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The Role of Intra-Sexual Competition in Attitudes towards Immigrants

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Abstract

We proposed the hypothesis that immigration attitudes (IA) could be partly explained by intra-sexual competition (ISC), as immigration can increase mate competition, negatively affecting mate access for local individuals with low mate value. To test this, we presented participants with masculinized/feminized images of males and females. Each image was paired with a background description. Participants reported whether the depicted person should be permitted residence and whether participants would help the person integrate. We also measured participants' mate value. Both men and women were more negative towards male than female immigrants. As expected, participants with lower mate value reported more negative IA, providing tentative support for the hypothesized association between ISC and IA. Because the manipulation of masculinity/femininity was only effective for female images, it remains unclear whether attractive (vs. less attractive) male immigrants elicit more negative IA.

Keywords: Anti-immigrant attitudes, Intra-sexual competition, Mate value, Outgroup hostility

The Role of Intra-Sexual Competition in Attitudes towards Immigrants

When two or more members of the same sex compete for the same reproductively relevant resources, intra-sexual competition (ISC) occurs (Darwin, 1872/2009). Males compete against other males in the search for desirable females, whereas females compete against other females for desirable males (Darwin, 1872/2009). Because males' minimum required parental investment is lower than that of females (Trivers, 1972), females are choosier than males when selecting mates. This means that males with lower mate value (i.e., desirability as a partner) are at risk of ending up with no partner at all. On the other hand, most females have access to their desired number—but not necessarily the desired quality—of partners (Rosvall, 2011), making female ISC less intense than male ISC.

In the current study, we present and test the hypothesis that ISC contributes to negative immigrant attitudes (IA). This hypothesis is based on the premise that immigration can influence the individually perceived access to desired mates, by both altering the sex-ratio (i.e., the relative number of females and males in a mating pool) and the attractiveness of a given individual relative to that of others. If, for example, more males than females enter into the local mating pool, this will decrease each individual male's chances of finding a desirable female partner, and increase male ISC (e.g., Kruger, Fitzgerald, & Peterson, 2010; Pedersen, 1991). Also, if the immigrants are considered to be relatively attractive, this might decrease the relative mate value of local individuals (e.g., Bateson & Healy, 2005). ISC could also increase if norms differently regulate mating behavior for immigrating males and females. Additionally, highly attractive males tend to adopt short-term sexual strategies, characterized by short, frequent sexual relationships, whereas females of high mate value tend to adopt long term sexual strategies (Gangestad & Simpson, 2000; Schmitt, 2005). Thus, even in the case of a balanced sex ratio in

the local mating pool, the influx of immigrants can affect male and female ISC differently (i.e., increase male ISC but not affect female ISC).

In line with the outlined theory, ISC includes competitor derogation (Fisher & Cox, 2011). several studies show that males display more negative IA compared to females (Ekehammar, Akrami, & Araya, 2003; Qualls, Cox & Schehr, 1992; Mayda, 2006). Also in Finland, males tend to display more negative IA and the sex difference is particularly apparent among younger individuals (Jaakkola, 2009), and especially immigrant men are discriminated (Öblom & Antfolk, 2017). Interestingly, also less direct evidence supports the notion of ISC being part of especially males' negative IA. The immigration debate in media is highly sexualized (Yardley, 2016) and several anti-immigrant vigilant groups, such as Soldiers of Odin in Finland, state as their aim the protection women and children from immigrant males (Rosendahl & Forsell, 2016).

The Role of Mate Value

Traits influencing individual mate value include physical attractiveness, resource acquisition, youth, status, health, social popularity etc. (Buss, 1989; Edlund & Sagarin, 2014). Females generally have a relative preference for characteristics signaling capacity and willingness to invest in potential offspring, whereas males tend to put relatively high value on physical attractiveness (Barber, 1995; Buss, 1989). Males are generally drawn to feminine facial features and youth, whereas females often prefer masculine faces with a marked jawline, and prominent brow ridges, and prominent cheekbones (Rhodes, 2006). Johnston and colleagues (2001) tested female preferences using manipulated images of faces, ranging from highly masculinized to highly feminized. The study indicated that females prefer *slightly* masculinized faces—perhaps as the result of a tradeoff between benefits (i.e., healthy offspring) and costs (i.e., low investment in offspring) of mating with very masculine males (DeBruine, Jones, Crawford,

Welling, & Little, 2010; Gangestad, Garver-Apgar, Simpson, & Cousins, 2007). Females report more jealousy in response to imagined feminine (vs. masculine) females flirting with their partners (O'Connor & Feinberg, 2012). This suggests that females are expected to perceive feminine (vs. masculine) women as a bigger threat on the mating market. In contrast, males would perceive masculine (vs. feminine) men as a bigger threat.

