



Departamento de Ciência Política e Políticas Públicas

Immigrant Social Workers in the Finnish Welfare State: Mutual Challenges

Edgar da Silva Carreira

Dissertação submetida como requerimento parcial para a obtenção do grau de Mestre em
Serviço Social

Orientador:

Professor Coordenador Principal Ricardo Manuel das Neves Vieira

Escola Superior de Educação e Ciências Sociais do Instituto Politécnico de Leiria

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Dissertação apresentada para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Serviço Social, realizada sob a orientação científica do Professor Coordenador Principal Ricardo Manuel das Neves Vieira e a coorientação da Professora Auxiliar Convidada Maria Júlia Cardoso

To Ana Cristina dos Santos Gomes and Teresa Teles, my two main supporters,

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RESUMO

Esta dissertação de mestrado é dedicada à compreensão dos desafios que tanto os Assistentes Sociais imigrantes como o Estado de Bem-estar finlandês encontram quando se cruzam. Para compreender os desafios para o Estado de Bem-Estar finlandês foram entrevistados Assistentes Sociais Finlandeses, pois estes são vistos como a face mais visível do Estado de Bem-Estar. Mas para atingir isto, uma vasta fundamentação teórica é proporcionada acerca do Estado finlandês, o Estado de Bem-Estar finlandês e as migrações na Finlândia antes da apresentação dos resultados empíricos.

Estes resultados foram obtidos na sequência da realização de entrevistas etnobiográficas aprofundadas procurando conhecer os trajetos de vida de quatro indivíduos (dois imigrantes e dois nacionais da Finlândia) que tenham pelo menos completado a licenciatura em Serviço Social na Finlândia ou no estrangeiro. O objetivo passa por tentar compreender como o Estado de Bem-Estar finlandês pode integrar melhor os Assistentes Sociais imigrantes que são necessários no Estado de Bem-Estar finlandês de hoje em dia, e que enfrenta um agravamento do índice de dependência principalmente devido ao envelhecimento da população e à baixa taxa de fertilidade.

O foco deste trabalho é predominantemente transdisciplinar. Os Assistentes Sociais imigrantes vieram para a Finlândia devido a motivos relacionados com os estudos, e acabaram por ficar, apesar de para já não terem hipóteses de trabalhar permanentemente como Assistentes Sociais, principalmente devido a barreiras linguísticas. Quanto aos Assistentes Sociais finlandeses, os choques culturais com os utentes parecem pedir a promoção de mais e melhor diálogo intercultural.

Palavras-chave: Assistentes Sociais imigrantes; Estado Finlandês; Estado de Bem-estar finlandês; migração altamente qualificada na Finlândia; imigração para a Finlândia; histórias de vida

ABSTRACT

This master thesis is dedicated to the understanding of the challenges that both the immigrant Social Workers and the Finnish welfare state face when they meet each other. To assess the challenges of the Finnish welfare state, native Social Workers were interviewed, because they are seen as the most visible face of a welfare state. But in order to accomplish this, a vast theoretical background is provided about the Finnish state, the Finnish welfare state, and the migrations in Finland before the presentation of the empirical results.

The results were obtained after the realization of deep ethno biographical interviews to get to know the life trajectories of four individuals (two immigrants and two Finnish nationals) that have at least completed the bachelor's degree in Social Work in Finland or abroad. Its objective is to try to understand how the Finnish welfare state can better integrate the immigrant Social Workers that are needed into the Finnish Welfare State of nowadays that is struggling with the worsening of the dependency ratio mainly due to the ageing population and the low fertility rate.

The focus of this work is predominantly transdisciplinary. The immigrant Social Workers went to Finland due to motives related to studies, and they have stayed, although without chances to by now work permanently as Social Workers, mainly because of the language barriers. Regarding the Finnish Social Workers, the cultural shocks with the service users call for the promotion of more and better intercultural dialogue.

Key-words: Immigrant Social Workers; Finnish State; Finnish welfare state; highly-skilled migration in Finland; immigration to Finland; life stories

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I.INTRODUCTION

Like art – indeed we must say like thought itself – science was born with every sign of superfluity and fantasy. It was born of the exuberance of an internal activity that had outstripped the material needs of life; it was born of the curiosity of dreamers and idlers. (Theilhard de Chardin, 1965: 278-279)

The 21st century is bringing new challenges to the Nordic welfare states, including Finland. Among those challenges there is an increasing immigration as well as the ageing of the population, as stated now: “It has been widely recognized that the Nordic welfare state is being challenged by major transformations, including globalization, European integration, immigration, the ageing society and increased individualization” (Kettunen *et al*, 2014: 14), something that was also acknowledged previously by Kvist and Greve (2011). In Finland, "the number of people in the workforce needed to support those outside the workforce - the dependency ratio - will weaken from the current level of 52.9 children and pensioners per one hundred persons of working age to 60 dependents in 2017 and 70 dependents by 2028", according to Habti and Koikkalainen (2013: 10), based on Statistics Finland (2013) information.

From a regional point of view, already in 2007 (Edvardsson *et al*: 3-4) it has been assumed that “in most of the small municipalities in northern parts of the Nordic countries there is an increasing demand for labor in the social care sector”. In the specific post-industrial service economy of Finland (see Castells and Himanen, 2002), there is a geographically broader demand that “is directed towards particular categories with specialized competence and is usually constituted on a demand which is impossible to meet on the national labor market, i.e. immigrated labor is a complementary labor force. (...) In sectors like finance and qualified jobs in health and social work, immigrant labor is more likely to be used as a complementary labor force to natives” (Rauhut *et al*, 2007: 7-15).

More recently, Riala (2009: 25-26) emphasized that in the Finnish context “labor is particularly in demand in the health sector and in social services”. This is why my research project will be focused on immigrant Social Workers and the challenges that both them and the Finnish welfare state face when they meet each other. But how did Finland reached this

point, in which the country needs complementary labor force, as Rauhut and colleagues (2007) put it? That is what I will try to explain on the next lines, namely by looking backwards and specifically to questions regarding demography, from a macro (European), meso (Nordic) and micro (Finnish) perspective.

Already in the 1990's it has been stated that "never has the contrast between the ageing European population and the youthful population of the rest of the world been so great" (Thumerelle, 1993: 76), with a special focus "in the north, where there may be some labor shortages" (Salt, 1993: 195). If we want to talk about numbers regarding this issue, it should be acknowledged that "since 1984, net migration in Europe has been positive, which means there have been more people moving to the EU than leaving it. This positive net migration is the main cause of population growth in the European Union" (Kunz & Leinonen, 2004: 139). And the vitality of the population is a crucial issue to the welfare state in itself, because "its institutions and mechanisms are based on the ceaseless continuity of a labor market career and full employment. It is a paradox that the risk-sharing task of the welfare state is needed more than ever just when its foundation and legitimacy is in crisis because of the full-employment society" (Forsander, 2003: 60; see also Esping-Andersen, 1996; Rauhut, 2010).

In the particular case of Finland, already in 2002 it has been recognized that "the small age groups finishing their education and moving on to working life cannot satisfy the demand for over a million employees" (Koivukangas, 2002: 10). This is reflected on the population ageing (Forsander, 2004), what "means that a larger proportion of the population will require income transfers while the proportion of total population in paid employment will diminish" (Hvinden, 2006: 15). But how did it reached the point of nowadays? Some explanations are, once again, given by the demographics: in the case of Finland "one has to go back as to the late 1960s to find a year when the total fertility rate was above 2,1" (Johansson, 2008: 1). Basically, "the total fertility rate had declined from 2,7 children per woman in 1960 to 1,8 in 1970" (Alho, 2002: 5). In comparison, in Sweden 1992 was the last year in which the fertility rate was above 2,1 (op. cit., 2008). In fact, "the fertility decline in northern Europe since the mid-1960s may be associated with the postponement of childbearing" (Sporton, 1993: 52).

But the explanations are broader, because "this is a result of several decades of low fertility rates, which is correlated with levels of economic development, urbanization, and female education and employment, and population ageing as a result of healthier lifestyles and medical innovations" (Goldin & Reinert, 2012: 182-3). It is recognized that "all over the

world, the combination of declining population growth rates and rising life expectancy presents a major fiscal challenge to social security systems” (Razin *et al*, 2010: 1). In the specific case of Finland it is assumed that “there is a remarkable change in population structure when the baby-boom generation born after the World War II retires during the current decade. The share of elderly is growing in the dependency ratio” (Heikkilä, 2014: 75), and it is expected that it will be reflected on the fact that “in 2030 it will rise to 140, while the proportion of total expenditure on social services of the GDP will rise from 25% to about 30%” (Hautamäki, 2001: 31), what means that “the worsening of the demographic support ratio threatens the well-being of Europeans in a very near future” (Ylänkö, 2002: 15), because Finland, along with "the entire western world contains the same weakness: baby boom generations born after World War II have little offspring compared with preceding generations” (Forsander & Trux, 2002a: 9).

To sum up, it could be said that “birth rates, mortality rates and migration are factors that regulate population volume. In the present societies, however, age structure, not population size, is the central factor influencing population development” (Forsander, 2002: 83), what means that “a change in age structure is not in itself the crux of the problem, which is really the rapid worsening of the support ratio” (Idem: 88). In front of this challenge, “two types of solution are normally proposed: raising the retirement age in order to reduce the cost of funding pensions, and using immigration to offset the future drop in the working population stemming from the fact that generations are being only partially replaced” (Legoux, 2008: 111). Regarding this issue, it should be acknowledged that “the best way to fight ageing is to increase fertility. This is, however, a long-term measure, since it will take about 20-25 years until today’s newly born children will be in the labor force and become productive”, as Rauhut (2012: 89) put it, based on Bengtsson and Scott (2010).

From another angle, it is argued that “despite the possibility of ageing trends being partly offset by the increased activity of older people, natural demographic processes leading to population decline can only ultimately be reversed in marginal regions if net in-migration can be achieved” (Heikkilä & Pikkarainen, 2010: 324). In a similar tone, the way stressed by Mika Raunio (2002: 1) was that “one crucial part of the solution is foreign labor that should fill in the gap in the Finnish labor markets”. So, the motivation and need to study the case of Finland is also based on the fact that “the changing demographics will hit Finland harder than most other EU countries. The reason that the transition will be more dramatic in Finland compared with most western nations is that Finland has not experienced the same steady

stream of new population through immigration as the receiving countries of Western Europe”, according to Forsander and Trux (2002b: 228), what only underscores the need to undertake an “analysis of the complex historical facts” (Feyerabend, 1993: 350) in this thesis.

But the need to study the mutual challenges that both the highly-skilled immigrants, specifically Social Workers, and the Finnish welfare state face when they meet each other is also explained by the fact that “there have only been few studies made about the integration of immigrants” (Saksela, 2004: 2), and that in the Nordic countries “most investigation has focused on immigration as a societal problem”, what could bring with it “the risk of narrowing the horizons and a tendency to study a “problem” mainly in the receiving communities’ perspective” (Runblom, 1995: 283).

More recently it has been stressed that “in international migration research (...) the Nordic countries appear as a peripheral and in no way as one model” (Brochmann & Hagelund, 2011: 13). In this context, “the right type of research into skilled migration is therefore crucial for Finland not to be left out of the skilled migrant flows so very important in today’s global economy” (Koskela, 2010a: 59), mainly because the social aspects of migration can’t be forgotten in a time in which it is emphasized that “it is by no means enough just to be a highly-skilled, employed migrant to be accepted” (Koskela, 2010b: 4).

On the other hand, the work with immigrants has been a field of increasing importance among the social workers (see Valtonen, 2001; Nash *et al*, 2006), namely because “the relatively rapid immigrant population growth has led to the fact that in any practice, such as social care (...) one may face immigrant clients. Dealing with immigrant clients requires a greater understanding of and sensitivity to norms and values not necessarily prevalent in professionals’ own culture” (Assad, 2012: 6). In addition, “the foreign graduates also get motivated when they see a foreigner behind the desk and they get hope of achieving their professional job one day” (Mohamed, 2013: 32). In this way, it has already been stated that “the intensifying international migration flows continue to pose both challenges and opportunities for many nation-states and citizens who are involved in immigration” (Içduygu & Senay, 2008: 299). Identify the challenges in Finland will be the task of my thesis with a focus on foreign Social Workers and on the Finnish welfare state, because “we cannot attempt to offset the low fertility rate by means of large-scale immigration without accepting the implications of settlement migration” (Legoux, 2008: 122).

But I want to develop a thesis that go much beyond the purely financial perspective, firstly because the migration process “is far more complex than a simple reaction to economic disequilibrium” (Kepsu *et al*, 2009: 5); secondly because I assume that "understanding highly skilled migration as a one-way flow of educated workers from developing to developed countries is an oversimplification that may obscure the fact that developed countries - such as Finland (...) – both receive and send highly skilled migrants" (Habti & Koikkalainen, 2013: 6); thirdly, "even though skilled migrants often arrive in Finland specially for work, professional life is not enough to provide a basis for a life in a new country" (Koskela, 2014a: 25), what means that the exclusive focus on the integration of highly-skilled migrants “as economic integration limits and conditions the scope of policies and activities carried out by recipient countries” (Fernández & Parra, 2011: 49); lastly, because I recognize the fact that “the simple ideas aren’t in any case a definitive basis of knowledge” (Bachelard, 2008: 143), what means that I cannot “isolate a research object from its context, from its antecedents, from its evolution” (Morin, 1991: 9-10).

The previously mentioned assumptions don’t mean, however, that I don’t acknowledge that “the complex processes and consequences of migration cannot be studied in their full depth in all areas of inquiry at one time” (Parsons & Smeeding, 2006: 4). They in fact reflect my recognition that “people’s decisions and behaviors are driven by a complex process that entails not just benefits and costs, but an interdependent system of beliefs, resources, and dispositions surrounding learning, which is not yet fully understood in social science” (Green, 2013: 97). However, the basic idea remains: the "highly skilled migration cannot be studied as an isolated phenomenon, separate from the complexities of human life" (Lulle & Balode, 2014: 68), because mobilities are "both geographical and social" (Idem: 69).

By taking such a holistic approach (see Morin, 1975), my aim is to "overcome the individualistic reductionism of highly skilled people’s lives" (Lulle & Balode, 2014: 73). My ambition is also to diminish the deficit of literature regarding the integration of immigrants, because it has been usually assumed that the migrants’ stay in the new country will be “more or less temporary, which is why not much attention has been paid, neither in academic circles nor by policymakers, to their integration” (Kepsu *et al*, 2009: 71). Moreover, the fact that I want to study the mutual challenges that both immigrant Social Workers and the Finnish welfare state that receives them face is explained by the notion that “immigration and welfare are two salient yet charged themes in today’s political discussions within national, Nordic,

and international or global contexts” (Jönsson *et al*, 2013: 11). But are immigration and cultural diversity something new in Finland?

Until nowadays, the migration fluxes in the Nordic space haven't suffered any stop since 1954, year in which it was established a mobility agreement between the Nordic countries (see Nannestad, 2003). It was also through this agreement that “two-thirds of the inter-Nordic migrants since 1954 have been Finnish emigrants to Sweden and Finnish returnees from Sweden” (Söderling, 2000: 119). In this frame, it should be acknowledged that in 1968 “Finland was the first Nordic country to adopt the so-called birthplace right (“law of the soil”) or *ius soli*, which provided a right to Finnish citizenship in cases where a child born in Finland cannot become a citizen of any other country” (Ylänkö, 2002: 41).

One might argue that the migration among the Nordic countries “does not increase the ethnical diversity in the labor market as Scandinavians can easily understand each other's culture: the Scandinavian languages are similar and many Finns have Swedish as their mother-tongue or have at least studied Swedish at school” (Johansson & Andersson, 2008: 7). By the way, “the territory of present-day Finland has been multi-ethnic for as long as it has been possible to speak about ethnic groups in general. One of the oldest divisions is the one between the Finns and the Sami, which is mainly based on linguistic factors and dates back to (...) approximately 2500 B. C.” (Hakamies, 2005: 5). In addition, “the other ‘old’ ethnic minorities in Finland have developed as a result of migration” (Ibidem). So, it could be assumed that Finland has been culturally diverse longer than many researchers claim, also because “the earliest written record of foreign entrepreneurs who were active in what is today Finland is from the 13th century” (Joronen *et al*, 2002: 49), what gives consistence to the idea that “both the homogeneity of the Finnish population as well as the scant immigration before the 1990's are national myths” (Louvrier, 2013: 62). Basically, “none modern society open to the exchanges and to the changes has a total cultural unity (...) because the cultures are constructions that are constantly transformed by reinterpreting new experiences, what makes artificial the search for an essence or for a national soul” (Touraine, 1998: 223). In the end, this sustains the idea that it cannot “exists humanity without an alterity” (Besnier, 1996: 160-161).

It seems that the innovation from 1968 was not enough to counter-balance the dependency ratio of nowadays, because in Finland immigrants or foreign citizens “numbered 195,511 persons in 2012, representing 3,6% of the total population. Totally, there were

285,471 persons living in Finland who were born abroad in 2012. This represents 5,3% of total population” (Heikkilä, 2014: 80), whereas in Sweden the proportion of foreign-born is of 14.3 per cent, the highest among the Nordic countries (see Andersson *et al*, 2010: 34), mainly because “in the midst of the ongoing financial crisis in 2008, the Swedish government decided to liberalize the labor migration policy for persons outside European Union” (Emilsson, 2014: 134) through which the Swedish state implemented a demand driven model, by which “it is the employers who choose what kind of migrants are needed” (Idem: 135). But previously, namely in 2006, “the Finnish Government established a new immigration policy program that seeks to increase the percentage of labor immigrants” (Salmenhaara, 2008: 14). So, why didn’t Finland attracted the needed skilled immigrants (see Koskela, 2010b) from 2006 until nowadays? This is one important question. And on the other hand, formerly “a certain country received a certain type of migrant, whether labor migrants or refugees. Nowadays, different types of immigrants are arriving at the same time, and one type has a tendency to mutate into another” (Pehkonen, 2006: 114).

To put it differently, “the challenge for a modern welfare state is to find a way to guarantee all its residents the same standard of work, living and education, and prevent the emergence of a permanent underclass, and also acceptance of the existence of such a class” (Pehkonen, 2006: 115). And if it was assumed that the “recognition and respect of cultural difference and international exchange continue to be a novelty for much of the Finnish-speaking, Lutheran, and White majority population” (Raento & Husso, 2002: 161), it should also be emphasized that a “time of crisis may become difficult for immigrant’s integration, since they have to face more traditional attitudes expressed by the entire population” (Voicu & Vlase, 2014: 26), what only stresses the need of a research like the one that I am proposing here.

After the societies based on the exchange and the industrial societies, we live nowadays in the context of the communication societies (see Touraine, 1996), also called knowledge societies (see Costa, 2012). In our era, “there is heightened competition between Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries to attract the human resources they lack, and to keep the highly-skilled groups in their own populations who might be tempted to emigrate elsewhere” (Heikkilä, 2005: 485). In this context, Sweden seems to perform rather well in the attraction of migrants with a tertiary education, because it is one of the only seven OECD countries that are “net recipients of highly skilled individuals” (Brücker *et al*, 2012).

And why it is the educational attainment important? One reason is because in the context of the knowledge society it is assumed that “the single most important individual characteristic affecting perceptions is education” (Boeri, 2009: 4), because “the higher the educational attainment, the better the fiscal position of either natives or migrants” (Idem: 16). Moreover, “educational institutions may be regarded as vital propagators of democratic tolerant views” (Ervasti, 2004: 29). Then, “education is potentially a major factor behind social integration” (Pungas *et al*, 2012: 14).

In contrast to Sweden, in Finland, a country that is, in many aspects (including mass immigration), described as a “latecomer” (see Forsander, 2004), “the recruitment of immigrant graduates has been particularly problematic. Highly qualified immigrant experts have been frustrated by the fact that the jobs offered to them underutilize their education” (Heikkilä, 2005: 489). And it might be considered as a problem to Finland, where “the social work profession has, so far, few persons of immigrant background in its ranks” (Valtonen, 2001: 257), when it is recognized that in Finland “the composition of the immigrant population will change in terms of national origin, motives for arrival, etc. Thus, also Finland will host a considerable number of resident aliens in the future. Therefore, social and cultural problems relating to ethnic minorities will become more acute and diverse” (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 2003: 11). In this context, “Social Workers are pivotal service providers and mediators. They are facilitators of the welfare distribution process, and a vital link between the immigrant constituencies and the system. For immigrant clients, social workers are often the human face of the welfare state” (Valtonen, 2001: 253).

So, study also the case of the Finnish social workers makes sense in this research, considering that in Finland “the authorities supported efforts towards cultural pluralism, most markedly the social workers” (Pitkänen, 2008: 36). And another reason to focus on immigrant Social Workers is the fact that “highly-skilled labor migration has been largely ignored in global/world city research (with the exception of multinational firm employees) because of lack of data availability” (Ewers, 2007: 119), something that is confirmed by the fact that “most of the earlier research on skilled migrants focused expatriates working in the fields of banking, law and accountancy. (...) It is argued that the focus in earlier research on global elites is too narrow to encompass the full spectrum of skilled migration” (Eskelä, 2013: 146). Moreover, it can’t be forgotten that “the particularity of a communication society is that it could and should be studied (...) in terms of social relations” (Touraine, 1996: 165),

something that will be made on this thesis, namely with the focus on the interaction with immigrant and native social workers in Finland.

So, in much of the recent research developed in this field “skilled migration tends to be discussed in general or abstract terms. Such generalization tendency often overlooks the great diversity of empirical cases and the very different situations that the ‘skilled migration’” (Freitas *et al*, 2012: 1) notion bring with it. Even though one could not live without having general ideas about at least some things in life (see Morin, 1992), “the quest for finding novel phenomena demands that people be taken as more rounded kind of beings, with all human dimensions welcomed to understand their behavior, besides the more strictly work related or *rational* actions” (Trux, 2010: 63) is a need already assumed.

In the precise case of Finland, it was already verified that “the lack of migrants in expert positions (...) is rather exceptional” (Eskelä, 2009: 17). And to my knowledge this is a trend that has been maintained. The history of the country has shown that the Finns many times prefer to see how the things work in other countries before take a consistent action (see Jakobson, 1998). If it is the case now, will it work in the current/future “contest for skilled migrants” (Goldin & Reinert, 2012: 168)? And when Finland decides to take a consistent action regarding this challenge, what will become the way chosen to approach the attraction competition? I hope that the master thesis that I am presenting here brings some support for the definition of future policies to attract highly-skilled immigrants to Finland, namely Social Workers, because the truth is that this time “Europe is not merely interested in the labor of potential immigrants, but also in their professional skills and expertise” (Forsander & Trux, 2002b: 234), when it is recognized that Finland is suffering with brain-drain (see Johansson, 2008; Kepsu *et al*, 2009: 1), because “out-migration, especially by young and highly skilled people, seriously depletes “national” human resources and can endanger the country’s future prospects for economic growth and prosperity” (Lulle & Balode, 2014: 85). As a consequence, “the net migration balance is still negative in the highly skilled migrant group” (Kepsu *et al*, 2009: 36). More recently, it was assumed by Anna Lobodzinska (2011: 51) that “Finland needs to attract skilled and well-educated individuals”, something that was previously stressed by Heikkilä and Jaakkola (2000: 13), who emphasized that “the availability of an educated labor force is a very important factor for Finland and its regional development”.

But how will Finland take the frontline of this attraction game when it has been already stressed, regarding the Nordic countries, that “the best educated immigrants will know English or French, but not Danish or Swedish” (Chand & Paldam, 2004: 15), or even Finnish, and that they will try “much harder to get into a country where they speak the language and are easy to absorb into the labor market” (Ibidem)?

Considering that the objective of the national Future Migration 2020 Strategy is "to create an immigration policy which supports the building of an unprejudiced, safe and pluralistic Finland, and enhances Finland's international competitiveness" (Habti & Koikkalainen, 2013: 3), I hope that my thesis contributes to shed more lights that could contribute to the efficiency of this plan or to the promotion of more research projects on the field of highly-skilled immigrants in Finland, because already in 2008 it has been emphasized that “how attractive it is to live in Finland compared to living in other countries is likely to become increasingly important for the labor supply in the future” (Johansson, 2008: 24), following the three step procedure that Koikkalainen and colleagues (2011: 154) have mentioned, based in an OECD (2007: 96-115) report: “attract, receive and integrate” immigrants is the tridimensional mission to Finland and the remain OECD partners, when “everything leads us to believe that the mobility of skills is escalating and gaining pace today” (Meyer, 2012: 71). Nevertheless, I can't continue without stress the idea that although this thesis is about highly-skilled migrants, namely Social Workers, in the developed economies “a vast army of low-skilled workers is needed to carry out what Asians call the `3-D jobs (dirty, difficult and dangerous) in manufacturing, construction and services” (Castles, 2007: 2).

Now, “the human mind opens itself to the world. This openness to the world is revealed by the curiosity, the interrogation, the exploration, the quest, the passion to get to know” (Morin, 2003a: 45), what is reflected on “what the word research means: exploration, questioning, risk, adventure” (Morin, 2005: 32). During the process I assume the risks and virtues of being a “disciplinary transmigrant (...). As for the geographical transmigrant, there is no homecoming for me. I operate in the borderlands between disciplines, where one must often pay for eclectic freedom with the lack of institutional shelter and miscommunication one easily gets exposed to” (Trux, 2010: 9). Then, my paradigm is far from being disciplinar, and inherently distant from the verificationist modern approach, as it will be shown next.

I.I Methods: ways to try to handle the complex and the multiple

(...) In a society on the move that gives a greater importance to the individual life stories, in the way that these are increasingly less reduced to the trajectories predicted by the institutions.

(Touraine, 1998: 362)

Following the vein of the previous paragraphs, and inspired by Isabel Guerra (2006) and Judith Bell (2005), I want that the hypothesis in my study will be to guide and not to verify facts that are behind the lack of bet on the immigration of Social Workers. Instead, I want to look into the particularisms of the Social Workers with an immigrant background in Finland, particularly because I want to avoid the “greater tendency to think about what unites them culturally rather than what distinguishes them” (Vieira & Mendes, 2010: 960). Then, I recognize since these early moments of the current research that “the choice of a method don’t depend solely on technical considerations. Each method corresponds to a mode of approach, to a representation of the social reality” (Touraine, 1996: 133).

So, in the following chapters it is presented a documental analysis in which I will analyze the evolution of the demography in Finland in a macro historic-sociological perspective, considering not only the fertility rate but also the fact that Finland has been progressively transformed from a country of mass emigration into a country of accentuated immigration (Koivukangas, 2003a). By doing so, my aim is not only to build a theoretical framework that justifies the present thesis, but also to assume that “a researcher can never approach an area of research without some ideas of what it is he or she will look for”, as Salmonsson and Mella (2013: 5) put it, based on Charmaz (2006).

Then, and in order to give a more consistent overview, both the Finnish state, the Finnish welfare state, the migration flows from and to Finland will be analyzed, as well as the phenomena of the highly-skilled migration. To put it different, the more theoretical part of the thesis will be the recognition that “immigration is also intimately tied to serious global economic pressures, the challenges of population ageing, and welfare-state reform” (Parsons & Smeeding, 2006: 1). On the other hand, it is taken into account that “a relevant knowledge is the one that is able to contextualize, so, to get together, to globalize” (Morin, 1996: 253). Considering that “the first requirement of a scientific analyst is that he should clearly define

the concepts that he is utilizing” (Myrdal, 1974: 729), every crucial concept (such as “international migration” or “highly-skilled migration”) that will be further utilized here will be defined to clarify the reader. To sum up the organization of this first part, it will be applied a ‘pluralist methodology’ “that will compare some theories with other theories” (Feyerabend, 1993: 51) as well as available data on the analyzed issues.

In the later chapters of my thesis, and before a reflexive conclusion, I will pay particular attention to the topic of the highly-skilled immigrants in Finland with focus on the foreign Social Workers. In this point the collection of data will be made through the realization of in-depth ethno-biographical interviews with two foreign Social Workers in Finland and two Finnish Social Workers that are their colleagues, because I recognize that this method “allows for privileged knowledge and insights into the ways in which subjects experience migration, (...) cultural meeting points, or other *métissage* processes, and of understanding how these processes affect their attitudes with respect to diversity as well as the hierarchy of their personal identifications” (Vieira, 2014: 10). In this respect I’m not concerned about give a privilege to a qualitative or quantitative analysis. In fact, I’m truly concerned about find answers to the questions that have been problematized. This means that “rather than building our analysis from biased and static categories, we might want to turn our attention to actual lived experiences and changing cultural representations” (Jónsson, 2011: 13-14).

This is then essentially a microscopic analysis, through which the aim is to reach a more refined and micro-sociological methodology, because I’m not only interested in the work aspects of the life of the individuals, but as well in the transformation of the self of each of the four biographic cases. The organization of the interviews will be based on the works of Vieira (2003, 2009, and 2014), Vieira and Trindade (2008), Atkinson (1997) and Spradley (1979). This approach in which the life stories are the core of the methodology is in line with the “vision of a universe that is evolutionary and asymmetric in time, what reintroduces a narrative element, a history” (Prigogine, 1996a: 236). Moreover, “it may be in the cultural particularities of people – in their oddities – that some of the most instructive revelations of what it is to be generically human are to be found” (Geertz, 1973: 43).

It might not be completely explicit until right now, but the only thing that I am sure is that my research will not follow the hypothetic-deductive method, but the inductive paradigm to discover. I prefer to say (and say is classify, which is not always easy) that my work will

have an intensive nature by the making of field work in Finland, with some ethnography and participant observation, where I will then proceed to the realization of in-depth interviews with highly skilled immigrants, namely Social Workers. This is commonly put in to the drawer of the Qualitative methodology. However, it don't mean that I will not make a questionnaire in order to obtain a broader picture about the universe that I am studying. With this I would like to say that I review myself on what Bourdieu (2006) called a "polytheist methodology" in order to produce knowledge about the phenomenon that is holistic and total, according to Marcel Mauss (1954), what means that "the knowledge is, therefore, a multidimensional phenomenon, in the sense that it is, in an inseparable manner, at the same time physical, biological, cerebral, mental, psychological, cultural, social" (Morin, 1987: 15). I agree with Gaston Bachelard's view (2008: 141), according which "we should insist on the rupture between the true modern scientific spirit and the simple spirit of order and of classification", because "the idea of a fixed method, or of a fixed theory on rationality, is based on a too ingenuous vision of the Men and the social conditions that surround him" (Feyerabend, 1993: 34).

At this point I am not afraid to say that if I am sure about something regarding the methodology is that I don't want to become a positivist and confound social facts with natural data, treating the social as a "thing", like it was suggested by Durkheim. So, more than verification (that follows the legacy of the verifying and positivist paradigms, both from the experimental studies), in this research I am looking for the discovery and comprehension of the social processes, like it was recommended by Max Weber (1983). And this is why I am trying that the science that I am producing on this thesis is adapted to the object (that in this case are subjects) studied here (see Morin, 1991).

