HELSINKI Quarterly

2/2018

CITY OF HELSINKI ▶ URBAN RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

Tourism

After a record-breaking year

Children

More families choose to live in the inner city

City brand

From ‘Daughter of the Baltic’ to ‘making an impact together’

Helsinki

Helsinki

HELSINKI Quarterly 2/2018

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CITY OF HELSINKI / KALLE KATAILA

We need to delve into a variety of data sources to understand crucial developments in the city.

Editorial

Helsinki Quarterly presents an overview of interesting research and statistical information from the past twelve months. The articles shed light on recent developments in Helsinki and its metropolitan area. Most of the texts in this issue have been published previously in Finnish and Swedish.

THE URBAN RESEARCH AND STATISTICS UNIT at Helsinki City Executive Office is charged with the duty to monitor the development of Helsinki by means of statistical analysis, prognoses and research. Sometimes this requires us to delve into a variety of data sources in order to produce relevant insights and understanding about crucial developments in the city. This issue of Helsinki Quarterly offers some examples, including **Tamás Lahdelma's** analysis of workforce flow networks and the importance of the proximity of business establishments. **Oskari Harjunen** has analysed large sets of data on real estate sales to demonstrate how the construction of a new metro line in the Helsinki Metropolitan area affects the housing market. **Pasi Mäenpää** and **Maija Faehnle**, on their part, have studied new kinds of networks that have existed in Helsinki only for a few years: their article focuses on urban civic activism and the contacts of the activists with local authorities.

OTHER ARTICLES in this issue concentrate on urban children and their world. **Ari Niska** writes about the return of families with children to the city centre and inner districts of Helsinki. He points out that there are more children in the city today than at any time since the mid-1970s. **Veera Moll's** article deals with the independent mobility of children in Helsinki. In international comparison, children in Helsinki – and Finland in general – are still relatively free to walk to school or roam their neighbourhood without parental supervision. This can be considered an indicator of how safe and functional Helsinki is as an urban environment.

HELSINKI IS BECOMING an increasingly important destination in the worldwide tourism market. **Pekka Mustonen** presents in his article an overview of travel statistics for 2017, a record-breaking year in tourism in Helsinki. Mustonen looks at the reasons underlying the exceptionally busy year and current trends in tourism, also casting an eye on potential future developments. The article by **Salla Jokela** offers a slightly different perspective to Helsinki as a tourism destination: she maps the history and development of city marketing efforts and city branding in the Finnish capital. Compared to its predecessors, the current city brand is much more based on the views of local residents: how they experience the city and what they cherish in it.

TIMO CANTELL

Director for Urban Research and Statistics
City of Helsinki

CITY OF HELSINKI / JUSSI HELLSTEN

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In Helsinki, efforts to capture the essence of the city gained ground along with the institutionalization of tourism.

The development of
Helsinki's city brand

CITY OFFICIALS have long striven to manage Helsinki's reputation and visual appearance through place-making and marketing communication. In the 2000s, these actions have been grouped under the umbrella of "city branding" – a practice that has become increasingly popular throughout the world in the context of global intercity competition. Branding refers not only to the promotion of cities through logos, slogans and visual representations, but also to strategic practices and participatory processes through which cities are reinvented and developed.

SALLA JOKELA

"City brand" is often used in colloquial language as a synonym for the reputation of a city, whereas researchers usually use it more specifically to refer to strategically managed attributes and mental associations connected to a city (e.g. Anttiroiko 2014). In Helsinki, efforts to capture and enhance the essence of the city gained ground along with the institutionalization of tourism. Prominent individuals and tourism societies had published illustrated guidebooks and brochures about Helsinki since the 1850s, but it was not until the mid-twentieth century that the city administration addressed the need for more systematic city promotion.

IN THE 1950S, the Sport and Excursion Office of the City of Helsinki launched a promotion campaign which included the publication of a series of tourism brochures. In these brochures, Helsinki was called the "White City of the North" along the lines of a catchphrase that had become established by the 1930s (Lindberg 1931; Laine 2011: 289). The idea of Helsinki's whiteness stemmed from the light-colored buildings in the center of Helsinki and it was frequently associated with Helsinki Cathedral (Jokela 2014).

Daughter of the Baltic meets the White City of the North

The promotion of Helsinki became more systematic after the opening of the Helsinki City Tourist Office in 1963. The office aimed to raise awareness of Helsinki's assets and improve the infrastructure of the city in accordance with prevailing ideas about urban life and tourism. In the inaugural speech of the tourist office, Mayor of Helsinki Lauri Aho described tourism promotion as a collective endeavor which required local people to learn to look at Helsinki through the eyes of a visitor. According to Aho, the essence of Helsinki was determined by contrasts between nature and architecture – between the major attractions and the islands, for instance – or the "old" Empire style city center and suburbs (Aho 1963).

THE STAFF of the Helsinki City Tourist Office recognized the need to come up with symbolic representations and material landmarks that would capture the spirit of the city. A new slogan was adopted from the title of novelist Maila Talvio's trilogy *Itämeren tytär* ("Daughter of the Baltic") in order to emphasize the maritime nature of Helsinki (Salokorpi 2000). This slogan was used in a series of tourism brochures, posters, and other marketing materials in the 1960s through the 1980s. During its peak years in the turn of the 1970s and 1980s, a brochure entitled "Helsinki – Daughter of Baltic" was published in 20 languages, including Arabic, Japanese, and Portuguese (Figure 1).

MIKKO NUPPONEN, the manager of the Helsinki City Tourist Office in 1963–1993, frequently associated the "Daughter of the Baltic" with the statue of Havis Amanda by the Market Square. According to him, the statue was "the touristic symbol of and probably the most photographed sight in the capital city" (Nupponen 1991). Most often, however, the slogan was depicted next

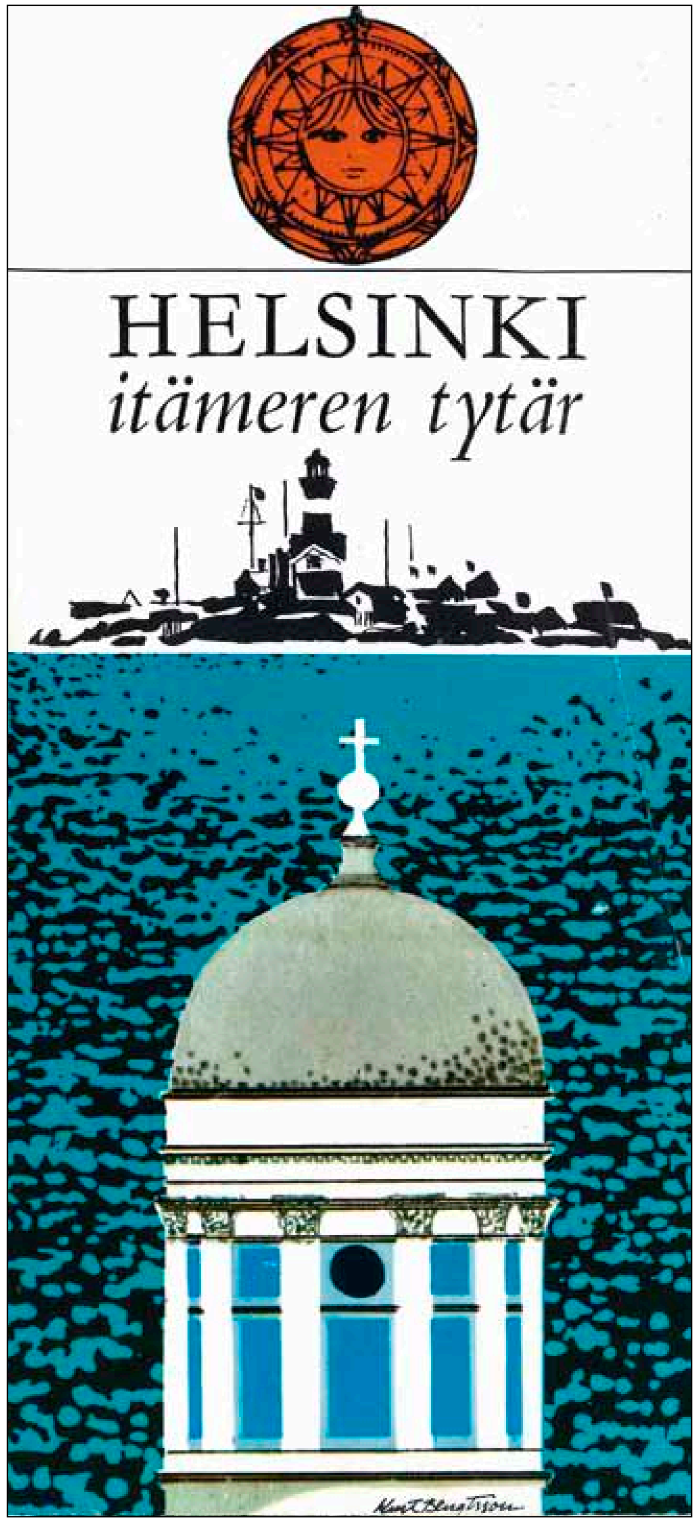

FIGURE 1.

"Helsinki – Daughter of Baltic" ("Itämeren tytär") brochure published by the Helsinki City Tourist Office was an important marketing tool for transportation companies, the Finnish Tourist Board, and other tourism communities both in Finland and abroad from the 1960s until the 1980s.

to the Cathedral, which was the "most visible landmark of Helsinki" and, together with Senate Square, "among the actual pull factors" in the city (Nupponen 1984).

WHILE TOURISM promoters were working to strengthen the symbolic and material basis of the "Daughter of the Baltic," Helsinki's brand evolved also more organically on the foundation laid by earlier marketing and communication. In 1970, for example, Boston Herald Traveler adopted both slogans by noting that Helsinki was "variously known as the 'White City of the North' or 'Daughter of the Baltic'" (Koenig 1970). Likewise, the notion of whiteness was used by planners to advocate functionalistic architecture in Helsinki and, later, by public commentators to oppose plans to build a Guggenheim Museum in Helsinki. Those critical of the museum plan argued that the winning proposal would be too dark for the "White City of the North" (Rakennuslehti 2016; Visanti 2016).

Making place for performances and *lifeseeing*

The Helsinki City Tourist Office promoted tourism not only by producing marketing materials, but also through place-making[1] and performances, which enabled people to enact the ideas captured in images and texts (Figure 2). In the late 1960s, for example, tourism officers appealed to the City Board in order to enliven the Empire center of Helsinki, which lacked "small shops, cafeterias, restaurants and public services which were characteristic of the turn of the century and would invigorate the area during weekends and after office hours" (Nupponen 1978).

NUPPONEN (1969) considered urban liveliness important, because "the motto of today is *lifeseeing*, which […] includes different functions from various domains of life that tourists can observe up close or in which they themselves can participate." In the 1980s, Finnair's marketing director Leif Lundström shared this idea when he emphasized the role of the City of Helsinki and its service providers in supporting the development of the Helsinki–Vantaa Airport into a "gateway airport" that would eventually encourage tourists to spend more time in Helsinki and Finland (Palojärvi 1986).

TOURISM PROMOTERS perceived local people as being integral and adding to the exoticness of Helsinki. In 1982, Nupponen was interviewed about foreigners' reasons for travelling to Helsinki. He stated that "we live in an odd and strange place and we are a little bit strange ourselves" (Pääkaupunki-lehti 1982). This

1) Place-making refers to activities through which people appropriate space and attach meanings to it (Cresswell 2015: 11-12).


Kaunotar ja 'Helsinki Itämeren tytär'

Helsinki-Lehden aamukahvivieraana oli eilen Miss Suomi Armi Aavikko ja kaupungin matkailupäällikkö Mikko Nupponen, joka luovutti Pakilan kaunottarelle juuri valmistuneen värikuvallisen matkailujulisteen, jonka tunnuksena on 'Helsinki Itämeren tytär'.

Juliste liittyy matkailutoimiston julkaisemaan julistesarjaan, josta vuonna 1973 ilmestyi Kauppatorijuliste ja vuonna 1975 Helsingin empirekeskustaa — Senaatintoria esittävä juliste.

Tämänkertainen juliste tuo esille Helsingin merellisyyttä aivan uudesta näkökulmasta. Ilmakuva on Sky Foto Möllerin ja painaja on Yhteiskirjapaino. Julisteen painosmäärä on 5.000 kpl ja julisteen tekstitys on suomen-, ruotsin-, englannin- ja saksankielillä. Julisteen mitat ovat 62 cm x 100 cm. Julisteen suurlevityksen suorittavat matkailun edistämiskeskus, Finnair ja Helsinkiin liikennöivät laivayhtiöt.

Neiti Aavikolle annettiin myös uusin Helsingin matkailukartta, jota hän sanoi käyttävänsä hyväkseen tehdessään matkoillaan propagandaa kauniin kotikaupunkinsa puolesta. Neiti Aavikko kertoi käyvänsä parhaillaan autokoulua ja ajotunti oli eilisenkin pyrypäivän ohjelmassa. — Kuvassa Miss Suomi uusinta julistettaan esittelevän matkailupäällikkö Mikko Nupposen ja päätoimittaja Valter Vartion seurassa.

FIGURE 2.

Local celebrities played a special role in the promotion of Helsinki. In 1977, Helsinki's tourism poster and map were ceremonially delivered by Mikko Nupponen to Miss Finland Armi Aavikko, who was from Helsinki and, hence, associated with the idea of "Daughter of Baltic." In a story published by Helsinki-lehti (1977), Aavikko promised to use the map during her trips to promote "her beautiful hometown". Picture from the Helsinki City Archives.

view was also taken into consideration by the Finnish Tourism Board, which wanted to launch a "charm campaign" to develop the Finns' language skills, manners, and sense of humor, "toward a more pan-European direction" (Kantakaupungin Alueuutiset 1986). In this campaign, Helsinki appeared not only as a showcase of Finnishness, but also as a leader of tourism development in the entire country. The Finnish Tourism Board, for example, acknowledged the potentially beneficial effects of urbanization on "sophisticating" the Finns.

THE WILLINGNESS of Helsinki's local authorities to adopt modern marketing tools clarified its marketing messages and, thereby, helped to improve people's knowledge of Helsinki's assets. This development paved the way to tourism promoters' understanding of the city as a product that could be "sold to" and consumed by various groups of people.

CITY OF HELSINKI / JUHANA HURTIG

From consumer-oriented image building to city branding

In the 1980s, city promotion in Western countries was supported by the adoption of the concept of image, which "in a fairly straightforward way captured something essential in the otherwise messy conceptual field of city marketing" (Anttiroiko 2014, 61). The study of city images had gained impetus with the rise of behavioral approach within geography and urban studies from the 1960s onwards, and the concept of image was adopted by place promoters as a way of referring to the attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs people held about places (Aikäs 2004: 41).

IN HELSINKI, the term "image" ("imago") was introduced to tour guides in the 1980s in the context of the "creation of a mental picture to listeners" (Nupponen 1988). Along with the economic restructuring that followed the depression of the early 1990s, the concept of image emerged also as an analytical tool for studying associations linked to Helsinki. These studies revealed that the image of the Helsinki capital region remained "unknown, neutral, or unclear" (Pääkaupunkiseudun matkailun kehittämisstrategia 1997).

ACCORDING TO the 1997 Tourism Development Strategy of the Capital Region, the general image of the region was to be developed on the basis of the region's "closeness to nature and sea", as well as its "interesting architecture, human scale, functionality, safety, and cleanliness" (Pääkaupunkiseudun matkailun kehittämisstrategia 1997). Tourism promoters were also interested in developing products for different market segments. These included "the hustle and bustle – good vibes, swinging Helsinki" for "the young, young adults and dinks (double income, no kids)" and "Helsinki seen from a child's-eye view."

DESPITE the increasingly market-oriented approach, the strengthening of Helsinki's image was essentially based on the same concerns as before. Tourism developers stated, for example, that Helsinki's city center should be made "livelier" for tourists and locals through the "liberalization of shops' opening hours" and plans that would "direct the services aimed at private citizens to locate on the street level" (Pääkaupunkiseudun matkailun kehittämisstrategia 1997).
The marketers of Helsinki also continued to balance between the exploitation of Helsinki's perceived "exoticness" and the production of more mainstream promotional imagery. In 1994, the City of Helsinki published a brochure to accompany its application for European Capital of Culture 2000. The initial brochure consisted of simple black and white photos and it was recalled by the City Board on grounds of being too bleak and giving an impression that Helsinki is "grey like Petrozavodsk" (Manninen 1994; Tani 1995: 74–75). This brochure was replaced by a colorful collage of images that marketed Helsinki as "a pocket size metropolis" (Figure 3).

THE IDENTITY-POLITICAL underpinnings of Helsinki's brand were discussed again in 2007, when Kari Halonen, the marketing manager of the City of Helsinki, maintained in a newspaper article that Helsinki should be branded as "a meeting point between East and West, sort of like the Istanbul of the North". According to Halonen, Helsinki's past in the sphere of influence of Russia and Soviet Union is "that exotic feature that makes tourists come here" (Huhtanen 2007). People quickly reacted to the article by stating that "Helsinki is not St. Petersburg or Istanbul" and it should "proudly be itself, with its own weaknesses and strengths" (Yrjölä 2007). In both cases, the evocation of Eastern exoticism conflicted with local people's understanding of what Helsinki was about. This suggested that the city needed to pay more attention to the locals' ways of conceptualizing and using the city.

Engaging stakeholders for the co-production of the city brand

As the previous examples show, city branding inevitably involves choices about whose idea of the city is taken as the starting point of the brand. In the worst case, the city brand is unsustainable, because it is not supported by the residents. Branding professionals have thus started to emphasize the need for more inclusive and democratic branding processes, which utilize branding as a comprehensive tool of urban development.

THIS IS EVIDENT in Helsinki's new brand concept, developed in 2015–2016 in accordance with the strategy of the Helsinki City Council. The "Brand New Helsinki 2020" project engaged various stakeholders to address Helsinki's strengths and weaknesses and to come up with a vision of what Helsinki wants to be in the future. The aim of the brand concept was to "highlight the city as a desirable location for both business and living, and help create the buzz that can make Helsinki a more interesting destination for visitors and events" (Helsinki brand concept 2016).

WHILE EARLIER city branding endeavors in Helsinki have included place-making initiatives, Helsinki's brand concept (2016) stresses explicitly that "the Helsinki brand needs actions, not words," as the brand is essentially made up of "shared experiences that happen wherever and whenever we encounter the city." Instead of slogans, the city brand is based on phrases that crystallize Helsinki's attitude – "One Hel of an Impact" and "Here is the city – use it!" – with the goal of ensuring that "[i]n 2020, Helsinki is a city full of people, actions and encounters that make an impact" (Helsinki brand concept 2016). The brand is supported by the My Helsinki website and hashtag, which enable people to share their tips and experiences concerning Helsinki (My Helsinki 2018).

HELSINKI'S NEW BRAND CONCEPT relies largely on the assets acknowledged by earlier generations of city promoters. These include "fascinating contrasts, such as pulse and peace, light summers and dark winter nights, the city and nature [...]", uniqueness and diversity ("We don't want to be overly polished. We are authentic and the city has a certain edge."), as well as smartness and functionality ("Everyday life in Helsinki goes smoothly.") (Brand New Helsinki 2018). What differentiates the new brand concept from earlier branding initiatives is the role of people as co-creators of the city brand instead of mere consumers and users of ready-made places and activities.

> *This suggested that the city needed to pay more attention to the locals' ways of conceptualizing and using the city.*

THE ACTIVE ROLE of the people of Helsinki in city branding supports Helsinki's attempts to emphasize civic activism as a distinctive feature, setting Helsinki apart from other major cities (Helsinki brand concept 2016). The idea of "people who make an impact" is also connected to a broader shift in the conceptualizations of administration and citizenship in networked western societies (Bäcklund et al. 2014). The rise of neoliberalism and globalization from the late twentieth century onwards have involved the emergence of autonomous and flexible citizens, whose actions can be harnessed for the purpose of enhancing (inter)national competitiveness and connectivity within global networks of cities. As a result, a growing number of people praise the important role of independent urban activism in the making of internationally recognized city brands (Mäenpää & Faehnle 2017). The value of urban activism is especially emphasized when contrasted with government funded cultural building projects, which are increasingly criticized for being expensive and unrealistic (Vihinen 2013).

