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Overview by Auditor General of the Republic of Estonia Alar Karis of the state's migration policy choices:

“Migration is a politically and socially sensitive issue in most countries, including Estonia. People often speak about this in general terms and emotionally without giving attention to specific data or focussing on the content of the matter. That's why people haven't acknowledged that approximately 25,000 people have migrated to Estonia in the last ten years, not all of whom have stayed here, of course. The National Audit Office took a look at how we've managed to employ the best skills of the people who've moved here for strengthening the economy and state of Estonia and what we should do to make the most of the potential of future immigrants who are capable of generating income. Another thing to consider is the fact that the number of working-age people or people aged 20-64 will decrease by approximately 50,000 by 2020 and by as much as 165,000 by 2040. At the same time, the number of people aged 65 and over will increase by approximately 24,000 by 2020 and by more than 88,000 by 2040.

We've become used to regarding our situation where more people are exiting the labour market than entering as a labour shortage awaiting us in the future. However, the idea of citizen's income is among others motivated by technological development, which means that soon, the world will supposedly need considerably fewer workers. This topic was recently discussed in media and it was pointed out that the development of information and communications technology means that 70 per cent of employed people or 431,000 people in Estonia may be at risk of losing their jobs in the long term.

It's impossible to predict what will really happen. We must be able to forecast in the short term which and how many specialists Estonia will need, but our knowledge of the long term is vague and that's natural, as we have no idea of the needs we may have in the distant future. Coming back to the present, it is clear that someone will have to maintain our pension and health insurance system, and our state and society as a whole. That's why we all have to figure out how to generate the income that can be used to meet society's demands in order to preserve the standard of living and guarantee the economic development of Estonia. The role of migration and various national reforms in solving these problems remains to be seen, as it is something that's raising more questions than can be answered at present. I hope that this overview will help us understand the present conditions better and find suitable solutions.”