

Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Thursday 1 December 2005

Danish press

Refugees scrape by

Denmark winds up at the bottom in a new European survey of benefit payments given to refugees to sustain themselves. Experts fear that low benefits will lead to a new underclass. A refugee in Denmark has much less to spend on clothes, food, telephone, transports, electricity, and heating than newly arrived refugees in the Netherlands, England, Germany, Sweden, and Italy. Daily newspaper Politiken reported that the average refugee received DKK 1859 per month in Denmark, a little more than a third of what refugees receive in the Netherlands. The Rockwool Foundation's Research Unit, which conducts studies on social issues, compiled information on how much refugees had to spend once they had paid taxes and rent from their benefit payments. The figures were adjusted to account for the countries' price levels. Report author Torben Tranæs said he found the figures surprising. 'We were surprised to find out that the level is so low compared with other countries. We knew it was somewhat lower than regular social benefit payments, but not that low,' he said. The introductory benefit payment allotted to newly arrived refugees since 1 July 2002 grants DKK 5527 per month to single newcomers during the first seven years after their arrival, considerably lower than in other EU countries. After the first seven years have passed, however, Denmark boasts one of the highest level of social benefit payments of all the countries in the study, second only to the Netherlands. Experts in social studies warned that the reduced level of benefit payments to newcomers added to the risk of an immigrant black labour underclass forming in Denmark. 'People are more likely to find alternative ways to compensate, because the daily necessities do not come any cheaper if one's benefit payments are cut,' said sociologist Shahamak Rezaei at the Roskilde University. Integration Minister Rikke Hvilshøj said, however, that it was almost impossible to compare social benefit payments between countries, as Danish municipalities granted additional payments for transport, children's clothing, and other costs. (Jyllandsposten, 30 November 2005, online edition. www.jp.dk)

Government backbenchers seek eased immigration

Young members of the government coalition want to make it easier for educated foreigners to come to Denmark. Junior Liberal and Conservative members of parliament are staging a rebellion against the two governing parties' hard line on immigration. They say that the borders should be open to people with attractive job skills. 'This isn't a loosening of Denmark's immigration policy. We propose a point system where highly qualified workers and researchers are allowed to work for Danish firms,' said Liberal science issues spokesman Torsten Schack Pedersen to national daily Politiken on Wednesday. Schack and several other leading junior MPs from the Liberal and Conservative Parties have introduced their plan to create a point system that would allot points to potential immigrants based on their language abilities, job skills, and education. 'We want to draw highly skilled workers,' said Liberal culture issues spokesman Ellen Trane Nørby to daily newspaper Berlingske Tidende. 'Experience shows that for each educated immigrant we let in, two jobs are created.' (Ritzau, 1 December 2005, www.denmark.dk)

Finnish press

Finnish ministries not on speaking terms over asylum seekers

Finland's Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Labour are in crisis over the management of asylum-related matters, Mervi Virtanen, a senior official at the latter ministry, was quoted as saying in the Thursday issue of Helsingin Sanomat, a national daily. "There is no communication between ministers or even civil servants for that matter," she told the paper. Ms Virtanen characterised the prevailing atmosphere as hostile and accusatory. She said that the interior ministry was plotting to gain total control of all aspects of immigration policy. Päivi Keskitalo, a lawyer for the Refugee Advice Centre, accused Kari Rajamäki (soc dem), the interior minister, of branding all asylum seekers as criminals.

(NewsRoom, STT, 1 December 2005, www.virtual.finland.fi)

Swedish press

Apathetic children sexually exploited

Police in Stockholm suspect that in a number of cases apathetic refugee children may have been sexually exploited after they sought asylum in Sweden. The police suspect that six children have been trafficked for sexual purposes, abused, physically injured and raped by eight people. Police are also looking at three other cases but have not yet decided whether to launch an inquiry or not. The police began their investigation yesterday and so far no one has been interrogated or arrested. The inquiry is based on reports from the Migration Board (*Migrationsverket*) that were handed over to the National Criminal Investigation Department, CID, (*Rikskriminalen*) at the beginning of November. In all, the Migration Board passed on information concerning thirteen children – 10 girls and 3 boys – to the police. The children are all aged between 8 and 18, and ten of them are minors.

(Dagens Nyheter, p. 8 & Svenska Dagbladet, p. 10, 1 December 2005. SPR translation)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Monday 5 December 2005

Danish press

More limits to be placed on immigration

It looks like immigrants will have to 'carry the can' for the future of the welfare state. The government is preparing to put future immigration policy high on the agenda when parties discuss welfare reform next year, by proposing to make it even more difficult for Somalis, Palestinians, Iraqis and other refugees and immigrants to acquire residency permits in Denmark. According to Minister of Health & the Interior Lars Løkke Rasmussen (V), in future immigrants from under-developed countries will only be allowed into the country if they have the necessary qualifications to find a job immediately. 'We are forced to change the very character of immigration,' said Rasmussen. 'The Welfare Commission's calculations are alarming and proof that immigration and integration policies until now have been a complete failure.'

Rasmussen's comments have already created dissension amongst some of the Liberal Party's own MPs who claim that placing further restrictions on immigration could be a breach of international rules and conventions.

(Jyllandsposten front page, 4 December 2005, & Politiken front page, 5 December 2005. NE translation)

Finnish press

Finnish PM hints at "more robust" measures to ease entry of foreign workers

Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen, the presidential candidate for the Finnish Centre Party, said Monday that dispassionate changes would have to be implemented in the country's immigration legislation in order to keep companies in Finland and to help preserve the current standard of welfare. "Unless results are reached soon, the government will be forced to consider more robust measures," Mr Vanhanen said in a seminar in Oulu. Mr Vanhanen added it was important to encourage people to study in Finland as well. The prime minister suggested the founding of a "student adviser's office" in China to market Finnish education. Should the Chinese bureau prove a success, Mr Vanhanen added, the scheme could be expanded to other countries.