Branding for transformation

International branding researchers have started to address the use of branding as a tool to achieve the goals of urban policy and strategic spatial planning (e.g. Oliveira 2015; Joo & Seo 2018). This approach is relevant also in Helsinki, where one of the goals of the brand is to lead the city's transformation "in the right direction" through concrete measures, such as "the removal of unnecessary obstacles that hinder encounters and actions with impact" (Helsinki brand concept 2016). In other words, the City of Helsinki is using branding as one way of reassessing the rationalities and practices of governing people and managing spatial change.

PASI MÄENPÄÄ AND MAIJA FAEHNLE (2017) state that Helsinki's administration should find ways "to participate constructively in the activities of citizen networks." The branding of Helsinki shows that there is a strong impetus for such participation, but it remains to be determined what role the new brand concept will play in facilitating and supporting new types of collaborations between the city and its people. Some important questions remain. How will Helsinki's residents, visitors and businesses be able to utilize the opportunities provided by the new brand concept? What will they get in return for their participation in the making of the brand? What kind of "impact" is desired and how is the "right direction" of transformation defined? Who will decide what kind of people, actions and encounters make the right kind of impact?

FIGURE 3A. FIGURE 3B.

Images have played an important role in the negotiation of Helsinki's brand, as in the case of illustrated brochures that the City of Helsinki produced to pursue the status of the European Cultural Capital 2000. The city's decision-makers criticized the images of the original brochure (on the left) for being too grey and gloomy and decided to replace them with a colorful photo collage (on the right).

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Open discussion makes the branding process transparent and helps people understand the role of branding.

OPEN DISCUSSION about these issues is important because it makes the branding process transparent and helps people to understand the role of branding – and their own actions in relation to the emerging brand – in the context of urban development. On a more profound level, open discussion will make it easier for Helsinki's residents to take ownership of the city brand as well as the processes through which it is made. ●

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CITY OF HELSINKI / JUSSI HELLSTEN

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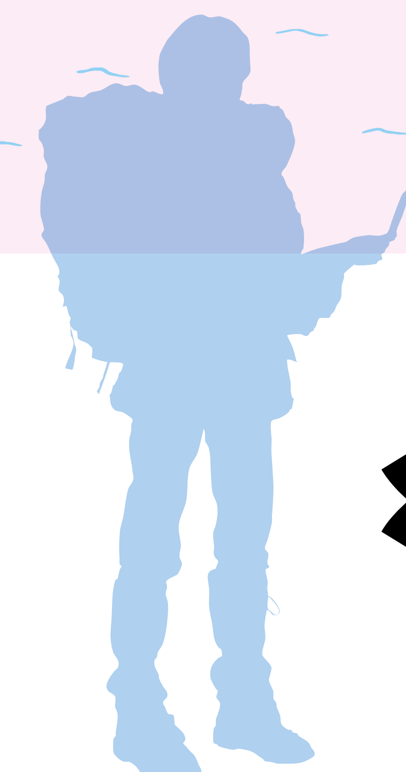
Last year was an exceptional year for tourism in Helsinki.



HELSINKI TOURISM enjoys a record-breaking year *– but what next?*

● PEKKA MUSTONEN

Last year, 2017, was a exceptional year for tourism in Helsinki. The year was the busiest ever for airline traffic flying in and out of Helsinki Airport, and record-breaking numbers have also been released for overnight stays in the city itself. The purpose of this article is to present a closer analysis of the travel statistics for 2017, and we will also cast an eye on the first half of the present year. The statistical examination will also be connected to the topical debate about how to approach the constant growth of global tourism, and sustainable tourism in particular.

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CITY OF HELSINKI / JUSSI HELLSTEN

Increasing interest towards Finland

In global regional travel statistics, Europe is still the world's most attractive destination for tourism. At country level, France is the most popular travel destination, while London tops the list of cities. However, Europe now holds a one-third share in worldwide tourism. Asia and especially China has grown rapidly as a travel destination in recent years. From a global perspective, Finland remains a relatively small player but interest towards it has increased around the world.

PART OF THIS interest is related to Helsinki's strategically excellent location on the flight routes from Europe to Asia. The flight statistics of Helsinki Airport support this fact. International traffic to and from Helsinki Airport increased by 11 per cent in 2017, and the total number of flights taken by passengers was the highest ever recorded. Of the 19 million passengers flying to and from Helsinki Airport in 2017, the majority were on international flights. The biggest increase, 21 per cent, was recorded in international transit travel. The statistics released by Finland's national airport operator Finavia reveal that the strong growth at Helsinki Airport has also continued in the first months of 2018, and this growth is boosted by increasing numbers of international transit passengers.

More than 4 million overnights in Helsinki

An interesting point of comparison for these air traffic statistics is offered by accommodation statistics, which are usually the most often used indicators when regions, countries or cities are measured against each other in tourism research. Air traffic statistics do not offer information on the citizenships of travellers, and for this reason, additional sources of data are needed. Information on overnight stays and citizenships are collected from all registered accommodation establishments. It has to be noted, however, that only a part of all tourists stay in registered accommodation establishments. Estonians staying in Helsinki are a typical example of a traveller demographic among whom only a small proportion of overnights are recorded in registered establishments (see Mustonen 2018b). The weakness of register-based statistics – such as the overnight statistics – is often related to a lack of comprehensiveness.

AS WITH THE DEVELOPMENT of air traffic, 2017 was also a record-breaking year in terms of the number of overnight stays. Registered overnights increased in Finland by about 8 per cent compared to 2016. Overnights by Finnish visitors increased by 4 per cent and foreign visitors by 17 per cent. A particularly strong increase of foreign visitors was seen in Lapland, 22 per cent compared to the previous year. However, the number of Finnish visitors in Lapland went down.

IN HELSINKI, the growth of overnight stays by Finnish visitors was almost as rapid (16 per cent) as with foreign visitors (18 per cent). The total increase of overnight stays in Helsinki was 17 per cent in 2017.

FOREIGN VISITORS generated 54 per cent of all overnight stays in Helsinki in 2017. The share of foreign visitors was the highest in June and August, when they accounted for almost two thirds of overnight stays. In Lapland, the situation was the opposite: most overnight stays by foreign visitors take place in the winter months. For example, in December 2017, Lapland had more overnights than Helsinki in any month of last year.

THE NUMBER OF registered overnight stays in Helsinki totalled 4.2 million in 2017. This was the first time that the number of overnights in Helsinki surpassed 4 million. The total number of registered overnight stays in all of Finland reached 22 million. Thus the share of Helsinki in all overnight stays in Finland amounted to 19 per cent. Among Finnish visitors, Helsinki's share was 13 per cent, while 33 per cent of overnights by foreign visitors to Finland took place in Helsinki.

Countries of origin of visitors to Helsinki

Russian visitors have dominated accommodation statistics in recent years, whether we look at the statistics at the national level or only the overnight stays in Helsinki. Russians accounted for 12 per cent of all overnight stays in registered accommodation establishments in Finland in 2017. In Helsinki, the share was smaller, remaining at 9 per cent. The share of Russian visitors in Helsinki's overnight statistics was at its highest in 2013, peaking at 18 per cent. After plummeting drastically in 2014–2016, the number of Russian visitors in Helsinki is now back on upward trajectory. In 2017, visitor nights from all source markets increased. Apart from the revived demand from Russia, other trends worth noting are the steady growth of Japanese overnights and, of course, the skyrocketing rise of Chinese visitors witnessed in Helsinki's accommodation establishments in the past couple of years. If the overnight stays by Japanese and Chinese visitors in Helsinki are put together, the total amount is greater than that of Russian visitors. It can be argued that the growing demand from Asian source markets – particularly China and Japan – has compensated for the flailing Russian tourism in Helsinki in recent years.

FOR ALL THE DISCUSSION about the growth of Asian visitors in Helsinki, it must be acknowledged that there are actually no Asian countries among the five biggest source markets for overnight stays in Helsinki. Russia is joined in the top five by Germany, UK, USA and Sweden, and these five countries together form the solid base for foreign bednights in Helsinki. 38 per cent of all foreign overnight stays in Helsinki originated in these five source markets. Top ten countries accounted for 58 per cent of all foreign bednights. In other words, almost 40 per cent of registered foreign overnight stays were by visitors from countries not in the top ten, which can be considered a relatively large share.

THE IMPORTANCE of the top countries for the total number of overnight stays is a useful indicator when we analyse the split between different source markets. From the perspective of economic sustainability, it is desirable that the share of an individual country should not grow too large. An over-representation of a single source market can even have negative impacts (Mustonen 2018c).

Tourism growth in Helsinki outpaced rival cities

Other Nordic capitals are often regarded as Helsinki's competitors in the world tourism market. Notwithstanding, Chinese tourists, for example, often travel to several cities during one trip, and from this point of view, Helsinki, Tallinn, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Oslo also form parts of one and the same target market. Thus the cities simultaneously compete for the same tourists and benefit from one another's success.

COMPARED TO the above-mentioned competitors, the growth of foreign overnights in Helsinki was in a league of its own in 2017. In Stockholm, the increase was 8 per cent and in Reykjavik, 6 per cent. In Copenhagen and Tallinn, the growth of foreign overnight stays was slower: 4 and 2 per cent, respectively. In Oslo, foreign overnights actually decreased by 5 per cent compared to the previous year. Also in absolute figures, the growth in Helsinki overtook all of these competitors.

STOCKHOLM WAS by far the biggest tourist destination among the cities in the Nordic area when measured in the total number of overnight stays. In 2017, the registered accommodation establishments in Stockholm recorded 9.4 million overnight stays. Copenhagen was second, with approximately eight million overnights. Helsinki has more foreign bednights than Oslo, while the total number of stays in Oslo was higher than in Helsinki. Among the cities in our comparison, Oslo had the second highest number of overnights by domestic visitors.

IF WE ONLY LOOK at the number of foreign overnight stays, Copenhagen tops the list with 5.4 million stays. In foreign bednights, both Reykjavik and Tallinn had higher figures than Helsinki. On closer inspection, Reykjavik and Tallinn offer interesting points of comparison for Helsinki. Tourism to both of these cities is heavily dependent on a small number of crucial source markets. Of all overnight stays in Reykjavik in 2017, 30 per cent were generated by visitors from the USA and 22 per cent from the UK. More than half of all foreign overnight stays in Reykjavik

were thus tied to demand from two source markets. Similarly, the role of Finnish visitors in Tallinn is immensely important. In Stockholm, by contrast, the 'sustainability indicators' describing the importance of individual source markets to the tourist industry of a particular city were the lowest among the cities in our comparison. Helsinki came second after Stockholm, while Copenhagen and Oslo were significantly more dependent on their top five source markets, which represented about half of all foreign overnights in the Danish and Norwegian capitals in 2017.

Accommodation capacities and room occupancy rates

With the recent rapid growth of tourism in Helsinki, the accommodation capacity and its sufficiency have been much debated. In 2017, Helsinki had 10,919 rooms in total (or an average per month of 10,085) and the entire Helsinki Metropolitan Area had 15,218 (14,130). The room occupancy rate calculated for the whole year in all the accommodation establishments in Helsinki was 73 per cent. For comparison: the occupancy rate for Lapland was 46 per cent, and 52 per cent for all of Finland.

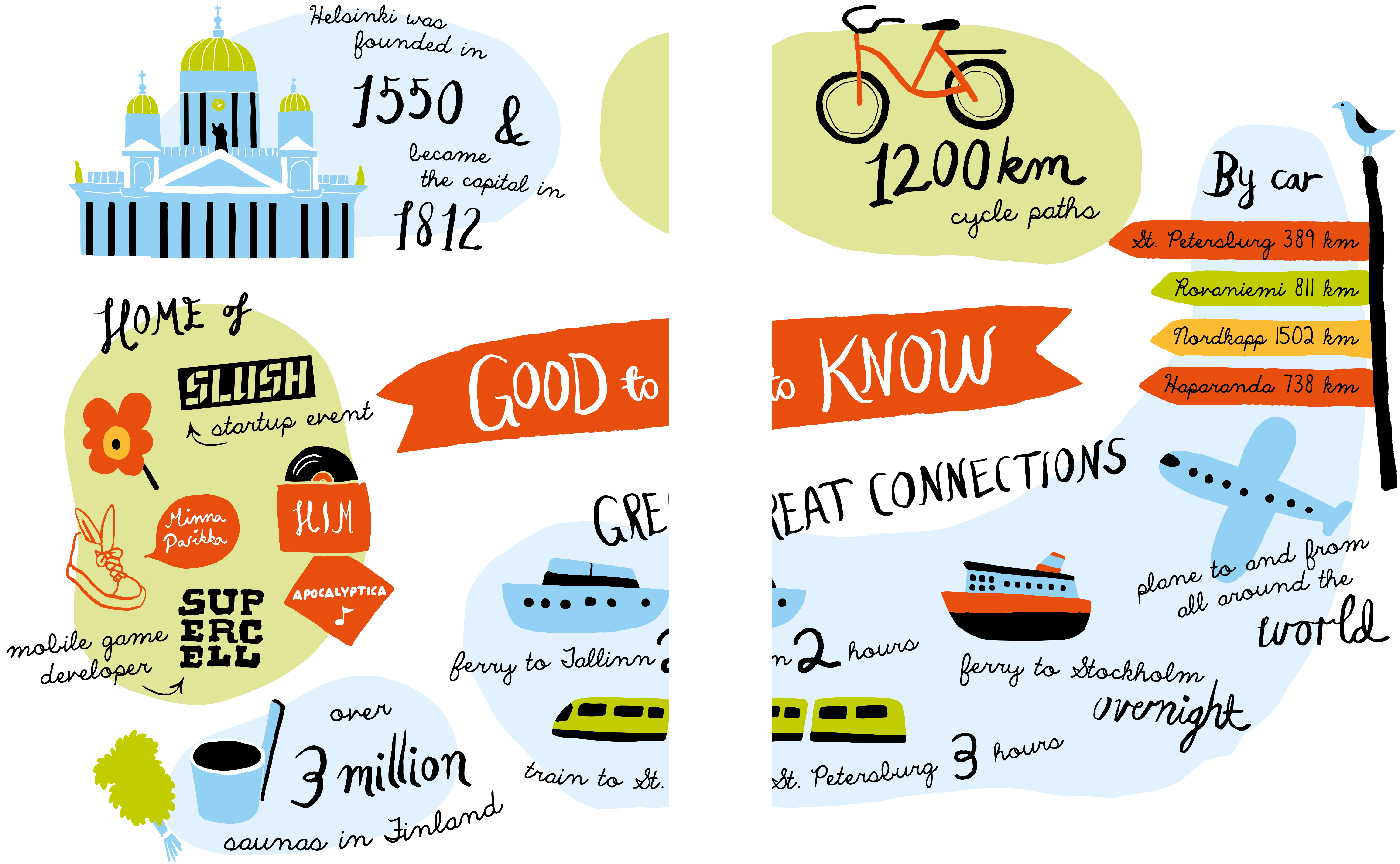
ROOM OCCUPANCY RATES show a considerable degree of seasonal variation. For this reason, a month-by-month analysis is more fruitful than the year-round perspective. The room occupancy rates of accommodation establishments are highest in the summer. In June, August and September the monthly occupancy rates in Helsinki were over 80 per cent. Accommodation statistics do not yet allow us to examine shorter 'micro-seasons' such as exceptionally popular weekends when the capacity is temporarily in full use.

IN SUMMER MONTHS, room occupancy rates are very high not only in Helsinki but also in all other reference cities. The highest occupancy in 2017 was recorded in the accommodation establishments of Reykjavik and Copenhagen. According to Benchmarking Alliance (2018), even the lowest monthly occupancy rates in Reykjavik surpassed 70 per cent, and the highest were over 90 per cent. Copenhagen had monthly occupancy rates of over 80 per cent from May to October, while Stockholm had the lowest percentages, remaining under 80 in all months.

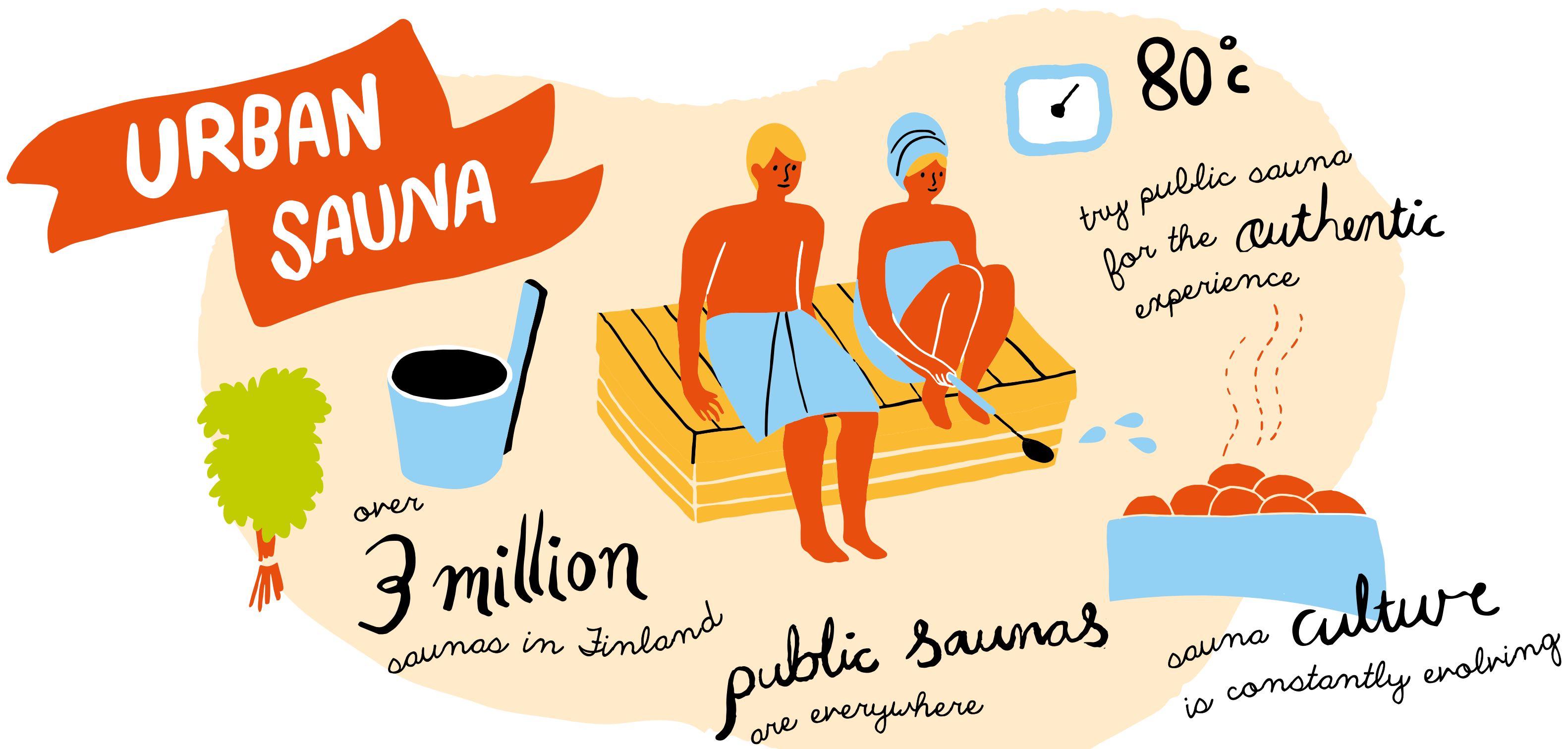
ALTERNATIVE TYPES of accommodation – such as Airbnb – have become increasingly popular worldwide in the past few years. They are revolutionising the tourism industry and have been a topic of much lively debate in the past year (e.g. Mustonen 2018d). On one hand, Airbnb and similar operators help to ease the pressure during times when traditional types of accommodation establishments are fully booked. On the other hand, it has been argued that they distort the competition and lead to an increase in housing prices in destinations where landlords prefer to rent their properties to tourists.

