Summary

Medical practitioners and other health professionals belong to high shortage occupations for Finland.

Looking at past, current and future trends (3-4 years), a number of occupations have been identified as mismatch priority occupations for Finland, i.e. they are either in shortage of surplus. Shortage occupation: an occupation that is in short supply of workers, and for which the employers typically face difficulties finding a suitable candidate. Surplus occupation: an occupation for which there are plenty of suitable workers available but low demand. The employers have no problems filling such posts.

The list below is based on an assessment of the labour market of Finland. The occupations presented are not given any rank. All of them present high mismatch.

Mismatch priority occupations
One major reason for shortages in these occupations is the lack of graduates from respective HE study programmes. Consequently, there are more vacancies than competent and suitable candidates. For instance, there are 110 open places for dentists in the whole country and 70 qualified unemployed or laid-off jobseekers. Regional differences play a role as well e.g. there is a substantial lack of qualified dentists in the province of North Karelia, but this is balanced by the situation in the province of Pirkanmaa; furthermore, medical doctors can be unemployed in certain regions, but in others – they can be in a shortage. The regional differences relate to rather low mobility of labour force inside Finland, which can be explained by higher living costs in certain regions (the South of Finland), house prices, etc.

Another reason for shortages for these occupations is the fact that Finland has the fastest ageing population in Europe which means growth in demand for medical services and at the same time a relatively rapid decline of working age population as a result of retirement of the labour force.

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There are measures in place to increase study places for medical practitioners and other health professionals at tertiary level. For example, according to a Government decision from 2012, study places for medical doctors will be increased from 600 to 750 up to 2016. There are Regional development projects for recruiting competent persons from abroad. For example, the project “Doctor – Promoting employment based immigration of doctors (med.)” was aimed at recruiting Russian doctors to North Karelia by offering them coaching and support in order to integrate them into Finnish society.

The Ministry of Employment and Economy (MEE) had a strategic programme- Welfare Service Development Programme HYVÄ, 2009-2011 – that concentrated on the social and healthcare sector and focuses on, among other priorities, ensuring the availability of competent labour force for the sector.

Social work and counselling professionals, social and health care (nursing) professionals

Demand for labour in the social work sector will increase from approximately 150 to 220 thousand employees by 2025. The ageing of the population implies higher demand and contraction of supply. Some job profiles (e.g. child protection) in social work are also demanding causing early retirements, staff turnover, and absenteeism. Shortages can also be explained by a lack of candidates with appropriate skills and competences. For example, according to the Occupational Barometer the number of unemployed and laid-off jobseekers is 809 (average at the end of month) and at the same time the number of open vacancies is (average at the end of month) 359.

The Welfare Service Development Programme HYVÄ, 2009-2011 of the Ministry of Employment and Economy (MEE) focused on ensuring the availability of a competent labour force for the sector. For example, several reports on development trends related to labour force needs and supply within the social and health care sector were produced. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health coordinates several development programmes which are based on Governmental Programmes and further, on the Strategy for Social and Health Policy and on the National Development Programme for Social Welfare and Health Care. One concrete aim for them all is the better matching of workforce demand and supply. For example, by targeting potentially new sources or under used sources of skill supply (e.g. partially disabled persons and long-term unemployed people).

Teaching professionals

Demand for qualified, special needs teachers is growing in Finland. This is a profession which has a special condition of eligibility; therefore, not all qualified teachers are able to work as qualified special needs teachers. For example, the number of unqualified special needs teachers remains high, at almost 1.2 thousand. According to the Occupational Barometer, there were 244 qualified jobseekers (teachers) for 281 open vacancies across the whole country. Regional differences do also occur – while in the South of Finland a substantial shortage of teachers is observed, in Central Finland there is a surplus. Also in the future, the rapidly growing retirement of ageing teaching professionals opens up demand for new teaching professionals despite diminishing pupil/student age groups (i.e. fewer pupils in the schools, less need for teachers).

Measures have been put in place to increase the number of:
a. study places for teachers at universities;
b. the number of teacher training programmes; and
c. the number of teacher further / specialisation education and training programmes.

The decision on study places in VET and HE programmes is always a governmental issue (i.e. by the Ministry of Education and Culture). Financing of teacher further / specialisation education and training programmes also comes from the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Finnish National Board of Education partly coordinates measures concerning teachers’ further education and training but providers and teachers themselves are free to choose how they will meet the set requirements.