(STT, NewsRoom, 5 December 2005, www.virtual.finland.fi)

Swedish press

Greens demands resignation

Criticism is growing of the way in which the Swedish Migration Board (*Migrationsverket*) is handling those apathetic refugee children that are suspected of being exploited. No suspects have been arrested, no children have been taken into care after reports were made to police and prosecutor Marie Lind Thomsen is calling the accusations "vague". The Green Party is now demanding that director general of Migrationsverket Janna Valik step down. The Greens say that Migrationsverket broke the law by not acting quickly and reporting cases to the social services and local police as soon as they suspected crimes against the children. Instead Migrationsverket bypassed the authorities and went straight

to the National Criminal Investigation Department (*Rikskriminalen*), which has meant that social services were unaware of the problems. "It's extremely serious that Migrationsverket made police reports without first reporting each of these serious cases to the social services. The board is after all an authority and should be aware of its obligation to report," says the Green Party's Yvonne Ruwaida.
(Svenska Dagbladet, p.10 & Dagens Nyheter, p.10, 3 December 2005. SPR translation)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Tuesday 6 December 2005

Danish press

New dispute over lower benefits for immigrants

A new dispute has broken out about the government's 'start package' of a lower rate of social benefits, around 65 per cent of the normal rate, for newly arrived immigrants and refugees. The Danish Confederation of Trade Unions and the Social Democrats have both rejected claims by the Directorate of Employment that the initiative has been successful in encouraging refugees and immigrants to find work or start an education. According to new figures, 41 percent of those who have been given 'start help' are now working or studying, compared to 28 percent who receive the normal 'full' benefits. Although the Social Democrats have consistently supported the government's strict immigration policies since 2001, it has always opposed the low 'starting rate' of benefits and has vowed to abolish it the moment the party regains power. The party's spokesman on finance and integration, Henrik Sass Larsen, cast doubts on the government's positive interpretation of the newly released figures. 'Can we call it a success when 59 percent of immigrants and refugees surviving on a lower rate of benefits still have not found work after three years? It is a fiasco and a clear sign that the government's restrictive policies are not working.' However, Eyvind Vesselbo (Liberal), member of the parliamentary integration committee, said he was in no doubt that the scheme is working. 'These figures show that the government's policies are a success. This group of immigrants has been given an incentive to work, something that is drastically needed, also for their own sake.'

(Jyllandsposten p. 5, 6 December 2005. NE translation)

Second generation immigrants as academically qualified as Danes

According to Statistics Denmark, 11.6 percent of second generation immigrants in the age group 30 to 35 have gone on to higher education. This is almost the same rate as amongst Danes, where 11.9 percent have a post-secondary school degree. However, the propensity to acquire academic qualifications varies depending on the country of origin. Whereas immigrants with Pakistani and Iranian parentage can be seen as ambitious elite, Somali and Turkish immigrants fare less well. Thus, despite the positive statistics the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations emphasises that much remains to be done to encourage second and third generation immigrants to continue on to university studies.

(Jyllandsposten on-line, 6 December 2005)

Swedish press

Migrationsverket changes procedures

The Swedish Migration Board has introduced new procedures to ensure that reports of refugee children being exploited are submitted in writing to the social services. The board introduced the method on Monday after strong criticism for not issuing clear

guidelines to the social services concerning refugee children suspected of being subjected to serious crimes such as human trafficking for sexual purposes, serious assault and rape. But the head of Social Services in Rinkeby is not impressed. "It is a bit late in the day for that now," says Sakir Demirel. "It is common practice for authorities to exchange information in writing. It is only in rushed cases where this happens verbally and then it is backed up in writing afterwards," he adds.

(Dagens Nyheter p.13, 6 December 2005. SPR translation)

Wrong to detain asylum seeker

The Supreme Administrative Court (*Regeringsrätten*) ruled yesterday that it was wrong to keep an asylum seeker in custody for over two years as a result of the police failing to deport him to Guinea (see SPR October 18, midday edition). Swedish police tried to deport Mamadu Ori Bari twice, but failed. The National Police Board then sought guidance on whether he could be held in custody when no deportation was possible. The court said that as no new attempt had been made to deport him for a year and four months, there were no grounds for detaining him. The ruling could set a precedent for the 158 people currently being detained in Sweden.

(Dagens Nyheter p.13, 6 December 2005. SPR translation)

Finnish press

Finns say no to immigration

According to a Gallup poll commissioned by the Finnish daily, Helsingin Sanomat, Finns disapprove of an increase in the number of immigrants received by Finland. 60 percent favour the current rate, while 16 percent believe there are already too many immigrants in the country. 20 percent support an increase. If party affiliation is included, then only supporters of the Finnish Green Party favoured an increase, while supporters of the other political parties favoured the status quo. Almost all who were asked believed that immigrants should live in the same communities as Finns.

Telephone interviews were conducted with 1000 people at the end of November. The survey had a 3 percent margin of error.

(FNB on-line, 6 December 2005)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Wednesday 7 December 2005

Danish press

High Commissioner for Refugees visits Denmark

The High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres was on a one day visit in Denmark last Tuesday. Guterres was interviewed in the Danish debate tv-programme Deadline 22.30. In the interview the High Commissioner pointed out the importance for the public opinion to distinguish between the migration flow seeking for a better life in industrialized countries, and the need there is for the international community to provide protection to people fleeing from civil war. "We are having around Europe a region with enormous economic problems...unless we address the cause of the problem trying to bring true development process to those regions we will have people desperately trying to survive, heading to Europe", Guterres said. The High Commissioner underlined also that Europe should remain an asylum continent, granting protection to people fleeing persecution and war.

(UNHCR, 7 December 2005, see the interview at www.dr.dk/dr2/deadline2230/tirsdag.htm)

Finnish press

Immigration poll: French-style rioting seen as unlikely in Finland

A majority of Finns - 55 percent - do not believe that even a sharp rise in the number of immigrants in Finland would lead to the same kind of ethnic unrest that took place in France a few weeks ago. On the other hand, 43 percent feel that rioting in Finland is very, or quite likely, according to a poll commissioned by Finnish daily Helsingin Sanomat and conducted by Suomen Gallup. Nearly all respondents - 94 percent - felt that immigrants should live together with other Finns, and not be isolated in separate neighbourhoods. One in five Finns feel that Finland needs more immigrants, most of which had high level of education. Gender was found to have no bearing on opinions on the immigration issue.

