



CHARLES LANDRY

HELSINKI CREATIVE CITY INDEX

Harnessing the Collective Imagination

3

STUDY REPORTS 2014



Helsingin kaupunki
Tietokeskus



City of Helsinki
Urban Facts



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ESIPUHE

Charles Landry on kansainvälisesti tunnettu ja tunnustettu kaupunkitutkija ja -konsultti. Hän on työskennellyt uransa aikana lukemattomissa kaupungeissa. Helsingin ja Landryn yhteistyö alkoi jo 1990-luvun alussa kun täällä mietittiin mahdollisuuksia haakeutua Euroopan kulttuurikaupungiksi vuonna 2000. Tästä lähtien Landry on seurannut tarkkaan Helsingin kehittymistä.

Jo parissa vuosikymmenessä on tapahtunut paljon. Kun vielä 1990-luvulla mietittiin, onko Helsinki eurooppalainen kulttuurikaupunki ylipäättään, niin viime vuosina olemme pikemminkin olleet kaupunkielämän suunnannäyttäjinä. Seuraajasta on tullut seurattava.

Tämä tutkimus selvittää Helsingin tilannetta 2010-luvulla, huomion kohteena on kaupungin luovuus. Luovuuden mittaaminen ei ole helppo tehtävä, tässä raportissa esitellään yksi keino tavoittaa jotain kaupungin luovuudesta. Tulokset kerrotaan niin tilastonumeroina kuin haastattelulausuntoinakin. Meille keskeistä on päästä kansainväliseen vertailuun. Menestymme tässä asetelmassa erinomaisesti, mutta Landry näkee edessämme olevan paljon tehtävää. Emme voi tyytyä nykytilaan, meidän tulee työskennellä ahkerasti menestyäksemme jatkossakin.

Tämä teksti on kirjoitettu englanniksi, lyhyt tiivistys on saatavilla suomeksi ja ruotsiksi tietokeskuksen Kvartti-lehdessä 2/2014 www.kvartti.fi.

Helsingissä marraskuussa 2014

Timo Cantell
Tutkimuspäällikkö

FÖRORD

Charles Landry är en internationellt känd och erkänd stadsforskare och konsult. Under sin karriär har han arbetat i ett stort antal städer. Samarbetet mellan Landry och Helsingfors började redan i början av 1990-talet, då man här övervägde möjligheter att ansöka om titeln som europeisk kulturhuvudstad år 2000. Sedan dess har Landry noga följt utvecklingen i Helsingfors.

På två årtionden har det hunnit hända mycket. Medan man ännu på 1990-talet undrade om Helsingfors överhuvudtaget var en europeisk kulturstad har vi de senaste åren snarast blivit något av en riktningssgivare inom urbant leverne. Följaren har blivit den efterföljda.

Föreliggande undersökning klarlägger läget i Helsingfors på 2010-talet med fokus på kreativitet. Att mäta kreativitet är inte lätt, men rapporten lägger ändå fram ett sätt att fånga något av en stads kreativitet. Rönen presenteras både i form av statistiksiffror och av intervjumaterial. Det är av vital betydelse för oss att få komma med i internationella jämförelser. Med föreliggande upplägg klarar vi oss utmärkt, men Landry upplever ändå att vi har mycket framför oss ännu. Vi kan inte nöja oss med vårt dagsläge, vi måste jobba flitigt för framgång även i framtiden.

Föreliggande text är på engelska, men ett kort sammandrag på finska och svenska finns i Faktacentralens tidskrift Kvarttis nummer 2/2014 www.kvartti.fi.

Helsingfors, november 2014

Timo Cantell
Forskningschef

FOREWORD

Charles Landry is an internationally renowned urban researcher and consultant. During his career, he has worked with a vast number of cities. His cooperation with the City of Helsinki began already in the early 1990s, when the city started to consider applying for the title of European Capital of Culture for the year 2000. Ever since, Landry has carefully followed developments in Helsinki.

Many things have happened in two decades. While in the 1990's one could ask whether Helsinki was a European cultural city at all, in the last few years Helsinki seems to have become something of a trendsetter in urban life. We followed the best practice of others; today we are the ones setting the example.

Focussing on creativity, the present study assesses where Helsinki stands in the 2010s. Measuring creativity is not an easy task, but this report presents one way of grasping something about the creativity of a city. Findings are presented both as statistical figures and interview responses. It is vital for Helsinki to be included in international comparisons, and in this particular setup, we do very well indeed. But Landry reminds us there is still a lot of work ahead. We cannot rest on our laurels; we must work hard for success also in the future.

The present text is in English, but a short summarising article in Finnish and Swedish can be found in our quarterly journal *Kvartti* (2/2014, go to www.kvartti.fi).

Helsinki, November 2014

Timo Cantell
Research Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Helsinki has achieved the highest score of the 20 cities who so far have had their creative capacity measured according to the Creative City Index, which is a combination of a subjective self-assessment and an external evaluation buttressed by factual data. Helsinki ‘punches above its expected weight’, yet there is no cause for complacency. The larger context of a financial crisis, economic restructuring and difficult geo-political dynamics is crucial to consider.

This summary highlights the key messages and opportunities emerging. A further extended summary covers how and why Helsinki reached its high score and the main issues and problematic areas emerging. A series of conceptual tools and analyses are also provided. They may help Helsinki think through some future challenges, how to go about them and how its potentials can be harnessed and harvested. The audit was undertaken by Charles Landry, who has a 20 year involvement with the city, and his team in collaboration with City of Helsinki Urban Facts on behalf of Helsinki City Council. In so doing Helsinki has become part of a growing comparative global dataset of creative cities highlighting and sharing global good practice. 245 people took part either in face to face interviews or electronically. The survey and discussions focused on how well people felt and Helsinki performed in relation to the 4 themed clusters and 10 domains below.

Identifying & Nurturing Creativity

Openness, trust, accessibility & participation

Talent development & the learning landscape

Enabling & Supporting Creativity

The political & public framework

Strategic leadership, agility & vision

Professionalism & effectiveness

Exploiting & Harnessing Creativity

Entrepreneurship, exploration & innovation

Communication, connectivity, networking & media

Living & Expressing Creativity

Distinctiveness, diversity, vitality & expression

The place & placemaking

Liveability & well-being

The Creative City Index looks at the city as an integrated whole, including economic, cultural, technological and social factors, where the dynamics interweave either reinforcing or counteracting each other, it assesses:

- The culture of industry, the creativity of the older and newer economy sectors.
- Social entrepreneurship and the cultures of self-help, self-organizing and co-operation.
- The creativity of public sector organizations and its civic creativity, which is imaginative problem solving and creating potential applied to public good objectives.
- Cross-sector creativity and inter-organizational collaboration and inventive partnering and networking.
- Boundary-busting creativity, such as between science and art or ecology and economics.
- Inspirational learning and professional development initiatives across the lifecycle to help create the conditions for creativity.
- Abilities to deal with 'wicked' problems such as avoiding the growth of an underclass.
- Obstacles to generating creativity and innovation including a culture of risk aversion.
- Physical attributes and contexts to support liveability and well-being and a strong urban culture.

Key messages

- Helsinki at 68.2% comes out top of the 20 cities so far assessed in the Creative City Index. This is a very good score approaching excellent.
- Ghent follows with 64.5%, then San Sebastian 63.5%, Freiburg 63.4%, Bilbao 63.3%. Lower down are Adelaide at 56%, Oulu at 51% and Taipei at 51.5%.
- Helsinki does very well on this Index as well as many other indices. It punches above its weight, but there can be a danger of complacency.
- Given the context of Helsinki it cannot rest on its laurels. It needs to be more creative than other places to mitigate against its natural disadvantages, such as its location and its unusual language.
- There is nothing wrong with the political and public framework in Helsinki. It is more how it operates. Culturally Helsinki and Finland still has a 'somewhat parental approach'.
- Helsinki is more open than closed. It is open in social attitudes, towards technology in relation to arts and a 'live and let' attitude, but more closed given its strong attitudes to rules.
- There is a solid and reliable professional culture, yet it may not be effective if it is not doing the right thing.
- The attitudes and attributes that helped make such admirable progress in Helsinki, such as its engineering driven mindset, may be precisely those that could threaten it in the future.
- Helsinki is good at dealing with the complicated, such as building an energy system, but less adept at dealing with the complex such as fostering an urban culture, that can feel imprecise. It is good at the 'predict & provide' model.
- Helsinki 25 years ago followed the best practice of others, then it became a leader, now it is out on its own and has few other role models to follow. It now has to create its own path, which is more risky.
- The learning system is good, if not very good, but not seen as innovative. This may cause problems given the new talent building processes that require new approaches to the curricula and learning contexts.
- A contest and tension is emerging between an older and a newer way of thinking, planning and acting.

- The evolving innovation landscape differs from the old one of more predictable outcomes. In a world of uncertainty, emergent evolution and fast prototyping open systems and encouraging iterative processes and allowing for failure are more important.
- A shift in thinking is required away from institution building towards connecting, enabling and intermediary mechanisms.
- The communications platform is strong, but there are worries that the networking capacity is weaker and so opportunities may not be maximized.
- The very solid platform Helsinki has, such as the trust in acting institutions and transparency, create opportunities that the city has not grasped. We call this 'the missed opportunity' perspective.
- Helsinki has weathered the post-Nokia crisis relatively well. Indeed Nokia has in effect been a professional development training ground and launch platform for many new companies to evolve and it is even benefitting the public sector.
- A major culture change process is underway in the city, partly linked to a generational shift, but there is still a long way to go. People mention the public administration, noting that other cities appear to be doing better.
- The Helsinki innovation system cannot evolve unless the public sector, which is so powerful, develops too.
- A contest is playing itself out between a more controlling and more enabling and facilitating approach to city making.
- The city is easing up, especially driven by activist groups and helped by the new level of social media interaction. The Restaurant Day is an emblematic example that has had knock on effects.
- Giving the community and socially driven sector scope to express themselves will help the city in the longer term.
- The struggle to make inter-disciplinary working the norm remains an issue, but the advantages of collaboration are seeping through. Participatory budgeting has proved fruitful, for instance in the youth sector.
- Helsinki is collegiate rather than collaborative. A struggle internally remains to push the collaboration agenda through. Habits of mind change slowly.
- Helsinki needs to develop an attitude and culture whereby it is 'strategically principled and tactically flexible', built on its strong ethos of justice and equality.



The Restaurant Day is an emblematic example that has had knock on effects. Photo: Timo Cantell.

- The old very valuable trust model, based on a homogenous society, is stretched to its limits and needs to be re-created for a more diverse society.
- A start-up culture has emerged rather rapidly and starting an independent business is socially validated. It is now a fashionable endeavour. This is a major culture shift as it implies an acceptance of possible failure.
- Maximizing the benefits of diversity is one the major future challenges. Helsinki can only grow in global stature with some level of diversity.
- There is need to encourage the innovation culture to develop even further beyond technology and especially increasing links between science, art and technology.
- Creating a major cultural institution of this type, like Ars Electronica in Linz, has been a major missed opportunity for Helsinki as its cultural institution building focus has been elsewhere.
- The World Design Capital 2012 year accelerated the processes of co-design and co-creation that were already beginning and the legacy programme is important.
- To understand the complex tasks Helsinki faces ahead requires a strategically focused ‘collective thinking brain’ for the city combining private and public interests.

- The perception of Helsinki is a mix of reality, hype and stereotype. The hype about Helsinki is both positive and damaging. Positive as it creates opportunity and it helps the city market itself. Negative in that it can lead to a boom and bust mentality.
- The level of well-being and liveability is strongly rated, although new problems lurk on the horizon such as increased divisions between rich and poor and the city centre becoming too expensive for Helsinkians.
- The physical fabric of Helsinki is improving with a shift in thinking from urban development to place making. A continually improving public realm and design is vital.
- A major analysis of what a creative 21st century bureaucracy would be like and its rules and incentives system is important for Helsinki to consider.

Opportunities

Harnessing and harvesting potential

To think holistically and laterally across greater Helsinki to make new combinations between mainstream and emerging creative economy sectors, and creative individuals across business, community, arts, universities and the city. Thinking through how Helsinki can move from a collegiate to collaborative culture.

Civic creativity & rethinking the bureaucracy

A major analysis of what a creative 21st bureaucracy would be: Its ethos, its operating mechanism, its rules and incentives system, its characteristics able to foster civic creativity.

Communicating and connecting Helsinki

To increase Helsinki's centrality and to maximize the assets and resonance of the city in a global setting identify a number of niches where Helsinki can be a global nodal point.

INTRODUCTION

During 2013–2014 Charles Landry and his team took the “Creative Pulse” of Helsinki’s imaginative capacities according to the Creative City Index. The audit was undertaken in collaboration with City of Helsinki Urban Facts on behalf of Helsinki City Council. In so doing Helsinki has become part of a growing comparative global dataset of creative cities highlighting and sharing global good practice. To date 20 cities have taken part. The Helsinki study included gathering 185 on-line survey responses of long and shorter questionnaires as well as holding workshops and focus groups involving 60 people including a series of individual strategic conversations with people from the public and private sectors.

The survey and discussions focused on how well respondents felt Helsinki performed in relation to the 10 domains of the Creative City Index. These findings were considered along with reflections on and assessments of Helsinki’s potential based too on Charles’ 20-year involvement with the City of Helsinki. Additionally factual data on Helsinki and previous research was assessed as well as comparisons to other cities across the world, particularly cities who have already participated in the Index, such as Bilbao, Adelaide, Ghent and Taipei to assess where Helsinki fits along a spectrum of cities.

The Creative City Index, developed by Charles Landry and Jonathan Hyams, evaluates the ‘creative pulse of places’ by exploring their urban dynamics, processes and achieved projects. It looks at the city as an integrated whole where these dynamics interweave either reinforcing or counteracting each other.

The Index consists of ten domains (Table 1), overlapping areas of importance to city development. They reflect the breadth of tangible and intangible factors that need to be optimized if a city wants to make the most of its creative potential. This paper summarises the results of the survey and workshop discussions, including how participants rated Helsinki against the domains as well as selected comments and areas of perceived strength, weakness and opportunity for Helsinki.

The Creative City

Creativity and innovation are related but crucially they are not the same. Creativity and imagination are the major pre-conditions for downstream innovations to occur, such as to become a ‘smart city’ or for economic and cultural vigour to develop. Creativity is a divergent thought process. It generates new ideas, whilst innovation is a convergent process concerned with turning ideas into reality and profitable products and services. To assess a city’s culture of creativity, you need to consider:



Dodo's Urban Farmers in Kalasatama. Photo: Timo Cantell.

- The culture of industry, the creativity of new economy sectors such as the new media as well as the creativity potential of traditional industries.
- Social entrepreneurship and the cultures of self-help, self-organizing and co-operation given their role in empowering people in local communities.
- The creativity of public sector organizations in terms of strategic policy development and delivering services, civic creativity – that is imaginative problem solving applied to public good objectives.
- Creativity expressed through working across sectors and inter-organizational networking. Inventive partnering and networking, for instance between universities and their local communities.
- Boundary-busting creativity – such as between science and art. To what extent are there potential projects that combine the artistic with the technological or more artistic approaches to planning or bringing the artistic community into the urban planning arena?
- How programmes in education and learning, and professional development across the lifecycle help create the conditions for creativity.
- Obstacles to generating creativity and innovation. Can the creativity agenda co-exist with a culture of risk aversion? The impact of the growing litigation culture, exacting safety standards and other sociological factors.
- How the physical context supports the development of a strong urban culture to encourage creatives to stay or be attracted to the region.

The Index

The distinguishing feature of the Creative City Index is that it is both a subjective self-assessment of a city combined with an external evaluation. Subjective views of the prospects of a city are crucial since they determine and shape the scope of what is possible, the resulting level of ambition and the motivation or will to do well. The external view tries to be as objective as possible also taking into account the psychological state of a city since results often depend on whether a city over-values or under-estimates itself. Together these assessments frame the results. The differences between the two create the basis for a strategic conversation in the city.

The Index thus uses a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, including self-completion online surveys, group sessions, one-to-one interviews and site visits as well as ensuring the researchers experience real projects in action.

Score ranges in the Creative Cities Index broadly have the following meaning:

90%+	Extraordinary
80%+	Exceptional
70%+	Excellent
60%+	Very good
50%+	Good but could improve
50%–	Below average, needs improvement
40%–	Poor, needs serious attention
30%–	Very poor

Discussion	Cluster Group	Domains
1	Identifying & Nurturing Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Openness, trust, accessibility & participation - Talent development & the learning landscape
2	Enabling & Supporting Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The political & public framework - Strategic leadership, agility & vision - Professionalism & effectiveness
3	Exploiting & Harnessing Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entrepreneurship, exploration & innovation - Communication, connectivity, networking & media
4	Living & Expressing Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distinctiveness, diversity, vitality & expression - The place & place-making - Liveability & well-being

Table 1: The domains and cluster groups.

Individual interviews, workshops and focus groups

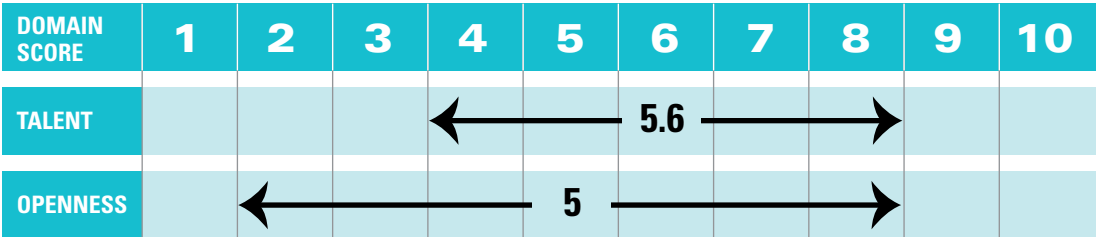
Around 35 individual interviews were held as well as group sessions involving 25 people covering a very broad mix of people from differing age groups, varying perspectives including the mainstream and alternative worlds. They included leaders in the city in the private, public and community sectors who have shaped Helsinki's development over the years, but also young and emerging people and groups who are beginning to shape the new Helsinki as entrepreneurs and activists.

