

Employment of Chinese graduates in Finland—opportunities and challenges

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Lessons from a study

- * Cai, Y. (2012). *Understanding employers' perceptions of international graduates—An investigation of the employment prospects of Finnish-educated Chinese graduates in Finnish companies operating in China*. Tampere: Tampere University Press.



Employers' positive perceptions

- * Generally, the employers have positive attitudes to Finnish-educated Chinese graduates
 - * They are easy to communicate with due to their proficiency of English language and understanding of Finnish culture;
 - * They could help the companies to overcome the cultural challenges through their cross-cultural perspectives;
 - * They have good professional knowledge and hand-on skills.
- * Regardless of some negative perceptions too.

Many employers have not seen...

- * Hiring Finnish-educated Chinese graduates is not simply for a skill match (technical, cultural, and logistical), but also for expanding and localising business in China.
- * The Chinese students' potential have not been fully discovered.
 - * Connection to business networks in China
 - * Identify technology gap and market niche
 - * Access to decision makers
 - * Entrepreneurial spirit

Dilemmas

- * Employers generally have positive attitudes towards recruiting Finnish-educated Chinese graduates, but few Chinese graduates are employed.
- * Employers prefer those Chinese graduates with work/ internship experience during their study, but many are reluctant to accept Chinese students as trainees.
- * Foreign students are considered important for Finnish labour market and economy, but there are too little information and research about them.

Reflection on immigrant employment policy

- * The current approach
 - * To train foreigners to adapt to Finnish work environment and help them find jobs that are mostly designed for Finns.
 - * It is based on the assumption that employers know what kinds of people to recruit.
- * Missing point
 - * Employers may have limited understandings of potential foreign employees.

To be seriously considered

- * Foreigners may have expertise and resources (more than what employers might have assumed), which may create new economic growth point for Finnish companies.
- * But to benefit from this, companies need to create new job positions for them (different from those posted on job advertisement).
- * Many companies may have not realised such potential or don't know how to find the right people.
- * There are information barriers between employers and foreign talents in the job market.

Suggestions for policy makers and employers

- * To develop effective mechanisms to match Finnish employers and foreign talents.
- * To provide more opportunities for Finnish employers to have a comprehensive view of foreigners in Finland.
- * To conduct research about the added value of foreigners for Finnish economic development.

Our next study

- * To explore the **added value that foreign employees bring to Finnish companies, and what conditions/support are needed to facilitate foreign employees' contribution** to Finnish economic development through investigating both the Finnish employers' and foreign employees' perspectives.