

Review of MFA's Support to
International Recruitment

**PUBLIC
PRESENTATION
OF RESULTS**

23 May 2023



Agenda

- **Introduction and overview**
- Findings, conclusions and recommendations
- Your questions

Motivation for the review

- *International recruitment* is important for Finland
- The MFA's support to *international recruitment* has not yet been comprehensively evaluated

There is also a perceived lack of clarity and strategy regarding Finland's approach

Purpose

- Gain a *clear picture* of international recruitment supported by the MFA
- *Generate ideas* for how this instrument can be rendered more relevant and effective

Review questions

1. What explicit and implicit *goals, expectations and rationales* guide the MFA's support to international recruitment?
2. What *presence* do MFA-supported international recruits have in the multilateral system?
3. How does the MFA *support, manage and interact* with international recruits?
4. How does Finland *compare to selected peer countries* regarding these issues?
5. What is the likely *effectiveness of the JPO and UNV programmes* in contributing to their stated objectives?
6. How important was the *earlier participation* of senior recruits in junior programmes for their subsequent international recruitment?
7. To what extent have the *experiences and networks* senior recruits have gained abroad been utilised during their stay and after their return?

Approach

- Review (not full evaluation)
- Participatory
- Mixed methods:
 - Interviews (61 people)
 - Document review and data analysis
 - Individual “example cases” (18 former and current recruits)
 - Comparison with Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden

*Many thanks for interest
and collaboration in Italy,
the Netherlands, and
Sweden!*

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1. Strategic clarity

Conclusion 1:

Finland needs more *strategic clarity* on international recruitment to further optimise its approach

Recommendation 1:

The MFA should develop and commit to *clearer objectives and strategic priorities*

1. Strategic clarity

Main findings:

- International recruitment is a priority of the Finnish government
- Different goals and rationales are associated with it
- Each goal/rationale calls for a somewhat different tactic, but there is no overarching strategy to guide Finland's approach

Typical goals:

- 1. Influence the multilateral system*
- 2. Strengthen human capacity of multilaterals*
- 3. Support access to and understanding of multilaterals*
- 4. Strengthen Finland's international workforce*
- 5. Demonstrate Finland's multilateral presence and leadership*

2. Above-average challenges

Conclusion 2:

Because national careers represent (more) attractive alternatives for Finns, international recruitment faces above-average challenges in Finland

Recommendation 2:

The MFA needs to ensure a sufficient level of support for Finns entering and progressing in international organisations

2. Above-average challenges

Main findings:

- Finland's representation in UN agencies varies; the number of staff posts is not in proportion to budget contributions
- Finland is well represented in the EU, although this is likely to be reversed in the future
- The number of Finnish JPOs has been lower on average than in Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden

For example, the Italian “market” for international recruitment is different from that in Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden

3. Effective management

Conclusion 3:

Effective management of international recruitment relies on relevant linkages and efficient coordination – rather than on a particular organisational structure

Recommendation 3:

The MFA should maintain current structures but strengthen coordination further

3. Effective management

Main findings:

- There is no “perfect” organisational structure for supporting international recruitment
- Coordination is key
- Finland’s setup is similar to that found in other countries
- Compared to other countries, the MFA has senior leadership and high-level coordination mechanisms but little staff capacity

4. Better utilisation

Conclusion 4:

Finland does not yet take full advantage of its footprint in multilateral organisations nor of the experience and network of former recruits

Recommendations 4 & 5:

The MFA should:

- **take measures to encourage more contact and information exchange between international recruits and the MFA**
- **work towards improved staff return management**

4. Better utilisation

Main findings:

- Lack of initiative and extreme caution leads to missed opportunities for useful information sharing between recruits and the MFA
- Several but not all returning senior recruits were able to make good use of their experiences and networks when back at the MFA

5. Outsourcing

Conclusion 5:

Outsourcing can provide dedicated capacity for international recruitment support

Recommendation 6:

The MFA should consider outsourcing some international recruitment functions
(in view of the limited staff capacity for international recruitment support)

5. Outsourcing

Main findings:

- Each country has had overall good experiences with outsourcing some services
- (Compared to other countries, the MFA has senior leadership and high-level coordination mechanisms but little staff capacity for international recruitment)

Examples for partial outsourcing:

Management of (crisis management) secondments in Finland and Sweden

JPO management in Italy and the Netherlands

Information on international job opportunities in Sweden

6. Value for money: JPO and UNV

Conclusion 6:

There are indications that the JPO programme represents better value for money than the UNV programme

Recommendation 7:

The MFA should prioritise the JPO over the UNV programme

6. Value for money: JPO and UNV

Main findings:

- The JPO and UNV schemes have been effective in providing a pathway for career progression into the UN, although the UNV scheme appears to be a less efficient mechanism
- The JPO scheme appears more efficient and effective in strengthening Finnish experts' knowledge of multilateral development policy and developing a 'pool' of development policy experts