A MAXIMUM OF 2,400 flats and 500 separate rooms were available through Airbnb in Helsinki in 2017. This peak figure was reached in August, according to AirDNA, a company that collects and releases figures about the use of Airbnb services. In other words, the total number of Airbnb rentals amounted to almost 3,000 in Helsinki last year (AirDNA 2018). These had monthly average occupancy rates of over 50 per cent throughout the year, peaking at nearly 80 per cent in August. While these figures are only approximate and indicative, it must be noted that Airbnb has brought with it a notable increase to Helsinki's total accommodation capacity with several thousand additional beds per month. It is of course impossible to estimate the exact effect of Airbnb activities on the occupancy rates of accommodation services in Helsinki. Nonetheless, there has been no observable decrease of room occupancy rates in registered accommodation establishments during the past years. On the contrary, the occupancy rates have actually slightly increased (although not very significantly). In the light of these statistics, it would seem that Helsinki's accommodation establishments have

> *Foreign visitors generated 54 per cent of all overnight stays in Helsinki in 2017. The share of foreign visitors was the highest in June and August, when they accounted for almost two thirds of overnight stays.*



Helsinki was founded in 1550 & became the capital in 1812
HOME of
SLUSH
startup event
Minna Parikka
HIM
APOCALYPTICA
SUPERCELL
mobile game developer
over 3 million saunas in Finland
GOOD to
to KNOW
GREAT CONNECTIONS
ferry to Tallinn 2 hours
train to St. Petersburg 3 hours
ferry to Stockholm overnight
plane to and from all around the world
1200 km cycle paths
By car
St. Petersburg 389 km
Rovaniemi 811 km
Nordkapp 1502 km
Haparanda 738 km



been at least somewhat underused, excluding the busiest times. This is not to say, however, that the changes in the room occupancy rates of registered accommodation establishments can be automatically linked to the existence of Airbnb, unless at some point we notice considerable increases in Airbnb's own occupancy rates.

2018 – a year of changes?

If the scope of our examination were limited to 2017, we could end our analysis by stating that tourism in Helsinki is thriving and the Finnish capital is fast catching its Nordic neighbours. The first half of 2018 looks somewhat different from the same period a year before. The growth has slowed down slightly. The growth in the total number of overnight stays turned negative in March, and this change is mainly explained by the decrease of domestic overnights. The number of overnights by Finnish visitors in Helsinki had stopped growing in January 2018, when it remained 4.5 per cent lower than a year before. The growth of domestic overnights remained negative throughout the spring months, until the number increased again in June.

FOREIGN OVERNIGHT STAYS continued to break the previous year's records up until May 2018. January and February had still seen double-digit growth percentages. The downward turn came in June, with a 4.3 per cent decrease in foreign overnights compared to the same month last year. In absolute terms, the number of foreign overnights in June 2018 remained very high – had the same figure been recorded a year earlier, it would still have represented a staggering growth. Thus, despite the drop, the number of overnight stays by foreign visitors in June 2018 is 11 per cent higher compared to the same month in 2016.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the high growth percentages of 2017, the continued growth of foreign overnights in the first months of 2018 can be considered almost astonishing. Since the total number of overnight stays has decreased only modestly from last year's record level, it can be stated that tourism in Helsinki remains extremely busy. One notable feature in the first half-year's statistics is the situation in the competitor cities. In contrast to Helsinki, the number of overnights has continued to grow in Stockholm, Copenhagen and Oslo.

MUCH ATTENTION has been paid recently to the development of Chinese tourism in the Nordic area. This source market offers one explanation to why Helsinki is now (in the first summer months) following a different trajectory than the other capitals. The overnight stays by Chinese visitors have decreased in Helsinki all through the spring, with the single exception of February. A similar fall has not been observed in the competitor cities. At the same time, however, border-crossings by Chinese travellers have increased at Helsinki Airport. Judging by these double-digit growth percentages, it seems that more and more Chinese tourists continue their trip directly from Helsinki Airport to other cities.

INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, the same observation holds true for Japanese tourists. Border-crossings have increased but the number of bednights has declined. At the same in Stockholm, for example, the number of overnight stays by Japanese visitors has grown since March 2018 – precisely the moment when the drop was observed in Helsinki's statistics.

THE UPCOMING MONTHS will be interesting for those who follow travel statistics. During the first half of 2018, many important source markets have lost ground in terms of the overnight indicators. This fall has been at least partly compensated by the rise of new source countries. From this perspective, tourism in Helsinki appears to rest on a solid foundation. We cannot yet draw long-reaching conclusions about the possible diversion of Asian tourist fluxes to other Nordic destinations merely on the basis of the first six months of this year. However, clear signs about such a phenomenon are visible. The task for a tourism researcher for the autumn is to examine possible reasons underlying these developments. At this juncture, hypotheses are too uncertain to put forward.

How to reconcile tourism targets and sustainable development?

International travel has grown around the world for decades (UNWTO 2018). Although part of this growth is generated by people who had travelled previously, new customer groups have also entered the global tourism market. An increasing number of people have the leisure to travel and can afford it. If major catastrophes are avoided, international travel will also keep on growing in the near future, whether we want it or not. In this sense, the tourism business is different from other industries: as a phenomenon, it is extremely difficult to control.

THE GLOBAL TOURISM market is undergoing something of a revolution. Uncertainty factors for the future and functionality of the business are created by the immense volumes of tourism, as well as the pressure brought by climate change or political changes and movements. At the same time, the fast evolution of technologies is likely to affect the tourism market in ways that we cannot yet even anticipate. This vast and partly uncontrollable conceptual network is also closely linked to the demand for increasing sustainability in travel and tourism development.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM – formerly mainly a preoccupation of the academic community – has finally also begun to filter through to the mainstream debate. This is partly due to the negative effects of tourism becoming increasingly evident. We have witnessed this also in Helsinki. In our new tourism roadmap (City of Helsinki 2018a), a chapter has been consecrated to sustainable tourism, with attention paid to each of its three dimensions: ecological, socio-cultural and economic. Ensuring sustainable growth is also a key goal of the Helsinki City Strategy, and the tourism roadmap reflects this priority.

FROM AN ECOLOGICAL perspective, the growth of international travel is a global challenge, not least because of traffic emissions. It is necessary to discuss how the strain caused by tourism is distributed across regions, since it is already a major problem for many destination areas in different parts of the world. It can be ecologically more responsible to aim to direct the focus of tourism to areas where the necessary infrastructure is already in place and well-developed. Emphasising individualistic tourism may prove to be the wrong choice from the viewpoint of sustainable development. However, it must also be noted that areas where the number of tourists is consistently multiple times larger than that of local residents face a worrying future on all the dimensions of sustainability. The infrastructure of cities is often better developed than in tourism destinations relying on nature attractions. Nevertheless, tourism has also grown in many major metropolises to the extent that its negative effects have changed the attitudes of local residents. This is a dilemma because tourism is a lifeline for many cities. To ensure that it is also economically

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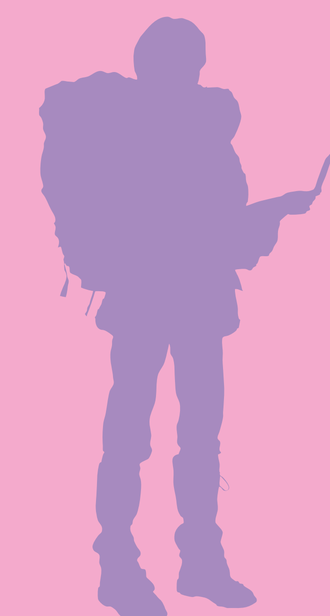

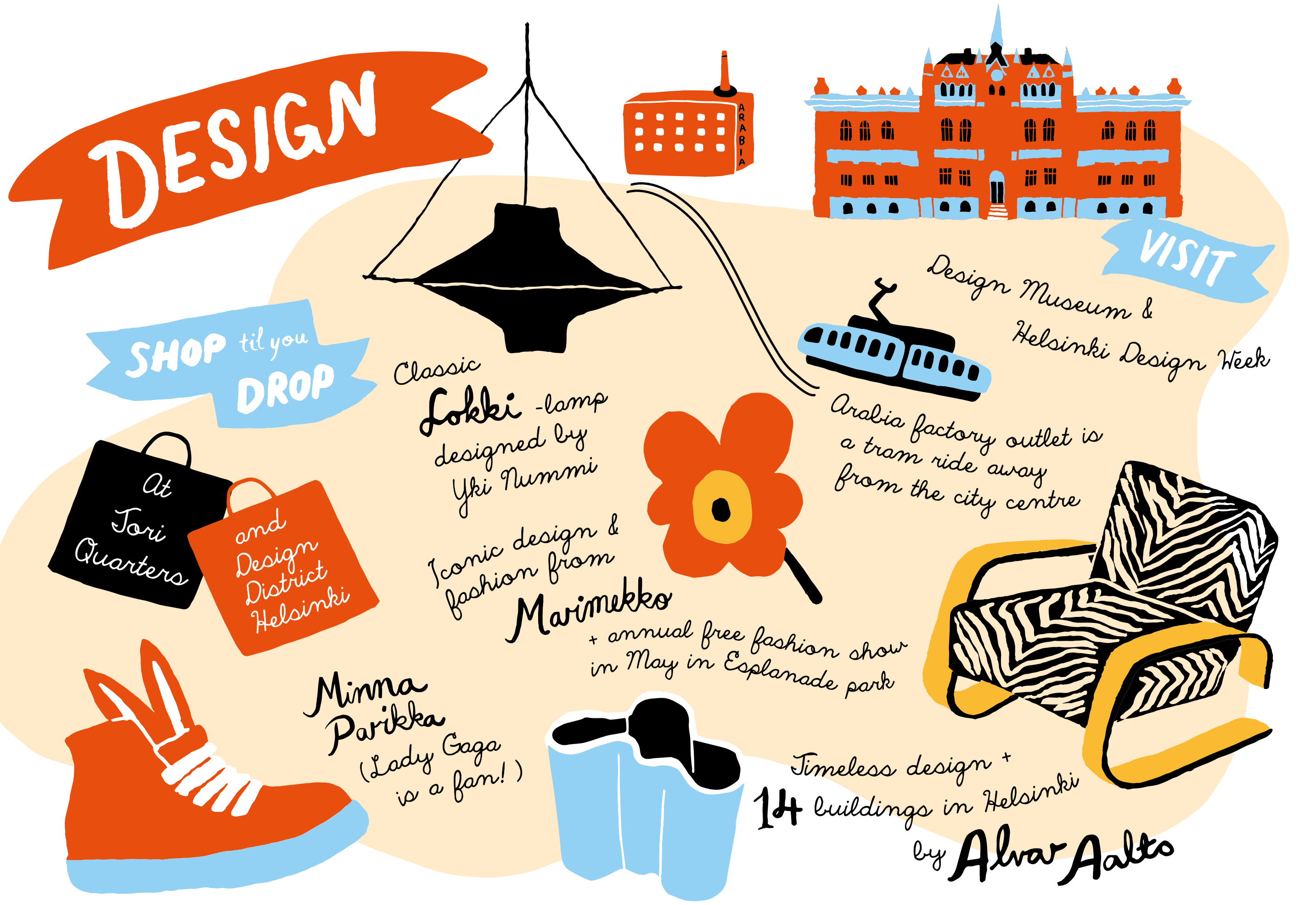

sustainable, cities must monitor its impact on the local economic structure. Too strong an emphasis on tourism can sap the vitality of other industries and lead to a one-sided economic structure. This does not seem to be currently a major risk for Helsinki but it may be an issue worth keeping in mind.

FROM A SOCIO-CULTURAL point of view, the key challenges are related to the local population. As stated in Helsinki's tourism roadmap, the city must ensure that it remains an attractive environment to live and work in, despite growing numbers of tourists. In other words, we should make sure that the local residents would consider the growth of tourism as a positive thing also in the future. If negative attitudes towards tourism become prevalent, this is likely to affect the demand for tourism services and consequently the multiple benefits of tourism.

BEING THE WORLD'S MOST functional city – as Helsinki has outlined its vision for the future in the City Strategy – would constitute a major competitive advantage also in terms of tourism and the international interest towards Helsinki. The strategy also states that Helsinki will invest in developing tourism and encourages all local stakeholders to present ideas that help enhance the attractiveness of the city (City of Helsinki 2018b). When a city is liveable and functional for its residents, it also works well for tourists. Moreover, any services or infrastructure projects that are created for tourists in the first place will also benefit the local residents.

PROMOTION OF TOURISM means not only a drive to boost up the tourist numbers but also creating better preconditions for the travel industry and – more generally – the strengthening of the city's international profile and protecting its interests abroad. An essential part of tourism development is controlling the growth of tourism as well as deliberate and goal-driven efforts to direct it. A balanced split between source markets is one of the central aims for Helsinki's tourism authorities. This dimension of sustainable tourism is monitored regularly, and – as stated above – the situation in Helsinki remains fairly stable in this regard.

WE CANNOT HAVE full control of tourism in the sense of being able to select what kind of people travel to Helsinki. However, marketing and coordination activities and strategic choices allow us to influence the course of tourism to a certain degree. The impact of various development measures may be more far-reaching than we would initially expect. Focussing on independent travellers, who spend a lot of money in the destination, may diminish the number of package tourists and affect the larger cash flows they collectively bring in, but this could be a positive development from an ecological point of view. Advantages and disadvantages must be weighed up case by case – but without losing sight of the larger picture.

GLOBAL TRENDS and economic fluctuations are not easily influenced. Although the growth of travel appears to us now as a mainly positive phenomenon, the situation may change in the future. We will be in a good position if we have weighed up our options beforehand. On a global scale, the dilemma of sustainable tourism has not yet been solved – and may never be. Almost all cities and regions have set some goals for the growth of tourism, but such goals are not unproblematic. On one hand, there is a desire to increase the volume of tourism (and consequently the income and international renown brought by tourists), but on the other hand, ensuring sustainability would probably entail some restrictions to tourism. Brave decisions, when taken voluntarily, can be the most difficult ones. ●

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CITY OF HELSINKI / JUSSI HELLSTEN

URBAN CIVIC ACTIVISM:
solutions for the governance of a self-organising urban community

A city is a community formed by city residents, and the role of the city administration is to answer their needs and ensure their conditions for success. Changes in the community and its operational environment require the administration to adapt to the new circumstances. In our previous article (see Helsinki Quarterly 1/2017) we discussed today's urban civic society and its new actors, methods and roles that are based on independent self-organisation. These we have termed ***urban civic activisms***.

PASI MÄENPÄÄ ● MAIJA FAEHNLE

We have characterised this new section of society as a *fourth sector* to which the city administration should, and eventually must, adapt. Identification of the resources of the civic society, strengthened by digitalisation, is necessary for achieving the strategic objectives of cities, such as ecological sustainability, participation of communities and individuals, and the vitality of neighbourhoods.

IN THE PRESENT article, we will locate areas of activity on which cities of the metropolitan area, particularly the administration of Helsinki, should focus in order to adapt to the 'fourth-sector' urban community in a coherent way. We will deal with challenges related to reforming city governance as well as some solutions to these challenges. We will present a model of hybrid governance as a desired state of city administration and will attempt to describe the steps leading towards this goal.

Re-wording of governance

A city organisation can enable people's self-motivated and self-organising activism successfully if it invests on the development of both its practices and operating culture. This requires new vocabulary, not only for adopting the new culture within the administration but also for communicating it to the urban community. One of the key measures we propose for the city is to put the following terminology to test when setting the goals for the administration. In Helsinki, one opportunity for doing this is while translating the city's new model of participation into concrete operative instructions for officials.

THE CONCEPT of urban civic activism directs attention to action, the diversity of actors and to the possibilities these activists bring to the development of cities. The challenge with this concept is that it is too easily equated with the traditional role of a citizen. However, people can function in an activist-like, 'fourth-sector' manner also in their professional roles – that is to say, by acting for the benefit of communities beyond one's own job description. A city official can be an activist, too. One can strive to avoid the image of separation between city residents and the city administration through a discourse where these are understood as one single urban community.

WITH THE RISE of urban civic activisms, the concept of *participation* must be understood in more diverse terms than before. City residents' participation in the development of their own city and living environment emerges on a more extensive scale than previously. The possibility to influence local affairs through administrative preparation and policy-making is, for many, a cornerstone of participation, but there are also more direct ways for participating and making a difference – such as when people help one another, engage in peer-to-peer transactions, act for the benefit of their community, or finance local projects. Not everyone needs to be an activist but, through their actions, activists also create conditions for the participation of those who are less active (see also Idström 2016).

THE TENDENCY of city administrators to talk of residents when referring to local people portrays them in a rather restricted role. People not only *live* in their neighbourhood but are also engaged in various activities in the neighbourhood, and in relationship with it. Moreover, the word 'resident' ignores the entrepreneurs and employees working in the area, or people taking part in leisure activities there, although all of these are also actors in the community. The Finnish word *kaupunkilainen* (literally 'one of the city') is a useful term because it refers to a person or other actor without emphasising the aspect of residence. The same applies to the word 'local(s)'.

ANOTHER PROBLEMATIC Finnish term sometimes used as a synonym for 'participation' is *osallistaminen* (literally 'making people engage in an activity'), because this word strongly implies the role of the public authority as an organiser (Westerink et al. 2016). Instead, it would often be more precise to speak of *crowdsourcing* in the sense that virtually any one can be a 'crowdsourcer'. This would support a detachment from top-down thinking. The term 'volunteer work' is usually linked to participation in activities arranged by a non-

People not only live in their neighbourhood but are also engaged in various activities in the neighbourhood, and in relationship with it.

governmental organisation (NGO) or a public administration organisation. In matters of taxation, similar activities are referred to as mutual aid. Such words are not ideally suited to capture the nature of urban civic activisms, and they should be replaced with terms such as *community activity* and *sharing of services*. The latter type of vocabulary would be helpful in managing these new forms of activity more coherently.

From 'Bureauslavia' to 'social media governance'

To enable urban civic activisms means tearing down obstacles to such activisms and creating preconditions for the emergence, dispersion and continuity of activisms also in the long term (Figure 1). This requires special investments in the development of a permissive atmosphere and readiness for experimentation. Many activisms fade out or do not emerge because the actors are needlessly afraid of running headlong into bureaucracy. We propose permissiveness communication in order to quell the fear of bureaucracy. This can be launched as a campaign designed together with activists, thus taking the first steps towards establishing *permissiveness communication* as part of the everyday communications of the city authorities. Part of this campaign can consist, for instance, of explaining what activities are already allowed (and being done) in the city without any official permits.

SUCCESSFUL ENCOUNTERS between activisms and authorities require interaction in the places frequented by activists, social media in particular. We propose that city organisations invest in the use of social media as an instrument of communication and, first and foremost, interaction and the production of information. As key measures, we suggest providing social media training for officials, ensuring support from management, and reserving time for public employees to work in social media. Matters under preparation should be opened for public perusal once they have been instituted, and they should be suitably communicated in social media from the start.

THE ROADMAP for social media governance that we describe in Figure 2 can be used to help the setting of goals for utilising social media. Not all public employees need to be 'social media pros', and they do not have to jump to the top in one go – initiating the learning process is the key thing. The city administration can also strive to meet activists outside of the online sphere, for instance through a regular series of meetings in the mould of the Helsinki Loves Developers 'open-door office' events. Various budgeting and design workshops can also be arranged, inviting service providers from the 'fourth sector'.

Bringing out resources through crowdsourcing

For identifying resources, the city organisation needs 'activism tentacles' – ways to detect budding activisms, or the potential and preconditions for the creation of such activisms. As measures, we propose a survey of the urban community's resources and an assessment of these resources, and we advise that such surveying is conducted constantly and by means of crowdsourcing. Helsinki has already experimented with outreach models with which these surveys could be coupled, such as the youth department's district surveys. This survey data can be produced through an open resource barometer that compiles quantitative and qualitative information, of which Helsinki's youth welfare reporting is an example.

THE RISE of urban activisms entails that the city authorities should adjust their democratic principle of equal treatment of city districts, so that the principle would not automatically preclude them from making use of potential activism resources in certain areas. Resource thinking can be hoisted to the side of democracy thinking by adopting a practice in which solutions are always weighed also in terms of the usability and renewability of the resources. In city planning, resource sensitivity means, for instance, that alternative plans (drawn up by groups of citizens) are identified as carrying more weight than an individual opinion. The city organisation can balance the residents' varying possibilities to take part in city planning by introducing support services available for everyone, such as allowing resident groups to 'borrow' professional planners, or fostering networking, or providing material packages and printing services.

THE LEADING IDEA in the shift to a better utilisation of activisms can be an orientation towards a sharing economy and decentralised co-production, which allows many other actors and platforms besides the city organisation to

*Varaamo allows anyone to browse and book premises owned by the City of Helsinki online.

FIGURE 1.

Solutions that enable the emergence, dispersion and continuity of urban civic activisms.

produce services and information, and organise crowdsourcing and planning. In this framework, the city's own under-utilised resources are made more widely available and the emergence of citizen-led sharing networks is supported. As measures, we propose extending the Varaamo service (which allows premises owned by the City of Helsinki to be booked online by private individuals and groups) to cover also private facilities, and developing libraries as hubs of sharing activities. The communications staff of the city can provide assistance for activisms that require more visibility in the urban space or online. This could help co-working spaces, for instance, to secure a sufficient number of users, allowing continuity for such services. Similarly, free server space provided by public authorities can be of significant help to some citizen-led platform economy services.

