

## Eures Advisers in Finland:

**TUULA KINNUNEN**  
Employment office of Helsinki/Kluuvi  
Tel. +358 10 60 70863

**AILA MACKEL**  
Employment office of Helsinki/Kluuvi  
Tel. +358 10 60 70862

**LELLA MOBIGLIA-WIKSTRÖM**  
Employment office of Helsinki/Kluuvi  
Tel. +358 10 60 70861

**TUULA MATIKAINEN**  
Turku employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 43137

**TOMI PURANEN**  
Turku employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 43090

**KAROLIINA KOKKO**  
Turku employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 43099

**SUZANNE SJÖLUND**  
Employment office of the Åland Islands  
Tel. +358 18 25 122

**LEENA NYMAN**  
Pori employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 43693

**TUULA SUIHKO**  
Tampere employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 45563

**KATI AHONEN**  
Tampere employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 45430

**AIJA SIEVÄNEN**  
Employment office of Päijät-Häme,  
Lahti  
Tel. +358 10 60 45037

**HELENA SOMMARBERG**  
Kouvola employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 40225

**PIRKKO NYSTRÖM**  
Mikkeli employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 41631

**KRISTINA RÖNNBLOM**  
Vaasa employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 46310

**RAILA NIEMINEN**  
inäjoki employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 40059

**TERTTU WIRZENIUS**  
Jyväskylä employment office  
Tel. +358 50 39 61701

**MARI TURUNEN**  
Jyväskylä employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 41132

**HANNELE SOIRILA**  
Hämeenlinna employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 45294

**LEENA PELLIKKA**  
Kuopio employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 42092

**TARU ASIKAINEN**  
Employment office of Joensuu Region  
Tel. +358 10 60 40722

**HANNELE OJALEHTO**  
Kajaani  
employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 44055

**TINA SUNDQVIST**  
Employment office of Oulu Region  
Tel. +358 10 60 44292

**IRMA TERVO**  
Rovaniemi employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 46597

**MARJA KETOLA**  
EURES Jobcentre  
(Cross Border project), Haparanda  
Tel. +46 922 61 467

**TARJA SOMERVALLI**  
Tornio employment office  
Tel. +358 10 60 46897

**MIRJA HUTTULA**  
Länsi-Pohjan Yrittäjät, Kemi  
Tel. +358 16 221 701

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# EURES ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005



# EUROpean Employment Service

# EURES

## info

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### Eures serves those needing a job or workers

The European Employment Services (Eures):

- advises workers wishing to work in Europe
- advises employers wishing to hire a European employee

In the European countries, an employment services network of more than 700 Eures advisers is in operation. In Finland, there are 23 advisers, who work in the largest employment offices of the country.

For more information about these services, visit the web pages of the Labour Administration at: [www.mol.fi/eures](http://www.mol.fi/eures)

### The Eures portal

The Eures employment services are backed up by the European Job Mobility Portal, which is one of the most popular web pages maintained by the European Commission. Some half a million people visit these pages monthly, and some 20,000 visitors are recorded every day. This portal for example contains the vacancies advertised by the public labour administrations in countries of the European Economic Area for each country and sector. In addition, it offers information on working, job-seeking and the labour markets in various countries.

<http://europa.eu.int/eures>

### In 2004

- The Eures advisers were contacted by nearly 100,000 job-seekers and employers
- Thanks to the recruitment events organised by Eures, more than 1,000 Finnish people found a job abroad
- Eures took part in over 1,000 events in Finland and elsewhere in Europe.

During the year, the Working in Finland guidebook for immigrants was completed. For more information, please visit [www.mol.fi](http://www.mol.fi) or contact the employment offices.



*Project Manager Tiina Oinonen, the Ministry of Labour*

## 2004-2005: A year of extending Eures connections

The enlargement of the EU in May 2004 had a significant impact on the activities of the Eures employment services network during the period extending from April 2004 till March 2005.

