

FINLAND'S HARD-WORKING AND CONFIDENT EXPERTS ABROAD

Impact assessment of EDUFI trainee programmes 2015–2018

Ulla Härmä
Niina Juuti
Riikka Koivusalo
Jaana Mutanen
Tarja Nousiainen
Ritva Ukkonen
Riitta Uotila



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CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION.	5
2.	FINNISH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR EDUCATION'S INTERNATIONAL TRAINEE PROGRAMMES.	6
3.	METHODOLOGY AND VIEWPOINTS OF THE REPORT.	8
4.	RESULTS BY TARGET GROUP.	10
4.1	Trainees.	10
4.1.1	Learning new skills important for finding a job and developing professional language skills had a positive impact on careers.	12
4.1.2	International traineeships support professional competence.	13
4.1.3	Traineeships have a strong impact on developing international competence.	14
4.1.4	Impact of international traineeships on studies.	15
4.2	Higher education institutions	17
4.2.1	EDUFI traineeships complement and diversify the selection.	17
4.2.2	Verbalising learning and competence as a way to enhance the impact of EDUFI traineeships.	20
4.3	Employers	20
4.3.1	Employers rated the added value of EDUFI trainees in the workplace higher than in 2017.	20
4.3.2	Overall added value created by EDUFI trainee programmes has increased.	21
4.3.3	Employers remain satisfied with the trainees' competence and motivation	21
4.3.4	Placements offer opportunities for development	22
5.	DEVELOPMENT IDEAS BY TARGET GROUP.	23
5.1	Development proposals received from trainees.	23
5.2	Development proposals received from higher education institution representatives.	23
5.3	Development proposals received from employer representatives	24
6.	REFLECTIONS ON IMPACT.	25
6.1	Trainees found courage, language skills and curiosity.	25
6.2	EDUFI traineeships supplement other provision of placements by higher education institutions.	25
6.3	Employers appreciate the additional resources and latest expertise provided by trainees.	26
6.4	Traineeship cooperation creates added value for society.	26
7.	CONCLUSIONS.	28

APPENDICES AND BACKGROUND MATERIAL. . . . .	.29
Appendix 1. E-mail invitation and survey for trainees . . . . .	.29
Appendix 2. E-mail invitation and survey for higher education institutions. . . . .	.33
Appendix 3. E-mail invitation and survey for workplaces . . . . .	.37
Appendix 4. Thematic interview with trainees . . . . .	.40
Appendix 5. Thematic interview with higher education institutions . . . . .	.41
Appendix 6. Thematic interview for workplaces . . . . .	.42

TABLES

Table 1. Grants awarded under EDUFI traineeship programmes and applicant numbers in 2015–2018. . . . .	.7
Table 2. Experienced career impact. . . . .	.13
Table 3. Development of international competence in 2017 and 2021.. . . .	.15
Table 4. Significance of EDUFI traineeship programmes for higher education institutions in 2017 and 2021. . . . .	.19
Table 5. Added value created by EDUFI trainees in the workplace.. . . .	.21
Table 6. Added value of participating in EDUFI programmes for the employer. . . . .	.21

FIGURES

Figure 1. Target groups of the assessment in the field of societal impact.. . . .	.8
Figure 2. Year in which the respondents completed their international traineeships. .	.10
Figure 3. Distribution of respondents' educational background. . . . .	.11
Figure 4. Respondents' international placements or trainee programmes.. . . .	.11
Figure 5. Distribution of respondents' destination countries inside and outside Europe. . . . .	.12
Figure 6. Placements offered in respondents' destination countries with details of the largest destination countries.. . . .	.12

1. INTRODUCTION

Dear reader,

International traineeships are an interesting and versatile topic, as on-the-job learning significantly complements basic competence imparted by studies at educational institutions, obtaining the latest expertise is important for organisations, and advancing internationalisation is valuable for our society.

This report provides an overview of the trainee programme activities of the Centre for International Mobility CIMO and the Finnish National Agency for Education in 2015–2018. It is a repetition of the report titled 'Finland's hard-working and confident experts abroad!' published in 2017¹. In the interest of clarity, all trainee programmes are referred to as EDUFI traineeships in this report.

The report illustrates the significance of international traineeships for individuals, higher education institutions, working life and society. It also provides qualitative and quantitative information based on which the quality of the activities can be monitored and developed.

In this report you can find more information about such topics as how trainees feel their traineeship periods have affected their studies or their competence development, or how the higher education institutions and employers that responded to the survey see EDUFI trainee programmes. Where applicable, the survey findings are also compared to the results of the previous survey.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my colleagues in the Finnish National Agency for Education who participated in producing this report:

Ulla Härmä, Senior Adviser
Tiia Jaakkola, Trainee
Niina Juuti, Adviser
Jaana Mutanen, Programme Manager
Tarja Nousiainen, Senior Programme Adviser
Niina Paasovaara, Trainee
Eveliina Torkkeli, Project Coordinator
Ritva Ukkonen, Programme Manager
Riitta Uotila, Senior Programme Adviser

I would also like to express my warmest thanks to our stakeholders for your valuable views. Producing this report would not have been possible without you. We value your feedback. We would also like to thank our readers for your interest and welcome you to immerse yourself in the themes of this report.

Riikka Koivusalo
Head of Unit
Internationalisation Services for Higher Education Studies

1 Tuomi, L. (2017). Finland's hard-working and confident experts abroad! Reports and surveys 2017:4b. Finnish National Agency for Education. <https://www.oph.fi/en/statistics-and-publications/publications/finlands-hard-working-and-confident-experts-abroad>

2. FINNISH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR EDUCATION'S INTERNATIONAL TRAINEE PROGRAMMES

International traineeships are one of the oldest forms of international mobility in Finland. The Trainee Exchange Office established in connection with the Ministry of Transport and Public Works (later the Ministry of Labour) started operating as early as in 1952. Bilateral traineeship agreements were initially concluded with other countries, offering Finnish trainees an opportunity to improve their language skills and competence in international placements regardless of their socioeconomic status. Applying theoretical knowledge in practice and advancing and expanding professional language skills have always been significant features of international traineeships activities.

Traineeship activities evolved in a changing world, and since the 1990s, they have had a closer link with education as responsibility for them was transferred to the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) in 1991. From that time on, the offer of international traineeships has been targeted at students and recent graduates. In addition to handling placements, the activities expanded to spreading information about traineeship opportunities and awarding grants to support Finnish students' traineeships. Among other things, placements were found in local organisations, EU bodies, UN organisations and other international organisations. A few years later, traineeships in Finnish organisations operating abroad were launched: Finnish diplomatic missions, Finnish Academic and Cultural Institutes, offices of Finpro and Tekes (currently Business Finland) and universities teaching Finnish outside Finland. As Erasmus grants became available and enabled traineeships in the European Union area in the late noughties, the geographical focus of the traineeships increasingly shifted to countries outside Europe.

*A trainee's experience:
"I am very proud of and grateful for having had the opportunity to go on a traineeship. It supported my growth, both in the personal and professional sense."*

At the beginning of 2017, the activities were transferred to the Finnish National Agency for Education, which is responsible for developing education and training, early childhood education and care and lifelong learning as well as promoting internationalisation. From that year on, international traineeship activities have been referred to as EDUFI traineeships according to the official abbreviation of the Finnish National Agency for Education.

The EDUFI trainee programme has accepted applications from higher education students or graduates within the first year after their graduation. Students applying for EDUFI traineeships must be aged 18 or over. The applicant must be Finnish or permanently resident in Finland. Some programmes

*A trainee's experience:
"In my case, inadequate language skills were a major problem at first, even though this ultimately turned into a significant learning experience. It is great that the language skills required for traineeships are today examined more critically".*

and placements have also had an upper age limit due to employers' wishes or national regulations in the destination countries. The application criteria may also include a certain type of language proficiency or educational background. Applications have been received online² twice a year. Information on the calls for applications has been provided through the Finnish National Agency for Education's communication channels and in cooperation with higher education institutions.

The following are some of the organisations that have offered placements in different sectors:

- Business Finland (since 2018)
- Finpro (until the end of 2017)
- Organisations engaged in development co-operation abroad
- Finnish diplomatic missions abroad
- Universities teaching Finnish language and culture abroad
- Finnish Cultural and Academic Institutes
- Suomi-koti residential and care homes
- Tekes (until the end of 2017)
- Newspapers and magazines of expatriate Finns and the Finnish American Heritage Center

In addition, applicants have been able to seek a placement in a specific country through the Businesses and local organisations programme, which finds suitable placements for them in the destination country. Placements have been offered in such countries as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, India, China, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Russia.