(Helsingin Sanomat, 7 December 2005. www.helsinginsanomat.fi)

Racism to be met with zero tolerance

A proposal put forward by the Finnish government's ministerial committee on immigration recommends that in developing a new immigration policy greater consideration be taken to how relations between different ethnic groups evolve. The proposal includes thirty recommendations and concrete suggestions to facilitate the integration of immigrants into Finnish society. The ministerial committee highlights the need to tackle racism more aggressively through enabling the police and other public authorities to clamp down on race-related crime. In addition to this, the proposal also focuses on solving labour shortages through actively encouraging qualified foreigners to come to Finland, as well as giving suggestions as to how to make it easier for immigrants to start their own businesses.

(Huvudstasbladet on-line, 6 December 2005)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Thursday 8 December 2005

Norwegian press

High Commissioner warns against intolerance and xenophobia

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, warned against intolerance and xenophobia when he met Wednesday with students at the Midstuen middle school in Oslo. The students had a chance to play "Against all Odds", a computer game that simulates the difficulties faced by people trying to flee their conflict ridden countries. Afterwards the High Commissioner met with King Harald.

"Today the world is experiencing increasing intolerance. Political leaders and media appeal to people's fears in order to gain votes and increase profits. It is particularly important that young people are pioneers in the fight against intolerance", said High Commissioner Guterres.

(Aftenposten on-line, 7 December 2005)

Danish press

A better class of immigrants

The Welfare Commission claims that the projected lack of qualified labour in the future could be partially solved by focusing more on immigrants' education and qualifications. Under a new system of requirements for entry into the country, borrowed from Canada, immigrants would be graded according to a points system based on the level of education, language ability, business experience, age, and the possibility of a contract with a Danish company. The maximum would be 100 points and the commission suggests that potential immigrants would need to score at least 60. Another recommendation is to reward immigrants with permanent residency after just two years, instead of the current seven, if they have held employment for two years and can pass an exam in elementary Danish and English proficiency.

(Jyllands posten p. 3, 8 December 2005. NE translation)

Finnish press

Immigration Seen as Possible Solution to Nurse Shortage

Finland's Union of Health and Social Care Professionals (TEHY) sees immigration as one way to deal with the shortage of personnel in the healthcare professions. According to a study released by TEHY on Wednesday, Finland has not sufficiently utilised the human resources available among immigrants with professional skills in health care. Finland is also unprepared for the increasingly multicultural nature of the field. As a solution, the union is calling for more support for immigrants in Finland. The study involved questionnaires and interviews with Finnish and foreign health professionals. Employers interviewed for the study say that language problems are a major issue. Insufficient command of the language is seen as a threat to patient security. In bilingual

communities, where there are large numbers of people speaking both Finnish and Swedish as their mother tongues, professionals in public health care including immigrants are expected to speak both. TEHY says that special attention needs to be given to teaching immigrant nurses the vocabulary of the profession. The union also wants to make it easier for professionals with degrees from other countries to get approval in Finland, and calls for development of multicultural skills of Finnish working communities. Finland has about 108,300 residents of foreign origin. Of this group, 2,400 are trained healthcare professionals. About two percent of healthcare workers in Finland are immigrants. In the study, 71 percent of respondents felt that foreign-born healthcare workers are treated like all other employees. However, about half of the immigrants themselves say that they have met with discrimination and prejudices. The most difficult jobs were seen to be at public healthcare clinics, and large workplaces with a fast stressful pace of work.

(YLE24 Finnish News Agency, 7 December 2005)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Friday 9 December 2005

Danish press

No Danish citizenship for torture victims

The centre-right Liberal-Conservative (VK) coalition government and its far right anti-immigration ally the Danish People's Party (DF) have agreed to withdraw the dispensation allowing traumatised torture victims, who do not speak the Danish language, citizenship. According to the Copenhagen-based International Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (IRCT) a third of all refugees coming to Denmark have been subject to torture and many of them suffer from post traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD). The Rehabilitation Centre and the Danish Institute for Human Rights have both expressed grave concern about the decision. "Every week we receive applications for Danish citizenship from 50 people, 35-40 of whom have been unable to learn Danish because they say they suffer from PTSD, we are fed up with this situation," says DF's naturalisation spokesman Søren Krarup. Krarup criticises doctors for being overzealous in diagnosing patients with PTSD.

(Politiken frontpage, 9 December 2005. NE translation)

Citizenship test now instituted

Language abilities, trivial knowledge, and financial independence will be taken into consideration when immigrants apply for citizenship in the future. The Liberal-Conservative government agreed with the Danish People's Party on Thursday that immigrants would need to pass a citizenship test, demonstrate a certain level of Danish skills, and prove they had supported themselves for four out of five years. Rikke Hvilshøj, minister of immigration and integration affairs, considered the test a fitting requirement for obtaining citizenship. 'We would like to send a signal that if you want Danish citizenship and to be able to say that now I am Danish, then it is important to be able to speak and understand Danish, that you know the Danish culture and the country's history, and that you have demonstrated that you can support yourself in Denmark,' Hvilshøj said. Opposition parties voiced their concerns over the measures; however, with the Social Democrats protesting requirements that immigrants demonstrate that they are self-sufficient. "We feel that if you are able to speak Danish then it should be up to the labour market to handle the problem of being unemployed" said John Dyrby, Social Democratic member of the parliament's citizenship rights committee. Simon Emil Ammitzbøll, the Social Liberal citizenship issues spokesman, also questioned the legitimacy of the measure. "We believe it's a matter of principle that you cannot make people's economic and social position the basis for obtaining civil rights that include citizenship and the right to vote", he said. "The question is also whether it can - and should - be up to the parliament to define what it means in a cultural sense to be Danish."