The number of employers contacting the Finnish Eures advisers went clearly up in the autumn of 2004. Interest in the labour force of the Baltic countries in particular increased, and more close-knit co-operation was established especially with Estonia. Additionally, after the expiry of the transition periods that came into force in May 2004, a Cross Border project is being planned to bridge the capital areas of the two countries, the objective of which is to facilitate the mobility of workers in border zones. A similar project was set up on the border between Finland and Sweden in the River Tornionjoki valley in 2000.

Together with the new member states, the co-operation network was further developed. The advisers of new member states were for example invited to visit Finland and to familiarise themselves with the labour market and labour administration services in this country. In association with the EU enlargement, the Eures network was also extended: there now are nearly 700 Eures advisers in Europe. In Finland, the number of advisers is 25.

In the new centres for job-seekers, Eures plays an increasingly visible role as part of the services package of the Labour Administration. The advisers also focused more on linking up with the employers, and an increasing number of the advisers are now working in the employer services. A central objective for Eures is to contribute to the availability of a skilled labour force in Finland after the large age classes reach retirement age.

The year for Eures was very busy. During this period, the advisers recorded nearly 100,000 contacts by job-seekers and employers. Co-operation was initiated with many other parties. According to a study conducted in Turku, highly educated Finns are interested in working in Europe. In the future, the changes at an increasingly international labour market will bring the services of the Eures network closer to both job-seekers and employers.

# Working life outlook in Finland during the year of activity



## **The EU enlargement and working life in Finland**

One of the objectives of the Labour Administration in the next few years will be to increase work-related immigration. As the need for labour increases, the Eures services will assist in the recruitment. During the year, the efficiency of services addressing the employers' needs in particular was improved. The advisers are increasingly moving over to work in the employer services sector.

An attempt will be made to reduce the entry of grey labour in the country by means of more efficient information and by increasing the co-operation between the authorities and other actors in the labour market. The European-wide Eures network will play an important role in disseminating information, so that the workers can be familiar with the working life in Finland and its basic rules before leaving their own countries.

## **The new EU states**

After the EU enlargement that took place on the 1st of May 2004, a transition period act applying to workers from the new EU states came into force in Finland. The purpose of this Act was to restrict uncontrolled migration of labour into Finland. In practice, majority of those who came from the new EU countries to Finland to seek jobs were mediated by service providers.

The EU enlargement clearly added to the tasks of the Finnish Eures advisers. Towards the end of the year in particular, the number of contacts by employers increased. The employers were the most interested in finding labour force in Estonia. The Estonians were also interested in working in Finland. According to an Eures study conducted in Estonia, almost every second of those who participated wished to come and work in Finland. In addition to the wages, they were attracted by the cultural and linguistic similarities and the short geographical distance.

## **The Finnish labour market**

Boosted by the economic growth, the employment rates and number of vacancies started showing a growth in Finland in autumn 2004. The average employment rate was 67%. During the year, 804,600 job-seekers were recorded by the employment offices. The unemployment rate was 8.8%. The number of the employed went down the most in the industrial sector, agriculture and forestry. In private services and trade, however, the number of jobs increased.

In 2005, the employment situation has seen a favourable development, and the number of unemployed has gone down. In some sectors, such as the metal and construction industries, health care sector and restaurant and cleaning work, there is a shortage of labour. In the future, it is expected that the problems of availability of labour will increase, as the medium age of the population will go up and the large age classes reach retirement age.

## **The service models of the employment offices to be updated**

The updating of the Finnish employment services started in the beginning of the year 2005. The aim is to speed up the finding of work by job-seekers, to prevent extended periods of unemployment and to ensure that employers find the workers they need. The use of electronic services will be increased. Job-seeking centres will be set up in the employment offices, which will serve as active meeting points for those needing work and those looking for workers.