Between 2015 and 2018, a total of 7,460 applications for EDUFI traineeship programmes were received from students and recent graduates. Grants were awarded to 910 trainees; in other words, approx. 12% of the applicants received a grant on average. When examining higher education institutions' international trainee programmes as a whole, EDUFI traineeships accounted for 9% to 12% of all higher education traineeships between 2015 and 2018. This proportion has increased further since the data for the previous report dating back to 2006–2014 was collected. In this earlier period, the proportion of EDUFI traineeships out of all traineeship programmes was from 8% to 10%. On the other hand, recent graduates or students studying abroad are not included in the statistics on the total number of students completing international traineeships. Consequently, this an indicative figure only, which can be compared to all trainee mobility in Finland. The trend in EDUFI traineeships has been similar as in other learner mobility: the mobility figures have declined³.

TABLE 1. GRANTS AWARDED UNDER EDUFI TRAINEESHIP PROGRAMMES AND APPLICANT NUMBERS IN 2015–2018.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Grants awarded	250	250	202	208	910
Applicant numbers	2468	1837	1678	1477	7460

2 EDUFI traineeships for higher education students and recent graduates. Finnish National Agency for Education. <http://www.oph.fi/edufi-harjoittelu>

3 Tilastoja korkeakouluopiskelijoiden ulkomaanjaksoista 2018 (Statistics on international mobility periods of higher education students in Finland in 2018). Publications 2019:12. Finnish National Agency for Education. <https://www.oph.fi/en/education-development-and-internationalisation/funding-internationalisation/edufi-traineeship>

3. METHODOLOGY AND VIEWPOINTS OF THE REPORT

The objective was to reproduce the corresponding report from 2017. The previous report looked at the period between 2006 and 2014, whereas the current one focuses on years 2015–2018. This is due to the fact that the impacts of a traineeship on the trainee’s career are only visible once some time has elapsed.

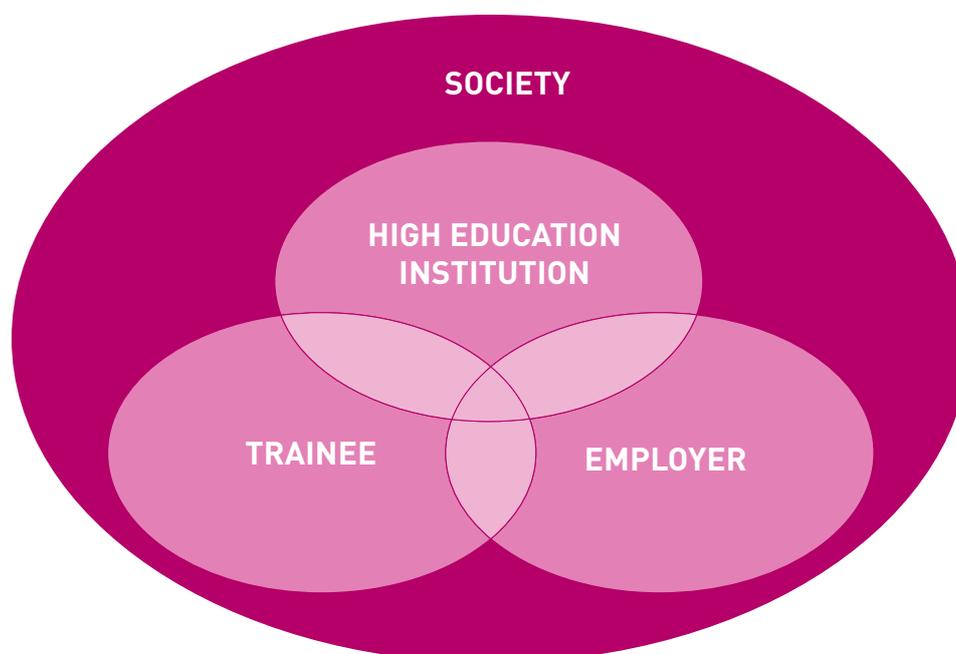
The data collection for this impact study took place between 15 September and 10 December 2021. For the materials used in the data collection, see the Appendices to this report.

This impact assessment had three main objectives:

1. Evaluating the Finnish National Agency for Education’s EDUFI trainee programmes in relation to higher education institutions’ own international traineeship programmes: Are there overlaps, and what added value do EDUFI traineeship programmes bring compared to the higher education institutions’ offer?
2. What impacts have EDUFI trainee programmes had on trainees’ later careers?
3. How could EDUFI trainee programmes be developed, for example in view of the competence needs in future working life?

The report examines the impact of EDUFI trainee programmes from four different viewpoints (Figure 1). These viewpoints are *trainees*, *higher education institutions*, *employers* and *society*.

FIGURE 1. TARGET GROUPS OF THE ASSESSMENT IN THE FIELD OF SOCIETAL IMPACT.



Viewpoints related to trainees:

- Strengthening of international competences (framework of hidden competence)
- Strengthening of professional competence (application of theory to practice and improving practical skills)
- Position of the traineeship in students' study paths (significance of consecutive traineeships, strengthening of international competences as a whole: significance of the traineeship)
- Factors that affected career choices and career paths
- Other benefits experienced by the trainee (paths to working life or further studies)

Viewpoints related to higher education institutions:

- EDUFI trainee programmes in relation to individual HEIs' programmes: overlaps, possible added value
- Speeding up of studies: significance and importance of credit points from the higher education institution's perspective, possibilities of awarding credits for the traineeship (recognition of learning gained during a traineeship), stronger motivation to learn, and the importance of international competences for academic success
- Other viewpoints brought up by higher education institutions (including international partnerships and contacts with employers in EDUFI trainee programmes)
- The position of traineeships regarding international study paths, projects completed in study units, RDI/research and the thesis process (the role of EDUFI traineeships)

Viewpoints related to employers:

- The importance of EDUFI trainee programmes for the workplaces that provide placements (including fresh knowledge and skills, the importance of compatibility between the student and the workplace, identification of future competence requirements)

In the context of societal impact, the report looks at:

- Special features and possible added value of EDUFI trainee programmes compared to other programmes
- The impact of trainee programmes on strengthening international competence in Finnish working life
- The role of traineeship programmes in identifying the transformation and competence needs of working life
- Improved knowledge of and more contacts with growing economies and developing countries through trainee programmes (link to strengthening of competitiveness)

Cross-cutting themes:

- The role of trainee programmes in identifying changes in working life competence requirements (including making hidden competences visible)
- the role of EDUFI trainee programmes in speeding up studies (cf. HEIs' performance requirements regarding degree completion times)
- The role played by and possibilities of developing the network that provides training placements
- Impact at micro level: effects reflected in the student's immediate circle (strengthening the importance and understanding of internationality among the trainee's family, friends and communities)

4. RESULTS BY TARGET GROUP

This section discusses the results of the data collection by target group, starting with trainees and proceeding to higher education institutions and finally employers providing placements.

4.1 Trainees

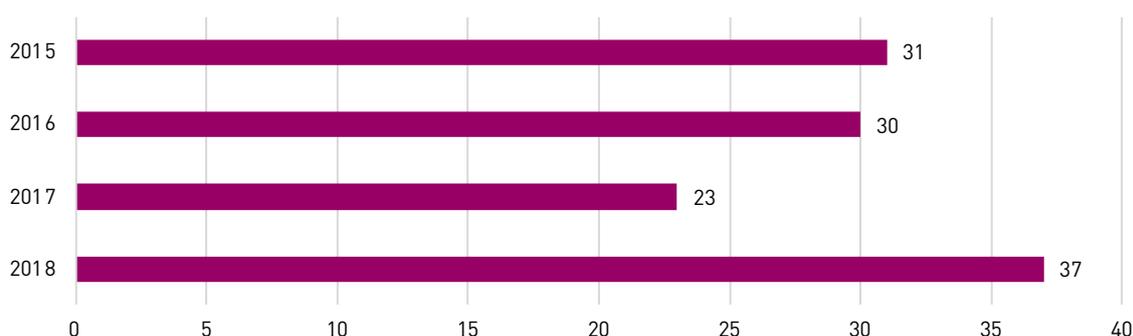
The questionnaire was e-mailed to everyone, 848 persons in total, who participated in the Finnish National Agency for Education's international trainee programmes in 2015–2018. A total of 122 responses were ultimately received. The e-mail was sent to former trainees who had participated in programmes that the Finnish National Agency for Education continues to offer.

As the respondents were contacted, they were also asked about their interest in participating in a thematic interview, and 55 people said they were willing to share their experiences of EDUFI traineeships more extensively. The results of the thematic interviews were collected by contacting the respondents separately. Some respondents also expressed their willingness to describe their experiences at an event of the TraiNet expert network for international traineeships as well as in webinars aimed at students.