UNVs are not funded by the other countries

7. International exchange of experience

Conclusion 7:

It is evident that international experience exchange can usefully inform Finland's approach – and that of other countries

Recommendation 8:

The MFA should establish and kick off a multi-country international recruitment contact group

7. International exchange of experience

Main findings:

- Other countries support international recruitment for similar reasons (and with similar structures)
- Data on the Finnish presence in the multilateral system and positions funded by the MFA is fragmented and incomplete

There is considerable interest in exchanging experiences in the four countries

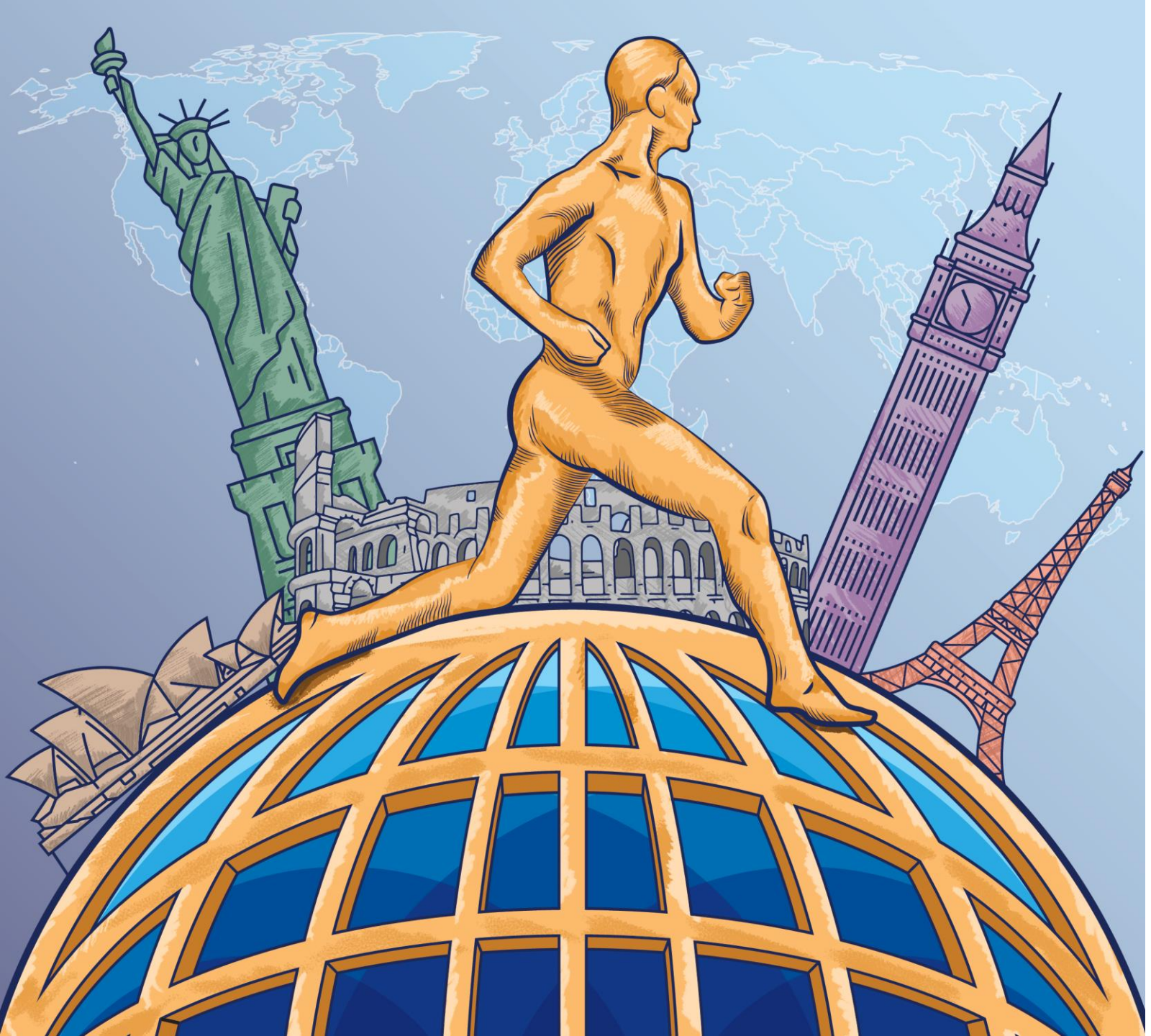
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Your questions

Reminder ... these were the main points:

1. (Lack of) strategic clarity
2. Above-average challenges for Finland
3. Effective management (through coordination)
4. Better utilisation (while recruits are away and after they return)
5. Outsourcing (of some support functions)
6. Value for money JPO > UNV
7. International exchange of experience



Kiitos!

Thank You!