This modernisation will have been completed by the end of the year 2006, and it will also help to increase the visibility of the Eures services.

# 04-05

## Events in 2004-2005

### April

- Scandinavian Tag, Jena, Germany
- Information event on working in the UK, Turku
- Skilled workers' fair, Jyväskylä
- Information event on working in Europe, Pori
- A soiree at the theatre for the employers, Pori
- A meeting of enterprisers, Huittinen
- Training event on the impacts of the EU enlargement, Helsinki
- Meeting of the working group on education and training, Brussels

### May

- Seminar by the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions, Working life info unit "Mobility of services and labour from Estonia to Finland", Tallinn
- the Europe Day: events around Finland
- Mobility Information Seminar, Kemi (a cartoon on this theme was published at the Arctic Comics Festival in Kemi)
- Jobs fair, Gdansk
- Seminar "Hello Scandinavia", Turku
- Meeting of the working group on information, Brussels
- Meeting of the steering group for Scandinavian employment services and the presentation of preliminary results of a project aiming at increasing the efficiency of Internet based employment services, Bergen
- Eures budget training, Brussels
- Meeting of Eures Project Managers, Brussels
- Event by Pohjola-Norden, Scandinavian treaties and the EU law: the Social Insurance Institute, tax authorities, Labour Administration

### June

- Conference "1994-Eures 2004 Job Mobility in the Enlarged Europe", Dublin
- In-service meeting/development day of Eures advisers together with supervisors, Kajaani
- Event for employers in the construction industry, Eures info

### July

- HerttuaJazz for employers, Pori

### August

- Nordic-Baltic project meeting, Copenhagen
- Co-operation and planning meeting with the Estonian labour market administration, Helsinki
- Eures meeting with the personnel and training officers at Päijät-Häme Central Hospital, Lahti

### September

- Eures European Network for Companies conference and the EURECA fair, Hamburg, Germany
- Eures annual general meeting, Mariehamn
- Getting to know the Eures services, mini seminar for employers, Helsinki
- Norra Nordiska Nätverket meeting, Iceland
- Meeting of the Lapland-Estonia Eures project, Helsinki
- Authorities' co-operation meeting with the SII
- Employer campaign
- Employer event in Mielakka

- Eures information for the recruitment staff in North Karelian Central Hospital
- Evening at the cinema for employers

### October

- Eures study visit to Latvia, Riga
- Eures Cross Border conference, Konstanz, Germany
- "The changing international employment services: Solutions for the availability of skilled labour", meeting of the Ministry of Labour and CIMO, Turku
- Multi-cultural recruitment fair, Tampere
- Meeting of Scandinavian employment services steering group, Reykjavik
- Social and health care fair for job-seekers and employers

### November

- National Guidance 2004 conference, Jyväskylä
- Pro Job fair, Kuopio
- Study visit to Finland by advisers from new EU countries
- Meeting of the Eures steering group, Helsinki
- In-service meeting of Eures advisers
- Eures Project Managers' meeting and budget training, the Hague
- Meeting of the steering group of the River Tornionjoki valley Cross Border project, Haparanda

### December

- Eures Nordic-Baltic project meeting, Copenhagen
- Eures Cross Border meeting, Tallinn
- High-level strategy group meeting, the Netherlands
- Joint budgeting meeting of the working committee of the River Tornionjoki valley Cross Border project, Eures Project Managers of Finland and Sweden, Helsinki
- Information event on working in the UK, Tampere, Vaasa, Seinäjoki

### January

- The joint Eures pre-training event for new advisers of the Baltic and Scandinavian countries, Tallinn
- Eures Nordic-Baltic project meeting, Copenhagen
- Information event on working in Belgium, Turku
- Next Step fair, Turku
- Recruitment fair, Oulu
- Learning by Working fair, Joensuu

### February

- National Eures assistant seminar, Jyväskylä
- Disneyland Paris recruitment event, Turku
- Information event on studying and working in Finland, Lepaya, Latvia