They covered economic issues, culture, youth, food, hospitality, retailing, social care and health, the police. There were inspiring innovators in all fields including small and large businesses, social innovators, interesting educators, historians and intellectuals.

The workshops included one with a group of 14 to 18 year olds with some coming from especially deprived areas. Another grouping included a talented mix of younger individuals, often activists, ranging from think tanks, guerrilla gardening to arts education.

Everyone was asked to rate each of the domains against a scale of 1–10 with 1 being very low and 10 being very high. Within the various groups the range of individual ratings covered a wide spectrum, see the attached examples in relation to responses to the “openness, trust, accessibility & participation” domain which resulted in a range from 1–9 and an average response of 5 or ‘talent development’ where the range was from 4–8. These differences are not a problem, but valuable. It is the debate about why there are differences of interpretation that is important in reaching an average score of ‘5’.

It is also notable that each domain at times contains a complex mix of issues. Openness may score less well than trust or accessibility and participation. For instance, those that scored openness very low focused more on attitudes to foreigners.



Factual background

The population of Helsinki is just above 600,000 and Helsinki Metropolitan Area (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Kauniainen) is 1,075,014. The Helsinki Region which includes a further 10 municipalities is 1,383,993. The latter is eight times the size of Helsinki. That population is projected to grow to 1,600,000 over the next 20 years.

The work-eligible population of Helsinki is 335,300 producing ca. 30–40 billion euros while the entire Helsinki region produces 65 billion euros. The employment in the creative industries at 43,282 is very high with a share of total turnover of 8.4%. Other strong sectors include information and communications at 9.3 %. There is a growing share of entrepreneurs in the workforce – it has reached 5%.

Public service employment at 34.9% is exceptionally high, partly accounted for by Helsinki’s capital status. 40,000 people work for the city, which is very high and including nationally related public sector jobs the figure is 105,000.

Average household income at 32,200 € puts Helsinki among the richer places in Europe. The overall unemployment rate at 7 % is one of the better ones in Europe.

Helsinki’s foreign citizens have increased substantially in the last 15 years now representing 8.4 % of the total population and 12.2 % have a foreign mother tongue. The percentage of foreign-language students in tertiary education is around 8.5% and the highest university ranking globally is 64th for the University of Helsinki. General education levels are very high as is foreign language competence.

Tourism and business have steadily increased over the last decade. Good ICT, increasing air links and high speed rail connectivity makes Helsinki an increasingly cosmopolitan and mobile place so overcoming its relative isolation. Cultural facilities and programming are extensive. Whilst crime is higher relative to the rest of Finland it is low by international comparison. Helsinki consistently does well in international benchmarking studies be that about liveability, public sector innovation or design.

Comparative scores

Helsinki ranks first at 68.2% [Very good verging on excellent] across all domains and the 20 cities that have participated so far and remember that this is a combination of internal self-assessment and external evaluation. The overall averaged score for the participating cities is 56.52%. Ghent (64.5%), San Sebastian (63.5%), Freiburg (63.4%) and Bilbao (63.3%) are the next cities in the ranking. Helsinki does well across all domains and scores highest for political and public framework at (61.2%) where the average is (47.5%) and communications (67.5%) against an average of (59%).

The biggest differences between Helsinki's scores and the average were for the domain 'entrepreneurship, exploration & innovation' where Helsinki scored (62.5%) against an average of (49.5%) and 'strategic leadership' (65.5%) against (49.5%). In both of these domains Bilbao had the highest score at (65%) for entrepreneurship and (77.5%) for strategic leadership as well as 'place & place-making' at (82.5%). The latter reflects its acknowledged efforts at comprehensive regeneration. What brought Bilbao's ranking down substantially was its very low score for 'talent and learning' at (37%) against Helsinki's (74%) and an average of (54.5%). In addition its connectivity at (55%) was below average. What brought Canberra's score down was the perceived lack of leadership in the city.

The 'distinctiveness, diversity, vitality' domain bundles much together. Freiburg is perhaps Europe's greenest city and scores highest at (77%) against (66%) for Helsinki and an average of (60%). Freiburg also tops the list for 'liveability' at (91%) against (78.3%) for Helsinki.

Helsinki scored second with (74.5%) in the 'professionalism & effectiveness' domain after Bilbao (77.5%). However the distinction was increasingly made that you can be professional, but not effective as you are not doing the right thing. Many cities' rankings were brought down because of low scores in this domain. They do not 'walk the talk'.

Sub-indicator scores

Each domain like the public and political framework contains a series of individual sub-indicators and the overall CCI system flags nineteen of these as especially important. Within the political framework domain Helsinki scores very well in terms of trust in public institutions (71%) but believes these to be rather bureaucratic (37.5%). Only Adelaide has a similarly sharp distinction – (68%) and (24.5%), where in a small state population-wise there are too many layers of government. Within the broad communications domain Helsinki scores extremely well in terms of ‘getting around’ (100%) and well for people to people ‘communications’ (78%), but less so for its ‘networking’ capacity (59.5%). Helsinki has a good score for ‘openness’ at (66.5%), but less good for ‘cosmopolitanism’ (55%).

Helsinki comes out highest of all cities for well-being at (79.5%). Surprisingly given its design strengths Helsinki is only slightly above the average of (64.3%) at (66%). Perhaps this is due to the bland 1960–1980’s buildings that dominate the inner ring of the city.

Ghent scores extremely well in a number of sub-domains. It ranks top for the reputation of its public institutions at (72%) and has the best score for its bureaucracy at (53%) with the smallest difference between those two scores of all cities at (19%). The difference in Helsinki is (33%), whereas as in Adelaide it is (43.25%), a city where there are regular complaints about being over-governed. One reason for Ghent’s high rating may be that it has a small bureaucratic simplification department run by a younger professional. It has the highest score for ‘this place is interesting’ (77.5%) against Helsinki’s (61%).



Helsinki scores extremely well in terms of ‘getting around’. Photo: City of Helsinki Media Bank/Paul Williams.

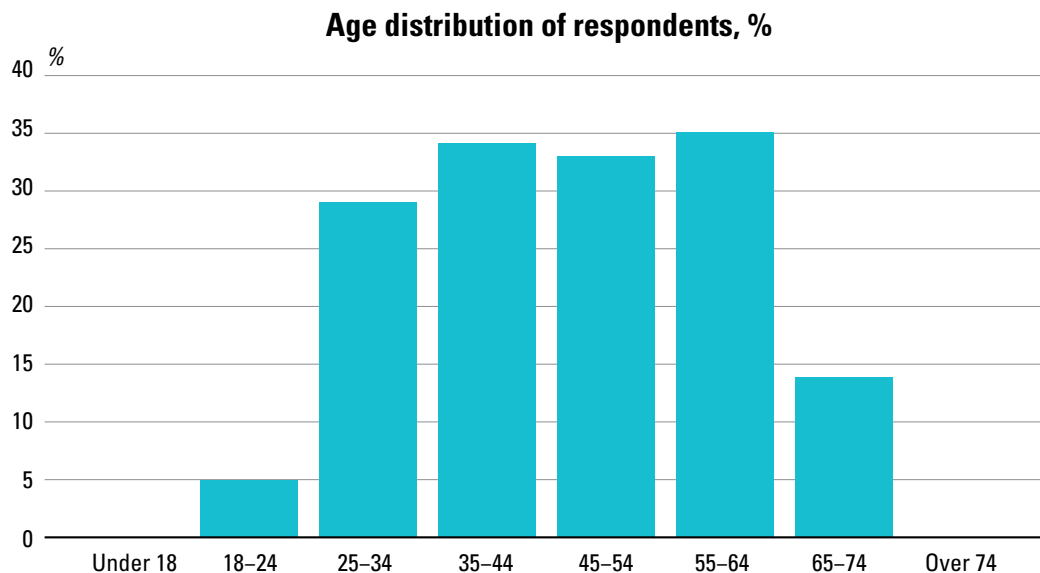
Ghent ranks its 'arts & culture' very highly, but considers its 'design' to be relatively weak at (55.3%). It is top for its university system at (75.5%) against (66.5) for Helsinki, which is third place after Canberra with (74%) when all education related domains and indicators are considered.

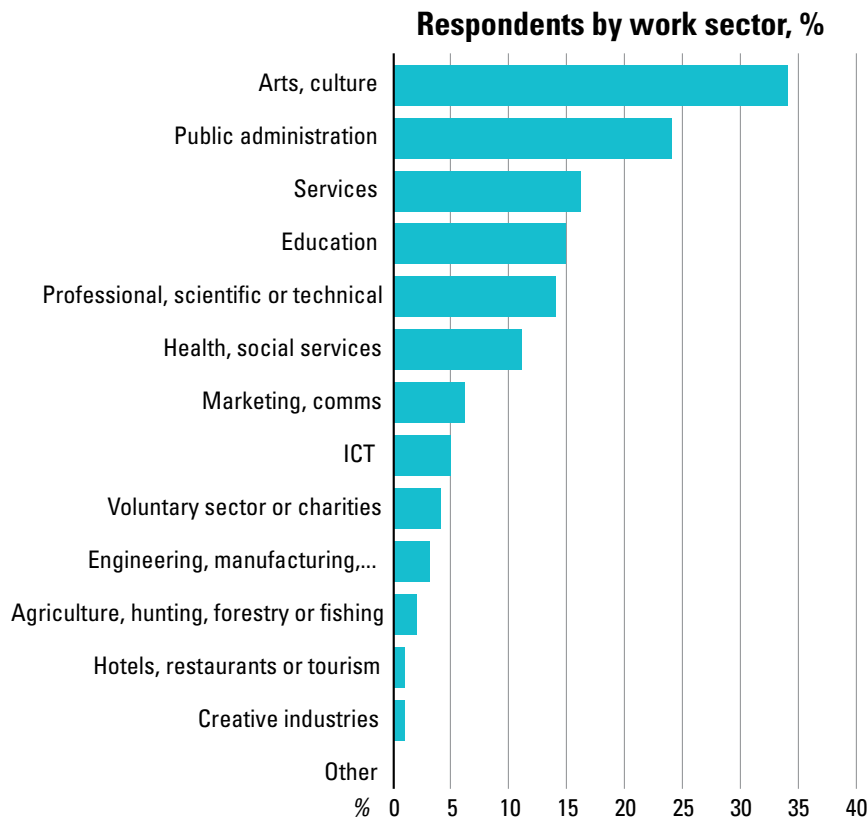
In terms of overall reputation Helsinki is third with (70.5%) after San Sebastian with (76.5%) and Ghent with (74%). San Sebastian scores very well on a number of sub-indicators, such as 'business friendly' at (52%) against (40.5%) in Helsinki and the average of (38%). 'Forward thinking' is (64%) where Helsinki is second best at (62%) against an average of (49%).

Survey results

Of the 234 survey respondents including on-line and face to face the age range was dominated by the 35 to 64 age bracket with very low response from the 18 to 24 bracket and no respondents from the under 18 or over 74 ends of the scale. We tried to address this problem by holding a dedicated half day group meeting with a dozen younger people under 18 and a half day workshop with 20 urban activists in the under 35 age bracket.

The dominant work sectors were those associated with the cultural sector, many of which overlapped into the creative industries and the public administration. In the individual interviews we tried to balance these with a focus on innovators in the ICT sector, start-ups and social areas.





The detailed evaluation

This evaluation combines an internal and external perspective taking international comparisons into account. Overall the outside evaluation rates Helsinki higher than in the internal perception. That score is made up from the assessment of the consultants as well referencing other external reports on the city-region.

The total score is 68.2% with 66% for the internal assessment and 70.5% the external one.

Why a difference in scoring? This is an interesting topic for readers to discuss, since neither the subjective nor the external evaluations are completely value free. The main aim of the Creative City Index method is to foster debate. For instance, the external consultants have been taken by the mood shifts in Helsinki over the last few years and this is why it rates Helsinki's entrepreneurial spirit highly. It also rates strategy making highly, since it is better than most cities, even though it feels how the city goes about these issues could be rethought to the advantage of the city.

By all accounts Helsinki, especially by international comparison, punches above its expected weight. It has overcome many locational disadvantages and its achievements in re-emerging after the breakdowns of the late 1990's is admirable.

Again, it seems to have weathered the post-Nokia situation relatively well. It has created a platform to move forward and it makes a lot out of its assets. This does not mean it can become complacent -- to stay where it is, given its disadvantages it has to be more innovative than others. Many Helsinkians cite Copenhagen and Stockholm as doing better.

DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
Openness and accessibility	65.9%	64.1%	65%

Why a difference in scoring? This difference is marginal. Helsinki is both open in a sense of accepting different lifestyles, it prefers consensus, but increased diversity will put stresses on a tolerance largely based on homogeneity.

DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
Learning landscape	78%	70%	74%

Why a difference in scoring? Everyone agrees that the Finnish learning landscape has a solidity and good track record. The status given to learning is higher than elsewhere and thus comparatively better. Helsinki was more self-critical and several interviewees felt, notable exceptions aside, that more could be made out of this resource and that it remained somewhat traditional in outlook.

DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
Strategy leadership	72%	59%	65.5%

Why a difference in scoring? This is a large difference. Whilst it is true that there is no easily encapsulated story for the future of Helsinki there is long term thinking, but this is happening more within departments such as planning or economics and less collectively across sectors and departments. In comparison to most other cities Helsinki does well. Helsinki could clearly do much better especially if it rethought its strategy making processes, but other cities even more.

DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
Entrepreneurship & innovation	71%	54%	62.5%

Why a difference in scoring? Here the external score perhaps focuses more on potential and the noticeable shift in entrepreneurial thinking cutting across not only the economic fields but also social innovations, which internal evaluations largely neglected.

DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
Distinctiveness, diversity, vitality	68%	63.5%	65.75%

Why a difference in scoring? Everywhere is distinctive to itself, but without doubt Helsinki has a special quality. One only needs to mention the Finns' love for tango as one cliched example.

DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
Political & public framework	62%	60%	61%

Why a difference in scoring? The scores are effectively the same and the framework is robust and transparent, rules are clear if not always agreed upon.

DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
Professionalism & effectiveness	75%	74%	74.5%

Why a difference in scoring? Common agreement that the project management capacity of Helsinki and Finland is solid and reliable. Some say people are professional, but with perhaps the wrong goal in mind so that the effectiveness suffers.

DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
The place & place-making	69%	67%	68%

Why a difference in scoring? The attempts to enhance the urban quality are well recognized seen in the new housing developments across the city. This gives the relatively high score. The 1960's to 1990's urban fabric continues to blight the visual experience of the city.

Internally higher scores were given for the domains:

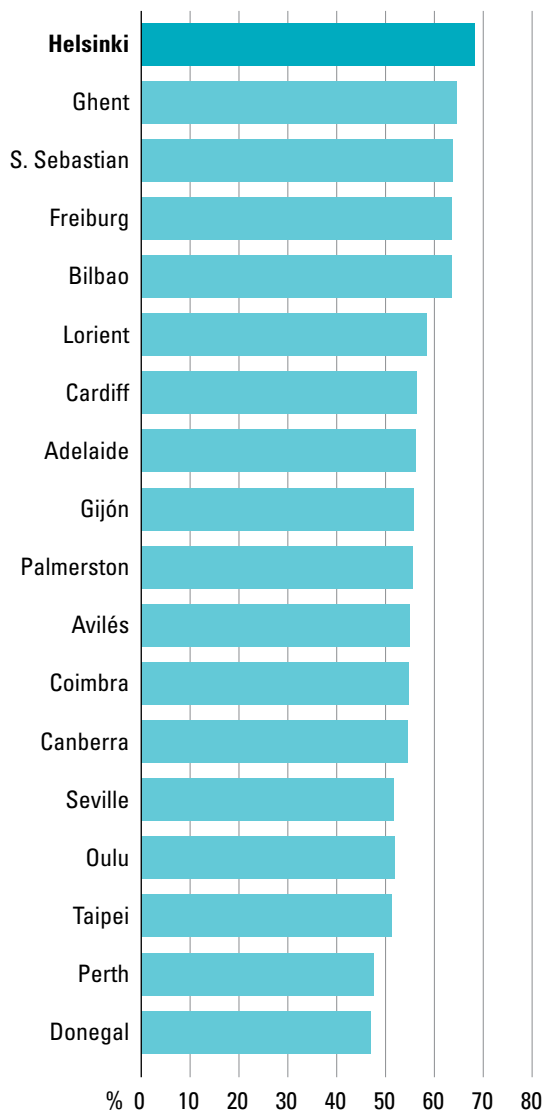
DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
Liveability & well-being	78%	78.5%	78.25%

Why a difference in scoring? Helsinki is no exception to the standards people associate with all Nordic countries. Comparatively basic facilities from hospitals to recreation are good. There is an ease to getting around.

DOMAIN	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	OVERALL
Communication & networking	67%	68%	67.5%

Why a difference in scoring? Essentially this is the same score. Physical links within the city and air and rail links across the country are good. International connectivity is better than one would expect especially to China. The gateway into Europe strategy works.