The questionnaire also contained questions about respondents' interest in sharing their experiences of how useful they had found EDUFI traineeships for job hunting, in working life, and possibly also from the perspective of developing their language skills. Interviews with higher education institutions and employers offering placements revealed that sharing trainees' experiences is found a very useful way of attracting interest in traineeships. On the other hand, sharing experiences also helps new trainees prepare for their placements.

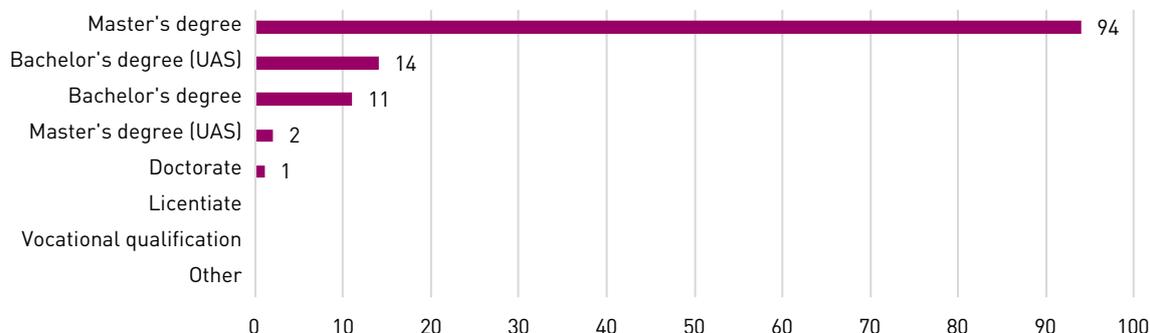
See Figure 2 for a visualisation showing the respondents' distribution by the year in which they completed their traineeships. More or less even numbers of respondents had done their traineeships in each year, which was fortunate in terms of compiling the report. The most recent participants in traineeships also were the most enthusiastic respondents. The largest group of respondents (37 people) had completed their traineeships in 2018, followed by those who did so in 2015 (31 people) and in 2016 (30 people). The lowest number of responses was received from those who had completed their traineeships in 2017 (23 people).

FIGURE 2. YEAR IN WHICH THE RESPONDENTS COMPLETED THEIR INTERNATIONAL TRAINEESHIPS.



The largest share of the respondents had a Master's degree (94 respondents), whereas 14 had completed a Bachelor's degree at a university of applied sciences, and for 11, the most recently completed degree was a Bachelor's degree from a university. Two respondents had a Master's degree (UAS), and one had a doctoral degree (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND.



For the distribution of respondents' international placements, see Figure 4. The largest groups of respondents to the survey said they had completed their traineeships in businesses and local organisations abroad (30 respondents) and at Finnish diplomatic missions (20 respondents).

Business Finland was created in an organisational reform as Finpro and Tekes merged at the beginning of 2018. As the report covers the period 2015–2018, it was necessary to break down the data by the three organisations. The total number of respondents who completed a traineeship in Business Finland and Finpro is 24. Tekes only offered one or two placements each year, and in 2018, Tekes was fully merged with Business Finland.

FIGURE 4. RESPONDENTS' INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENTS OR TRAINEE PROGRAMMES.



The range of destination countries is large, as the respondents had completed traineeships in a total of 47 different countries. Of the 122 respondents, 41 (34%) had had traineeships in Europe and 81 (66%) in destination countries outside Europe (Figure 5). The most important host countries were China (12 trainees), Chile (10 trainees), Russia (9 trainees) and the US (6 trainees). For the distribution of countries, see Figure 6.

FIGURE 5. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' DESTINATION COUNTRIES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE EUROPE.

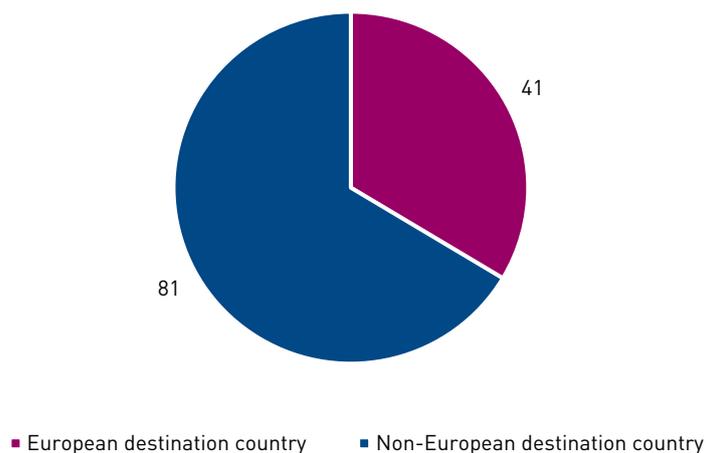
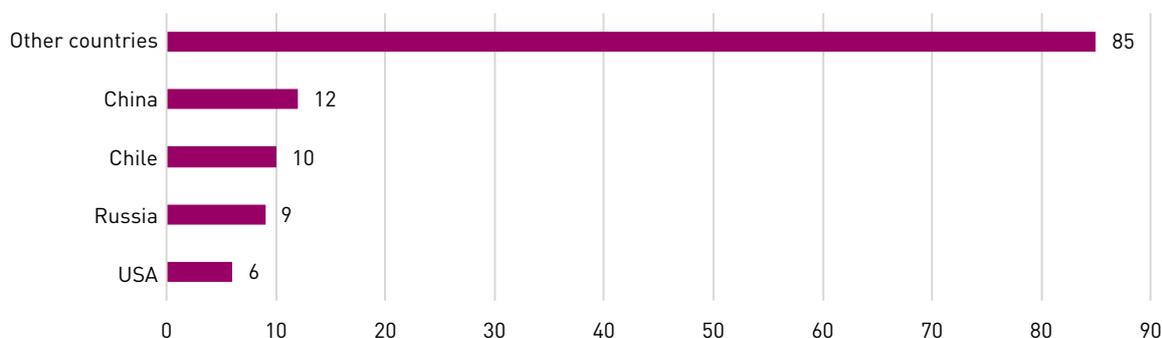


FIGURE 6. PLACEMENTS OFFERED IN RESPONDENTS' DESTINATION COUNTRIES WITH DETAILS OF THE LARGEST DESTINATION COUNTRIES.



4.1.1 Learning new skills important for finding a job and developing professional language skills had a positive impact on careers

In the survey, the former trainees were asked about the extent to which they estimated that the international traineeship had impacted their careers. For this question, the following four options were provided:

- finding a job in the respondent's field
- learning new skills that are significant in terms of finding a job
- forming professional networks
- developing professional language skills

These areas were assessed in the survey on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant a minor impact and 5 a strong impact. The findings were compared to the results of the survey conducted in 2017 on the same theme. Respondents to the 2017 survey had completed their international traineeships between 2006 and 2014.

When the results of the 2021 survey were analysed, it turned out that learning new skills that are important in terms of finding a job had had the strongest experienced impact on careers with an average score of 4.0 (3.6 in the previous report). Development of professional

language skills was regarded as the second most significant impact with an average score of 3.8 (4.1 in the previous report). The average score for the international traineeship's impacts on finding a job in the respondent's field was 3.5 (3.3 in the previous report). As in the previous survey, forming professional networks was again experienced as having the least impact with an average score of 3.1 (2.9 in the previous report).

The overall trend appears to have been positive compared to the previous report. Development of professional language skills is the only area in which the average had declined slightly compared to the previous survey. One reason for this may be that students already have high levels of language proficiency before the traineeship. For example, the increased offer of English courses at HEIs or the higher number of Finnish trainees who are studying abroad may be significant for this area, while the decrease in the average score compared to the previous survey is relatively small.

*A trainee's experience:
"I picked up modes of working and learned about the importance of networking, acquired diplomatic skills and information search skills, and gained self-confidence."*

TABLE 2. EXPERIENCED CAREER IMPACT

Impact	2017	2021
Learning new skills that are important in terms of finding a job	3,6	4,0
Development of professional language skills	4,1	3,8
Finding a job in the respondent's field	3,3	3,5
Forming professional networks	2,9	3,1
Average	3,5	3,6

4.1.2 International traineeships support professional competence

The survey contained an open-ended question about how the former trainees' professional competence had developed during the international traineeship. The former trainees brought up the following skills gained through the traineeship that have supported them in working life. Information is also provided below on how many of the respondents have worked abroad after their EDUFI traineeship:

- **Diplomatic missions:** Language skills, international cooperation practices, writing reports, working under pressure, entertaining and networking (10/20 work or have worked abroad).
- **Finnish American Heritage Center:** Cultural knowledge, interaction skills, customer service, archives management skills (0/2 work or have worked abroad).
- **Combined offices of Finpro and Business Finland:** Conducting market research, communication skills (especially social media communication), professional self-confidence, international business and working in an international environment, networking, managing your own work and time use, teleworking skills (8/24 work or have worked abroad).
- **Organisations engaged in development co-operation:** Communication skills, understanding of UN activities and culture, international experience, networking (7/10 work or have worked abroad).