### March

- Jobs fair, Granada, Spain
- Jobs fair, Gdansk, Poland
- Eures Nordic-Baltic seminar, Riga, Latvia
- Information event on acquiring foreign labour for employers, Pori
- Training day on employment relationships for employers, e.g. work permits, Eures
- eRekry events, Seinäjoki and Tuuri
- Workers for the Right Place project, seven events

- Events for jobseekers

- Joint events for jobseekers and employers

- Events for employers

- Meetings of EURES advisers and partners



## Cross border Tornedalen: In the Tornionjoki River valley, the

Cross Border is a joint name for projects set up by the European Commission aiming at facilitating the mobility of workers in border zones between neighbouring countries.

In addition to the Tornionjoki River valley, similar Eures projects are being planned with such partners as Estonia.

Compared to other border zones of Europe, the valley of the Tornionjoki River is a large area: the border between Sweden and Finland is 600 km in length. This area is sparsely populated, and the unemployment rate remains high. People turn to the neighbouring country in order to find jobs, which has been customary in these regions for centuries. A joint Scandinavian labour market has been operating for as long as 50 years in this border region.

### Positive and challenging outlooks in the North

Some 1,000 people regularly cross the border to go to work, some 60% of them commuting from Finland to Sweden, from Tornio to Haparanda. The main sectors attracting workers are construction, the industries, trade, health care and tourism. The economic opportunities of cross-border traffic have recently drawn to the area some strong new actors: such retail chains as IKEA, Stockman and Anttila are opening new units in the near future, creating hundreds of new jobs in the region.

In the last while, tourism enterprises of the fell area have experienced difficulties in finding adequate amounts of seasonal labour. This problem, too, was addressed by the Eures employment services across the national borders. New mining workers are also required both in Kiiruna and Kittilä'8a. Snö'9avit, the immense gas field in northern Norway, draws workers from Finland and Sweden. The Arctic Ocean also offers promising opportunities, and so does co-operation in the Arctic areas. This is why there are plans to extend the Cross Border area to Norway during the next year of activity.

The demand for labour is increased by the economic growth encouraging the establishment and expansion of companies, as well as the ageing of the population. By the year 2015, it is estimated that 15,000 new workers will be needed in Norrbotten in Sweden, and as many as 35,000 in the Finnish Lapland. Mobility of labour and cross-border co-operation will have a crucial impact on the well-being of the whole region.

### Obstacles to be conquered

Despite the shared cultural background and long history, there are certain obstacles in the labour market of the Tornionjoki River valley that restrict the free mobility of workers. The partnership efforts in the Cross Border Tornedalen projects have successfully addressed such as shortcomings of training and problems arising from differences in the social security systems.

Some of the best results yielded by the project have been co-operation between the authorities in different fields. The Round Table working group established in 2003 in particular has done excellent work to solve problematic situations involving social security. Whenever necessary, complex issues have been taken as far as the parliamentary level.

Joint seminars on social security for several actors have proved efficient tools of co-operation. Not only Finland and Sweden but in recent times also Norway have taken part in these seminars. This co-operation presents many types of challenges, and its successes yields benefits even on the national level.

# border is no obstacle

## Bridges needed across the river and linguistic gaps

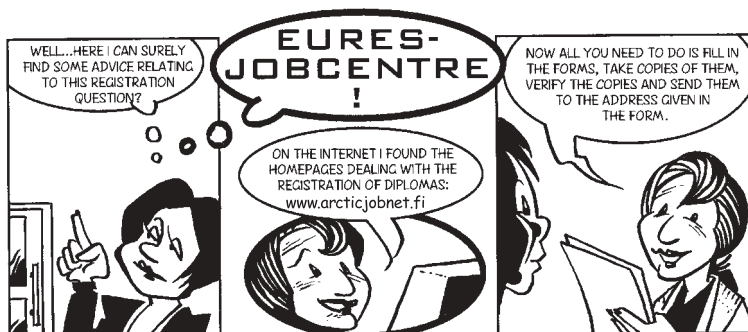
The project even looked into the geographical aspects of mobility. Commuter traffic between the east and the west is also obstructed by the river: in places, the distances between crossing points are rather long.