The Current Study

The hypothesis tested in the current study was that increased ISC can—at least partly—explain negative IA. To test this hypothesis, we presented participants with masculinized/feminized images of males and females. Each image was paired with a background description. Participants reported whether the depicted person should be permitted residence and whether participants would help the person integrate. We also measured participants' mate value. We expected that men with lower (vs. higher) mate value would display more negative IA, and attractive/masculine male immigrants would be seen as increasing male ICS more than unattractive/feminine male (or female) immigrants would. Consequently, local males would display more negative IA towards attractive/masculine immigrants. Conversely, females with lower (vs. higher) mate value would also display more negative IA, and attractive/feminine female immigrants would increase female ISC and hence elicit more negative IA among local females. Based on these assumptions we made the following predictions:

i) Men and women with relatively low mate value will be more negative towards immigrants of the same sex compared to men and women with a relatively high mate value. This expectation is derived from the notion that low mate value individuals will perceive immigrants as relatively more threatening to their own situation on the mating market.

ii) Men will have more negative attitudes to immigrants than women. This expectation is derived from the fact that male intra-sexual competition is higher than female intra-sexual competition.

iii) Men will be more positive towards female immigrants than towards male immigrants, whereas women will be more positive towards male immigrants than female immigrants. This hypothesis is derived from the fact that intra-sexual competition would increase if more members of the same sex were accepted into a country.

iv) Immigrants that are perceived as more attractive and masculine/feminine will elicit the most negative reactions by members of their own sex. For immigrants of the opposite sex the effect will be the opposite.

Methods

Ethical permission

The current study received permission by the Ethical Review Board of Åbo Akademi University.

Participants

We recruited participants through mailing lists of universities and vocational schools, mailing lists of city/municipality employees, and social media. After excluding participants with incomplete answers on items measuring mate value, the final sample consisted of 533 participants (374 women, 158 men, and one who did not identify as either female or male), between 16 and 60 years of age ($M = 34.73$, $SD = 12.80$).

Measures

IA. We presented participants with pictures of males and females of different ethnic origin, together with a short description of why the depicted individual seeks residence permit in

Finland. We included the five following questions: “In your opinion, should the person be granted a residence permit in Finland?”, “How willing would you be to help him/her find an apartment?”, “How willing would you be to help him/her establish a social network?”, “How willing would you be to ask him/her to spend time with you and your friends?”, and “How willing would you be to invite him/her to your house?”. Responses were given on a scale from 1 (“Absolutely not”) to 9 (“Yes, absolutely”). We combined responses to these items by calculating the individual mean for each participant and each picture. This measure had adequate internal reliability ($\alpha = .94$). See Table 1 for means, *SD*, and range for each item.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviation, and Range for Items Measuring Immigrant Attitudes

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	
Asylum	6.37	2.39	1	9
Apartment	5.52	2.35	1	9
Social	5.65	2.29	1	9
Hang Out	5.45	2.33	1	9
Home	5.22	2.39	1	9

Mate value. We used the Mate Value Scale (Edlund & Sagarin, 2014) that consists of four questions regarding self-perceived desirability as a partner. Responses were given on a scale from 1 (extremely undesirable) to 7 (extremely desirable). The mate value scale shows adequate validity and reliability (Edlund & Sagarin, 2014; Gillen, Collisson, Murtagh, Browne, & Mccutcheon, 2016). We combined responses by calculating the individual mean. This measure had adequate internal reliability ($\alpha = .88$).

Materials

The stimulus material consisted of 16 pictures. These pictures included a masculinized and a feminized version of eight individuals (four males and four females). Pictures were manipulated using the software PsychoMorph (Tiddeman et al. 2001). Faces differed only in sexual dimorphism, and all other characteristics (e.g., skin texture) were held constant. The pictures were manipulated to be either 100% more similar to average male face or 100% more similar to average female face. Pictures were neutral (minimal make-up, no jewelry or hats etc.). The depicted individuals originated from four different regions: Mexico, Vietnam, Iraq, and West Africa (Nigeria and Cameroon) and were 22-27 years of age. This is an age where individuals are seen as attractive and sexually active (Antfolk et al., 2015, Antfolk, 2017).