- **Finnish Cultural and Academic Institutes:** Language skills, social media use, writing, knowledge of Finnish art and culture, working in an international environment, intercultural communication, networking skills, self-confidence, project competence (5/15 work or have worked abroad).
- **Businesses and local organisations:** International work experience, knowledge of different cultures, project management, public speaking skills, language skills, flexibility (6/17 work or have worked abroad).
- **Universities teaching Finnish language and culture abroad:** lesson planning skills, teaching methods, improved language skills, public speaking confidence (1/5 work or have worked abroad).
- **Suomi-koti residential and care homes:** Language skills, professional growth, courage, understanding of different cultures (0/4 work or have worked abroad).
Competence-promoting factors shared by all EDUFI trainees were:

Operating in an international environment

- Knowledge of other cultures
- Networking
- Initiative, self-management
- Interaction skills
- Project work skills
- Language skills

4.1.3 Traineeships have a strong impact on developing international competence

In the report completed in 2017, a traineeship's impact on the development of international competences was assessed using the framework of hidden competences created as a result of a study implemented by CIMO and Demos Helsinki in 2013⁴. In the framework of hidden competences, typical perceived international competences (language skills, tolerance and cultural competence) are complemented with expanded international competences, which also include resilience, productivity and curiosity. In this framework, resilience means persistence and self-knowledge; productivity means efficiency, an analytical approach, problem-solving skills and reliability; and curiosity is associated with a capability for networking, tolerance, cooperation skills, interest in new things, understanding of foreign cultures and adaptability. In addition to these themes associated with the framework of hidden competences, the respondents were asked about the impact of the international traineeship on developing their courage and general language skills.

A trainee's experience: "Being active yourself was important for making the traineeship a positive experience."

The same questions as in 2017 were put to former trainees when compiling data for the current report. If we compare the averages of all responses, we note that there is little variation in the results from year to year. Five years ago, the development of international competence had the greatest impacts on courage (4.1), followed by general language skills

4 Demos Helsinki. (2013). Piiilotettu osaaminen. <https://demohelsinki.fi/fi/julkaisut/piilotettu-osaaminen/>

(4.0). In 2021, the strongest impacts were experienced in the area of curiosity (4.0), whereas courage (4.0) and the development of general language skills (4.0) tied for the second place. The impact on productivity was again moderate (3.3), as it was in 2017 (3.3). In the area of resilience, the score was close to a strong impact (3.9), similarly to the same figure in the previous report (4.0). The average for the different areas of international competence development has remained the same in the current report as in the 2017 report (3.9).

See Table 3 for the experienced development in respondents' international competences compared to the results obtained in 2017.

TABLE 3. DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETENCE IN 2017 AND 2021.

Competence	2017	2021
Curiosity	4,0	4,1
Courage	4,1	4,0
General language skills	4,0	4,0
Resilience	4,0	3,9
Productivity	3,3	3,3
Average	3,9	3,9

4.1.4 Impact of international traineeships on studies

Approximately one out of two respondents said that the traineeship had had an impact on their studies. These impacts were related to such aspects as the time of graduation, credit points, the thesis process, development of writing skills, study motivation, further studies, career plans and internationalisation of studies and careers.

Fewer than one out of ten respondents said that the traineeship had delayed their graduation. This was not exclusively a negative outcome for the trainee, as it was essentially associated with working in an interesting job. On the other hand, enthusiasm for transitioning to working life motivated some of the respondents to graduate quickly. The following are extracts from former trainees' comments:

"It took me six months longer to complete my studies, but the work experience was valuable."

"The traineeship delayed the completion of my Master's thesis slightly, but it was worth it".

"I postponed starting my thesis because of the traineeship and ended up being in a terrible rush to finish it. Ultimately, however, the time I spent abroad helped me find the subject of my thesis and inspired me greatly in doing research. I got everything done in the end, and my newfound enthusiasm led me to a career in research, which I had not considered before".

"Of the listed options, the traineeship had the greatest impact on the progress of my studies – the first professionally motivating workplace encouraged me to speed up my graduation and move to working life on a more permanent basis."

Receiving credit points for the traineeship period was reported as one of the positive impacts of the placement. Some also mentioned that they had come up with ideas or collected data for their Master's theses during the traineeship. The benefits of improved language skills included helping students to write their Master's theses and to make use of the data needed for the thesis. The placement helped some respondents find key sources of information for their theses, or networks that gave them access to interviewing people that played an important role for the thesis.

The significance of the traineeship can be looked at from many perspectives. The following quotations illustrate trainees' experiences of how the traineeship supported them in writing their Master's theses when they were in the final stage of their studies.

"The traineeship enhanced the international perspective of my thesis and meant that it became a more permanent and particularly natural part of my following jobs (and the current job)."

"My tasks (writing a working paper) helped and directly supported the writing of my Master's thesis. I started working on my Master's thesis after returning from the traineeship, and I felt from the start that this was something I was well capable of and could easily write myself. I had also learned to compare Finnish and English practices (which was part of the working paper), and this kind of comparative approach also helped me with my thesis. "

For some, the traineeship clarified their career plans, while others were motivated to continue their studies.

"The placement confirmed my desire to move to the field of communication, and I applied for a place in a Master's degree programme in communication studies during the traineeship. I had a good basic understanding of what a person in the communication sector does."

"At least I learned what I would not want to do."

"However, I discovered during my traineeship what kinds of workplace skills employers appreciate and what I might need in the job of my dreams, so I completed a minor subject module on business skills as supplementary studies after my graduation."

One out of two respondents did not mention the traineeship's impact on their studies. However, 72% of them gave as the reason for this that they had already graduated before they went on the traineeship.

"Despite completing a traineeship, my studies progressed at the normal rate".

"However, in my mind the traineeship was and still is about much more than just something related to my studies. It was a unique life experience."

In some cases, respondents felt that the traineeship had had a greater impact on clarifying their career plans and helping them find a job.

"I learned a good work routine during the traineeship."

"It was an obvious advantage when I was looking for a job".

"The traineeship was important for me in the sense that my placement was the only job in existence that directly corresponded to my education. It gave me an important merit for the future."

"However, I feel that the traineeship had a major impact on my career, and on what I am like as an employee and what kinds of interests I have. The placement is one of the reasons why I have pursued a career in a global company."

4.2 Higher education institutions

Nineteen people representing twenty different higher education institutions responded to the survey aimed at HEIs. Nine of these were universities and eleven universities of applied sciences. Ten of the respondents were coordinators of international affairs, six worked in career guidance, and three were managers of international affairs. The survey was supplemented with five thematic interviews (three universities and two universities of applied sciences).

4.2.1 EDUFI traineeships complement and diversify the selection

The survey findings and the thematic interviews that supplement them indicate that EDUFI trainee programmes are seen as complementing and diversifying the higher education institution's offer of international traineeships. These programmes are experienced as complementary particularly because they offer traineeships in non-EU countries. Not all higher education institutions monitor the numbers of their students who apply for and/or receive EDUFI traineeships, however.

In addition to EDUFI programmes, the traineeships offered by higher education institutions include the following forms of international placements:

- Erasmus+ traineeships, for which higher education institutions offer grants
- Placements obtained through international cooperation between higher education institutions (especially in the social welfare and health care sector)
- Placements organised by students themselves (often supported by a grant awarded by the HEI)
- Placements offered by businesses and organisations, on which higher education institutions share information on their websites (for example CERN, AIESEC and FIMSIC)

The survey examined the significance of EDUFI trainee programmes for higher education institutions in the light of responses to nine statements concerning different areas. The respondents assessed the statements on a scale of 1 to 5, on which 1 meant a minor impact and 5 a strong impact. The overall average of all responses in 2021 was 3.5, which indicates significant development compared to this figure in 2017, which was 2.8. For the experienced significance of EDUFI trainee programmes for higher education institutions, see Table 4.

In 2021, the average was 3.5 or more for the following statements:

- *widen the selection of destination countries* (4.2)
- *widen the selection of international placements* (4.2)
- *supplement the selection of other international traineeships* (3.9)
- *clarify participating students' career choices* (3.7)
- *improve participating students' learning motivation* (3.6).

The following statements were considered somewhat significant (average below 3.5):

- *providing ECTS credits for students who complete an international traineeship* (3.2)
- *linking the traineeship to a larger part of the student's studies* (3.2)
- *new international working life partnerships for the higher education institution* (2.9)
- *speed up the studies of participating students* (2.5).