Linguistic problems always tend to be part of co-operation between countries. In the Cross Border work, an attempt has been made to solve these problems through such as education. In the Tornionjoki River valley, the majority of commuters have up till now headed towards Sweden, but as the employment situation is improving, Finland is more active than before in attracting labour force from Sweden. In Sweden, interest in learning Finnish has thus been awakened, as in many jobs at least two languages are now required. Recent studies indicating that the wage levels in Finland are higher than in Sweden also efficiently influence attitudes and encourage mobility.

## Functional networks, efficient information

Cross Border Tornedalen is a relatively small co-operation project, which however has achieved a lot. Another indication of fresh ideas, active approaches and daring include a cartoon about mobility of workers published at the Arctic Comics Festival in Kemi, in which important information is presented in an easy-to-digest format.

The population density of the area is low and the number of people commuting across the border is small; on the other hand, the small scale is the strength of this project. Commitment to co-operation and the good networks of the region have been helpful in influencing the authorities both at the regional and the national level. A genuine improvement has been seen in labour force mobility. The bright future outlook of the Arctic area creates a good base for further increasing the partnerships in the Tornionjoki River valley that have got off to such a good start. The spreading of good practices will also be an important challenge in the future.



## Eures Cross border Tornedalen: examples of implemented measures

### The Round Table group

- a working group of cross border authorities that meets regularly and has worked efficiently to improve labour force mobility in the area

### Seasonal workers in the tourism industry from Sweden into Finland

- an information campaign in Northern Sweden attracted skilled workers to the Finnish fell region

### The entrepreneurs of Western Ostrobothnia

- the possibilities and willingness of entrepreneurs in neighbouring countries to engage in productive co-operation mutually and in activities directed to third countries were analysed

### IT co-operation in Oulu and Luleå

- Information on vacancies in the IT field in Oulu was disseminated to unemployed IT professionals in Luleå

### Social security seminar

- The operation of unemployment benefit societies in Finland and Sweden was facilitated by comparing the differences and finding shared practices

### Eures Job Centre

- The joint offices of the employment services of Tornio and Haparanda and an Eures adviser representing the trade unions in the old Customs House of Haparanda

# Well-educated Finns interested in working in Europe

A period of working abroad has for many been a stepping stone towards success and even an international career. In the last few years, highly educated Finns in particular have been drawn by the possibility of going to other European countries to look for jobs. The labour markets in the UK, Sweden, Germany and Spain have proved the most attractive. The jobs have been offered by such as hotels, restaurants, tourism enterprises and the care sector.

- During the year 2004, we found jobs for more than a thousand Finnish job-seekers through various recruitment events, explains Tomi Puranen from Turku, who himself was trained as an Eures advisor in the beginning of the new millennium. - Another indication of the growing interest is that the Finnish Eures advisers were kept busy answering the enquiries of employers and workers, nearly 80,000 of which were received in total.

- Finnish people are known for their high standard of education and good language skills. They are also considered conscientious workers. In other words, we have a good reputation amongst European employers, explains Tomi Puranen. - We have excellent chances of mediating jobs. The work of an Eures adviser is rewarding in other respects, too: it is great to see how happy people are after finding a good job.

## Obstacles to mobility were studied

One of the most important tasks for the European Commission is to reduce the obstacles for workers' mobility. In Turku, a questionnaire was sent out to examine these obstacles, and more than 500 replies were received. This large body of material led into a more detailed study, the results of which were compiled by Paula Koskinen in a book called *Eurooppaan töihin? Suomalaisen korkeakoulusta valmistuneiden näkemyksiä eurooppalaisista työmarkkinoista* (To Work in Europe? The views of Finnish university graduates of the European labour market).