The Creative Cities Index



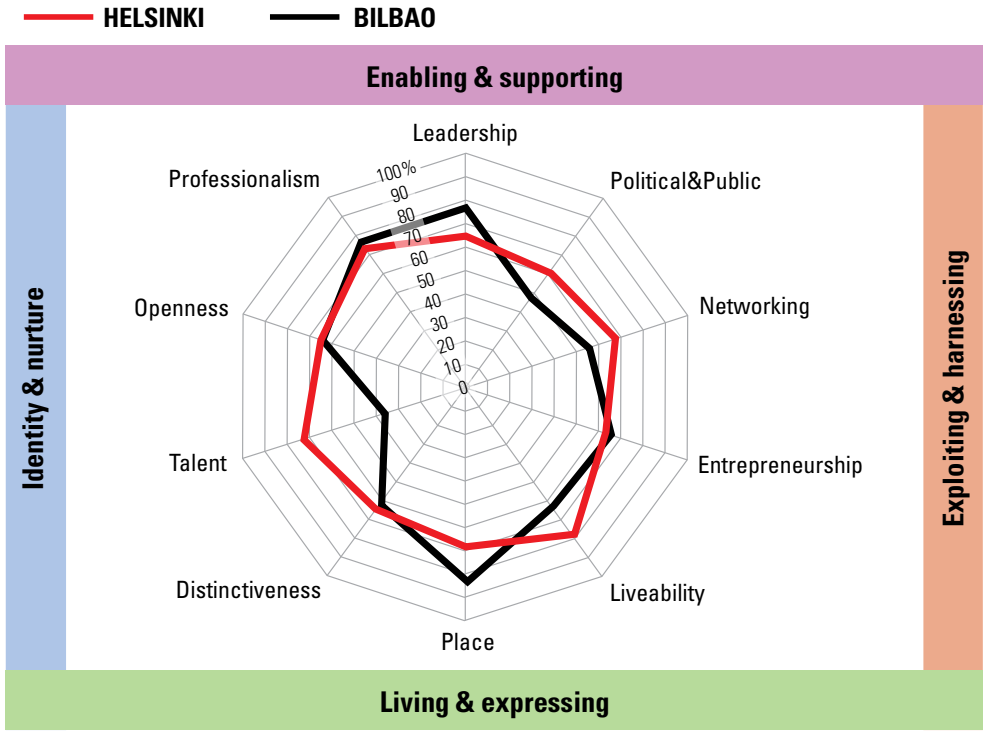
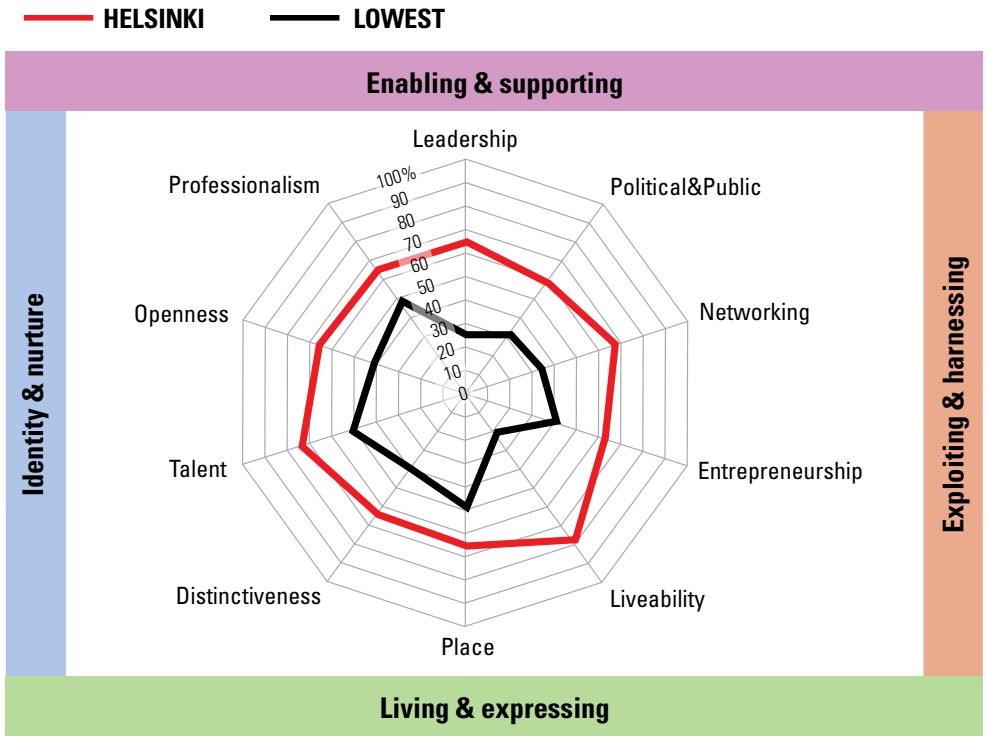
Overall findings

The following charts provide a snapshot of the scores identified by participants in Helsinki's Creative City Index and provides a comparison with Bilbao, Ghent and Adelaide.

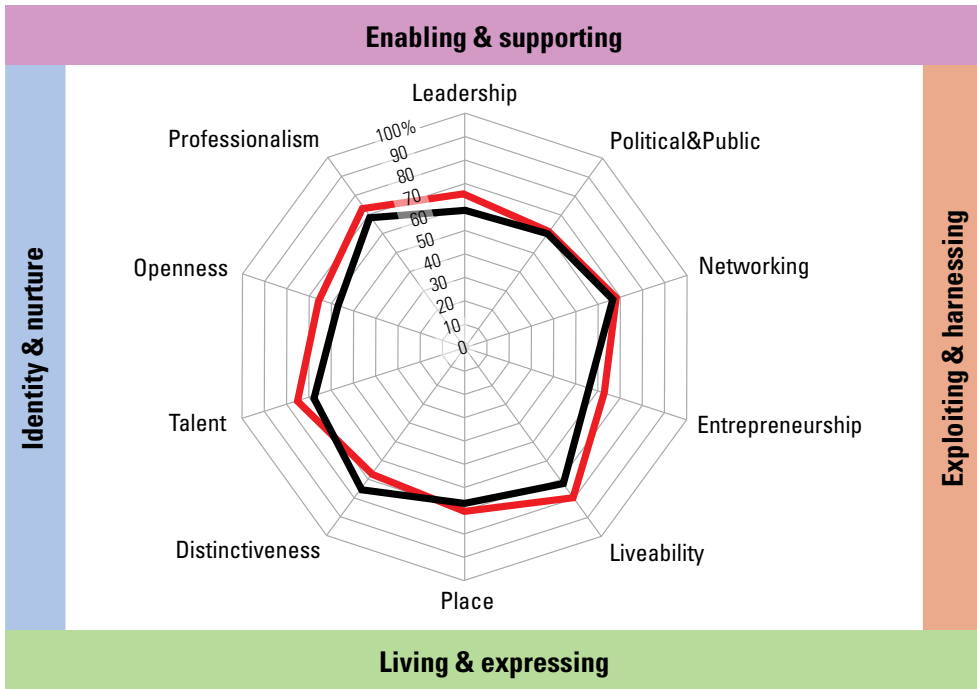
As can be seen from the charted data, the areas where participants rated Helsinki highly is in the quality of its Liveability & Wellbeing [78.3%] which is slightly higher than Ghent [71%] and Talent & the Learning Landscape [74%] which is once again higher than Ghent [66.5%].

The areas where Helsinki rates slightly below the other comparative cities shown here are the areas of Distinctiveness, Diversity & Vitality [65.8%] compared to Ghent [74%], Place & Placemaking [68%] compared to Bilbao [82.5%], Strategic Leadership, Agility & Vision [65.5%] compared to Bilbao [77.5%], and Professionalism & Effectiveness [74.5%] compared to Bilbao [77.5%].

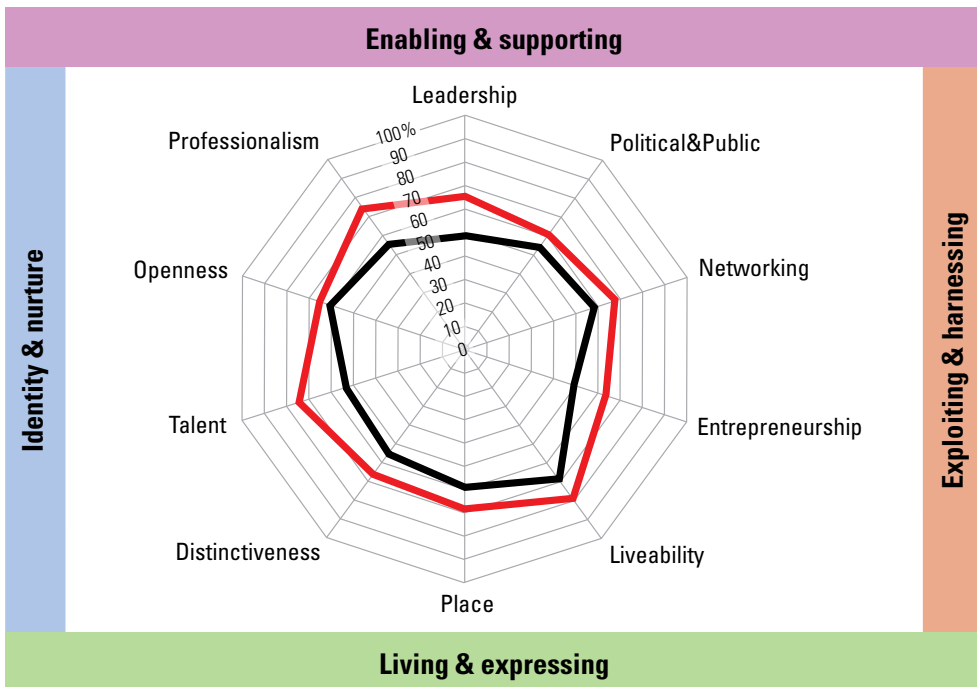
The comparison to Adelaide (56%) and Canberra (55%) is instructive. Both score in the middling range and whilst they have solid infrastructures their relative isolation hampers their capacity to attract and retain expertise and talent. This shows how crucial it has been for Helsinki to develop some sense of centrality both physically and virtually within Europe and elsewhere.



— HELSINKI — GHENT



— HELSINKI — ADELAIDE



SECTION 1: IDENTIFYING & NURTURING CREATIVITY

Introduction

The domains considered in this paper can be seen as enabling and nurturing creativity: the first through inviting, encouraging and enabling people to connect and contribute in a wide range of areas; and the second through developing and nurturing talent, in its many forms for people in the community. Each domain contains key traits or questions concerning creativity, with tangible and intangible expressions.

Openness, trust, accessibility & participation

- The city is open minded and welcoming and as a result many people from a diversity of backgrounds make it their home.
- The society, institutions and organizations create an enabling environment where opportunities are facilitated and it is easier to get projects going.
- It is a well-connected gateway to and from the world.
- It is easy to get around, nodes of transport connect, the system is easy to understand.
- It is intercultural and focuses on what people share across boundaries, recognizing difference but seeking out similarities.
- It encourages bridge-builders.
- It acknowledges conflicts and tries to embrace, manage and negotiate a way through them.

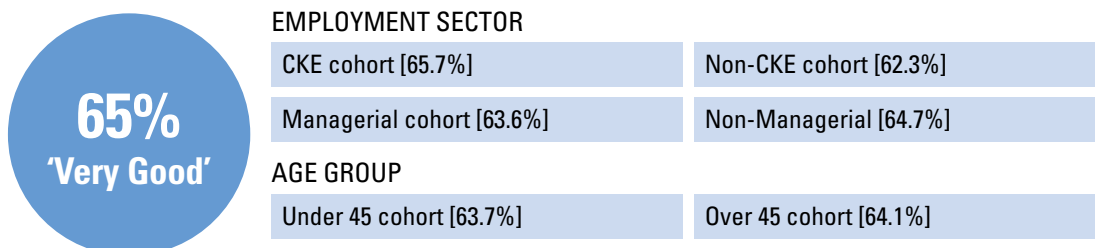
Talent development & the learning landscape

- Learning and knowledge are highly valued.
- All talents are nurtured, fostered, promoted, rewarded and celebrated.
- There is a diversity of learning options with ladders of opportunity that take people up the levels.
- People of all ages enjoy the challenge of learning and want to self-improve. Schools connect with the local community in multiple ways and share their facilities.
- Universities identify with and are committed to the city. They open themselves out and contribute to helping solve urban issues. There is teaching of core skills as well as centres of excellence that are globally recognized.
- There is pride in teaching and the education institutions strive to be the best in their field.
- The constantly evolving curriculum is in tune with the needs of business.
- This system grows and retains talent, and there is also a balanced two-way flow of talent to and from other parts of the world.

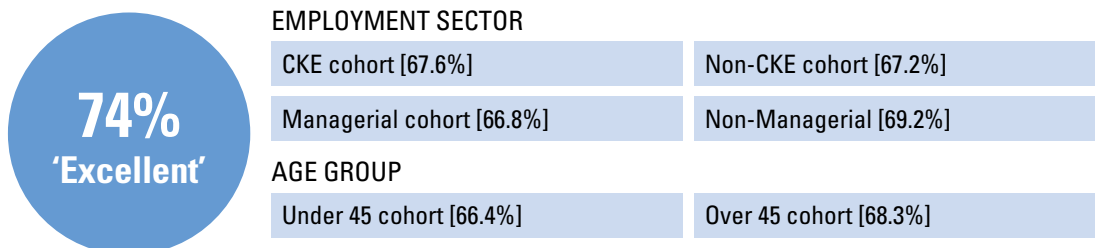
Domain scoring

Overall scores for both the sessions and the surveys without external ratings are provided below:

Openness, trust, accountability & participation



Talent development & the learning landscape



Relevant indicator scores

Indicator	Helsinki	Adelaide	Ghent
Open environment	66.8%	61.3%	50.6%
Cosmopolitanism	54.6%	51.8%	46.9%
Getting around	100.0%	95.7%	71.0%
Education	71.8%	60.3%	69.3%
Universities	68.6%	65.6%	75.4%

Note: Creative Knowledge Economy workers are abbreviated as [CKE].

Consulting team comments

Openness, trust, accessibility & participation

Openness is perhaps the most important attribute for a city to become more creative. It is a complex term and no person, organization or city is completely open and accessible across the board and all the time. We are selectively open. Openness, for some, is only possible in familiar surroundings and so they open out from a position of feeling anchored in place or home or amongst friends. The curiosity about others, ideas or things happens within a sense of safety, constraints and limits. Many scientists fit this stereotype. Here safety breeds confidence. For others openness is a default position and there is a willingness to float into the unknown. Such people are more likely to be the explorers, the innovators, the mavericks or the cosmopolitans. They eat up novelty – be it new people, places or projects. But still within this spectrum we can be prejudiced. The apparently open person can be closed minded about certain things – be it alternative medicine, certain activities or particular ethnicities. And equally the apparently closed minded person can reveal surprising.

It is hard to encapsulate a whole city in terms of concepts like ‘openness’ or ‘trust’ and the whole psychological scaffolding that goes with that. The broader cultural issues outlined above determine possibilities. Yet let’s try. Helsinki is more open than closed and Helsinki has a particular form of being open. It is more a calm welcome than in your face ‘hello’. It is a more passive form. It has a consistency about its openness and does flip around, but it is a touch constrained. There is, it appears, a strong culture of mutuality. This is evident in the city’s open data activities as well as open government programmes and the award-winning Helsinki Region Infoshare is witness to that. The fact that the stakeholders interviewed stressed the transparency and clarity of the rules system is another sign of openness. Other collective signs of openness are the city’s desire to learn about best practices of relevance to city development and the general urge to self-improve. And this is driven both by a genuine drive to learn as well to compete.

There are sectors where openness is more prevalent than others. The dabbling, messing around and playing, especially with technology, is an example of Helsinki’s openness. This is witnessed in the gaming culture. The arts, both mainstream and sub-cultural, are accepted and the quirky and eccentric finds its way quite naturally in the Helsinki culture. There is letting lifestyles be lifestyles – there are more guys with pony tails in conventional jobs in Helsinki than anywhere else as an instance.

Yet there are some areas where Helsinki needs to learn to be open. The most important of these is in relation to foreigners. Finns are less used to them than other global hubs especially those with previous empires.

And there are barriers to the openness. Finns are ‘paternalistic by instinct’ they say. The emphasis on rules and the strong ‘is this allowed’ default position or the quite entrenched siloes in both the private and public sectors have consequences. It shapes attitudes towards risk, it curtails the exploratory instinct, it can reduce levels of ambition.



There are sectors where openness is more prevalent than others for example in the gaming culture. Photos: © 2014 Supercell and © 2014 Rovio Entertainment Ltd. Angry Birds.

It affects too the culture of debate and critical thinking as rules and critique are not good bed fellows. Helsinki is a 'two degrees of separation' city and since people tend to know each other this can constrain debate as does the lack of critical mass. It is better not to go out on a limb when opportunities are not vast. Consensus then becomes far more the norm, which has positive features, but can make it harder to reach the difficult decisions. The expert knows best syndrome is a strong feature of Finnish and Helsinki culture and this also reduces the innovation capacity and discussion culture. These are all versions of not being open.

The Reader's Digest 'dropping your wallet test' which saw Helsinki as the most honest city out of 16 with Mumbai second and Budapest third is a wonderful example of the level of trust. Trust, ironically, is fostered by this adherence to rules since there is reliability, transparency and predictability. This culture is less driven by tribal tendencies, relationships and hidden connections or sharing of favours. This shows how attributes simultaneously embed a mix of qualities. The central question is how the nexus of characteristics coalesces and evolves. In Helsinki's case the strong trust is a powerful asset as it can, if not abused, shorten transaction costs. Trust is the enabler of an open city and the challenge for Helsinki is now whether it can trust those it is less familiar with. In a multicultural, more diverse Helsinki, the old trust model, based on a homogenous society, is stretched to its limits and perhaps cannot work and needs to be re-created. In addition the relative decline in equality with the gap between rich and poor growing puts strains on the trust relationship. Whilst understanding of the need for diversity grows as Helsinki internationalizes even further the countervailing forces of the True Finn movement has had a polarizing effect.