One might ask why I am so concerned about the relation between subject and object (that here will be subjects as well). The answer comes from the pen of Teilhard de Chardin (1965: 220) that give us the alert that "almost incurably subject and object tend to become separated from each other in the act of knowing. We are continually inclined to isolate ourselves from the things and events which surround us, as though we were looking at them from outside, from the shelter of an observatory into which they were unable to enter, as though we were spectators, not elements, in what goes on". That's why there is an exigency for the "reintegration of the observer in its observation" (Morin, 1991: 116), what allow us to be "co-producers of the object that we are getting to know" (Idem: 134).

On another perspective, I am also assuming that “the researcher don’t know what he will find before really find it, because if he already knew it he has already found it” (Serres, 2008: 101). In sum, and to characterize my methods, I would like to add the notion that it will have an intensive nature, that is, by the comparison of cases through a technique that many authors call qualitative, but that don’t refuse the possibility of use statistical data and questionnaires, because the aim will be always to understand and produce knowledge about the problem in a way as complete as possible. What I will make is to assume and recognize the nonlinearity that “signifies the possibility of unexpected, so called emergent, changes of direction in the course of a certain process” (Knyazeva, 2004: 392).

But is it absolutely new? I will now ask to Favell and colleagues (2007: 15) to clarify the reader: “within the more specific field of migration research (...) truly interdisciplinary work using multiple methods is more common”. And this is what I will try to do, following the idea that was suggested by Hautamäki in 2001 (p. 7) according which “future studies are multidisciplinary and multidimensional. It is essential that no single way of looking at society – e.g. ecology, sociology or economics – is allowed to dominate”. And this seems a need even more urgent after “the end of the certainty” has been declared by the Nobel laureate in Chemistry Ilya Prigogine (1996b). The future is now.

Basically, in the theoretical framework it is presented reasons that sustain the need for a thesis like this. And since it is a thesis about immigrant Social Workers in the Finnish welfare state, then each concept will be analyzed: firstly the Finnish state, that precedes the Finnish welfare state analyzed later; between that, migrations are always in discussion, and after there is a specific chapter dedicated to the evolution of the migrations in Finland. This will include a brief look into the highly-skilled migration, since Social Workers in Finland are supposed to have completed at least a Bachelors+Masters degree on the field. After this it will be presented four life stories of four Social Workers. The thesis is finished with a reflexive conclusion.

To sum it up, this thesis does not follow the modern vision of the segregation of the disciplines, since it consists of a composit work based on a wide variety of disciplines, from Social Work to History, from Geography to Social Policy, or from Sociology to Anthropology.

II.THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

II.I “From proletarians to migrants”

Men are not created equal, nor would they be likely to stay so if they were (Sjaastad, 1962:

81)

It was with the French Revolution of 1789 that has started, among other things, the modern society (Jacobson, 1996). During these times it happened that “many people were taken along in the solidarity of proximity in villages, neighborhoods, work places and public meeting places” (van Dijk, 2005: 108). Later, “millions of Europeans moved from rural areas to towns” (Eriksen, 2015: 3).

In 1848, Marx and Engels wrote “probably the best known political pamphlet of all time: *The Communist Manifesto*” (Milanovic, 2012a: 125). In that work, the authors “persuasively and repeatedly insisted on the fact that people in all — civilized societies were divided into two large classes: that of the owners of the means of production (the capitalists), and those that were selling their labor for a living and held no property (the proletarians)” (Ibidem). It was a time in which it was assumed that the place of birth and the social class determined each of them, 50% of the income of an individual during a lifetime (see Milanovic, 2012a; 2012b). These facts made that hundreds of individuals moved from the countryside towards the big cities (Braithwaite, 2006: 423), in which the employment was flourishing, what only gives consistence to the idea that the migration, independently from the character (intra-national or international), “has historically been the most important means for poor people to escape poverty” (Goldin & Reinert, 2012: 13).

So, “the very existence of inequality between states stimulates migration” (Freeman, 1986: 55), a fact that reinforces the notion that one of the worst things that a human being could face is to not be connected to any state (Strayer, 1986: 9), because as a member (citizen) of a state one has rights (Myrdal, 1962; Marshall e Bottomore, 1992). Recently, Cohen (2005:

62) argued that in the particular case of the European Union, “the supranational approach on the construction of a unified European space seems a projection of the nation-state and it is being imposed to the states themselves”. At this point, the question posed by Riva Kastoryano seems legit: “the nation-state is still relevant” (2005: 146)? Annika Forsander (2003: 67) is very clear about this issue: “national origin is relevant to the labor market integration of new immigrants. The national origin of the immigrants is the strongest variable explaining the immigrants’ labor market career in statistical data”. One could also add to it the fact that “states are responsible for the immigration policies which determine whether migrants are let into national borders at all” (Ewers, 2007: 127).

But also Milanovic (2012b: 2) underscores the role of the nation-state by mentioning that it “is very important in determining one’s income level, access to a number of benefits, from pensions to free health care, and where by far the dominant way in which political life is organized is at the level of the country”. This last argument from Milanovic gains more relevance through the idea stressed by Fitoussi (2005: 45), according which basically in no other period in history it was verified a so great “deepening of the income inequalities to inhabitants between countries” as in our era, a fact that only gives power to the notion of “migration as an equilibrating mechanism in a changing economy” (Sjaastad, 1962: 80).

However, “migrants have different and sometimes changing motivations for moving, which may depend on their cultural background, political circumstances, their personal aspirations, life stage and gender, etc. The complex interaction between the motivations that drive migration means that these processes cannot easily be reduced to a few, narrow policy categories” (Jónsson, 2011: 14). Thereafter, “there however seem to be other, more fundamental reasons why technological and economic globalization has not coincided with an acceleration of migration. First, (...) the impact of technological change on migration is fundamentally ambiguous. While advances in communication and transport technology facilitate movement, this does not necessarily lead to more migration, because technology can also allow people to stay at home. Potential migration can be absorbed by circulation because of improvements in transport technology allowing for long-distance commuting while potential circulation and commuting can be absorbed by communication systems allowing people to work from home” (Czaika & de Haas, 2013: 30). In sum, and “while this has made the world more mobile, it has not necessarily made the world more migratory” (Ibidem). Despite this, one should recognize that “the international migrant stock in the world was approximately 232 million people in 2013. This means that the percentage of international

migrants among the world population was 3.1 in 2013. There were 195 million international migrants in 2005, which shows that the migration flows are increasing in the global level” (Heikkilä, 2014: 78).

Then, and although some arguments presented here point to the idea that the income differences between countries are the main reason for the individuals to move from one country to another, “there is some other empirical evidence that employment rates are more important in determining the migration decision than are wages or income levels”, according to Bauer and Zimmermann (1998: 110). Furthermore, Goldin and colleagues (2011: 120) accentuate that “the desire to move because of wage differences between countries is not sufficient to turn a potential migrant into an actual migrant. Migration assumes different levels of cost and risk for each individual, depending on their level of education, financial resources, social capital, access to information, social networks, and other endowments”. Moreover, Czaika and Vothknecht (2012: 5) underscore that “people with sufficient capacities to aspire and to realize migration may never migrate if the right opportunities do not come up. On the other hand, if the capability for migration is absent, voluntarily migration is very unlikely”. And these are some of the main reasons why “a system based on ignoring the interests of sending countries and migrants is becoming unsustainable” (Castles, 2007: 4). This seems a critical issue on the case in point here, because it is said that “the scale of skilled migration is not only determined by the demand expressed by a country of destination” (Brücker *et al*, 2012: 170).

If in the last decades the relevance of the place of birth to predict the future incomes of an individual has increased (Milanovic, 2012a; Milanovic, 2012b) relatively to what has been stated by Marx and Engels during the XIX century, it seems clear that “the children’s life opportunities during their lifetime should depend less on the lottery of birth than in their own capabilities” (Esping-Andersen & Palier, 2009: 79). By now, and in the contemporary societies, in which it is said that the place of birth defines 80% of the future income of a person (Milanovic, 2012a), one might say that if “«from immigrants to citizens» would be the motto in France, and «from guests to foreigners» or even to «foreign citizens» in Germany” (Kastoryano, 2003: 5), it seems that internationally the motto is “from proletarians to migrants” (Milanovic, 2012a). In general, it seems to mean that “most citizens are residents, most residents citizens. If congruence were perfect, all citizens would be residents, all residents citizens. Perfect congruence is unrealized and unrealizable in the modern world. But approximate congruence remains an ideal” (Brubaker, 1989: 145).

The previously mentioned ideas seem to prove that “as predictor, Marx shared the common fate of all the prophets - that of being contradicted by events” (Myrdal, 1962: 24). Moreover, and “whereas Marx thought that society was divided into different groups based on differences in economic power only, sociologists nowadays argue that society is also divided across the lines of culture, gender, religion etc” (Bijsterveld & Bussemakers, 2015: 7). The “homo complexus” (Morin) seems finally assumed to be a reality.

In sum, it seems that the increasing relevance given to the place of birth by Milanovic on his works seems to be possible to be inverted, because “the ultimate problem, then, is poor policy, not unfortunate geography. And policies, unlike geography, may be amended by high-skilled migrants” (Ernst, 2015: 25). But why should one switch from geography to policies? One explanation is given to us by Diane Sainsbury (2006: 239): “immigrants’ social rights are not only affected by welfare regime type but also by the form of immigration and the immigration regime”. And this seems to have a critical meaning for two particular reasons: firstly, “if welfare systems are indeed failing to protect immigrants, this has implications for labor market outcomes and for the intergenerational transmission of disadvantage” (Barrett & Maître, 2011: 22); secondly, “whereas the early social theorists saw industrialization, bureaucratization and colonialism as the most powerful agents of change in their time, the focus now has to be shifted to other forces, such as transnational processes, instantaneous global communication, complex and contested identities, demographic change and value pluralism” (Eriksen, 2015: 5). And this is why we will now shift our attentions to the issue of the evolution of the demography.

II.II From “baby-boomers” to “age bombers”

The Nordic welfare model will face substantial pressure in the future /.../. The number of elderly is increasing at the same time as the work force is shrinking. The balance between those working and those not working will thus change dramatically, which in turn affects both labor markets and public finances /.../. In short, the financial sustainability of the welfare state is at stake
(Andersen et al, 2007: 63, quoted in Rauhut, 2010: 39)

The context in which we live nowadays is of what in the year 2000 the Nordic Council of Ministers (2000: 47) called an “European age bomb” in comparison to the “baby-boom

generation” that were born immediately after the World War II (Forsander, 2004). But how did we go from “baby-boomers” to “age-bombers”? The answer is complex, and then requires a holistic view of the problems associated. This is why Maurizio Ferrera (2008: 91) let us know that the foundation and the expansion of the welfare programs “had taken place in the context of ‘industrialism’ - understood as a general mode of organizing the spheres of economic production and social reproduction. The last three decades have witnessed a rapid transition towards a new ‘post-industrial’ order, in the wake of the rising importance of services, changes in household patterns and behaviors, and population ageing”.

But one could go even deeper in this question by mentioning that “since the 18th century life-expectancy at birth has steadily increased and mortality has been postponed to higher ages due to e.g. new technology for disease control. Parallel to this process the fertility rates have dropped during the 20th century. This is a worldwide phenomenon. Increased life-expectancy at birth has had an impact on ageing, but the major cause is the very low fertility; the base in the population pyramid has simply become smaller and smaller” (Rauhut, 2012: 89). In this context, it has been already stated that “Finland is a European country where demographic changes towards the ageing of the population are at the most advanced stage” (Lobodzinska, 2011: 43). Data from the Official Statistics of Finland (2016) confirms that 2015 was the year in which fewer babies were born in Finland in the last 150 years.

All of the changes previously described are reflected, among other things, on “a perverse result: namely, a balance based on low fertility rates *in fact*” (Esping-Andersen, 2000: 90), that is translated on the finding that the positive and current correlation between the fertility rate and female employment is “the great paradox of the contemporary Europe” (Idem: 95). In front of this scenario, “during the next decades the population with an active age in the European Union will suffer a reduction of 50 million”, according to Esping-Andersen and Palier (2009: 72). These ideas seem to prove that the principle according which “large cohorts will naturally reproduce large cohorts and *vice versa*” (Rauhut *et al*, 2008: 10) is not as straight forward and simple as one might think. By the way, it is in the exactly same work that Rauhut and colleagues (Idem: 23) give us a crucial idea: “the population in the Nordic countries has been ageing gradually for a very long period of time. Recurrent episodes of concern over the alleged problems of emerging demographic structures were shown in the last century. Today the national debates on ageing usually focused on fertility and mortality issues, but migration needs to be taken in to account to a greater degree when ageing is discussed”.

In front of the abovementioned context, “the retirement of the baby-boom generations has led to much public discussion about the sustainability of the public sector finances, including pension systems” (Alho, 2002: 13). The reasons of these discussions might be found on the notion that “the Nordic welfare model is based on a principle of risk distribution among individuals, with the public sector and public national insurance forming the main elements. Unfortunately, this model is very sensitive to demographic changes. An ageing population makes it difficult to organize welfare through public national insurance based on this model, as there are large transfers from wage earners to non-wage earners. The rise in the proportion of old people affects the so-called dependency ratio” (Rauhut, 2010: 38). In the end, nowadays, in the “Post-Industrial Society” (Touraine, 1971), new challenges are therefore posed to the European Union, that Finland takes part: “as recognized in the Europe 2020 strategy, the European Union (EU) faces a clear demographic challenge in the next decades. The EU will need to import foreign labor in response to gloomy demographic forecasts in the context of ageing populations, low birth rates, and the prospects of a collapsing social security system” (Ramos *et al*, 2015: 78).

In fact, and “without an effective policy to increase the birth rate, Europe will need a settlement migration policy; the only migration policy, however, is one linked to labor needs”, (Legoux, 2008: 127). In this context, “the future of Finland will depend on its ability to adjust to changing conditions” (Jakobson, 1998: 157), among them are the abilities regarding the attraction and maintenance of people with university degrees (Raunio, 2003). And the importance of international migration in front of this scenario is justified by the fact that “relatively small changes in migration can make a difference” (Alho, 2002: 10). The statement from Alho is clear if we take into account that “by 2003, European population (within the European Union twenty-five) was growing at a rate of only 3.8 persons per 1,000 inhabitants, or .38 percent. Of these 3.8 persons, 3.3 were due to net immigration” (Parsons & Smeeding, 2006: 2). This very last fact seems to particularly give reason to the idea of migration as “the chief mechanism of population redistribution” (Heikkilä & Jaakkola, 2000: 17).

To complement the previously mentioned ideas, it should be added that “in recent years, two major socio-economic trends have captured the attention of policymakers in Europe and the public in general: demographic change and skill shortage in the labor market. While the latter was initially perceived as a temporary problem, it was acknowledged that the long-term impact of the former would impact upon it. In other words, changing European

demographics towards older and smaller populations will impact on the availability of sufficient skilled workforces in European societies” (Mahroum, 2001: 29). The first challenge mentioned by Mahroum could be summed up with the idea that “in a world where people die between eighty and ninety, it is difficult to maintain parameters that were chosen when the life expectancy was between sixty and seventy. Furthermore, increasing the retirement age is not just a way of increasing resources available to both workers and retirees (which is a good thing in an era of low growth)” (Piketty, 2014: 489). This means that “the contemporary welfare state addresses a past social order; its ideals of universalism and equality emerged with reference to a relatively homogeneous industrial working class” (Esping-Andersen, 1996: 9).

On another perspective, Zimmermann (2004: 29) adds that we are facing “a split labor market that is characterized by high levels of unemployment for low-skilled people and a simultaneous shortage of skilled workers”. To be pragmatic, one should recognize that “labor shortage may be eased by educational reforms and by raising the age of retiring from the labor force, but one crucial part of the solution is foreign labor that should fill in the gap in the Finnish labor markets” (Raunio, 2003: 7). And this is why we will now turn our attention to the skill shortage topic with a focus on the case of Finland, also because even though “Europeans may not be enthusiastic about immigration (...) if they must experience it in relatively large numbers, they are happier if it is more highly skilled” (O’Connell, 2011: 235).

II.III Immigrant Social Workers and other foreign highly-skilled people: for Finland, the future is now

Since it has been shown until this point that “the increase in migrations is inevitable and a great challenge to the EU” (Koivukangas, 2003a: 7), the choice of Finland as the focus of this thesis is also justified by the fact that it “is unique compared with many other European countries” (Pitkänen, 2008: 33) regarding the issues of ethnic and cultural diversities. Based on the work of Freeman (1995), that established “three main approaches to immigration selection” (Carney and Boucher, 2009: 32), it has been added “a fourth category of “new immigration states”, such as Norway, Finland and Latvia who were until recently fairly closed to immigration but who in recent years (...) have become immigration states (...)” (Idem: 33).

By the way, and despite what was previously said, it should be also acknowledged that “there is a widespread and growing perception in Europe that migrants are a fiscal burden and abuse its generous welfare states. This view induces negative perceptions about migration to Europe which is almost unavoidably taking place” (Boeri, 2009: 29). However, “the native-born young, whether skilled or unskilled, benefit from letting in migrants of all types, because their high birth rates can help increase the tax base in the next period. In this respect, skilled migrants help the welfare state more than unskilled migrants, to the extent that the offspring resemble their parents with respect to skill” (Razin *et al*: 2010 20). In addition, and “in an increasingly knowledge-based economy the market value of immigrants with weak educational backgrounds will tend to be low” (Nannestad, 2003: 5). Regarding this aspect, it is argued that “Europe is more and more drawn into a competition to attract international skilled labor to fill the gaps” (Zimmermann, 2004: 3).

However, “it is seldom that a country faces a labor shortage in its total economy at one and the same time. Usually, labor shortages spread across a wide range of occupations and skill groups. Furthermore, labor shortages can also be concentrated to certain geographical areas” (Rauhut, 2012: 100), what in the context analyzed here means that “social services in general, and care in particular, are among the employment sectors that prosper most in Europe” (Soysal, 2012: 8). To give an example, in the case of Sweden “unemployed male workers within the industry or forestry sectors have been offered education to become trained care workers (auxiliary nurses)” (Johansson & Andersson, 2008: 5). Furthermore, it seems that one of the great dilemmas is also the fact that “contrary to the United States, European workers are very immobile, making it difficult for the economy to adjust to asymmetric changes in labor demand” (De Giorgi & Pellizzari, 2009: 2).

Regarding the particular case of Finland, one should firstly acknowledge that “the need for international workers and students is one of the main issues addressed in the innovation and competitiveness strategies covering the Helsinki metropolitan area” (Eskelä, 2013: 145-146). Taking the country as a whole, and “contrary to increasing unemployment in other sectors, bachelors in social services (...) have extensive scope in welfare states such as Finland because of their role of social policy in almost every field (...)”, as Gurung and Riaz (2015: 10) point in their thesis. In fact, “in the second decade of the third millennium the number of people retiring from the workforce is double that of 2000, and, for instance, the health and service sector will lose up to half of its workforce by 2025” (Louvrier, 2013: 65). Social work seems, in addition, to be one of the many jobs “that are likely to persist in any

real economy for the foreseeable future that (...) involve non-routine labor and are therefore less likely to be substituted by a computerized machine or to be relocated to another country” (Green, 2013: 183). In this scope, one should also keep in mind the fact that “the population structure also determines what kinds of services each group needs” (Heikkilä *et al*, 2011: 30).

But is the integration of immigrants made only by having a working contract? A possible answer is given by Koikkalainen and colleagues (2011: 154), when they emphasize that “facilitating immigrant access to Finnish society via work necessitates a deeper look into formal and informal barriers of integration at the level of the workplace”. Additionally, “it is important to understand the challenge that the existing plurality in terms of worldviews, languages, cultures and ethnic origins puts forward. There are plenty of possibilities for the practice of exclusion in Europe and the practice of exclusion extends to many different levels of society” (Jokinen, 2012: 136). This is why “popular notions such as the ‘global hunt for talents’ obscure the fact that the reasons why people move vary greatly, in terms of ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors, or of personal, family or work-related motivations” (Freitas *et al*, 2012: 2), despite the fact that Stein (1996) “has ascribed a large part of the movement to shortages of certain expertise in local labor markets” (Mahroum, 2001: 28).

Right now it should be clarified that “the issue of ‘labor shortage’ does not refer to being short of labor or to the fact that the necessary amount of labor does not exist. It simply means that given the offered wage level no teacher or assistant nurse is willing to accept the jobs offered” (Rauhut *et al*, 2008: 11). In the case of the present thesis, we are referring to the Social Workers, because “all of the Nordic countries launched an array of social policies that favored the formalization of care and gave rise to complex care work regimes that needed and still need a steady and sizable labor supply” (Wrede & Näre, 2013: 58). Furthermore, “individuals with higher education should exhibit a higher migration probability, because higher education reduces the risks of migration through a higher ability to collect and process information” (Bauer & Zimmermann, 1998: 97). By the way, it should be stated that “human capital has traditionally been regarded as one of the key factors behind economic growth, but not many studies have focused on its importance for immigrants’ integration, specifically for skilled immigrants” (Salmonsson & Mella, 2013: 8). And this is one of the reasons why the perceptions of both the immigrant social workers and their native colleagues will be studied, always taking into account that “we cannot attempt to offset the low fertility rate by means of large-scale immigration without accepting the implications of settlement migration” (Legoux, 2008: 122). It seems particularly urgent for two particular reasons: on the one hand, we live

“in a time when societies need to accommodate “diverse diversities””, according to what was said by Hahl and Paavola (2015: 47), based on Dervin (2010); on the other, “like in many European countries, also in Finland one of the “risk groups” in such marginal position is immigrants” (Pyykkönen, 2007: 2).

Considering what was previously said, and taking into account that studies on the field of the highly-skilled migration “remain modest compared to those concerning low-skilled migration”, as Voicu and Vlase (2014: 25) put it, based on Huber and colleagues (2010), the need to develop a thesis on the topic of the foreign Social Workers in Finland seems nowadays critical, particularly if we take into account that they take part of the phenomena of this specific kind of migration, that is “an issue of on-going importance in the next decades” (Freitas *et al*, 2012: 7). So, if we consider that “countries and companies constantly compete with each other in order to attract highly skilled workers” (Pungas *et al*, 2012: 6), it seems dangerous that “despite its visibility as a conceptual reference point in migration studies there has been lack of research on international skilled and professional migration, both from the experiential point of view of migrants and in terms of more structural analysis of demographics and politics” (Favell *et al*, 2007: 16).

It is said that “the challenges posed by increased immigration and ethnocultural diversity are a major concern for governments across the world” (Ugland, 2014: 145), and that “immigration challenges two fundamental traits of the modern, democratic, and wealthy countries in the Western world: that they are nation states and that they are welfare states” (Forsander, 2004: 208). Then, in the next chapters I will make an analysis of the evolution of the Finnish state, the Finnish welfare state, and the evolution of the flows of migration from and to Finland. This approach is taken also based on the idea that “there is a need for a more historical and more holistic perspective to be taken” (Rauhut, 2012: 90) regarding the problems mentioned here.

III. THE FINNISH STATE

Has a nation anything more precious than the language of his fathers? (Johann Gottfried von Herder)

III.I Before Finland, the Fenni

It has been already acknowledged that “there is no narrative without its region”, what means that “without Geography there is no collective history” (Serres 2008: 107). This is the main reason why we will now proceed to a brief analysis of the evolution of the state in Finland. But not before clarify what is the “State”, and also what is a “nation”.

Firstly the State, that “don’t create by itself the collective identity of a society neither is the only mediator in the process of social integration” (Mozzicafreddo, 1985: 51). This means that “the characteristics, the model, or the configuration of the state is not an essence, but a process that inexorably transforms itself according to the circumstances, above all where the individual and collective choices of the citizens prevail” (Mozzicafreddo, 2009: 1). This is reflected on the idea that “it is necessary a certain permanence on the space and time, so that the human community transforms in a state. A group of people could only develop the essential organizational models to the construction of a state if they live and work together, in a certain region, during many generations” (Strayer, 1986: 11).

With respect to the nation, “it could be equated neither with a particular race nor with a language, a religion, an interest group, or a naturally defined territory. In other words, the nation cannot be defined in terms of substantive attributes of any kind”, according to Beck and Grande (2007: 7), based on Renan (1982). Nevertheless, and despite the fact that Touraine (1998: 265) found that “the idea of nation is more political than cultural or community”, one could assume that “the nation represents territorialized cultural belonging, while the state formalizes and controls legal membership” (Morris, 1997: 194). After this brief conceptual framework, the question is: when and how did both the Finnish nation and the Finnish state emerged? To give a consistent answer, let’s take a quick look backwards.

Publius Cornelius Tacitus, “Rome’s greatest historian” (Benario, 1999: 1), wrote *Germania* (early 98 B. C.), “an ethnographical treatise” (Idem: 3) in which the author undertook to explain the culture and characteristics of people unknown to his audience, in this case the different people that live in the European continent in his time. In the last pages of his work, Tacitus describes the “Fenni”, people that lived in an area nowadays known as Finland. He describes them in the following manner:

The Fenni have astonishing savagery and squalid poverty: there are no arms, no horses, no household; herbs serve as their food, hides as their clothing, the ground as their bed; their only hopes are in their arrows, which they point with bones in the absence of iron. And the same hunt feeds men and women alike; for the latter accompany the men everywhere and claim their part in catching the spoil. The children have no other protection against wild animals and rains than being placed under some intertwined branches: to this hut the young men return, this is their refuge when they are old. But they think it a happier state than to groan over the working of fields, to struggle at home-building, to deal with their own fortunes and those of others with hope and fear: without concern in their relations with men as well as with gods, they have attained a most difficult thing, not to have the need even to express a wish. (Idem: 59-61).

It is said that “an archaic society don’t possess State: holds a few hundred members that live by hunting and recollection; they dispose multiple know-hows, obey sharing rules and regulations, kinship, magic, ceremonies of life and death, arts, dances, sings, parties. Magic, myth and ritual sacralize the rules of the organization of the society” (Morin, 2003a: 182). So, and despite the fact that they didn’t had state, the Fenni are part of “the so-called «illiterate» from the archaic societies of hunters-gatherers that had an extraordinary «cultural capital» taking the knowledge of the animals, the plants, the fishes, the remedies (...) which we find ourselves lacking” (Morin, 1992: 23). Now one might perfectly put the question: was the presence of Tacitus the very first sign of cultural diversity in the territory of present-day Finland? As a matter of fact, it “has been multi-ethnic for as long as it has been possible to speak about ethnic groups in general.

One of the oldest divisions is the one between the Finns and the Sami, which is mainly based on linguistic factors and dates back to the beginning of the Battle-Ax culture approximately 2500 B. C. From that division emerged the oldest, autochthonous ethnic

minority of Finland, the Sami people, who maintained their previous hunting culture, while the Finns switched to agriculture” (Hakamies, 2005: 5).

III.II From the Swedish Empire towards the Great Duchy: increasingly independence

Being part of the Swedish Kingdom since 1239 (Nord, 2008: 95), Finland has benefited from the fact that during the Reformation it appeared “in Sweden a literature in both languages of the country, with the Bible being translated into Swedish and (the major part of it) in Finnish. It also started to appear other texts of Juridical and Churchman nature translated from Swedish into Finnish from Mikael Agricola” (Klinge, 2000: 31). As a matter of fact, “the Reformation, carried out in the spirit of Lutheran Protestantism in the 16th and 17th centuries, was a process of making the centralized state. The state was inseparably intertwined with the Lutheran church and its lessons combining conformity and an individual relationship to God. Homogeneity and conformity have by no means implied an absence of class conflict and class consciousness” (Kettunen *et al*, 2014: 16). These were signs of “the (artificial) accumulation of the memory and knowledge and also the expansion of the «religions of the Book». This accumulation is rhythmic by all the progresses achieved in the field of support and the mode of diffusion of writing: from the parchment paper, the *volumen* to the *codex*, the manuscript to the press, until the invention of newspapers” (Guillaume, 1996: 107-108) that had a crucial role in the independence of the Finnish state (Heikkilä & Kunelius, 2005).

In fact, and regarding the independence, “the first essential step was (...) separation from Sweden. This came about as a by-product of the deal struck between Napoleon and Alexander I in 1807, in which the Russian czar undertook to persuade or, if necessary, compel Sweden to join Napoleon’s blockade against Britain. In the process Russian forces occupied Finland, and the country was annexed to the Russian empire as a Grand Duchy of the czar” (Jakobson, 1998: 11). Then, in the last decades of the 19th century, the educated elites in Finland “assumed to be possible and necessary (...) to develop their social and political thought on the basis of knowledge about the most advanced societies. Social problems should be anticipated by keeping an eye on experiences in those societies, and solutions had to be adopted and developed in advance by learning from mistakes made elsewhere” (Kettunen, 2001: 232).

But the will to learn with what was going on outside of Finland didn't stop the will of the Finns towards more freedom. And the proof is that controlled international telegraph lines were "considered to be militarily critical. The Finns wanted to take control of telecommunications, which they related to independence (...). To avoid the story of Russian control repeating itself in local telephone communication, the Finnish Senate decided in 1879 to leave telephone operation in the private sector. In most other countries, the telephone was considered to be a successor to the telegraph, and thereby a state monopoly. In 1886, the Finnish Senate issued a telephone statute, which distinguished sharply between telephone and telegraph regulation (...)" (Castells & Himanen, 2002: 56-57). This seems to be clearly the proof that "in the politics of the nineteenth-century Europe the principle of self-determination, because it was explicitly democratic, challenged existing political authorities as well as the territorial status quo" (Anderson, 1996: 38). On another perspective, it could be also said that that attitude in the 1870's had a crucial role in the future independence of Finland, since it is recognized that in the XIX century the public utility instruments, like the telegraph or the telephone were really considered as "natural monopolies producing needs and that were many times considered as strategically important" (Majone, 1997: 144).

Later, and following "the great dream of the XIX century: the future emergence of a society not built on man, but by himself" (Monod, s.a.: 34), "the ancient Diet of the Four Estates was substituted by a unicameral parliament in 1906. Suddenly, Finland passed from the older to be the most modern parliamentary system in Europe. With the universal suffrage, the number of voters has been multiplied by ten, and Finland became the first country in Europe to extend the right to vote to the women" (Klinge, 2000: 108).

III.III Finland as an independent State

"The new mythology of the State/Nation, that appeared two centuries ago in the West, triumphs (...) in the world. The State/Nation constitutes an animistic entity, a soaked substance of paternal/maternal (the motherland), being alimented by the sacrifice of its heroes and transforming its History in myth" (Morin, 1987: 156). Reaching the independence in the 6th of December 1917 after the collapse of the Russian empire, Finland faced a civil war, that "started in January 1918, just one month after independence, between Reds (socialists) and the Whites (non-socialists) with opposing social interests and very different views of

Finland's future" (Castells & Himanen, 2002: 137). Basically, this seems one of the reasons why it is said that "after the duty to the religion there was the religion of the duty, the secular cult of the abnegation and devotion without fails serving the (...) nation (...)" (Lipovetsky, 1996: 31).