In 2017, the average was more than 3.5 for the following statement:

- *supplement the selection of other international traineeships* (3.6)

The following were considered somewhat significant (average less than 3.5):

- *widen the selection of international placements* (3.3)
- *widen the selection of destination countries* (3.0)
- *improve participating students' learning motivation* (3.0)
- *clarify participating students' career choices* (2.9)
- *linking the traineeship to a larger part of the student's studies* (2.7)

The following were found the least significant:

- *providing ECTS credits for students who complete an international traineeship* (2.4)
- *speed up the studies of participating students* (2.4)
- *new international working life partnerships for the higher education institution* (2.1)

The responses in the survey conducted for the current report indicate that the following aspects, in particular, were experienced as more significant by higher education institutions than in 2017:

- widen the selection of destination countries and international placements
- new international working life partnerships for the higher education institution
- providing ECTS credits for students who complete an international traineeship
- clarify participating students' career choices

In all of these areas, the average had increased by at least 0.8 compared to the previous report (Table 4).

TABLE 4. SIGNIFICANCE OF EDUFI TRAINEESHIP PROGRAMMES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN 2017 AND 2021.

	2017	2021
Widen the selection of destination countries	3,0	4,2
Widen the selection of international placements	3,3	4,2
Supplement the selection of other international traineeships	3,6	3,9
Clarify participating students' career choices	2,9	3,7
Improving participating students' learning motivation	3,0	3,6
Providing ECTS credits for students who complete an international traineeship	2,4	3,2
Linking the traineeship to a larger part of the student's studies, including study paths, links to the thesis process, etc.	2,7	3,2
New international working life partnerships for the higher education institution	2,1	2,9
Speed up the studies of participating students	2,4	2,5
Average	2,8	3,5

Examined by field of education, higher education institutions reported that traineeships had a particular significance for the following fields:

- social and administrative sciences
- business management
- health care and social services
- communication sciences
- linguistics
- humanities and cultural fields

Speeding up the participating students' studies was the area with the least significance compared to the others. In the thematic interviews, however, the interviewees often emphasised the fact that EDUFI traineeships are not seen as slowing down the studies because they have a motivating effect and because traineeships are mandatory anyway. Similarly, the significance of international working life partnerships was relatively low. This was also reflected in the answers to the open-ended question, in which most respondents said that partnerships had not been established, or they had no knowledge of them.

Higher education institutions were asked to describe the impacts of EDUFI traineeships on students they had identified. This information had not been collected systematically, but the following are the most commonly identified impacts:

- Better opportunities for finding a job, a clearer idea of career prospects
- General growth as a human being, stronger professional identity, increased self-confidence
- Improved international competence
- Progress in studies and motivation to transition to working life

All responding higher education institutions had marketed EDUFI traineeships in some form or other. The following channels were used for the marketing:

- Intranet and website
- Information sessions on international exchanges and traineeships
- Student e-mail lists
- Student organisation and tutor events
- Electronic workspaces, notice boards

- Newsletters
- Social media, for example Instagram
- Working life fairs
- Informing persons responsible for faculties' international traineeships
- Personal guidance
- Word of mouth between students

4.2.2 Verbalising learning and competence as a way to enhance the impact of EDUFI traineeships

The respondents and interviewees in thematic interviews pointed out that agreeing on the goals of the traineeship with the employer, versatile and meaningful tasks, and sufficient guidance in the workplace are important starting points for the trainee. Careful preparation for the traineeship as well as reflections during and after it are valuable for identifying the benefits achieved and making them visible. Verbalising the skills gained during the traineeship would help the trainee highlight their competence when contacting potential new employers. Peer support and sharing of experiences between trainees would also help to verbalise learning.

4.3 Employers

Responses to the survey were received from 45 employers' representatives or contact persons from around 30 different countries and from all continents. Apart from Finnish newspapers and magazines for expatriates and the Finnish American Heritage Center, responses were received from all programme types. In addition to the survey, 16 thematic interviews were conducted, in which a total of 20 people were interviewed. In the following sections, the results of the reports from 2017 and 2021 are compared. It should be noted that in the 2017 survey, the number of respondents was almost twice as high, with a total of 85 respondents from 47 countries. However, the number of thematic interviews organised in 2017 (8) was only one half of those conducted in 2021.

4.3.1 Employers rated the added value of EDUFI trainees in the workplace higher than in 2017

When assessing the added value created by international trainees in the workplace on a scale of 1 to 5, the employers' rating of the overall added value was 4.1 (Table 5). The overall added value increased from 2017, in which year this rating was 3.9. When looking at the sources of added value, their order of importance remained the same as in 2017, the only difference being that the two sources rated as the least important (*latest professional expertise* and *new ideas for the development of services*) were regarded as equally important in the most recent report. However, the added value was estimated to be higher in 2021 than in 2017 in all categories. Employers found that the most significant added value created by the trainee is manifested as an additional resource for the workforce (4.8) and the trainee's understanding of the younger generations in working life (4.7). As the next most important sources of added value were emphasised new ideas for development of work (4.2), fresh ideas for the working culture (4.1), and possibility to recruit new employees (3.9). The latest professional expertise (3.8), new ideas for developing services (3.8) and the new option, or expanding language skills, were also seen as bringing added value (3.6).

TABLE 5. ADDED VALUE CREATED BY EDUFI TRAINEES IN THE WORKPLACE.

	2017	2021
Additional resource for workforce	4,6	4,8
Understanding of younger generations in working life	4,4	4,7
New ideas for the development of work	4,0	4,2
Fresh ideas for the working culture	3,8	4,1
Possibility to recruit	3,7	3,9
Latest professional expertise	3,6	3,8
New ideas for the development of services	3,5	3,8
Expanded language skills (a new question in the report for 2015–2018)		3,6
Average	3,9	4,1

4.3.2 Overall added value created by EDUFI trainee programmes has increased

Both the general added value of participating in EDUFI traineeship programmes (average 3.1, Table 6) and the added value of EDUFI trainees for employers (average 4.1, Table 5) are higher than the averages in the previous report. As Table 6 shows, the added value of participating in the programmes was again assessed as higher than in 2017 in all categories. The respondents were asked to estimate the added value obtained from: *new networks and partners in Finland* (3.4), *possibility to develop EDUFI programmes* (3.2) and *possibility to network with other placement providers* (2.8). The respondents found that new networks and partners in Finland were the most significant source of added value, whereas the possibility of influencing programme development was considered more important than before.

TABLE 6. ADDED VALUE OF PARTICIPATING IN EDUFI PROGRAMMES FOR THE EMPLOYER.

	2017	2021
New networks and partners in Finland	3,0	3,4
Possibility to develop EDUFI programmes	3,0	3,2
Possibility to network with other placement providers	2,7	2,8
Average	2,9	3,1

4.3.3 Employers remain satisfied with the trainees' competence and motivation

In particular, employers appreciated the trainees' competence, motivation and language skills. A large number of respondents either did not perceive differences between EDUFI trainees and those that came through other programmes or did not have anything to compare them to. Especially in Finnish diplomatic missions, however, the longer than usual period of EDUFI traineeships, the trainee's previous experience and the fact that the trainee is often more advanced in their studies than those coming through other programmes were seen as significant benefits. Employers appreciated the trainees' courage, initiative and independent approach to work. Knowledge of the Finnish language and culture as well as Finnish networks were seen as significant benefits in some programmes.

Employers in local businesses and organisations appreciated the trainees' new ideas and views, which had in many cases led to the globalisation of views. The trainee's

maturity, diligence, language proficiency, multiculturalism competence and openness were appreciated. A few of the employers who participated in the thematic interview for businesses and local organisations said that the trainee had even provided training for other staff members. One employer reported that the Master's thesis produced by the trainee on the employer's organisation had produced valuable information for the employer.

A trainee's experience:

“The best part of my experience was the trust I enjoyed on the part of the diplomats. I was assigned some of the same tasks they were performing, and I was trusted to attend many meetings on my own. It gave me the feeling that I can and know how to do things, and it strengthened my ambition to embark on a diplomatic career”.

4.3.4 Placements offer opportunities for development

Respondents were also asked how the workplace had supported the trainee's professional or international competence. Employers emphasised the importance of mentoring trainees. In at least one case, the trainee had met with the employer in Finland before the traineeship period began. The trainees received personal mentoring provided by a supervisor in some cases, and at other times the trainee had been paired with a more experienced employee or another trainee. The trainees had been included in internal and external teams, and they had participated in staff meetings. Employers had striven to share their networks with trainees. Planning the placement and induction was considered important, and in the thematic interviews, a few employers noted that a sharper focus on this aspect would be a good idea in the future.