'Library 10' is a good example of both openness and accessibility.
Photo: City of Helsinki Media Bank/Mika Lappalainen.

Yet this is the contradictory and complex nature of the system – 'you can watch a board meeting, twitter the city board but at same time people do not trust the city, yet they have invented an app to pinpoint a snow spot, but citizens do not believe the city will arrive.'

The virtue of accessibility is that it helps harness potential especially when aligned to other qualities. It is one of the virtues of the social democratic philosophy and ethos and there is a cultural assumption that accessibility should be the norm. It is visible in Helsinki both physically, virtually and in gut instinct and mindset. Libraries are a prime example, especially the fact that the university library is open to all even those who are not students. 'Library10' is a further good example of both openness and accessibility.

The fact that public transport connects most places and is relatively cheap is another example of accessibility. Individuals, even those in powerful positions, are approachable and as a relatively small place connections are tighter, notwithstanding the difficulties newcomers face either through the language barrier or lack of cultural capital. The barriers to accessibility link to the flipside of being less open. The sense of being guarded is noticeable to first generation incomers and curtails their potential to grow. Clearly language is important – its uniqueness and difficulty in itself creates an obstacle for some.

Yet the participatory instinct is strong as witnessed in volunteering statistics, voting patterns, levels of civic engagement, more open consultative frameworks such as doing the masterplan and the emerging discussions about opening the culture of debate.

Comparing these findings with other Creative City Index cities the openness, trust, accessibility and participation domain shows Helsinki [65%] doing well, in spite of some misgivings noted in the survey, when you compare with its main comparators Bilbao [65% or Taipei [66%], Adelaide [60.4%].

Talent development & the learning landscape

Learning and being learned has status in Helsinki and Finland in general and the fact that the teaching profession maintains a relatively high social status means talented people continue to be attracted to the profession. It is thus not surprising that Helsinki has an acknowledged educational infrastructure that for many years has been praised, copied and given awards. Thus falling off the top of the PISA perch has come as a shock and led to much soul searching. Nevertheless most survey respondents agree that Helsinki has good education at the different levels and lifelong learning opportunities (here Sibelius upper secondary school, Helsinki School of Natural Sciences and the dual qualification at Mäkelänrinne upper secondary school were mentioned) and they note that specialisms, such as dedicated arts schooling or the fact that in some schools kids can learn in German, English and Finnish, set Helsinki apart from other countries.

Yet others note that whilst schools in downtown are doing extremely well sharp differences are beginning to emerge between the best and the worst mirroring the rich/poor divide. The Myllypuro developments are cited as a good example of lifting the status of suburbs by moving one of Metropolia campuses there from downtown. A number of schools are mentioned as leading the way as are some university programmes. A common point made was that whilst the standards in all sectors are good it is difficult to adapt and to shift teaching methods or develop the curriculum more forcefully.

This connects to issues raised earlier about sticking to rules or the tried and tested. A serious point made is that Helsinki's education systems are too traditional for the new waves of talent building, which rely more on autonomous learning, self-organisation, being inter-disciplinary, having personal and interpersonal abilities, to be able to reflect, evaluate and manage risk and to handle stress and to challenge oneself.

In this context the creation of Aalto University is cited as a brave initiative of encouraging cross-fertilization and convergence increasingly being explored by others across the globe. The merging of technology, arts and design and business institutions in principle both helps break down silos and fosters inter-disciplinary learning and collaboration. The government's wish to encourage this through extra funding is clearly positive. Given that the three Aalto entities are located both in Helsinki and Espoo this should encourage collaboration between the two cities which has been consistently difficult.

Some argue that Aalto had a real chance to reinvent learning but copied MIT model instead, even though its Design Factory wants to create passion based and exploratory learning.



The creation of Aalto University merged technology, arts and design and business institutions.
Photo: Leena Ylä-Lyly/Aalto University (left), Julia Weckman/Aalto University (right).

They feel that the good Aalto idea could have gone even further and has not adjusted to new forms of learning. For instance, does its creative economy teaching look at and explore the deeper spin-offs of disciplines like design, music or film and how they migrate into other fields. Indeed these activities are competences rather than sectors. It is too early to say what impact Aalto can have as it has still to prove itself and some are worried about the hype which can lead to false expectations. Importantly the physical separation of activities in Otaniemi and elsewhere reduces the scope for ‘planned coincidences’ and makes bumping into others less likely.

The University of the Arts Helsinki formed in 2013 as a result of a merger between three formerly independent universities: Sibelius Academy, Theatre Academy Helsinki, and Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, equally encourages cross-sector working. Similarly to Aalto the question remains – how you encourage synergy when you are physically separate. Critics argue that the move is more about the Ministry saving money, yet is it not possible to do both save money and foster collaboration?

Overall commentators note that the quality of education is good and not innovative and that curricula are not easy to change. They say the universities could be more dynamic and a number of positive initiatives, for instance in the field of entrepreneurship



The University of the Arts Helsinki formed in 2013 was a result of a merger between three formerly independent universities. Photo: Leena Ylä-Lyly/Aalto University.

education and methods of education were mentioned such as the University of Helsinki's new teaching facilities such as Helsinki Think Company or Minerva. The relations between the City and university, by contrast, are getting better and initiatives such as the 'Urban Academy' are highlighted. Interestingly people say 'not all the interesting things are happening in universities.' In fact Nokia was and remains a learning and development platform in that many of the newer companies, for instance, in gaming have Nokia staff in them that has helped them grow. The Nokia eco-system learnt to make products and to fix technical problems and thus bridged the gap between theory and practice.

A constraint on becoming a true learning system is the view that people are good at sharing data, but less at sharing ideas, knowledge and insight. In the context of Finland's critical mass problem and the global competitiveness perspective this is a worry as the city is not making the most of its potential resources.

A final point of great concern - it was claimed that there has been a talent loss after the emergence of the True Finns. Can this be substantiated?

Comparing findings Helsinki [74%] is second in the talent and learning landscape domain behind Canberra [74%] and ahead of Freiburg [71%].

Survey, interview & workshop comments

The following comments regarding strengths and weaknesses were gathered from the surveys.

Openness, trust, accountability & participation

'We have a different form of openness, not the Mediterranean style, it is not expressive.'

'Every Finn has a little policeman behind their eyes.'

'We always ask instinctively "is this allowed".'

'It is the values of equality that really matter to us – everyone should have access.'

'It is quite easy to talk to people at a high level.'

'This was such a great place for equality ... but now the gap is growing.'

'If you drop your wallet you usually get it back.'

'There is a jealousy frontier, they will only tell you when they've finished.'

'A bit closed and mistrusting someone might steal my ideasits the problem of smaller placesless good at sharing things.'

'It's not easy for foreigners especially if you are not a high level professional.'

'Lack of foreign employees and the barrier of their entry into the workforce is a big minus for Helsinki and the whole country. The working life is still mainly Finnish and if you do not fit the traditions and standards.'

Talent development & the learning landscape

'Education is not merely serving the local businesses, it is about the growing youth to become better people, happier, skilled in whatever they do, capable of communicating and acquiring information.'

On how good things are: 'Going abroad you realize things you take for granted.'

On education: 'very good and very traditional" slowly shifting but not quick enough.'

'Old fashioned – educating robots, who can't think.'

'Aalto - too early to say.'

'It's free, the education, and good but it is more like a machine.'

'The city invests a lot in new knowledge, but how relevant is it to reinventing the city.'

SECTION 2: ENABLING & SUPPORTING CREATIVITY

Introduction

This second section focuses on the findings and discussions relating to Enabling & Supporting Creativity and the relevant domains of:

The political & public framework

This domain refers to the public institutions, to political life, to government and governance and to public administration.

In an ideal creative place these institutions will:

- be lean but proactive, ethical, transparent, accessible & enabling
- have structures that are horizontal, co-operative & departmental lines thinly drawn
- keep bureaucracy to a minimum
- employ public sector personnel who are highly motivated & have strong links with the private sector
- support a healthy community & voluntary sector that encourages politicians & officials to be enabling

Professionalism & effectiveness

The creative place works well, things happen and are achieved when:

- there is pride in being professional and doing things with quality. Standards are high and benchmarks are frequently set here
- companies, organisations, individuals and products are often given awards
- there are centres of expertise in a range of specific areas – attributes such as reliability, punctuality, efficiency or accuracy are highly respected
- professionals are confident in their own ability and not afraid to work in partnership with others and to delegate authority, breaking with conventional rules of hierarchy

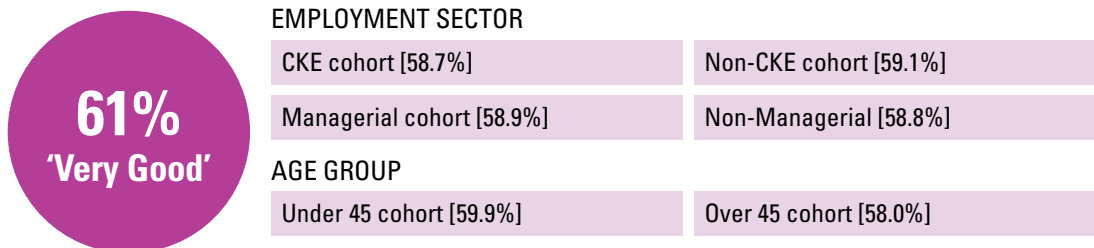
Strategic leadership, agility & vision

In a creative place, there are dynamic and forward-looking people of quality in every sector providing a strong sense of vision for the place. This includes cities where:

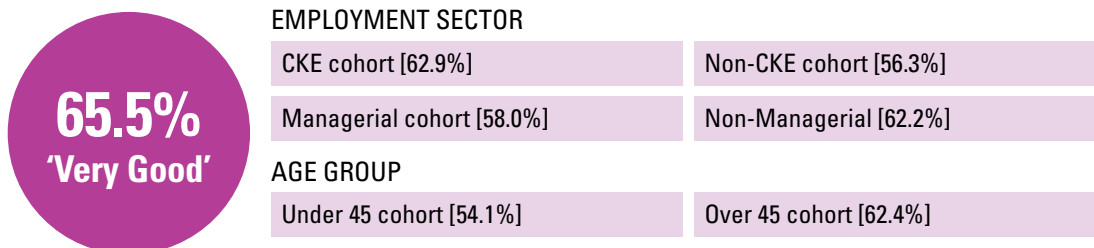
- new trends and emerging developments are flagged early (the green agenda would be a perfect example)
- leadership style is noticeably inspiring, able to delegate and be empowering to others
- thinking is strategic and future-proofing
- decision-making communities in public and private walks of life have a forward focus, whether they are teachers, public servants, transports chiefs, middle and higher management in industry and business, or community organisers or those in the artistic world
- there are good mechanisms to bring people together from different disciplines as well as gather information on best practices and innovative solutions from around the globe

Domain scoring

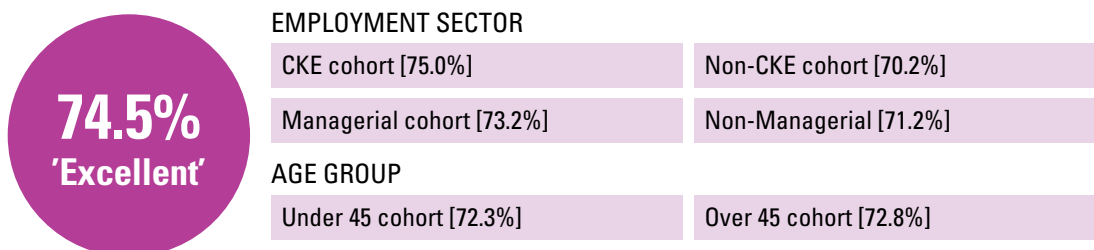
Political & public framework



Strategic leadership, agility & vision



Professionalism & effectiveness



Relevant indicator scores

Indicator	Helsinki	Adelaide	Ghent
Public institutions	68.5%	67.8%	71.8%
Bureaucracy	35.9%	24.6%	53.7%
Leadership	58.7%	46.7%	59.6%
Forward thinking	64.5%	45.1%	54.3%

Note: Creative Knowledge Economy workers are abbreviated as [CKE].

Consulting team comments

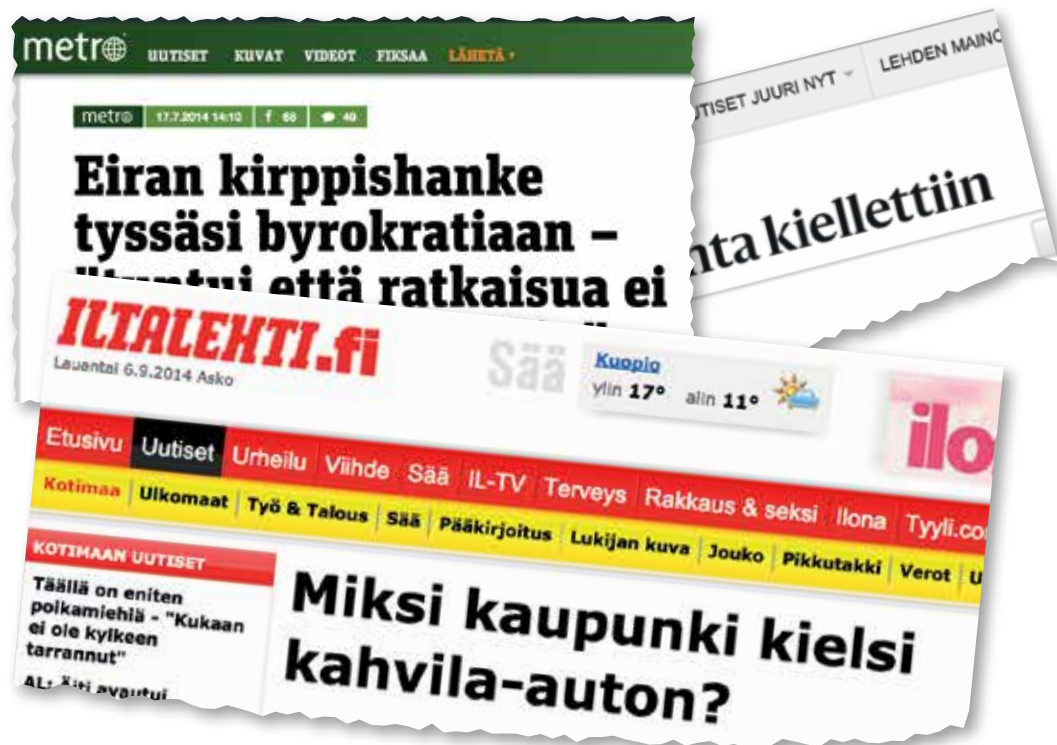
The political & public framework

There is nothing wrong with the political and public framework in Helsinki. It is more how it operates. Culturally Helsinki and Finland 'still has a parental approach' and is 'paternalistic by instinct'. Thus there is a tone that 'they' (the officials and politicians) know the public good. This affects the attitudes to rules and the type of people attracted to working within the public institutions in a self-reinforcing process. This culture also 'expects the system to provide' so that the administration mirrors Finnish culture with its affection for boundaries and this is buttressed by a technocratic mindset with its more linear, step by step thinking. Where is the crux of the problem? The person, the system or the culture of organization and most say it is the culture that determines everything.

'What you see is what you get'. There are no double standards, no hidden agendas, no back doors. The system is objective, transparent and there appears to be a genuine willingness to do good. It is very stable, there is lots of structure, individualism is discouraged, but at the same time the system is easy to access. There is not an atmosphere where mistakes can be made. These mechanisms were very solid in the 'predict and provide model' of running a city, where things were easy to calculate in a complicated world of providing mostly hardware infrastructure. It is less adept in a more complex setting, which include solving 'wicked' problems, where issues are solved more through iterative, interactive processes.



'It is a culture of following rules and not challenging them'. Queue outside Ateneum Art Museum.
Photo: Lotta Haglund.



Articles about bureaucracy banning a flea market and a coffee van.

The system is solid with an element 'of the old boys network', but this is apparently reducing. 'If you know the right people the administration is great', 'it gets 10 out of 10, if you don't know the people it gets 2 out of 10'. Yet there is trust and it is not corrupt. Compared to systems across Europe and beyond the system and framework is good, indeed very good and reliable. 'Going abroad you realize things you take for granted'; 'things do work here'. Helsinki has rightly been praised a lot, but the reformers say the administration is in essence 'still from the 19th century'. A strong history of doing things gradually defines the ethos and 'it is typically old fashioned as a process'. It is not a problem of the framework - it is a culture of following rules and not challenging them - 'people obey and officials hold the rules'. The paradox of the system is its combination of a strong structure and rigidity with an equal emphasis on accessibility.

There is a dead weight within the system and this counteracts the energy and ideas of some visionary thinkers in the administration and elsewhere and civil servants, who have been there for a long time, have had their enthusiasm for the new blunted. The job security tends to reduce the level of ambition so people do not see the bigger picture problems. 'The public sector sucks you in and draws out your energy'. The consequence is that there is a fear to take a clear stand, it remains the exception to go your own way, there is less proactive and less forward looking work than there could be, although this

is changing positively. For example, the attempt to boulevard some of the wide soulless roads leading into the city is forward looking. In general, though, it is easier to do nothing rather than something as this would require extra energy and there are no incentives to take risks. In addition the administration sees a need to be even handed and to avoid conflict and this has implications for strategy.

For this reason often important issues fall between the cracks as the silo tends to dominate. These issues usually require cross-sector working, such as complex poverty problems, creating an integrated vision for the city or addressing Helsinki's image in the outside world.