Then, "the development of Finnish society was problematic particularly during the inter War years of the 1920s and 1930s, which were marked by the instability of domestic policy largely as result of the 1918 civil war" (Kuutti *et al*, 2010: 163). By that time "Finland was an agricultural society in the process of building a national identity" (Alho, 2002: 3). But the 1930's "represented a political watershed in all Nordic countries with national class compromises between industrial and agricultural/primary sector interests, and between labor and capital through the major trade union federations and employers' associations. These compromises also came to be reflected at the parliamentary and governmental level, with political compromises reached across parties representing various class or economic interests" (Alestalo *et al*, 2009: 6). In 1937, with the political colligation in Finland between the Agrarian party and the Social Democrats it has been instituted the social security (Klinge, 2000: 129). A few years later, Finland faced the war once again: "in the Second World War, Finland ended up as the only country to fight both the Soviet Union (1939-1940 and 1942-1944) and Germany (1944-1945)" (Ainamo *et al*, 2006; 1). In this respect it seems also vital to underscore the idea that during the war, Finland has refused the calls of the German government to "apply any measure against Jewish people in Finland" (Klinge, 2000: 139).

"Finland has experienced rapid changes in the decades since 1960s. These developments were triggered by extensive societal changes. The first of these relates to the late but rapid industrialization accompanied by the relatively fast growth in wealth. The subsequent rapid process of urbanization and the improvement in housing standards provided a good basis on which to reinforce the structures of the welfare state" (Vaattovaara *et al*, 2010: 195). And one should not underestimate urbanization, since it is said that "the liberation of the individual could only be done through an urban way of life, in a space where the anonymity is a guarantee. In the city, the individual is disconnected from the dependency ties, the hierarchies, be they social or familiar, in which each stood (Roman, 1996: 41-42).

One should, nevertheless, don't forget that "the notion that one can find the essence of national societies, civilizations, great religions, or whatever summed up and simplified in so called "typical" small towns is palpable nonsense" (Geertz, 1973: 22). But even taking into

account what Geertz says, it seems vital to consider what Paul Chemetov (1995) says, quoted on Chesneaux (1996: 122): that the city is “a long time formation... It is, above all, History”. And if “the basis of democratic life cannot be the “Us” the Nation, but the multiple “I’s” that constitute a country’s or the Republic’s citizenship” (Vieira & Mendes, 2010: 960), I would suggest that cities are, along with history, a combination of particular stories. In this thesis I am dealing with both by focusing on the History in the first chapters, and on the life stories on the later.

Following the vein of the last paragraph, it seems clear that “Finland as a nation, cannot afford to exclude any stratum of the population” (Vaattovaara *et al*, 2010: 195). And this idea seems perfectly connected to the principle established by Michael Walzer (1983) that Benhabib (2002: 444) let us know about: “membership was the first social good that needed to be distributed, in that the distribution of all other goods, like income and positions, benefits and opportunities, depended upon individuals’ being recognized as members of a polity who would subsequently be entitled to these”. Furthermore, and because “it is not so much the existence of international organizations and institutions which challenge the self-contained nature of the nation-state, but the continuing flow of people across their borders, even in the face of exclusionary policy” (Morris, 1997: 201), we will now turn our attentions to the international migration issues, starting with the emigration from Finland.

IV. THE INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND FINLAND

Everything passes to and from as if there were a constant exchange of a spiritual matter, including things and men (Mauss, 1954: 18)

In the Introduction and Theoretical framework of this thesis, emphasis has been posed on the issue of demographics. However, one should be aware of the fact that “the theory of demographic transition has been criticized. One of the major criticisms is that it fully focuses on the natural population change only, i.e., fertility and mortality, while migration is ignored. Already in the 19th century, i.e. the agricultural society era, migration did play an important role in population changes” (Rauhut *et al*, 2008: 20). But which is the relevance of migration from an international point of view, and how is it related with the mankind? A quick look back might help us to understand it.

“We are fully sons of fifteen billion years of cosmic genesis; we are entirely the fruit of biological evolution at the end of which we have distinguished us to become sapiens humans. We have become increasingly deviant, more foreign, strange in the cosmic becoming, after biological. We split up from it by building culture and noosphere. And in this inherence and linked separation, we have become able to know and consider this becoming.” (Morin, 1987: 195).

“Near the Suez’s Isthmus, more than one hundred thousand years ago, time and place uncertain, a tribe of Africans settled encamped, installed limply but vigilant around a fire. Suddenly interrupting endless conversations, some of them, exasperated, stand up and decided to go one step further in the direction of the rising sun: to see, some said, no, said another, to ensure better hunting, said the wisest, to know, perhaps. They will be always numerous those who leave with a goal well established? (...) Forgotten by the Africans that stayed, forgotten Africa, the common birthplace, its descendants populated Ireland, Japan, Karelia, the Easter Island. We are almost all living as the result of that decision” (Serres, 2008: 11-13).

In fact, and “while migration is a social phenomenon that stretches back to the first appearance of humans, globalization has made modern migration fundamentally different in its geographic scope, frequency, and intensity” (Goldin *et al*, 2011: 98). In this context, one should firstly define what the concept international migration means. With the support of Castles (2000: 269), one could describe it as the moment in which an individual crosses “the frontiers which separate one of the world’s approximately 200 states from another”. “Because of the free movement of people, which was established by the Treaty of Rome of 1957 and the Single European Act of 1993, it is possible to consider international migration between EU member states as internal migration” (Bauer & Zimmermann, 1998: 95-96).

By the way, and even considering that Finland is an element of the European Union, in this thesis an immigrant in Finland is considered to be anyone who has moved from another state of the world into Finland. It should be added the fact that the kind of migration that I am talking about here “is an international phenomenon, an expression of globalization with implications for national, economic and political stability and cultural identity” (Nash *et al*, 2006: 346).

Then, it should never be forgotten that “migrants are not mere objects of the macro-processes that steer migration, but rather subjects who selectively move between different countries”, as it is posed by Dekker and Engbersen (2014: 5), based on Brettel and Hollifield (2008).

V. EMIGRATION IN FINLAND: FROM SWEDEN TO THE WORLD

The peoples of the world are on the move across continents, oceans and borders. (Benhabib, 2002: 440)

If one considers that “in terms of relative importance, migration was much more significant at the end of the 19th century and early 20th century than it is today” (Milanovic, 2012b: 131), one should remember that “since the famine of the 1860s 1.3 million Finns have emigrated to every corner of the world” (Koivukangas, 2003a: 3). Also because of “its peripheral location and unfavorable climate condition” (Lobodzinska, 2011: 44), “historically, Finland has mainly been a country of net emigration” (Söderling, 2000: 119). “In the early 20th century, emigration rates to the USA were high, and in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, many emigrated to Sweden” (Johansson, 2008: 2). Basically, this is a little reflex of the fact that “in the second half of the XIX century, twenty one million Europeans settled in both Americas. The planetary era has been converted in an era of great migrations” (Morin, 2003a: 255).

During that time Europe was “the traditional source of immigrants to the Americas” (Czaika & de Haas, 2013: 10), and Finland in particular reflected the fact that “countries (...) with small populations are much more prone for migration than more populated countries” (Idem.: 23). By the way, it should be known that “the first Finns arrived to America between 1630 and 1660. (...) The immigrants from Finland were sent by the Swedish government as soldiers and government officials. The Delaware settlement, which was also called New Sweden, had received 500-600 settlers, mostly Finns and Swedes by 1660” (Brundirks, 2011: 15).

Kero (1974: 56) has noted that the emigration to North America “was a transitional phenomenon in the transformation of an agricultural society to an industrial society. The most important cause of emigration was the relative overpopulation which developed in Europe during the transitional phase”. But it was much more than that, because “for Europeans and Latin Americans, entry remained free until 1920”, as Castles and Miller (2009: 85) put it,

referring the work of Borjas (1990: 22). In fact, in the USA there was a “refusal to implement restrictive measures in 1897 and their later approval of the same laws twenty years later in 1917. More restrictions followed in the 1920s” (Glynn, 2011: 10), when the US “Congress enacted a series of laws (...), designed to limit drastically entries from any area except Northwest Europe” (Castles & Miller, 2009: 91).

One should at this point acknowledge that “in the White heritage of the Civil War, “Nordic” was associated with the idealized tradition of the free Nordic peasant and local community, whereas for the Social Democrats, “Nordic” began to represent democracy in contrast to authoritarian regimes and, especially in the 1930s, in contrast to the prevailing state of industrial relations in Finland” (Kettunen, 2001: 234). Following this line, it seems evident that Finland was not, in the beginning of the 1920s, considered to be a country from Northwest Europe and then the emigration to the USA was very limited. This happened because “the United States’ 1921 and 1924 Immigration Acts limited arrivals by introducing quotas for countries” (Glynn, 2011: 3).

Later, “mechanization in the agriculture and forestry industries in the 1950s and 1960s further decreased the demand for labor in these sectors, leaving a large proportion of the population to seek a living elsewhere” (Dhalmann & Yousfi, 2010: 223). “After the Second World War there was a lack of manpower in Sweden. There were two alternative solutions, either to recruit women into paid work or to import manpower. In Sweden trade unions advocated the recruitment of women while employer federations advocated the import of manpower. Both alternatives were chosen” (Johansson & Andersson, 2008: 3). As soon as 1954, “the Nordic countries introduced a common labor market with free movement of labor between the countries. During the first twenty years the labor flows were, in general, directed towards Sweden, and, in general, came from Finland. The immigrants to Sweden picked up unskilled jobs in the industrial sector, i.e. so called ‘3D’-jobs (dirty, dangerous and degrading)” (Rauhut *et al.* 2008: 54). Emigrants from Finland to Sweden were then mostly “low-educated workers who were taken into jobs directly to perform tasks *on the assembly line*, without much investment in their language skills or professional training. Gradually, the immigrants settled down. They were joined by their families” (Trux, 2010: 41).

There are three main consequences of the emigration to Sweden that should be highlighted here: firstly, that “emigration exceeded immigration, and Finland suffered a net loss of 187,000 inhabitants during the years 1960-1970 due to this” (Alho, 2002: 5); secondly,

that this migration, “together with the nationalistic ideology and the conscious policy of building a unified nation state, created a stereotypical picture, sometimes called a myth, that Finland is an exceptionally homogeneous and monocultural society. This ideology, in turn, has served as justification for the strict immigration policy of the country and enhanced the opinion that Finland and Finnishness should not include minority groups, traits or habits which are strikingly deviant from the main culture”, as Hakamies (2005: 7) put it, based on Häkkinen & Tervonen (2004: 22-23); thirdly, that since the 1960s “every Finnish children have to learn the basics of the Swedish language at school. After the migration from Finland to Sweden, (...) the Finnish language went on to enjoy of a prominent position in that country” (Klinge, 2000: 147).

So, “immigration is shaped not only by the global economy. Historical relationships between countries – play a central role in determining immigration patterns” (Misra *et al*, 2006: 320). In the end, “economic determinants (...) are not the only factors that play a role in international migration” (Jennissen, 2003: 175). It is, however, good to also stress the notion that “about 27 per cent of Finnish post-war emigrants have moved to countries other than Sweden. The majority of these emigrants have been women, (...) tended to be older and to have higher educational qualifications than migrants to Sweden” (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 2003: 4).

“From 1800 until the end of 1970, over a million people have moved from Finland to foreign countries, mainly to the United States, Canada and Sweden” (Assad, 2012: 9). To be historically and geographically more precise, one should underscore the fact that Finns “went mainly to North America before the depression of the 1930’s and to Sweden since the World War II” (Koivukangas, 2003b: 2). To be even more accurate, one should also mention that “a total of 530,000 Finns moved to Sweden to work in the booming economy in the 1960s and 1970s. Seventy-five per cent of all Finns who emigrated after the Second World War headed for Sweden” (Koikkalainen *et al*, 2011: 143). In fact, “international migration in Europe in the 1960s and the early 1970s (until the economic recession of 1973/1974) consisted for a considerable part of labor migration” (Jennissen, 2003: 172). And “although the post-1973 recruitment stop and other measures to limit the migration of low-skilled workers may have created an impression of ‘Europe shutting his door’, the long-term direction of *de facto* migration policies has indeed been ‘expansionary’ as other researchers have argued”, according to de Haas and colleagues (2014: 13), referring the work of Freeman (1995). In the case of migration of people from Finland to Sweden, “in the 1980s this migration due to the

economic reasons decreased noticeably. The main reasons for this were depression and structural changes in the Swedish economy as well as the narrowing of the differences between the Finnish and Swedish economies and standards of living” (Korkiasaari & Söderling, 2003: 3).

It is said that in the recent years “the reasons for moving are most likely non-economic, like getting new experiences, advancing in a career, improving skills rather than seeking a better income. Emigration is often planned to be temporary. It is fairly common for well educated young adults in modern Finland to seek a temporary job from abroad” (Brundirks, 2011: 20).

One should, at this point, ask: what if the temporary move of highly-educated people from Finland becomes permanent settlement? This question deserves to be answered in a later chapter, since it has been already stated that “today, official policies in the EU (and indeed throughout the developed world) target the highly-skilled, while less skilled workers are admitted only in very limited numbers through temporary and limited schemes for specific sectors”, as opposed to the policies adopted during the period 1945-1974 (Castles, 2006: 28). This issue and its consequences will be specifically focused in a later chapter dedicated to the in and out migration of highly-skilled people to and from Finland, because it is recognized that “there is a growing global competition for skilled people” (King *et al*, 2010: 101).

VI. THE FINNISH WELFARE STATE, OR THE “EXCEPTIONAL” *HYVINVOINTIVALTIO*

“(...) the role of efficient public sector is a necessary precondition for successful economic development.” (Fellman *et al*, 2009: 3)

VI.I Welfare state: origins and main characteristic

It is said that “it was easy to predict that, as larger sections of the population receive all their fair share of political power and become increasingly aware of possessing such power and possibilities of using it in their own interest, would put pressure in favor of redistributive state intervention on a larger scale. This occurrence was predicted by Aristotle” (Myrdal, 1962: 53). In this way, it seems vital to stress that “despite that the concept of macroeconomic stabilization is generally associated to the Keynesian economy, it precedes Keynes” (Block, 1994: 693).

Historically, it was after the French Revolution, namely with the French Revolutionary Constitution of 1793, “one of the earliest documents to treat welfare as a responsibility of the national state” (Brubaker, 1989: 155), that the relevance of the state as a protector is underscored. In that document it is established, among other things, that “public relief is a sacred duty. Society owes subsistence to citizens in misfortune” (Ibidem).

Then, and “while the early nineteenth-century tension was between the decentralized police economy and laissez-faire, liberalism, the late-century tension was between laissez-faire and the growth of an administrative state of office blocks in large cities” (Btaithwaite, 2006: 414). In this way, it is shown that “it was precisely the local, municipal or regional levels which played a decisive role in the prehistory of European welfare states, especially in the areas of poor relief, health services, public hygiene and housing or even in the early days of the unemployment insurance” (Conrad, 2011: 222). Then, one recognizes “the discovery of the ‘welfare city’ before, instead and parallel to the emerging welfare state” (Ibidem).

The welfare state itself has a distinct particularity on it that is shared by many scientists: its imminently national character (Myrdal, 1962; Freeman, 1986; Barbalet, 1989;

Marshall & Bottomore, 1992; Adão e Silva, 1997). Then, “welfare states in particular can only function properly when the dividing line between insiders and outsiders is crystal clear, because anyone who contributes to one is also a potential beneficiary, and vice versa” (Entzinger, 2007: 119).

VI.II The Finnish welfare state and the immigration

“It is obvious that predominantly agricultural societies probably will not adopt social insurance systems, just as highly industrialized and urbanized societies will have such schemes” (Flora & Alber, 1981: 65). And Finland “has been a poor country for most of its history. It was an agrarian or even subsistence economy much longer than other European countries, with most Finns living as peasants” (Castells & Himanen, 2002: 129). However, “the Finnish term for welfare state, *hyvinvointivaltio*, (...) slowly emerged in public debates in the 1950s. (...) As *hyvinvointi* means both welfare and wellbeing, it is easy to use *hyvinvointivaltio* as a concept for describing socio-economic circumstances and not just the role of the state. Actually, this was the way the term still in the 1960s appeared in social policy research (...). As a concept for the role of the state it was until the 1970s mostly used by right-wing and left-wing critics” (Kettunen, 2012: 11). And it was precisely during the 1960s that “the government committed to building a modern welfare state” (Oinas, 2005: 1230) in Finland. That “dominant ideology (...) proclaimed that government and municipalities should provide education, health care, old age security and a good standard of living for the inhabitants” (Rauhut, 2010: 38).

The idea behind these actions “was to reinforce economic and technological development and progress with the help of a leftist Keynesian economy manifested in proactive state policies & the building of public institutions which should bring the nation-state into the role of a developmental state by integrating the whole population into its productive resources” (Finnemann, 2005: 9-10). This seems to mean that also in Finland it was true that “the modern welfare state largely emerged as an institutional system as a response to industrialization and urbanization” (Hvinden, 2006: 7). But not only: it was also an answer for a society which was “progressively more tertiary – one in which the treatment of information plays the same central role that the treatment of natural resources played at the beginning of industrialization” (Touraine, 1971: 62).

But it is necessary to underscore now the idea that “the first major reform was the 1937 National Pensions Act. This was considered a significant socio-political reform demonstrating a democratic tendency, and resulted from the new red-ochre government co-operation between the Social Democrats and the Agrarian Party. This typically Nordic political co-operation in the 1930s was a reaction to extremist tendencies from both the left and the right” (Niemelä & Salminen, 2006: 10). This “virtuous circle was supposed to connect the interests of worker-consumers and farmer-producers on the one hand, and of workers and employers on the other” (Kettunen, 2011: 84). And along with Finland’s Westernness, “the Nordic ties were underlined in the domain of foreign policy, and ultimately the Scandinavian-type of social and political structures in Finland also prevented a fascist seizure of power” (Nygård, 2013: 8) apparently reflected on the refusal of the Finnish government to persecute the Jewish community in the country during the II World War Klinge (2000).

But basically, and “even in the context of Europe’s Northern periphery, Finland was a latecomer in the field of social policies and industrial relations” (Kettunen, 2012: 2). It seems legit to ask how good it is to be a latecomer. One possible answer is given to us by Johannes Kananen (2014: 10-11), according which “modern impulses of modernization of agriculture, establishment of universal education and a modern polity with modern political rights” could be considered as elements that stimulate the societal emancipation. While in countries such as the U.K. these “three modern impulses occurred with a clear interval”, what created “a quite distinct working class subject to various constraints” (Ibidem), “the timing of these three impulses was special in the Nordic countries in the sense that they occurred rather simultaneously” (Ibidem). To be more specific, it is important to explain that “the simultaneous growth of manual and white-collar occupations differentiated Finland from the earlier industrialized countries where the growth of the number of manual workers both started and ended earlier” (Alestalo, 2000: 63). One proof seems to be that “in Finland, *sosiaalinen* and *social* were adopted, in the 1940s, also in the field of industrial welfare. In large industrial companies, these activities greatly expanded in Finland soon after WWII, carried out predominantly by female “social workers”, often under the direction of male “social directors”” (Kettunen, 2012: 10). These might also be historical reasons for the fact that “in general, the Nordic welfare regimes explicitly aim at reducing differences between social groups” (Huijts & Eikemo, 2009: 452).

Even though it is argued that “from the 1980s the structures, practices and ideologies of the welfare state became questioned as the result of a large cultural shift” (Heikkilä &

Kunelius, 2005: 5), in this point the Finnish welfare state assumed its “exceptional” (Alestalo *et al*, 2009; Kettunen, 2001) character, because “the great expansion of social security benefits and public services occurred after the welfare state had been declared to be in crisis, i.e. after the early 1970s” (Kettunen, 2001: 226). That is why it is assumed that “the golden years of the Finnish welfare state were during the 1980s. There was almost full employment and the standard of living was rising quickly. This positive economic development was combined with annual increases in most indicators of welfare-state expenditure” (Vaattovaara *et al*, 2010: 6).

However, “the first half of the 1990s was in particular for Finland (...) a period of acute crisis, and the welfare state came in for scrutiny with the rise of globalization as a new figure of thought not least by professional economists. (...) Thus, the welfare state was challenged from within as well as from the outside world” (Alestalo *et al*, 2009: 20). But it recovered in the mid-1990s “in part based on increased investments in education, preventing early departure from formal education and training, and facilitating the transition from school to work, in particular school leavers with low qualifications” (Hemerijck & Eichhorst, 2009: 29). This fact sustains the relevance of the Finnish welfare state for the recovery from the crisis of the 1990s, because “the weaker the country’s development level and more embryonic its social protection system” (Fitoussi, 2005: 55), the more severe the consequences of an economic crisis.

Finland joined the European Union in 1995, and “European transnationality seemed to represent a threat to the national welfare state” (Beck & Grande, 2007: 27) for the Europeans in general. However, and “as the geographical borders have been losing their significance, the ‘borders’ of the welfare state system have been increasingly strengthened: more computerization, more identity checks and more exclusion, particularly of undocumented migrants” (Entzinger, 2007: 130). This proves that “the welfare state is not only a redistribution machine or a regulatory ‘dispositif’ but also a knowledge system (...). Welfare institutions produce, for example, statistical instruments, data and opportunities for self-revelation by the beneficiaries and clients” (Conrad, 2011: 227). After doing this analysis, “one could argue that the very strong state involvement for promoting investments in fixed, human and social capital has been particularly prominent in Finland in the Nordic perspective” (Fellman *et al*, 2009: 20). At this point, it seems vital to mention that “a welfare state and immigration need not be incompatible, but only in situations of selective admissions policies, attuned to the long-term labor market needs, that must also be effectively

implemented” (Entzinger, 2007: 129). What seems to be a natural consequence of the fact that “as there is further development, grows the importance of the human «capital»” (Fitoussi, 2005: 38).

Following the line of the last paragraph, an immigration policy focused on the attraction of highly-skilled individuals to Finland, among them social workers, seems to be the proper way to face this rise of the importance that the human capital has been acquiring. And this doesn’t necessarily mean a disinvestment in the welfare state, since “a greater scope of unemployment insurance and activation policies is not associated with inflows of low-skilled migrants. If anything, more contributory transfers would seem to encourage skilled migration” (Boeri, 2009: 28). And even though proximity and homogeneity were the basis for the emergence of the “local welfare arrangements” (Hvinden, 2006: 6), “empirical analysis does not support the thesis that we have to choose between diversity and solidaristic welfare states”, according to Lister (2009: 265), based on a research from Kymlicka (2006).

However, it seems impossible to don’t take into consideration the relation between people’s opinion about immigration and the welfare state in Finland. In this way, Senik and colleagues (2009: 20) say that in “Europe as a whole attitudes towards immigration and attitudes towards the welfare state are strongly associated”, what means that the less people support immigration, the less they are supportive towards the welfare state. Here, the level of education of the immigrants seems to have an important role, since “highly skilled migration cannot be used as a scapegoat even by the most xenophobic movements. The reason is that natives’ perceptions about the role of migration improve with an increase in share of highly skilled immigrants. The more people with at least tertiary education in the migrant population, the better the overall ‘grading’ the evaluation of the role of immigration among natives” (Boeri, 2012: 2-3), even though it has been proved that “the effect of ethnic heterogeneity on the welfare state’s ability to sustain its legitimacy is limited” (Mau & Burkhardt, 2009: 26). And regarding the attraction of foreign social workers, it seems that they will substitute Finnish women (Salmenhaara, 2008).

VII. IMMIGRATION TO FINLAND

VII.I From the humanitarian towards the labor immigration policies

In order to be able to discuss immigration to Finland, one should first briefly clarify both the concept of immigrant and the way in which one could acquire the Finnish citizenship. In this way, Rauhut and colleagues (2008: 54) explain that “the basic condition for being classified as an immigrant in the Nordic countries is that the immigrant intends to live in the country for a specific time, which varies from country to country”. In Finland that time is 12 months (see Rauhut *et al*, 2008).

Regarding the citizenship issue, it “can be acquired at birth by descendants of Finnish citizens (*jus sanguinis*) and, under certain circumstances, through being born in Finland, regardless of parental nationality (*jus soli*). It is also possible to apply for citizenship through naturalization based on residence in Finland (*jus domicili*)” (Vilkama & Yousfi, 2010: 234). And it is precisely this later principle that “in Finland entitles individuals to basic social security” (Koikkalainen *et al*, 2011: 147). In a regional (Nordic) comparison, in the recent years “the proportion of non-native residents in Finland is not only notably lower but has also increased decades later” (Yousfi & Vilkama, 2010: 256).

“It has been said that with regard to immigration Finland has been almost an isolated “island” untouched by European and global migration streams. But looking at history this is not true” (Koivukangas, 2003a: 3; see Koivukangas, 2003b). And we don’t need to go as far back as centuries ago to see that it isn’t true. “While several European countries (France, Great Britain, The Netherlands) have received a flow of immigrants from former colonies, no Nordic country, for obvious reasons, has been confronted with any situation of that kind” (Runblom, 1995: 288). Regarding the case studied here, “Finland has gradually turned from being an exporter of labor into a country receiving immigrants. The direction of migration only changed as recently as the beginning of the 1980s, when the number of immigrants exceeded the number of emigrants for the first time” (Pehkonen, 2006: 113). “Since that the net immigration began to increase” (Heikkilä & Peltonen, 2002: 2).

In fact, many Finnish emigrants returned “from Sweden in the early 1970’s and during the whole of the 1980’s. The major reasons for the return were good employment situation in Finland and the wish of parents to have a Finnish education for their children” (Koivukangas, 2003b: 2). This seems to prove that “migrants, when deciding whether to return home, respond more strongly to economic prospects in their home than in their host country” (Czaika, 2012: 23). But one should note that immigration to Finland have started earlier, namely because “the first refugees after WW II arrived from Chile in 1973” (Louvrier, 2013: 64). Before this, and “due to its late industrialization, and relatively strict migration policy after the Second World War, Finland has not experienced major immigration flows” (Dhalmann & Yousfi, 2010: 222).

“Until the end of the 1980s, immigration to Finland consisted primarily of Finnish citizens returning from Sweden (85%) who had emigrated there 10 to 20 years earlier (...). A significant increase in the number of immigrants occurred in the early 1990s. Several factors influenced this growth including the collapse of the Soviet Union, the return migration of ethnically Finnish Ingrians, the immigration of Estonians, and the influx of refugees from the former Yugoslavia (mainly Bosnia and Herzegovina), Africa (Somalia) and Asia (Iraq)” (Lobodzinska, 2011: 44). “In 1986, the Government’s immigration and refugee policy program has introduced the annual refugee quota and in 1987 a decision has been made to scatter the refugees at various municipalities around the country” (Assad, 2012: 11). Then, “the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 prompted (...) an upsurge in asylum seekers” (Martin, 2009: 13) to the Western countries.

It is vital to clarify that “although the demise of the Soviet Union did open up the borders of Russia to out-migration, this did not lead to a mass migration to Finland that one might have expected” (Alho, 2002: 6). One major reason behind this fact might be that “Finland’s delicate relations with Moscow inhibited the country from welcoming refugees from the east” (Runblom, 1995: 319). By the way, this tension didn’t impeded that “immigration increased drastically in the beginning of the 1990s, in part because of migrants from the former Soviet Union” (Pirttilä, 2004: 21). The truth is that “during the 1990s the relative number of foreign residents increased in Finland more rapidly than in any other Western European state” (Pitkänen, 2008: 33), even if in 1993 Finland adopted “the ‘safe country of origin principle’, that allows countries to restrict access to the national asylum system to people originating from countries designated as ‘safe’ and/or to all people arriving via countries regarded as safe” (de Haas *et al*, 2014: 22).

One should not, however, forget that “the arrival of the first significant groups of immigrants in the early 1990s coincided with one of the most serious economic recessions in Finland’s history” (Ristikari, 2006: 11). During these years immigrants were particularly “over-represented in the segment of the workforce who were the last to be hired and the first to be fired” (Heikkilä, 2005: 494). To sustain this idea one could make a simple comparison between natives and migrants: “the national unemployment raised from 3.5 per cent in 1990 to 17 per cent in 1995. Among the immigrant population the rate of unemployment was about 50 per cent and among certain immigrant or refugee groups 80 per cent and more” (Koivukangas, 2002: 7). More recently, and despite the fact that “the principle of free movement is one of the core principles of the European Union” (Heikkilä, 2014: 78), a curious feature of migration to Finland is that “those immigrating from countries outside the OECD are around twice as many as those immigrating from a country inside the OECD” (Johansson, 2008: 5).

To sum up, and according to Saukkonen and Pyykkönen (2008: 9-10), based on Pyykkönen (2006), there are “three phases in Finnish immigration policy. From 1940 until the mid-1990s, the reasons for immigration were mainly humanitarian. (...) The second phase in Finland’s immigration policy (mid-1990s to early 2000s) is that of integration. (...) In the (...) recent phase, Finnish immigration policy has focused on labor migration”. Nowadays, in Finland as well as in the other Nordic countries, “work migration (...) is demand-driven. (...) Work immigration is conducted through the employers’ demand for labor, and it is the employers’ choice of employees which selects the immigrants” (Seip, 2014: 170). This evolution seems to sustain the notion that, along with the other European countries, Finland progressively became “an immigration country” (Kastoryano, 2003: 5). “Traditionally, the Finnish immigration policies have not been developed on the basis of the economy and the labor market, but more as a consequence of international commitments or thought of kindred nations”, according to Eskelä (2009: 19), inspired by Forsander (2000: 144).

One assumption sometimes taken is to say that the Finnish and other “generous welfare states are (...) *welfare magnets*” (Mau, 2007: 13). In fact, and based on Halfacree (2004), Eskelä (2013, 147) states that “migration decisions tend to be complex and include a variety of components”. At the same time, “migration is an activity which requires resources” (Sjaastad, 1962: 80). Then, and regarding the reception of welfare benefits, “there is generally little evidence that immigrants are excessive users relative to natives” (Barrett & Maître, 2011: 21). In addition, it is said that “welfare generosity is a lot less important than labor

market conditions in determining the location decisions of migrants” (De Giorgi & Pellizzari, 2008: 18). Moreover, “a closing the welfare door policy (...) would postpone the assimilation of migrants who are already in the country or who would come in any event” (Boeri, 2009: 22). And if “immigrants are more likely to be in receipt of unemployment related supports in a wide range of countries” (Barrett & Maître, 2011: 21), issues regarding the employability of immigrants in Finland seem to be critical. But they are not the only ones. Far from that.

VII.II The trinity language, work and social networks

It is said that “acquiring the language of the new country is one of the most important and biggest problems for immigrants” (Heikkilä *et al*, 2011: 10), since “language has always been recognized both academically and politically as an essential element for the integration of immigrants into a host society” (Fernández & Parra, 2011: 22). For the specific country studied here, it is important to stress that “unlike race and ethnicity, language actually is, in Finland, an officially legitimate base for differential treatment in recruitment in care work” (Olakivi, 2013: 95).