**Occupations in the field of business and administration**

This occupational group has the highest number of open vacancies in Finland. For example, in relation to “commercial sales representatives”, the number of open vacancies for the whole country was above seven thousand (average at the end of month) compared to around four thousand unemployed and laid-off jobseekers (average at the end of month). Regarding “contact centre salespersons”, there were more than three thousand open vacancies compared to four hundred (average at the end of month) unemployed and laid-off jobseekers. The reasons for shortages relates to reimbursement (provision/commission-based salary), **working conditions** as well as a lack of mobility in the labour force e.g. while in Eastern Finland there is “serious shortage of job seekers” (no exact figures available), in the region of Ostrobothnia (west of Finland) a large surplus is observed. Furthermore, these occupations are considered less attractive. It seems to be a widely known assumption that especially “call centres” have a rather negative image as employers. Employers have also reported that the sales professions require a certain “type of personality” and not all candidates are suitable for, in this case, working as call centre sale person. A rather high rate of **employee turnover** in the occupation can be explained with a mismatch between the preconception of what the work is like and what it is in reality.

Implementing employment and enterprise services aims to ensure that open vacancies are quickly filled and jobseekers and employers find each other. They also promote new business activities and business development and strengthen the expert role of the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment in Finland (ELY) within regional enterprise service networks. Competence development services identify the development needs with respect to the customers’ competences and skills, improve customers’ professional skills and support their employment and ensure that the competences required in the labour market are taken into account in the planning and provision of services. Furthermore, supported employment services promote entry into labour market for those customers who require individual support and/or multi-professional services to a greater degree than average.

**Surplus Occupations**

The five top surplus occupations in Finland are: Secretaries (general), Administrative and specialised secretaries, Garment and related trades workers (especially Tailors, Dressmakers, Furriers and Hatters), Architects, planners, surveyors and designers (especially Graphic and Multimedia Designers) and Sales, marketing and public relations professionals. (Advertising and Marketing...
Designers, sales, marketing and public relations professionals. For all these groups a large surplus of jobseekers has been identified. One of the key challenges for Finland has been the intensive structural change of the labour markets caused by globalisation. Over recent years, especially in the forestry and the ICT sectors, tens of thousands of employees have lost their jobs due to the “run down of production” on a very big scale. Consequently, the layoffs have created a large group of skilled workers who are not able to find work in their old professions but who do not, as yet, have the skills required to find jobs other sectors / profession where jobs are available.

As part of implementation of the active labour market policies (ALMP) in Finland, enhancement of skills development has an important role whereby education and training are seen as key measures to meet changing skills requirements and generally improve the matching of labour supply and demand. Activities include: basic (vocational) labour market training, jobseekers’ self-motivated and/or independent studies which are supported by specific unemployment benefits and wage subsidies for apprenticeship training and other skills development. Programmes and projects to create flexible opportunities to develop personal skills and competencies as well as development of information, guidance and counselling services have been launched and implemented; e.g. Municipal Trial (Kuntakokeilu, NOSTE Programme and Door to Learning programme (OpinOvi). Also the development of intermediate labour markets, which aims to improve professional skills, expertise and labour market status of the persons who have difficulties to find work, is one of the development targets of the labour market policy included in the Government Programmes.

Note on the methodology

The list has been compiled by Cedefop in the first half of 2016 combining quantitative and qualitative methods. In particular, a list of mismatch occupations was formulated following quantitative analysis of labour market indicators. Country experts were then asked to build on and scrutinise this list. Their expert assessment and knowledge of the country’s labour market has provided rich insights about the reasons behind the skills shortages or surpluses at occupational level. These are also accompanied by measures and policies that aim to tackle such mismatches. Country’s stakeholders have also been included in validating the final list of occupations.

Find here more data and information about Finland.

References

[1] General medical practitioners (ISCO 2211), Specialist medical practitioners (ISCO 2212), dentists (ISCO 2261) and audiologists and speech therapists (ISCO 2066).

[2] Based on the Occupational Barometer


Regional development projects are organised regionally. Depending on the project and e.g. funding these can be also part of some governmental programme, EU-programme etc.

University of Eastern Finland. wanda.uef.fi/tkk/liferay/projektit/doktor/

Social Work and Counselling Professionals (ISCO 2635) and Psychologists (ISCO 2634).

Nursing Professionals (ISCO 2221), Nursing Associate Professionals (ISCO 3221), Dental Assistants and Therapists (ISCO 3251) and Medical and Pathology Laboratory Technicians (ISCO 3212).

See e.g.: Hanhijoki I. et al. 2011

Commercial Sales Representatives (ISCO 3322) and Contact Centre Salespersons (ISCO 5244).

Based on the Occupational Barometer

Special Needs Teachers (ISCO 2352) and Early Childhood Educators (ISCO 2342).


Commercial Sales Representatives (ISCO 3322) and Contact Centre Salespersons (ISCO 5244).

Based on the Occupational Barometer

National Teacher Survey e.g.: www.tem.fi/files/22247/TEM15_09.pdf

ISCO 412

ISCO 334

ISCO 753, in particular 7531

ISCO 216, in particular 2166
ISCO 243, in particular 2431

Based on the Occupational Barometer

Kuntaliitto.fi
www.kunnat.net/fi/asiantuntijapalvelut/aek/tyollisyys/kuntakokeilu/hankkeet/Sivut/default.aspx

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