Trainees had been given versatile tasks and responsibility: “Rather than ending up just making coffee, the trainees are always given meaningful tasks”. The trainees had performed similar tasks as the other employees, and they had also been given opportunities for representing the employer, rather than solely working in the background. “As the trainees have been assigned proper tasks, they have been faced with new situations, and the learning curve has been quite steep”, was the description provided by one of the employers. Many of the employers stressed that the trainees had also been able to influence their tasks, and as their competence developed, they had been given more challenging assignments. Several employers also mentioned giving the trainee an opportunity to plan and carry out a project of their own.

A trainee's experience:

“What motivated me in the work was great freedom and responsibility to provide instruction as I wanted. My instructor's trust and encouragement increased my motivation.”

Employers emphasised the importance of giving feedback. They said that feedback had been provided in discussions with the trainee, for example. Some of the employers gave daily feedback, while others had a separate feedback meeting with the trainee around the mid-point and at the end of the traineeship. Some of the responses also indicated that employers had assisted trainees in finding a job after the traineeship and sometimes even hired them. Employers had supported trainees' language studies and participation in other courses.

5. DEVELOPMENT IDEAS BY TARGET GROUP

This chapter discusses development ideas that emerged in the previous report by target group and compares them to the responses received in the data collection for this report.

5.1 Development proposals received from trainees

The following development proposals received from trainees for the 2017 report still remain relevant:

- A clear job description and tasks: more detailed planning of the tasks by the employer and the trainee, or producing a plan for the trainee's tasks and determining why the trainee is taken on in the first place (especially with regard to the Businesses and local organisations programme)
- Familiarisation with the tasks in advance: anticipating the tasks, for example by using some kind of annual calendar
- More demanding and responsible tasks

The following issues emerged as new development proposals:

- Trainees called for larger grants and longer traineeship periods; the support provided for the traineeship seemed modest compared to its actual costs.
- Clearer information about the costs incurred from the traineeship (including flights and possible service fees for visas)
- Improving the flow of information and schedules: trainees would like to be informed sooner of whether or not their application was successful, which would allow them to initiate the visa process in time. They would also like more assistance from the local contact person in matters related to visas or working times, for instance (especially in the Local businesses and organisations programme)
- Sharing the contact details of former trainees who have gone to the same placement, city or country with new trainees for tips
- Better preparation of the traineeship supervisor and a more reflective approach to guidance

5.2 Development proposals received from higher education institution representatives

The following development proposals received from higher education institutions for the 2017 report still remain relevant:

- More extensive offer of placements in countries outside Europe
- Stepping up cooperation between higher education institutions and the EDUFI traineeship team to provide trainees with more support and guidance
- Longer and more flexible application periods

The following issues emerged as new development proposals:

- Advance information on application periods: some higher education institutions only provide information about the calls after they have started
- More visible marketing in good time before the call, and information targeted at students in different fields: those who have recently started their studies are an important target group that would benefit from knowing about the internationalisation opportunities and being able to anticipate future calls for applications.
- Communication material to support marketing: for example, giving more visibility to former trainees' experiences
- More detailed information about different placements and the tasks they assign to trainees on the EDUFI website, including interviews with employer organisations and a clear indication in connection with each placement of whether it is suitable for university or university of applied sciences students, or both.
- More English-speaking placements
- More opportunities and placements, for example in diplomatic missions, for UAS students.
- Larger and more diverse offer of placements in the fields of technology, health care and social services, as well as humanities and other generalist fields
- Increased flexibility in the citizenship and language proficiency criteria, in other words accepting applications from all students in Finnish higher education institutions.
- Flexibility in the length of traineeships periods, as sometimes traineeships are too long to be compatible with certain degrees.

5.3 Development proposals received from employer representatives

Compared to the 2017 report, employer representatives identified addressing the higher living costs of expensive areas and cities in the grant amounts as a development proposal with continued relevance.

The following issues emerged as new development proposals:

- Longer traineeships (preferably six rather than three months)
- Employers called for more organised administration of trainee programmes on the part of EDUFI traineeships (especially in the Businesses and local organisations programme)
- Employers would like to see the application process brought forward, as this would provide additional time for sorting out visas and other similar issues. Some employers expressed hopes for a centralised model of security checks and paperwork.
- Making the experiences of former trainees available on virtual channels could increase the number of applicants
- At least one regional meeting during the traineeship for trainees in different placements
- Maintaining a register of former EDUFI trainees: for such purposes as future recruitments

6. REFLECTIONS ON IMPACT

Similarly, to the corresponding report published in 2017, the current report found that EDUFI traineeships were considered to provide added value for the trainees themselves, higher education institutions and employers alike. The following sections contain more detailed observations on the impact of EDUFI traineeship activities, wider societal perspectives and examples of impact specific to individual trainee programmes.

6.1 Trainees found courage, language skills and curiosity

Based on trainees' responses, the most important areas in which EDUFI traineeships helped them develop were courage, language skills and curiosity, which is similar to the findings of the previous report. EDUFI traineeships were regarded as having positive impacts on both orientation to the student's career and in relation to the studies, and the traineeship could even be a source of inspiration for a thesis subject. The trainees are ambassadors for Finland and, in addition to their personal competence, they export their knowledge of Finland to the destination countries, sometimes providing the only contact point with Finland in a foreign cultural environment. Exporting trainees' knowledge of Finland is important, especially outside Europe, where the majority of EDUFI placements are found.

In addition to language skills, cultural competence and personal professional development, EDUFI traineeships can be considered an investment with societal returns which are multiplied, for example in form of the networks' trainees establish in an early stage of their careers.

A trainee's experience: Of course, the most important thing was that I had the financial prerequisites for going on an EDUFI traineeship. Offering these traineeship activities is great, as they are an important contact point with working life for higher education students."

6.2 EDUFI traineeships supplement other provision of placements by higher education institutions

From higher education institutions' perspective, EDUFI traineeships still appear to supplement other provision of placements. As in the previous report, particularly the offer of placements outside the EU and a wide range of countries were considered increasingly important. Higher education institutions also appreciated the significance of new international working life partnerships. Higher education institutions experienced students' development during traineeship periods as positive. Some higher education institutions that participated in the survey would like to see more flexibility in the duration of traineeships, making them easier to fit in with the specified timeframes of the institutions' study units.

6.3 Employers appreciate the additional resources and latest expertise provided by trainees

The responses of employers offering placements showed that trainees' importance as an additional resource had increased further compared to the previous survey. As in the previous report, an EDUFI trainee is additionally seen as an injection of the latest know-how and understanding of new generations. Some employers called for longer traineeships that would preferably last six months rather than three. This would contribute to promoting employment, especially among the recently graduated. The 2021 report also found that employers appreciate the trainees' competence, motivation and language skills. As one of the underlying factors can be seen Finland's high-quality education system and welfare society that also functions well in other respects, enabling young people to pursue high-quality education and training and giving them a good competence base already in undergraduate programmes.

6.4 Traineeship cooperation creates added value for society

Based on the responses received in the survey, we can conclude that high-quality EDUFI traineeships are a factor that contributes to the achievement of society's goals in terms of developing competence, strengthening competitiveness and achieving internationalisation skills. The information gathered for the survey indicates that EDUFI trainees' competence development through on-the-job learning complements the knowledge and skills learned at the educational institution. In the context of strengthening competitiveness, we can observe that trainees are integrated into the daily activities of their employers, learning skills and establishing contacts they will need in the future, which makes it possible to achieve long-term multiplier effects. The added value of building up internationalisation skills is created by working in a foreign cultural environment and later tapping the know-how thus obtained. Consequently, investing in EDUFI trainee activities will also be beneficial in the future.

From the perspective of promoting the internationalisation of higher education,⁵ stepping up international traineeship cooperation with Finnish organisations, in particular, can be regarded as creating strategic synergies also in the future. Finnish organisations strive for achieving Finland's shared goals, and traineeship cooperation with these organisations contributes to improving the fitness for purpose and impact of EDUFI trainee activities. On the other hand, the goals of the 2030 Agenda visible in the tasks of organisations engaged in development co-operation and cooperation relevant to the Africa Strategy are clear and natural priorities from the perspective of traineeship cooperation. The traineeship cooperation that began as support for Team Finland's Knowledge experts⁶ is likely to be an issue best left to the next report.