On another way, we have been walking “towards a type of society where the integration through work will be increasingly problematic” (Mongin, 1996: 74). The reality is that “we don’t know other type of integration in our actual democracies that isn’t made through work” (Ibidem.), limitation that is emphasized by the notion that “in the new social project, work has a crucial place as a means to fight social exclusion” (Soysal, 2012: 6). On the other hand, “skills acquisition at work is effective and hard or impossible to substitute through other channels” (Green, 2013: 81). The relevance of work for the immigrants in the case of Finland (see Forsander, 2004) is acknowledged.

Another great issue seems to be the social networks, since “in a network society, an individual has to stand firm and to fight for a place in particular social networks that gives access to all kinds of resources” (van Dijk, 2005: 108). It is particularly relevant in the case of Finland, where “exclusion of the individual from all social networks is the worst possible situation” (Raunio, 2003: 34). To put it differently, this seems to be one of the reasons why Riala (2009) points social networks as one of the “factors which impact on the labor market position of all people”. Then, immigrants in Finland are not excluded from the requirement of

develop social networks. It is precisely the opposite: they need them, since integration should be both cultural and social (see Eriksen, 2015; Heikkilä *et al*, 2011).

In this context, the city seems to provide an opportunity to develop both types of integration; because it is there that each person has “the possibility of being a foreigner and that allows meetings and interactions between individuals from different social backgrounds and cultural orientations” (Touraine, 1998: 253-254). It seems then problematic that “in Finland a lot of time and effort has been put into official integration projects, while simple gestures that would make a big difference, like being a friend of the foreigner next door, sometimes seem quite impossible” (Janhonen-Abuquah & Palojoiki, 2005: 366).

VII.III Recent numbers of immigration in Finland and people’s perception about it

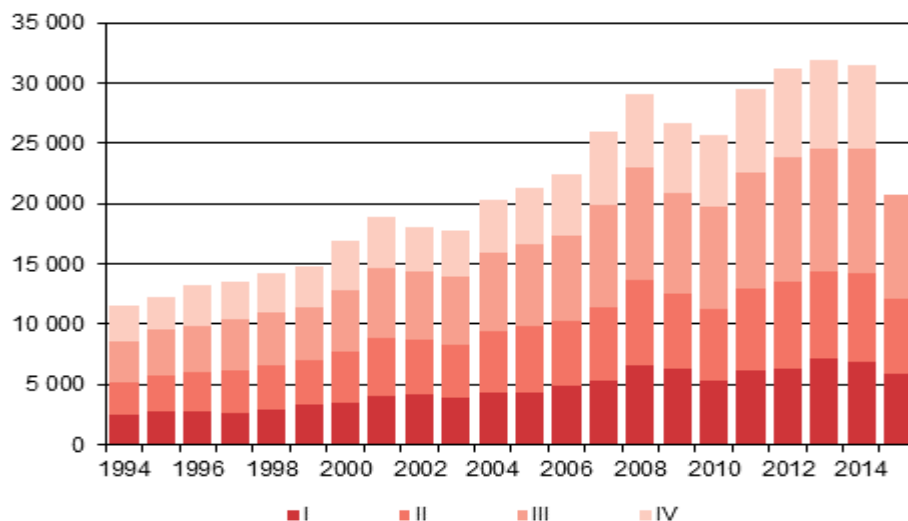


Figure 7.1: Immigration by quarter 1994-2014 and preliminary data 2015

(source: Statistics Finland, 2015)

The above presented data developed by Statistics Finland shows the number of immigrants that went to Finland from the years 1994 until the third quarter of 2015. It is clear that even though some fluctuations, immigration to Finland has generally increased during the period analyzed. The peak was reached during the year 2013, when more immigrants entered into Finland during the period analyzed. But there are two more interesting points that deserve

our attention here: on the one hand, the fact that from 2012 to 2014 (including), the number of immigrants surpassed 30,000 persons/year; on the other hand, and compared with the data from 2011 onwards, 2015 numbers seems clearly under the data from previous years, reaching almost less 5,000 thousand persons if compared with the numbers of 2013.

It is a fact that “the increasing diversity has generated active discussion in politics, media and in the everyday life. Immigrants and the issues associated with their integration are one of the most controversial topics of discussion in Finland” (Riala, 2009: 7). “The general opinion in all immigration discussions in the media (...) seems to be that immigration no longer helps the development of the society, that has become a social problem. Explanations for this shift in perspective range from economic to socio-cultural reasons. Due to the economic crisis, there is less need for immigrants.” (Heikkilä *et al*, 2011: 14), it is argued. However, one should note that in the Finnish case “a larger share of foreign-born in the labor force is not positively correlated with a higher local unemployment rate for the Finnish-born” (Johansson, 2008: 22). But one fact that seems to influence the visions that people have regarding immigrants in Finland and in its European counterparts is related to the history of migration, because since Europe “has, at least since the end of the 15th century, ‘exported’ its people elsewhere has a serious difficulty viewing itself as an immigrant continent and accepting migrants who mostly come from the areas that were formerly colonized by the Europeans. This reversal of migration flows seems politically difficult to manage” (Milanovic, 2012a: 132).

If the Finnish government “incentivize skilled labor migration, they can help address skill shortages and skill deficits over a relatively shorter period than it takes to educate and train young non-immigrant workers” (Green, 2013: 149). This seems critical considering that, as it has been stated in this work there is a lack of social workers in Finland. One idea from Forsander (2003: 57) seems to sum up the evolution of migration in Finland: that the country’s “immigration situation is different compared to other Western countries as not once in history has the labor shortage reached proportions that would result in a broad demand for foreign labor”. In this way, and if the needed social workers are attracted from abroad or from the already settled immigrant populations in Finland, the myth of the immigrant as a mere welfare benefits consumer will be literally converted in the reality of the immigrant as a welfare provider.

VIII. HIGHLY-SKILLED MIGRANTS: ORDER TO ATTRACT!

“(...) the European Union needs to prepare a unified policy of selective labor.”

(Zimmermann, 2004: 22)

In the context of this thesis, “the definition of highly skilled (...) refers to tertiary educational attainment only, which represents a rather broad category ranging from individuals with practical and technical education degrees (e.g. nurses) to PhD holders” (Brücker *et al*, 2012: 36). Looking backwards, namely to a hundred years ago, “even though a minority of more educated workers earned a pay premium, most young people could grow up with, perhaps, only a basic level of education, find a factory job and pick up most of the necessary technical skills while working. Nowadays such jobs still exist, but, in developed countries, are in the minority. Most jobs are for applicants with at least high-school graduation level” (Green, 2013: 58). This means that “qualification levels shifted upward: a high school diploma now represents what a grade school certificate used to mean, a college degree what a high school diploma used to stand for, and so on” (Piketty, 2014: 484).

The rise of the educational level has been a crucial element for the recovery of the Finnish economy from the crisis of the beginning of the 1990s, because in Finland it was increased the “aggregate level of labor productivity per hour by reducing employment of less skilled workers” (Honkapohja *et al*, 2009: 63). However, in 2006 (p. 31) Stephen Castles stated that “there is already free movement for the highly skilled”. One explanation for this seems to be that “the accumulation of education, training, or job experience, by changing the value of a person’s labor, opens up new opportunities, thereby increasing the likelihood of a move” (Schaeffer, 1985: 104).

Then, the alarm ringed by the voice of George Steiner (2005: 54): “it is desperately urgent that we stop in the possible way the outflow of our best young scientific talents (but also the humanistic) from Europe”. More recently, Kepsu and colleagues (2009: 17) stated that “more than 40% of the highly skilled persons in all OECD countries who are resident outside their home country live in the US”.

The abovementioned facts seem to be signs of the fact that “globalization is synonymous with the decline of Europe” (Beck & Grande, 2007: 3), that is facing a phenomena called “brain drain, or the migration of highly skilled individuals” (Martin, 2014: 240). This concept “has been coined at the beginning of the 1960s by British tabloids to denounce the emigration of British scientists to the USA” (Dumitru, 2012: 8), and it has been shown that Finland suffers with that (Johansson, 2008), because there are “a mobile, multicultural population of Finnish citizens abroad” (Heikkilä & Jaakkola, 2000: 7). However, it should be recognized that the “brain drain” couldn’t be bad in every single situation, because “migration to a country with a higher quality of education adds value to a high-skilled migrant, which ultimately benefits the country of origin *if* a migrant returns or invests” (Ernst, 2015: 37) in his/her home country. In these cases the move of an individual is brain gain for both countries.

It is said that “knowledge, entrepreneurship, and technology are the driving force of a dynamic economy. Two reliable ways to generate ideas and innovation in an economy are to increase the number of highly educated workers and to introduce diversity into the workplace. Both of these objectives are advanced through migration” (Goldin & Reinert, 2012: 189). It is then natural that the attraction of highly-skilled persons is one of the “three main political challenges” that Finland and the other Nordic countries are facing (Seip, 2014: 165). In the country analyzed here, “the higher education internationalization strategy (2009-2015) highlighted the efforts to increase the number of international students up to 20,000 by 2015”, as Gurung and Riaz put it (2015: 8), based on the Finnish Ministry of Education (2009) information. This is why “the last score years or so might be best described as an era of High-Skilled Migration” (Parsons *et al*, 2014: 4).

By the way, Finland is not alone, because “destination countries are making increasing efforts to attract immigrants from this group” (Pungas *et al*, 2012: 3) constituted by actual and potential highly skilled individuals. Maybe because of this, “higher educated immigrants have shorter migration durations than lower educated immigrants” (Jackson *et al*, 2013: 6). In this way, attraction policies seem not enough for the foreign Social Workers in Finland that should have also reasons to stay. Quoted on Kepsu *et al* (2009: 130), Richard Florida (2000: 5) put it clear: “The availability of job and career opportunities is a necessary but insufficient condition to attract the young knowledge workers. (...) Quality-of-place completes the picture”. In this frame, “non-income” incentives such as real estate prices, child support, and health care services will play a bigger role” (Mahroum, 2001: 34). Moreover, in the case of

Finland one should consider that “it is by no means enough just to be highly-skilled, employed migrant to be accepted, rather ethnicity and nationality play large roles in the formation of social identities and on levels of acceptance of skilled migrants” (Koskela, 2010b: 4).

Another issue that have been endangering the migration of highly-skilled people to Finland is that “stripped from their educational credentials and work experience, immigrants with a doctoral degree from their country of origin may end up in the cleaning business in Finland” (Salmenhaara, 2008: 15). What has happened in Finland is that “19-22 per cent of immigrants are working in a profession that does not match their education level whereas the figure is around 14-16 per cent among native Finns” (Fernández & Parra, 2013: 61-62). This “process results in a waste of human resources” (Heikkilä, 2005: 495) and is also known as “brain waste” (Pires, 2015). Then, and considering that “foreign credential recognition is particularly relevant in the case of highly regulated professions” (Ramos *et al*, 2015: 86), such as Social Work in Finland, “policies that favor human capital transferability improve the relative situation of immigrants in the labor market” (Idem: 85). By now it seems clear that for the highly skilled immigrants in Finland, including those that earn a university degree in the field of Social Work, “education alone is not sufficient if one is to survive in the labor market” (Suikkanen & Linnakangas, 2004: 244). In fact, “recruitment of people of migrant background is also a question of equality and social justice” (Tuori, 2012: 37), and “growing cultural competence is increasingly characteristic for individuals working in international and multicultural environments (...) especially for those working abroad” (Raunio, 2003: 16).

From other point of view, and if one takes into account the cold and dark weather that characterizes Finland during most of the year and that I’ve already experienced, along with the language barriers, namely if one tries to speak Finnish, and so forth, O’Connell (2011: 238) gives a possible solution by saying that “Governments cannot do much about the weather, but policy considerations might helpfully be directed at aiding immigrants with language skills as well as increasing public understanding of the economy’s need for foreign workers, specially skilled ones”. Policymakers play, then, a vital role for the attraction and maintenance of immigrant highly-skilled individuals for a country.

But even though the importance of work in the Finnish society (Forsander, 2004) is here addressed, one should bear in mind that “we cannot talk about education when the individual is reduced to the social functions that he/she should assume” (Touraine, 1998:

355), namely those regarding labor market. And the highly-skilled immigrants in Finland should not be taken merely as contributors to the economy or welfare providers, as it is the case of the Social Workers. This is the main reason why we will now turn our attentions to the individual life stories and associated trajectories of four human beings: two Finnish-born, and two foreign-born Social Workers in Finland, because one “must put aside all that reassure us and assume the bigger risks” (Serres, 1993: 100).

In this chapter I will proceed to the analyzis of the four ethno biographical interviews with respectively two Social Workers with an immigrant background, and another two that are Finnish citizens: two from the Helsinki area, and another two from the Turku area. The names utilized here are fictional in order to preserve the identities of each of the individuals.

The main reason why I am taking an approach based on the life stories in this section is because “the scientific knowledge cannot know and let to know what is the true knowledge without appealing to the other knowledge, the story” (Lyotard, 1987: 26). In this case multiplied stories that are the cornerstone of this chapter. In the first subsection we will take a look at the immigrant Social Workers before look closely to the native one, as well as the one that is in the middle.

IX. FOREIGN AND FINNISH SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE FINNISH WELFARE STATE: PATHS, CHALLENGES AND ASPIRATIONS

IX.I The foreigners

Who they are?

On the one hand we have John, a foreign Social Worker that describes himself in the following manner:

I am a third born in a family of six. Zambian mom and Zambian dad. And I am a Social Worker. I have my degree in Social Work from Zambia. My bachelor degree I have just finished it here in Finland (in 2014). And... Well, that's pretty much. That's me. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

Family, country, and profession are the main ways in which John identifies himself. What could make us think about, on the one hand, the relevance of one's country of origin, and on the other on the fact that people tend to describe themselves in terms of the roles that they have as workers (De Masi, 2000).

By her side, Maria prefers to say about herself:

I have lived in Portugal until 2006; I have studied Social Work in Matosinhos (Portugal), that at that time was a 5 years degree. Now I am not properly sure, but it was before the Bologna process started. When I have finished my degree, it started the Bologna process. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

Maria refers to her home country in the past, and don't call herself a Social Worker. Also here she prefers to talk in the past by stressing that she has studied Social Work. As opposite to John, Maria seems to be more marked by the changes in the academic system (by mentioning appearance of the Bologna process) and by the completion of the degree in Social Work.

The reasons

I-Reasons to choose Social Work as the degree

Maria is very clear about her relation with the Social Work:

I am not a person that wanted to become a Social Worker since I was a child. I have felt attracted by the social field. But I was not thinking: "oh, I want to become a Social Worker!" (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

Then, what shaped the will that made her apply for and complete a degree in Social Work in Portugal? She emphasizes the people that surrounded her when she was a teenager, as well as her desire to contribute to the promotion of a better quality of life of some specific groups:

The influence of friends of mine during the secondary school. I was taking the course as a Sociocultural Animator, and actually I had a job. Honestly, I have never liked to study (laughs). I have never been that ambitious regarding this issue. But I have always been curious. So I started thinking: natural sciences, no way! So I have ended in the social sciences. Because I would like to help the elderly, the children... I have done apprenticeships in Portugal where i was working with children and the elderly. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

By his side, John talks about Social Work as his "way of life", that he describes as follows:

Being helpful to overcome our everyday social challenges to myself and the people around me. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

But his background is of great importance for the choice of Social Work as his "way of life". While for Maria the main influencers were friends, John stresses the parents, and his mission as a Social Worker is kind of a legacy from his father:

I really want to help communities and people. I just want to develop the community and to develop the people as a whole. I am coming from a background were my father was a justice/lawyer. My mother was a lecturer. So, for my father, that is how it was. And he could save individuals. But for me, I want to save a great amount of them. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

II-Why Finland?

Maria, the Erasmus student

To Maria, from Portugal, coming to Finland was a matter of exclusion of options during her degree in Social Work in Portugal, as she explains:

When I was on the fourth year of my degree, I had the interest in become an Erasmus student. And it was due to that that I have gone to Finland. But my idea was not to come to Finland. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

In fact, she was looking for another Southern European country when she thought of being an Erasmus student, but the language was there a barrier, as she explains:

There were "x" available places to Italy. But at that time my Professor asked me if I knew the Italian language. And I said that no. So she said: "then you cannot go, because there they don't use the English language". And I said "ok". After that I have realized that there was an available place to Finland, and I knew that Finland was actually excellent from the educational point of view. And my only idea was: "why not? Let's go! (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

So it was at that time, in 2007, when she went to Joensuu in order to carry on her apprenticeship in an institution for people with disabilities. But the objectives went much beyond the academic life, and the help of a colleague was crucial in that decision that she classifies as a "turning point" in her life:

Well, I think that at that time, if i remember properly, my greatest objective was to be at my home, independent, and to try the real life of an adult (laughs). At that time, when I have thought of Finland, I was thinking of the cold, yes (laughs). But I was really interested, because I have heard, and it was acknowledged through the media, that Finland was excellent in educational issues. Then, i was more than ready, and I wanted to come, without any fear. But I went with a friend, a colleague from my class. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

That was just the beginning of a friendship of a lifetime, because she needed someone to be with, a fact that seems to show that man is a total social phenomena (Mauss, 1954), and not satisfy his needs just by being a *homo faber* (man at work):

I am sincere. I am courageous, courageous, but not until that point. I guess that I have felt that I have needed someone to be with. And at that time I went with a friend, and fortunately everything went really well. In my case, it was not a close friend. It was just a colleague from my class, and then we became friends. And still today we are friends. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

John, the degree student

John, from Zambia, a country that he proudly describes and talks about, found the opportunity to come to Finland and pursue his studies there through the online marketing:

Well, I was living in Zambia, a very peaceful country, small, landlocked, one of the largest producers of cocoa. And it is the home of the biggest falls in the world, the Victoria Falls... Hum, I did my diploma in Zambia, in Social Work. And when I went to check for the places for my degrees, I saw the Finnish schools being advertised online. Yeah, so, I have applied. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

But why John did not opt for a Francophone or Anglophone country to complete his degree, since he speaks both French and English fluently? Plus, he also has friends in many countries. But he decided to follow a different path:

Actually I have a lot of friends that choose to either go to Ghuangzu, in China, or had the chance to go to Michigan or Chicago, were my friends are. But I have decided to come to Finland because I like a very quiet place, which was not known, and also the level of the education was a little bit considered. I am not that much of a noisy person. Not going so much. So I wanted a bit of... Yeah, yeah, yeah. A quiet, peaceful and just a good environment. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

In the end, he was looking for a place that as his native country, also have peace, in contrast with the neighboring countries of his birthplace:

I came to study, so my expectation was to find a mode of study that encourages me to study, and even graduate. And also another expectation was to graduate and find a good work, because in studies Finland is the best in Europe. So I would say the Finnish studies are the best. So it would be very profitable to work in a different environment. (...) Ever since I was was young, Zambia was surrounded by countries that have been involved in so many wars. Angola is our neighbor, Congo, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia... All of these. So in Zambia there was an influx of immigrants from these countries. So I would like to work with immigrants and in a background where there are this multiculturalism. So that was my expectation: to expand my knowledge about the multiculturalism, and also to graduate and to work in this place. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

Then, both his origins and the environment in which he grown up had a significant impact in his choice both of Social Work as his profession, and of Finland as the country in which he would become habilitated to become a Social Worker.

From what has been analyzed until now, one could say that Maria went to Finland for the pure pleasure of the discovery, and that John made his choice based on the quiet and

peaceful environment that according him characterizes Finland. One might wonder that this is related to the age in which they have moved to Finland: while John came at the age of 30, Maria went at her 20s.

III-Motivations to stay in the country

Maria returned to Finland after her experience as an exchange student in Joensuu, namely through a Leonardo Da Vinci traineeship. She just knew about it in the very last days of the application procedure. The way in which she was treated is underscored by her as well:

I was in the fifth year, the last of my degree, and it happened that I was talking with someone from the University office, or something, and I have took a look into the wall, and saw informations about the Leonardo Da Vinci program. I suddenly said: "I want to do that!" And the lady answered: "but the applications end today or tomorrow". Something like that. And I was like "whaaat?" And she said "yes". But I said: "I really want to go!" Then she said: "but it is you that must find your own traineeship placement abroad". Then I have realized that the only place in which I had contacts was in Finland, in Joensuu, with my supervisor. I have contacted her, and the lady from the University office was amazing because she gave me an extra day to conclude my application. She has realized that there was really the chance, and that it was mainly a bureaucratic matter. Also because in Finland there are 2 hours in advance comparing to Portugal. And my supervisor, once again excellent, went to talk with her boss, dialed with all the documents needed. Well, I don't know how, I and my friend went to Finland again (laugh). (...) The way in which I was received at the institution, all of this way of treatment in which you don't need to call "Mr./Mrs. Doctor". Because in my native city there were people full of money that prefer the brand "x", brand "xpto", and so on... You see, for me, I have never liked that behavior that much. And now here, I went here, and haven't felt nothing like that. It was a breath of fresh air. (laughs) (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

But there were other reasons to stay, namely related to love, as Maria explains:

In my traineeship place I have met a friend that became my boyfriend. Finnish. And I was thinking: "well, I want to be with him. I already have this employment, already have a good pocket money, I like to be here. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

And although the relationship came to an end, it gave to Maria the sweetest fruits of her journey in Finland: two children that now attach her to the country.

John feels Finland as a home. But not the only one:

I am very happy because I have two homes: being here and being in Zambia. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

And it is like that because John is following the strategy that he has established before he went to Finland:

I have expected to graduate and then a few years later I could go back to my country. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

Both John and Maria moved to Finland due to reasons related with their studies and ended establishing themselves there. What means that the attraction was made, and the subsequent establishment was done as well. But until which point one could have a life somewhere when one is not able to get means of subsistence? The case of John is of very significance in this point, because he has emphasized the role that work has for him and for his integration. And he has never got employed for a long period in Finland:

Mostly you get about 6 months contract as a student, because you can't speak Finnish. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

Nevertheless, does it mean that the working life is the most important issue in an immigrant Social Worker's life in Finland? In fact, John seems to also feel that work is "a mark of self-esteem, gives structure to one's existence, prevents social isolation, etc" (Claassen, 2012: 2). By the way, and because John is passionate about basketball, a sport that he has practiced and that he teaches, he was able to get a short-term employment contract as a coach in a humanitarian association. This seems to clearly show that "career development must be involved with a person's total life, including work and leisure" (McDaniel's, 1974: 6).

Socialization and Finland as a "programed" country

Because "any being can only be understood as inter-being" (Herrmann, 2008: 13), the issues regarding socialization must be highlighted in this analysis. And the comparison between the processes of socialization in the native country of each of the interviewees and Finland is emphasized.

In Portugal there was the possibility that someone ring the bell of my home from downstairs, at my parents apartment asking: "Maria is there?". But here, no. Here you inform in advance, you program when you will be with the person. So, of course that from time to time I was with someone, but it was just from time to time, and it was programed. While in Portugal, at my parents place, I was used to listen to the bell ringing many times a day, here there is silence. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

Maria seems to miss the processes of interaction through which people meet in Portugal, namely in her home city. This reflects the relevance of the processes of socialization for Maria's integration. When asked if everything is more programed in Finland, she said:

Yes. And much more peaceful. In a certain way lots of peace, calm and stuff like that. But then it comes a point... And look that I am not from Lisboa or Porto (major cities in Portugal). I am from Póvoa do Varzim... (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

John, on the other hand, stresses the sense of community that the Zambians have, although he haven't met many in the beginning:

There were other Zambians living here already, but when I have moved from there, I had no idea about what I would meet. But for us, because we are Zambians and we care for each other... So, it's easy: if I say I am Zambian, other Zambians will come and get to know me. And when I moved here it was just me, myself and I. And I have tried to find the Zambians that were living in Finland. So, apparently in this zone in which I was living there was only one Zambian who was in he's way out, because he was graduating. So, I have only met one Zambian in the beginning. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

And John underscores the way in which Finns and Zambians interact, from his point of view:

We are a talkative country. Most of the African countries have a talkative culture. So when you ask the Finns... I don't know. But when you ask how to do, the Zambians will try to find means and ways: they will find the direction; they will take you to the place where you are supposed to go. But here the Finns just write you a map. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

The main challenges and principal particularities of a new country

Neither John nor Maria say that they have felt any kind of discrimination in the daily life while in Finland. But the cultural particularities are remarkable, particularly to Maria that underscores the flexible hierarchy in Finland, namely in comparison to her home country, Portugal:

I have found it extremely funny that at my workplace there were the boss, but you didn't really realized who was and who was not the boss. Here in Finland (...) people don't use outside shoes at the inside. They are really simple. I mean, usually there is no suit and tie, or better clothes... I mean, here is everyone equal, simple. And I have found it spectacular. I was so used to that bureaucracy, hierarchy, that is horrible and in which I have felt as if I was living in a prison regarding these issues, because we always tend to say: "oh, Mr. Dr., oh something". No! And here, no. For them is everyone "hän" (he/she). Very simple. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

But Maria has faced constraints from the financial point of view in her return through the Leonardo Da Vinci's traineeship:

In the Leonardo Da Vinci it was supposed that the money would come, but nothing arrived at my account. So, I went here with my own savings. But I was thinking: "well, they will pay me...". But I had to spend my Christmas in Joensuu because I had no chance to go to Portugal and spend it with my family. But for everything: I came to Finland in November, and in December I would be returning to Portugal? So I was thinking a bit and I have decided: "no, the scholarship has not arrived yet. No, no, no. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

By his side, John stresses language as the main barrier, particularly in the beginning of his life in Finland. But every time that he has problems with the language, he is not afraid to ask for clarifications in English, although in the beginning it was not that easy, as he points:

Well, the good new was that our study program was in English, and we were representing sixteen countries. People from different countries. About sixteen countries in one class. And we had a few Finns that were speaking a bit of English. So in the end I could ask them a few questions. And also I had school tutors. But then, when after school you come back home, you are living in an environment in which they are international students. So, that's how it was. Then back in 2010 some of those Finns didn't even spoke English. (...) So, it's like that. It has been quite, quite, quite mind opening. So, it was really a bit tough. You see postals which are written in Finnish. In the apartment in which you are living you don't even know what it means. And you can't speak to someone here in Finland saying: "Hey! Can you interpret this one?" But how I did managed was like this: every time I used to take a phone, take a photo, take it to school, because I had a few friends. So I have asked them: could you interpret this one for me, please? And they made it: this one means "this", this one means "that" (laugh). I was like "ok". (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

John's speech seems to reveal the increasingly openness of the Finnish society towards what/who is foreigner: people in Finland seem to be increasingly conscious of the need pointed by Maalouf (2009), according which one should speak at least three languages: one's native language, English and a third language. By the way, that openness is still not enough for a non-Finnish speaker Social Worker to get employment in his field of study in Finland:

When I have graduated, I went back to my apprenticeship placements and they have said: "Now you have to learn Finnish, because employment needs so. When you were a student we in some way forgot this, but now that you are graduated, we can't". So now I have been trying to get employment and trying to learn Finnish. I am now enrolled in a Finnish course. So, I have not gotten any calling or any job as a Social Worker after my graduation. But I have had jobs like cleaning jobs and jobs like this, not Social Work. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

Maria remembers the time in which she was looking for a job in Joensuu, already with one child:

Joensuu is a small city, and then there are many difficulties in that aspect of... Joensuu is a city known by being a bit racist. Something that I have only realized later, because I am white, and I was blonder

at that time. But I knew it... It is a really small city, and you see that it is more complicated: they give employment to the natives or to you, if you know really well the language. Without knowing the language... hum, hum! (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

Maria is now working with a short-term contract as *ohjaja* (Monitor), and both she and John are then two cases of brain-waste. Their skills and qualifications have been underutilized mainly as a consequence of their lack of skills in the Finnish language. And it seems remarkable that Maria refers to the city in which she was living as "racist", even though she has been physically similar to the natives. And both the case of herself and of John shows that language seems a very significant means to discriminate foreigners in the job-hunting. This is why for John an investment in the education is the way, as well as the need to work in a Finnish speaking environment:

Now the barrier is that I have to go back to school and start learning Finnish. (...) Time goes and Finnish is not a simple language that you could learn in one day. And it's better to be in the place in which Finnish is being practiced more. Then you can easily learn. But if you are not in those environments anymore, and you are not working in a place in which Finnish is spoken, you kind of even forgot the little that you know. So, it kind of distances you a little bit when you are no longer at school, no longer active. And then you are not working in those places. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

In addition, it should be added that both the cases and John and Maria resemble the idea that "in their professional trajectories, many workers find an occupation, but neither always a stable employment" (Gomes & Elizalde, 2009: 254). Then, there seems to be no safety, no basis to take great risks, since the life is so precarious (Jakonen *et al*, 2012). Let's then see what are the life projects of both John and Maria.

Aspirations for the future

John, a modern Ulysses

At the age of 35 and with the career as a basketball player finished, John is currently a volunteer at the Finnish-Zambian association. He has his objectives, not without some reserves, although he shows confidence on himself:

Now I think there is more need for me to save people than to just play basketball. People need social services, and I believe I got the right skills. But let's say: how long can you live unemployed in a country? That is my point. In Finland it is very difficult to live unemployed, because we don't even have our major family. You want it to be your home but you kind of... because you don't have family, no one provides for you. But when you go to Zambia, family is there, unemployment could be there because we are an Anglophone speaking country, and... So, that is my point. Like... I have studied here, but is tough to tell what will happen in the next few years. How long can you live unemployed? After my Master's degree, if I don't get employed again, how could you live? How could you sustain yourself without financial income? So, it's tough to tell. But mostly I will just get my Masters, start a family. (John, Zambia, Appendix C.2)

For John, the future seems to be open. He underscores that by saying that after completing the Master's degree in Social Work in a Finnish university, the first choice is to stay in Finland, where he feels *good to work here. And if not I would probably go back to Zambia. And if not there, I have my horizons open* (John, Zambia). The possible return to Zambia is also related to his aspirations not only for himself, but also for his beloved home country: *It is good to see how the work culture is here, so I could also have the chance to work back in Zambia, and also learn how to help the Social Work in Zambia* (John, Zambia). John seems then more like the Ulysses described by James Joyce in the 1920s than the Ulysses that was the hero of Homero's "Odyssey": along with Joyce's character, John has the future open and the unpredictability as his destiny, because the world has no geographical limits for him.