(Ritzau, www.denmark.dk 9 December 2005)

Finnish 15- to 25-year-olds are tolerant, but selectively so -Survey

A survey carried out by 15/30 Research, a market research company, indicates that young Finns, while internationally oriented, are selective in their tolerance. The firm unveiled the preliminary results of the survey on Thursday. Finnish teenagers and young adults tend to be more tolerant toward sexual minorities and members of different religions than toward immigrants, the survey suggests. Three out of five or respondents said they were not opposed to increasing development aid spending, but two out of five would curb immigration. On average, male respondents voiced more anti-immigration views than female ones did. 15/30 Research interviewed 1,352 people aged 15 to 25. (NewsRoom, STT www.virtual.finland.fi 9 December 2005)

"Immigrants' knowledge of Finnish language should be promoted"

The most important means to make an improvement in the status of immigrants in Finland is to promote their knowledge of the Finnish language. Furthermore, it could be necessary to teach them Swedish as well - particularly health-care vocabulary. These are the conclusions drawn by the Union of Health and Social Care Professionals (TEHY) from the findings of a survey among members that was conducted recently and published on Wednesday. The purpose of the study was to glean information on the number of foreign-born employees, their background, education, work, and their treatment in the social and health sector. Currently, only a few percent of the Finnish health-care professionals have an immigrant background. The biggest obstacles facing those who wish to find a job in the health sector include inadequate language skills, differences in the systems of degrees, as well as insufficient multicultural skills within work communities. The survey also showed that a total of 71 percent of all immigrant respondents felt that they were treated in the same way as other employees in their workplaces. However, one in two immigrant members have faced discrimination and prejudices. The targets of racism are most obviously the immigrants of Russian and Estonian origin as well as those with a different complexion compared with the native population. Apparently, the most negative work environments include large and busy workplaces in the public sector, for example health centres.

(Helsingin Sanomat, 9 December 2005, www.helsinginsanomat.fi/english)

UNHCR takes up fight against intolerance

The High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres was yesterday on a one day visit to Finland. Guterres spoke at an event celebrating the Finnish Refugee Council's 40 year anniversary. The High Commissioner emphasized the problem of the increasing intolerance which he sees as one of the most serious threats to refugee's rights today. According to Guterres, intolerance causes fear in people and in our societies. Fear makes people more restrictive when it comes to help refugees, he adds. Guterres criticized also media because of its indulgent way and mixing of the concepts. He points for instance the connection media makes between 'refugee' and 'terrorism'. UNHCR is therefore starting a campaign against intolerance next year.

(Yle, 8 December 2005, http://internytt.yle.fi/artikel.php?id=66694_Inrikes)

Swedish press

County investigates Social Authorities' treatment of apathetic children

The Migration Board met with representatives of the County to discuss 9 cases of apathetic children who were physically abused. The cases are reported to the police and at least 8 people face now charges for child trafficking, rape and serious child abuse. All children involved had already been in contact with the social authorities. The County will now investigate if the social authorities made sufficient efforts to help the children.

(Svenska Dagbladet, 9 December 2005, p. 9)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Monday 12 December 2005

Swedish press

Hidden families granted asylum

More than 20,000 asylum seekers who have had their applications turned down in the past have re-applied for asylum since the new, temporary asylum act came into effect. Of this group, 4,400 have been in hiding since their applications were first turned down. So far, the Migration Board has re-examined 900 cases and in 85 per cent of them the asylum seekers have been granted residence. "The explanation is that we have focused on families with young children – one of the groups law-makers have specifically focused on in the new act," says the Migration Board's Torbjörn Modén. (Svenska Dagbladet p. 6, 11 December 2005. SPR translation)

"Cultural heritage behind criminality"

On Wednesday, the Swedish Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) will publish a report entitled "Crime among Swedes and immigrants". On daily Dagens Nyheter's debate page today, Mauricio Rojas, Liberal MP and the party's spokesman on integration, reveals some of the findings of the report. The report will show that immigrants are overrepresented in crime statistics, particularly in the case of serious crimes such as murder, homicide, assault and battery and rape. It will also show that while immigrants from certain countries do not commit more crimes than native Swedes, immigrants from other countries commit far more crimes. The only satisfactory explanation for the differences between the different immigrant groups is one of socio-cultural heritage, writes Mauricio Rojas. He points out that the issue has been considered taboo but it is time to both understand and deal with a situation that is highly unsatisfactory. (Dagens Nyheter p. 4. 12 December 2005. SPR translation)

Finnish press

Finland's fast-track asylum procedure may endanger due process, says Ombudsman

Mikko Puumalainen, the Finnish Ombudsman for Minorities, said Monday that the fast-track processing of asylum applications featured obscurities and room for interpretation that might give rise to problems related to due legal process. Furthermore, while the point of departure is that due process is guaranteed even under the fast-track procedure, factors linked to the hastiness of the procedure could influence legal protection, Mr Puumalainen added. The ombudsman has submitted a report to the government, citing cases where asylum seekers have been sent back without administrative court rulings. (STT NewsRoom Finland on-line, 12 December 2005)

About 200 Ingrian returning migrants deported for committing crimes

The Directorate of Immigration estimates that it has deported an estimated 200 foreigners with Ingrian background for crimes committed while in Finland. Ingrians – descendents of Finns who settled in Russia and Estonia in the 17th century - have been allowed to settle in Finland as "returning migrants" since the early 1990s. Most of the

deportees are young adults, convicted of drug-related offenses. Despite having no connection to Russia, some of these individuals have been deported to Russia instead of Estonia, as they formally are Russian citizens. The Directorate of Immigration does not have precise figures on the number of Ingrians who have been expelled for criminal activity, but estimates are that about 200 may be affected. Ingrians who have been deported are usually barred from entering Finland for five years. Finnish human rights lawyer Markku Fredman has called for an end to deporting Ingrians with an Estonian background to Russia. "The idea of the deportations is to send someone who cannot adapt to Finland to where that person came from. However, now people are being separated from their families, and are being deported to a completely foreign social environment", he points out. Also, a young person sent out of the country under such circumstances is an easy target for recruitment into organised crime.

(Helsingin Sanomat on-line, 12 December 2005)

Russian environmental activist seeks asylum in Finland

Renowned Russian environmental activist Sergei Kharitonov is applying for political asylum in Finland. Kharitonov, who has made a reputation for himself by drawing attention to the safety problems at the Sosnovyi Bor nuclear power plant on the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland, says that he is in great danger in Russia. "My persecution is based on the fact that human rights are violated in Russia", Kharitonov says.