Each picture was paired with a background description. Descriptions were written so that they could be paired with any of the pictures, regardless of sex or origin. The combination of pictures and descriptions were counterbalanced, by creating eight survey versions, so that each description was combined with every picture once. (See Appendix for the background descriptions).

Procedure

The online experiment was created using the Survey Analytics platform. Data was collected during three weeks during Fall 2017. Participants were asked to take part in a survey concerning immigrant attitudes. Participation was anonymous, voluntary, and could be discontinued at any time. Participants read a standard informed consent form before starting.

After asking participants to provide demographic information, participants were presented with pictures of four males and four females, each paired with a background description. Each participant was only shown half of the picture set to avoid problems with seeing two different versions of the same face. The version (feminine or masculine) and the order in which images appeared were counterbalanced. Participants were asked to read each description and respond to

the items measuring IA. Next, participants completed the Mate Value Scale, and two filler questionnaires to keep the hypothesis of the study less apparent. The final question was a control question with nine alternatives asking participants to guess the aim of the study.

Statistical Analysis

Data were modeled as a linear multi-level model with random intercepts for each participant. The association between mate value and IA was interpreted as a linear regression, whereas the effects of participant sex, stimulus sex, and stimulus masculinization were analyzed as an ANOVA-type model. For modelling data, we used the lme4-package (Bates, Maechler, Bolker, & Walker, 2015) for R (R Core Team, 2008). To compare means, we used the lsmeans-package (Lenth, 2016), and to compute *p*-values, we used the lmerTest-package (Kuznetsova, Brockhoff, & Christensen, 2016). Anonymized data, analysis scripts, and additional results are available on the Open Science Framework (osf.io/y92ez).

Results

Descriptive and Explorative Results

We first inspected participant characteristics (Table 2).

Table 2

Participant Demographics

	Female		Male		Total		IA	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>M^a</i>	<i>SE^a</i>
Sexual Orientation								
Heterosexual	338	90.4	151	95.6	499	93.6	5.63	0.09
Homosexual	3	0.1	3	1.90	6	1.1	5.89	0.78
Bisexual	27	7.2	3	1.9	30	5.6	5.61	0.35
Other	6	1.6	1	0.6	7	1.3	6.83	0.73

Relationship Status									
Single	84	22.5	54	34.2	138	25.9	5.30	0.17	
Dating	56	15.0	13	8.2	69	12.9	5.50	0.23	
Cohabiting	87	23.3	34	21.5	121	22.7	5.52	0.18	
Married	135	36.1	52	32.9	187	35.1	6.04	0.16	
Other	12	3.2	5	3.2	17	3.2	5.66	0.46	
Education									
Compulsory	4	1.1	8	5.1	12	2.3	4.61	0.54	
Vocational	60	11.3	38	24.1	98	18.4	5.11	0.18	
Gymnasium	41	11.0	16	10.1	57	10.7	5.67	0.25	
Polytechnic	96	25.7	37	23.4	133	25.0	5.43	0.16	
University	157	42.0	57	36.1	214	40.2	6.13	0.12	
Other	60	16.0	38	24.1	98	18.4	5.12	0.18	

IA = Immigrant Attitudes. Higher values indicate more positive attitudes. ^a means and standard errors from linear-multi level model across both sexes controlling for participant age.

Participant age was related to IA, $B = -0.02$, $SE = 0.01$, $t = -3.18$, $p < .01$, so that older participants reported more negative IA than did younger participants. We thus included participant age as a co-variate in subsequent analyses.

After this, we also explored whether sexual orientation, relationship status and level of education was related to IA. Heterosexual and bisexual participants had slightly more negative IA than homosexual participants, but the differences were not statistically significant, $F(3) = 0.93$, $p = .42$. Married individuals had more positive IA than the categories other, cohabitant, and in a relationship. Single individuals had the most negative IA. The differences were, however, not statistically significant, $F(4) = 2.35$, $p = .05$. Finally, participants with a university degree had more positive IA, whereas participants with no second- or third-level education (compulsory) had the most negative IA. Education was significantly associated with IA, $F(5) = 5.69$, $p < .001$.