Maria, the polytechnic mother

Maria, the Portuguese Social Worker that has never had the chance to act in the field of study to which she is qualified for, and that is currently working as an *Ohjaja* (Monitor), opens her arms to hug the future, also at the age of 35: *I want to have my job. Everything could happen* (Maria, Portugal). And after the experience of working with people with disabilities, she broadens the horizons, always fueled by the curiosity and by the respect for her own values:

I am interested in the refugee issue. Not because of the current wave. But because I would be able to apply my English language skills, as well as the Finnish that I know. Or I could try the volunteering work, so that I could also practice more the language. Or studying. Studying to become a cook. But now that I don't eat meat, it might be harder (laughs). (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

But where does Maria want to cook? The answer is clear, and the family is the priority:

I have two kids. So I would need to stay with them. And this means Finland, where they are enrolled in the school. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

Does it however mean that Portugal has been forgotten? Here she speaks about the relevance of the memory. For her and for both children:

I maintain the memories with pictures. This year I am going to bring them to Portugal, because it is important to maintain the roots. Since they were babies that I want them to speak my language. And it was the only way that made them speak Portuguese nowadays. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

Both for John and Maria, the future seems open and not programmed at all: both have the ambition to stay in Finland, want to raise their families there, and desire to pursue their studies. They are then the kind of people that, by keep on studying in the current situation, "see much beyond the economical crisis" (Green, 2013). On the other hand, and while John sees in Social Work his future that will allow him to contribute to a better world, Maria seems to see herself also as a change promoter, but not necessarily as a Social Worker, because she feels that:

Acting as a Social Worker is precisely the most boring part, if I could say it in this way, because I guess that there is not that much contact with the users. So, to be honest I don't know if I have the ambition of act as a Social Worker. (Maria, Portugal, Appendix C.1)

In sum, and while John has found in the Social Work a "way of life", Maria seems to have different manners to identify herself: as a mother and as a Monitor.

IX.II The native and the one in the middle: Social Workers that have grown in Finland

The life stories here analyzed are from two Social Workers that are working in the same institution, sharing as well the Finnish nationality, but that have been born in different States.

Who they are?

On one side we have Iida, a Social Worker born and raised in Finland that opts to describe herself in the following manner:

I am Iida, I am 26 years old, I was born and raised in Finland, Turku, and I am not a qualified Social Worker yet. I am also finishing my Master's at the University of Turku, and I am planning to graduate in a few months. So, I have worked here around 4 years now. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

Iida briefly introduces herself as a woman born and raised in the country 26 years ago, switching then the core of the discourse towards the study and working issues. The focus on the *homo faber* (man at work) seems evident, with a statement in which she talks about the present, shortly describes the past, and envisions her short-term future regarding her life as a student and as a Social Worker. But there is much more Iida beyond the office, as she describes:

My life is quite busy at the moment. I am finishing up Uni, so there is a lot of work. And, well, I spend a lot of time with my friends, I go traveling very much, I go to London quite a lot, because my boyfriend lives in London. I would say traveling is very much a hobby for me. (...) I lived almost 9

months in New Zealand, just traveling. That was last year. Then I went to Australia, I have spent time in Canada, where now I am planning to go again and spend some time. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

Although Iida emphasizes the state of “busyness” (see Hadden, 2009) in which she is living nowadays, she does not seem to neglect some pleasures in life, like being with the beloved ones and traveling, her “hobby”.

Secondly we have the case of Samira, a Social Worker that is Finnish, but that was not born in the same country as Iida:

I am from Iran, but I am Kurdish, and I came to Finland when I was 2 years old. So, I think that I am also Finnish. I am Finnish and Kurdish. (...) I don't think that I am Iranian or Kurdish. And I also don't think that I am only Finnish, because that is not the truth. My parents are both Kurdish, but I am thinking that I am part of both... (Samira, Iran/Finland, Appendix C.4)

The State and the Nation seem to clearly be the factors through which Samira defines herself: she is from Iran, the country in which she was born 23 years ago, before moving to Finland at the age of 2. But not only, since she underscores her belongingness to Kurdistan, a Nation without a State. So, how does she introduce herself to other people in different contexts?

When people ask me "where are you from?", I cannot say that... ah... Of course, if I go to a holiday in Spain, I would say that I am from Finland, because that is the truth. I am from Finland. But then they look to me and they are like: "ah... no... You are not. Finns are like this and that" (laughs). Then I am like: ok, I am originally from Iran, but I have been living in Finland for many years. (Samira, Iran and Finland, Appendix C.4)

After point out the fact that she is a citizen of Iran with affinities with Kurdistan, Samira refers to her Finnish citizenship in the context of a travel to another European country as “the truth”. This seems to resemble the notion that the truth should be treated as something plural (see Morin, 2003a), as well as the idea that she has a composite identity (Vieira, 1999), i.e., one in which there is a miscigenation of belongings in the being.

The Reasons

I-The reasons to choose Social Work as the degree

Samira: from an interest in Psychology to the dedication found in the unknown

For Samira, Social Work was not the first option when she had to think about a profession that will fulfill her desires. In fact, Social Work not even was a possibility at the first sight, as she explains:

At first I would like to be a Psychologist. But then I had one year to think about it: what am I gonna do in my life? Then I was just searching on the internet about through which stuff can I help people, and I thought: "Ok. There is something!" I didn't knew about Social Work that much. But then I have searched for information, and I thought: "Ok. This is fine!" (Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

The idea that life is a project without predetermined outcome (Vieira, 1999), and the notion that we have routes and not roots (Trux, 2010) seems clear from the path of Samira, that at the beginning didn't knew exactly what Social Work was about. Then, the reasons to choice of Social Work as her field of studies made her travel to another destiny, located in Northern Finland, and geographically distant from her parents that are living in Espoo:

I have chosen Social Work because I want to help people. That has always been the thing that I would like to do. And I am studying, finishing my Master's degree in Lapland. So, I have been studying there, and I have lived there for around three years during the Bachelor's degree. And then I have moved to Turku because I am married. So, my husband lives in Turku, and my parents live in Espoo. (Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

About her experience in the North of Finland, she underscores that:

It was interesting to understand how is it to live in a cold and small place. (Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.3)

In addition, for Samira the understanding of different geographical realities is not the only change that she wants to experience. In this way, she highlights that Social Work is not everything that she wants to do in her life:

I don't want to also be doing this work all of my life. I want change. (...) I want to do something else.

(Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

Iida: without specific reasons for a commitment towards the other

Just like Samira, Iida have not either thought of Social Work as the first option with respect to her university studies. But the need for a constant contact with people was appealing enough to make her review her options:

There are no specific reasons for it. When I have graduated from high-school in 2009, I have started studying Business & Administration, but then I have figured out that it was not what I would want to do. I was quite confused at that point. (...) Then I have made a search at the University, and I saw Social Work. I have always thought I would like to work with people, so I thought: "why not?" And that was it. I didn't have a specific reason why. I just like to work with people, and I thought: "this sounds interesting". And also that there will be jobs. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

Then, the reasons go beyond what is the need to be in touch with the people, since Iida took into consideration the fact that "there will be jobs" available for the Social Workers in Finland. In this way, it might be suggested that she has joined the business with pleasure (*juntar o útil ao agradável*), as a Portuguese expression says. Until now there seems to be a feeling of fulfilment in Iida's life regarding her choice for Social Work:

I have been doing substitution of Social Workers, and after that I have been working here permanently with my own clientele since last August. Before that I was just substitute for the others at holidays. But now I have my own clientele. I have worked in child protection before the work with immigrants. I have worked as a Social Worker with people with disabilities as well. And I have done very short substitutes on elderly care. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.4)

II-The reasons to work with immigrants

Iida, or one of the “happiest coincidences” in a lifetime

For Iida, working with a focus on the immigrant populations was not her first possibility as a Social Worker. Before that she had experience with other kinds of populations, as she explains:

I have been doing substitution of Social Workers, and after that I have been working here permanently with my own clientele since last August. Before that I was just substitute for the others at holidays. But now I have my own clientele. I have worked in child protection before this. I have worked as a Social Worker with people with disabilities as well. And I have done very short substitutes on elderly care.

(Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

Regarding the reasons that made her work with immigrant populations, Iida talks about a coincidence in her life:

I think it was a coincidence, because I had a summer substitute job. I think it was in 2012. Early: around January/February. I have just sent applications, and I have got many answers. My boss at that time said: “actually we don’t have any jobs here at the moment”. But later on he said to me: “hey. Someone cancelled. Would you like to come for an interview?” And I thought: “this place sounds very interesting”. Then I have just gone to the interview and I get the job. So, I would say that it is a coincidence, since at that point I had studied very little about it (Social Work). I didn’t knew what kind of branches there are. It was not a conscious decision. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

What seems to be worth to underscore is firstly the notion that Iida started working as a Social Worker before she has finished her Bachelor’s degree. Then, and although working with immigrants was not a conscious decision, Iida points its relevance:

I think that it was one of the happiest coincidences in my life. Yes. I really enjoy working here, and I think that one of the main reasons why I am still here is that I really like the atmosphere here, with my

coworkers and my boss, and other people. And the clients: I have found the work very versatile. I have my own calendar, and I get to meet the clients when I want to meet them... There are no similar days.

(Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

In association with the environment that she experiences at the workplace, the non-routine work with the possibility to establish her own schedule seems to be of very significance for her feeling of happiness.

Samira and her feeling of giving back

As an immigrant in Finland, Samira feels that as a Social Worker she has the chance to help people that also come from other countries of the world:

This is like my thing, and I have something to give to the immigrants, because I am also an immigrant.

(Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

She is an immigrant along with her parents, and that is a strong reason to make her have the willness to contribute for a better life to those that are coming to what she describes as her country, Finland:

I have heard the stories from my parents about what they have faced. (Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix

C.4)

The background of her family in Finland seems then to play a significant role in the commitment that she has regarding her work with immigrant populations.

The challenges

At the workplace

Samira: in the middle, between Finland and the Kurdish community

When questioned about possible challenges that she might face at the workplace with colleagues, Samira underscores her Finnishness, as well as the affinity created by the language with her Kurdish clients, that are a majority. This seems to resemble two things: firstly, the fact that the presence of Social Workers with an immigrant background might be really beneficial; secondly, the notion that Samira refuses to belong exclusively to Finland and exclusively to the Kurdish culture or the Iranian State. It could then be said that she is a being in a constant process of miscegenation (Vieira & Mendes, 2010):

I don't think that I feel bad, because (...) I think that I am Finnish as well. That is the only thing. And people say that it is very good to be an immigrant and being working in the field of Social Work. When I meet Kurdish clients, I just speak Kurdish with them. And they have been saying: "it is so good that you are here now! If we have something we can just call you, and we don't have to speak Finnish"

(Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

Iida, with Samira as the Kurdish that is "one of us"

While talking about experiences with Social Workers with a foreign background, Iida talks immediately about Samira that works in the same office. It is very interesting how she also creates the fact that Samira is Kurdish, since it seems to resemble what I have also felt during the interview with Samira: every once in a while she reinforces the idea that she is Kurdish.

Actually one of our Social Workers, she came, well, basically she lived all of her life here, but she was born in Iran. She is Kurdish. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

After stressing that her colleague is Kurdish, Iida underscores the Finnishness of Samira. By doing this she seems to assume and accept the composite identity of her colleague:

I think that she is very Finnish as well, because she lives here since she was 2. So, she knows Finnish perfectly, and you wouldn't know if you didn't asked her or someone told you. Hum... No, she is one of us. (Iida, Finland Appendix C.3)

With the customers

Iida: the language and the cultural perspective

For Iida, the first and main challenge to be overcome with customers is that of the language. In order to solve it, there is a service provided by translators, what calls for a new meeting with the immigrant:

Many people come here and they just know very basic words in Finnish. So, obviously we have to translate it, what makes everything a lot more difficult, because you can't have the appointment straight away. You have to set other time, and all the letters, papers are obviously in Finnish. So, clients tend to be a little confused about what are the papers all about. Because in Finland things tend to be on paper. And it makes it difficult. Plus, a lot of times they can't even write. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

When the meeting happens, the cultural clashes are many times inevitable, with the Finnish rules being applied:

(...) we work from a Finnish perspective, our cultural perspective. It sometimes feels that the decisions that we make, that we don't really take into consideration their own cultural background or religion, for example. Some really strict Muslims think that they can't take loan. For example: the student loan, because there is interest, and interest is "haram" in Arabic. And we say: you have to get the student loan; you can't take money here before you get the student loan. They say: "I can't take it, because my

religion says that I can't take it". And so one girl was really upset with me because she thought that I am doing this on purpose, when I am just following the rules. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

Although she reinforces the notion that the Finnish laws should prevail, she characterizes her approach as “human”, since she says that she treats her clients as human beings, and not according to their belongings and characteristics, as she explains:

*I think that we are here as humans, not dark or Somali person. I don't want to make it like that. (...)
And people are individuals. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)*

The question that arises in my view is a complex one, and resembles my thoughts as a Social Worker as well: it is reasonable to treat each client as a human being. But Social Workers are not supposed to incorporate the particularisms of each individual in its intervention? The answer seems to be “yes”, but it opens space for another one to my knowledge without answers: how?

Samira: an immigrant working with immigrants

Arriving in Finland at the age of 2 as a quota refugee with her parents and brother, Samira is herself an immigrant. Although she said that she have not felt racism, she underlines the idea that she understands clearly the position of the immigrants with which she works with:

I don't know what other Finnish Social Workers think about it, but I really understand this people (the clients, that are immigrants) when they talk about racism. I haven't felt it in any way, but I understand it. And when they have like... Anything regarding immigration. I really understand it. It's like... I also feel it, and sometimes I have lived the same experiences that they have had. I don't know how the Finnish Social Workers perceive the stories of the immigrants, but are they thinking "Is it true or not?" (Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

Samira gives the example of her work with her Kurdish clients to explain that, although she understands some of the positions of the immigrants, her interventions (like those of Iida) are guided by the Finnish laws, since she is acting in Finland:

I have to do it in the Finnish way, but when they tell me something that is right in the Kurdish culture, but is wrong in the Finnish culture, I understand it. But I cannot say that it is ok if it's not ok here to do that. (Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

Living in the between seems not to be an easy task, and it was not for Samira, especially during her teenage years:

When I was a teenager, it was not very hard, but hard, because I think that at the same time I am Finnish and I am Kurdish. Our culture is not the same as the Finnish culture. So, sometimes when I was trying to do something in the Finnish way it was not right. So, as a teenager it was hard for me to... Like, I didn't knew how to live. Ok, now it is also hard when you do something, you have to think about it: what is right and what is not. (Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

There still seems then to be an inner conflict for Samira, that struggles to adapt her miscigenated being to the distinct contexts that she inhabits.

Aspirations for the future

Iida: a possible life in London with family in Finland

With her British boyfriend actually living in London, Iida opens up the window to live in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, and in case that they have children, a return to Finland is mandatory for her. In this frame, the reasons that she highlights about raising a family in Finland might suggest ideas to promote the attraction of people from abroad, namely those with kids. In another way, traveling is a passion to maintain:

I was offered a position here in this office when I get my qualification. I will have a guaranteed job here. And I don't know. I plan to go more traveling. Perhaps I have been thinking of living in London for a while, but if I have a family of my own, I will definitely come back to Finland. (...) I think it's a good place to live, if you have a family, (...) because it's quite safe here, and clean, and not overcrowded, and the schools are very good. And obviously the language is important for me. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

Regarding her studies, Iida wants by now to get the qualification and later expand her horizons towards other fields:

I am sure that I will continue studying after I graduate. I will do something. For example, Psychology, or Psychotherapies, or something like that... I am not quite sure yet. In the University of Turku you get to fill in your... You got to fill in after you are graduated for three years... You can do studies, whatever you want, for free. After you have graduated. So, that's really good. Now I would just like to get the qualification. (Iida, Finland, Appendix C.3)

Samira: a life in Turku but beyond Social Work

Married and established in Turku, Samira wants changes, namely with respect to the familial life, where the creation of a family is an objective:

Turku is the place in which most likely I will be. My husband is working here, and maybe I will also be working here. And, I don't know, maybe it will bring babies (laugh). Build a family, and I want to somehow do something, an influence, that makes the world change. (Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

On the other hand, and regarding her professional and academic life, she highlights her will to keep on studying. The curiosity seems then to remain in her, since she wants to acquire more knowledge from different fields:

I didn't knew what this work is. And now I know, and I want to get so much information. Then, when the time will come, I will decide what I will do next. And I don't want to finish my school life. I want to learn, and learn, again and again. (Samira, Finland/Iran, Appendix C.4)

Main points in the 4 biographical cases				
Categories	Maria, Portugal	John, Zambia	Iida, Finland	Samira, Finland/Iran
Who they are?	Maria seems to have her main points of reference in the past.	Family, home country and Social Work are the main points of identification.	For Iida, work and studies are the main points to describe herself.	Kurdistan is clearly the the main way for Samira to refer to herself.
Why Social Work?	She is not fascinated by the area at all, but she took the degree along with some friends.	Being kind of a family legacy, John has always wanted to help the others.	She have the will to be in touch with people. Have started the degree without even knowing that much about it.	Samira wants to help to improve other people's lives.
Why Finland?	Maria came as an exchange student, although her first option was Italy.	John came as a degree student, after see the Finnish universities being advertised online.	-----	-----
Why the work with immigrants?	-----	-----	For Iida it was all a coincidence. She was called for interview after sending many applications to many places.	Samira wants to help people that, as her family has had, are struggling to live as immigrants in Finland.
Reasons to stay	A relationship that gave her 2 children made her stay.	John feels at home in Finland.	-----	-----
Challenges	The language is the main barrier highlighted by Maria.	John do feel the language as a challenge to join the labor market.	The interaction with people from distinct cultures seems to be the main problem.	The main struggles were felt during the teenage years, in which she did not knew how to act in certain circumstances.
Aspirations	Maria wants to stay with her kids, what by now means staying in Finland.	With the horizons open, John gives preference to remain in Finland.	Iida wants a life in Finland, even if her boyfriend is living in the U.K.	A future in Finland with her family, and always learning, is what Samira wishes.

Table 9.1: Principal points of the 4 biographical cases analyzed

As we could see from the table above, the foreign Social Workers are struggling with language issues, while the Finnish citizens seem to have as bigger dilemmas the issues of the interaction with people from cultures. In the case of Samira, she was puzzled between cultures as a teenager.

X. REFLEXIVE CONCLUSIONS

In this very last chapter of this Master thesis in Social Work, I guess that it is of very significance that "many academics are squeamish about writing in the first person for a variety of reasons, stemming from the belief that it violates core postulates of modernist science", as Beatty and Torbert (2003: 248) note, based on Posner (2002). By the way, I don't review myself with this view, because since the very beginning that I have assumed that I am part of this complex process that is the making of a thesis. Then, myself has been expressed in every single word that has been (and will be) written. What means that I clearly assume "reflection as a right and a responsibility of citizenship" (Levy, 2007: 22).

Regarding the demographic issues, it seems clear for Europe in general and Finland in particular what Keynes has predicted during the storm that was the crash of 1929: "from now on we need not expect so great an increase of population" (Keynes, 1963), unless there happens a huge and massive influx of international migrants into the Finnish and European borders. And the migration to Finland started, as stated on this thesis, at least in the time of the Roman empire, namely with the visit of its historian Tacitus. Basically, the homogeneity of a place (in this case a country) is only apparent if seen from the outside, because in the inside our senses feel the multiple (Santos, 2002).

With respect to the empirical analysis, John and Maria are both Social Workers, but they look to the profession in distinct ways: while John refers to himself as a Social Worker, Maria mentions Social Work as a degree that she has. What is also of very significance is the different way in which they refer to their native countries: Maria talks about Portugal always in the past, although she likes it; and John talks about his dear Zambia as something that lasts forever: the past that he glorifies, the present that he exhaults (namely the sense of community that exists there), and the future that he wants to be the best and that he wants to contribute to.

In sum, Maria is now living in Finland and plans to continue there without forgetting her origins, while John navigates between his "two homes": Finland and Zambia. In which place his boat will berth? Only the future will tell us if he really wants he's boat to be alongside. But in all of the 4 persons interviewed for this thesis it became clear that each self should be seen as a "not yet (*noch nicht*), a finite event that is always pressing forward, always on the way" (Aho, 2007: 222). This specific idea seems to be especially visible in Samira that feels definitely belonging to both Finland and Iran, as well as Kurdistan, the nation through which she has identified herself firstly.

John's life path in Finland is a clear example about the urgency that the Finnish welfare state has to attract Social Workers, because in order to be a qualified Social Worker, one must have completed 5 years (bachelors+masters according to the Bologna rules) of higher education in the field of Social Work. And although this Zambian man is just about to start his masters, he has already had contracts to work as a Social Worker, although it was only when he was studying. Finland then needs more professionals from this area of knowledge, those that are the most visible face of the welfare state, as Valtonen (2001) points out. However, the skills of both John and Maria are not being fully utilized, since they have been mostly working in professions that do not correspond to their qualifications. This resembles the "hierarchization" that Santos (1999) talks about regarding migration: the immigrants are much more in risk of developing tasks to which they are overqualified.

Moreover, and although some scholars tend to put the merely financial issues in the frontline of the reasons that sustain the move and staying of a person into another country, the life stories highlighted here show that that fixist and deterministic focus on financial issues is many times wrong. And why did I've said financial instead of economical? Because I review myself on the view that Edgar Morin expresses in many books: that Economics are much more than finance. And according to this same thinker, even Economics offer a too limited explanation, because it does not take into account the human being and its feelings, namely its pains, its dreams, its passions and its aspirations. Passions and aspirations, respectively what moved John to and made Maria stay in Finland: John still aspires to help others and acquire more knowledge in Finland before return and help on the improvement of the quality of life of the inhabitants of his beloved Zambia; Maria stayed in Finland because she fell in love with a Finnish man, a relationship that gave her two kids that attach her to Finland. Then, both empirical cases analyzed here show that the economical determinants are not enough to explain one's move to another country. In this way, talking about the man as merely 'homo

economicus' leads to a narrow vision that often forgets the cultural and inner perspectives of each individual, both critical for the understanding of the migratory paths of the human species. This calls for a deeper and more holistic approach of the migration issues by combining multiple disciplines, as it was tried in this work, because "a researcher cannot achieve the kind of authentic certainty with econometric models that mainstream economics promises" (O'Boyle, 2016: 70).

Regarding the life stories of Iida and Samira, what seems of very significance is the fact that they are both working as Social Workers (although not with a permanent contract) without holding the necessary qualification to be a Social Worker in Finland (that is 3 years of Bachelors+2 of Masters degree). On the other hand, it is worth to talk about the way in which they have identified themselves: while in the discourse of Iida it seems to prevail the factor work as the main identifier, for Samira the countries (Finland and Iran) and the nation (Kurdistan) seem to be of primary relevance when she describes herself. Moreover, even Iida referred to Samira as Kurdish, what seems to resemble the fact that Samira really stresses her belongingness to Kurdistan. Still about Samira, and although she masters the Finnish language, she have faced cultural shocks, especially in her teenage years, when she did not knew how to proceed in certain circumstances, due to her mixed background.

Something that the past and the present teach us is that we went from proletarians to migrants, as it was suggested by Branko Milanovic. But the cases of both John and Maria, that have been able to only have short-term working contracts from time to time, teach us something more and make us wonder if these very same migrants are not part of a "precariat" (Jakonen *et al*, 2012), people that don't have that much certainties regarding their working life and that are obliged to shift from job to job indefinitely. John and Maria reflect the notion that although the service sector is in increasingly demand, in a certain way that very same field in which the Social Workers act is "precarious by excellence", as Gomes put it (2011: 13). And even more precarious for the immigrants, even those that have a degree from a Finnish higher education institution, as the case of John clearly shows.

From the machro-historical sociological approach taken during the process of making this thesis, it became clearer that the human species is in a constant move, and that while in the modern era the establishment of roots was an urgency connected with the affirmation of the Finnish state and inherent territory, in the postmodern times the ability and need to mutate are increasingly valued, as the cases of both Social Workers here analyzed show. This is in

line with the findings of Bauman (1996), and resembles also the notion that we do not necessarily have roots, but routes, as suggested by Trux (2010). In addition, both situations reflect the idea previously mentioned in this thesis that the individual paths of each person are increasingly less predicted by the institutions, according to Touraine. But it shows more, namely that it does not “exist predefined rules” that would regulate the behavior of each individual. It is the individual by him/herself that determines the rules of the games that (s)he is playing in life, according to Castro-Gomez (2000: 157), inspired by Lyotard (1990). Although one could not ignore that the Finnish Welfare State should create new possibilities for the integration of its immigrants in general and to the immigrant Social Workers in particular. Among those means to promote the integration, I propose that the Finnish higher education institutions that offer international degrees in Social Work make a questionnaire in the beginning and in the middle of the degrees: through them they will get to know who is willing to stay in Finland working as a Social Worker, and then offer to these students a more intensive and consistent teaching about the Finnish language and culture. For the Finnish nationals Social Workers, I would suggest the promotion of broader courses to reflect on the intercultural dialogue, namely to deal with the cultural shocks with clients.

Limitations of the study

Regarding the limitations, this research, that aimed to give a national overview, shows only cases from the cities of Helsinki on Turku, that moreover are both located in the Southern part of Finland. About the foreign Social Workers interviewed, and since they are both unemployed at the time of the interviews, it was not possible to interview possible colleagues. Another one is strictly connected with the fact that the country here analyzed has scarce numbers of Social Workers with a foreign background. And this makes it harder to find the persons for the interview. On another perspective, the empirical findings of my research consist of interviews with people from Helsinki and Turku, both localized in Southern Finland, being one the actual capital (Helsinki) and the other the previous capital (Turku). This fact calls for further research on this topic in other regions of Finland and from other perspectives. What inherently means a travel outside of the great centers. A travel that is worth it and that I am willing to take part in a future research.

Future research

The analysis made in this work points to the non-existence of a full employment system that will allow for the maintenance of the welfare state with the model that it has since the middle XX century. So, there is a need to do research in order to find solutions that could reshape the welfare state. And since the full-employment is not a reality nowadays, it is very important to also ask about the other ways to integrate people in Finland, both the immigrants and the natives. And in the particular case of the immigrants there is the need to see integration in a broader way instead of only having a working contract and an 8-16h job. Because that immigrant individual that has a successful job might be the very same person that doesn't have any kind of connection with the other persons in the neighborhood in which (s)he inhabits, or no acquaintances in the surroundings, what means a lack of social integration.

This seems an important issue that must be researched if we consider the reduction of work available (De Masi, 2000) to fulfill one's everyday life. In this way, could the Finnish welfare state maintain its logic of full employment for its own sustainability, and in this way could work still be considered as the main mean for integration in the Finnish society? Following this path, it would be important to assess the evolution of the work ethic in Finland in the long-term, what means an analysis of the perceptions of work in different generational cohorts. Moreover, it would be very important to study other forms of attracting migrants, namely those that happen through the internet, because as the case of John shows, he was navigating on the web when he has discovered and thought of completing his university degree in Finland.

From the methodological point of view, it is suggested that the future research developed in this and other fields try to promote the dialogue between the disciplines, incentivizing by this way the transdisciplinarity, urgency stressed by Edgar Morin in several works, and by Basarab Nicolescu in a specific book (2002). Following this need of thinking out of the box, one is invited to open up towards sources of knowledge that go much beyond the geographical borders of the so-called western world (Alatas, 2006), something that I guess that was achieved in this thesis by putting scholars from different fields, countries and regions in discussion. This is one of the most reliable ways to generate new products from our minds. Being a "transdisciplinary migrant" (Trux, 2010) seems then not only a tendency but also a need to be reinforced nowadays in studies concerning migration issues.

XI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX

Appendix A-Interview Scripts

A.1-Interview script with John and Maria

I-How do you describe yourself?

II-What made you choose Social Work as a degree? Which/who were your influences?

III-Why did you come to Finland?

IV-What made you stay in Finland?

V-There are challenges that you have been facing as a qualified Social Worker in Finland? Which are they?

VI-What are your aspirations for your future?

A.2-Interview script with Iida and Samira

I-How do you describe yourself?

II-What made you choose Social Work as a degree? Which/who were your influences?

III-What has made you work with immigrants?

IV-There are challenges that you have been facing as a qualified Social Worker at the workplace and/or with the clients? Which are they?

V-What are your aspirations for your future?

Appendix B-Transcription of the Interviews

B.1-Transcription of the interview with “Maria”, Social Worker from Portugal, realized on the 29th of January 2016

Q. Tell me a bit about you.

-I am Maria, I have lived in Portugal until 2006, I have studied Social Work in Matosinhos (Portugal), that at that time was a 5 years degree. Now i am not properly sure, but it was before the Bologna process started. When i have finished my degree, it started the Bologna process. Then, when I was on my fourth year, I had the interest in become an Erasmus student. And it was due to that that I have went to Finland. But my idea was not to come to Finland.

Q. So which country did you had in your mind?

-Italy (laughs).

Q. So, you wanted to go to Italy?

-Yes. There were "x" available places to Italy. But at that time my Professor asked me if i knew the Italian language. And I said that no. So she said: "then you cannot go, because there they don't use the English language". And i said "ok". After that I have realized that there was an available place to Finland, and I knew that Finland was actually excellent from the educational point of view. And my only idea was: "why not? Let's go!"

Q. So, you didn't had to think twice when you saw the opportunity to go to Finland, because what you really wanted was to make an Erasmus?

-No. What I really wanted was Erasmus. Being out of Portugal, the experience. And then I was thinking: "but why not Finland?" To be honest it didn't came to my mind. But when i had the chance I said to myself: "yes. Let's go!"

Q. And before you went, which were your expectations? Did you had any plans? High expectations? Which were your expectations?

-Well, I think that at that time, if I remember properly, my greatest objective was to be at my home, independent, and to try the real life of an adult (laughs). At that time, when I have thinked of Finland, I was thinking about the cold, yes (laughs). But I was really interested, because I have heard, and it was acknowledged through the media, that Finland was excellent

in educational issues. Then I was more than ready, and I've wanted to come, without any fear. But I went with a friend. A colleague from my class.

Q. And have you felt that the fact that you haven't come alone was relevant?

-I am sincere. I am courageous, courageous, but not until that point. I guess that I have felt that I needed someone to be with. And at that time I have went with a friend, and fortunately everything went really well. Because not all the time, and I have already seen many cases here, while I was an Erasmus and after, there are many close friends.

Q. Yeah, yeah. Many times things don't work.

-In my case, it was not a close friend. It was just a colleague from my class, and then we became friends. And still today we are friends.

Q. And she is still here or, she has left?

-No. Actually she is in England.

Q. So, she has also studied Social Work?

-She is a Social Worker. We have finished the degree in the same year. She is in the social area, but not acting as a Social Worker. So, I have went here. But the Erasmus was just four months. So it was a really short experience.

Q. And how do you describe that little experience? Because it was a short experience that had a great impact in your life.

-Absolutely. So great, that after that I have decided to come here again (laugh).

Q. And which were the motives that made you return?

-Well, colleagues that went in Erasmus in that year from other schools had to went to the classes. And my Erasmus was a bit different from that point of view. Because we, me and my colleague, went to a sort of traineeship. It was in a home shelter. I have chosen, at that time, domestic violence. I was in Portugal doing an apprenticeship in a home shelter, and my friend was doing her at a prison. So, we have tried, when we went here, to do the apprenticeship in that same area. But, and even if it looks incredible, without they let us to know, they simply didn't accepted and didn't told us their decision. So, they have sent me and my colleague to a home shelter for people with disabilities. What is completely different. Fortunately for me it was magnificent. In Portugal I have already had lots of interest in that field. I have completed a professional degree as a Sociocultural Animator. So I have always liked to work with people with disabilities.

So, that Erasmus was spectacular because I just had good experiences: it was the issue of being living with my friend in a house. I had to cook a bit. Because I had never cooked before. That kind of personal things. And I had the desire to get to know a new culture, behave with many people from different countries. Spectacular! And moreover I was really fortunate, because the people that worked in my apprenticeship place were magnificent.