Yet now there is tension developing between the old structure and an attempt to create a new one and there are few role models to follow. The creativity and empowerment agenda seek to unleash forces and work with the participatory instinct of citizens, whereas the administration can act like a monopoly. In essence it is the difference between a controlling or an enabling and facilitating administration or put another way a fostering or formalizing approach.

Crucially the reformers stress how the privileges of being in the system block the potential of others who are mostly outsiders. This makes the process of co-creating policy difficult, even though this is an important global trend. In fact the need to pursue the creativity idea is embedded in the thinking of the administration, but it is an uphill struggle to implement innovations in spite of the willingness. Sympathetic officials say 'I do not have power, it is not in my own hands.'

Yet there are significant exceptions, such as the youth department creating an element of participatory budgeting. The central issue is that it is difficult to renew the system from within. In good financial times it was easier 'to make everyone happier'. Now 'reality has kicked in and this can lead to polarization' and keeping things as they are rather than using the crisis as the opportunity for change.

The challenge people see in transformation is 'not to throw the baby out with the bathwater' and thus not to eliminate its good features of trust and reliability. The aim should be 'to keep the best and to reinvent the rest'. Indeed people are starting to bend the rules by focusing on the spirit of the law rather than letter of the law; they are focusing more on an attitude of 'yes if' rather than 'no, because'. This is necessary in order to accommodate activity, such as Restaurant Day, where the system needs to bend towards flexibility.

The administration has a reputation it does not deserve say the sceptics, who argue that the administration needs to transform itself from a silo focused organization into a learning system, where it asks questions of itself and becomes adaptive. The system is 'creaking at the edges' in attempting to deal with the new conditions and here the social media have played a crucial role. They highlight that other Finnish cities are doing better in terms of administrative change such as Tampere or Rovaniemi who have focused on shifting the culture of their organizations and brought in new management skills. Helsinki as the key Finnish city is seen as somewhat arrogant where being the head of a department carries real social weight and status within the country.

Many department heads have recently changed and these key new appointments have sent out an important message that a new social media savvy generation is taking charge and things are beginning to happen rapidly.

They appreciate that there are times to make things rational to avoid an emotional response. This newer generation understands urbanism perhaps better – how cities work and the qualities that make compelling cities.

They understand that in the private sector ‘they would be fired if they persisted in a siloed approach’. They know that to make an organization work the discretionary effort (the extra time you willingly give to the organization) must be fostered through a corporate culture that supports collaboration. Furthermore the need to look at itself from a citizen or customer perspective in order to be adaptive is clear to them in order to create a friendly experience.

This is the new world of open source innovation and co-creation and the critics say that Helsinki remains partly ‘trapped by the institutes of modernity’, with their focus on departmentalism representing a mid-20th century approach and that there is not enough political will to shift. This is most notable with the culture institutions. In the world of networks the system operates differently with resources used differently, but these resources are now fixed elsewhere and with pressure on budgets it is hard to move them. Some politicians are addressing the problem (and one received a democracy award for twittering and creating links between city and citizens) and are now setting joint targets to break down silos. One said: ‘I am saving the citizen from the bureaucracy’. Many indeed say that politicians are ahead of the public and that ‘they are moving too fast’, which has in part created space for expressions of populist themes.

The key messages are that the social media have made a dramatic difference and have reached a new critical mass. This has helped the opening out process. There is a bubbling up as witnessed by our group sessions with activists from ‘guerrilla gardening’ to those noted in the book ‘Helsinki Beyond Dreams’ (www.helsinkibeyonddreams.com) The most emblematic and catalytic event has been Ravintolapäivä (Restaurant Day). Restaurant Day ‘unleashed a beast’ as ‘an act of citizen misbehaviour’ and encapsulates the changes taking place. The bureaucracy was first shocked, then confused and then in a significant ‘act of letting go’ they trusted people’s common sense. This led to other ‘tactical urbanism’ initiatives such as Cleaning Day, carrot mobs or flash mobs. In essence a movement has been unleashed concerned with people doing things together on a city scale. ‘We took permission and people were surprised.’

The main difficulty is whether it is changing the system or just acting as ‘bread and circuses’ for the masses whilst the mainstream system remains the same. There are some examples that show systemic change, such as the participatory budgeting noted above or the operational models of Suvilahti and the Cable Factory, which are good examples of trying to be flexible or implementing the city’s food strategy.



Flow Festival in Suvilahti. Photo: Timo Cantell.

These processes have been bursting to come out and it took time in its unfolding – perhaps from 2000 onwards – and is now difficult to stop. Indeed the politicians and public sector now use these activities for their branding purposes.

What is clear is that the Helsinki innovation system cannot develop unless the public sector, which is so powerful develops too. Here misaligned planning horizons make this difficult. The mayor has a 7 year term, the council a 4 year term, officials are on long term contracts and the private sector requires a clear framework with in-built flexibility to respond.

This drive towards increasing adaptiveness requires an ethical framework and core values, which Helsinki has, such as its focus on equality and the mode of operation that combines being ‘strategically principled and tactically flexible.’

Helsinki with [61%] and Ghent with [60.8%] far outstrip the other cities in this domain.

Survey, interview & workshop comments

'I trust the public administration and they tend to listen to people more and more, but the administration is quite slow to change their perceptions and ways of planning and working.'

'There is still little or no corruption, but the media is active in criticizing the politicians and the public officials. The amount of criticism, unfortunately, also means that there is little risk taking or open-mindedness for new ideas and radical experimenting.'

'Once you become a permanent city / state official, you basically have a job for life. This tends to attract the wrong people. Hence there is little incentive to strive for the utmost quality in one's everyday work. I know this since I have worked for both the local and national government for many years.'

'The public sector jobs are mainly wanted for their job security and not because people wish to do great things for the general public.'

'Working in the public sector can reduce the level of ambition and will to innovate in the society.'

'The political and public sector system strives for risk-minimizing and keeping things mostly as they have always been.'

'I think the public sector performance and development is somewhat a taboo in Finland.'

'Not only the lavish employment security benefits but also the amount of officials, and what they actually do in their daily work, are topics we need to discuss at some point, but the point is yet to come.'

'Active public administration and the citizens more and more seek each other and participate, but the political sphere is drifting apart and politicians are less accepted as partners in grass-roots community development processes.'

'There is a strong history of doing things gradually ...in reality the administration is trying to be streamlined, but has the wrong model...perhaps...'

'How much local government is open for involving private sector, or citizens, or internally supports horizontal cooperation, is different in Helsinki compared with other metropolitan municipalities.'

'...Helsinki is most hierarchical. This ability is also different between city departments. There is a long tradition of independent city departments (with their own political committees) creating their own cultures, habits of governance.'

'Foreigners have to speak Finnish well before they can get occupation on public sector workforce. The foreigners have to adapt the Finnish working culture.'

Strategic leadership, agility & vision

The central dilemma for Helsinki today is that for over 20 years it has been cited as an example of best practice in terms of making the most out of its opportunities, in being strategically adept and in thinking long term. It identified early on the main drivers of city development from intense globalization, to new forms of urban competitiveness, such as the talent agenda or even the implications of increased diversity. In this process it initially had models and approaches to follow. At first it was catching up, then it was a leader and now it is out on its own in territory it has to explore by itself.

In the period around 2000 Helsinki seemed it 'could be the best city in the world', but began to miss some opportunities as it lacked confidence or knowledge of what it could do. Inevitably forging a lonely path involves hard decisions and taking a clear stand and here its culture of consensus can cause a problem. People say Copenhagen and Stockholm have now been better at navigating the world stage.

Helsinki has historically dared to think big especially in spatial planning terms such as its approach to the bigger region including St. Petersburg and Estonia or initiatives like Rail Baltica.

Several commentators, however, say the strategic thinking still comes from a 1970's mode of thinking that is very logical, over-rational and as technically advanced as can be and somewhat topic and sector based rather than focusing on the deeper underlying trends and future urban battlegrounds. Some even say the words used are old fashioned and that there is a need to reinvent strategy making as compelling story telling where the strategic directions and vision elements are framed within a narrative of rethinking how a city works.

This would address the problem of people saying the city has 'no clear strategy, many visions and no leadership.' Comments like these are easy to say. In fact the City of Helsinki has a clear strategy making process and strategy that is well expressed – see <http://www.hel.fi/www/Helsinki/en/administration/strategy/strategy/>.

Is it the best it could be? There are good examples of strategy in action, such as the food focus, the international student city project, the bold physical planning projects to develop Jätkäsaari, the wider Suvilahti area and new urban estates.

Yet as with most urban strategy processes it is not immediately apparent how the vision and strategy was put together. Was it only the strategy division, was it all other public sector departments, were private and community interests involved in shaping the strategy? Were maverick and unusual perspectives incorporated? How will goals be achieved? Who will be involved and how? What partners will participate? Embedded in the strategy is the notion of being innovative, but 'it is not enough just to say we want to be innovative.....without us being innovative ourselves'

The role of strategy is to deal with the biggest context, its major faultlines, its battlegrounds, strategic dilemmas, such as balancing global and local priorities and its opportunities. This is unlikely to be addressed at its best from only a public sector driven perspective.

Of course there also strategies by some of the major companies and other institutions, but they rarely if ever address the future of the city as a whole.

In the past Helsinki was building its welfare state and the foundation was education and then leaving this thinking to the public interests made more sense. There were clear targets and these could be quantified. Now Helsinki is trying to create an eco-friendly city capable of retaining and attracting high talent of all kinds. The first had one logic to it and the latter has a different logic.

To understand this well requires a collective thinking brain for the city that operates in new ways to create and tell a story of where is Helsinki is, where it could be going and how to get there. This should really integrate different perspectives and ways of thinking and that can both re-imagine what is possible through blue sky thinking as well as to address and make recommendations on dilemmas such as:

- Assessing within the global landscape the deeper drivers and describing viscerally and even emotionally how these might affect Helsinki in day to day terms.
- Using the strategic planning process to highlight and foster innovations and to spell out what they could do and how these might be achieved.
- Seeing strategy differently, for instance through the imperatives of creativity or design thinking, which should be seen as competences and not as sectors. This would open out a rich field of possibilities for Helsinki and involve many outside partners in the city and elsewhere. It would reveal new areas for the economy, although this is often unpredictable, such as the rise of games. For instance Helsinki is interested in 'sustainable lifestyles'. Can this interest be turned into sellable products and services?
- Spelling out the implications of the forces pulling in different directions about how you run the city – a more traditional top down model or an open source driven and enabling approach based on co-creation of policies, programmes and service.
- Showing how the city can orchestrate both the need for systemic changes that combine some ground breaking initiatives and others that are incremental but important, such as Helsinki Region Infoshare. 'Isn't it old fashioned to think only about the big things, let's concentrate also on the small – the nudge approach to life.'
- Describing the shifts in approach required to make the most of Helsinki's potential where crossovers, collaboration and interdisciplinary work become the new common sense. Indeed are the Helsinki strategists assessing the strategic capacity of the city itself? Is Helsinki's strategic knowledge up to date? Whose role is this rethinking? The strategy division? City of Helsinki Urban Facts? A new multi-partner task force? Is the city using the best of its brains?

- Addressing a shifting demographics with more elderly and where health or social services could eat up 100% of the city budget. Hence the need to radically rethink most services such as health care and social services. In addition to assess how a bureaucracy operates and its services can be delivered or how the cultures of the public and private sector can develop on a new basis of mutual respect.
- The cultural institutions 'on the list' are the last bastion with privileges that many believe are unfair and unproductive. Many argue too that they eat up so much budget that they are weakening the overall cultural vibrancy of the city and its innovative capacity. In 5-10 years time their budgetary dominance is likely to be challenged. Is it possible to think ahead now?
- How to address the conflict between the dominant real estate driven approach to city development versus one based more on legitimating new methods of calculating value. Crucially then inserting these into decision making unless Helsinki wants to see a level of gentrification where the centre becomes too expensive for 95% of the population. Can the strategists find ways of curtailing the dominance of economic evaluations, which always find a way controlling how decisions are made?

There is little public evidence that these kind of issues are a top strategic priority, when they in fact set the context for the city to work well.

There may be a fear to address these questions and as with the Guggenheim discussions, the difficulty of making big decisions, since consensus is an over-riding concern. Clearly the Guggenheim issue and the others are not easy decisions, but urban development inevitably throws up stark choices with significant implications. And this is why planning is changing towards a discipline concerned with mediation and conflict resolution.

To take an instance, Helsinki over the years followed in cultural terms a relatively conventional approach to institution building and whilst Kiasma and the Music Centre are praiseworthy bold initiatives Helsinki has missed opportunities. 15 years ago and more Helsinki was well ahead of the game globally in the emerging new media field with initiatives such as MUU (www.muufi.fi). Their activities at the time seemed obscure, but with courage Helsinki could have anchored its position as a world leader had it set up an equivalent to ZKM in Karlsruhe or Ars Electronica in Linz. The latter has combined well an artistic programme with solid research the results of which are spilling into the mainstream and helping to create new products and services. Instead the traditional cultural institutions monopolized budgets.

Three examples are highlighted that point the way to the future: food, senior care provision and youth service budgeting.



Restaurant Day in August 2012. Photo: Timo Santala/Visit Helsinki.

Food essentially became the catalyst to change Helsinki and open it out through Restaurant Day and associated activities. It hit a wave and caught on like wildfire. The surprise for many was the Finnish Food Safety Authority's response to these developments, which in effect said: 'please wash your hands and have fun' with an unwritten rule that you do not mess with alcohol. Food culture is a relatively new domain for urban strategy and it has been looked at comprehensively in Helsinki. Starting several years ago it is an example of integrated planning especially around the Abattoir area which keeps heritage, maintains a wholesale function normally pushed to the edge of a city and merges with the new interest around food. The focus on 'food miles' awareness, bringing the rural into the urban, focusing on local produce, avoiding the food chains, helping entrepreneurship such as the flavour studio and new restaurants and linking everything to education is far-sighted and helps change the image of Helsinki tying it into the new Nordic cuisine. The strategy caught the food bubble well, exemplified by Restaurant Day. It brought different elements together including: R&D, social innovation, traditional and new industry and networking by linking into the Delice culinary cities movement. It ties in well with the spirit of the times such as guerrilla gardening, the eco-agenda and the challenge to oligopoly food chains. Crucially it pre-figures how strategy might be implemented in various areas in the future. The food leaders were the intermediary and connector between new ideas and the bureaucracy, such as building control, licensing

and the hygiene department. It understood the complexity and has fostered a mixed use environment in the Abattoir area.

The World Design Capital triggered a series of catalytic initiatives in order to embed design thinking into everyday life and the economy. The Lauttasaari 'design led solutions for active ageing project' is one example. The goal was to offer clients a more flexible service provision than is currently the case. With the new kind of service planning and budgeting, the elderly were able to organise their own support and services and create their own personal care budget and lead the kind of lives that they want to live. The senior citizens have choices and responsibility and in fact want less, and so overall demand is less endless than assumed. They used the same money differently and spent less. Since 70% of the department's budget is spent on staff this will cause ructions. sIndeed left of centre parties say it is privatization rather than empowerment. Yet the seniors on the ground understood the economics and had greater awareness.

Crucially in this approach you learn from users and as needs evolve it demands that silos are broken down as sports, libraries, transport and so on are involved. It proved difficult to get the thinking through to the mainstream as the service design model is very different from an expert driven health care model. That model derives its ethos from acute care where the emergency is the norm and it is thus very hierarchical. It is also different form the culture of social services, which to some recipients of care can appear to be disempowering.

The original youth plan in its time was a model in Europe as it defined and integrated the issue as a cross-cutting concern. The youth department has now gone some steps further and of special interest is willingness to develop participatory budgeting. This achieves many things simultaneously, always the sign of a creative approach. It fosters commitment to the aims and ultimate results, it helps develop responsibility and thus encourages personal growth and it provides a learning opportunity to understand the city and its dilemmas better.

Vision can be re-conceived and Helsinki can do more in this field by instigating some symbolic actions. There could be a focus beyond the city centre. Kallio in the inner ring is already on its own developing into a hub with interesting initiatives that foster identity, belonging and a sense of verve such as the Made in Kallio idea. But it would be important to send a bigger signal that suburbs matter. An example was the National Theatre of Scotland's decision to base itself for several years in the deprived area of Glasgow Easterhouse where it still has a presence. Or António Costa the mayor of Lisbon's decision to move the mayoral office from its former, palatial, City Hall to a site in Mouraria, a run-down and neglected neighbourhood plagued by unemployment and drug dealing. Using a mix of European funding, participatory budgeting and direct grants the mayor then piloted a series of 'interventions'. A criterion for funding was that applications had to come from coalitions of different groups.

Finally, one aspect of strategy is agility and here the planning processes and horizons cause a problem. For instance, a new idea needs a draft to be submitted by May 2014 for discussion in August 2014 and for agreement November 2014 and this may then be implemented say in October 2015. From idea conception to making it happen could then take two years by which time the moment may have passed. This calls for the need for working out a mechanism where a part of any budgets remains free and unallocated in order to respond to strategic opportunities that may emerge surprisingly.

These different planning horizons also cause problems with entrepreneurs who often need to be able to respond flexibly within a framework.

Helsinki with [65.5%] is in second position well behind Bilbao [77.5%] and similar to San Sebastian with [65%].

Survey, interview & workshop comments

I have no idea what the vision is for Helsinki. It needs a local and global perspective – the elements are there somewhere.'

'Strategic thinking exists everywhere, but we miss public and lively discussion.'

'Ground breaking initiatives are happening, such as the structural changes within the metropolitan area: to combine the metropolitan cities together under strategic leadership and mutual vision.'

'No common structures to lead innovations into departments and to create shared processes.'

'Strategy is there but not visible and communicated in a good way of what Helsinki could become.'