Mate Value and IA

We tested our i) prediction that individuals with lower mate value would hold more negative IA. As expected, we found that individuals with lower mate value reported more negative IA, $B = 0.32$, $SE = 0.08$, $t = 4.09$, $p < .001$. Follow-up analyses revealed that this was true both for women, $B = 0.34$, $SE = 0.09$, $t = 3.78$, $p < .001$ and men, $B = 0.28$, $SE = 0.14$, $t = 2.00$, $p < .05$.

The Roles of Participant Sex, Stimulus Sex, and Stimulus Masculinization/Feminization

We tested the remaining hypotheses with a linear multi-level model, with participant sex, stimulus sex, and stimulus masculinization, and their interaction terms as predictors, and IA as the outcome variable. Age was entered as a co-variate in the model. With respect to our ii) prediction, we found a main effect of participant sex, $F(1) = 29.01$, $p < .001$. As expected, men held more negative IA ($M = 4.98$, $SE = 0.15$) than did women ($M = 5.94$, $SE = 0.15$).

Concerning our iii) prediction that men would hold more negative IA to male (vs. female) immigrants and women hold more negative IA to female (vs. male) immigrants, we found a statistically significant interaction of participant and stimulus sex, $F(1) = 4.86$, $p < .05$. As expected, men reported more negative IA to male ($M = 5.14$, $SE = 0.15$) than female ($M = 4.81$, $SE = 0.15$, $t = 7.06$, $p < .001$) stimuli. Contrary to our expectation, women reported more negative IA to male ($M = 6.17$, $SE = 0.10$) than female ($M = 5.71$, $SE = 0.10$, $t = 14.72$, $p < .001$) stimuli.

With respect to our iv) prediction that men would display the most negative IA towards masculine male stimuli and women display the most negative IA towards feminine female stimuli, we did not find a statistically significant interaction, $F(1) = 1.72$, $p = 0.19$. A closer examination showed that there was no difference between IA towards feminized ($M = 6.18$, $SE = 0.10$) and masculinized female stimuli ($M = 6.16$, $SE = 0.10$, $t = 0.44$, $p = .97$) for women, and no difference between IA towards feminized ($M = 4.86$, $SE = 0.16$) and masculinized male stimuli ($M = 4.76$, $SE = 0.10$, $t = 1.52$, $p = .42$) for men.

Discussion

We found support for two of our predictions and partial support for our third prediction. Low mate value was associated with an increase in negative IA both for men and women. Men displayed more negative IA than women, and men (but not women) displayed more negative IA towards immigrants of their own sex. We did not find any indication that IA was affected by masculinization of the stimuli.

Follow-up Study

Because we found no evidence for anti-immigrant attitudes being affected by the masculinization of the targets, we, in a follow-up study, tested whether this could be due to a failure to successfully manipulate the attractiveness of the faces.

Method

Participants

We recruited 135 (101 female and 34 male) participants. The average age was 23.86 years of age ($SD = 4.01$). There was no statistically significant difference in the age of female and male participants, $M = 26.68$, $M = 24.38$, $t = -0.81$, $p = 0.41$.

Measures

Each participant was asked to report how attractive they found the person on the images and how attractive they thought others would find the person on the image. Both the question “In your opinion, how attractive is the person on the above image?” and the question “How do you think others would evaluate this person?” were answered on a response scale from 0 “not at all attractive” to 10 “very attractive”.

Procedure

We created two online surveys. As before, each survey included eight pictures, either the feminine or masculine version of one of the eight stimulus individuals. Each survey included pictures of four male and four female stimulus individuals. Four images were masculinized and four images were feminized. Masculinization was counterbalanced across the two surveys.

Data Analysis

To test whether participants found masculinized males more attractive than feminized males, and feminized females more attractive than masculinized males, we modelled data as a linear-mixed model. Statistical procedures were the same as in the main study.

