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Aalto University Student Union AYY

## AYY, TYY & ArtSU: Listen to international students when making decisions

*Mantė Žygelytė from Aalto University Student Union (AYY), Omotola Adeshina from University of the Arts Student Union (ArtSU) and Shashika Harshani from Student Union of the University of Turku (TYY) wrote about the 3/6 month rule that is threatening international students.*

We, international degree students, are a diverse group of people of various backgrounds and life situations. We have been left out of the recent immigration discussion, even though we are affected by several government proposals, one of them being the 3/6 month rule. If an immigrant does not find a job within three or six months, they will be deported from the country. It is not a realistic timeframe to find a job in Finland, because on average it takes over 14 months to secure a job as an unemployed jobseeker. A residence permit for a recent graduate to look for a job is no consolation when the longer term threat of eviction looms.

Abroad, Finland is known and admired for its advancements and equality. While many aspects of life here, like education and student life, are excellent, the challenges in finding employment make it harder for us to recommend Finland as a place to study both due to legal reforms and structural racism.

Decision-makers, you have the power to make a change by extending the timeframe for the 3/6 month rule. See us as people, not just as numbers and a way to save Finland from a low birth rate. Everyday, we make a conscious choice to stay here in Finland. However, the choice to stay might be only temporary if we are not welcomed here.

Mantė Žygelytė, Vice Chair of the Board at AYY

Omotola Adeshina, Board Member at ArtSU

Shashika Harshani, Board Member at TYY