- This study indicates that students and those having recently graduated have a great need for information, says Tomi Puranen. - More information is required especially on the methods of finding work. The Internet is a good source of information, but most people going abroad would like to confirm the information thus found face to face with an adviser. People would also like more information events both in the universities and polytechnics.

The most important reasons for going abroad for work or work practice were an interest in the culture of the target country, a wish to acquire experience and a desire to improve one's language skills.

According to the study, those who already had stayed in the target country had the best starting points for going abroad to work. The unemployed often were nervous about going. There also were certain differences between the various places of study: university students know more about working abroad and are less nervous about leaving than students in polytechnics. Increased information can do a lot to reassure candidates about going abroad.

## International contacts valued in Turku

Turku is a large university town, in which are located not only the University of Turku, Å81bo Akademi University and Turku School of Economics and Business Administration but also the largest polytechnic in Finland. The need for Eures information and employment services is clearly visible: some 500 jobs abroad are mediated yearly.

- The wide-spread enthusiasm and smooth co-operation are also reflected in the figures. We work closely together in sharing information and experiences with such as Academic Career Services, explains Tomi Puranen.

- Recently, we have also participated in creating standards for European work practice. Experiences are gathered in various countries on how the trainees could make the most of their working period.

- In the years to come, international contacts will be closer than ever, and work outside the home country will attract an increasing number of people, reflects Puranen. - I hope we can also draw skilled labour from abroad to alleviate the labour shortage. In any case, the need for Eures services will increase in our office and everywhere in Finland.

Työjakso  
ulkomailla  
on monille  
ponnahduslauta  
menestykseen ja  
jopa kansain-  
väliselle uralle.



*Eures Adviser Leena Pellikka, Kuopio*

# A foreign employee is a challenge and an opportunity for a company

When special language skills or new contacts with other countries are needed in a company, hiring a foreign employee can be a good solution in many ways. Especially in sectors at risk from labour shortages, skilled labour will be needed in the years to come. The national Eures services of the Labour Administration will help employers find the correct channels and workers that are right for them.

- Eures is the right way to go about finding workers with language and other special skills, says Leena Pellikka, an Eures adviser in Kuopio. - We in Northern Savo have seen a number of foreign workers coming to work here for example as teachers, in contact centres and in the metal industry.

In case a company requires an employee speaking German as their native language, for example, the employer can leave an advertisement concerning the vacancy in the employment office, and that ad will be accessible in the web pages over the whole European Economic Area. - In addition, I can contact the Eures advisors in German-speaking countries directly, and sometimes they might know a suitable candidate straight away, explains Leena Pellikka.

## **Valuable experience**

Sometimes employers are worried about such as the adequacy of their own language skills, but a worker coming from abroad also offers a possibility for free practice. In some workplaces, the arrival of a foreign worker has triggered an active interest in studying the language, and even various types of cultural societies have been set up.

- Contacts with workers from other countries may also lead to important contacts in terms of exports and imports, Leena Pellikka points out. - It is obviously a good idea to also make use of the Eures contacts this way around. When Finnish employees work or train abroad, they receive valuable information and experience, which can be useful in many ways for the company.

- I'm very happy with the way interest in the Eures services has been increasing, reveals Leena Pellikka. - This is a good opportunity for international operations even for smaller enterprises.

## **Swedish speakers in the heart of Savo**

Midas Touch, a company established in Lapinlahti, needs native Swedish speakers who also speak Finnish in their contact center. The search for candidates in Sweden launched with the help of an Eures adviser produced success beyond expectations: the company was looking for two employees, but nearly thirty excellent applications were received.

For the employer, the speed and success of the Eures services was a positive surprise. The first Swedes who came to work for Midas Touch were also happy with both the fast recruitment and their work.