5 Ministry of Education and Culture. (2016). Policies to promote internationalisation in Finnish higher education and research 2017–2025. <https://okm.fi/en/international-strategy-for-higher-education-and-research>

6 Ministry of Education and Culture. (2017). Policies to promote internationalisation in Finnish higher education and research 2017–2025: Implementation programme. <https://okm.fi/en/international-strategy-for-higher-education-and-research>

Examples of added value created in individual traineeship programmes:

- Trainees in Business Finland have benefited from synergies created by the fact that its offices are often co-located with a diplomatic mission's premises. This puts the trainees in contact with central government administration and gives them an opportunity to consider public administration as a possible career path.
- In Finnish diplomatic missions abroad and in Parliament's office in Brussels, trainees come into contact with public administration and, in particular, the foreign service. Many applicants justify their applications by noting that they are interested in a career in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and intend to apply for a place in the Training Course for Newly Recruited Diplomats (KAVAKU), which may lead to a diplomatic career.
- Those in placements with universities that teach Finnish language and culture abroad carry out grassroots education export: they bring with them the latest trends in the instruction of Finnish to benefit the students and teachers at foreign universities.
- In the Finnish Academic and Cultural Institutes, trainees can familiarise themselves diversely with communication and cultural sector tasks and serve as a link in cultural exchanges between Finland and the destination country. The trainees stress that, in particular, they have developed their communication, event production and project management skills, language proficiency and IT skills. When working in partnership projects, trainees raise awareness of Finland and Finnish cultural and scientific actors and participate in creating effective networks.
- In Suomi-koti residential and care homes, health care and social services students gain valuable international experience, which is increasingly also needed in jobs of this field in Finland.
- Newspapers and magazines for expatriate Finns and the Finnish American Heritage Center offer placements of the type that few other programmes can provide. Traineeships in such countries as the US are difficult to come by without going through a ready-made programme and applying for a working visa.
- In Businesses and local organisations traineeships, Finnish special expertise is exported to the destination countries, which comprise several different states and language areas. As they return to Finland, trainees can contribute their local special expertise and advanced skills in the local language or English to Finland and the Finnish working life. The placements are offered in fields of global and national importance, including education, wellbeing, health, equality, the environment and sustainability.
- In organisations engaged in development cooperation, such as the various UN organisations, the trainee gains experience that will help them later in finding employment with these organisations. It is in Finland's interest to place our citizens in international organisations with which our country is affiliated. Development co-operation placements provide trainees with valuable experience and networks, which are useful in the tasks of the Finnish Foreign Service, among other things.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This report concurs with the observations of its earlier counterpart (Finland's hard-working and confident experts abroad, 2017⁷) in that EDUFI traineeships are a high-quality complement to the offer of international traineeships for higher education students and the recently graduated. The non-EU dimension of EDUFI traineeships remains relevant, and co-operation with Finnish organisations and organisations engaged in development co-operation, in particular, will continue to be consistent with Finland's goals.

The benefits gained from traineeship cooperation have a high impact from the viewpoint of both individuals and organisations, and they can also be considered to benefit Finland in a wider sense. In their responses, both trainees and higher education institutions found international traineeships a meaningful part of the studies. From the trainees' and employers' viewpoint, traineeships may be seen as significant for pursuing an international career path. The on-the-job learning experience offered by employers and the latest know-how gained by them are considered a useful exchange. When implemented to a high standard, EDUFI traineeships bring added value to our society and strengthen not only competence but also international interaction.

Proposals for developing the activities also came up. Trainees call for developing the job descriptions, better flows of information and improvements associated with traineeship grants and the duration of traineeship periods. Higher education institutions would like to see more cooperation, improved marketing communications and more extensive offer of destination countries outside Europe. The employers' wishes were associated with offering sufficiently long traineeships and developing cooperation in the administration of EDUFI traineeship activities.

To conclude, we should note that conducting monitoring exercises of this type at regular intervals should be continued to support the quality assurance of international traineeship activities and to obtain a situational picture of them. Collecting a statistical time series related to monitoring the development of placements and trainee numbers, examining the qualitative development of the activities from the perspective of different target groups, and gathering development ideas that can help make the activities even better for all stakeholders are valuable activities.

The next report is likely to cover the years tainted by the COVID-19 pandemic and provide an overview of what EDUFI traineeship activities look like in the next review period. The experiences of trainees working with the Finnish Team Finland Knowledge experts will be examined as a new activity.

7 Tuomi, L. (2017). Finland's hard-working and confident experts abroad! Reports and surveys 2017:4b Finnish National Agency for Education. <https://www.oph.fi/en/statistics-and-publications/publications/finlands-hard-working-and-confident-experts-abroad>

APPENDICES AND BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Appendices:

- E-mail invitations
- Webropol surveys
- Thematic interview questions

Background materials:

- Mobility statistics of CIMO and the Finnish National Agency for Education

Appendix 1. E-mail invitation and survey for trainees

Dear recipient, You took part in an international traineeship organised by EDUFI (formerly CIMO) between 2015 and 2018. We are carrying out an impact assessment of international traineeship programmes and would ask you to answer the following questions. The purpose of the survey is to find out how the international traineeship has affected you, your family and friends, your career and your competence.

The survey will take about 30 minutes to complete. All answers are confidential, and individual responses will not be reported. The details of individual respondents will not be revealed in the assessment report.

Thematic interviews will also be conducted as part of this impact assessment. If you are interested in participating in an interview, please provide your contact details at the end of the survey. Also give us your contact details if you would like to participate in webinars for students or meetings of an international traineeship expert network as an alumna/alumnus. You can save the survey before completing it and continue responding later. Please respond by Friday 5 November 2021 at the latest. The questionnaire functions best when accessed from a computer.

[The questionnaire is carried out as a Webropol-questionnaire. See the questionnaire on the next page.]

More information about EDUFI trainee programmes: edufi-harjoittelu@oph.fi

More information about the impact assessment: Niina Paasovaara, niina.paasovaara@oph.fi

Thank you for your participation!

Kind regards,

Niina Paasovaara

SURVEY FOR PARTICIPANTS IN INTERNATIONAL EDUFI TRAINEESHIPS (FORMERLY CIMO TRAINEESHIPS)

Background questions

1. Age
2. Gender
3. The most recent degree you have completed
4. The field of your most recently completed degree

Background questions about the traineeship

5. Destination country of your traineeship
6. In which year did you start your international traineeship?
7. Placement (traineeship programme name)
8. Description of your workplace during the international traineeship

Please give the employer's name, country and city, and possibly the department, unit or other specification. Briefly list your most important tasks. In later questions, you will be asked for more detailed information about your tasks and working language.

9. What type of competence was particularly appreciated in the workplace?

Impacts of the traineeship on your career

10. Your three most important jobs after the traineeship

You can leave out short-term jobs that are not relevant to your education. Give a brief description of the employer, the duration of the employment and a job description for each workplace.

11. What impacts did the international traineeship have on your career?

Please think back to the CIMO or EDUFI traineeship you completed and consider its potential impacts on your studies, career, competence etc.

1 2 3 4 5

1 = minor impact, 5 = significant impact)

- Finding a job in my field
- Learning new skills that were significant for finding a job
- Professional networks formed through the traineeship
- Development of professional language skills

12. What kind of professional competence do you think you acquired during the international traineeship?

Also give an example of a situation in which you noticed that your competence had improved.

13. What was your working language?

Also give an example of a situation in which you noticed that your language skills had improved.

14. What kind of impacts do you identify that the traineeship had on the following characteristics and skills

1 2 3 4 5

1 = minor impact, 5 = significant impact)

- Productivity
- Analytical ability
- Problem-solving skills
- Reliability
- Tolerance
- Interest in new things
- Understanding of other cultures
- Co-operation skills
- Adaptation
- Networking skills
- Self-knowledge
- Resilience
- Courage
- General language skills
- Language skills needed in professional contexts

Other impacts

15. What kind of impact did the destination country of the traineeship and its culture have on you?

Please also give practical examples, if possible.

16. How did you attempt to adapt to the country's working and other culture?

Which methods did you use?

17. What impacts did the international traineeship have on the progress of your studies, learning outcomes and thesis?

18. Did the traineeship have an impact on the internationalisation of your family and friends?

You can choose several options.

To conclude/feedback on the traineeship

19. Which factors affected your traineeship experience?

What made the traineeship successful? Which aspects could be improved?

20. Would you be interested in participating in our *TraiNet meeting or our future webinars as an alumna/alumnus?

* TraiNet = A network of experts on international traineeships in Finland, whose members mainly are internationalisation experts from higher education institutions. (If you are interested, select one or two options.)

Sharing your traineeship experiences (annual TraiNet meeting for experts)

Giving tips for those interested in a traineeship abroad (webinars for students)

21. Would you be interested in writing about your EDUFI traineeship from the following perspectives

If you are interested, select one or two options.

What were the benefits of your traineeship period and experiences when looking for a job or in the workplace?

How did your traineeship benefit your professional or general language skills?

22. Would you be interested in participating in an interview linked to the assessment of CIMO and EDUFI trainee programmes?

The interviews will mainly be conducted remotely.

Yes

No

23. Contact form

If you are interested in participating in one of the above options, please add your contact details here.