Participation and innovativeness in a self-organising city

The operations of an administration that supports urban civic activism may seem like a radical change compared to a 'traditional' public administration, but are they really that different in light of recent history? The *urban governance* discussion that has been going on in urban research since the 1990s has referred to a descent of public power from its former sovereign position to a more levelled network of partnerships, cooperation and negotiation with other operators (see e.g. Sager 2012). At the same time, the academic debate – focussing on the state of democracy and sustainable development – has also highlighted concepts such as *civic engagement* and *participation*, or more specifically the need to intensify the interaction between citizens and administration (see Kettunen 2002; Bäcklund et al. 2002).

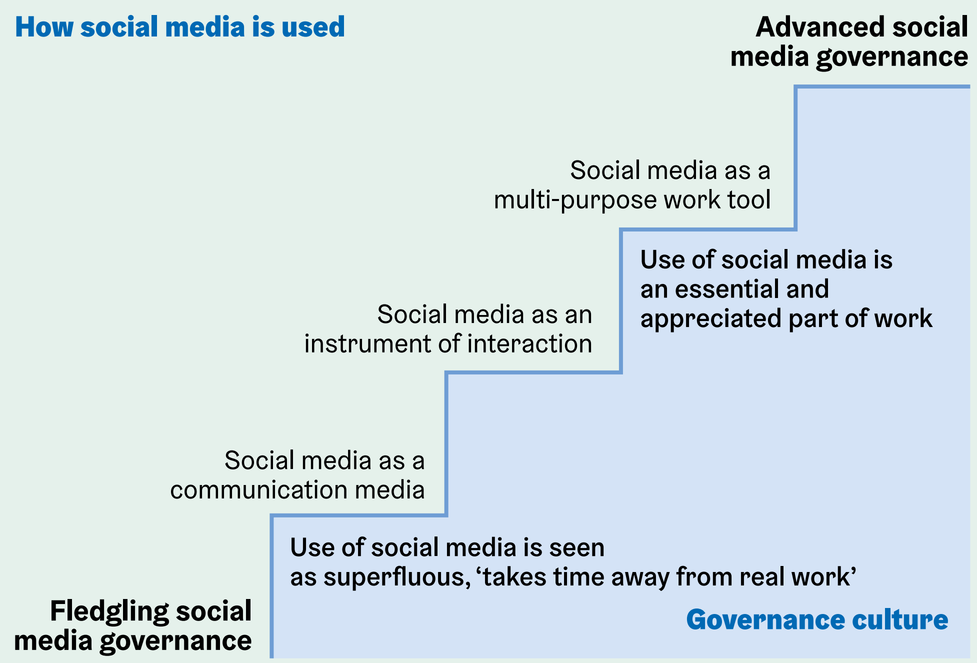

FIGURE 2.

Steps of social media governance. By following these steps, the public administration can adapt itself to the transfer of the civic society into social media. At its best, social media can become a multipurpose tool that helps assemble quick-response citizen groups in crisis situations and produce background information for planning by means of data analytics.

BY THE EARLY 2000S, innovation policy had become an important part of urban development through themes of information industry, the creative class and metropolitan politics. The concept of *triple helix* in innovation policy was expanded to the customer-oriented economy and augmented into a 'quadruple helix' that acknowledges a strong civic society (Kanninen 2005), thus spawning an innovation environment thinking that highlights the local aspect in the spirit of the quadruple helix. (Schulman & Mäenpää 2011.) The 3P partnership model of real estate development that emphasised the customer-oriented economy was expanded to a 4P model (*public-private-people partnership*) (Majamaa 2008). In the field of city planning, there was discussion of co-creation which was derived from a communicative, participatory planning paradigm and which also led to design-focused thinking emphasising user orientation.

THE DISCUSSION of urban civic activism as a resource of urban development can be understood as deriving from all these discussions. The question of city residents' participation is linked to the city's ability to adapt and create something new, in the conditions of deepening, technical-economic-social digitalization. Therefore, the challenge created by urban civic activism is not an entirely new subject but a continuation of previous development towards a stronger position for city residents in urban development. This challenge culminates in the ability of cities to merge the dimensions of participation and innovativeness into a goal of urban policy that is democratically legitimate and can be operationalised as administrative processes.

MOVING TOWARDS hybrid governance A description of the desired state of a self-organising city can be started in terms of the relevant concepts. In analyses that focus mainly on city planning, the conceptual premise is usually *co-planning* or *co-design*, whereas the concept of *co-governance* is often used in analyses with a broader scope. (Horelli 2013.) The latter term refers to a paradigm in which the administration shares its formal decision-making power with communities. Definitions focussing on the concept of partnership, on their part, tend to emphasise contracts between the parties. For our analysis, with its emphasis on the 'fourth sector', neither the sharing of decision-making power nor the contractual basis of cooperation would appear relevant for describing the conceptual structure.

AS A CONCEPTUAL premise, we propose the term *hybrid governance*, deriving, on one hand, from the concept of *hybrid organisation* arising from organisational studies (Billis 2010) and its derivative *hybrid administration* (Heinonen & Ruotsalainen 2017), on the other hand. A 'hybrid organisation' refers to an organisation that mixes the elements, values and operating methods of different sectors of society.

THE FUTUROLOGISTS Heinonen and Ruotsalainen, on their part, have developed a model of predictive hybrid governance that involves systematic and comprehensive activity by the administration in order to predictively understand its operating environment, taking into account and working together with the residents, their peer-to-peer networks and other local actors (op. cit.). Peer-to-peer networks largely refer to the same phenomenon as urban civic activisms, because these activisms typically comprise mutual, social media-based and principally non-hierarchical networks between peers.

SPECIFYING HYBRID ADMINISTRATION as hybrid governance means shifting attention from the system, the decision-making power and contracts to interaction processes. In our opinion, the concept of hybrid governance is best suited to describing the view of the future city opened up by urban activisms, not least because it involves a combination of operators, operating methods and processes that are diverse and not commensurate in terms of values and operating logic.

URBAN CIVIC ACTIVISTS often seek cooperation with different parties, including the city administration, but they do not wish to melt their identity and operating methods with those of others, fearing that they would thus diminish their own role as actors. Primarily, these informal communities want to remain communities, and peer-to-peer networks want to remain peer-to-peer networks, cherishing their communal identity, values and operating methods – sometimes this seems to be an end in itself. Operation of the fourth sector is, by its nature, occasional and usually does not constitute an established partner for the city organisation. The local authorities, on their part, cannot share responsibility for decisions with these civic actors, and cannot make legally binding contracts where the other party is not a legal entity. This is why hybrid governance describes the paradigm better than co-governance or partnership.

FIGURE 3.

Development of the relationship between activisms and city administration, and the levels of co-operation in hybrid governance.

FIGURE 4.

Three examples of the levels of collaboration under hybrid governance between the city administration and the fourth sector.

Steps to hybrid governance

Hybrid governance should not be approached as an ideal goal of development but rather as multilevel readiness to act together with the fourth sector in a coherent way. The city authorities can move towards the operating methods of hybrid governance on a case-by-case basis, learning and experimenting. Figure 3 describes a possible progress in the utilisation of urban civic activism in city administration as well as the corresponding levels of co-operation on the way to deeper hybrid governance.

Even at its most advanced level, hybrid governance must remain porous to the extent that the city administration can choose the approach it applies on a case-by-case basis. Sometimes the authorities may need to assess if it is reasonable to restrict their role to simply fostering a permissive atmosphere – for instance, when dealing with strongly ideological actors. In other cases, a more supportive and more enabling approach can be taken, such as when dealing with the new kinds of neighbourhood movements. These are a valuable partner alongside with the more traditional district associations and clubs in the formation of the neighbourhood community, including as a source of information and as representative bodies. An example of deeper hybrid governance would be, for instance, linking participatory budgeting with a crowdsourcing campaign that creates local services.

Figure 4 shows what the levels of collaboration can signify in practice, in three different cases. In the examples cited in the figure, the City of Helsinki currently operates mostly at levels 1 to 3. In spring 2017, the Public Works Department gave the REKO food distribution network in the Viikki district a free event permit as a precedent, in line with earlier guidelines given by the authority administering market squares in Inner Helsinki. In the field of peer-to-peer lending, the city libraries have acted as a hub for the Kuinoma peer-to-peer service. Furthermore, the officials in charge of city planning regularly take part in planning-related discussions in social media groups and utilise them as a channel for civic engagement. In these groups, the officials discuss with alternative-planning activists, comparing the city's own draft plans and alternative plans drawn up by the activists.

Rain, sun and gardening

As a question of urban policy, the challenge posed to cities by urban civic activism and the fourth sector largely reverts to digitalisation, and it represents the more recent social-technological phase of digitalisation that has followed the initial technology-oriented stage. The fourth sector grows from the ability of internet platforms to enable and foster communication, interaction, like-mindedness, self-organisation and activity in a cultural atmosphere dominated by the spirit of hacker ethics, information sharing and co-creation (see Himanen 2001), as well as ethical thinking linked to sustainable development in different ways. As a result, the city community begins to consist of urban operators and their networks instead of 'residents' and 'customers'. The subject of governance changes, and a new concept of democracy as empowerment for direct participation in developing one's own living environment is attached to that subject.

Peer-to-peer networks generated by a digitalisation that extends its tentacles ever deeper into society, as well as their sharing-based platform activities, must be accepted as the new logic that reconstructs urban societies. This means that the city can no longer be developed with a slavish devotion to geographic equality, because the fourth sector does not rise and operate in the same way in all districts and at all times. Otherwise, too many of the urban communities' resources end up wasted.

The city authorities can still act like rain that nourishes the entire cityscape. But it must also learn to be a sun that, according to the 'topography' of the urban community, shines on different places in different ways, in concordance with how each of these spots seems to flourish. In addition, the local public authority must act as a gardener who can pick the best plants and plant them in new locations, understanding where each flower will bloom and knowing how to make a tree growing from a sprout to bear fruit. ●

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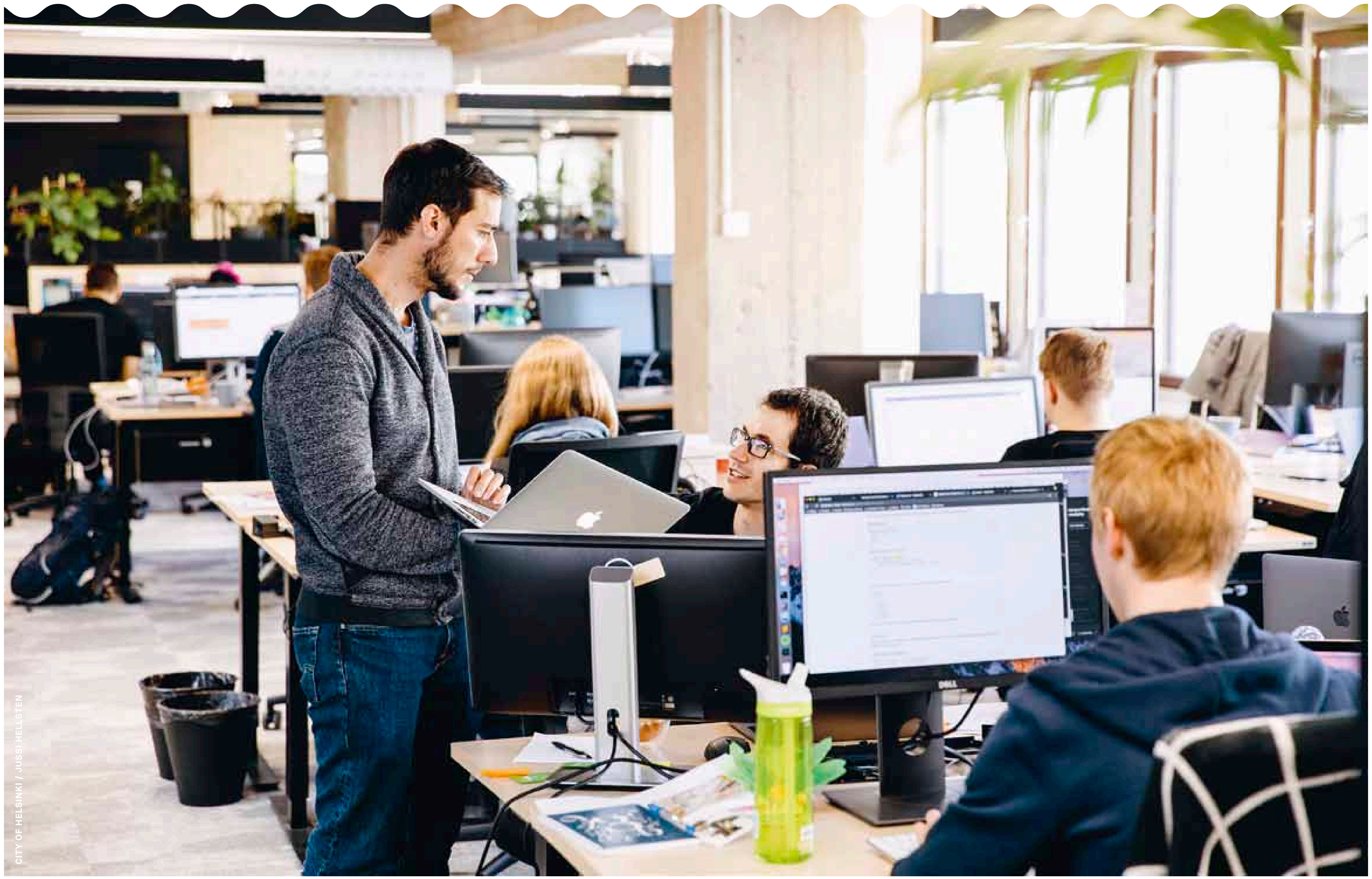
CITY OF HELSINKI / JUSSI HELLSTEN

> *The contemporary knowledge-based economies increasingly rely on businesses located in urban areas and on their capacity for innovations.*

TAMÁS LAHDELMA

Geographical proximity and employee mobility in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area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Geographically closer business establishments form stronger and denser networks generated by employee mobility in urban regions, and the networks created as a result of employees switching jobs are linked to higher productivity in business establishments. This supports the idea that employee mobility enhances the productivity and competitiveness of businesses, industries and regions. The findings presented in this article suggest that land use planning and the development of business clusters in urban areas could help improve the functioning of the labour market and increase business opportunities for enterprises.

Background

The contemporary knowledge-based economies increasingly rely on businesses located in urban areas and on their capacity for innovations. Since the urban structure influences the operational preconditions and business activities of companies, land use and the way it is managed is a crucial factor for developing the vitality and attractiveness of urban regions. It has been shown that economic productivity increases along with a varied industrial structure in urban regions, the geographic proximity of businesses in the same industry and a high job density (Loikkanen & Susiluoto 2011; Loikkanen 2013). The purpose of our study is to look at organisation-level mechanisms underlying these advantages of agglomeration, and we will do so by analysing how the urban structure affects the formation of networks between companies and thus economic productivity. We approach the issue through methods of network analysis focussing on how the geographic proximity of knowledge-intensive businesses in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area influences workforce mobility and how this mobility is in turn linked to business activities.

Employee mobility between companies is seen as an important factor for the development of regional and urban economies and innovation.

THERE IS A RANGE of general research findings showing how networks between companies, on one hand, and between businesses and research organisations, on the other hand, have positive effects on innovation, knowledge capital, competitiveness and growth. Networking is considered to lead to the spread of knowledge and innovations between businesses, which increases their productivity (e.g. Audretsch & Feldman 2004). However, research literature often treats networking as a phenomenon on a rather general level, although the methods of network analysis in fact also allow a closer examination of local networks (e.g. Ter Wal & Boschma 2009; Maggioni & Uberti 2011).

Context

Economic activities are strongly concentrated in urban areas, and research and development, in particular, are locally agglomerated (Carlino et al. 2012). Agglomeration benefits brought about by clustered economic activities have been seen to bear a close relationship to the processes of the creation and spread of knowledge. At the same time, it has been predicted that evolution in information technologies may promote the geographical dispersion of innovation activities (Asheim & Gertler 2005). However, when we assess the role of geographic proximity we have to consider that companies can also be close in other ways apart from geography. It is essential to make an analytical distinction between the geographic and organisational dimensions of proximity (Boschma 2005). Geographic proximity is not, per se, a sufficient condition for the transfer of knowledge, and active participation in networks of knowledge exchange is necessary. Employing people from rival businesses, cooperation partners or other companies can be an important way of accessing such networks (Breschi & Lissoni 2003).

THUS, EMPLOYEE MOBILITY between companies is seen as an important factor for the development of regional and urban economies and innovation. Research suggests that job switches between businesses promote structural change in the local job market and boost productivity (Maliranta et al. 2008; Böckerman & Maliranta 2012; Piekkola 2015). Transferring from one employer to another, employees not only move to a new workplace network, but they also create ties between the old network and the new one, thereby facilitating the spread of knowledge and ideas (Granovetter 1995). Although staff changing jobs can also have drawbacks for employers – such as losing a skilled employee to a rival company – studies maintain that employee mobility promotes learning processes within companies as well as their business success (e.g. Combes & Duranton 2006).

MODELLING EMPLOYEE MOBILITY should take into account not only organisational similarity but also the location of businesses in the urban area. In our statistical analysis, the purpose of a locational variable that controls area effects is to identify factors influencing the companies' workforce demand or their locational decisions – factors that cannot be accounted for in the model – such as the companies' finance situation

(Haaparanta & Piekkola 2006) or their investments in the organisation (Piekkola 2015). When assessing the interrelation between geographic proximity and employee mobility, controlling for the location of companies is essential since the effects relating to the companies' internal dynamics can be spatially distributed – as was the case with the reorganisation of the electronics industry and related business services in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area during the period of our study. Furthermore, location-related costs based on land prices influence the locational choices of companies so that different kinds of companies locate in different cost zones. This, in turn, influences the opportunities of companies to build networks (Arzaghi 2005).

ORGANISATIONAL PROXIMITY – which, like geographic proximity, has an important impact on the spread of knowledge – is strongly linked to the role of social capital in local networks. The concept of social capital is defined and used in literature in numerous ways. In the present study we distinguish between two interpretations of the concept: one focussing on social cohesion, the other focussing on "mediation" across "structural holes". According to the concept of social capital understood as social cohesion, strong and dense relationships give network members the kind of opportunities to achieve their goals that they would otherwise lack. The interpretation that focusses on social capital as mediation across structural holes emphasises, in turn, the ties between groups or communities that allow for transfer of ideas and resources between them. According to the latter view, a dense network facilitates goal achievement only to a certain degree, since strong cohesion may lead to the sharing of common rather than new information.

Research data

In our study, we have used employees' professional mobility between business establishments as an indicator of ties between organisations. We examined the job transfers on the basis of individual-level data from Statistics Finland's employment statistics. We describe these links between organisations in terms of both the in- and the outflow of employees, because, according to research literature on employee mobility, companies learn from both new employees (e.g. Song et al. 2003) and from personnel who have moved to

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other organisations (t.ex. Corredoira & Rosenkopf 2010).

THE ASSEMBLED DATA covers job changes between business establishments in the knowledge-intensive industries in Helsinki Metropolitan Area in the years 2008–2012. During that period, a total of 52,500 job changes occurred in the selected industries. In our study, we classify as knowledge-intensive the following industries in the service and technology sectors:

- research and development
- data processing
- business services
- private and public education
- software publishing
- software industry
- information services
- electric and electronics industry
- other metal industry

IN 2012, these industries together accounted for around 18,400 workplaces in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, with approximately 158,800 employees in total (HSY 2013). The labour flow networks identified in the study included 7,820 business establishments, which, during the period studied, had a total of 136,300 employees on average.

USING STATISTICS FINLAND'S CODES for establishments and enterprises we combined our individual-level employment data with information on the location and business activities of establishments. The latter were obtained from Statistics Finland's Business Register and Statistics Finland's data on companies' R&D and export activities and the educational level of the employees within the organisations. By combining the results of the network analysis based on employment statistics with data on companies' locations and business activities, we were able to analyse the interrelations of the different forms of proximity between workplaces and their position in the network, on one hand, and their network position and their business activities, on the other hand.