Professionalism & effectiveness

Helsinki is good at project managing the complicated, but less so in dealing with the complex. Building an energy plant or motorway system is complicated. It has an enormous number of detailed steps that have to be taken into account from engineering to measuring. There is lots of room for error. But you know how to do it if you stick to the plan and execute with diligence. It is essentially mechanical and Helsinki is good at that. It fits the mindset and cultural background with a preference for the straight forward. Bringing up a child, by contrast, is complex. The distinction between complicated and complex is crucial. In a world of predictable outcomes doing the complicated well is

an enviable asset. In a world of uncertainty, emergent evolution, fast prototyping and open source development we learn and adapt from day-to-day experience and things co-evolve in relationship to one another. The logical grid model works less well with innovation or pressures or processes where you do not know the end result as the rules based system puts you on a leash.

Finns and Helsinkians are extremely professional once the goals are decided. There is an engineer like professionalism. Listening, adjusting and flexibility are less of a strong point. The high level of proficiency is taken for granted and people complain about things that other cities would regard as exceptionally well done.

A crucial point made was that being professional does not necessarily mean being effective because someone might be doing the wrong thing. Here people linked execution to what the strategy goal is and how a project might be implemented. Once that distinction was made the praise is more muted.

The dilemma here is that Helsinki's highly professional culture can miss out on the subtleties especially when people are out of their comfort zone.

In addressing a world where urban culture and the emotional experience of the city is more important 'there is now an execution problem' and things are seen as less efficient. 'The more we go to culture the worse it gets.'

Yet project management and executing projects can itself be a formidable inventive space where with the right mindset and approach creativity can flourish when appropriate.

Again Helsinki with [74.5%] comes second to Bilbao [77.5%] with Ghent [69.5%] and San Sebastian [69.5%] following.

Survey, interview & workshop comments

'You can trust a Finn indeed

'You can trust people to deliver as they do what they say they will and they will know what to do.'

'We get rid of tons of snow, people complain if the buses are 5 minutes late.....in other cities there might be chaos'.

'We take it for granted that things work well.'

SECTION 3: EXPLOITING & HARNESSING CREATIVITY

Introduction

This third section focuses on the findings and discussions relating to Exploiting & Harnessing Creativity and the relevant domains of:

Communication, connectivity, networking & media

- a creative place is well connected internally and externally, physically and virtually
- it is easy to get around and ghettos are rare. Social mobility is more possible; diverse cultures connect
- there are high quality public transport systems
- it has a sophisticated IT and communications infrastructure
- the population travels at home and abroad taking advantage of the excellent rail and air services which also make a gateway for receiving outsiders
- speaking foreign languages is commonplace
- business to business and cross-sectoral links work well, there are clusters, hubs, focal points and knowledge exchanges
- the place is outward looking and makes contact at all levels abroad, creating joint ventures, research projects, product development and civic partnerships

Entrepreneurship, exploration & innovation

This place is one where entrepreneurs feel very much at home, where an idea can become reality quite quickly:

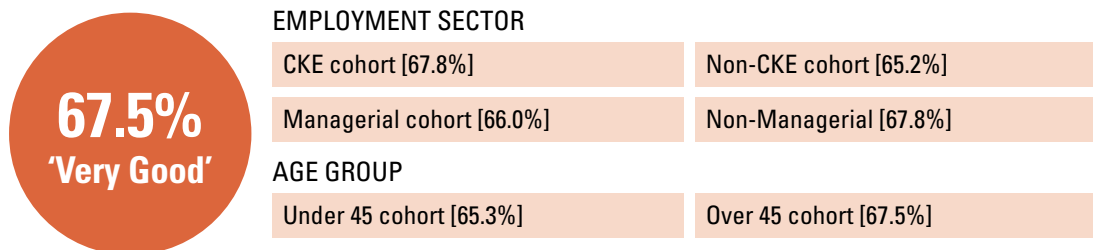
- a place where you can make mistakes without being too severely judged
- there are extensive support systems from advice to access to funding and risk capital. Clusters, where appropriate, are encouraged to help force-feed innovation and generate critical mass

- rewards, prizes and other recognition systems celebrate achievement and thus there is a higher than average level of innovation and R&D
- universities are keen to turn their insights and research ideas into useful products and services
- the open innovation ethos based on sharing and connecting small enterprises and large corporates is well developed
- the creative industries play a significant role and there is a reputation for design-led distinctive products and services
- going green is seen as a catalyst to create innumerable innovations

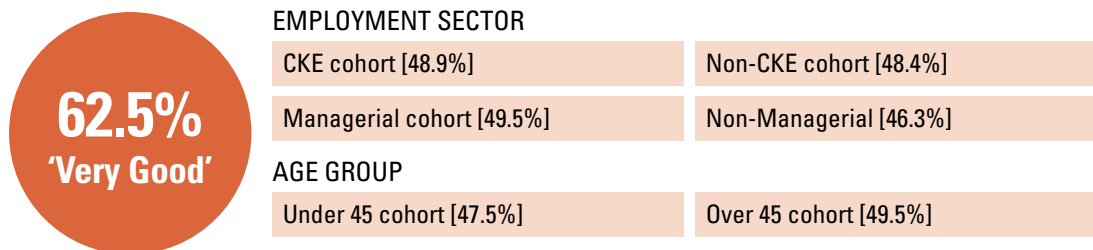
Domain scoring

Overall scores for both the sessions and the surveys are provided below:

Communication, connectivity, networking & media



Entrepreneurship, exploration & innovation



Relevant indicator scores

Indicator	Helsinki	Adelaide	Ghent
Business Friendly	43.5%	31.2%	45.1%
Innovation	42.5%	48.2%	45.4%
Networking	59.2%	60.9%	58.9%
Communications	83.5%	52.4%	69.2%

Note: Creative Knowledge Economy workers are abbreviated as [CKE].

Consulting team comments

Communication, connectivity, networking & media

Helsinki knows its baseline technological connectivity is excellent. It is a tech savvy place and has a raft of ever improving tools to reduce perceived distance and increase immediacy and the social media are playing an ever important role in opening out the city and getting more voices heard. There is a sense of easiness and seamless connectivity witnessed in the small details and the large. You know when buses arrive, there is nearly ubiquitous wifi, a few clicks will tell you what you want to know.

Physical transport is straightforward and extensive from buses to rail and airport links are more extensive than one would think especially to China and the Far East and all the hubs in Europe are connected with new links to places like Miami coming on stream. Helsinki has persuaded the world that it is a gateway into Europe.

These attributes cannot, of course, reduce physical distance. Helsinki is often perceived to be further away than it really is, since the perception of coldness and snow pushes places further out in the mind. Helsinki is not a geographic turntable or hub, but has created a counter point by generating a sense of IT centrality and ‘where it’s happening’ in the IT world, thus it feels more accessible. Add the fact that Finns travel more widely than many and that all middle class Finns speak English and often another language too, the Finnish presence is felt more strongly. This is how Helsinki foreshortens distance. However, by contrast, when the tourists come to Helsinki largely in the summer the residents go – thus there is no natural meeting point.

Helsinki’s perception in the outside world has a combination of hype and reality and the stereotype. Clearly Helsinki punches above its expected weight, but is it really the start-up capital of Europe? The feeling of being best in the world, some say, has made Helsinki complacent. It became content too early, ‘believing its own hype and then politicians felt there was nothing to do’.

Yet the hype helps Helsinki given we live in a shouting world and the Finnish default position is to feel less comfortable with marketing. With the problem of information overload Helsinki needs to be clever to get through the noise and clutter. Thus conventional approaches like ‘Helsinki is the most business friendly city’ will not get through the sound barrier. The approach needs to be more complex involving a combination of its accessibility and counter-intuitively, its ability to allow you to fulfil your potential and dreams, that in the city there are choices for you and a sense that you will feel you belong. Easy to say, but difficult to make convincing. In short the ‘fun and functional’ needs an extra dimension. Slush’s 2013 slogan ‘Welcome the dark, embrace the cold’ is more like the direction. It is direct, unapologetic and confident.

Helsinki is both large and small. Person to person connections are easier in a pocket sized metropolis. It is easier to talk to someone and influence them.

But cultural attributes come strongly into play such as a tendency to be inward-looking and not to find networking an easy task. This reinforces the critical mass problem and here the work of Granovetter is important. His book *The Strength of Weak Ties* (1973) argues that weak ties are often better than stronger ties in gathering information, garnering resources or generating innovations. This is because by being involved in many diverse circuits unusual insights and potential can be explored. This is why it is so important for people in Helsinki to connect and to find ways of bringing in new ideas and challenges. Here being in essence a ‘one paper city’ can cause a problem by reducing the ideas flow and culture of debate.



‘Sauri the twitter politician’.

The communications from officials to citizens is criticized and this is usually the case in this type of survey. This implies that classic communications from print to the internet may need reviewing and different mechanisms could be explored from the approach of ‘Sauri the twitter politician’ to giving theatre producers the task of communicating the city’s intent. It shows the significance of taking communications seriously as a conscious and continuous activity rather than something that occurs at the end of a process.

Helsinki is collegiate rather than collaborative, friendly rather than willing to explore things together. Collaboration worked well even though difficulties were substantial in the major events of 2000 European Capital of Culture and WDC in 2012. There was a joint target and an obvious win-win situation. Yet there remains a continuous problem in collaborating across the region since Helsinki will always remain the key brand and the other partners will always feel they will be subsumed. Thus two agendas are bumping into each other – the global and local perspective. The government will continue to push cities and communities to merge together voluntarily or by government force, a process that is happening across the globe. This discussion is occurring across the nine municipalities in the Helsinki region. Helsinki supports this while Espoo resists.

It will be interesting to see if there is a third way of collaborating whilst maintaining a level of independence.

The spirit of collaboration does not come naturally to a culture comfortable with silos, and that applies to the private sector too, which is why the new ethos of events like Slush or the first Friday meetings of the gaming sector are important signals of doing things differently.

Whatever the outcome, partnership thinking is the trajectory of the future, if places are ambitious. It is clear that more complex projects with a wider scope are difficult to handle in isolation given the mix of skills required to make them happen. Helsinki scores highest on this domain [67.5] followed by a cluster of smaller cities Ghent [65%], Palmerston in New Zealand [66.5%], Coimbra in Portugal [65%] and Seville [64.5%]. These are all smaller, which makes Helsinki's score better.

Survey, interview & workshop comments

'Never had a sense that I could not talk to someone.'

'You live in an apartment building like in a forestthe ideal situation you can't hear, you can't see and you don't talk.'

'Finns do not look forward to meeting new people.'

'There is lots of communications and connections but not good at networking.'

'People are not communicative for fun, they have to have some reason to communicate. People communicate when they find it useful.'

'Everything is 1 or 2 degrees of separation.'

'Lots of improvements - benefits of collaboration seeping through - but is it quick enough.'

'Baana bicycle route and new policy to promote cycling is good, as is the lively discussion on external accessibility and the vision of rail tunnel to Tallinn.'

'In general level of connectivity is pretty good internally, but external connections are limited. We are far from central locations, with the exception of flights to Asia.'

'Helsinki is really a pocket sized metropolis you feel well-connected even though we are far away.'

'An innovation culture has to be learnt by doing and communicating well.'

'The mediapeople tend to think that Helsingin Sanomat version of events is true.'

Entrepreneurship, exploration & innovation

There has been a noticeable shift in relation to entrepreneurship in Helsinki, it is even cool to be young entrepreneur and much more acceptable. The fact that Aalto Entrepreneurship Society has 7,000 members is a measure of the shift. It is in the start-up arena that the older thinking is beginning to clash with the new. Often these activities are supported in co-working spaces and incubators where sharing and ideas exchange are more common practice. This new wave of talent building has a new dynamic based less on 'the expert knows' perspective where fast prototyping and failing quickly, if you are going to fail, is more the norm and where communications are speedier. Clearly even here deeper cultural issues can come into play such as a tendency to be somewhat closed. Given Finland's size Helsinki needs to make the most of what it has and with a smaller resource pool greater sharing is one answer. Yet many of the inventions being made from apps to games are immediately global and in addition in a greater open source based world many geographic boundaries are broken allowing companies to tap into a global talent base.

One concern is the issue of hype, which can have both damaging and positive effects. Positive in that it can create opportunity and a spirit of 'can do'. Damaging in that it can create a frenzy like in a stock market leading to a boom and bust situation. There is then not enough time to mature ideas and to get a solid base as in the end developing innovations is still based on the cliché of '10% inspiration and 90% hard work'. There are few short cuts. And the infrastructure needs to be there. However, this infrastructure is different from what was required in the more hardware driven economy. The more fragmentary, yet networked, nature of some innovation processes requires less centralized institutions and more enabling devices or platforms.

This means that the 'new Nokia', if there ever is one, will not be like the old. 'Nokia was like the Vatican', 'it hoovered things up', sucking up available talent from everywhere. Thus some say psychologically the Nokia sale had a hold on Helsinki, but 'now it is gone there is a sense of liberation' remembering too that Nokia is still large with its focus on areas like IT security. Nokia difficulties were a blessing in disguise as 'they monopolized the best skills and did not leave much room for new growth'. They occupied space – mentally, financially and in the imagination. Nokia's strength highlights the flipside of doing well – complacency and thus many say the Nokia shock was good. In that more solid, predictable Nokia past the demand was for more educated but less entrepreneurial people. Now the emphasis has shifted and a different skill set is required to cope with a more entrepreneurial society where communication, marketing and social skills have a greater currency. And here Helsinki can ask itself whether there is a cultural fit.

Instead it is better to see Nokia now as a kind of learning platform. The Nokia eco-system had many virtues including that 'people learnt to make products and to fix technical problems', it helped too in creating a diversity of companies in the supply chain and elsewhere that has kept Helsinki going.



Kone is one of Finland's most successful companies. Escalators at Blue Bay Shopping Center.
Photo: Copyright © KONE Corporation.

In addition the vast back-up systems to operate on a global scale from legal skills, such as licensing to marketing or global research are now of benefit to many of the successful start-ups like Rovio or Supercell where many ex-Nokians are working.

The 'next Nokia' is likely to be a set of companies rather than a massive hulk. Yet we must remember the role of large corporations like Kone, now one of Finland's most successful companies. However, the range of new activities might use the Helsinki IT platform in unexpected ways ranging from products and services in sustainable living, new forms of education, health tourism, clean tech or migrating gaming more rapidly into serious gaming as a problem solving device, where the applications are potentially vast. Currently gaming is entertainment driven given its vast audience as there is not yet enough money to be made in new areas – but that will change. New areas of rethinking will emerge as who would have predicted the rise of gaming and new competences such as design thinking are likely to play an important role here and this might be to re-conceive – even what a lift is.

In this process institutions like libraries will change. They will be less about books and more about helping people to learn and new connections and collaborations with private companies will emerge. This will ultimately challenge the mainstream cultural institutions too, who are sceptical about the link between culture and commerce, unless it is on their own terms.



Slush conference at Cable Factory in 2013. Photo: Tuomo Lampinen.

And the spirit and ethos of these new times is different and will need to shift the Helsinki culture where overt failing was a bit of a problem. Yet we should remember that in the labs and engineering companies that created the past, well-known Finnish products, trial and error mechanisms were part of everyday life. Yet they were seen somehow as separate from the individual and more as part of an internalized, hidden, private technical process.

Yet other aspects of the Finnish culture deriving from the oft quoted engineering mindset, such as its hands on approach to inventing things or its problem solving capacities are positive and, aligned with changing attitudes to failure, can help create a new culture. Here initiatives like Slush where 1,200 companies and 7,000 people attended in 2013 are crucial.

This reminds us that younger entrepreneurs do not necessarily immediately need or want structured support, as in the past thinking about economic development, but more connections and opportunity platforms. So stereotypically we may characterize the older model of a creativity platform as the Culminatum style of running things. This was good at organizing seminars and exchanges, but it did not have a culture of active curating in order to create a vibrant environment. This is where organizations like Forum Virium, the Start Up weekend, the first Friday meetings to exchange ideas or the Slush conference are different. It highlights the importance of 'gathering events,' intermediary systems or exploration settings like at the Design Factory. The implication is that there should be a shift from funding institutions to intermediaries. It is more about fostering than formalizing and as someone noted 'the formal structure did not foster games so where did they come from'.

Some call this older approach the ‘Oulu model’ which is driven by transfers of technology with universities taking the lead role. Many realize this is not enough and that ‘the city itself is the product’ and how that works encourages or discourages the innovation system. This is why someone unkindly said: ‘We’re still celebrating our innovation policy when the party has moved to the next room’ or ‘Helsinki still uses the old metaphors in the new competition.’

The newer model has the well-known features. It is user centric, its system fosters crossovers, it develops mechanisms to harvest imagination, it encourages a more collaborative culture, it is more enabling, it uses devices like book camps, like the Think Company is doing, or maker markets, it creates buzz through awards and celebration of achievements. It implies a new funding model, as some say the older system ‘reinforces a narrowness’ of approach. One interviewee characterized the difference as: ‘The old system was a zero sum game – in the new one you try to create plus plus.’

The support infrastructure, however, is also credited. As an example, the TEKES applications system is ‘efficient, doable, easy and smart compared with the EU’ – this reminds how difficult doing things can be elsewhere. The issue is that TEKES was built for big things, whereas the current innovation landscape is about the small, the fragile, it is moving and when it scales it can be superfast (remember how Google moved to world domination in 3 years), when tipping points are reached it scales to the maximum. This is because of the nature of the medium which is networked and global and very efficient in creating solutions as they are close to the problems. Thus many start-ups were global from the beginning, such as Rovio or Supercell or the recent Blind Square, set up by an ex-Stockmann employee. And as these companies mature they may help plug the venture capital as noted by several people.