Q. Still, here in Finland?

-Yes. I have been in Joensuu. Me and my friend, we were in distinct institutions, but we were connected. She was with users with deep disabilities. In my case, I have worked with users that had not that deep disabilities. So I have just loved. It was an experience that really marked myself. It was the beginning of a new life.

Q. So, was it a turning point in your life?

-Definitely!

Q. So, and by what you have just said, your Erasmus experience was just a key moment in your life.

-Indeed! Really! Until then, I was living in the same house. A small house for 5 persons. With two bedrooms. Then I have satisfied my need of having my bedroom, my space. To feel where I am.

Q. So, where did you feel that you were when you have been in Portugal?

-Hummm... I don't know what to say.

Q. And where do you feel that you are, while in Finland? You feel that you went to a better place?

-Oh... There are several phases. Obviously I had other age, it was a long time ago. And I have passed through many things since I am here in Finland. There are several factors to consider in this issue. But during the time of my Erasmus, it was a way to discover a bit of the world. I have stayed here in Finland. But I have felt like... I don't know what to say... But yeah, I have felt myself living, you see?

Q. So, and by what you have said, Erasmus for you means life?

-Yes. And I have found it impressive that when I have returned later, a colleague from the degree in Social Work was doing her Erasmus and she just gave up before the end.

Q. She went home?

-Yes. I mean: someone that goes for an Erasmus knows that normally will return home. It is an experience of a few months... And give up? What? Almost everyone probably misses the family. That normal stuff. But you know that later you will return. For me it was really weird that someone quited in such an oportunity. It is... is something.

Q. Since you are in Finland, during your Erasmus and later on, you have never thought of return to Portugal?

-No. Obviously that in the beginning, not in Erasmus, I have missed. But that was normal, not that kind of feeling that is not healthy. But when I have really started to live here, of course that I have had more painful moments, I could say. There yes. It was at that time that I was starting my life here. It is different.

Q. Yes.

-But Erasmus is a personal experience. Is to get to know the culture, the people, the system. I mean...

Q. For you, which were the main difficulties that you have felt during your traineeship in Joensuu?

-It was a long time ago, but... I had much luck, really. Because they have never made me felt bad, or that I was less than them. They talked to me in English. Even the users there, they talked to me in English. And the Finnish people that worked there didn't even knew that the users knew how to speak in English. So, it was super funny, they treated me super well. In fact, I have felt someone special.

Q. And what was the reason for that feeling?

-Because I was foreigner, Portuguese. They had curiosity. I have felt so welcome because I was different. Like this: "oh, you are Portuguese? How is it there?". And to see the struggle for the users to talk to me in English. And then their affection. They gave me hugs... It was fantastic! Obviously that there were also those moments, like when we were having the breakfast or so, and between them the staff needed to talk they made it in Finnish.

Q And how did you felt in those moments?

-I had no reasons to feel bad, because what was important for me they spoke in English. So, they made all the efforts for me to don't feel excluded.

Q. So, and because Finland has a short history of mass immigration, they have just looked to you with curiosity, as someone exotic...

-Exactly. And don't forget that it was in Joensuu. Much different from the Southern Finland, where there are lots of foreigners. In Joensuu not that much. So, it was really different. And my supervisor invited me and my friend, as we were in the same institution, to spend weekends at her place and to have sauna together. It was really funny because I have started thinking and then I have just said: "look, we will have sauna with the bikini dressed, right?" And she answered: "of course not. But why?" And i said: "because you are my supervisor." What means that i just went with the Portuguese mentality: be with someone above you in the hierarchy of the organization... I mean: it is a bit intimate, no? But it was so ridiculous... Later... Oh my God! (Laughs).

Q. So, it was a cultural shock, right?

-Yeah. Like for them, the Finns in general, it was a shock the way in which we greet in Portugal.

Q. You give two kisses in the face, right?

-Yes. It happened. That supervisor of mine had a friend that worked in another day shelter. When I was introduced to her, my first reaction was to make the move towards the two kisses in the face, because she was a woman, and she immediately (made a move backwards and reached out the arm for a shake hands). And I was like "woooooow!". These are the cultural differences that I have found really interesting and funny.

Q. So, these were cultural differences that you have found funny. That were not shocking?

-No, no! She was the one that was correct. And it was only later that I have realized how ridiculous I was in that situation. Because in Portugal is a bit like that...

Q. Yes. The Portuguese mentality. But I don't found it ridiculous.

-For me, and although we are both woman, she is my supervisor, "boss" (laugh).

Q. It was during those moments that you have realized the equity that exists in Finland regarding hierarchical issues? Like that you don't have to treat your boss like "Doctor something", like we usually do in Portugal? Here you have felt that?

-Ah! Exactly! Now that you talk about it, I remember that I have found it extremely funny that at my workplace there were the boss, but you didn't really realized who was, and who was not the boss. Here in Finland, as you know, people don't use outside shoes at the inside. They are really simple. I mean, usually there is no suit and tie, or better clothes... I mean, here is everyone equal, simple. And I have found it spectacular. I was so used to that bureaucracy, hierarchy, that is horrible and in which I have felt as if I was living in a prison regarding

these issues, because we always tend to say: "oh, Mr. Dr., oh something". No! And here no. For them is everyone "hän". Very simple.

Q. And that was one of the motives that bring you back to Finland?

-Yes. It was everything. The way in which I was received at the institution, all of this way of treatment in which you don't need to call "Mr./Mrs. Doctor". Because in my native city there were people full of money that prefer the brand "x", brand "xpto", and so on... You see, for me, I have never liked that behavior that much. And now here, I've went here, and haven't felt nothing like that. It was a breath of fresh air. (laughs)

Q. So, you have felt that you were in Portugal with that hard hierarchy, and here you have felt...

-That we are all equal.

Q. You have went here because you wanted to become independent and to know the world. So, metaphorically, did you felt that you went from the jail to the freedom?

-Yes, Yes. And in many ways. I had my house, my freedom.

Q. You had your own space...

-Yes. Finally.

Q. And did you felt that your space, your house, is in some way the continuation of yourself, like a scientist has suggested?

-(Laughs) Yes, yes! It has to do with so many things in our lives... And it is an extended conversation... (laughs).

Q. And since we are here to have a conversation, you could talk about that.

-(Laughs) No. I have always been very dependent and protected by other people. Or because I had problems in my eyes, or in the nose... Whatever. I have been submitted to surgery. I am a daughter, living at that time with my grandmother living in the same bedroom. I mean, all of those things make what we are, and here I have felt: now I have space, now I have freedom. And it was really good. And in fact the difference between the cultures, the people... It was good to go out of my reality for a while...

Q. So, even from the identitary point of view, you have felt a renovated person, a new being, a third person. You were one thing before you have arrived and another right now?

-Yes. Of course that it has been a long process.

Q. And does it continues to be a process?

-Yes, yes. And in fact it was good for me to come to Finland.

Q. And which were the motives that bring you back to Finland?

-Because later I was in the fifth last year, the last of my degree, and it happened that I was talking with someone from the University office, or something, and I took a look into the wall, and saw informations about the Leonardo Da Vinci program. I suddenly said: "I want to do that!" And the lady answered: "but the applications end today or tomorrow". Something like that. And I was like "whaaat?" And she said "yes". But I said: "i really want to go!" Then she said: "but it is you that must find your own traineeship placement abroad". Then I have realized that the only place in which I have contacts is in Finland, in Joensuu, with my supervisor. I have contacted her, and the lady from the university office was amazing because she gave me an extra day to conclude my application. She have realized that there was really the chance, and that it was mainly a bureaucratic matter. Also because in Finland there are 2 hours in advance comparing to Portugal. And my supervisor, once again excellent, went to talk with her boss, dealt with all the documents needed. Well, I don't know how, me and my friend went to Finland again (laugh).

Q. So, you and your friend after Erasmus, you have just returned to the same scenario.

-Yes. We have really liked it. It was magical. (laughs)

Q. Because it was just on the last minutes and you didn't even knew about. You get to know it in the very last day.

-Exactly!

Q. So, in some way, in that day you have realized that you had to definitely move to Finland?

-Look: we have returned from our Erasmus on the 22nd of December 2006. And in April 2007 we went to Finland for a 15 days holidays. (Laughs) Let's go!

Q. In Joensuu?

-In Joensuu, we also went to Helsinki, Tallin... It was not that we were thinking that we will never return to Finland, but we were not thinking "we will certainly return to Finland!". Maybe the normal was to finish the degree, stay in Portugal working... I wanted to return, but at the same time I was thinking "well, maybe I will stay here in Portugal." But I went in

holidays, and then there was the possibility of finish the degree and went abroad through the Leonardo Da Vinci program... Finland.

Q. You haven't thought twice?

-I was thinking "ah, now I will return!" And of course that there were different expectations. The experiences were distinct.

Q. If it was another, which was the expectation? Certainly a renewed one, but which was it?

-Of course that it was not that great novelty. I felt it as something more serious. It was not anymore just the personal experience. To compare, in Erasmus I have just had a few weekly working hours. There were not long working days; and on the Leonardo Da Vinci I have felt that it was a job. It was supposed to take 9 months. But the things didn't work really well. We went in November 2007, and the money didn't come, the scholarship didn't come. In Erasmus, much less money, everything worked well. In the Leonardo Da Vinci, it was supposed that the money would come, but nothing has arrived in my account. So, I have went here with my own savings. But I was thinking: "well, they will pay me..." But I had to spend my Christmas in Joensuu because I had no chance to go to Portugal spend it with my family. But for everything: I came to Finland in November, and in December I would be returning to Portugal? So I was thinking a bit and I have decided: "no, the scholarship has not arrived yet. No, no, no."

Q. You preferred to don't take the risk and to play it safe?

-Yes. And my friend, that could perfectly go to Portugal, understood that if I was about to stay alone, she stayed with me. Then, and after the delay on the payment of the scholarship, they have changed the duration of my internship: from 9 it went to 6 months. So it will end in May.

And it was totally different. My friend went to the same institution as I did, where I have made my Erasmus. And I have had a 8 hours/day job. I am not sure if it was 7 or 8, but it was 7 or 8. But the staff of the institution was excellent once again, because when I was doing the Leonardo Da Vinci and receiving the scholarship, during the Easter holidays, that they call "hihtoloma", part of the staff went for holidays. So, they were in need of personnel. And instead of contacting a recruitment agency, they put me and my colleague working there as substitutes. Well, and it was a good money.

In three weeks I have received 1000 euros. And I have never received before 1000 euros. Huh!!! In a job to which I was already receiving a scholarship to be there. They made the choice and selected us. It was their choice, because they took into account our situation. And it was good. It was spectacular.

Q. So, you have nothing bad to say about them.

-No. Nothing. That situation was around March/April 2008. Before, and since they knew that we will spend our Christmas in Finland, the boss of our institution managed to get an

employment for us in a shopping. To do christmas packages. In my case I have already made it in a hypermarket in Portugal. And well... I was sweating during one month to earn 500 euros. It was a dogy month. Without exagerating: a dogy month. And in Joensuu, as a sum, with days of interval, I have worked 8/9 days that was not a 8 hours/day job. I was able to go to the toilet and to drink water whenever I wanted to. That is, different rules. And I have received 500 euros that didn't really costed anything. Now you see the difference from Portugal to Finland.

In the hypermarket in which I used to work, to go to the toilet it was a "oh my god!". To drink water? No way! I mean: It was really, really strict. And here I have received the scholarship plus 1000 euros for 3 weeks of work. Then I was thinking: "Everything is cool here. In every aspects" (laughs). So, in December 2007 i had that job in the shopping, and in the Easter of 2008 I have worked as a substitute for the institution in which I was doing my internship.

Q. And what happened after those three weeks of paid work at the institution?

-Then we have continued the traineeship normaly until the end. After I have been in holidays there in July. Later I have been in holidays in Portugal, and after that I have returned to Finland definitely.

Q. So, you have finished the Leonardo and then you haven returned?

-Yes. In my internship place I have met a friend that became my boyfriend. Finnish. And I was thinking: "well, I want to be with him. I already had this employment, already have a good pocket money, Is like to be here".

Q. So, you have felt that you were already adapted?

-Yes. And I have decided: no doubts. I am gonna stay here. I thought that because I already had working experience here it would be easier to find employment. But the things have changed (laughs)...

Q. Changed... And what happened with that change?

-Since the moment in which I had the permanent residence, I went to Portugal with my boyfriend in holidays. My friend has finished the Leonardo and went here only in holidays. When I moved to Finland, I went immediately to the employment office, with the hope to find and employment. So I've went there and they asked me: "what do you want?" And i have answered: "I want to find employment". The answer was: "now you will learn the language" (Laughs).

Q. So, you have studied the language?

-It was like that during some years, because it is a slow process. In the first course in which I was enrolled, I have stopped it one month before it's ending, because I was in maternity license. And here in Finland is completely different from Portugal. Here you can stay until three years at home. I haven't stayed the three years at home. Because I wanted to study again. 5 hours/day. Because in Portugal the maternity license is just of few months. But in the end I have stayed 17 months in maternity leaving, and only then I have went to study again.

Q. The language?

-Yes. Only that. Because they told me that what I needed was to learn the language. So i said to myself: "ok". Of course that, even during the language course, I was in the job hunting. I went to pizzarias, I went... I don't know. But they didn't gave me employment. Joensuu is a small city, and then there are many difficulties in that aspect of... Joensuu is a city known by being a bit racist. Something that I have only realized later, because I am white, and I was blonder at that time. But I knew it... It is a really small city, and you see that it is more complicated: they give employment to the natives or to you, if you know really well the language. Without knowing the language... hum, hum!

So, i didn't found employment, and I have ended at home with one children and studying. What was a bit frustrating, because I had already finished my degree. I was thinking: "what I am going to do is to work. But how?" There appeared the negative part.

Q. Because until then everything has been marvelous?

-Yes. It was a bad situation to think: "I have finished a degree that has cost so much to my parents, during 5 years. For nothing." And the thing is that I was not thinking of getting a job in the field of Social Work. I have tried and tried many things. But nothing. And I became frustrated. And it made a difference in my life, because then I had to stay at home with my children. It was just me and the children. So, where were my colleagues from my traineeship, my Erasmus? I have switched for a much more solitary life.

Q. Without the adrenaline and Erasmus environment?

-Yes. Because in those times we were people of around the same age, always having meetings, and I was at home, isn't it? But then...

Q. Then you have felt loneliness knocking your door, in a certain way?

-(Laugh) At that time yes. And the need to talk through the Skype and... it was hard, and very frustrating. And no one gave me work. It was incredible.

Q. So, you have found yourself in a certain way excluded because no one gave you a job...?

-Yes. And it was in those moments that I have felt the differences that until then I had never felt before. But each case is different. It was the experience... Until then it had been spectacular, but after that... Well, it was the life that i have chosen, right?

Q. Yes. That you have chosen and that you have decided to carry on, right?

-Yes. Because I have taken the decision: I am not gonna go back! (Laugh)

Q. You have never been in a position in which you were thinking of leaving Finland?

-No.

Q. And even an hipothetycal will to leave Finland desapeared due to the fact that you have a kid?

-No, no, no... Because until then I have felt loneliness in certain moments, but I was not unhappy. I was also living my life. I was not married on the paper, but for me it was equal to that: I had a boyfriend, and we were living together. So I have felt that I was married. And regarding this issue I have felt well! There was only that aspect in which I have felt a bit lonely: it was just me and the children, to which I talked with, and that situation of don't have an employment... And my friend has already gone from Finland. I didn't had any longer that ambience... With this I don't mean "I want to go out at night!" No! But the opportunity of being together. Because in Portugal I have always had friends, many friends. I had a group of friends since the time in which we were 5 years old, when we have started the elementary school. Until today they are still my friends. And after, at around 17 years old, when I was finishing the degreee in Sociocultural Animation, I have had another group of friends. So, thank God there is no friends missing in my life. And they have been very important in my life.

Q. You have missed that here in Finland?

-Suddenly, it was only me and a children. The problem was not the children, that was awesome, great!

Q. Yes, yes.

-But...

Q. You were missing something more...

-Yes. When I have went here for the first time I had a friend with me. Great! People... But then, no, it was really a great impact. And at that point yes, I was not thinking anymore: "Oh, this is just for a few months and then it ends". No. It is my life.

Q. Because you don't turn back.

-No. No. These are important decisions. Neither my intention was to turn backwards! In every single aspect.

Q. Yes, yes.

-I was talking a lot with my mother. At that time I think that I was using the Messenger, and not the Skype, I don't know. And with some friends as well, yes.

Q. So, the social media were for you a way to escape from the loneliness?

-Yes. Yes. A lot. Really.

Q. You were that kind of person that was always counting the seconds until the moment in which you will contact your family and friends?

-Yes. Indeed. Indeed. And then there was the question that Joensuu is a really small city. You feel that there is nothing to do. And then, being a mother, I thought that there was nothing to do. I had no family there. If my husband was at work, I was alone. Then I didn't had the desire to be there. I have really felt that I was alone.

Q. In a certain way helpless...?

-Yes. I didn't had at least family.

Q. And your supervisor from your internship?

-She was at work. And she didn't lived in Joensuu. She lived far away. She had to come to Joensuu by car. Everything was an issue. And then here in Finland... There are good and bad things, and then it is different in certain aspects: here is little... while in Portugal there was the possibility that someone ring the bell of my home from downstairs, at my parents apartment asking: "Maria is there?", here no. Here you inform in advance, you program when you will be with the person. So, of course that from time to time I was with someone, but it was just from time to time, and it was programed. While in Portugal, at my parents place, I was used to listen to the bell ringing many times a day, here there is silence.

Q. So, do you feel that you went from an environment in which everything was unpredictable to an environment in which everything is much more programed?

-Yes. And much more peaceful. In a certain way lots of peace, calm and stuff like that. But then it comes a point... And look that I am not from Lisboa or Porto (major cities in

Portugal). I am from Povia do Varzim... People from Lisboa or Porto tell me: "oh, but there are so many things to do here in Helsinki". And I... (Laughs). But that's it, and I am not criticizing. It is just my personal experience. I just only ask people from Lisboa or Porto: "now you are complaining?"

Q. And how was it after that period in which you were at home with your children? After those moments of loneliness? What has succeeded? Any other turning point?

-After that I have realized, I have joined "Lusofin" (online forum of Portuguese people in Finland), and I have realized that they organize meetings. But then I have started thinking "Oh, but I am here so far away", and realized that here (Helsinki area) there are much more people, much more Portuguese people, more job opportunities. So I have said to my partner: "let's go to the South, because it has many job opportunities". Moreover, everytime that I went to Portugal, I had to make a travel of 5 hours by train to reach the airport. And expensive: around 60/70 euros or so. And I have said: "let's go to the South". My partner has found a job, the life was completely different. So I have stayed with him. Sometimes I think that we should think in ourselves.

Q. And then, when have you moved to the Helsinki metropolitan area?

-I have moved in the 31st of May 2013, after the death of my mother. I don't know if it was that, because I had to decide: or I go to Portugal to say goodbye to my mother, or I stay here with my children.

Q. It made you reevaluate the objectives of your life?

-Maybe. But what really gave me a great incentive... Because the worst thing that has happened to me was to not have the chance to say goodbye to my mother, because I was too far away, in Joensuu. It is like this: in a few hours you listen something about the amputation of a leg of your mother, and from the nothing I have realized that there was the possibility that she could not survive. And I had to decide what I should do: should I go with my two children (the youngest was a baby with 8 months)...? So I was thinking "well, what should I do?" So I had to bring the children with me, because my partner had to work. I had to treat the issues concerning the documents, then the travel to Helsinki, and after that a scale somewhere. I know that I have arrived in Portugal in the day in which my mother has died, a few hours later after that. So...

Q. So, that was a key moment after your Erasmus and you have your children, right?

-Yes. Children obviously.

Q. Two really happy events: Erasmus and when you had your kids, and one really sad: the death of your mother.

-Yes. Also because when my first children was born my mother was in Helsinki. She has just been there and watched the birth of my first children... She was the most important person. The one in which I could count for everything. And after she returned to Portugal in June, in August I was planning to visit her with my children and his father. I have just arrived one day after my mother has been hospitalized. And what was supposed to be a visit to Portugal, to show my children, no. I have spent there more time than what I was expecting. So I had to leave my children with a babysitter, and visit my mother everyday at the hospital in Porto.

I mean, it was something... It was complicated, because here in Finland you could stay at home during three years with the children. But I had to make a choice: or i call a babysitter, or I would not visit my mother. I mean, I had to make that. I had to visit my mother every single day. Because every day she needed me. And I don't regret that.

Q. Nothing?

-Nothing.

Q. It was then a moment that made you redefine the objectives in your life, right? Everything was reformulated?

-Yes. Completely. Because my mother was hospitalized since August 2009 until she passed away.

Q. And how did you have experienced that period? Because your mother was at the hospital, but you also had your children. How did you dealt with that?

-It was complicated, because I wanted to give more support to my mother. But no. I was here, a frustrated person because I didn't had employment. I have felt myself as a housewife. And then I had my mother hospitalized. Many negative feelings that obviously didn't helped in my personal life. Maybe I should have talked with my partner in that time... But I felt it like that, and my mother... When I was with her for the last time, in 2012, i didn't knew that it would be the last time. The only year in which I have spent my only Christmas in Portugal since I went to Finland, after so many years... And my mother had the tears in her eyes, walking with the help of a hiker towards the lift. And I have told her: "oh, mom, don't be like that, please! I will visit you during the summer". But i didn't, because my second children was born in August. Obviously that later I have felt regrets, because I only had in my mind that I would only visit Portugal with my partner and both children. It was my objective to go with both children. I don't know.

Q. It was your objective.

-And then it came May 2013, and my father was not able anymore to take care of my mother, that was bedridden. My father had to bring my mother to a nursing home. And after that she went to the hospital and later passed away there. She had problems with her utero. And due to that, at the hospital she had a cancer, because her organism had no defenses. So then I have regreted while I was thinking: "why didn't I went there to visit her?"

Q. So, 2013 was an year of changes?

-Exactly. I was there in Portugal, returned to Finland in April. After that me and my partner at that time have changed our residence to Espoo. He managed to get an employment as a practical nurse, with house and so. In Southern Finland the houses are really expensive. While in Joensuu we were paying a maximum of 200 for a house of 70m2, we have payed here 650 euros for a house with 70m2 from the company that he was working to as a practical nurse. Very good! He found employment, and of course that for me it was a breath of fresh air.

Q. It was a rebirth for you, in a certain way?

-Yes. Then I have arrived here, it was a novelty, and I get to know Portuguese people. So I didn't went depressed.

Q. The fact that you have met other Portuguese people made the difference?

-I was the only Portuguese person in Joensuu, you see? I used to say that Portuguese was the "secret language". But here it is not (laughs). And there I was the only one. While I was in Joensuu there was a Brazilian woman, what was good, I thought. I was able to practice Portuguese. And here it has been different.

Q. Through the Forum Lusofin you met other Portuguese people.

-Yes, yes. Since then...

Q. Since then, what have been the main changes?

-It was an year of changes, because in October 2013 my partner put an end to our relationship. And I didn't knew that well the people here. I had just moved recently. And I had to look for a house with my two children. And it was really hard.

Q. Was it challenging?

-A challenge and another turning point in my life once again. Really, really remarkable. Because I have ills... But increasingly less, because it was more than 2 years ago, and the time helps on everything. But it was very complicated. Very hard.

Q. And how did you managed to live here with two children with you?

-Yes. I was still in the maternity license period of my daughter, that was with one year old at that time. But in fact there was no chance to make too much plans, because I have spent two

months looking for a home. And I felt that like if it was one year. Really hard. There is no chance to make great plans, because things suddenly change.

Q. So, those months were hard, and were did you stayed during that period?

-I was a zombie. A zombie can't eat. And i didn't got to eat, so I have just gave to eat. In a different city and country. The houses were really expensive. I have ended renting a house by 950 euros, that was a bedroom of 49m2. But it was my house. My very first house. Mine. For me and for my children. Then I had to work (...). I have been only one month unemployed. It falled from the sky (laugh). I have received a call in Finnish. And actually I was not able to understand everything from that call. So I went to a place called "InEspoo", and there was a lady that was really helpful. She helped me with the bureaucracy... a lot. I was asked if I would like to work in a day shelter for people with disabilities. And I said "Aham! Aham! Ok!" (laugh). I have went to the interview and I was selected.

Q. So, both in Joensuu and in Espoo, you have never really acted as a Social Worker?

-No. I have worked and actually work as a Ohjaja (monitor).

Q. But do you still have the dream of working here as a Social Worker?

-I think that I have never quited, but... The thing is that i am not a person that wanted to become a Social Worker since I was a child. I felt attracted by the social field. But I was not thinking: "Oh, I want to become a Social Worker!" And it also costs a bit, because here in Finland they have one "weapon": the language (laughs). Of course. (...) There are other Portuguese people employed here, but they work in different fields.

Q. Like Management, Business, Informatics...

-Exactly! In offices in which they mostly speak English. I have started to realize, through the hardest way, that the jobs in the social area in this country, without the Finnish, are very hard.

Q. You have found Finnish a very difficult language?

-Yes, yes. And after this time in which I have been working, I am much better than what I was, but I am afraid... I don't say that it is impossible, because i don't know what will happen tomorrow, but I am not focused exclusively on being a Social Worker. No. First I want to know the language, step by step. I don't know. Maybe I am more inclined for the no.

Q. Returning, what made you choose Social Work in your degree?

-The influence of friends of mine during the secondary school. I was taking the degree as a Sociocultural Animator, and actually I had a job. Honestly, I have never liked to study (laughs). I have never been that ambitious regarding this issue. But I have always been curious. So I have started thinking: natural sciences, no way! So I have ended in the social sciences. Because I would like to help the elderly, the children... I have done internships in Portugal where I was working with children and the elderly.

Q. Besides, you are now working with people with disabilities. Do you fill fulfilment by working with this target group? Even if you don't act as a Social Worker?

-Yes. No doubt. Because in the end I guess that acting as a Social Worker is precisely the most boring part, if I could say it in this way, because I guess that there is not that much contact with the users. So, to be honest I don't know if I have the ambition of act as a Social Worker.

Q. I have read that it is the kind of job that many Finns don't want to do, because they found it very hard.

-Yes. It is. And here there is also a need of practical nurses, what in my opinion are really bad paid. That is why they look for foreigners to fill these jobs (laughs).

Q. Have you been enrolled in any kind of education in Finland?

-Only to study the language. I have the level 3 (in 5), that is intermediary.

Q. Are you planning to apply for Finnish citizenship?

-I have other priorities.

Q. Which?

-Firstly, have my degree in Social Work here. What is an investment. Not because I only want to become a Social Worker. My boss keep on asking me why I don't keep on my studies. And I have answered: "I am already a Social Worker, I have already studied for 5 years." But what they want is that I study to be a lahihoittaja (practical nurse). Because for that there are plenty of jobs available.

Q. So, they want you to study that because they need it?

-Yes.

Q. So, your degree in Social Work is not recognized, although it has been obtained in the EU, namely in Portugal?

-Exactly.

Q. So, about your life, what are you expecting to do?

-I want to have my job. And everything could happen.

Q. So, what is your strategy to face the unpredictable?

-I am interested on the refugees issue. Not because of the current wave. But because I would be able to apply my English language skills, as well as the Finnish that I know. Or I could try the volunteering work, so that I could also practice more the language. Or studying.

Q. Studying for what?

-For being a cooker. But now that I don't eat meat, it might be harder (Laughs).

Q. And are you planning to cook your here in Finland or in any other place?

-I have two kids. So I would need to stay with them.

B.2-Transcription of the nterview with “John”, Social Worker from Zambia, realized on the 30th of January 2016

Q. Please, John, tell me about you. Who is John?

-Well, John is a third born in a family of six. Zambian mom and Zambian dad. And I am a Social Worker. I have my degree in Social Work from Zambia. My Bachelors degree I have just finished it here in Finland (in 2014). And... well, that's pretty much. That's me.

Q. So, how old are your?

-I am 35. Born in Zambia in the 20th of February 1980, in Lusaka.

Q. And why did the third born in a family of 6 went to Finland?

-(Laughs) That's a great question. Well, I was living in Zambia, a very peaceful country, small, landlocked, one of the largest producers of cocoa. And it is the home of the biggest falls in the world, the Victoria falls... Hum, I did my diploma in Zambia, in Social Work. And when I came to check for the places for my degrees, I saw the Finnish schools being advertised online. Yeah, so, I have applied.

Q. And why did you decided to come to Finland and not for example to the UK, or the US, or other more "common" country, let's say?

-Yeah. You are right! Actually I have a lot of friends that choosed to either go to Guangzu, in China, or had the chance to go to Michigan or Chicago, were my friends are. But I have decided to come to Finland because I like a very quiet place, which was not known, and also the level of the education was a little bit considered. I am not that much of a noisy person. Not going so much. So I wanted a bit of... Yeah, yeah, yeah. A quiet, peaceful and just a good environment.

Q. And when did you moved to Finland?

-I have moved on the 21st of September, 2010. I was a bit late for my studies, because of my Visa process, as in Zambia I took a bit long... I was 2 or 3 weeks late for school.

Q. So, you have finished everything in Zambia and then you moved to Finland?

-Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q. And which were your expectations before you went to Finland?

-Well, yeah, my few expectations are...

Q. Few expectations...

-(Laughs) Yeah. What I mean by few expectations is: I came to study, so my expectation was to find a mode of study that encourages me to study, and even graduate. And also another expectation was to graduate and find a good work, because in studies Finnish is the best in Europe, so I would say the Finnish studies are the best. So it would be very profitable to work in a different environment. Even if there is a rich background about Zambian immigrants that (...) Ever since I was young, Zambia was surrounded by countries that have been involved in so many wars and conflicts. Angola is our neighbor, Congo, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia... All of these. So in Zambia there was an influx of immigrants from these countries. So I would like to work with immigrants and in a background where there are this multiculturalism. So that was my expectation: to expand my knowledge about the multiculturalism, and also to graduate and to work in this place.

Q. So, it is your expectation to work in Finland? You have expected to live a few years in Finland?

-Yeah, yeah, yeah. I have expected to graduate and then a few years later I could go back to my country.

Q. So, return to Zambia is still a plan?

-Yeah. It is good to see how the work culture is here, so I could also have the chance to work back in Zambia, and also learn how to help the Social Work in Zambia.

Q. When you have just arrived, have you felt great difficulties?

-Well, when I came, another thing that I didn't know was that Finland had zero tolerance towards anglophone or francophone (Laugh).

Q. And you speak English and also French?

-I speak both. Yeah. So, when I came, some difficulties that I had were: number one, the language barrier, number two, the fact that I was coming from Zambia, which is an African country where people interact easily. So I have expected people to be more interactive (...).

Q. And how did you manage to deal with those interaction problems that you have faced?

-Well, the good news was that our study program was in English, and we were representing sixteen countries. People from different countries. About sixteen countries in one class. And we had a few Finns that were speaking a bit of English. So in the end I could ask them a few questions. And also I had school tutors. But then, when after school you come back home, you are living in an environment in which they are international students. So, that's how it was.