THE NETWORK PERSPECTIVE that we applied differs in terms of the methods of statistical analysis from the kind of economic research on agglomeration advantages that relies on econometric modelling. Econometric models are usually based on the assumption of companies functioning independently of each other, only reacting to consumer demand (Granovetter 1985). While autocorrelation models in spatial econometrics identify interdependence between regions, network analysis methods enable an analysis of dependences between companies. In the network-analytical approach, individuals or organisations are placed in the network of social and economic relations, and the main focus of the analysis is, expressly, on the interdependences between actors (c.f. Abbott 1997).

Findings

In the light of our study, employee mobility and a common labour market – which both are important for the spread of knowledge – seem to have a strong spatial dimension: our statistical analysis shows that geographic proximity is linked to employee mobility between establishments also when other forms of proximity and organisational factors have been taken into account. Our findings suggest that workplaces located closer[1] to each other in the urban area form both stronger and denser labour flow networks[2]. In the knowledge-intensive industries in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area that were the focus of our study, one-quarter of job changes occurred between workplaces located under one kilometre from each other and half within four kilometres. The city centre and the fringe areas of Inner Helsinki, as well as the Otaniemi–Tapiola–Leppävaara axis in Espoo, form the strongest agglomeration of labour flows in knowledge-intensive industries in the capital region, complemented by Pitäjänmäki and the more peripheral employment zones in the region.

THE RELATIONSHIP OBSERVED between proximity and workforce mobility can be seen as supporting the view that matching between employers and employees take place not only through the price mechanisms of the labour market, but that the processes of job seeking are also affected by social factors that require close personal contact (Granovetter 1995). Employee mobility between companies links networks together, which creates social cohesion between these companies. This creates networks that can enhance mobility even further. The social processes that influence job seeking may be local, because short distances facilitate contacts between people and enable the kind of knowledge exchange that happens more easily through face-to-face interaction (cf. Storper & Venables 2004). This can be the case especially in well-networked knowledge-intensive service industries where informal interaction plays a key role for economic activities (Arzaghi & Henderson 2008). With the rapid development of

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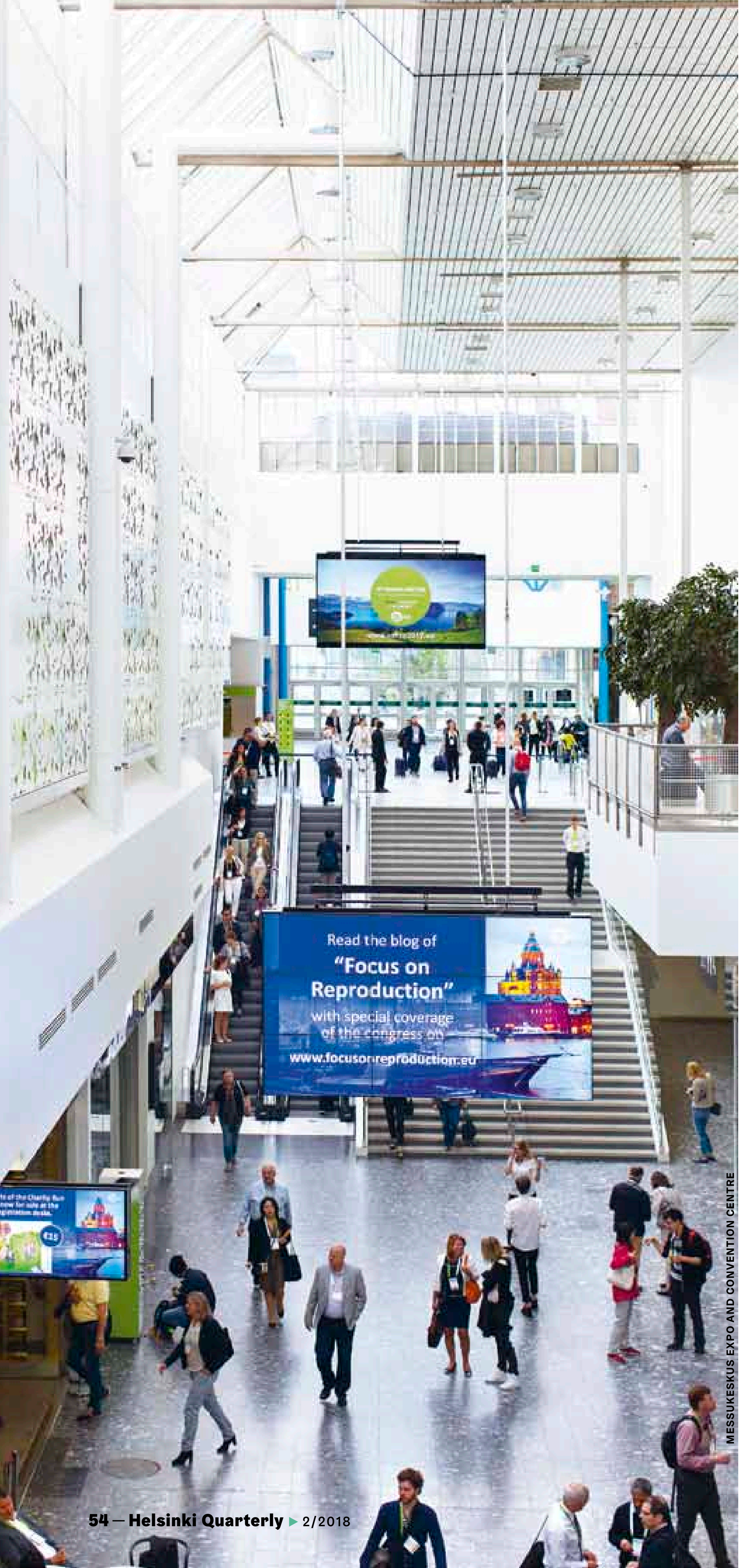
1) The geographic distance between business establishments is measured as the average distance weighted by the number of employees switching jobs between the establishments during the period studied. The distance between the establishments has been calculated at postal code area level, the most detailed level of location data that Statistics Finland delivers. For each postal area, a geographic point of gravity has been computed as an average weighted with the floor area of its commercial properties. The distance between postal code areas has been computed as the shortest distance between the areas' points of gravity.

2) The strength of the labour flow network is the average of the number of job switches. The density of the network was computed by taking the number of actual reciprocal contacts between business establishments linked to one another through job changes, and comparing this to the number of all potential contacts within the labour flow network of a business establishment.



MESSUKESKUS EXPO AND CONVENTION CENTRE

information technologies, networks are no longer necessarily geographically limited, but spatial proximity still seems to be of importance for economic activity.

NETWORKING THROUGH switches of jobs has – as our findings suggest – a positive correlation with higher productivity at workplaces measured in our study in terms of turnover per employee. This supports the view that workforce mobility raises productivity and competitiveness in businesses, industries and regions (e.g. Maliranta et al. 2008; Böckerman & Maliranta 2012; Piekkola 2015). The link between productivity and the network contacts made when people change jobs is interesting also from the perspective of social capital theories, since the different approaches have opposing views on how networks generate social capital.

ACCORDING TO OUR STUDY, productivity of establishments appears to have a positive correlation with strong and dense network ties within the labour flow networks – more so than brokering relationships, considered to be essential for the access to new ideas, information sources and resources and thus for competitiveness. This may be explained by the fact that employee mobility is limited and that even the densest labour flow networks are consequently rather sparse. Thus also the denser networks include actors who are not connected with each other in such a way as to provide grounds for brokerage and ensure them a favourable position in terms of information and resource flows. However, the selection of businesses with different levels of productivity into different network positions makes it difficult to assess the impact of network structures on productivity.

Conclusions

Although geographic proximity plays its role in parallel and in interaction with organisational forms of proximity, and the labour flow networks and the productivity of businesses are, in turn, connected through complex interrelations, our primary conclusion from viewpoint of land use planning is that these phenomena correlate positively with one another. If proximity between companies correlates with increasing employee mobility, the local labour market may be made more functional by planning land use in a way that guarantees better conditions for businesses to be located near each other.

IN 2015, there were about 610,000 jobs in Helsinki Metropolitan Area, of which 160,000, or one quarter, were in the knowledge-intensive industries that were the scope of our study (HSY 2016). These industries account for almost all of the exports of services in the metropolitan area and the majority in Finland as a whole. Through the technology industry, they also account for the majority of the exports of goods in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. In a longer perspective, the growth of production and jobs has been significantly faster in the knowledge-intensive industries than in all industries on average. These industries also represent, in terms of both ownership and personnel, the most international part of the Finnish economy. Creating favourable conditions for knowledge-intensive industries to locate and function well is of great importance for economic development in both the metropolitan area and Finland in general.

COMPANIES LOCATE into urban areas and create contacts with other businesses and stakeholders on the basis of their own business criteria. However, cities can develop the conditions for successful business clusters. The supply of offices is crucial, as are transit connections and local services for companies and their employees. Our findings suggest that it would be important for the knowledge-intensive industries in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area that the cities focus their support on already existing clusters in order to help these zones grow larger, denser, more varied and more functional. To achieve this, local authorities must enable infill construction and the renewal of old structures so that the supply of offices can adapt to the changing needs of enterprises in the attractive zones. To ensure the conditions for successful entrepreneurship, it is also vital to exploit the potential of new rail connections and easily accessible station areas in developing the availability of offices. ●

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Cities can develop the conditions for successful business clusters. The supply of offices is crucial, as are transit connections and local services for companies and their employees.

OSKARI HARJUNEN

Housing market has already anticipated the effects of the WEST METRO

The opening of the Helsinki's western metro line finally took place in November 2017, over a year after the latest planned opening date. Despite this, the new metro line has already influenced the housing market around its stations for several years. My research shows that the West Metro has raised the housing prices by approximately four per cent in the immediate vicinity of the new stations, where the travel time saved due to the metro will be the most tangible.

What do the housing prices say about the effects of the West Metro?

The most obvious effect of a major traffic investment such as the West Metro is the improved accessibility in the neighbourhood of the future stations. The new metro line offers a fast, reliable connection to the city centre of Helsinki as well as to other stations, shortening travel times and improving the comfort of travel. This means that the metro reduces the travel costs of the people living in the area. Due to these obvious effects, it is likely that the metro investment will increase the desirability of the neighbourhoods near the stations and the demand for housing, which will eventually raise the housing prices. Improved accessibility is therefore capitalised in the housing prices.

ON THE OTHER HAND, the West Metro may lengthen travel times in some areas and make travel more difficult. This is because the West Metro is part of a larger reform of the transport system, which includes the reorganisation of the existing bus routes. In the reorganisation, metro feeder lines will replace bus routes that connected suburbs directly to the Helsinki city centre. In practice, this means that those who live further away from the new metro stations will have to use two different modes of transport to visit the city centre. The fact that the accessibility of the city centre has been thus reduced may slow down the price development of the areas with feeder traffic. On the other hand, the new metro line will also improve the accessibility of other metro stations in these areas, which will raise the housing prices correspondingly. In addition to this, the development of an urban structure that follows the metro will bring more local services and jobs to the vicinity of the metro stations, possibly reducing the importance of the accessibility of the city centre. Due to these opposing effects, it is unclear how the changes in accessibility will eventually affect the housing prices in the feeder traffic areas.

BESIDES THE DIRECT travel costs, the West Metro also affects the desirability of the neighbouring areas indirectly. With better accessibility, the urban structure in the vicinity of the stations can be made more compact. Densification will bring more residents, services and investments to the areas, which increases not only their desirability but also the housing price level. A large number of travellers on feeder lines passing through the station areas may further increase the offer of services, feeding the positive price development. On the other hand, the large number of people passing through and living in the neighbourhood of the stations may also diminish the attractiveness of the area, if the constant streams of people cause congestion in the traffic or services, or lead to general unrest or even increased crime in the neighbourhood of the stations.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF a new metro line may also have several other effects that are eventually capitalised in housing prices. Some of these effects raise the housing prices, while others lower the price level. In practice, it is impossible to identify all effects, but the use of housing prices in connection with a good study design makes it possible – by looking at the homebuyers' willingness to pay – to discover the overall impact on the residents of the neighbouring areas.

BASED ON economic theory, it is to be expected that the housing market will anticipate the future effects of traffic investments after the details of the investment have been published. This means that it is possible to assess the effects of the West Metro from the point of view of the residents of the area already during construction, before the metro line is completed.

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> ***West Metro*** *affects the desirability of the nearby areas also indirectly.*

How was the research conducted?

The present research investigated how the housing market reacted to the changes in the urban structure that occurred as a result of the first phase of the West Metro in the vicinity of the stations during the construction period of the metro line. The study focussed on the geographical scope, timing and average magnitude of the effect on price.

THE HOUSING PRICE data of the Central Federation of Finnish Real Estate Agencies (KVKL) was used as the basis for the analyses. The data is based on the real estate sales by the largest agencies and it covers the construction period until 2016. In addition to the purchase prices, the data also includes comprehensive information on the characteristics of the dwellings as well as their exact locations. The location information made it possible to place the properties on the map, which enabled a precise assessment of the effects of the metro at various distances from the new stations.

IN AN IDEAL SITUATION, the answer to the research question would include information on how the housing prices would have developed in the target area if the construction of the metro had not started. In that case, the difference in housing prices between the alternate scenarios would reveal the overall effect of the metro on housing prices. However, it is not possible to observe alternate realities, and therefore the price comparison must be implemented by using a different, carefully selected reference area.

IN THE STUDY, the effect of the metro was assessed based on the price development of the target and reference areas by using the difference-in-differences (DID) method, which has been used in various published studies on the effects of traffic investments (see for example Billings 2011 or Gibbons and Machin 2005). The most important requirement of this method is that the housing prices in the target and reference areas need to have developed in a similar fashion before the construction of the metro was announced. If this is the case, the differences in price development after the metro announcement can be interpreted as due to anticipation by the housing market (and thus related to the metro). In the study, residential areas in the vicinity of commuter train stations in Helsinki and Espoo were used as reference areas, excluding the Helsinki city centre.

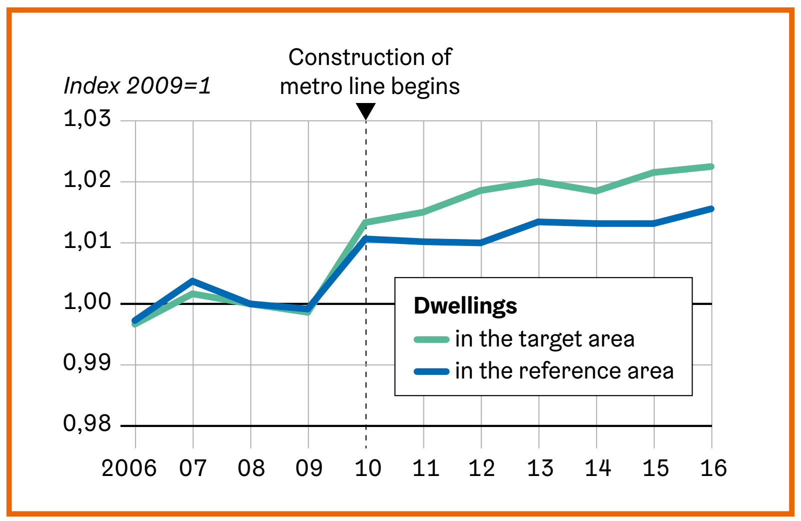
How has the West Metro affected the housing prices?

The study showed that the housing market had anticipated the effects of the West Metro already years before the metro started to operate. The results also reveal that the benefits of the metro are focused specifically on the immediate vicinity of the metro stations. The metro line project has raised the housing prices by approximately four per cent on average within a radius of 800 metres from the new metro stations, which corresponds to a rise of approximately 160 euros in the dwelling prices by square metre. Further away, the metro construction has not affected housing

> M
>
> ***The housing market*** *had anticipated the effects of the West Metro already years before the metro started to operate.*

FIGURE 1.

Housing price indexes by the square metre in the target and reference areas. Index value in 2009=1.



prices. Based on the results, it would seem, therefore, that the benefits brought by the metro clearly overcome its disadvantages in the vicinity of the new stations, while further away the effects cancel each other out. The results of the study are in line with international findings, according to which the effects of traffic investments are the largest within walking distance of stations (see for example Gibbons & Machin 2005).

THE STUDY SHOWED that the price increase in the vicinity of metro stations was specifically due to the construction of the metro and that the experimental design allowed us to control for the other factors influencing housing prices. In the diagram showing the annual prices per square metre (see Figure 1.), it can be seen that the housing prices developed from 2006 to 2009 in a very similar manner between the target and reference groups. Correspondingly, the price trends separate from each other quickly within a few years from the start of the construction of the metro in early 2010. The similarity of the price trends before the construction of the metro and the positive effect on price in the target areas after the construction of the metro began are a strong indication that the observed difference in prices is specifically due to the metro.

THE WEST METRO has had a major impact on the overall value of the existing housing stock, and thereby also

> *This study also investigated the potential effects in the vicinity of the* ***East Metro*** *stations. Based on the results, the construction of the* ***West Metro*** *has not affected housing prices in the east.*

> *The metro line project has raised the housing prices by about 4 %*

the wellbeing of the residents, already before it was opened, even though the effect on price is only focused on the immediate vicinity of the new metro stations, not more widely on the neighbouring areas of the stations. This is due to the relatively dense existing urban structure close to the new metro stations. In 2016, the areas with a positive effect on price within a radius of 800 metres from the new metro stations had nearly 28,000 residents within a total of 1.7 million square metres of housing. It is possible to make a rough estimate on the magnitude of the overall effect in euros in the light of these statistics on the urban structure and the results of this study. Based on the results of the estimation, the West Metro has raised the average housing prices per square metre by approximately 160 euros, meaning that the value of the housing stock as a whole has increased by nearly 300 million euros due to the metro.

IN PUBLIC DISCUSSION, it has been noted that the construction of the West Metro could also affect housing prices along the eastern part of the existing metro line, especially close to the old metro stations, which would further increase the direct benefits of the metro. The assumed increase of prices in the east is based on the idea that the West Metro enables smooth commuter traffic from East Helsinki to South Espoo, where a considerable number of jobs are located. This study also investigated the potential effects in the vicinity of the East Metro stations. However, based on the results, the construction of the West Metro has not affected housing prices along the East Metro by 2016.

What lessons to learn from the study?

The strength of the research design used is that it studies the actual choices made by homebuyers. These choices are based on the actual budget limitations of the families and careful consideration of the characteristics of the home and the neighbourhood. Using only survey data, for example, it would be very difficult to discover what families truly value in traffic investments. Even if surveys could reveal that the families in the target areas value the renewal brought by the West Metro, they nevertheless cannot reliably answer the question of how much these families would be prepared to pay for the renewal.

IN ADDITION TO the scientific contribution, the research results are also useful from the point of view of impact analyses related to traffic investments. The study illustrates how housing prices can be used in connection with a good research design as a part of the impact assessment of traffic investments. With the area of influence defined in the study and the average magnitude of the effect on price, it is possible to calculate the overall effect on the wellbeing of the residents of the target areas. At this juncture, however, it is important to remember that a large number of potential benefits are linked to a traffic investment such as a new metro line, and defining the benefits experienced by the residents of the target areas is not enough to assess the cost-effectiveness of the metro investment. That would require information on the total benefits for the whole society. In addition to the effect

on the housing market, they also include other effects that may become evident locally or more widely at the level of the entire urban area in issues such as the productivity of companies, the labour market, the commodities market and the commercial property market.