The scope for entrepreneurialism is far broader and includes social enterprise and social innovations. This is likely to be a growing field given the future challenges to public budgets and the need to rethink how services are to be delivered especially in health, education and social care and issues related to the environment. It fits the Finnish ethos. Whilst organizations like SITRA recognize its importance and there is a growth in the movement since 2010 there is more potential to be tapped.

It is important not to constrain the concept of innovation and entrepreneurship. To take an example – the police prevention unit’s approach to youth, families in need, and immigration is innovative and entrepreneurial in that it was seeking to solve a problem. Prevention is key to different thinking. What was once called community policing has been reframed. The difference in approach stresses that the police is not always right, it seeks to get across that the police can help you and that together, by listening to each other, we can solve issues and that we need to work closely with other departments to achieve this. This is very much how the new innovation system works. How the police addressed ‘the Kamppi incident’ (conflict between police and local youth at a shopping mall in 2013) is cited as an example of dealing with the dilemmas of the transitional age

of the young – not a kid not an adult. Here more a ‘for the youth by the youth’ approach was adopted. This contrasts sharply with how Finnish society normally works more based on the notion that ‘we can solve your problem’ as we are the experts.

This reminds us that the innovation system in Helsinki cannot develop unless the public sector, which is so powerful, develops too. Here examples of using the city as a test bed (Barcelona is an excellent model) such as Forum Virium is attempting with its new public procurement ideas are good.

So beyond the element of hype there is a groundswell happening and whether Helsinki is Europe’s start-up capital is irrelevant. It is nevertheless useful to learn from experiences like those of Tel Aviv and Israel (the ‘Start-Up Nation’). Especially Helsinki can learn how their culturally driven mindset has helped foster an inventive dynamic as well as how they created their strong global networks, which are often religion based.

Some pointers noted include that there are no common structures to lead innovations and get them also into public sector departments as shared, commonly accepted processes. This comment suggests that in spite of good efforts there could be a better overall strategy with more co-operation and less red tape. The consequences will be probably unexpected, but will open out new vistas.

Helsinki is second highest in this domain with [62.5%] after Bilbao with [65%].

Survey, interview & workshop comments

The start-up scene has developed fast in Helsinki, and we are now considered one of the hot-spots in this field globally. Especially gaming (mobile games) but also other industries have benefited from a new wave of serial entrepreneurs and start-up activists, backed by private venture capital funds and angel investors.

There is a lack of capital nation-wide, start-ups that can get foreign funding have the advantage.....competition in the domestic markets tends to lead to oligopoly quickly through mergers and buy outs in developing sectors, and this cuts the innovation edge.

The social security system does play an important role in facilitating the entrepreneurial attitude in the sense that people find it possible to follow their visions and ideas.

When you used to say I am starting my own company they ‘thought I was unemployed’

There is a real problem because of the lack of venture capital.

Now much more acceptableAt school I was discouraged – a huge new thing.

In past ‘said you are unemployed’ now cool to be entrepreneurial – no need to hide behind big brand.

There is a jealousy frontier, they will only tell you when they’ve finished’ but in prototyping culture.

SECTION 4: LIVING & EXPRESSING CREATIVITY

Introduction

This final section focuses on the findings and discussions relating to Living & Expressing Creativity and the relevant domains of:

Distinctiveness, diversity, vitality & expression

In a creative place, there is a clear identity and dynamism.

- citizens are self-confident, proud & open, inclusive & receptive to outsiders & outside influence as they feel at ease in their city
- the cultural offering is wide, the arts are dynamic & high quality as well as experimental & ground-breaking
- a design-aware environment in which the creative industries flourish, where the retailing experience is attractive and special
- expression & debate are encouraged

The place & placemaking

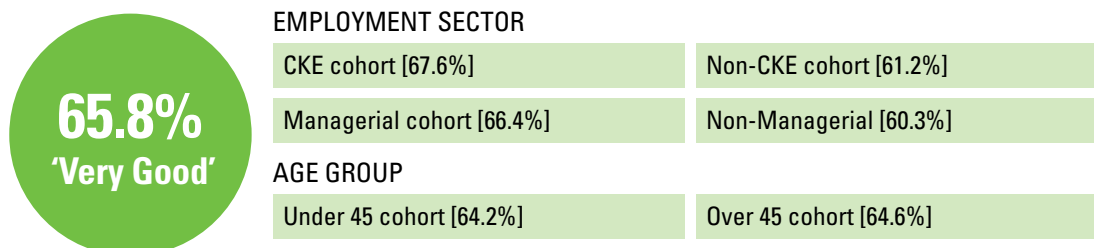
A creative place uses its collective skills, techniques & insights.

- its urban design teams orchestrate and weave its elements together collaborating with others who understand how the social, cultural and economic life of the city works as well as those who think artistically
- the built environment is human centric, sensitively conceived & implemented. Human interaction & activity is encouraged by this physical environment
- it acknowledges & respects & blends well with its natural environment, its surrounding landscape, & is aware regarding its ecological footprint
- the public realm acts as the connective tissue within which the buildings, forecourts & streets form a pattern or mosaic. The urban design knits the parts of the city together into a more seamless whole
- when you are there you want to be there but its reputation drew you there in the first place – it has a critical mass & a magnetism which enables it to compete well with other places which have similar mass & attraction

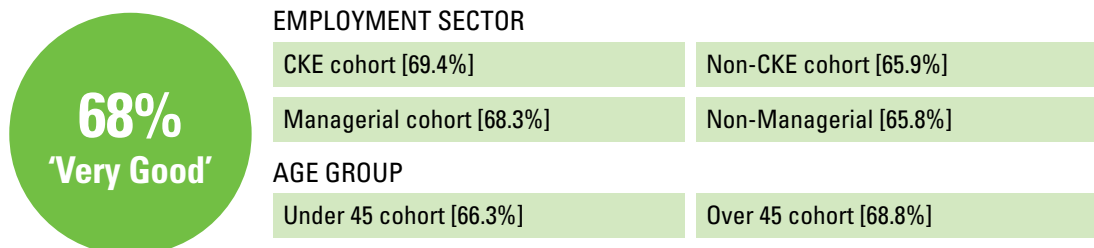
Domain scoring

The overall session and survey scores for this cluster of domains averaged at:

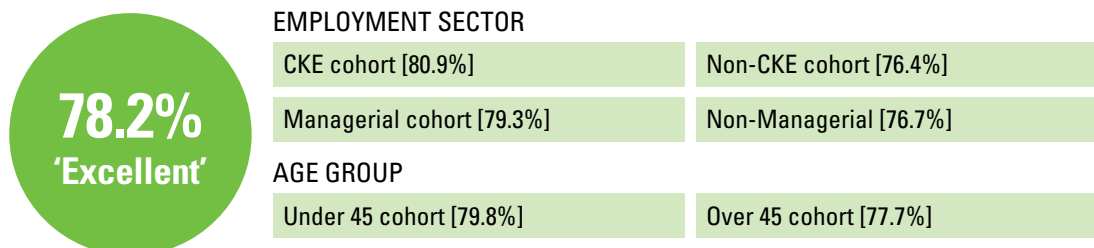
Distinctiveness, diversity, vitality & expression



The place & placemaking



Liveability & well-being



Relevant indicator scores

Indicator	Helsinki	Adelaide	Ghent
The place is interesting	60.2%	54.2%	77.3%
Design strengths	67.3%	60.5%	55.3%
Arts and culture	71.2%	64.2%	75.5%
Built environment	62.3%	51.9%	56.1%
Reputation	68.9%	58.2%	73.9%
Well-being	75.4%	79.1%	58.4%

Note: Creative Knowledge Economy workers are abbreviated as [CKE].

Consulting team comments

Distinctiveness, diversity & accessibility

This domain has a cluster of attributes that can pull in different directions, but it is precisely how they connect and work off each other that helps us understand how Helsinki can deal with the emerging complexity of living with the energies of diversity.

Every place is distinctive to itself and some more so than others and to those we must count Helsinki. That distinctiveness is a mix of the clichés about Finns and some things that astonish. To a globalizing world, with English as an increasingly dominant language, Finland and Helsinki are very distinctive. The language Finno Ugric to start with, complex and melodic, and that aside the quirky humour and one thinks here of the Leningrad Cowboys or Lordi, the love of tango and hard rock, the occasional wildness, the tech savviness, the ability to be silent, a certain live and let be attitude, the respect for learnedness are just some of the features that mark out the city.

When people talk of ‘their Helsinki’ in the survey they mention most predominantly the closeness to nature, the Jugendstil buildings and the defining products from Aalto chairs to Marimekko, Iittala, Artek (just sold to Vitra) and Moomin. Only a few add to that the high regard for modernism, especially in architecture, that many link to Finland’s nation building processes. Few if any mention the distinctive things most dislike



Leningrad Cowboys and Lordi represent Finnish quirky humour.
Photos: Dirk Behlau (left), Petri Haggrén (right).

such as legacy of the bland and soulless buildings from the 60's to 80's. Although some admit that 'Helsinki is a bit sterile', that 'the totality is rather bland', that 'it is not pluralistic'.

Being at the edge for so long, seemingly less known and now pushing itself to the centre through its tech driven developments is a further dimension of what makes Helsinki different if not unique. These are just some of the elements of Helsinki's distinctiveness. The challenge for the city is to be watchful of copying too much and emphasizing the 'brand experience'. Here some worry about sanitizing the city and making it too clean: 'They want a tidy city for tourists and tax payers – that is not very good'. Helsinki is increasingly well known enough to follow its sense of self with its grittiness and rough edges, rather than being self-effacing.

Normally the arts and cultural scene is highlighted in assessing distinctiveness and clearly Helsinki has a sophisticated alternative and mainstream cultural scene buttressed by an extensive arts education infrastructure. An irony of Helsinki's creative eco-system is the role of the established cultural institutions. Normally these would be seen as one of the drivers for change and invention. In Helsinki's case it is different. The 'culture institutions protect the core of our culture' and 'cultural life and art is traditionally about institutions and expensive walls.' 'In these difficult times they have suffered less than others and are safe under this government'. Their organizational structures are large and for many seen as unwieldy and self-referential and not attuned to the new dynamics of society evolving around them. Significantly the argument is made that they absorb resources that might be spent differently. There is 'no incentive for institutions to change – everyone knows the dilemmas', 'we know it is 1970's thinking50 years out of date,' 'the best way to get tax payers money is through swimming pools and opera houses'. How will these arguments pan out as the city evolves?

Helsinki's distinctiveness exuded a sense of self, a subdued and contained confidence and its positive characteristics were based on a Finland and Helsinki that was largely homogenous (the Sami people aside). Then that homogeneity bumps into a world of increasing diversity, difference and multiculturalism and all the stable elements on which trust and predictability were based are somewhat shaken. Whilst Helsinki is a city of incomers from rural areas and smaller cities they are still Finns. But the other diversity of foreigners is growing rapidly (only in comparison to the rest of Finland but not in relation to places like Canada). Thus a new framework for building trust between differences and shifting identities is needed and the True Finn phenomenon is a harbinger of the issues to address. Our Comedia report of 2010 'Helsinki an open & intercultural city' describes the issues and potential in great detail.

Most importantly it stresses looking at everything the city does through an intercultural lens. This is a way of judging how well Helsinki is doing. The question for many is less immigration per se, but what kind of immigration. The problem is less about the highly skilled, who may suffer some discrimination in terms of opportunities, but they

are seen as desirable and often essential. Supercell, for instance, has 26 nationalities in its staff of less than a 100.

The issue is always more for those with less skills, marginalized or suffering from poverty and whose ability to become more integrated is hampered by prejudice and lack of choice and here the inward looking pride of populist politicians causes a problem for those promoting the internationalization agenda. Interviewees noted; 'We are not used to foreigners nor have had time to get used to them - it takes 15-20 years and for the 2nd generation if given the opportunity to build prosperity.'

When we bundle distinctiveness with diversity the distinctiveness of a city changes and does the kind of vitality. The cliché is that Helsinki has vitality in prescribed periods, the 1st May as an instance, when everyone lets go. The expressiveness is contained yet explosive.

Yet a sea change is happening, a new confidence in self is emerging. The 'I love Helsinki' movement is expression of this new pride as are the protagonists in 'Helsinki Beyond Dreams'. 'I can be proud of what we have', 'we do not have to imitate, even though we lack a bit of inspiration'. Helsinki is going with the flow of the mood of the times given the new pride and confidence in things Finnish as well as the rural and natural. This love of the natural was seen often as traditional but now it is hip, thus you feel people are more relaxed in themselves.



The rise in neighbourhood identity and street identity is significant and noticeable. Käpylän kyläjuhlat 2012.
Photo: Käpylän kulttuuriyhdistys ry.



The rise in neighbourhood identity and street identity is significant and noticeable. Kallio was the driver with its projects like ‘Made in Kallio’ and this search for urbanity in more suburban areas is spreading to more places. Helsinki in some senses is learning to want an have an urban culture. This has been brewing for some time as people find delight in the city’s fine layered textures, its diversity of facilities, shopping and people, where they are strangers and one can communicate in third places in the public domain.

Helsinki with [65.8%] is in fifth place after Freiburg, well ahead with [77 %], Ghent with [74 %] San Sebastian with [68%] and Cardiff with [67%].

Survey, interview & workshop comments

‘Helsinki has found its identity as a bit peculiar and is now more confident.’

‘Finland is colourful even when it is black and white.’

‘Lots ambition but not enough expression.’

‘Things are going on but it’s not there yet.’

‘The cultural institutions are one of the last areas of old thinking.’

'Intolerance against immigrants is because we did not open boundaries soon enough'

'...we have not had enough time to get used to them; it takes 15-20 years to manage, it will be better when they build up prosperity in the 2nd generation.'

Place & placemaking

The opinions of place can be subjective. The Aalto building at the Market Square has been voted best and worst building in Helsinki, partly because it obscures the view to the Uspenski Cathedral. This sums up the dilemma of the subjective nature of taste.

First impressions of a city count as they are also our last impressions and Vantaa airport is generally a positive one that is aesthetically pleasing and easy to navigate. The journey into Helsinki is softened by the ring road's sculptural features, but then you do not see the city's best face. Halfway there the 60's to 80's housing and industrial buildings begin with their relentless blandness and then like soldiers on parade the cultural buildings are lined up.

Until recently the dominant view was that 'planning people think they know everything about cities' holding a view of cities essentially as physical constructs. Yet there is an important shift taking place from an urban development, hardware driven perspective dominated in part by the works and transport department to place making and understanding urbanity. The place making focus is by definition intrinsically interdisciplinary. Your primary question as a place maker is: 'What makes this space work in terms of the physical setting and how does it encourage conviviality and activity – and does it feel emotionally satisfying?' To make this happen requires varied insights. Many say Helsinki is 'learning to be urban' and a newer generation 'wants more than Malmi' and so initiatives like closing down a street in Kallio are emblematic of a new approach.

Helsinki knows its own city with access to nature at its heart and set against the layers from the grandiose Russia inspired statements to Jugendstil, to the brutalist period and even some harsh other environments to the pleasing new neighbourhoods emerging in Jätkäsaari, Kalasatama and even the upgrading plans for Central Pasila. The concrete brutalist movement that creates cities without soul has been overcome and initiatives such as boulevarding and making the main thoroughfares more human scale are a sign of things to come. Even 'the snow clearing people are changing' and thinking through how you avoid bland facades and in this context the heated streets were an important innovation.

Helsinki appears to like the big statements like Kiasma or the Music Centre, but also does the purely functional well giving the user a sense of being honoured. One thinks of the Saarinen railway station in the past or the Kamppi bus station more recently and there are some inspired interventions such as the Kamppi Chapel of Silence or the new university library, that given its accessibility to everyone is able to inspire a broader population.



Jugendstil houses at Huvilakatu.
Photo: Lotta Haglund.



Merihaka built in the 1970s and 1980s.
Photo: Lotta Haglund.

The new urbanity is as much about the small grain as well as the grand statements and contrast here the large cultural institutions lined up and Library No. 10. This is why it was important to keep the fabric of Lasipalatsi, and the plans for the Amos Anderson museum underneath its structure may make some of its more forlorn areas vibrant.

When Helsinki is viewed from a sensory perspective and its emotional and psychological impact there is a noticeable change over the last 20 years. There is an increased sense of urbanity with its focus on developing an urban culture, that in spite of the weather allows the public domain to spread seamlessly, such as Baana, and where going back to fostering mixed uses and understanding the nature of ‘third places’ neither home or the office is key.

Crucially getting the sense of urbanity in the suburbs and neighbourhoods is equally important, they also like coffee and having some incidental music. Everything does not need to happen in the core to make a more creatively interesting city. Indeed great cities have a variety of hubs that act as counterpoints. Perhaps the most important urban planning challenge is to try to avoid ghettos developing and finding ways of mixing the richer and poorer.

This involves a different conception of planning where those that understand the soft, activity based nature of place making are given equal status to those concerned with the hard. These might be people who understand the social, or the young and the old, the economic dynamics of places or how to create the conditions so people feel

they are shapers, makers and co-creators of their evolving environment. Different professional disciplines and perspectives have varied conceptions of place and space. It is only together and thinking in an integrated way that some of the wicked problems of place making can be addressed. A final point several interviewees said: 'there are so many rules, if you want to do something different ...the small things are not allowed only the big things'. Is this something to do with the fact that the planning department in Helsinki employs 300 and only 150 in the larger Stockholm?

Helsinki with (68%) is in third place with after San Sebastian [75%] and Bilbao at [82.5%].

Survey, interview & workshop comments

'The new housing developments across the city have created a new style that is much better than our 1980's heritage.'

'Interesting buildings are Kiasma, Music Centre, the Helsinki University Library, the plans of Guggenheim Helsinki...'

'I would miss the sea and the city with its cafes. I would also miss the good connections, nice scale of everything, bicycle road network and public transport that functions well.'