Results

The correlation between own and others' ratings was $r = .70$, $n = 927$, $p < .001$. We did not find any statistically significant interaction between stimulus sex and stimulus masculinization for own or other ratings, $F(1) = 3.26$, $p = .07$ and $F(1) = 1.77$, $p = .18$. For both types of ratings, there was a statistically significant main effect of both stimulus sex, $F(1) = 60.25$, $p < .001$ for own and $F(1) = 5.10$, $p < .05$ for others, and stimulus masculinization, $F(1) = 6.05$, $p < .05$ for own and $F(1) = 8.68$, $p < .01$ for others (See table 3).

Table 3

Means and Standard Error for Attractiveness Ratings

	<u>Own</u>		<u>Other</u>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
Feminized Females	6.30	0.15	6.79	0.14
Masculinized Females	5.87	0.15	6.30	0.14
Feminized Males	5.32	0.15	6.38	0.14

Masculinized Males	5.26	0.15	6.20	0.14
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Note. Higher values indicate higher attractiveness on a scale from 0 to 10.

Although the means were in the expected direction for females, with feminized females being perceived as more attractive than masculinized females, $p < .01$ and $p < .01$ for own and other, respectively, the opposite was not true for males. Not only was the difference not statistically significant, $p = .64$ and $p = .25$, feminized males were perceived as more attractive than masculinized males.

We also tested the three-way interaction of participant sex, stimulus sex, and stimulus masculinization. It was not statistically significant for either own, $F(1) = 1.54$, $p = .22$, or other ratings, $F(1) = 1.18$, $p = .27$.

Discussion

We tested whether the manipulation of masculinity and femininity affected perceived attractiveness of the stimuli used in the main study. Masculinization of female faces was successful. However, for male faces, there was no effect of masculinization on attractiveness. Hence, the main study could not successfully falsify the assumption that the attractiveness of males affects immigrant attitudes.

General Discussion

We proposed and tested an association between ISC and IA. Our predictions were derived from evolutionary argumentation regarding ISC and mate value, as well as previous findings regarding IA.

Mate Value and IA

We found that the higher the individual mate value, the more positive were IA. This finding is also in line with previous research, which indicate that individuals who perceive immigrants as threatening to their own social status are more likely to have negative IA (Stephan, Renfro, Esses, Stephan, & Martin, 2005). Another explanation for this association could involve self-esteem. Since self-perceived mate value tends to correlate with self-esteem (e.g., Goodwin et al., 2012), it is also possible that negative IA are partly explained by low self-esteem.

Sex Differences

In line with our expectations, men reported more negative IA than women, and men exhibited more negative IA towards male immigrants compared to female immigrants. Contrary to what we expected, also women reported more positive attitudes towards female immigrants. A possible explanation for this could be the negative portrayal of foreign men in the social narrative. Outgroup men are more likely to be perceived as threatening compared to outgroup women (Plant, Goplen, & Kunstman, 2011). Moreover, when we collected data, Finland had recently suffered a terror attack by a male immigrant, and this might have affected attitudes towards immigrant men. Furthermore, a series of studies by Navarrete and colleagues (2010) indicate that through evolutionary history, males and females have developed different strategies to cope with aggressive male out-group members. Outgroup men elicit a strong threat response in both sexes, male responses relate to social dominance, whereas female responses relate to fear of sexual coercion. This is in line with current perceptions of immigrant men as sexually threatening (Agerholm, 2017; Sarrasin, Fasel, Green, & Helbling, 2015). Another explanation for the relatively positive IA towards female immigrants could be the general view of women as in need of protection (Sarrasin et al., 2015). Women in the sampled population may also experience less increase in actual ISC, because more men than women are currently immigrating to Finland (Finnish Immigration Service, 2018). Importantly, actual immigration numbers are not

necessarily having a directly perceivable effect on mate access as the number of immigrants is often low compared to the number of locals. ISC is perhaps more likely driven by a popular conception of immigration being higher than it actually is.

Attractiveness

We did not find support for our prediction that attractive (vs. less attractive) immigrants elicit more negative attitudes from same- sex individuals. The results from our follow-up study suggest that the manipulation was effective for female but not male stimuli. Based on this, we could not effectively test whether attractive (vs. less attractive) male immigrants elicit more negative reactions among local men or not. However, since feminized females were in fact perceived as more attractive compared to masculinized females, the current study suggests that attractive female immigrants do not elicit more negative reactions from local women compared to less attractive female immigrants.