24. Privacy policy*

The information you provide will be used to carry out an impact assessment of EDUFI traineeships. Personal data are collected for the sole purpose of contacting you and will not be disclosed to outsiders. For the part of this survey, we will comply with the principles of data protection and processing of personal data set out on the Finnish National Agency for Education's web service.

I understand what my data will be used for.

Appendix 2. E-mail invitation and survey for higher education institutions

Dear recipient,

The Finnish National Agency for Education's EDUFI trainee programme has offered higher education students and recent graduates traineeships abroad for a long time. This programme previously known as CIMO traineeships has been assessed and developed along the way to ensure that it meets the needs of the target group in the best possible way.

We would like you to respond to the enclosed survey, which will help us examine the significance and impact of EDUFI traineeships and their relationship with other provision of placements (including ERASMUS+ traineeships and the higher education institutions' own offer).

As the questions cover several thematic areas, please ask other experts in your higher education institution about their views if the theme or statement in question is not relevant to your tasks.

You can save the survey before completing it and continue responding later. Please respond to the survey by 4 November 2021. The questionnaire functions best when accessed from a computer.

[The questionnaire is carried out as a Webropol-questionnaire. See the questionnaire on the next page.]

The results of the assessment, which will be ready in December 2021, will be used to develop the programmes.

More information about EDUFI trainee programmes: edufi-harjoittelu@oph.fi

More information about the impact assessment: Niina Paasovaara, niina.paasovaara@oph.fi

Thank you in advance!

Finnish National Agency for Education

Niina Paasovaara

EDUFI SURVEY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS 2021

1. My higher education institution is

Select one or two options.

UAS

University

2. Name of the higher education institution

If you represent more than one higher education institution, give the names of each institution.

3. Position

Choose the option that best describes your position.

Coordinator, international affairs

Manager, international affairs

Other, please specify. Provide additional information in question 4.

4. Provide additional information to question 3 about your position here if you selected "Other, please specify".

5. Unit

Choose the option that best describes your unit.

Higher education institution's international services

Career and recruitment services or similar

International services of a faculty or field of study

Other, please specify. Provide additional information in question 6.

6. Other unit, please specify. Provide additional information to question 5 about your unit here if you selected the option "other".

7. What types of international traineeships does your higher education institution offer?

8. What is the significance of EDUFI (previously CIMO) trainee programmes as part of your higher education institution's other provision of international placements?

When you think about such aspects as the available placements, the relevance of the traineeship content (meeting the learning objectives) for the students in your higher education institution, the duration of the traineeship, the destination countries available, the size of the grant, etc., how would you assess the importance of EDUFI placements, in particular?

9. Assess the significance of EDUFI trainee programmes for your higher education institution

1 2 3 4 5

1=little significance, 5=high significance

Supplement the selection of other international traineeships offered by us

Widen the selection of destination countries

Widen the selection of international placements

New international working life partnerships for our higher education institution

Providing ECTS credits for students who complete an international traineeship

Speed up the studies of participating students

Improving participating students' learning motivation

Linking the traineeship to a larger part of the student's studies, e.g. study paths, links to the thesis process, etc.

Clarifying participating students' career choices

10. Which fields of education have benefited from EDUFI traineeship programmes in particular?

11. What kind of possible new international contacts with working life have EDUFI trainee programmes opened to your higher education institution?

12. What potential impacts of having completed a traineeship can be identified in your students?

Speeding up or slowing down their studies, finding employment, clearer idea of career prospects, etc.

13. How have you marketed EDUFI trainee programmes to students?

14. How should EDUFI trainee programmes be developed to enhance their impact?

In particular, consider the impact of the programme on trainees and their career development.

15. How would you develop EDUFI traineeships? For example, think about the destination countries and fields of study as well as your institution's policies and strategies.

16. Would you be interested in participating in an interview linked to the assessment of EDUFI trainee programmes?

If yes, provide your name and e-mail address here. The interviews will mainly be conducted remotely.

17. Privacy policy*

The information you provide will be used to carry out an impact assessment of EDUFI traineeships. Personal data are collected for the sole purpose of contacting you and will not be disclosed to outsiders. For the part of this survey, we will comply with the principles of data protection and processing of personal data set out on the Finnish National Agency for Education's web service.

I understand what my data will be used for.

Appendix 3. E-mail invitation and survey for workplaces

Dear Sir/Madam,

Greetings from Finland! The Finnish National Agency for Education is providing international EDUFI trainee opportunities for Finnish higher education students and recent graduates. Your organisation has provided training placements for the trainees coming through EDUFI (former CIMO).

In order to evaluate the trainee programmes we would appreciate your opinion by **the 4th of November 2021**. Please ignore this message if you already submitted your answers.

The questionnaire works best on a computer.

[The questionnaire is carried out as a Webropol-questionnaire. See the questionnaire on the next page.]

Further information regarding the programmes: edufi-harjoittelu@oph.fi

and on the evaluation: Niina Paasovaara, niina.paasovaara@oph.fi

Thank you!

The Finnish National Agency for Education

Niina Paasovaara

QUESTIONNAIRE TO HOST ORGANISATIONS OF EDUFI (FORMER CIMO) INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES

1. Background questions

Position

Organisation

Country

2. What kind of added value has the cooperation with CIMO and EDUFI given to your organisation?

1 = low added value, 5 = high added value

New networks or partners in Finland (e.g. higher education institutes or organisations)

Possibility to participate in developing CIMO and EDUFI training programmes

Possibility to network with other providers of training placements

3. What kind of added value have CIMO and EDUFI trainees brought to your organisation?

1 2 3 4 5

1 = low added value, 5 = high added value

Extra resource for the workforce

The latest professional knowledge

New ideas for the development of the work

New ideas for the development of your services

Fresh ideas for your working culture or for the working culture at your office

New understanding on the younger generations in working life

Possibility to recruit qualified employees

Wider language abilities

4. If you compare trainees coming through CIMO and EDUFI with other trainees you have had at your organisation: are there any differences between the trainees (e.g. attitude, competencies, motivation and language skills)?

5. How has your organisation supported the development of the trainees' professional or international skills during the traineeship?

6. How should EDUFI training programmes be developed in the future?

7. Would you like to participate in EDUFI evaluation interview?

Interviews help us to develop EDUFI trainee programmes. Write your contact information here in order to contact you to arrange the interview.

8. Privacy policy*

The information you provide will be used to conduct an EDUFI training impact study. Personal information is collected for contact purposes only and will not be disclosed to third parties. With regard to the survey, we follow the principles mentioned in Finnish National Agency for Education's online service regarding data protection and the processing of personal data.

I understand how my data is used.

Appendix 4. Thematic interview with trainees

THEMATIC INTERVIEW WITH FORMER TRAINEES

Background variables:

Last name

First name

Destination country of the traineeship, task:

1. What kind of impact has the international traineeship had on your career, including professional competence (productivity)?
2. What kind of impact did the international traineeship have on the progress of your studies and your learning results?
3. What kind of impact did the destination country of the international traineeship and its culture have on you?
4. Do you recognise any impacts your traineeship may have had on the internationality of your immediate circle (family members, friends, close relatives, etc.)? What kind of effects can you recognise?
5. Which issues should be paid attention to in order to improve the international EDUFI programmes?

Appendix 5. Thematic interview with higher education institutions

THEMATIC INTERVIEW WITH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS 2021

Impact of international CIMO/EDUFI trainees programmes

Name:

Task:

Higher education institution:

Themes of discussion

1. What is the significance of EDUFI (previously CIMO) trainee programmes (including the selection of grants/programmes, destination countries, paid/unpaid traineeships, length of the traineeship period) as part of your higher education institution's other provision of international placements?
2. What kind of international trainee programmes does your higher education institution offer?
3. What kind of potential new international contacts with working life has the programme opened for your higher education institution?
4. What potential impacts of having completed a traineeship can be identified in your students? (speeding up/slowing down of the studies, finding employment, clearer idea of career prospects etc.)
5. How have you marketed CIMO/EDUFI international trainee programmes to students?
6. How could the EDUFI trainee programmes be improved in future to enhance their impact?

Appendix 6. Thematic interview for workplaces

EDUFI (FORMER CIMO) EVALUATION INTERVIEWS FOR THE HOST ORGANIZATIONS 2021

Name:

Position:

Organization:

Country:

Themes

1. Have you supervised CIMO and EDUFI trainees? Approximately how many CIMO and EDUFI trainees have you supervised and when (years)?
2. The trainees and the added value?
3. Overall participation - What kind of added value has this participation given to your organisation?
4. If you compare the trainees coming from the CIMO and EDUFI programmes with participants of other programmes: are there any differences between the trainees (e.g. attitude, competencies, motivation, and language skills)?
5. How EDUFI's training placement programmes should be developed in the future?

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