'I like the feeling of a tiny big city. Wooden house districts just a stone throw's away from the city centre. The cosiness and calmness of the cafes, libraries and even pubs mixed with the city buzz. Interesting cultural venues.'

Liveability & well-being

The statements: 'The services Helsinki provides are unbelievable' or 'things are not as good as you might think there are problems hidden on the horizon' provoke some thought. Most survey respondents say the general levels of liveability are good, indeed very good, and there is an expectation of a high level of facilities and services from hospitals, to recreation to employment rights with free education and health. 'It is when you go elsewhere that you realize what we have'

Yet there are emerging issues that threaten Helsinki's level of well-being and some of these are internationally common. For instance, as globalization moves apace with rapid speed capital cities and their central cores inevitably gentrify quickly as they are the attractor for commerce and the globally oriented nomads who buttress the system. This well-known process raises prices and begins to make the centre unaffordable unless countervailing measures are taken. The centre, of course, has the national facilities and so remains the hub, but is different than before.

The positive aspect is that new areas tend to come. This is why in a dynamic process off-centre sites like Kallio begin to take on a new identity as energetic, often younger, incomers typically with a professional background make the place their own as they have access to greater resources. This usually starts with someone setting up a meeting place like a café or restaurant and soon a different type of shop comes in so changing an area's flavour.

The dilemma for Helsinki is how in this process of the rise and fall of neighbourhoods it can avoid the great disparities – a new vibrancy in Kallio and, say, entrenched difficulties in Kontula.

The global policy landscape is about reducing taxes, letting the market do its work and breaking down some of the gains of the welfare state. This will not create balanced communities that avoid exacerbating the differences between rich and poor, it exacerbates the gap between social groups. There is indeed an underclass emerging, new to Helsinki, that feels defeated before they have begun. This is the flipside of Helsinki's liveability, where there is a poverty of possibility and a lack of cultural capital and connections so one is not able to network oneself upwards. When your networks are only those who are equally under-networked you end up trapped. The new hotels, the taxis, the fancy restaurants, the buzz in the city are inaccessible.

This can only be addressed when looked at comprehensively, especially the overarching issues youth or immigrants face. This is where a new focus on creativity and innovation should take hold, for instance in creating summer job opportunities for the young. If Helsinki wants future entrepreneurs these groups should not be neglected. Often solutions are simpler than one thinks, but it involves overcoming the silo approach to dealing with the difficult areas that most people responsible for them are not experiencing directly. Given that the basics work well in Helsinki, 'there not many things to complain about,' a strong view expressed is that: 'all this can be fixed' with the right attitude and a touch of imagination.

Helsinki with [78.3%] is in second place well behind Freiburg [91%].

Survey, interview & workshop comments

'This is a city that works, it's both fun and functional.'

'What I like most is that everything works well and is well taken care of.'

'The cleanness, the environment, public transport, all the things tend to work – even in wintertime.'

'Safety, organizedness, the cozyness due to the pretty small size, the cool, creative and lively culture scene.'

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW PERSPECTIVES

The missed opportunity perspective

A number of far-sighted interviewees took a different perspective in analysing Helsinki. They took it for granted that the city was doing well given its circumstances. Instead they considered what could have been achieved with the solid platform laid and the potential that provides. The scores for those who assessed Helsinki from the viewpoint of ‘what it could have achieved’ are (on a scale of 1-10):

Nurturing and identifying creative potential

1.	Openness, trust, accessibility & participation	3
2.	Talent development & the learning landscape	5

Comment: The sense was that whilst Helsinki is welcoming it has not fully addressed what it means to fully embrace both cultural and ethnic diversity, beyond the very highly skilled. They believed the broader diversity was not sufficiently seen as an asset and that the debate around it was too frequently framed in terms of problems rather than opportunities.

In terms of learning several respondents noted that if the solid and good education were less traditional in terms of outlook, institutional structure and methods of working far more could be achieved and experiments explored.

Enabling and supporting this creative capacity so that opportunities and prospects are maximized

3.	The political & public framework	4
4.	Strategic leadership, agility & vision	4
5.	Professionalism & effectiveness	6

Comment: Helsinki understands the processes of long term thinking and strategic planning. Yet the element of risk aversion, common to most public administrations everywhere can constrain thinking, reduce perspectives and not allow left field opportunities to come into play. In addition the rule focus reduces the capacity to be strategically agile making it difficult for Helsinki to follow the maxim to be ‘strategically principled

and tactically flexible.’ Trust is high and represents a formidable asset that can be harnessed to achieve more. For instance, this basis can help more flexible arrangements, looser agreements or experimentations to be trialled given the lower risk of abuse. Add to this – the known professional qualities of Helsinki provide both an attitude of mind and set of skills that could balance well the increased playfulness required in innovation with the desire to get things done.

Exploiting and harnessing the city’s expertise, talents and aspirations

6.	Entrepreneurship, exploration & innovation	4
7.	Communication, connectivity & networking	7

Comment: The enabling platform in principle provides a good context to exploit potential, but a few elements are missing. Some in terms of thinking style and others practical questions. The more rules based and systems approach prevalent in the city may not be appropriate for the newer forms of innovation emerging which is more cross-disciplinary, less siloed and more focused on rapid trialling and experimenting where failure is an intrinsic part of the process.

The city’s networking abilities do not match its acknowledged communications assets. The ‘work’ involved in ‘networking’ is also concerned with ‘connecting the dots’ in order to make more out of potential. For instance, the different agencies involved in inward attraction, foreign direct investment and tourism can mean the economic benefits are not maximized.

Living and expressing the creativity expressed through Helsinki’s urban design and various facilities and services

8.	Distinctiveness, diversity, vitality & expression	3
9.	The place & place-making	8
10.	Liveability & well-being	8

Comment: In terms of how the city is developing as a place and its general liveability there is no criticism of missed opportunities. Instead this is focused on how the city can reveal its multi-cultural diversity and allow it to express itself in its variety.

Taking these figures as the benchmark Helsinki would score 52%, which is at the lower end of the ‘good but could improve’ scale and verging on the ‘below average, needs improvement’ scale.

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Culture centre stage

The deeply embedded culture of a city determines the scope of its possibilities as do attitudes and habits of mind. These in turn are shaped by its history, tradition, location and how it has made use of its resources. This culture can be a help or hindrance to a city's prospects and its willingness or ability to be imaginative, creative or inventive. Whilst technologies change relatively fast cultural attributes, if they are an obstacle, change most slowly. A city's attributes may chime well with how the world is moving or less so.

Helsinki has a mix of cultural attributes in equal measure both the good and less good in relation to building resilience in the future.

There is a deeper history to the practical, no nonsense approach, allied to a tinkering capacity within Finns, that can solve tangible problems. It was said: 'Finland is a solution finding country and human centred'. It is related, perhaps, to its rural origins and coping with harsh nature and the need for mutual support. It manifests itself today in the 'engineer model' of dealing with life. This feels comfortable with technical problems and technology. It feels less at ease with mistakes and only takes very calculated risks. The first instinct is to be guarded. Yet it is extremely adept at project managing and delivering a power plant, but can handle complex issues less well. A corollary is a tendency for the 'expert knows best' syndrome and this in turn can reduce the innovation capacity that lies within the inventive tinkering and fixing things culture. It can stifle too the participatory instinct.

History (of occupation) again may have fostered a very strong regard for rules and asking first about rules is often the default position: 'Is this allowed'. This makes the culture paternalistic by instinct.

This means straight lines and grids are preferred to curves where you cannot see the end. These seem unpredictable. The grid model can be contrasted to the spaghetti model, where things are less clear, yet connected. The engineering mindset feels here the danger that clarity is lacking or possible double standards could emerge. The grid model works well when you have complicated problems that can be solved by logical processing. It works less well with processes where outcomes are less clear where understanding complexity, inter-relationships or dynamics is a priority.

The rules based system can constrain. In an innovation era driven by the internet and fast prototyping experimentation and debate become key – this challenges the classic mindset.

These attributes reduce the discussion culture and thus the culture of critique is not strong, although some say ‘complaining is a national pastime.’ Allied to this is the deep sense of equality and a need to be even handed. This has implications for making difficult decisions.

It expresses itself in city terms as the ‘urban engineering approach’ to city making where creating the hard physical infrastructure takes precedence over the soft infrastructure that concerns creating atmospheres, activities and artistry in planning and development. In building a nation from scratch these qualities are essential, yet in building an experientially rich city, which is now a priority, less so – indeed it may be counter-productive. Standards, rules and norms, which lie at the heart of engineering, are fine for building energy systems, less so for building an urban culture.

A new personification is needed beyond the engineer model. What is it? It has to be more organic. Someone who understands living systems and perhaps the ‘urban ecology paradigm’ of city development sounds too limiting as it implies only a concern with the environment. This city is a living system made up of hard and soft infrastructures where conditions are created to foster ‘planned’ coincidences and serendipity which becomes the texture that makes an urban culture. In principle the positives of Finnish culture also help these conditions, if it can find ways of loosening up.

The urban development trajectory

A series of conceptual tools and analyses are proposed below. These may help Helsinki think through some of its challenges and potentials in new ways. The first characterizes the post-war urban development trajectory in a very simple schema. A second segment stresses the shift from assessing natural advantages to a world where prosperity depends on creative advantages. And the last describes the new innovation eco-system thinking.

The City 1.0

A simple way to characterize the different phases of urban development in the post-war period is the sequence of ‘The City 1.0’, ‘The City 2.0’ and ‘The City 3.0’. Helsinki needs to move decisively from a 1.0 City to a 3.0 City. The historic city is ‘The City 0.0’.

The stereotype of ‘The City 1.0’ is: Large factories and mass production; the city is seen as a machine; the management and organizational style is hierarchical and top down; structures are siloed, vertical with strong departments, partnership is rare; learning is by rote, urban functions are separated; aesthetics is less important; planning focuses on land-uses; participation is low.

Transport is focused on cars and the pedestrian is invisible. Culture concentrates on traditional forms; cultural institutions dominate. This is the rational, ordered, technically focused and segregated city. It is the hardware focused ‘urban engineering paradigm’ for city making.

The City 2.0

The industrial emblem of ‘The City 2.0’ is the science park and high tech industry; its management ethos has flatter structures; partnership working rises in importance; learning systems open out. There is greater awareness of integrating disciplines. Issues are more connected and the software and hardware of the city interact. Urban design and the emotional feel becomes a higher priority. The city is made more spectacular. Gleaming glass towers proliferate. Vast retailing, entertainment or cultural centres try to bewitch. The city becomes a canvas and stage for activities. Planning is more consultative and sees the city in a more rounded way and transport redefines itself as mobility and connectivity. Walkability and pedestrian friendly streets grow. Mixed-uses and diversity become more important. Respect for ecology grows and the creative economy sectors rise and culture becomes a competitive tool. There is more emphasis on distinctiveness, aesthetics, human comfort, and creating a sense of place.

The City 3.0

‘The City 3.0’ takes on the virtues of ‘City 2.0’, but adds a concern to harness the collective imagination and intelligence of citizens in making, shaping and co-creating their city. For this ‘soft urbanism’ the full sensory experience and impact of the city and built fabric is crucial. It is for beauty and against blandness. The city is conceived as an organism. It is adaptive to increase its chances to become resilient. Organizationally it is more flexible; horizontal and cross-sector working is the norm. There is a greater tolerance of risk.

Learning institutions are communities of enquiry; they teach higher order skills such as learning how to learn, to discover, to problem solve. This allows the transfer of knowledge between different contexts so talent can be unleashed.

Entrepreneurship is key and the creativity and innovation agenda rise in importance. Open innovation systems often drive development processes and there is collaborative competition. Micro-businesses and SMEs have a greater role. The urban form provides cultural and physical environments to encourage creativity. Its industrial emblem is the creative zone or creative quarter and ‘third places’ become important, pop up culture is common.

Planning moves away from a land-use focus and is more integrative bringing together economic, cultural, physical and social concerns. Mixed use is the ethos, partnership and participation the pattern. A holistic approach to identifying opportunities and solving problems is the norm. This reshapes the regulations and incentives regime. Eco-thinking, interculturalism and creativity are all embedded in the way the city operates.

Technologies are focused on creating smart applications. These are interoperable, immersive, self-regulating and interactive devices that help visualize and track the city in motion. The smart grids and sensors, open participatory and open data platforms and apps for city services are well developed.

Transport is a different discipline and is concerned with seamless connectivity. Culture focuses more on people making their own culture, less as passive consumers and more to enhance their expressive capacities. Culture is performed in more unusual settings.

These overall trends within the City 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 clearly overlap. Many still display a 1.0 mindset in a world that increasingly operates at 3.0.

Misalignment & Disconnection

The major fault line for Helsinki is the misalignment between an evolving 3.0 world and its economy, culture and social dynamics and its existing operating system that still has several 1.0 features. This creates tensions and misunderstanding. This disconnection needs to be overcome.

There is a large grouping in Helsinki, not merely defined by age, that can operate globally, is widely connected and networked, that understands the new business models driven by the internet where ideas sharing is more prominent, which thrives in an open innovation environment and often has a portfolio career. The watchword for Helsinki is local buzz and 'global pipelines'.

The Creative Imperative

Encouraging creativity is vital – not merely an option. Less creative places decline and do not meet their potential as they do not innovate. Creativity is recognized as a new currency and crucial multipurpose aptitude and resource as we move from a reliance on natural to knowledge resources. The scope for creative action is broad.

Creativity is the core input that helps drive economic performance, overall well-being and growing levels of innovation. The creative capacity of a city is shaped by its history, culture, physical setting and enabling environment. It is enhanced when the city creates the conditions for individuals, organizations and the city as an amalgam of these to think, plan and act with imagination.

Cities have always innovated as laboratories for solving the problems of their own making. What has changed is the speed at which they must do so driven by the pressures of global competition. In moving from natural advantages to a world where prosperity depends on creative advantages, requires the ability to use and mobilize inventive thinking and brainpower.

Creativity and innovation are related but crucially they are not the same. A culture of curiosity from which imagination is encouraged out of which creative ideas can emerge is vital for inventions to emerge which when generally applied become an innovation. Creativity is the major pre-condition for downstream innovations to occur, such as how to become a 'resilient city' or 'smart city' or for economic and cultural vigour to develop. Creativity is a divergent thought process. It generates new ideas, whilst innovation is a convergent process concerned with turning ideas into reality and profitable products and services.

Creativity requires certain qualities of mind and attitudes including a willingness to be curious, open, flexible or the capacity to see connections and to be collaborative. Creativity needs physical and organizational environments, settings and management cultures that encourage it. The applications of creativity and resulting innovations are context driven. In the 19th century it focused on building our core urban infrastructures, in the 20th it created new economic paradigms and made immense advances by focusing strongly on specialist knowledge. In the 21st century creativity is needed to rethink the systems by which we manage and operate our cities and value creation is reconceived. To be successful today requires new competitive tools in addition to the older ones.

Innovation Eco-System Thinking

A significant shift in approach has taken place in Europe exemplified by the European Capital of Innovation award process launched in 2013. It states: 'a broad approach to innovation is required that is not limited to bringing new products to the market, but also covers processes, systems or other approaches, including by recognising our strengths in design, creativity, services and the importance of social innovation. Funding will be meshed with support for research and technological development'. This requires a deeply embedded culture of creativity and innovation and not to see activities as one-off events, pilot projects or isolated initiatives.

The elements of an innovation eco-system involve giving space and credit for new ideas, ways of thinking, concepts or paradigms; acknowledging the need for new skills or professions, such as the connector and intermediary; the need to rethink and to adapt the incentives, regulations and legal regime. Encouraging alliances or networks for change which may challenge existing power relationships. This implies behaviour change, different ways of measuring success and failure with technology seen as the servant of changed aims and purposes. Facilitating mechanisms such as a creativity and innovation platform or a task force or development agency are required to ingrain the thinking and to drive tangible results. This systemic thinking is not concerned only with methods, techniques and processes, but with shifting the mindset so it brings the elements together in an integrated way.

To quote from the Capital of Innovation award: 'Increasingly, the city is seen as a place of systemic innovation, where the four P's - People, Place, Public, and Private - join together as an interconnected systemic whole where each player is interdependent on each other. Innovation as a system links the citizens (People) with the built environment (Place) and public organizations and policy-makers (Public) through business (Private) - creating an interactive innovation ecosystem of the city.'

The criteria for the award were: Innovative in processes and impact; inclusive, by involving citizens; inspiring by attracting talent, investment and partners; interactive by encouraging open communication between key players; integrated by maximising a holistic viewpoint involving people and place. The European City of Innovation had 58 applications and 6 finalists, who were Barcelona, Espoo, Grenoble, Groningen, Malaga and Paris. The winner was Barcelona. It was impressive in the way it used the city as a test bed for driving innovation, within which the city council is playing a significant role.

Many of Europe's leading cities as well as second cities applied. They had to show concrete results. Themes emerged: Several highlighted evidence of their quadruple helix approach - linking universities, the public and private sectors and citizens' involvement. Many proposals put forward open data applications, but initiatives focusing on these alone were not deemed to be systemic. Various examples of participative crowd-sourcing schemes were suggested. The energy transition was a strong theme and some reconceptualised complete systems such as health. There were model urban development schemes to act as inspiration so becoming 'living labs', typically combining incentives to develop the creative economy, eco-city thinking, new forms of mobility and co-creation.

Cities often threw out problem solving challenges to established private companies and SMEs allowing them to use the city as a test bed for innovations.

Two crucial issues emerged from all finalists: the biggest obstacle to change was their own municipal institutions and the need to overcome the silo mentality and the difficulties in achieving real collaboration.

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DESCRIPTION

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HELSINKI CREATIVE CITY INDEX

Harnessing the Collective Imagination

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