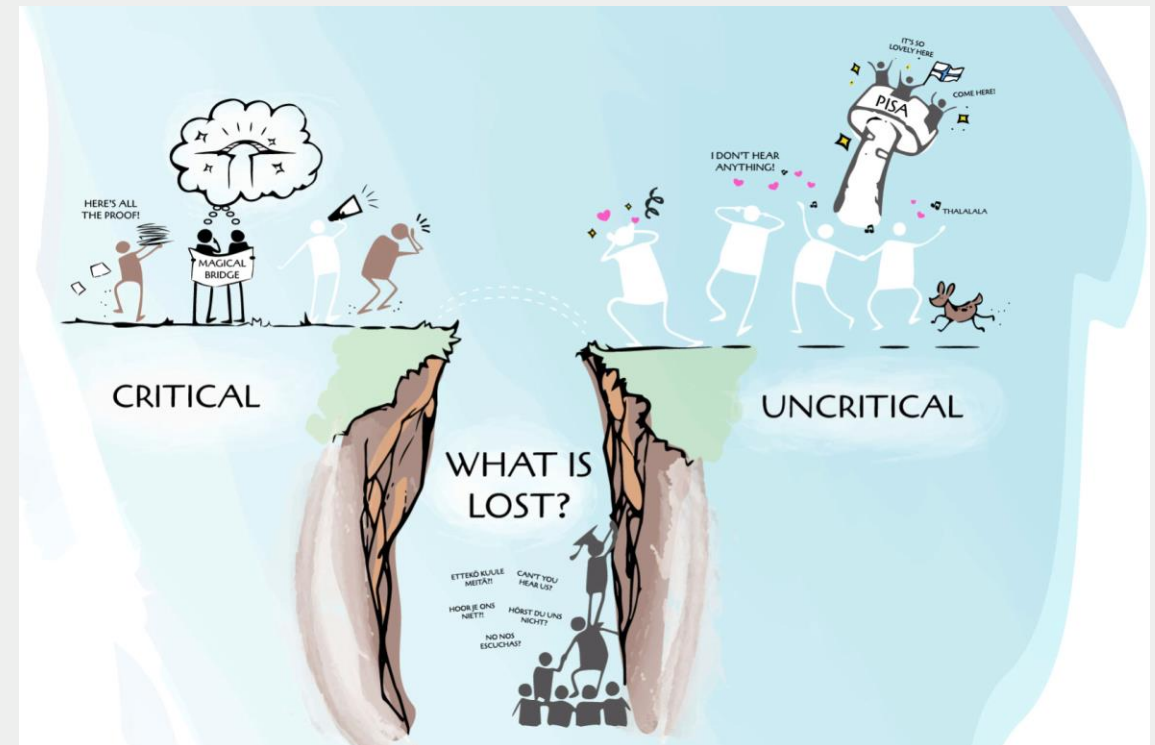


- Honest dialogue, understanding, and acceptance of the past, present, and future of diversity, discrimination, racism, segregation, migration, and integration in Finland
 - **Thoughtful and compassionate dialogue** about the real objectives of migration and integration in Finland today
 - Clearer definition of national policies on migration and integration e.g.,
 - What is two-way integration?
 - What is cultural diversity in the Finnish context – status quo and desired future?
 - What should equality and non-discrimination work look like for small businesses, big industries, the government, etc? What about enforcement?
 - **Consensus and collaboration are crucial**



Structural/systemic hurdles

- **The Finnish migration regime and its economics** – commodification and maximum benefit for Finland is behind successful migration flows into Finland, but is also behind several negative developments in the Finnish labour market that now affect migrants but will soon plague the entire working class
 - / Internationalisation of HEIs, HEI funding system, and disconnect between HEIs and industry
 - Poor transition into the labour market





Structural/systemic hurdles

- **Systemic discrimination** is replete in Finnish society and in the Finnish labour market specifically
 - Race, ethnicity, and nationality-based discrimination in various formats:
 - Labour market segmentation
 - Statistical discrimination
 - Language
 - Network and closed recruitment and hiring
 - » Result: A labour market segmentation that makes it so that the best will not stay in Finland, and if they do, they will be so expensive it will not be sustainable

JYU DISSERTATIONS 744

Quivine Ndomo

The Working Underclass

Highly Educated Migrants on the Fringes of the Finnish Labour Market

News 21.10.2019 9:47 | updated 21.10.2019 11:05

Researcher: “If there’s a worker with a Finnish name, they’ll probably be hired”

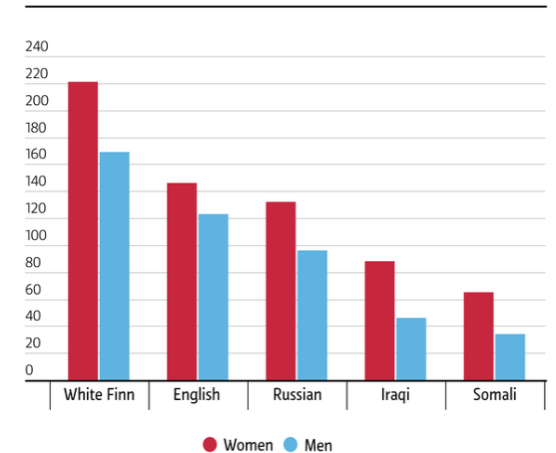
Research suggests a clear hierarchy of applicants with white Finnish women at the top and Somali men at the bottom.

Share



Akhlaq Ahmad Image: Henrietta Hassinen / Yle

Interview invites per 500 job applications



Source: When the Name Matters: An Experimental Investigation of ethnic discrimination in the Finnish Labor Market. Ahmad Akhlaq, University of Helsinki, 2019.

Image: Yle

Ahmad, A (2019) When the Name Matters: An Experimental Investigation of Ethnic Discrimination in the Finnish Labor Market. Sociological Inquiry. 2019, 1–29.

Solution?

- **Collaboration, solidarity, and strategic alliances on issues such as language and recruitment practices** are the only way to stem segmentation of the workforce in Finland, to improve labour market and industrial conditions for all workers
- Recommended collaborations:
 - University - Industry
 - Government – University- Industry
 - Trade Unions – Universities – AVI – Migrant associations
 - Migrant workers – Finnish workers





Personal hurdles





Solution?

- To develop fit-for-purpose interventions for personal problems, intervenors need to understand
 - / Intersectionality
 - / The system-personal nexus
 - / How migrants chose to deal with personal hurdles e.g., resilience, reworking, resistance
 - / Role of networks and associations accessible to migrants such as migrant and cultural associations