(Helsingin Sanomat on-line, 12 December 2005)

Danish press

Withheld public funding forces girls' clubs to close

Integration Minister Rikke Hvilshøj has described the special clubs for immigrant girls as important and very necessary – she plans to visit one in January. However, by then it will probably have closed due to lack of funds, DKK 200,000 that would have been theirs had the Integration Minister herself not withheld funds for these girls' clubs. (www.dr.dk , 11 December 2005)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Thursday 15 December 2005

Danish press

New immigrants to make language test in their home countries

Foreigners will have to make a language test and a democracy test in their home countries before coming to Denmark for familiar reunion. This is the Liberal Party's new proposal, presented yesterday by Irene Simonsen, secretary for the Party's immigration issues. "They will have to study Danish in their home countries before they arrive in Denmark. And they will also have to study a course on how democracy and culture works in Denmark", explains Simonsen. The secretary for immigration issues of the Conservative Party, Henriette Kjær, agrees with Simonsen. "If they have taken the decision to move to Denmark, then it is in my opinion completely coherent to start taking lessons in Danish" she says.

(DR, Danish Radio, 12 December 2005, www.dr.dk)

No to tax relief for immigrants

Minister of Integration Rikke Hvilsthøj (Liberal Party) said today that the Government is negative to a proposal concerning special tax arrangements for immigrants that get into the labour market. The proposal was put forward by the Roskilde University (RUC) in a report on Integration of foreigners made for the Ministry of Integration. The reports presents 23 propositions to how to help immigrants who live on social benefits, to get into the labour market. One of the most controversial points in the report is to exonerate immigrants with up to DKK 300 000 if the person has found a job himself. The tax relief will furthermore be for saving or to be invested in business activities. Hvilsthøj underlines that all people who get social benefits actually have the responsibility to look for and find a job. Shahamak Rezaei from RUC sais the report is based on the factual Danish reality and suggests what should be done to change it. "Our proposal on special tax arrangements is intent to activate people out of passive situations" Rezaei says.

(Politiken, 13 December 2005, www.politiken.dk)

Sweden press

Immigrants suspected of crime more often

Immigrants are over-represented in Swedish crime statistics, according to a report presented by the National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) on Wednesday. The report is based on statistics for those suspected of committing offences that have been reported to the police between 1997 and 2001. The authors suggest that one reason why immigrants figure in the crime statistics is that it is difficult to move to a new country. Another contributory factor is that immigrants often have a lower social status than the average Swede in terms of education, job and income. In addition, the reception immigrants receive in Sweden has its faults. "It is discrimination that is the problem, not the cultural background one has. It's easier to turn to crime as an outsider," says Soc Dem MP Yilmaz Kerimo in a comment to the report. One of the conclusions of the report

is that people born overseas are two and a half times more likely to be suspected of committing a crime than people born in Sweden and with both parents also born in Sweden. The report also found that people born in Sweden with a foreign background were less likely to commit crimes.

(Svenska Dagbladet, p 7 & Dagens Nyheter, p 8, 15 December 2005, SPR translation)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Wednesday 14 December 2005

Danish press

Government considers Danish exam

Immigrants applying for residency via family reunification could in the future face a Danish language exam before they even set foot in the country. In an effort to attract the best potential candidates for integration, Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen (V) is considering a proposal that will require potential immigrants to take a Danish exam in their native countries. At his weekly press conference, Tuesday, the PM said it was a 'most interesting' proposal that would become part of the government's considerations about welfare reform. At the same time, the Liberal Party's integration spokesperson, Irene Simonsen, embraced the proposal. 'Testing people in their native countries would ensure that we receive more immigrants with a better chance of integrating into our society,' she said. 'If applicants can pass a simple language test it will provide them with at least some understanding of what is happening around them when they arrive in Denmark. If they do not pass then they will be rejected at a very early stage. Command of Danish is the key to integration.'

(Jyllandsposten p. 4, 14 December 2005. NE translation)

Lack of integration in public sector

The state is still lagging behind in employing people from ethnic minorities, even though both Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen (V) and the Welfare Commission have highlighted the importance of encouraging more 'new Danes' into the labour market to create better integration and to maintain the welfare state. Despite the government's target that 4 percent of all public sector personnel should be of immigrant extraction, the current percentage is just 2.1 and has remained stable for a long time. A spokesman for the *Association of Public Sector Employees* blamed immigrants' general lack of education and qualifications as a major hindrance to employment.

(Politiken p. 14, 14 December 2005. NE translation)

Swedish press

Several men cleared of suspicion

Several of the men who were suspected of abusing and sexually exploiting apathetic refugee children are no longer under investigation. "The prosecutor has judged that adequate grounds do not exist in a number of the cases," said Ulf Göranson, Stockholm County police press officer. However, according to prosecutor Lise Tamm, there is a growing case against several of the other men.

(Dagens Nyheter p.12, 14 December 2005. SPR translation)

Immigration to Solve Labour Shortage?

Immigration of skilled labour to Finland should be encouraged, says an official working group set up by the Ministry of Labour. Immigration would help compensate for large numbers of people leaving the labour market and help secure economic growth. According to Rauno Saari, Chairman of the Immigration Policy Working Group, a greater emphasis should be placed on integration. Attention would be paid to language studies and to learning Finnish manners and customs. This, the report says would assist integration of immigrants and reduce the risk of racism. The report says skilled workers from Ukraine and Russia would be high on the list of recruits. Labour Minister Tarja Filatov says the plan is good for the future, although now unemployment remains top of the bill.

(YLE24 on-line, 13 December 2005)

Who are the newcomers that Finland wants?

Nearly all of the parties represented in the Finnish Parliament feel that Finland should be more active in attracting highly-skilled immigrants, as well as other foreign workers. Only two parties - the True Finns and the Left Alliance - are opposed to active recruitment of foreigners with special campaigns. These are the conclusions that can be drawn from a survey of all the Parliamentary parties on immigration policy conducted by the Sunday edition of *Helsingin Sanomat*. Also answering the survey were all presidential candidates, as well as three labour market organisations. Immigration has been a hot topic of public debate.

The results of the survey suggest that the political parties sharply differ from the public at large with respect to immigration policy. Last week, Suomen Gallup released a poll on citizens' opinions on immigration. Although the questions asked in the two surveys are not identical, it is nevertheless clear that the parties feel that labour from abroad is a significantly more important factor in Finland's future, than ordinary citizens do. (...)

It is actually quite surprising how similar the parties' views are on immigration policy, even though the topic is one that raises strong emotions. The parties are almost unanimous in their reasons why Finland needs foreign labour - most important of which the pending labour shortage due to an ageing population. (...) The political parties are, therefore, in line with the government's immigration policy programme, which states that Finland should be marketed more than is now the case, and that immigration policy should focus more on promoting work-based immigration. A ministerial group on immigration policy is expected to discuss a new programme on Tuesday. The government should give its approval early next year. (...)