Then back in 2010 some of those Finns didn't even spoke English. And you have asked them: why can't I find sort. And they go like: "What is sort?" (Laugh). So, it's like that. It has been quite, quite, quite mind opening. So, it was really a bit tough. You see postals which are writen in Finnish. In the apartment in which you are living you don't even know what it means. And you can't speak to someone here in Finland saying: "Hey! Can you interpret this one?" But how I did managed was like this: everytime I used to take a phone, take a photo, take it to school, because I had a few friends. So I have asked them: could you interpret this one for me, please? And they made it: this one means "this", this one means "that" (laugh). I was like "ok".

Q. So, it was your way to deal with the daily difficulties?

-Yeah. Yeah. And also from the school tutors, I mean, the lecturers. If i didn't understood anything, I would ask them: "what is this, and what is that?"

Q. So, colleagues and tutors, they were your main supporters here?

-Yeah.

Q. When you have moved to Finland, you already had family or friends here from Zambia or other countries?

-Well, there were other Zambians living here already, but when I have moved from there, I had no idea about what I would meet. But for us, because we are Zambians and we care for each other... So, it's easy: if I say I am Zambian, other Zambians will come and get to know me. And when I moved here it was just me, myself and I. And I have tried to find the Zambians that were living in Finland. So, aparently in this zone in which I was living there was only one Zambian who was in he's way out, because he was graduating. So, I have only met one Zambian in the beginning. Yeah.

Q. But the other Zambians here in Finland had a great importance for your integration in Finland?

-Yes. They are very supportive, and it's easy to integrate in the sense that that Zambian introduced me to a Finnish Zambian association, in which I am currently a chairman.

Q. So, you are working there?

-Yes. I am working there voluntarily. Because it is a nonprofitable organization. But it does a lot of work, because there is no Zambia embassy in Finland. So, every problem that a Zambian encounters, there is the Finnish-Zambian association, that takes care of it. So, that's how it is.... Oh, he introduced me to that, he gave my e-mail to the secretary, and the first thing that we had was the Zambian independence party. I went to meet some of them that were thirty or forty years old. That's how it is... They are good because I was free to ask them

the questions about how does it go, because Zambia is more like the opposite of Finland. Yeah.

Q. Zambia is the opposite of Finland in which sense?

-Well, Zambia as the general countries is the opposite of Finland: Finland is cold, Zambia is hot; Finns are quiet, Zambians are talkative (laugh). So that is what I mean: we are more like the opposite. Finns are more quiet and reserved. We are a talkative country. Most of the African countries have a talkative culture. So when you ask the Finns... I don't know. But when you ask how to do, the Zambians will try to find means and ways: they will find the direction, they will take you to the place where you are supposed to go. But here the Finns just write you a map. So, that is what I mean: like the opposite, we do the things a bit more differently.

Q. So, you have arrived in Finland at the age of 30.

-Yes.

Q. And which was the reason that made you chose Social Work as your profession?

-I really want to help communities and people. I just want to develop the community and to develop the people as a whole. I am coming from a background were my father was a justice/awyer. My mother was a lecturer. So, for my father, that is how it was. And he could save individuals. But for me, I want to save a great amount of them.

Q. So, your family in some way had a great influence in your studies.

-Yes, yes.

Q. So, when you were living in Zambia, you had any kind of economical problems? You have faced that, or not that much?

-Well, normally... How can I tell you... I don't think I had much of economical problems because my parents were working. And the school system is different in Zambia. It's privatized.

Q. So, did you went to the private school?

-I went to school. There were quite many schools there. From kindergarten, primary and other.

Q. And secondary.

-Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q. And when have you found your first job as a Social Worker here in Finland? How was it, how did you find it, which were the obstacles?

-Well, the first work that I have got as a Social Worker was during my practical placement. Because in every place that I have made my practical placement, they asked me to work later on. I did my practical placement in a religious institution in the Helsinki area. And I was employed there. I was running the Friday night cafe. It was a church. And the Friday night cafe was mainly about international students who come from different places for a meeting every Friday. The organization provided tea and created a space in which there was someone to talk to, to meet them. And after that I was also leading another project from the same church, which had services before Sunday. And I have also worked in the taking care of the children. The church was providing the service to the members and other people: like if they have commitments and they have no one to leave the child with, because it takes a lot of money, the church provided this service. So that was my first place to work.

And then secondly I did my practical placement in a home for teenagers. Those that are not living with their parents. And I was also employed there. Mostly you get about 6 months contract as a student, because you can't speak Finnish. But then for an international church, because that place is multicultural, I did my services in English. So, there was no problem. And when I was employed, I had to learn my basic Finnish. Because I was supposed to know how to welcome people, and such things. And, that is how it was.

Q. So, there were no major problems, and have you felt that the fact that you have been studying in Finland was an advantage for you to get those jobs?

-Yes!!! Because I was studying here and I was also learning how the system works. So, it was easy in that way.

Q. So, do you think that it would be harder if you haven't been studying in a Finnish university?

-Yeah. Yeah.

Q. Even in that church?

-Hum... Not really in the church. In the church it was open, because when we went as students, we discover that it was an English place. And I also knew people who were working there, who did their studies... But mostly, after a while some studies from here. For you to get it. Because the people that I remember to work there have completed their studies here.

Q. You said that you had friends there. What means that you had some connections already?

-No, no, no. I didn't knew anyone. I just went there as a... We were like four people there.

Q. Social Workers?

-Yes. From my class. One from Canada, Ghana, Nigeria and myself. Not everybody go to that place of employment, They saw the services that we were offering. Because when you go to your practical placement, they give you a chance to explore your ideas. They show you how to run their services, and then they ask you: "how could you help us to improve"? Or "what do you think that we could do?" And then they decide on themselves on the positive ones. So, that is how it was.

Q. So, you have finished recently your Bachelors degree in Social Work.

-Yeah. In 2014.

Q. What have you been doing since you have finished your degree?

-Well, I have been trying to apply for a job. When I was a student it was easy to get a job. For these two times for 6 months. Because I have also worked to YMCA as an international student tutor, and also at the Helsinki Human Rights, as a sports coach.

Q. Volunteering?

-No. With contract. With employment contract. So then, when I have graduated, I went back they have said: "Now you have to learn Finnish, because employment needs so. When you were a student we in some way forgot this, but now that you are graduated"... So now I have been trying to get employment and trying to learn Finnish. I am now enrolled in a Finnish course. So, I have not gotten any calling or any job as a Social Worker after my graduation. But I have had jobs like cleaning jobs and jobs like this, not Social Work.

Q. Then you have been struggling to maintain your standard of living?

-Yeah, yeah. It is. It is. Because when you work as a Social Worker, as you wanted to study for, you expect to work and also to get paid by that. But then you don't get a job up to your educational level. So it means that you go for other jobs and then we get paid less. So, that is a struggle.

Q. So, you feel that language has been a problem for you to find a job as a Social Worker?

-Yeah. Yeah.

Q. Because of the language or something more?

-No. Normally... I don't know if they require anything else, but mostly for me it has been the language. Because when I was a student, every places to which I have went to and in which I have worked... Every feedback that you get from the placement place... Mostly all places I got employed. They said. "John is a very good worker". And then they gave me a contract for 6 months. But again... When you graduate you go there and they say: "No. You got to learn Finnish". So, that is... (laughs) That is the only barrier that I have. All of these places in which I have worked before, when I go back and they say: "No. But you are supposed to have now a better Finnish". And I had never studied it before. They had never included much Finnish. So, now the barrier is that I have to go back to school and start learning Finnish.

Q. And what have you felt when they told you: "Now you have to learn Finnish"? You feel that as soon as you learn Finnish, you will find a job?

-Yes. That is how I feel. And that is what I think. But time goes and Finnish is not a simple language that you could learn on one day. And it's better to be in the place in which Finnish is being practiced more. Then you can easily learn. But if you are not in those environments anymore, and you are not working in a place in which Finnish is spoken, you kind of even forgot the little that you know. So, it kind of distances you a little bit when you are no longer at school, no longer active, and then you are not working in those places. So, anyway, let's see.

Q. So, do you feel that you are active even if you are not studying?

-Yeah, yeah, yeah. I am active.

Q. And what, besides working, do you do in in Finland? How is your life in Finland?

-Well, studying, working, and there isn't much to do. I try to do sports.

Q. You practice basketball, right?

-Yes. I am helping young people to play basketball. Some would say I have good skills. And I am also playing.

Q. So you teach and you play?

-Yes. But now I am not playing for a team because you don't make money in sports in Finland. So, you often buy your own license before you play for a team. The team has no support. So that is more like an investment again. So it's kind of expensive.

Q. Do you think that sports are a good way to promote your integration? Or do you already feel integrated?

-Sports, somehow, helps you to get integrated. But then I think work would make it much more easy. Because with work you interact and then you get to know people. You provide services to people, and also that way is better to integrate. But sports... Sports are limited. Sports are really limited. When we go to division one here in Finland... I was playing basketball for a team in the Helsinki area, and we were in the division 2. So we won the league and went to the division 1, and then they told me: "Well, in division 1, because it is professional". And then they have said that in division 1 they only allow 3 international passports, 3 foreigners, and as a student they couldn't allow me to be a player, full time player as well as a student. So I had to choose between the two. So I went to graduate, to finish my studies. Later there was no money for the team to stay in the division 1. So, it was out.

Q. But was it good to play basketball, since it is one of your passions?

-Yeah, yeah, yeah! I played basketball in Zambia, where I started to be called to the national team when i was 11, when I was in the high-school. So, basketball is my passion.

Q. And Social Work?

-Social Work is my lifestyle. What means being helpful to overcome our everyday social challenges to myself and the people around me.

Q. Do you feel that you are still just a Zambian, or do you describe yourself in other ways?

-Here... You know when you are welcome in a place? You feel that you are at home. That is how it is. So, it is my plan now to move to the study life in this society that with the language barriers that make you feel not much welcome.

Q. So, you don't feel welcome?

-It's like: if you have studied and you got your bachelor degree from a University and then you can't even find a way to turn the language barrier. You still feel like "aahhhhh! Am I really welcome to work???" Because we are growing up to becoming adults. And if you can't work how much can you provide to yourself? It's kind of a tricky situation. I love Finland, I love to be here, but...

Q. And you have some people here.

-Yeah, yeah! A lot of them. So, I am mad: if you can't work and can't provide, life becomes difficult. If you have studied, you have been in school, and you can't find work...

Q. And you have studied in Finland...

-Yes.

Q. They can't complain about your degree.

-Yes. That is another thing. When you come to Finland, every other education that you have from other part of the world, it doesn't count.

Q. Have you felt that, when you have applied for the Bachelors?

-When you are there, they don't really ask for anything else. Even the means of application, they don't ask about that: your qualifications. But then they just ask you "What have you been doing in life?" Then you answer that you have made "this", and "this", and "this", and "that". And then they say "Ok. Good". But they don't care that much when you get into a school.

Q. Since you are applying for a Master degree in Social Work in several universities, when they ask you what you have done in life, what do you say?

-Working and providing services. Because now, when people come from Zambia, and as a chairman of the Finnish Zambian association, I need to help those that need to be integrated and don't know how it works. I take people to the registration, to the police station... So, to these places. It's work, it's good for a few Zambians who are coming, or people from different countries, because when I was an international student I was with Erasmus students. Students from everywhere. So, you can call it work, but it is voluntary. That's what I have been doing. So, I have been studying, and working, and studying. And my life has been mostly studying.

Q. What are your aspirations right now?

-It is to do my Masters. I am not planning to play professional basketball anymore. I think I have done enough. I have been really... I have ended my career without injuries. But now I think there is more need for me to save people than to just play basketball. People need social services, and I believe I got the right skills. But let's say: how long can you live unemployed in a country? That is my point. In Finland is very difficult to live unemployed, because we don't even have our major family. You want it to be your home but you kind of... because you don't have family, no one provides for you. But when you go to Zambia, family is there, unemployment could be there because we are an anglophone speaking country, and... So, that is my point. Like, I have studied here, but is though to tell what will happen in the next few years. How long can you live unemployed? After my Masters degree, if I don't get employed again, how could you live? How could you sustain yourself without financial income? So, it's though to tell. But mostly I will just get my Masters, start a family.

Q. Do you have girlfriend?

-Well, I don't, because I was focused on my studies. I tried that when I was in school and it was so much constraining: school here, relationship there (laugh).

Q. And your future? Where do you want it to be?

-I was looking more to Finland and Zambia. And then open it wide, because I still feel like: "ok, I got my education here, Finland is structured". So I feel good to work here. And if not I would probably go back to Zambia. And if not there, I have my horizons open.

Q. Do you still have plans to return to Zambia and help your country later, as you told me when we firstly met?

-You know, I am very happy because I have two homes: being here and being in Zambia.

Q. And regarding your identity? Do you feel something similar?

-Yeah, yeah, yeah. That is true. I feel myself as a "FinnZambian" (laughs).

Q. So, you feel at home in Finland?

-I feel ok, I feel alright. The thing that sucks the most is that you don't have it all. And you can't put your skills to work. And every place where I have made my practical placement, I wish I could have here the copies of all of the recommendation letters, because they all say "He is working well".

Q. So, you have the recommendation letters?

-I have. From the practical placements.

Q. And when you apply for a job, do you send the recommendation letters as well?

-I usually fill online applications, and then i have to attach my cv there. Mostly they ask if I speak Finnish: "How much is your Finnish?"

Q. And the first thing that they ask is about language skills?

-Yeah. It is one of the first things that they ask for. Mostly they ask for language. The only problem is the language.

Q. And how do you feel that people look at you here, since you are not working? Do you feel prejudiced because you are from a geographically distant country and unemployed?

-Of course you feel it. You are an educated Social Worker, but you are working in the cleaning industry and delivering posts. Your supervisors are not as educated as you are. Because they were gotten from asylum seeking and they... Of course that you feel that intimidating.

Q. So, you have been working in short-time jobs, right? It is what you have been doing the most?

-Yes, yes.

Q. Do you feel disappointment?

-Yeah. It is really disappointing, because when you finish your degree and you want to work, to practice.

Q. Yes. You are graduated as a Social Worker, but then they answer no to your job application because of the language...

-It's so crazy that the people that I have worked with, they still tell me: "Oh, are you still working in such place?" I answer no, and then they say: "Ahhhh! How couldn't they give you a job? You are such a good worker!" And I don't know what to say... Like, then there is no job for you.

Q. Finnish people telling you such things?

-Yes. And lot of people that I have met.

Q. Do you stay in touch with the people from the places in which you have made your practical placement?

-Yeah, yeah. Sometimes I go there to do some volunteering work. I visit those places and do volunteering once in a while. Yeah.

B.3-Transcription of the nterview with “Iida”, Social Worker from Finland, realized on the 7th of April 2016

Q. Who is Iida?

- I am Iida, I am 26 years old, I was born and raised in Finland, Turku, and I am not a qualified Social Worker yet. I am also finishing my Masters...

Q. Where?

-At the University of Turku, and I am planning to graduate in a few months. So, I have worked here around 4 years now.

Q. Always as a Social Worker?

-Yes. I have been doing substitution of Social Workers, and after that I have been working here permanently with my own clientele since last August. Before that I was just substitute for the others at holidays. But now I have my own clientele. I have worked in child protection before this office. I have worked as a Social Worker with people with disabilities as well. And I have done very short substitutes on elderly care.

Q. So, you have experience in the field of Social Work with disabled people, elderly, children and now immigrants. Do you think that that variety of experiences gave you a broader vision about Social Work?

-Yes. Definitely! It has helped with the work of different kinds of people, different kinds of customers. And at this work it is not just about immigrants. We have all kinds of people: little babies, old people, families, single people. We are closely collaborating with other branches as well: disabled services, elderly care... We have child protection here as well. So, I am doing child protection here as well.

Q. Just with immigrants?

-Yes. Just immigrants. With my own clientele, regarding child protection issues.

Q. So, basically previously you have been working with elderly, disabled, children, and now you work with immigrants, which combines all of the previous experiences.

-Yes. This is a very broad variety.

Q. Looking backwards, what made Iida choose Sosiaalityö?

-Hum... There are no specific reasons for it. When I have graduated from high-school in 2009, I have started studying Business and Administration, but then I have figured out that it was not what I would want to do. I was quite confused at that point. (...) Then I have made a search at the university, and I saw Social Work. I have always thought I would like to work with people, so I thought: "why not?" And that was it. I didn't had a specific reason why. I just like to work with people, and I thought: "this sounds interesting". And also that there will be jobs (...).

Q. Which were the reasons that made you work with immigrants? The opportunity, the fascination about immigration issues, or other?

-I think it was a coincidence, because I had a Summer substitute job. I think it was in 2012. Early: around January/February. I have just sent applications, and I have got many answers. My boss at that time said: "Actually we don't have any jobs here at the moment". But later on he said to me: "Hey. Someone cancelled. Would you like to come for an interview?" And I thought: "This place sounds very interesting". Then I have just went to the interview and I get the job. So, I would say that it is a coincidence, since at that point I had studied very little about it (Social Work). I didn't knew what kind of branches there are. It was not a conscious decision.

Q. It was not a conscious decision but it was a decision that has made you happy.

-Yes!!! Definitely! I think that it was one of the happiest coincidences in my life. Yes. I really enjoy working here, and I think that one of the main reasons why I am still here is that I really like the atmosphere here, with my coworkers and my boss, and other people. And the clients: I have found the work very versatile. I have my own calendar, and I get to meet the clients when I want to meet them... There are no similar days.

Q. Yeah. There are no similar days, it is not a routine work...

-Well, we have some routines. But yes: it is not everyday the same, like factory work where you just do the same every day. But I like to have little routines in order to have some structures.

Q. How is your interaction with the immigrants? What are the main difficulties that you find when you meet them?

-Well, the language. The language barrier. Many people come here and they just know very basic words in Finnish. So, obviously we have to translate it, what makes everything a lot more difficult, because you can't have the appointment straight away. You have to set other time, and all the letters, papers are obviously in Finnish. So, clients tend to be a little confused about what are the papers all about. Because in Finland, things tend to be on paper, and it makes it difficult. Plus, a lot of times they can't even write.

Q.They can't read or write at all?

-Yes. There are people from different kinds of backgrounds. Some might have a university background, a degree... I would say that the majority of the people don't know how to read or write at all, or know very little. Or they know in their own language, like Arabic. Yeah. So, I would say that that is the main problem.

Q. And problems with the interaction: you don't find any other cultural issues, like religion?

-Well, some clients can... They might think... I don't... Because we work from a Finnish perspective, our cultural perspective. It sometimes feels that the decisions that we make, that we don't really take into consideration their own cultural background, or religion, for example. Some really strict Muslims think that they can't take loan. For example the student loan, because there is interest, and interest is "haram" in Arabic. And we say: you have to get the student loan, you can't take money here before you get the student loan. They say: "I can't take it, because my religion says that I can't take it". And so one girl was really upset with me because she thought that I am doing this on purpose, when I am just following the rules. I don't... Well, cultural, well... Many times it is not a major problem, but some people, some clients, they have problems with time. If the appointment starts at 1pm., one might show up at 20 past 1pm., and...

Q.It changes your schedule...

-Yes. And I just can't wait. I have the translator waiting, I am waiting, and it's really frustrating because you are... well, you are in Finland and you have to be on time.

Q. Yeah. That was for me a main issue as well. But I came here.

-Yeah, yeah. But I think that many of these problems are background problems that could be solved if you tell that this is the time, and we are in Finland. This is how we do it, and if you are not on time, I will (...).

Q.Then, you tend to work with the Finnish perspective. What about the point of view of the immigrant? What is the relevance of it?

-The relevance is that obviously we would not... I would never tell my clients what to do when it comes to make decisions, but they make their own decisions. You know, I respect that.

Q.But then there was the case of the student loan...

-I can't. There is nothing I can do about it. Because we are in Finland, and we have to be equal for everyone. If one says: "I can't do this because of my religion", it wouldn't be fair for the people because the religion is different. So, I always think that it is very important to discuss about the religion and cultural differences. But at the same time I don't want to make a too big deal, if you understand what I mean, because I think that we could (...). Humanity

stays within. Or do you want me to really embrace cultural differences, because I think that we are here as humans, not dark or Somali person. I don't want to make it like that.

Q.Human beings.

-Yes. Exactly. And people are individuals. Some people might tell me: "I don't want to have anything to do with my culture. I want to be Finnish now.", and some people would like to maintain their religion and cultural background. And I respect that, if that is what they want to do. I respect that, but... Hum... Obviously we do respect distinct backgrounds, but I think it's about listening to the client, pay attention to their expressions, asking questions like "hey, could you tell me about this thing in your culture?" I think it's about openness.

Q.Have you ever worked as a Social Worker with immigrant Social Workers? Social Workers with an immigrant background?

-Yes. Actually one of our Social Workers, she came, well, basically she lived all of her life here, but she was born in Iran. She is Kurdish. (...) Yeah. I think that there are quite a few like... Imigra... Like... People who are not raised in Finland. But I think that it might change in the future.

Q-According to what I have been researching, it must change.

-Yeah. Definitely!

Q.But then one main issue is the language.

-Yeah. That's true. That's the problem that I come accross almost every day, because my clients are struggling with the language. So, yeah. I think it is easier for little children, very young people that go to elementary school, and they could make friends.

Q.It's different than arriving here at the age of 24 and start to learn the language. But it's possible.

-It's possible, and I know a lot of my clients, they know very good Finnish.

Q.So, you talk with them in Finnish?

-Sometimes. It depends on the situation. If it's a very easy matter, I will. But if... Because... The problem is that sometimes my clients think that they can have a meeting with me without a translator, and that they speak Finnish good enough, and that they understand all that I am saying. Sometimes I can understand what they are saying. But I need the translator. They sometimes don't think the same, but I think that it is just a positive problem, in a way, because they really try, and they want to try, but just in case I have a little doubt, I ask for a

translator, because it's very dangerous to just assume something and not know for sure. So, I want to make sure that everything is being properly understood.

Q.And how is it to contact the translator?

-Yeah. We have this place called Translator office, which is downstairs, which is just call up and order the translator. It has to be ordered in advance. But sometimes obviously they have their own schedules. They are not just working for us. They are working for the whole city of Turku. So, they have appointments in health care, immigration services, police... So, their schedules can be quite bad. So, sometimes when I ask "can I have a translator next Thursday at one o'clock", they could answer "but we don't have anyone".

Q.Did it ever happened?

-Yeah, a lot. Then I just suggest a new time. And I always send a letter (to the client).

Q.How was your life in Turku as a child?

-I am from a middle-class family. I got three sisters. I have lived here basically all of my life. I moved here when I was 8 years old, from Salo, which is like 50km away.

Q.So, you were born in Salo?

-Yes.

Q. Your sisters are older, younger?

-I am the oldest. One of my sisters is already working, and the other is training to be a nurse. And the one that is still in school is the youngest. My parents both went to high-school, and my mother is living in Norway.

Q.So, you are the only one in your family with a university degree?

-Well, pretty much. There are a few of my cousins went there, but in my household yes, I am the only one.

Q.Do you usually face stressful situations? There are times in which you cannot sleep because of one situation at the workplace?

-Well, no. I am lucky. When I step out of the door, I just completely forget everything. I don't have to do it consciously, I just go home and that's that. And it has always been like that. I

don't... Because I know this is work, and I got so much other stuff going on in my life at the moment (laughs).

Q. Fortunately.

-At the university, traveling, and meeting my friends... I know some people might stress. Some people might think about that when they go home. But I am not that kind of person. I don't think it makes me less empathetic.

Q. No, no, no! At all.

-I have really thought about it sometimes, but I think it's a good thing, because I come home better. And I think that it would be terrible if I spend my night thinking about my clients. (...) A lot of clients ask me "Could you fill in this form for me? Could you do this, and this, and that for me?" And I always tell them: I am not here to do the things for you. All in a respectful way. But we can have a look at this form together, and then you learn how to do it. It's not a help if I always do it for them: they will never learn themselves. And I always tell: "We can have a look together". And I explain: you won't learn if I do this for you. Some people are very irritated, but they will realize at some day that... I think I want to get to know the people who come to me. I always ask questions like "Hey. How was your day?", if I don't know them that well.

Q. Normal conversation.

-Yeah, just normal conversation, and not just about the problems, or what is wrong in your life. Because you will tell me how your family is, what do you do when you are not in school, or työharjoittelu, or something like that.

Q. I feel that that makes the person more relaxed.

-Yes. And I don't want to be a strict authority. Of course that I have a role, I am an authority. But, then and at the same time, I want to meet the people as people.

Q. Human being.

-Yeah. That is my main goal: to make my clients not to need me. Eventually. And I just want to get to know them as well. And quite often a client comes to me with a problem. I ask them: what do you think? What would be the solution for this? I ask them, and then they will go on to that. Of course that there are times in which there is a solution. Sometimes they are good, and sometimes they are not that good.

Q. Don't give them the fish, but teach them how to fish.

-Yeah. I think that it is very important in the work with immigrants/refugees, because they are in a new country, learning new things. And in order to learn something you have to experience it yourself. I want to have that kind of approach, and some people might become very irritated in the beginning, like: "you are my Social Worker. Why don't you do this for me?" But I tell them: I am not here to do the things for you, but to help you, to guide you, to give you advice.

Q. Who is Iida outside of the office?

-Well, my life is quite busy at the moment. I am finishing up uni, so that is a lot of work. And, well, I spend a lot of time with my friends, I go traveling very much, I go to London quite a lot, because my boyfriend lives in London. I would say traveling is very much a hobby for me. (...) I have lived almost 9 months in New Zealand, just traveling. That was last year. Then I went to Australia, I have spent time in Canada, where now I am planning to go again and spend some time.

Q. So, you are a migrant yourself?

-Yeah. Sort of, I would say. I enjoy going to new places, and the feeling of traveling. Obviously it is a different kind of thing for me, and I am doing it because I am able to do it.

Q. So, you have never traveled for work purposes or studying purposes? It was just for fun?

-Yeah, yeah. I did work in New Zealand. Not Social Work. It was just Hospitality, because that was an easy solution. Because if I have wanted to be a Social Worker, that would require a lot of paper work and money, so... I just wanted to enjoy my stay as well. So, yeah.

Q. So, you have worked in the Hospitality field?

-Yeah, yeah. But I have done it several years before I even started Social Work. I have worked as a team manager in a restaurant as well in Finland. And I have worked in a hotel as well, so I have done that too. Yeah. I have started working when I was 15. I have went to school, obviously. But I have went to work every now and then.

Q. You had a work that was like a part-time or summer jobs?

-Yeah. Part-time and some summer jobs. Work has been very important for me as well.

Q. So, if you make sort of a ranking, you will put work as the most important thing? Or travel? Or...?

-I can't... Obviously, if I had the money, traveling would be the number 1. I can't travel without money, and I enjoy working. Work is very important for me to have the feeling that I am really doing something.

Q. And studying is not "doing something"?

-Yeah... Well, I like studying as well, but at this point I would just love to be finished with the uni, because (laughs) I have been in the uni for 5 years, and I have went to school... God knows how many years now, and I would like to focus on Social Work, traveling...

Q. So, Social Work, raveling...

-Yeah. And I had enjoyed studying, and I think that I have always been pretty good in school and studying. And it's been easy for me. I have never had really a struggle with going to school or uni. And...

Q. So, it's joyful?

-Yeah. It's easy for me. And I am sure that I will continue studying after I graduate. I will do something.

Q. Tohtori tutkimus (Doctoral studies)?

-(Laugh) No. No. For example, Psychology, or Psychotherapies, or something like that... I am not quite sure yet. In the University of Turku you get to fill in your... You got to fill in after you are graduated for three years... You can do studies, whatever you want, for free. After you have graduated. So, that's really good. Now I would just like to get the qualification.

Q. Yeah. And then, does anything switch from the moment before you have the qualification and after you have the qualification? In your career, or something?

-Yes. It's a significant change because in the Finnish law you can't have a permanent Social Work job if you don't have the qualification, which is the Masters. And it's really needed, because in Finland you can't get a permanent job without it. I think that it is different when you go abroad. The Bachelors will do. But in Finland it's impossible.

Q. In Portugal, by now a Bachelors it's enough. But in Finland there is the need to have the Masters. And just to finish, because I don't want to still more of your time: you have your colleague from Iran. What is the feeling of working with her? There is any struggle, any cultural shock?

-No, I think that she is very Finnish as well, because she lives here since she was 2. So, she knows Finnish perfectly, and you wouldn't know if you didn't asked her or someone told you. Hum... No, she is one of us.

Q.And regarding religion, she is not muslim?

-No. I think that she is one of us. Like anyone would be. Actually I am a very good friend of some of the translators. I know this Somali lady for a very long time, and she is Muslim, and I don't see a problem. We get along very well. And... I tend to meet people as people, and not by trying to know if the person is muslim.

Q.As human beings.

-Yeah.

Q.I have asked about that because sometimes it could be a cultural shock. That is what I mean.

-Yeah. That's true. That's true. (...) I have done a lot of traveling. I know a lot of people from different kinds of backgrounds. Even in my job it is very multicultural. It might be a cultural shock for people in different contexts. But for me it has been like that.

Q.Yeah. And what about the degree in Social Work here in Finland? It is 3+2 years of Masters. How is your degree structured? Is it more focused in which disciplines/courses?

-Ah... In Turku... Because every university organizes it differently, I think that here in Turku it is a lot about Social Policy first: you have to learn the basics, the structures of the society in order to go to Social Work. Like what causes problems in the society. At first it was really boring, but now I see why we have studied it. You have to understand the big picture in order to apply something at the micro-level. We have Social Work courses. They are for example in parenting, families, children, elderly...

Q.Immigrants as well?

-Yeah, yeah. Romani people, immigrants, people that have problems with narchotics or alcohol.

Q.Addictions.

-Yeah. Addictions. You have plenty of courses: some of them you have to have them, but some you can choose. We have liked a field practice which is 3 months. And then you have this that we call "clinic practices", that lasts 6 months.

Q.It is interesting that you have said that you have courses in Social Work about migration, because in Portugal I have done both degrees in different institutions, and in both there are no specific courses about immigration. Do you think that there will be a great influx of immigrants in Finland during the next years, and that more Social Workers with intercultural skills will be needed?

-Definitely. Definitely. We need more Social Workers for these branches. And I think that it should be something built in. When you are a Social Worker you have to have that skill.

Q.And how do you describe that skill?

-I would say that it's about knowing about different cultures, different backgrounds. Like cultural competency is about knowing different backgrounds, cultures, having basic knowledge... But at the same time, you have to treat people as individuals, not someone that is representing a nation or a religion. But you might know what might influence them. And I think that it is about open conversation as well. You need to be able to ask things in a respectful manner, and discuss with the client about their culture. But as well to share the Finnish culture.

Q.It is about intercultural dialogue, in the end.

-Yes.

Q.It is not a one way thing.

-No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. And unfortunately sometimes I am the only Finnish person that they know a bit more.