IN ADDITION TO impact assessments, the research results can also be used directly in the planning of the urban structure, and especially the development of the station areas along the West Metro and its forthcoming extension. Based on the results, the urban structure should be developed and densified especially within walking distance of the new metro stations, so that the increase in land value could be utilised as effectively as possible. ●

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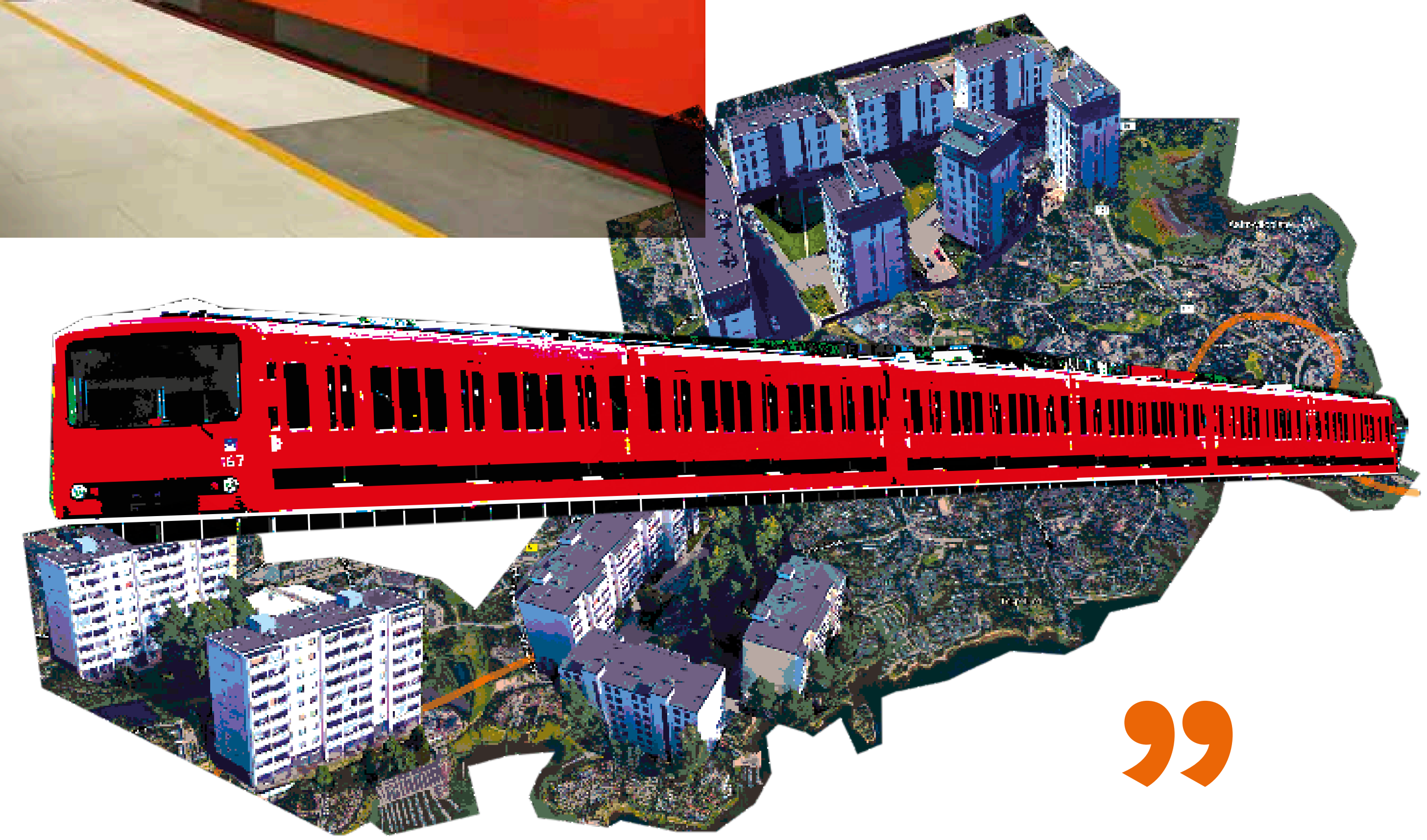


> *The research design allows us to study the real choices of homebuyers.*


CITY OF HELSINKI / RIKU PIHLANTO

Number of children
on the rise particularly in Inner Helsinki

ARI NISKA

For the first time in fifty years, a considerable part of the growth in the child population of Helsinki occurs in the existing housing stock and infill areas. Today, there are more children in the city than at any time since the mid-1970s. This article looks at the development of the number and proportion of 0–15-year-olds in Helsinki's population between 1962 and 2017.

IN the following, we examine the extent to which the number of 0–6-year-olds and 7–15-year-olds has increased in Helsinki in the last few years, and in which parts of the city. Apart from the numbers by district and the relative change, we also look at the proportion of children in neighbourhoods and attempt to determine what kind of neighbourhoods have seen the strongest increase. The foremost observation is that the vast majority of this growth in recent years – as opposed to earlier periods – has occurred in Inner Helsinki and its vicinity, in the existing housing stock and infill development areas.

Development of the number of children in Helsinki: four phases

Changes in the number of children in Helsinki during the last fifty years can be said to have occurred in four phases. During the first one, from late 1960s to mid-1980s, the number of children fell markedly. The number of 0–15-year-olds in Helsinki was at its largest in 1968, namely 112,298, and it decreased by one third to 76,302 in 1986 – a dramatic drop in less than twenty years (Figure 1).

RAPIDLY FALLING birth rates was a common phenomenon in industrial countries such as Finland in the 1960s and 70s. Background factors included improved and more widespread contraception, higher female attendance in education and work and the increased predominance of the one- or two-child family model.

ANOTHER FACTOR that reduced Helsinki's child population was the rapid realisation of housing development projects in the 1960s and 70s in the neighbouring municipalities, Espoo and Vantaa. Old dwellings in Inner Helsinki were increasingly seen as inadequately equipped – and the urban environment as unsuitable for children – in comparison with the new suburban dwellings and environments (Hankonen 1994).

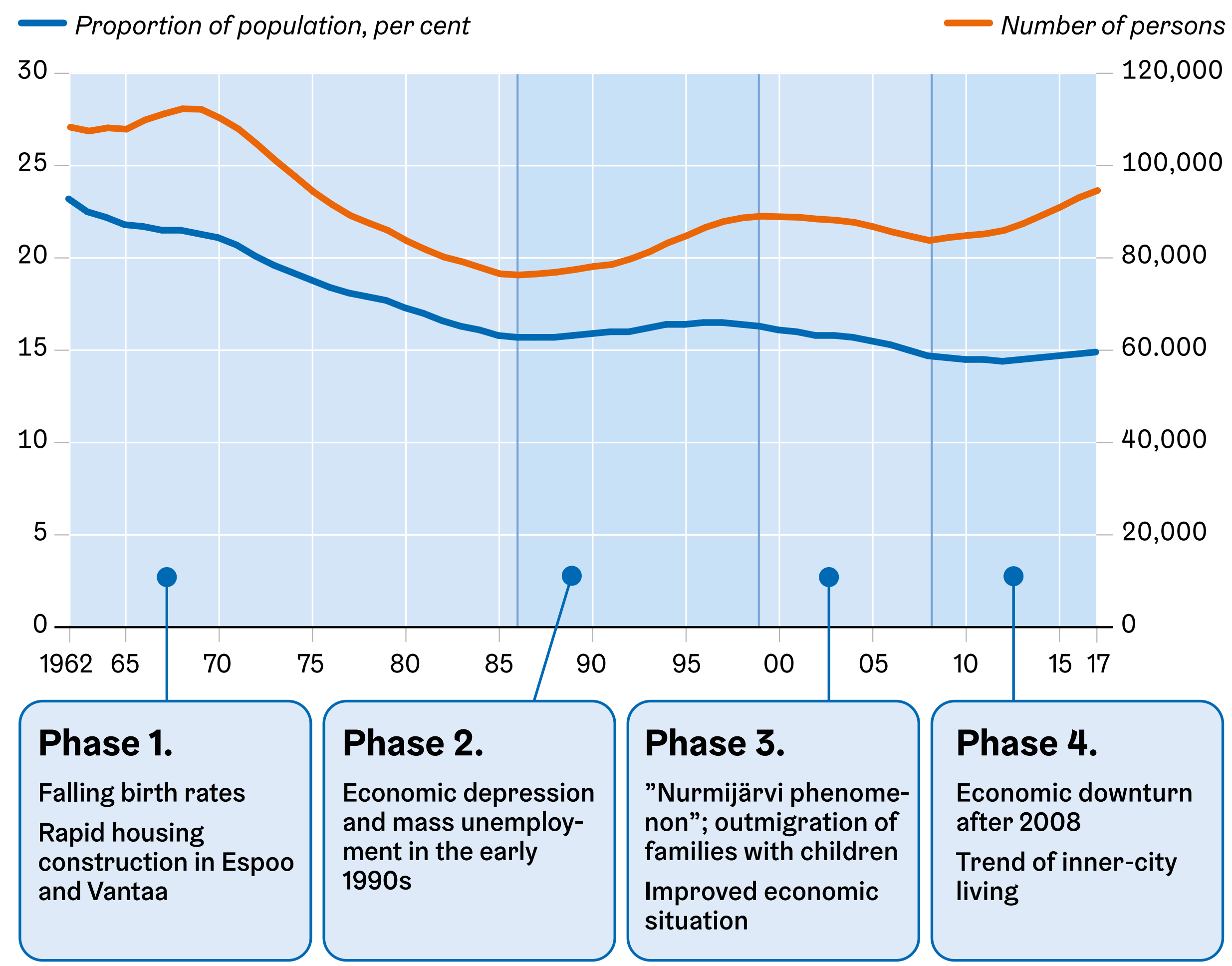


FIGURE 1.

Four phases of change in the number and proportion of 0–15-year-olds in Helsinki during the period 1962–2017.

DURING THE SECOND PHASE, between the late 1980s and the late 90s, the number of children increased again. This was most evident from 1992 onwards. In 1999, there were 89,041 children aged 0 to 15 in Helsinki. During the economic depression in the early 1990s, birth rates rose despite an unprecedented increase in unemployment (Lainiala 2014). In the depths of the depression, in 1993, the average unemployment rate reached 18.7 per cent in Helsinki, with 49,900 unemployed job seekers (Lönnqvist & Salorinne 2016). The highest local unemployment rates, over 20 per cent, were seen in the eastern and northern districts of Helsinki, where income and education levels were low and where a significant share of the residents worked in fluctuating job sectors such as construction or services.

IN MAY 1993, the proportion of women among the unemployed in Helsinki was 37 per cent. Possible reasons why women were less often unemployed than men include the assumption that they chose to focus more on education, family and children as unemployment started to rise in the female-dominated social, health and service sectors. These choices would have led to a rise in birth rate. In the early 1990s, it became more common for families to have a second or third child than it had been earlier. (Rotkirch 2010, Lainiala 2014, Miettinen 2015). Uncertainty about employment and economy also reduced people's readiness to manage their debts (Kiander & Vartia 1998, 289–296), and made families with children less apt to seek a larger home in suburbs or nearby municipalities.

IN THE THIRD PHASE, the number of children started decreasing again in Helsinki (more specifically in the year 2000), and this trend continued until 2008. The national economy grew and, by the end of this phase, unemployment in Helsinki had fallen to around 6 per cent (Lönnqvist & Salorinne 2016).

IN THE EARLY 2000S, the improved economic and employment situation may have allowed many families with children to satisfy their pent-up housing needs again. People began to move to the suburbs and neighbouring municipalities almost as much as in the 1970s (Vuori & Nivalainen 2012). In the early 2000s, authorities in Helsinki were concerned about families with children moving to the outer Helsinki Region (this trend was referred to as 'the Nurmijärvi phenomenon') and the potential negative consequences for the city's tax revenues. Helsinki began to draw up plans to incorporate land in the southwest corner of its neighbouring municipality Sipoo, which would allow it to build housing for tens of thousands of new residents in the future.

IN THE FOURTH PHASE, after 2008, the number of children in Helsinki started to grow again, and this trend has continued to the present day. The figures for 2014 surpassed the previous peak year, 1999. In early 2017, the number of 0–15-year-olds in Helsinki was 94,606 (including 462 in the new major district of Östersundom), which is the highest figure since 1974 and over 5,500 more than in 1999.

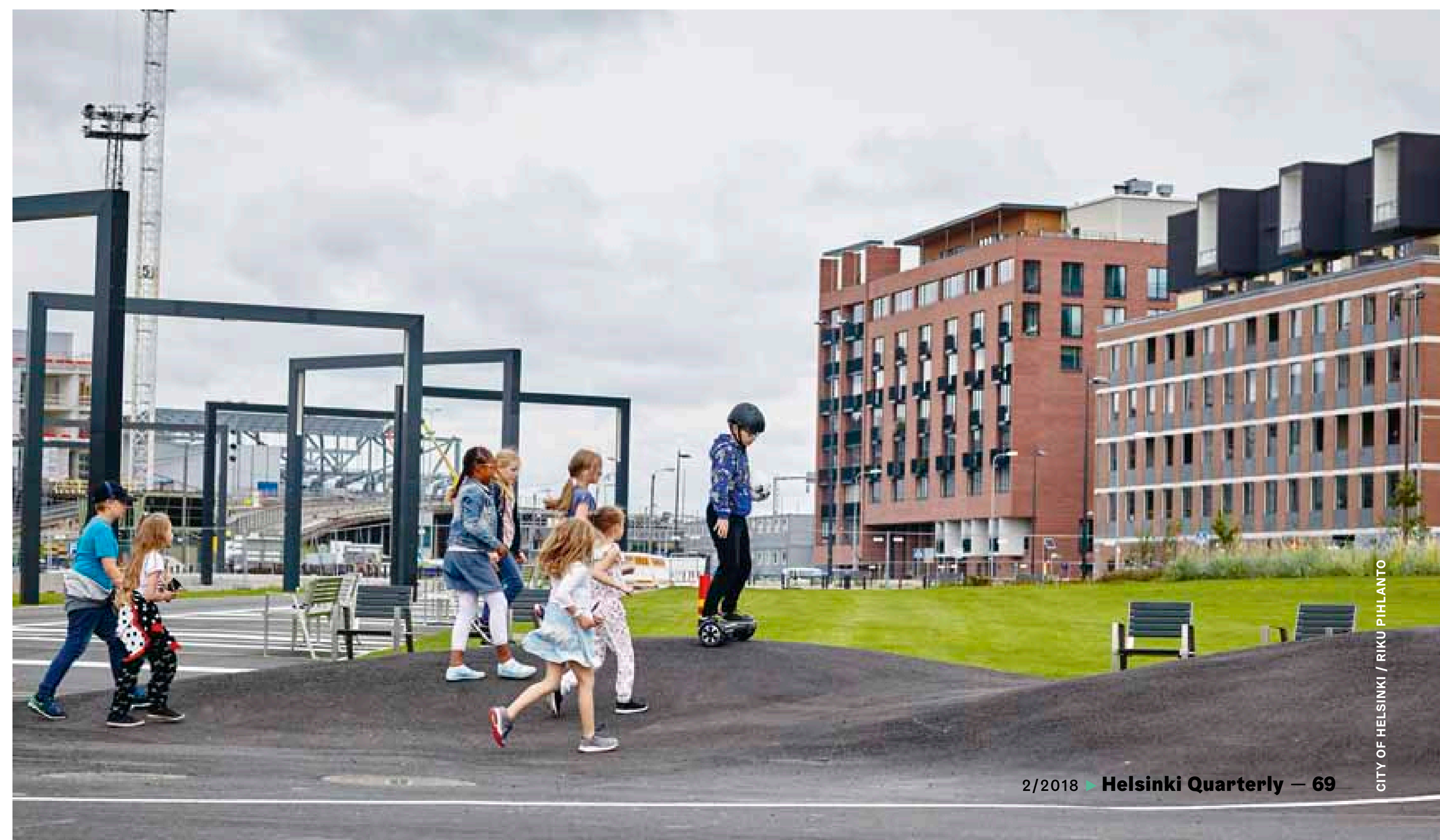
THIS INCREASE has been explained by the economic downturn that began in 2008 and resulted in higher unemployment – as in the 1990s. By the end of 2015, the number of jobless in Helsinki had reached 41,700, which was more than in 1992, the second worst unemployment year of the 1990s depression. The hypothesis is that the economic situation would have urged people to put off their plans to move to other municipalities in the Helsinki Region. Another explanation sometimes proposed is that families with children are increasingly interested in inner city living regardless of economic circumstances (Boterman et al. 2010, Juday 2015, Lilius 2016, Mustonen & Lindblom 2016).

INCREASING IMMIGRATION during the fourth period accounts for a part of the rise in the number of children – but not a particularly large share. The three largest groups of residents with a non-native mother tongue – Somali-, Russian- and Estonian-speakers – together accounted for one-quarter of the increase in the period, amounting to 2,878 children.

THE PROPORTION of children in the population has not varied as much as their total number. It has also followed a more clearly declining trend. Between 1962 and 2016, the proportion of 0–15-year-olds was lowest in 2012: 14.4 per cent (see Figure 1). Since then, it has been growing somewhat, to reach 14.9 per cent in 2017. This was, however, a clearly smaller proportion than the last peak, in 1997, when 0–15-year-olds made up 16.5 per cent of Helsinki's population.

THIS MEANS that the adult population in Helsinki has grown more significantly than the child population since the 1960s – with the exception of slight increases in the child population in the early 1990s and mid-2010s. This development is linked to factors such as migration gain, declining numbers of families with children and the rise of solo living. Nevertheless, changes in the number of children are important information to the providers of services for children and families.

THE EXCEPTIONAL growth in the child population during the fourth phase – an average of about 1,000 children per year – has created a need to increase the capacity of day care centres and schools. This has proved challenging within in the existing housing stock – notably in Inner Helsinki, where the recent growth in the number of children has come as a slight surprise.



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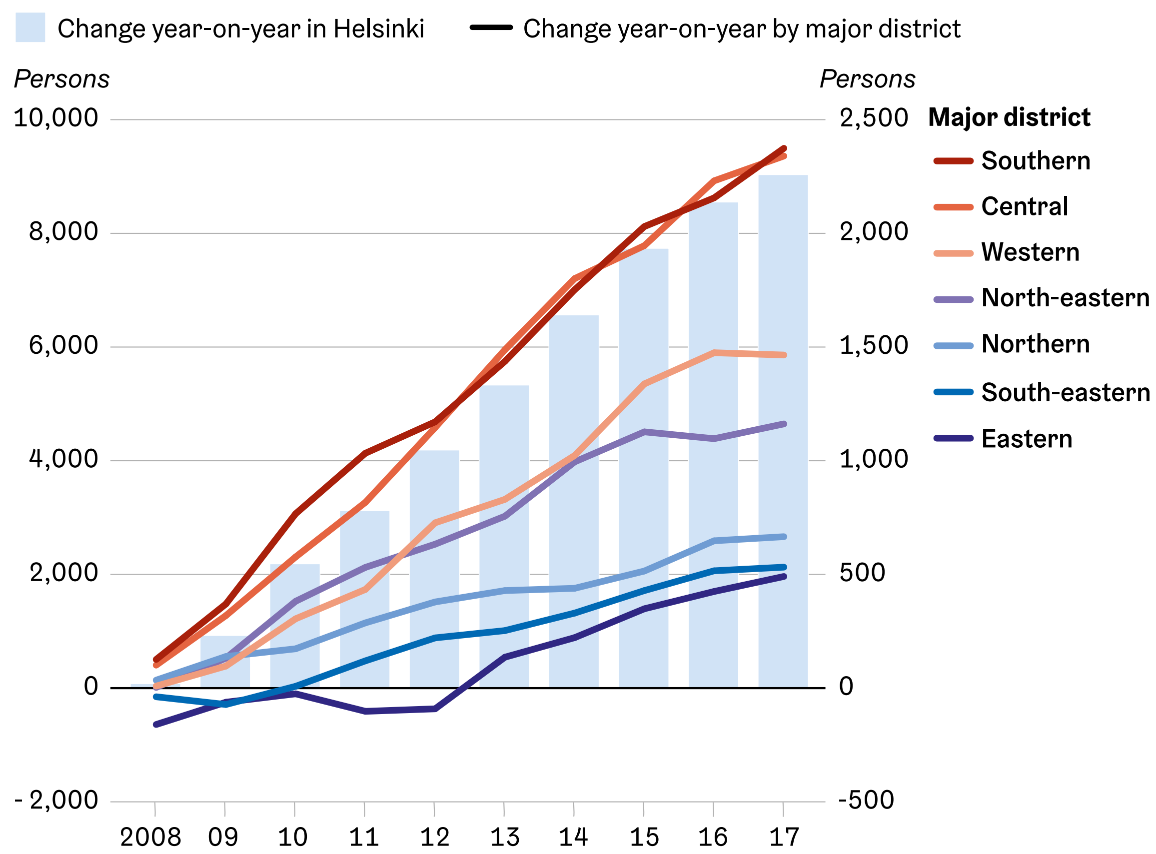

FIGURE 2.