Sexual Orientation, Relationship Status, and Education

We also explored whether there were any associations between sexual orientation, relationship status, education and IA. Heterosexual and bisexual participants reported slightly more negative IA compared to homosexual participants. These associations were not statistically significant. Married participants reported the most positive IA, whereas single participants reported the more negative IA. It could be argued that ISC should be a bigger concern for single vs. partnered individuals, and that single, therefore, should hold more negative IA. The observed differences were, however, not statistically significant. This is in line with Fisher, Tran and Voracek (2008), who did not find that unpartnered individuals were more likely to derogate same-sex individuals. We also found that participants with a university degree held more positive IA than individuals with lower degrees. This association could be explained both in terms of

decreased status on the mating market, but also as the result of the perceived effects of immigration on the labor market.

Limitations and Future Directions

Apart from the unsuccessful manipulation of attractiveness, some other limitations should also be considered. The study was conducted in Finland and the sample was not population based. The high rate of female participants as well as individuals with higher education skewed our sample and might decrease generalizability.

Another limitation is the participants age span (16-60 years of age) which does not perfectly match the age of the stimulus (22-27 years of age) in terms of eliciting ISC. The youngest and oldest participants might not perceive target individuals as competing for the same mates as them.

A suggestion for future research is to replicate the current study using a more representative sample and to aim for a better manipulation of attractiveness, while matching the age of the stimuli individuals and the participants. It would also be important to include measurements that can help to rule out other explanations, such as a measure of fear of violence and sexual coercion. Finally, the context did not necessarily facilitate thoughts about mating (i.e., we only asked the participants to answer questions regarding immigration). A context containing cuing thoughts of ISC might give a different outcome.

Conclusions

We found tentative support for the hypothesis that immigration-related increase in ISC contributes to negative IA. Individuals with lower mate value held more negative IA than individuals with higher mate value. Before any conclusions can be drawn, more stringent tests of the hypothesis are needed.

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Background descriptions

- A. This individual arrived to Finland because there were few job opportunities in his/her home country. The salaries in the country are also low and competition is tough. After this individual graduated, he/she decided to move abroad to increase his/her opportunities for a better life. The individual came to Finland and has applied for a residence permit in order to look for a job here.
- B. This individual is 24 years old and belongs to a group of people that are persecuted in their home country due to their ethnicity. There have been imprisonments of several individual without proper legal procedures. The risk for armed conflict between different ethnic groups is considered to be steadily increasing. Because of the increased persecution during recent years, the individual chose to leave his/her home country and move to Finland. The individual came here along and is hoping to receive a residence permit.
- C. The individual on the photo is 22 years old and wants to get a residence permit in Finland in order to study. University education is expensive in his/her home nation and few have the possibility to study. Being accepted to a university requires more than just good grades and money. It is also important to have a certain family background. The individual knows many others who have moved abroad to study and he/she chose to do the same.
- D. The individual below belongs to a religious minority that has been persecuted in his/her home country. Members of this religious minority has been threatened and had their property damaged by certain radical members of the majority religion. The individual read online that Finland is one of the safest countries in the world and that we have freedom of religion. When persecutions seemed to be on the increase the individual decided to come here and apply for a residence permit.
- E. Because of financial insecurity and poverty in the home country, the individual on the photo decided to increase his/her chances to a better life by moving to Finland. The individual is 23 years old and came to Finland alone after working for minimum salary for many years. The individual hopes to receive a residence permit, find a better job, and to be able to send money back to his/her parents, who are still living in the home country.
- F. The individual on the photo is 25 years old and lived in a country where political conflict already for a long time is part of everyday life. The differences between social groups are large and the situation has become more and more unstable lately, with more violence between different political groups. Together with a few acquaintances, the individual took a plane to Central Europe, from where he/she traveled to Finland. The individual is currently waiting for a decision on his/her application for a residence permit.
- G. The individual lived in a country where the threat of war was increasing. People protested in the streets almost daily and the country's army used more and more drastic measures to silence the protesters. The news warned that war was imminent and this has led to many citizens leaving the country. The individual on the photo has recently arrived in Finland and wishes for a residence permit to be able to start over.

- H. The individual on the photo comes from a village with few possibilities. Unemployment is prevalent and poverty does not seem to decrease. The individual is 26 years old and has decided to apply to a university abroad in order to get a good education. The individual chose to come here because education is almost free in Finland, and he/she is currently waiting for a decision on her/his application for a residence permit.