There is an increasing need for international workers in this and many other companies. - By means of the Eures services, the search can be made cover a large number of European workers meeting the requirements, reminds Leena Pellikka.



# Eures is seen, heard and influential in many ways

Eures events for employers, employees and job-seekers were organised around Finland: fairs, exhibitions, information events and a number of different events for special groups. In Jyväskylä, a fair for skilled workers was organised, in Tampere a multi-cultural recruitment fair, in Oulu another recruitment event. Next Step and Studia fairs in Helsinki and in Tampere as well as Next Step fairs in Helsinki. Europe Day events were arranged in many places. Finland was also highly visible in the Eures events of other countries.

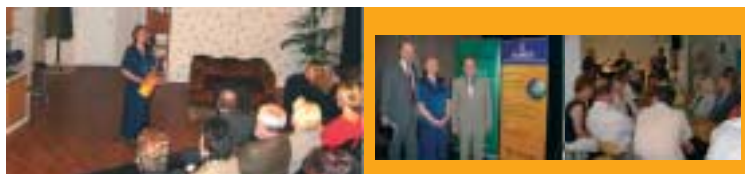


## **Disneyland Paris is looking for workers in Finland**

For many years, a very popular recruitment event has taken place in Turku at least once yearly. When the head-hunters of Disneyland Paris come to recruit Finns to work in the theme park, there is no shortage of enthusiastic candidates.

In France, the Finns enjoy an excellent reputation: conscientious workers who are good with languages are much in demand, especially for the busy summer season. Even though successful candidates need to speak French, which is not very common in Finland, Disneyland already has hired 177 Finnish workers through the Eures recruitment events in Turku. For many of those, their experience in Disneyland also increases their opportunities of launching into a successful international career.

Through the international services of Turku employment office, international seamen's recruitment events also are organised regularly. In these events, foreign employers are looking for deck and machine room officers, crews and other professionals for their ships. This way, skilled financial administrators have also been recruited for such as luxury cruisers sailing the oceans of the world.



## **Information for employers through jazz and drama**

The employers of Pori region were invited to a theatre performance, before which they received a 30-minute information bulletin on the Eures services. This information event with difference was favourably received: the participants expressed their wish to receive information in such a pleasant form also in the future.

For employers in Southwest Finland, a special music festival called HerttuaJazz was arranged in connection with Pori Jazz, and there are plans to make this a yearly tradition.

## **Learning and Working 2005**

This fair in Joensuu, which was the largest training and working life event in Northern Karelia, recorded 7,500 visitors. Many of these also became interested in the Eures services. In the shared stand of Joensuu employment office and Eures, job application and educational advice for Finland and abroad was available, and the Eures web pages were on display.

## **Finland at Gdansk recruitment fair**

In March 2005, invited Eures advisers from eight states and some employers from the same countries got together in Gdansk. From Finland, mushroom growers Mykora from Kiukainen and Aker Finnyards shipyard from Turku took part. Almost 10,000 people visited this fair, and several hundred expressed their willingness to come and work in Finland. The Finnish section was voted the best in the fair.



## Future outlook

The European Commission has named 2006 the European Year of Workers' Mobility, during which information will be spread about the benefits of working abroad. The Eures network will play an active part in the events of the theme year, the largest one of which is Job Fair Europe to be arranged simultaneously in some one hundred European cities in September. In Finland, these fairs will take place at least in Helsinki, Jyväskylä and Turku.

Towards the end of 2006, Finland will be in the spotlight, as the country will have the EU presidency.

Together with Eures in Estonia, we will analyse the labour market in the capital areas of the two countries, and the possibilities of setting up a Eures Cross Border project between the two regions will be examined.

Some of the important events in the future include a joint seminar for supervisors in the Nordic and Baltic countries in Riga, a national seminar of the health care sector in Helsinki as well as a co-operation seminar of the German and Finnish labour administrations in Porvoo with the representatives of two EU programmes, Eures and Euroguidance, present.