On refugee policy, the parties are largely sticking to their present policy lines. No Finnish party supports the French type of policy. In their view, foreigners must be granted the right to their own language and culture, but in a manner that helps them learn the Finnish language and ways. All parties feel that public funds should be spent to help foreigners maintain their own language and culture.

Finland has fewer than 110,000 foreigners (about two percent of the population) of which ten percent are refugees. Each year the number of foreigners in Finland is increasing by

between 5,000 and 9,000. About 60 percent of this group moves to Finland because of family ties, and about ten percent come for work. Nearly half of the foreigners in Finland are either of Russian, Estonian, or of Swedish origin. The unemployment rate among foreigners is about 28 percent.

(Helsingin Sanomat international edition. First published in print 11 December 2005)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Thursday 15 December 2005

[Danish press](#)

[Sweden press](#)

Immigrants suspected of crime more often

Immigrants are over-represented in Swedish crime statistics, according to a report presented by the National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) on Wednesday. The report is based on statistics for those suspected of committing offences that have been reported to the police between 1997 and 2001. The authors suggest that one reason why immigrants figure in the crime statistics is that it is difficult to move to a new country. Another contributory factor is that immigrants often have a lower social status than the average Swede in terms of education, job and income. In addition, the reception immigrants receive in Sweden has its faults. "It is discrimination that is the problem, not the cultural background one has. It's easier to turn to crime as an outsider," says Soc Dem MP Yilmaz Kerimo in a comment to the report. One of the conclusions of the report is that people born overseas are two and a half times more likely to be suspected of committing a crime than people born in Sweden and with both parents also born in Sweden. The report also found that people born in Sweden with a foreign background were less likely to commit crimes.

(Svenska Dagbladet, p 7 & Dagens Nyheter, p 8, 15 December 2005, SPR translation)

People born overseas sick listed more often

Swedish news paper Svenska Dagbladet publishes today the findings of a report into the differences in sick listing between people born overseas and those born in Sweden.

A study by the Swedish Social Insurance Administration reveals that people born in the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey have a 75 per cent higher sick listing rate than people born in Sweden. On average, the sick listing rate for people born overseas is 31 per cent above that of people born in Sweden. One reason for this is that the people born overseas work in poorer working environments and hold different jobs to those held by people born in Sweden. The study also shows that only 5per cent of people born in Sweden are unemployed and uninsured while the corresponding figure for people born in the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey is 26 per cent. The variations reveal that the Swedish labour market is segregated, write the authors of the report and conclude by saying that measures are needed to improve the labour market and to prevent ethnic discrimination.

(Svenska Dagbladet, p. 5; 15 December 2005. SPR translation)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Friday 16 December 2005

Danish press

UN criticises Danish refugee demands

The government's integration policies will only lead to further alienation of refugees, the Office of the United Nations' High Commissioner of Refugees says. New efforts are weighed down by negative attitudes and sanctions, unlikely to help integration of refugees in Denmark. That is how the Office of the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees' estimates the government's new integration packet, local newspaper *Fyens Stiftstidende* reported on Friday. The proposals include demands that newly arrived foreigners sign a treaty pledging to work towards their children's and spouses' integration. They must denounce terrorism as well as declare that it is forbidden to use violence against one's family. 'The UNHCR finds it hard to see how such a declaration should have a positive effect. The way the declaration is formulated creates an anticipation that foreigners will not respect certain values that are fundamental in a democratic society, and that they will commit the type of crimes mentioned in the declaration,' the UNHCR wrote in its hearing answer about the integration packet. 'Meeting everyone with such anticipations can alienate the majority of refugees who arrive with a positive attitude towards integration,' the organization continued. Pål Aarsæther, spokesman for the high commissioner, said the organization had met with Minister of Integration, Immigration, and Refugee Affairs Rikke Hvilshøj last week, to discuss the issue. 'Our biggest concern is the wording, which is very negative and lumps everyone together,' he said. 'Our experience shows that incentives are more effective than sanctions,' Aarsæther said. The integration packet has the support of a parliamentary majority, with the votes of the Liberal-Conservative minority government and the Danish People's Party.

(Jyllands-Posten, 16 December 2005. www.jp.dk/english_news)

Torture victim to sue Refugee Board

A man who was subjected to torture in his native country of Iran after being deported from Denmark has been granted the go-ahead to sue the Danish Refugee Board. High Court judges yesterday ruled that the case should be allowed to continue, thereby denying an appeal from the Refugee Board that it should be thrown out. The 24-year-old man is demanding DKK 250,000 in compensation because the Refugee Board deported him to Iran in 1999 where he was allegedly hung up, beaten and had salt rubbed in his wounds. He managed to flee to Denmark again in 2003 when he was finally granted asylum.

(Berlingske Tidende, 16 December 2005, p 8)

Swedish press

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Monday 19 December 2005

Danish press

Danish immigration debate shocks rest of Europe

Following Danish newspaper Politiken's presentation of quotes from members of the Danish People's Party (DF), leading European newspapers have described the tone of the Danish immigration debate as "deeply frightening" and "shameful". According to French daily, Le Figaro, not even the most right-wing French politicians would use the kind of rhetoric used by MP Jesper Langballe (DF), calling Islam "a plague on Europe". UK daily, the Independent, comments that no British politician would ever say that immigrants were "on a lower stage of civilisation". Swedish author Göran Rosenberg commented that the Danish debate is on a dangerous path, where rule of law loses its importance and where racist rhetoric becomes commonplace. Also the German Institute for Human Rights in Berlin commented that the tone of the debate "definitely does not contribute to integrating foreigners" into Danish society.

(DR on-line, 16 & 17 December 2005)

Swedish press

Fewer cases of apathetic children after active care

Between 2003 and February of this year, 26 cases of apathetic children and youth have been reported in Gällivare and Kiruna, two municipalities in northern Sweden. After seeing that attempts to treat apathetic children in intensive care units and psychiatric clinics were unsuccessful, the local authorities in this region decided to treat the most serious cases at home. As a result, there are no longer any reported cases of apathetic children in this part of Sweden. In Gällivare and Kiruna, primary care givers together with psychiatrists, child psychiatrists, social workers and the Migration Board work together to support asylum families, and to, as far as is possible, treat cases of apathetic children in their home rather than putting them in institutions.