Changes in the number of 0–6-year-olds in Helsinki and its major districts, annual cumulative number 2008–2017

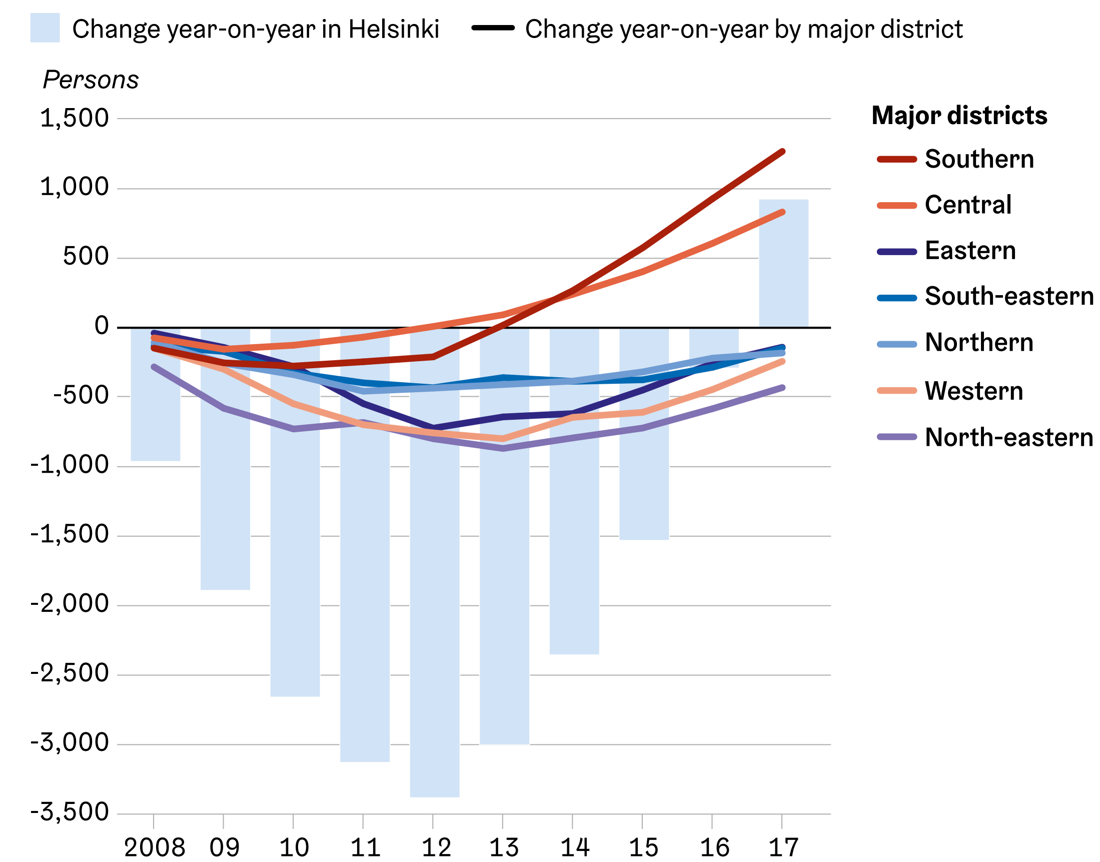

FIGURE 3.

Changes in the number of 7–15-year-olds in Helsinki and its major districts, annual cumulative number 2008–2017

Increase in the number of children in major districts between 2008 and 2017

In 2008–2017, the number of children has developed very unevenly in different parts of Helsinki. At the major district level, the largest increase was seen in the Southern and Central major districts – 7,000 children, or a total increase of almost 70 per cent. The number of 0–15-year-olds increased by over 3,600 in the Southern major district and by 3,200 in Central. Thus, the child population grew by half in the Central major district and by one third in Southern.

THE STRONGEST numerical change occurred among children under school age, in the Central and Southern major districts by over 2,300 each (Figure 2). Since the initial level was lower, relative change was greater in the Central major district, no less than 71 per cent, versus 44 per cent in Southern. The number of 7–15-year-olds also increased in the Southern and Central major districts over the period 2008–2017, by a total of over 2,000. Meanwhile, the number of 7–15-year-olds decreased by a total of 1,100 in the remaining major districts. After 2013, the proportion of 7–15-year-olds started to grow in other major districts as well, but not enough to balance the decline earlier in the period (Figure 3).

THE STRONG INCREASE in the number of children has lifted the Central major district with its 9,200 children from last position two notches up, past the South-eastern and Northern major districts. The major district with the largest total number of children in Helsinki is Eastern (19,000 in 2017), followed by the North-eastern major district (18,000). The Western and Southern major districts rank next. However, in terms of children's proportion of the population, the Central (10.1%) and Southern (12.4%) major districts still ranked last in 2017. The average proportion in all of Helsinki was 14.9 per cent.

THAT THE NUMBER of children increases unevenly across the major districts is nothing new. During the period 1991–2000, for example, the number of children increased in the Eastern (over 4,000) and South-eastern (slightly over 2,300) major districts. During this period, the number of children increased modestly in the Southern major district, by less than 900. In the Central major district – the only one with a decreasing number of children in 1991–2000 – the decrease amounted to slightly over 1,000 children. In the following, we will look at the development of the number of children in those parts of the Southern and the Central major districts with the strongest increase in the child population in recent years.

Recent changes in the number of children in Southern and Central major districts

There is often a large number of children in newly built housing areas with a good provision of sizeable dwellings attracting families. In such areas, even one third of the inhabitants may be children. As an example, children made up 30.3 per cent of the population in Ruoholahti in 1995, when this residential area had recently been completed. After the initial phase, the number and proportion of children gradually fall. In 2017, children made up only 16.4 per cent of Ruoholahti's population. However, the growth in child population in the Southern and Central major districts seems to come only partly from new-built areas.

IN 2017, the Central major district had a child population of slightly over 9,200, which was roughly one third more than in 2008. Of this growth, 75 per cent occurred in either new housing in the Arabianranta, Hermanninmäki or Kalasatama areas or in infill developments in Vallila, Vanhakaupunki or Vilhonvuori. An increase of some 200 children was also seen in the Linjat and Käpylä sub-districts where hardly any new dwellings were built (see Figure 4). Relative change in the number of children was great both in new-built areas in Arabianranta and Vallila as well as in older neighbourhoods where the numbers of children had initially been low, such as Linjat and Alppila.

AT THE BEGINNING of 2017, the Southern major district had a child population of almost 14,000, which was over one quarter more than in 2008. The number of children increased most in the areas of Lauttasaari, Jätkäsaari, Etu-Töölö, Taka-Töölö, Kamppi and Punavuori (Figure 5). In the sub-district of Jätkäsaari, a development area still largely under construction, the number of children grew by almost 600 during the period 2008–2017; nevertheless, their proportion in the population fell by almost five per cent, down to 15.8 per cent. In Lauttasaari, the child population increased in both the infill development in Vattuniemi and in older areas. In Ruoholahti and (to some extent) Suomenlinna, both the number and proportion of children decreased. Nonetheless, Ruoholahti still had the highest proportion of children in the Southern major district: 16.4 per cent.

IT IS NOTABLE that the vast majority (70 per cent) of the growth in the child population in the Southern major district – amounting to 3,600 – occurred in existing housing stock. This was despite the fact that the numbers of children grew fastest in infill buildings in Lauttasaari and the new development in Jätkäsaari. The proportion of children also increased most strongly in existing housing

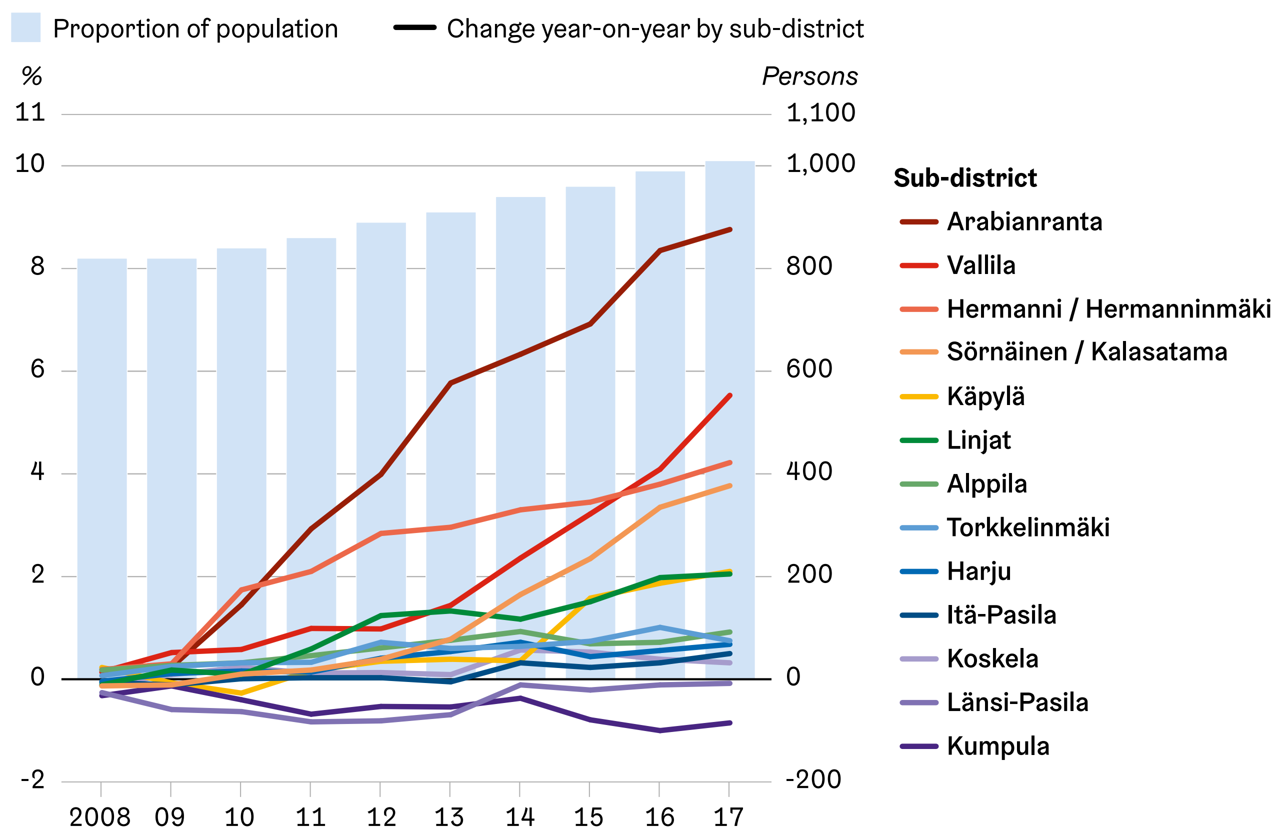

FIGURE 4.

Population proportion and numerical change of 0–15-year-olds in sub-districts of the Central major district, annual cumulative number 2008–2017

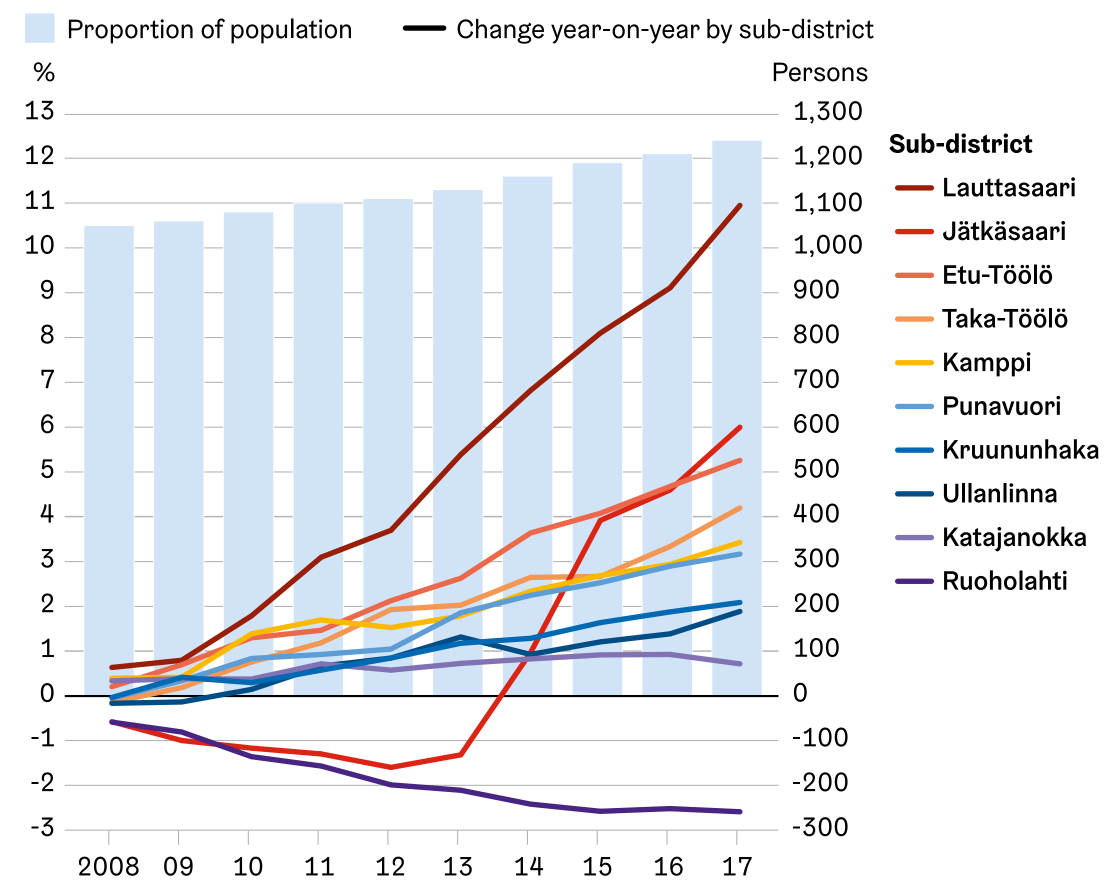

FIGURE 4.

Population proportion and numerical change of 0–15-year-olds in sub-districts of the Southern major district, annual cumulative number 2008–2017

stock in Punavuori, Töölö, Kamppi and Kruunuhaka (albeit not in Lauttasaari). During the previous growth phase in the 1990s, the number of children decreased as a rule in both the Central and Southern major districts (except in the statistical areas of Ruoholahti and Jätkäsaari). In the Central major district, the number of children decreased by one thousand in 1991–2000. In that period, increases in the number of children occurred mostly in the new developments situated in the Eastern and South-eastern major districts.

IN THE 2010S, during the most recent growth phase, the child population has grown especially in Inner Helsinki and its immediate vicinity. This is partly due to brownfield developments in former harbours and industrial sites in the inner city. Regardless of this intensive residential construction in inner Helsinki, another clear new trend is that a considerable part of the increase in child population occurs in existing buildings or infill developments – for the first time in fifty years. This new situation implies challenges in finding suitable facilities for services for children and youth. It also raises the question why the strongest increase in the child population in recent years has occurred in the old areas in southern Inner Helsinki.

IS THE INCREASE linked to the economic downturn in 2008 and the resulting uncertainty on the labour market, or are there other reasons? Have the large development projects in Inner Helsinki made families with children also more interested in old dwellings in the inner city – regardless of economic ups and downs? Or have there been work- or lifestyle-related changes that have made city-centre housing attractive? What does settling in the inner city imply for families' choices of child day care and schools? We asked these questions – and many others – in our recent interview survey of families with children in the inner city districts of Punavuori and Kruununhaka (Kohtamäki & Niska, forthcoming), the results of which will be published soon. ●

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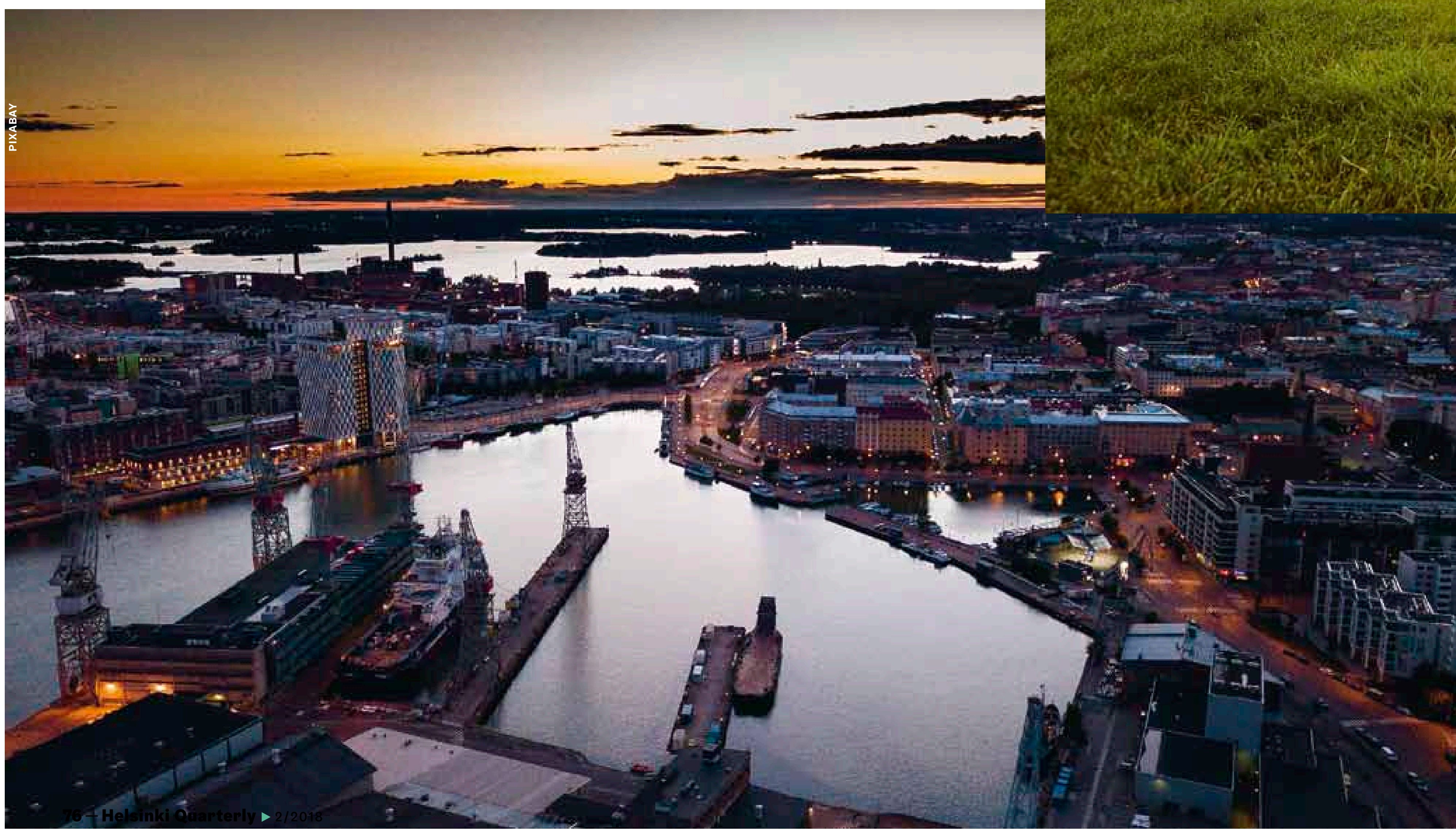
Is the increase linked to the economic downturn in 2008 and the resulting uncertainty on the labour market, or are there other reasons? Have there been work- or lifestyle-related changes that have made city-centre housing attractive?

General interest in children's independent mobility began to grow in the 1990s.



PIXABAY

CITY OF HELSINKI / RIKU PIHLANTO

Children would occasionally play on railway tracks, industrial sites, wasteland and landfills.

From **city streets** to **suburban forests**
– changing mobility patterns of children in Helsinki

EEVA RISTA, HELSINKI CITY MUSEUM, CC BY 4.0

VEERA MOLL

Since the 1990s, children's independent mobility in the city has been a lively topic of research. By international comparison, children in Finland still move fairly independently. However, recent decades have seen evidence of decreasing autonomy in children's mobility. The article looks at Helsinki from the 1940s up until the present day and discusses how a changing city influences the spontaneous mobility of children.

ELANNON KOKOELMA, HELSINKI CITY MUSEUM, CC BY 4.0

A hundred years ago, one-tenth of the world's population lived in cities, and one-third in the 1950s. Nowadays, more than half are city-dwellers. The number of children living in cities amounts to roughly one billion (UNICEF 2012, IV). Due to traffic hazards, pollution, lack of greenery and scarcity of playgrounds, among other things, the city has come to be seen as an unsuitable environment for children to grow up (Karsten 2005, 275). Nonetheless, an urban childhood is more common today than a rural one.

THE EXTENT TO which children can move around safely in their neighbourhood is a factor influencing the wellbeing of city children. The independent mobility of children in cities is linked to the issue of empowerment in the urban realm: who has the right and the possibility to move about in the city? Independent mobility is also closely linked with health, as well as the growing concern in recent decades that children might not be getting enough exercise (Bicket et al. 2015, 4). Everyday mobility, home-to-school journeys made on foot or by bicycle and an environment conducive to outdoor activities may be important for both a fair division of urban space and children's healthy life habits (Kyttä et al. 2009, 9). Children who roam without supervision also learn to know their own neighbourhood better than just looking out of the car window (e.g. Fyhri et al. 2011, 703).