Q.That resembles the vision of Kathleen Valtonen, according which the Social Worker is the visible face of the abstract welfare state.

-Yeah. And I am aware that I represent the Finnish culture. I know that I am sort of a window for them. To how we do the things here.

Q.Yeah. And do you feel yourself as the reflex of the Finnish culture when you are here?

-Yeah. I do. Because I don't represent just me. I represent my employer, which is obviously the city and the state. And in that sense I represent the Finnish culture. When it comes to me, yeah, I think that I am quite Finnish in a way. Not like very basic, basic, basic, but I think it's there for me and it always will be. Even if I move away from Finland it will still be (laugh).

Q. And what are your plans for the future?

-I was offered a position here in this office when I get my qualification. I will have a guaranteed job here. And I don't know. I plan to go more traveling. Perhaps I have been thinking of living in London for a while, but if I have a family of my own, I will definitely come back to Finland.

Q. So, the future is open. And you don't have the ambition to live with your boyfriend in London?

-Yeah. I would. Yeah, yeah. But if we ever have a family, I would definitely come back here.

Q. Is your boyfriend Finn?

-No. He is Brit. And I have told him that (laughs). I will come back here.

Q. So, Finland will be the destiny if you have a family.

-Yeah. Because I think it's a good place to live, if you have a family.

Q. And to raise children as well.

-Yeah. Because it's quite safe here, and clean, and not overcrowded, and the schools are very good. And obviously the language is important for me.

Q. So, the Finnish language for you it's important.

-Yes.

Q. So, you would like that your kids learn the Finnish language.

-Yes. I think that it's very important because I want them to express in Finnish. It's my own language.

B.4-Transcription of the nterview with “Samira”, Social Worker from Iran, Iranian and Finnish, on the 8th of April 2016

Q.Who is Samira?

-I am from Iran, but I am Kursish, and I came to Finland when I was 2 years old. So, I think that I am also Finnish. I am Finnish and Kurdish.

Q.So, Finnish and Kurdish?

-Yes. I don't think that I am Iranian or Kurdish. And I also don't think that I am only Finnish, because that is not the truth.

Q.So, you are a mixture?

-My parents are both Kurdish, but I am thinking that I am part of both... Yeah, because that is the truth, since I have been living here since I was 2 years old.

Q.When someone is asking you: "where are you from?", and you say that you are from Finland, Iran or whatever, it seems that it is impossible to belong to two places or more. But it is possible.

-Yeah. When people ask me "where are you from?", I cannot say that... ah... Of course, if I go to a holiday in Spain, I would say that I am from Finland, because that is the truth. I am from Finland. But then they look to me and they are like: "ah... no... You are not. (laughs) Finnish people are..."

Q.They have the stereotype: that Finnish people are blond, that they have blue eyes...

-Yeah. Then I am like: ok, I am originally from Iran, but I have been living in Finland for many years.

Q.How many years? How old are you?

-23.

Q.Born in Iran, Kurdish.

-Yeah. Kurdish.

Q.How do you describe yourself beyond that?

-I am happy, and I have choosen Social Work because I want to help people. That has always been the thing that I would like to do. And I am studying, finishing my masters degree in Lapland.

Q.Lappin Yliopisto?

-Yeah.

Q.Ok...

-So, I have been studying there, and I have lived there around three years during the Bachelors degree. And then I have moved to Turku because I am married. So, my husband lives in Turku, and my parents live in Espoo.

Q.Is your husband Finnish?

-No. He is also Kurdish.

Q.And how is that of being in Turku and studying in Lapland? Is it hard to manage?

-No. No. I liked to live in Rovaniemi, but I knew all the time that I will not gonna be there. I have been there just for studying. I will be living here or in Espoo again. But it was interesting to understand how is it to live in a cold and small place.

Q.So, it was a good experience to be there?

-Yeah. Yeah.

Q.So, when your family has moved to Finland, they came to Espoo?

-Well, firstly we have been in Kokkola, and then we have moved to Espoo. Now they are there and I am here (in Turku).

Q.So, you have said that you have choosen Social Work because you want to help people.

-Yeah.

Q.And you have always felt that you would like to be a Social Worker?

-Hummm.. No. At first I would like to be a Psychologist. But then I had one year to think about it: what am I gonna do in my life? Then I was just searching on the internet through which stuff can I help people, and I thought: "Ok. There is something!" I didn't know about Social Work that much. But then I have searched for information, and I thought: "Ok. This is fine!" I have been also interested in migrant people, and Kokkola is a place that receives refugees. So, this work is what I want to do.

Q.You have mentioned that the work with immigrants is something that you really like to do. Do you think that the fact that you are an immigrant, that it has an impact?

-Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Becasuse I think like... I don't know. This is like my thing, and I have something to give to the immigrants, because I am also an immigrant. I don't remember anything, but...

Q.But you have made the move...

-Yeah. And I have heard the stories from my parents about what they have faced.

Q.And what are these stories about?

-Ah... We have been here for 21 years, and they still feel that they want to go back to Iran. They want to see the family, and they are not... They don't feel that this is their country, and things like that. It wasn't easy to come here and leave everything there.

Q.So, you were refugees or asylum seekers?

-Quota refugees. We were in Turkey, and then Finland bring us here. We didn't came here by ourselves.

Q.And what about you? What do you feel? Do you also feel that you also want to return to your home country?

-No, no. I think that this (Finland) is my home country. This is my country. Here I love to work and live. But it's hard for my parents. They still want to return. Not for the whole life, but they would like to spend like 6 months there and 6 months here. But I don't know.

Q.Have they ever returned again to Iran?

-We have been visiting. Many times.

Q.So, you still have family there?

-Yeah.

Q.And your household is made by yourself, your parents. Do you have any sister or brother?

-An older sister and a smaller brother.

Q.Are they here in Finland as well?

-Yeah. Yeah. In Espoo.

Q.So, you are the only one living in Turku?

-Yeah. I have been the one that is always moving.

Q.Always being a migrant, moving.

-Yeah (laughs). Moving. I am not filling any place.

Q.So, you think that you don't belong to any place?

-No, no. I think that I just don't want to be in the same place my whole life. I want to see places and expand my horizons.

Q.This is the first time that you are working as a Social Worker?

-Yeah. Yeah.

Q.How did it appeared? How do you feel about it?

-Good. Good. It is very good also for my studies, because then I have stuff to put there, and I have experienced it. So then I could put it as an example that I have made it. Plus, I like it. I want to stay here working.

Q.So, you are with a short-term contract?

-1 year.

Q.When have you started?

-In January.

Q.And then hopefully you will continue here.

-Yeah. I hope so. I want to do this, and maybe one day I will also publish my master thesis as a book. So, I have been thinking also about writing something. But let's see.

Q.What kind of writing? Academic? A novel?

-I am not sure.

Q.So, besides being a Social Worker you have other plans.

-Yeah.

Q.Like writing a book, and what else are you planning to do?

-I don't know. I don't know any specific plans. But then I don't want to also be doing this work all of my life. I want change.

Q.Again, you are like me...

-(Laughs) It's like: I want to do this, but I don't want to do this during my whole life.

Q."This" is working at this place, or being a Social Worker?

-Being a Social Worker. I want to do something else.

Q.Do you have any specific plans besides being a Social Worker?

-No. Now I prefer to focus on this and get something. I didn't know what this work was. And now I know, and I want to get so much information. Then, when the time will come, I will decide what I will do next. And I don't want to finish my school life. I want to learn, and learn, again and again (laughs).

Q.Are you the only Social Worker with an immigrant background here?

-Yeah.

Q.And how do you feel about that? How do you feel?

-I don't know what other Finnish Social Workers think about it, but I really understand this people (the clients, that are immigrants), when they talk about racism. I haven't felt it in any way, but I understand it. And when they have like... Anything regarding immigration. I really understand it. It's like... I also feel it, and sometimes I have lived the same experiences that they have had. I don't know how the Finnish Social Workers perceive the stories of the immigrants, but are they thinking "Is it true or not?"

Q. So, do you have a good relationship with your colleagues and so on?

-Yes... I don't think that I feel bad, because like I said, I think that I am Finnish as well. That is the only thing. And people say that it is very good to be an immigrant and being working in the field of Social Work. When I meet Kurdish clients, I just speak Kurdish with them. And they have been saying: "it is so good that you are here now! If we have something we can just call you, and we don't have to speak Finnish"

Q. How many languages do you speak?

-Finnish, Kurdish is my mother tongue, and Persian, a language that I haven't been practicing.

Q. Most of your clients that come here mostly speak Kurdish?

-Yes. Kurdish.

Q. And the others?

-If there is no need for a translator, I just don't call a translator. Because I think that it is much better that we just talk about it without a translator.

Q. So, you think that without a translator it is much better?

-Yeah, yeah.

Q. And how was your life as a child, as a teenager?

-When I was a teenager, it was not very hard, but hard, because I think that at the same time I am Finnish and I am Kurdish. Our culture is not the same as the Finnish culture. So, sometimes when I was trying to do something in the Finnish way it was not right. So, as a teenager it was hard for me to... Like, I didn't know how to live. Ok, now it is also hard when you do something, you have to think about it: what is right and what is not.

Q.And even here as a Social Worker you also have to think about to act in the Finnish way or in the Kurdish way?

-No. I just think about it in the Finnish way, but I can understand (the immigrants).

Q.So, with Kurdish clients, you think in the Kurdish way?

-No, no. I have to do it in the Finnish way, but when they tell me something that is right in the Kurdish culture, but is wrong in the Finnish culture, I understand it. But I cannot say that it is ok if it's not ok here to do that.

Q.So, when you were a teenager you wanted to be a Psychologist, and then you have switched to Social Work?

-Yeah, yeah.

Q.But your objective has always been the same: helping people, helping immigrants.

-Yeah.

Q.Besides your job, how is your life out of work, like at home, leisure, hobbies?

-I don't have time to have hobbies (laughs).

Q.Why?

-I have to study when work ends. And I have to have time to my husband (laughs). So, it's very hard now. But I'm and trying to run 1 to 3 times a week.

Q.Don't you consider time for your husband as time for yourself as well?

-Yeah! Yeah!

Q.And regarding your studies, don't you feel any pleasure?

-Yeah. And I have had always the idea that I have to do my studies well. I want to do it quickly, writing and finish it. And I am stressing very much about everything. Now that I am studying and working, I have a lot of stress going on. And I want to finish school next year. That is my plan.

Q.So, you think that you are a very busy women?

-Yeah (laughs).

Q.And you think that after the Masters you will be much more free?

-Yeah. *The problem is also that I want to be busy. I need to have stuff to do. I can't just sit here and doing nothing. That is very hard to me.*

Q.Why?

-I don't know. *I don't really know. I just don't want to be here without doing something.*

Q.So, you want to do something.

-Yeah. *Work also. I want that all the time I have something to do.*

Q.You feel the same at home?

-Yeah. *I don't know why. We have just went to Gdansk in Poland because I want to have holidays for a few days.*

Q.A few days, not weeks?

-Yes. *A few days. And my husband doesn't want to travel a lot, but I want to travel. And he was asking "why do you want to go? Why can't we just be at home and like doing nothing?" And I have said: No. It will not going to happen with me, because if I am at home I am studying. So, when I go somewhere else and I don't have the computer, it's very good. But if I have it, I will do something.*

Q.So, you don't accept the idea of doing nothing?

-No.

Q.But for your husband it is ok.

-Yeah, yeah. *Sometimes he tells me: "Please, sit down" (laugh).*

Q.And what else do you like to do besides that?

-Olla vaan (just be). *Be. Just be. Be with me and with my husband. Not even watching tv. Just be there. That would be amazing (laugh).*

Q. So, in the end it is amazing, it is something that you want.

-Yeah, yeah. I mean, my aivot (brain) doesn't leave me alone (laugh). He will be all the time: "you have to study! You have to study!" (laugh).

Q. And do you have lots of courses to do?

-No. That is also another problem! And I make the stress for me, because I am done with courses.

Q. Do you consider yourself as a happy person?

-Yeah. I am a happy person, and when I start somethinhg, I want to finish it. So, if any problems appear, I will make it. It doesn't matter how many problems will come. I will do it. Ok. Maybe I will be mad for one or two hours, maybe I cry, but then I am like: hey. (laugh) No, you have to make it. And I like that about myself.

Q. What are your plans for the future?

-It depends. Turku is the place in which most likely I will be. My husband is working here, and maybe I will also be working here. And, I don't know, maybe it will bring babies (laugh).

Q. Soon?

-No (laughs). Build a family, and I want to somehow do something, an influence, that makes the world change.

Q. You want to change what? The world? Your life?

-Change the world, because the situation now is not good. And I want to in some way change it. I don't know how, but I want to change the world, somehow.

Q. Yeah.

-Yeah. And it doesn't need to be something huge. Change the client's life is promoting change.

Q. And what is your nationality, the one that you hold on your citizen card? Finnish or Iranian?

-Both.

Q. So, you are an European citizen?

-Yeah. And also Iran.

Q. Would you like to see Kurdistan as an independent country?

-Yeah. I would like to see. But then there has been the same thing during many years.

Q. So, do you believe in the change?

-I want to. But I don't know. (...) Sometimes people hate and are angry with me, because they ask me about where I am from, and I say that I am Iranian-Kurdish. And they ask: "Why do you say that you are from Iran? Why don't you just say that you are Kurdish? Why do you say the other part, that you are Iranian-Kurdish?" Then I am like: ah... because... I don't know. Because it is Iran, and I have Iranian passport. So...

Q. So, Kurdish people ask you why do you mention Iran. And what about the Iranians that are not Kurdish, when you say that you are Kurdish, are they mad?

-No, no. I think that it is ok. I say that I am Iranian, without mentioning that I am Kurdish. And then they ask me: "Where in Iran are you from?". And I say that I am Kurdish. And they say "ok". It doesn't like... matter. And for me it is not a huge problem either. It is what I am.

Q. And if Kurdistan would become independent in the next year? How would you define yourself?

-It must be Kurdish.

Q. Would you forget Iran in that case?

-Oh, no. We cannot just forget something. No. Because I have been listening to the people, and Iranian and Kurdish cultures look almost the same, but some things I take them from both cultures.

Q. So, you are a mixture, right?

-Yeah.

Q. It is amazing that you put those cultures in dialogue in yourself.

-Like I have said, sometimes it is not easy. But it's possible.

Q.Regarding religion, do you have any? Are you Muslim?

-Ah... Hum... If someone asks me, I would say that I am Muslim, but I don't know. I haven't been searching about what is Islam. I was born and then taught that this is the right religion, and I think that I believe in God, but I don't think about it.

Q.So, you don't go to the church, the mosque?

-No, no.

Q.You don't pray?

-No. So I don't know what to answer, because I don't even know what I believe in.

Q.Because you are not sure in what you believe in?

-Yeah. Yeah. I am sure that I believe in God. That is sure. But I am not sure if it matters in which God i believe in. Like in how many Gods. I think that there is one God. The important for me is in what the person believes. What is my God.

Q.I am really interested in this topic.

-I have been thinking that I want to read more about my religion. Because when you ask me what is my religion, I say that I am Muslim, because I believe it. But if you ask me now something about that, I cannot answer to anything, because I don't know about it. So, I want to read about it and then maybe choose.

Q.The religion?

-Yeah. And choose what I want to believe in. By now I just say it.

Q.That dialogue is important.

-And also understand the different religions.

Appendix C-Sinopsys of the interviews

C.1-Synopsis of the interview with “Maria”, Social Worker from Portugal

Categories of Analizys	Subcategories	Excerpts of the Interviews	Interpretation/Analysis
Way(s) to describe the self	Main elements of representation of the self	<i>“I have lived in Portugal until 2006, I have studied Social Work in Matosinhos (Portugal), that at that time was a 5 years degree (...)” (Maria, Portugal)</i>	Maria Talks about her home country and the degree in Social Work as something that is part of herself, but belonging to the past.
The reasons	People and/or facts in life that have influenced the decision to choose Social Work as a degree	<i>“[...]I am not a person that wanted to become a Social Worker since i was a child. I have felt attracted by the social field. But i was not thinking: “oh, i want to become a Social Worker!”. [...]” (Maria, Portugal).</i> <i>“The influence of friends of mine during the secondary school. I was taking the course as a Sociocultural Animator, and actually i had a job. Honestly, i have never liked to study (laughs). I have never been that ambitious regarding this issue. But i have always been curious. So I started thinking: natural sciences, no way! So i have ended in the social sciences. Because I would like to help the elderly, the children...” (Maria, Portugal)</i>	Maria has been influenced to study Social Work by her friends and her will to help people.
	Reasons to choose Social Work as a degree	<i>“When i was on the fourth year of my degree, I had the interest in become an Erasmus student. And it was due to that that I have went to Finland. But my idea was not to come to Finland (...). (Maria, Portugal)</i> <i>“There were “x” available places to Italy. But at that time my Professor asked me if I knew the Italian language. And i said that no. So she said: “then you cannot go, because there they don’t use the English language”. And I said “ok”. After that I have realized that there was an available place to Finland, and I knew that Finland was actually excellent from the educational point of view. And my only idea was: “why not? Let s go!” (Maria, Portugal)</i> <i>“(...) But I was really interested, because I have heard, and it was acknowledged through the media, that Finland was excellent in educational issues. Then, i was more than ready, and I wanted to come (...)” (Maria, Portugal)</i>	Maria came to Finland as an Erasmus student. Although it was not her first choice, she came with all of the will. And the reputation of the Finnish educational system was one factor influencing her decision.
	Reasons to stay in Finland	<i>“I was in the fifth year, the last of my degree, and it happened that i was talking with someone from the University office, or something, and I have took a look into the wall, and saw informations about the Leonardo Da Vinci program. I suddenly said: “I want to do that!” And the lady answered: “but the applications end today or tomorrow”. Something like that. And i was like “whaaat?” And she said “yes”. But i said: “I really want to go!” Then she said: “but it is you that must find your own traineeship placement abroad”. Then I have realized that the only place in which I had contacts was in Finland, in Joensuu, with my supervisor. I have</i>	The way in which she was treated during her Erasmus placement made her apply for a Leonardo Da Vince Traineeship again in Finland. Then Maria have met her

		contacted her, and the lady from the University office was amazing because she gave me an extra day to conclude my application. She have realized that there was really the chance, and that it was mainly a bureaucratic matter. Also because in Finland there are 2 hours in advance comparing to Portugal. And my supervisor, once again excellent, went to talk with her boss, dealt with all the documents needed. Well, I don't know how, me and my friend went to Finland again (laugh). (...) The way in which I was received at the institution, all of this way of treatment in which you don't need to call "Mr./Mrs. Doctor" (...)” (Maria, Portugal) “In my traineeship place I have met a friend that became my boyfriend. Finnish. And I was thinking: "well, I want to be with him. I already have this employment, already have a good pocket money, I like to be here.” (Maria, Portugal)	boyfriend, a fact that have only strengthened her will to stay in Finland.
Challenges faced as a qualified immigrant Social Worker in the Finnish welfare state	What kind of challenges were faced as an immigrant qualified Social Worker in Finland?	“In the Leonardo Da Vinci it was supposed that the money would come, but nothing arrived at my account. So, I went here with my own savings. But I was thinking: "well, they will pay me...". But I had to spent my Christmas in Joensuu because I had no chance to go to Portugal and spend it with my famil (...)” (Maria, Portugal) “(…) Joensuu is a small city, and then there are many difficulties in that aspect of.. Joensuu is a city known by being a bit racist. Something that I have only realized later, because I am white, and I was blonder at that time. But i knew it... It is a really small city, and you see that it is more complicated: they give employment to the natives or to you, if you know really well the language. Without knowing the language... hum, hum!” (Maria, Portugal)	Maria has faced constraints regarding the funding of her Leonardo Da Vinci traineeship, highlighting also the peripheral position of Joensuu, relating it with the difficulties of getting a job there without speaking Finnish.
Aspirations for the future	What are the plans/projects for the future	“I have two kids. So I would need to stay with them. And this means Finland, where they are enrolled in the school”. (Maria, Portugal) “(…) Acting as a Social Worker is precisely the most boring part, if I could say it in this way, because I guess that there is not that much contact with the users. So, to be honest I don't know if I have the ambition of act as a Social Worker.” (Maria, Portugal)	Maria is attached to Finland by her children, but do not have the ambition to act as a Social Worker.

C.2-Sinopsys of the interview with “John”, Social Worker from Zambia

Categories of Analizys	Subcategories	Excerpts of the Interviews	Interpretation/Analysis
Way(s) to describe the self	Main elements of representation of the sel	<i>“I am a third born in a family of six. Zambian mom and Zambian dad. And I am a Social Worker. I have my degree in Social Work from Zambia. My bachelor degree I have just finished it here in Finland (in 2014) (...)” (John, Zambia)</i>	John stresses his origins in Zambia, namely his Zambian family, emphasizing as well his professional role as a Social Worker..
The reasons	People and/or facts in life that have influenced the decision to choose Social Work as a degree	<i>“(...) I really want to help communities and people. I just want to develop the community and to develop the people as a whole. I am coming from a background where my father was a justice/lawyer. My mother was a lecturer. So, for my father, that is how it was. And he could save individuals. But for me, I want to save a great amount of them.” (John, Zambia)</i>	For John Social Work is almost a family legacy. He wants to save individuals, as his father.
	Reasons to choose Social Work as a degree	<i>“Well, I was living in Zambia, a very peaceful country, small, landlocked, one of the largest producers of cocoa. And it is the home of the biggest falls in the world, the Victoria falls... Hum, I did my diploma in Zambia, in Social Work. And when I went to check for the places for my degrees, I saw the Finnish schools being advertised online. Yeah, so, I have applied.” (John, Zambia)</i>	John took the peaceful environment of Finland (a similarity to his home country) as a factor for his decision to move to Finland. The advertisement on the internet was another factor that made him apply for a degree in Finland.
	Reasons to stay in Finland	<i>“I am very happy because I have two homes: being here and being in Zambia.” (John, Zambia)</i> <i>“(...)I have expected to graduate and then a few years later I could go back to my country.” (John, Zambia)</i>	John highlights his belongingness to both Finland and Zambia as a factor influencing his decision to stay in the later. All although his plan since the beginning is to return to Zambia sooner or later.
Challenges faced as a qualified immigrant Social Worker in the Finnish welfare state	What kind of challenges were faced as an immigrant qualified Social Worker in Finland?	<i>“(...) the barrier is that I have to go back to school and start learning Finnish. (...) Time goes and Finnish is not a simple language that you could learn in one day. And it's better to be in the place in which Finnish is being practiced more. Then you can easily learn. But if you are not in those environments anymore, and you are not working in a place in which Finnish is spoken, you kind of even forgot the little that you know. So, it kind of distances you a little bit when you are no longer at school, no longer active, and then you are not working in those places.” (John, Zambia)</i>	John highlights the need to keep on studying, practicing and learning the Finnish language, associating with that the need to be in a workplace in which the Finnish language is practiced.

Aspirations for the future	What are the plans/projects for the future	<i>"Now i think there is more need for me to save people than to just play basketball. People need social services, and I believe I got the right skills. But let's say: how long can you live unemployed in a country? That is my point. In Finland it is very difficult to live unemployed, because we don't even have our major family. You want it to be your home but you kind of... because you don't have family, no one provides for you. But when you go to Zambia, family is there, unemployment could be there because we are an anglophone speaking country (...)" (John, Zambia)</i> <i>" (...)good to work here. And if not i would probably go back to Zambia. And if not there, I have my horizons open. " (John, Zambia)</i>	On the projection of a possible future, John do not forget the comfort of his memories associated with Zambia, and stating clearly his will to work as a Social Worker. Finland is the first choice to live, but Zambia comes nearby.
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C.3-Sinopsys of the interview with "Iida", Social Worker from Finland

Categories of Analizys	Subcategories	Excerpts of the Interviews	Interpretation/Analysis
Way(s) to describe the self	Main elements of representation of the self	<i>"I am Iida, I am 26 years old, I was born and raised in Finland, Turku, and I am not a qualified Social Worker yet. I am also finishing my Master's at the University of Turku, and I am planning to graduate in a few months. So, I have worked here around 4 years now." (Iida, Finland)</i>	Iida describes herself with a strong focus on her working and student life, although she firstly highlights her Finnishness.
The reasons	People and/or facts in life that have influenced the decision to choose Social Work as a degree	<i>"There are no specific reasons for it. When I have graduated from high-school in 2009, I have started studying Business & Administration, but then I have figured out that it was not what I would want to do. I was quite confused at that point. (...) Then I have made a search at the University, and I saw Social Work. I have always thought I would like to work with people, so I thought: "why not?" And that was it. I didn't had a specific reason why. (...)" (Iida, Finland)</i>	Iida do not find a specific reason to study Social Work, besides the fact that it is a channel to be with and help other people.
	Reasons to work with immigrant populations	<i>"I think it was a coincidence, because I had a Summer substitute job. I think it was in 2012. Early: around January/February. I have just sent applications, and I have got many answers. My boss at that time said: "actually we don't have any jobs here at the moment". But later on he said to me: "hey. Someone cancelled. Would you like to come for an interview?" And I thought: "this place sounds very interesting". Then I have just went to the interview and I get the job. So, I would say that it is a coincidence, since at that point I had studied very little about it (Social Work) (...)" (Iida, Finland)</i>	For Iida the work with immigrants was an opportunity that happened as a coincidence. All of this although she did not had that much knowledge on the field of Social Work.

Challenges faced as a Finnish Social Worker in the Finnish welfare state	What kind of challenges are faced by a Finnish Social Worker working in a multicultural workplace?	<i>“(…) one of our Social Workers, she came, well, basically she lived all of her life here, but she was born in Iran. She is Kurdish.” (Iida, Finland)</i> <i>“I think that she is very Finnish as well, because she lives here since she was 2. So, she knows Finnish perfectly, and you wouldn't know if you didn't asked her or someone told you. Hum... No, she is one of us.” (Iida, Finland)</i>	Iida mentions the belonging of Samira to the Kurdish nation, although she reinforces immediately after that her colleague is “one of us”. Then, the composite identity of her colleague seems to be accepted.
	What kind of challenges are faced by a Finnish Social Worker working with immigrants in Finland?	<i>“Many people come here and they just know very basic words in Finnish. So, obviously we have to translate it, what makes everything a lot more difficult, because you can't have the appointment straight away. You have to set other time, and all the letters, papers are obviously in Finnish. So, clients tend to be a little confused about what are the papers all about (...)” (Iida, Finland)</i> <i>“(…) we work from a Finnish perspective, our cultural perspective. It sometimes feels that the decisions that we make, that we don't really take into consideration their own cultural background or religion, for example. Some really strict Muslims think that they can't take loan. For example: the student loan, because there is interest, and interest is "haram" in Arabic. And we say: you have to get the student loan; you can't take money here before you get the student loan. They say: "I can't take it, because my religion says that I can't take it". And so one girl was really upset with me because she thought that I am doing this on purpose, when I am just following the rules.” (Iida, Finland)</i>	The language and the difficulty to promote the intercultural dialogue seem to be the main challenges that Iida faces with her clients.
Aspirations for the future	What are the plans/projects for the future	<i>“I was offered a position here in this office when I get my qualification. I will have a guaranteed job here. And I don't know. I plan to go more traveling. Perhaps I have been thinking of living in London for a while, but if I have a family of my own, I will definitely come back to Finland. (...) I think it's a good place to live, if you have a family, (...) because it's quite safe here, and clean, and not overcrowded, and the schools are very good. And obviously the language is important for me. (Iida, Finland)” (Iida, Finland)</i> <i>“I am sure that I will continue studying after I graduate. I will do something. For example, Psychology, or Psychotherapies, or something like that... (...)Now I would just like to get the qualification.” (Iida, Finland)</i>	Iida wants to live in Finland, specially if she has children. Regarding her studies, she seems to keep the doors open for the possibility of expanding her horizons.

C.4-Sinopsys of the interview with “Samira”, Social Worker from Iran raised in Finland

Categories of Analizys	Subcategories	Excerpts of the Interview	Interpretation/Analysis
Way(s) to describe the self	Main elements of representation of the self	<i>“I am from Iran, but I am Kurdish, and I came to Finland when I was 2 years old. So, I think that I am also Finnish. I am Finnish and Kurdish. (...) I don’t think that I am Iranian or Kurdish. And I also don’t think that I am only Finnish, because that is not the truth. My parents are both Kurdish, but I am thinking that I am part of both...”</i> (Samira, Iran/Finland)	Samira stresses her belongingness to the Kurdish nation, and to the Iranian and Finnish states.
The reasons	People and/or facts in life that have influenced the decision to choose Social Work as a degree	<i>“At first I would like to be a Psychologist. But then I had one year to think about it: what am I gonna do in my life? (...) I have chosen Social Work because I want to help people. That has always been the thing that I would like to do. And I am studying, finishing my Masters degree in Lapland.”</i> (Samira, Finland and Iran)	The opportunity to help people was the main reason that made Samira opt to study Social Work.
	Reasons to work with immigrant populations	<i>“This is like my thing, and I have something to give to the immigrants, because I am also an immigrant.”</i> (Samira, Finland/Iran) <i>“I have heard the stories from my parents about what they have faced.”</i> (Samira, Finland/Iran)	Samira has in her background (she is an migrant) and in her family the main justifications to work with immigrant populations.
Challenges faced as a Finnish Social Worker in the Finnish welfare state	What kind of challenges are faced by a Finnish Social Worker working in a multicultural workplace?	<i>“I don’t think that I feel bad, because (...) I think that I am Finnish as well. That is the only thing. And people say that it is very good to be an immigrant and being working in the field of Social Work.”</i> (Samira, Finland/Iran)	Samira feels very comfortable by working with other Finns, mentioning no difficulties.
	What kind of challenges are faced by a Finnish Social Worker working with immigrants in Finland?	<i>“(...) I really understand this people (the clients, that are immigrants) when they talk about racism. I haven’t felt it in any way, but I understand it. And when they have like... Anything regarding immigration. I really understand it. It’s like... I also feel it, and sometimes I have lived the same experiences that they have had (...)”</i> (Samira, Finland/Iran) <i>“When I was a teenager, it was not very hard, but hard, because I think that at the same time I am Finnish and I am Kurdish. Our culture is not the same as the Finnish culture. So, sometimes when I was trying to do something in the Finnish way it was not right. So, as a teenager it was hard for me to... Like, I didn’t knew how to live.”</i> (Samira, Finland/Iran)	Samira reminds her teenage years to underscore the understanding that she has regarding the problems of the immigrants with which she works with.
Aspirations for the future	What are the plans/projects	<i>“Turku is the place in which most likely I will be. My husband is working here, and maybe I will also be working here. And, I don’t know, maybe it will bring babies</i>	For Samira, build a family and keep on studying are two

	for the future	<i>(laugh). Build a family, and I want to somehow do something, an influence, that makes the world change.” (Samira, Finland/Iran)</i> <i>“(…) when the time will come, I will decide what I will do next. And I don’t want to finish my school life. I want to learn, and learn, again and again.” (Samira, Finland/Iran)</i>	objectives that seem to give a meaning to her life
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