(Svenska Dagbladet p. 13. 18 December 2005)

Asylum interpreters under suspicion

Saturday's Svenska Dagbladet reports that the Swedish Migration Board has used the services of a person suspected of human trafficking as an interpreter for asylum seekers. Police suspect several other interpreters of helping fellow countrymen to cheat in the asylum process in return for a sum of money. The man in question comes from the former Soviet Union and was used as an interpreter until police raised suspicions that he was involved in smuggling refugees into the country. Migrationsverket stopped using him as an interpreter in asylum cases but has since used him again as an interpreter for issues that do not relate to the asylum process. In a related article, SvD writes that over half of all apathetic refugee children who have received treatment in Sweden come from the former Soviet Union. The government's national co-ordinator, Marie Hessle, has therefore travelled to several of the regions in question to find out whether there is any experience of child apathy there.

(Svenska Dagbladet p. 6, 17 December 2005. SPR translation)

Finland's unsuccessful Aliens Act needs urgent reform

Finland's current Aliens Act, which came into force in 2004, has proved to be unsuccessful. One of the largest problems is the new temporary residence permit - the so-called B-permit - which can be granted to an applicant who is ineligible for asylum but cannot be deported. The practical problem is that a person holding a B-permit is not entitled to a job, education, or social security in Finland, as he or she is not recorded into the Population Information System, kept by Finland's Population Register Centre. According to some experts, the consequences of the law approach a violation of constitutional rights. A decision will be made in the course of next spring whether only the 51st paragraph of the Aliens Act will be amended or if it will be revised in its entirety.

A B-permit is granted to an applicant who is ineligible for asylum on grounds of persecution or some other international need for protection, but who nevertheless cannot be deported. Elsewhere in Europe and in the Nordic region, these applicants have often stayed in the country illegally without any permits. Finnish authorities have wished to give such persons at least some kind of official status. So far the total number of B-permits granted is 238, which is almost half of all residence permits granted to asylum-seekers. This was not the purpose of the law, and the numbers are considerably higher than the law-makers had envisaged.

The majority of B-permits have been issued to people of Somali, Afghan, or Iraqi origin.

The total number of all asylum applicants for 2005 is thus far 3,400. The majority of them have received a negative decision.

(Helsingin Sanomat international edition on-line & YLE 24 on-line, 19 December 2005)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Tuesday 20 December 2005

Danish press

Denmark accused of intolerance

Both the Council of Europe and the UN's High Commission for Refugees, UNHCR, have criticised Denmark's integration policies. The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, consisting of representatives from 46 European nations, concludes in a new resolution that members of ethnic and religious groups in this country are exposed to a high level of intolerance from politicians and the media, and the government's reform of immigration and integration legislation contributes to a hostile environment for diverse ethnic and religious groups. The UNHCR also claims that a new law proposal currently passing through parliament that will slash social benefits for married couples who have not had at least 300 hours work during a two-year period will hit refugees particularly hard – 'a group that is often amongst the most vulnerable in a society.' The Liberal Party's spokesperson on integration, Irene Simonsen, said she could not rule out that immigrants could be hard hit by the 300-hour stipulation, but if they are then it is their own choice. 'Many of them often want to stay at home and that is OK by me. But they should not expect to get paid for it. And this rule applies to Danes too.'

(Politiken p. 5 & Berlingske p. 4, 17 December 2005. NE translation)

Swedish press

Migration Board staff celebrate deportation

Officials at the Migration Board in Solna last year celebrated the deportation of an asylum seeking family with a sick child, by drinking champagne at work, reports Dagens Nyheter today. In an email to staff, Annica Ring, an official at the Migration Board, wrote: "On Friday at 3 p.m. we will celebrate with AM2 in their kitchen. I hope you will all be able to set aside 15 minutes beforehand in our kitchen as we intend to fulfill [name of official's] promise of champagne after a certain family left Sweden. I have received confirmation today that the deportation went well, notwithstanding the fact that handcuffs and foot shackles were used and police officers were hit with a handbag in the traditional manner. So, a warm welcome to our kitchen at 2.45 p.m. for a toast". Despite the detailed wording of the email, Annica Ring now denies that the toast was to celebrate the deportation of a certain family and says that staff were celebrating the co-operation between the various Swedish services involved; a co-operation that "we hoped would benefit the family". Janna Valik, director general of the Migration Board, has read the email and says to DN that Annica Ring's line manager has spoken to her about the email and that she assumes that this will suffice.

(Dagens Nyheter p. 8, 20 December 2005. SPR translation)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Wednesday 21 December 2005

Danish press

Immigrants take language protest to the streets

Hundreds of immigrants and refugees, along with a number of language teachers, yesterday protested government legislation that raises the bar for immigrants seeking citizenship. The square in front of Denmark's parliamentary buildings was filled with several hundred protesters, as they demonstrated against the government's increased requirements for immigrants and refugees seeking citizenship. The regulations, which were instituted last week, require applicants for Danish citizenship to pass a culture and language test, which the demonstrators said rendered all the language tests immigrants had already been forced to take useless. Foreign students from language schools in and around the capital organised the demonstration. Elsebeth Gerner Nielsen of opposition party the Social Liberals was among the speakers who criticised the Liberal-Conservative government's requirements that immigrants needed to pass an advanced language test to attain citizenship. 'The level of the test is the equivalent of a university education,' said Nielsen. Concerns were also raised by Bashir Farah, the spokesman for the student council of a language school for immigrants learning Danish. 'It affects the weak and those that don't have an education. That affects 75 percent of immigrants and refugees,' he said.

(The Copenhagen Post, www.jp.dk 20 December 2005)

Swedish press

Migration Board director critical

Director General of the Swedish Migration Board Janna Valik has reacted strongly to the revelations that staff celebrated with champagne after deporting a Russian family seeking asylum in Sweden (see SPR December 20 early edition). The e-mail sent by an official at the board, Annica Ring, was followed up by one explaining that they were not celebrating the family's departure, more the successful co-operation with police and social services. But Janna Valik says to daily Svenska Dagbladet (SvD), "It makes no difference. The damage was already done." SvD also reports that the Green Party is demanding Janna Valik's resignation, and that Minister for Migration and Asylum Policy Barbro Holmberg (SD) considers the incident to be lacking in judgment and unacceptable. In a written statement she says, "The meeting with asylum seekers should be conducted with dignity and respect for the individual. That applies equally to work relating to returning them to their homelands."