FURTHERMORE, independent mobility promotes the use of sustainable modes of transport. The likelihood of becoming a car user is higher among children who have regularly been driven to school by their parents (City of Helsinki 2017, 4).

GENERAL INTEREST in children's independent mobility grew in the 1990s after a study of British children had showed their mobility to have decreased significantly over the previous two decades. Important reasons for this change included growing traffic volumes and increasing parental anxieties (Hillman et al. 1990, 106–108). The research done in the UK was followed by a number of studies worldwide showing that independent child mobility had indeed decreased[1].

When the home opened up out to the backyards

Was everything better in the past, or is it just that memories grow sweeter with time?[2] How has the independent mobility of children – and the opportunities for that mobility – changed in Helsinki? No single source can give a direct answer to this question since independent child mobility was not measured in Helsinki in the past. We need to combine various sources: oral history, contemporary newspaper reports, expert opinions and statistical data.

1) Bhosale 2015; Bicket 2015; Kyttä et al. 2014; Griffin & Wolley 2014; Karsten 2005; Tandy 1999.

2) The question is inspired by Lia Karsten's article "It all used to be better? Different generations in conceptions and opportunities on continuity and change in urban children's daily use of space", from 2005

IT HAS BEEN shown that children used to move about rather independently in Helsinki, at least during the first half of the 20th century. Oral historical evidence shows that Helsinki offered plenty of green milieus such as parks, gardens, allotments, fields and woods. Since traffic was much lighter, it was possible to ski and play in the snow in the winter even in the city centre. The hills, rocks and shores of Helsinki were venues for ball sports and other types of games, or they could be used for sledging, downhill skiing or just admiring the view. Sometimes children would make long trips together in the city – to have a picnic or just to play (Laakkonen & Kivistö 2001, 23–36, Moll 2011).

ORAL HISTORICAL material also shows the importance of the sea for recreation. Scouting and similar hobbies took some city children far out into nature. The material also highlights places where children were forbidden to play. Children would occasionally play on railway tracks, industrial sites, wasteland and landfills. Objects found among the rubbish could be reappropriated in play. Accidents were not always avoided (Laakkonen & Kivistö 2001, 23–36).

IN HER RESEARCH on the Helsinki of the 1940–1960s, Anna-Maria Åström notes that, for children, home was more of a springboard to various outdoor activities than a place for cosy domestic life. The world of children opened up out of the front door (Åström 1998, 17).

Concerns about urban children

Children roaming freely in the urban space were not always viewed with approval. A concerned debate about housing and the wellbeing of children had arisen already in the 19th century (Kumpulainen 1999, 123; Moll 2016, 68). There were real reasons to pay attention to the children. Child mortality was elevated[3], and and housing remained crowded in Helsinki until the 1960s (Kuparinen & Vihavainen 2006, 8–10). The proportion of children in the population was high and schools were over-crowded. The children born in the period immediately after the Second World War formed Finland's largest baby boomer generation.

3) Official Statistics of Finland: Causes of death: child mortality. Statistics Finland.

> ***In Finland, there are good conditions for increasing the level of physical activity on home-to-school journeys.***

With accelerating urbanisation in the 20th century, words were increasingly put into action. In 1946, a famous polemic pamphlet by Heikki von Hertzen, head of the Family Federation of Finland, titled *Koti vaiko kasarmi lapsillemme?* ('A home or a barracks for our children?') is seen to have triggered plans to build the 'garden city' of Tapiola. In the accelerating public debate on cities and housing, children were increasingly the focus of attention. It was considered natural that improved housing for children – tomorrow's citizens – would serve the good of the whole nation.

AFTER THE WAR, the Family Federation of Finland's stance was clear. The population centres of the day were regarded as socially unsound, and the federation declared the objective to promote decentralisation in order to achieve healthier urban life and housing (Asuntopolitiikka 1/1956). In practice, this implied a demand for building garden cities. These new communities would contain sufficiently large, well-lit and hygienic homes close to nature, ideal for saving the children from the filth and decay of the city. In short, the old city was no good. A special worry for the federation were the newly constructed tower blocks in the Taka-Töölö area, as well as the workers' district of Vallila (Von Hertzen 1946, 14, 20).

THE CONDITIONS of families were also gradually improved in other ways apart from the urban and housing planning in the 1940s. Child benefits, maternity allowances, prenatal clinics and loans for young families were introduced. According to the garden city philosophy, elements necessary to children such as clean nature and safety should be found in the city, too.

TRAFFIC WAS a cause for concern as traffic accidents increased alongside the number of cars. Between 1965 and 1973, around a thousand people were killed annually in road traffic in Finland. Gradually, however, traffic accidents started to decrease (Official Statistics of Finland 2010). Nevertheless, there were frequent articles in the Family Federation's periodical publication Asuntopolitiikka ('Housing Policy') reporting children injured or killed in road traffic, and demands were raised for better safety in the city (e.g. Asuntopolitiikka 3/1950).

HOPES NOW LAY in the suburbs, as the following quote from Asuntopolitiikka (2/1950) illustrates. 'Improvements can probably be achieved in the older neighbourhoods, but it is essential that henceforth all neighbourhoods should be designed so that the locations of schools and safe walking routes for children are planned simultaneously.' Families with children soon started moving from central districts to suburbs, where children could move about more safely.

TRAFFIC SAFETY measures were gradually upgraded and speed limits were introduced. Children's safety was also promoted by the national accident prevention organisation Tapaturmatorjuntayhdistys (through its road traffic division, predecessor of the Finnish Road Safety Council). This organisation ran awareness campaigns on road safety and produced educational material, films and guidebooks.

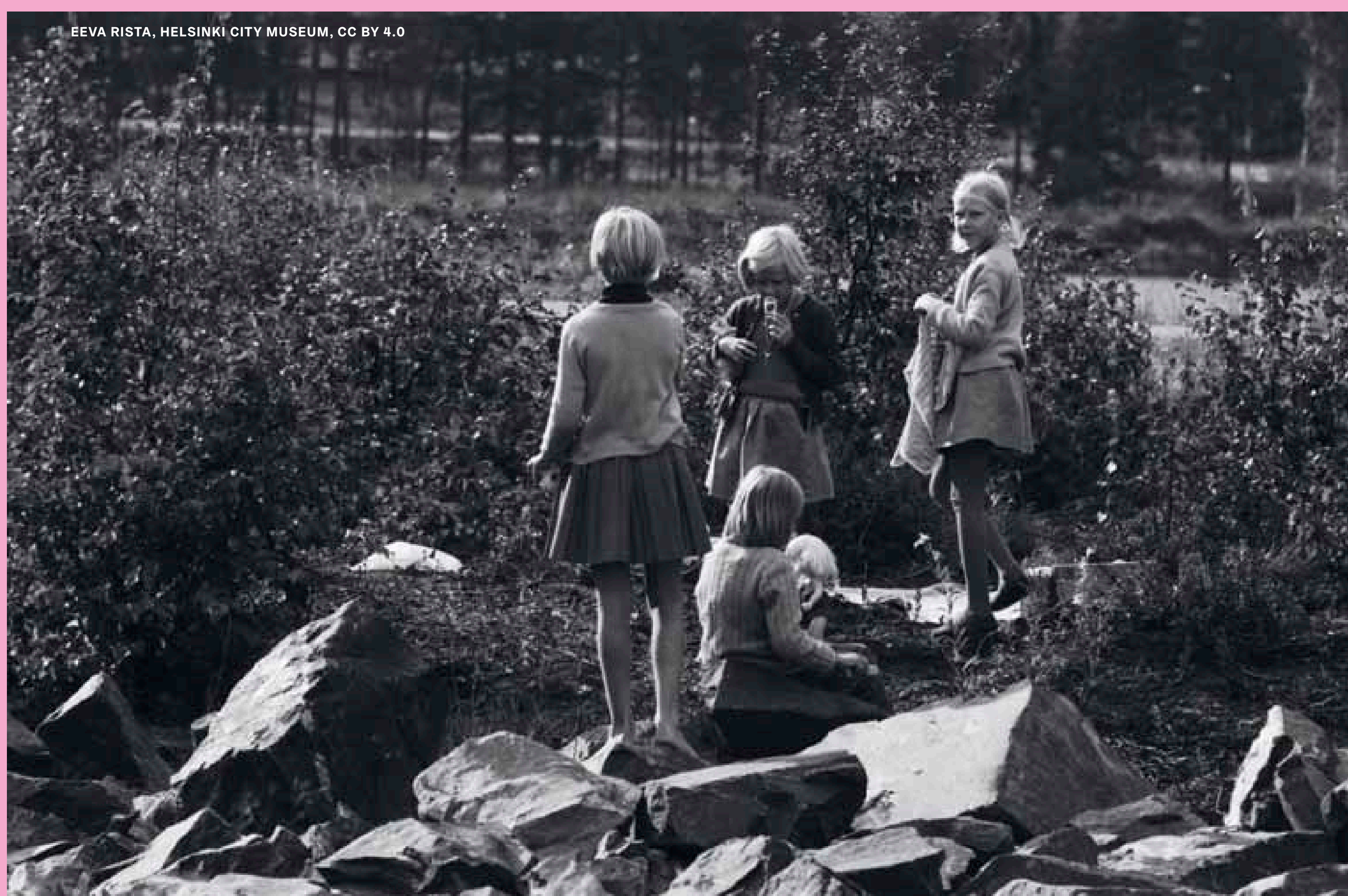
THE EFFORTS for traffic safety seemed to work. Towards the end of the 20th century, the traffic environment improved rapidly, with increasing emphasis placed on respecting the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The number of accidents decreased. (Syvänen 1991, 170).

CERTAIN NEW REGULATIONS, such as forbidding younger children from cycling to school, played their part in reducing the numbers of accidents. At the same time, however, these limitations had an impact on children's independent mobility (Syvänen 1991, 187). Only recently have the authorities begun to introduce deregulatory measures, after having identified the potential of the home-to-school journeys to increase children's physical activity.

From garden city utopia to suburban reality

Another factor influencing children's mobility in the city was the increasing size of homes. Overcrowded housing gradually decreased, and housing space per person more than doubled in Helsinki between 1950 and 1980. More and more children had a room of their own.

FOR MANY YEARS, children's need for a space of their own at home had been a frequent topic in the specialist press. The magazine Kaunis Koti ('Beautiful Home', 1965:8) wrote that a well-planned bedroom for children or adolescents should include exercise equipment such as 'wall bars or steady rings, since both help you maintain good posture and give you a feeling of cheerful confidence. After trying this equipment at home, the children will not be afraid of gym class at school --'


EEVA RISTA, HELSINKI CITY MUSEUM, CC BY 4.0

> *"When I went to skate in the ice rink, I would put my skates on at home and walk there with blade protections on."*

IN A WELL-EQUIPPED HOME, children could now play the kind of games that used to belong outdoors. Whereas in the immediate post-war years the world of children in Helsinki opened up outside their front door, they could now spend their spare at home, too.

THE IDEALISING TONE of the garden city debate gradually began to fade in the magazines and expert opinions of the mid-1960s. Some felt now that the new neighbourhoods that sprouted around the city were not ideal garden towns but rather inadequate forest suburbs. Alarming reports from inner cities in the first half of the 20th century had given way to similar warnings focussed on suburbs (see e.g. Mäenpää 1968, 74). The new suburban environments were not always considered ideal even for the children – although they had been designed expressly for families with children.

'IT'S A CRIME against children to build houses the way we do nowadays', stated a Swedish expert quoted by the Finnish national broadcaster YLE in a programme focussing on children in suburbs. 'A childhood spent in a monotonous, unstimulating and unhospitable environment may cause emotional emptiness, violent outbursts and an inability to understand beauty and tenderness.' (Yleisradio 1976) The researcher Irene Roivainen, who has studied the debate on suburbs in the nationwide daily newspaper Helsingin Sanomat, identifies a change in the discourse in the late 1960s. According to her, a 'dramatic' paradigm shift occurred in 1968, with a strong increase in problem-centred articles and opinion pieces on the topic (Roivainen 1999, 56).

NONETHELESS, in oral historical material, the childhood in the suburbs is remembered as anything but monotonous, unstimulating or unhospitable. Memories of a variety of games in the backyards, on the shores and in nearby woods recur in most of the writings collected in 2016–2017 by the Finnish Literature Society (SKS 2017). A childhood in the suburbs in the latter half of the 20th century and early 21st century appears to have been close to nature and safe, and characterised by children's independent mobility.

ONE PARTICIPANT who had spent a childhood in Olari, Espoo, in the 1980s, writes: 'As an adult I have realised how fine the urban layout in Olari really was: you could walk from home to a day care centre, school, playground or health club without crossing a motorable road. When I went to skate in the ice rink, I would put my skates on at home and walk there with blade protections on. The grocery stores, the child health clinic and the hairdresser's were also all within easy reach. Across a footbridge was the library where I started going independently at the age of nine or ten.'

ANOTHER WRITER still remembers the vast area that children could roam in the 1960s–70s in the Helsinki suburb of Pakila: 'A new walkway had just been completed when I started school, and my mother gave me instructions on how to walk to school without crossing a single road or a parking lot. The roads were our borders against the outside world, although two of them could be crossed on a footbridge and there was an underpass beneath another one. You were familiar with everything on your side of the roads. I could probably still mark the locations where dozens of different plants grew and where we used to climb the rocks.'

The majority still walk to school

Do children then move less independently today than they did earlier? The study *The last free-range children? Children's independent mobility in Finland in the 1990s and 2010s* (Kyttä et al. 2014) – so far the only major Finnish research on changes in children's mobility – notes a substantial decrease over the twenty-year period in question.

THE SAME REPORT argues that the conditions enabling children to roam freely have not been guaranteed and that Finns fail to see the value of the relatively free mobility of children in our society. In fact, independent mobility has been associated with images of lacking parental care and interest and children's loneliness. Consequently, there have been calls for more adult supervision in children's free time.

BY INTERNATIONAL comparison, Finland is still doing well in terms of children's mobility. A study published in 2015 by the Policy Studies Institute compared independent mobility in various kinds of neighbourhoods, making comparisons within and across the 16 countries included in the research. The objective was to find out about the reasons for the differences, to discuss the consequences of reduced independent mobility and to give policy suggestions. Independent mobility was mapped through a series of questions including whether children had permission to cross main roads or go to school without supervision. Other questions sought to determine whether children were allowed to walk independently elsewhere apart from school, stay out after dark, cycle on main roads or travel alone on public transport. Additional questions were asked about the attitudes and fears of adults and children.

AS A WHOLE, children in Finland were found to move far more freely than children in other countries. Some suggested reasons for this difference include the tendency of both parents to work and the general atmosphere of trust often associated with Nordic culture (Kyttä et al. 2014, 8–9).

"You were familiar with everything on your side of the road."

THE CONCERN that children are less and less able to move on their own – and the health implications of this loss of freedom – has prompted researchers and planners to look at the home-to-school journey as an opportunity for children to get more exercise (Mitra 2012, 21).

IN FINLAND, worries about children's physical passivity have been highlighted even at national government level. The objective of the Liikkuva koulu ('School on the move') programme, one of the governmental spearhead projects, is to make schoolchildren exercise at least one hour a day. This can take many forms – walking or cycling to school has been among the suggestions.

IN FINLAND, there are good conditions for increasing the level of physical activity on home-to-school journeys. According to the latest National Travel Survey, the majority of children's journeys to school are still made on foot, albeit the proportion has shrunk over the last ten years. According to the same study, cycling is the second most common means of transport on school trips, bus the third and car ride the fourth, followed by other ways of travel such as tram or metro. Not only do Finnish children move generally fairly independently, but walking and cycling are also considered rather safe options for making school journeys (Turpeinen et al. 2013, 34 & 20).

THE HOME-TO-SCHOOL journey must indeed be sufficiently safe in order for parents to allow children to go to school on their own. In 2017, the City of Helsinki surveyed the current traffic safety situation near schools in Inner Helsinki. The report states that traffic safety in the vicinity of schools varies considerably (City of Helsinki 2017). Remarks were made regarding pupils' attentiveness in traffic, the physical surroundings of the schools, traffic arrangements along home-to-school trajectories and the behaviour of vehicle drivers. Apart from traffic education, there is thus room for improvement in the urban environment.

THERE MAY ALSO BE a need to pay attention to the attitudes of parents. As stated above, their mobility habits have a direct impact on those of their children. Thus, the most efficient way to influence children's active mobility may be for parents to change their own ways of travel.

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"Across a footbridge was the library where I started going independently at the age of nine or ten."

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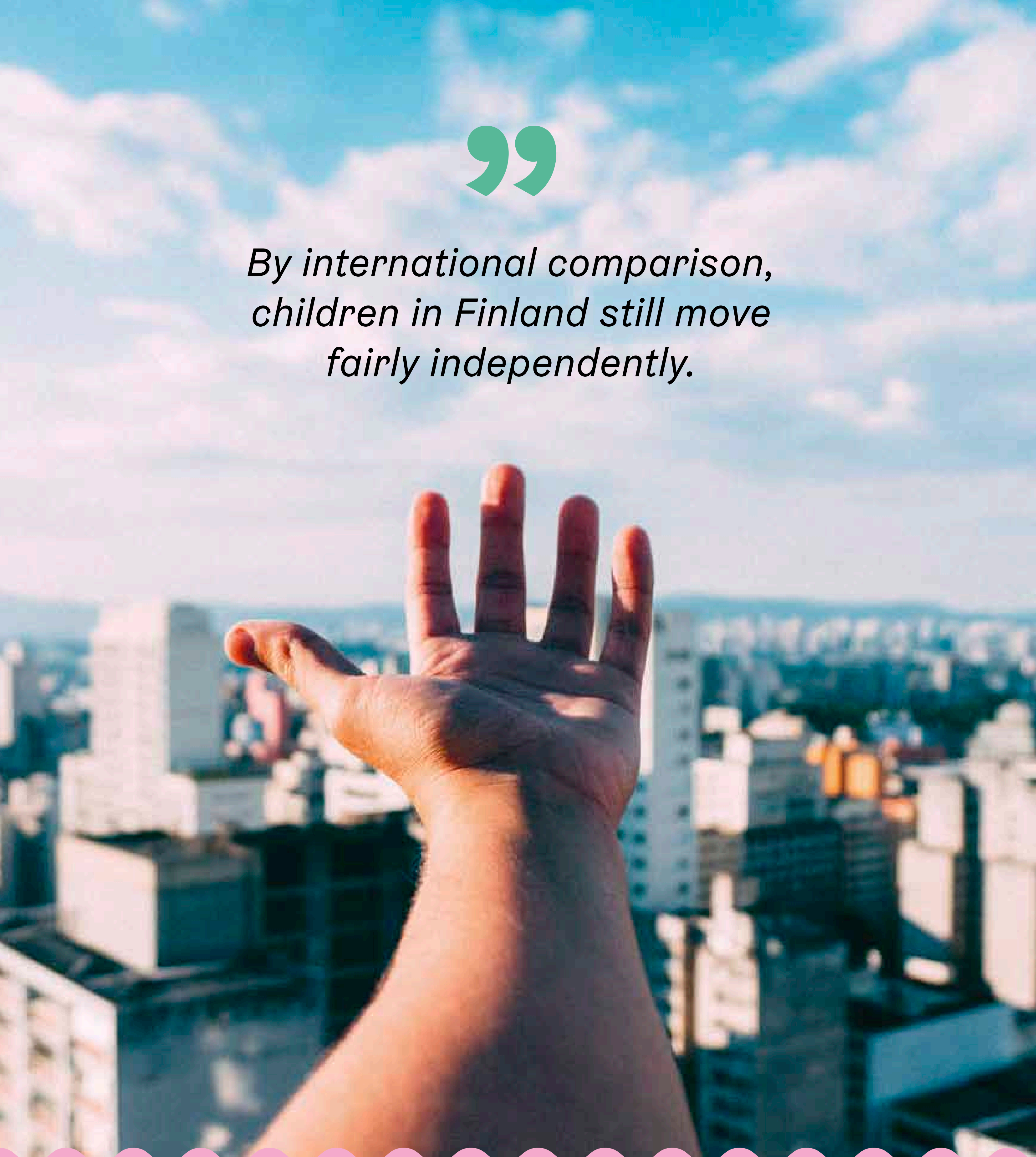

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