(Svenska Dagbladet p. 10, 21 December 2005. SPR translation)

Norwegian press

Demands that amnesty be given to deported Kosovar family

"Give the Omeri family a 'Christmas amnesty'" urges Steinar Miland, chairman of the Norwegian Labour Party's Telemark district. The Omeri family was deported to Kosovo in October after having resided in Norway for three years. Miland adds that their

deportation back to Kosovo is contrary to the Norwegian government's Soria Moria Declaration. After having been shown under what conditions the family is now living in Kosovo, members of the town they lived in Northern Norway are in an outrage. The village they are living in is a border town between Macedonia and Albania, which still lacks most facilities as a result of the war. The children are unable to attend school. Furthermore, there are no shops, health clinics, and no opportunities for work. To make matters worse, the family belongs to a small minority group that is unpopular amongst both Serbs and Albanians. It is for these reasons that Miland is demanding that the family be allowed to return to Norway.

(www.nrk.no, 20.12.2005)

Icelandic press

Minister of Social Affairs appoints Immigration Council

The Icelandic daily, Morgunbladid reports that the Minister of Social Affairs has made appointments to the Immigration Council for terms of four years. The council will concern itself with the assimilation of foreigners into Icelandic society and serve as a consulting body for the government on immigration issues. A committee concerned with the affairs of refugees will operate under the direction of the Immigration Council. Its assignment is to make proposals to the government concerning how to receive so-called quota refugees and supervise related services.

(www.icelandreview.com, 21 December 2005)

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Baltic and Nordic Headlines

Thursday 22 December 2005

Swedish press

Migration Officials' Questionable Behavior

More press reports have surfaced of questionable behavior among employees at the Swedish Migration Board. Swedish Television News has broadcast a recording of a case officer insulting a blind asylum seeker. When he says he is ready to commit suicide, the case officer replies he can do as he wishes, finally ordering him out of her office, as her next appointment is waiting. Swedish Radio News says that she has now been suspended. The newspaper Dagens Nyheter reports Thursday that a second board employee has also been suspended, after she invited colleagues to share a cake because a single mother and her three children were being kicked out of the country. Earlier this week Dagens Nyheter revealed that another board employee invited colleagues to champagne to celebrate the expulsion of a family with a severely ill child. At a press conference Thursday, the board's director general made a formal apology, and presented a six point program to improve the agency's ethics. She resisted demands for her resignation.

(Swedish Radio on-line, 22 December 2005)

More Migrationsverket celebrations emerge

Daily Dagens Nyheter (DN) writes that a head of unit at the Swedish Migration Board in Kristianstad was forced to resign immediately, yesterday, after new revelations of staff celebrating the deportation of a family. "We were invited for cake and coffee to celebrate a family being sent out of the country," says an official to DN. The celebration took place in March last year, the day after a single mother and her three ill children were deported. The invitation came from Liz Sandgren, who wrote in an e-mail to staff, "We will celebrate with cake and at the same time wish her and her children all the best in their homeland!" Some 15 employees took part in the celebration. One official says to DN, "It's OK to have this kind of attitude at the unit, that a deportation is something to celebrate. It's clear that such a culture exists and there are also racist tendencies amongst some of the staff." Migrationsverket's Director General Janna Valik says that Liz Sandgren's values differ from those of the Board and adds, "We have a tough job, but that doesn't excuse this kind of behaviour or choice of words." Janna Valik has no plans to step down herself over the revelations. "I'm taking these events on board, but it isn't I who decides who is to be the director general of the Swedish Migration Board," she says to DN. Svenska Dagbladet reports that Moderate MP Henrik von Sydow has reported Migrationsverket to the Parliamentary Ombudsman after the revelations.

(Dagens Nyheter p. 8 & Svenska Dagbladet p. 6, 22 December 2005. SPR translation)

New report on discrimination

On DN's debate page today Public Investigator, Professor Masoud Kamali and researcher Magnus Dahlstedt present their report, which claims that politicians are responsible for spreading stereotypes and prejudiced perceptions about immigrants. They divide up society into "us Swedes" and "the others", meaning people who stray from the norm and must be adapted to the Swedish democratic society. The report shows that despite claims that the government represents the people, there are real

inequalities in terms of representation of ethnic groups. This has led to the recurring problem of political mistrust and people with a foreign background abstaining from voting. Explanations for this have focused too much on the shortcomings of immigrants, for example in terms of lack of knowledge about how Swedish society works and poor language skills, that they lack “democratic traditions” etc. The report clearly reveals that the will is there to engage amongst the immigrant population in Sweden. Kamali and Dahlstedt write that it is high time the political parties had a complete shake-up and took a look at their priorities in order to help the voices of immigrants to be heard. (Dagens Nyheter p. 6, 22 December 2005. SPR translation)

Norwegian press

Refugee children responsibility of childcare authorities

The Norwegian government has decided that in future unaccompanied children seeking asylum will be the responsibility of the childcare authorities, under the Child Welfare Act. Partly as a result of last month’s disappearance of four under-aged Chinese asylum seekers, the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) has tightened its routines. There are about 110 unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in Norway. Children under the age of fifteen are assigned individual legal counsel. Should (www.aftenposten.no / NTB, 22 December 2005)

Finnish press

Official Rebuke Over Delayed Asylum Decision

The Deputy Parliamentary Ombudsman Jukka Lindstedt has rebuked the Directorate of Immigration over delays in implementing an asylum decision. He says the Directorate was wrong to delay granting an asylum decision to a Chechen family even though the Administrative Court had earlier ruled in their favour. The family had to wait over half a year while the Directorate procured additional information. The Ombudsman says administrative officials are duty bound to abide by court decisions. The Directorate of Immigration originally denied asylum to the family in 2002. An appeal on the decision was made to the Helsinki Administrative Court, which then overturned the Directorate's decision a year later.

(YLE24 on-line, Finnish News Agency, 21 December 2005)

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