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CITY OF HELSINKI URBAN FACTS



Coworking
An urban scenario
for the future of work

Life Expectancy

Increase in Helsinki but area disparities remain

Music Tastes

Helsinki's preferences from Bach to Beyoncé



Quarterly

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MARJA VÄÄNÄNEN

The digitised city is a goldmine of data and information



The digitisation of cities can open up unforeseen opportunities from which we must learn to benefit, says **Timo Cantell**, new editor-in-chief of Kvartti and director at City of Helsinki Urban Facts since April. As a city department specialised in data and information, Urban Facts is strategically placed to follow the developments.

“We monitor the various urban phenomena in the surrounding city and we collect, store and analyse information. In southern Europe, a facility like ours might be called an urban observatory.”

”Part of our job is to tailor this data into various analyses and other information products to be utilised by the city management, residents or virtually anyone else. This enables the City of Helsinki to be strategically aware of its state and development and the changes therein.”

According to Cantell, the fact that his department is situated in a building called the Round House in Helsinki’s Kallio district is symbolic in itself. The windows of the fifth-floor offices offer an almost complete 360-degree view of the surrounding cityscape.

”Due to the nature of our activities, which include providing all the city departments with statistical



PHOTOS: VISIT HELSINKI/JUSSI HELLSTEN



and research knowledge and document storage expertise, we are in fact an exceptionally well-networked unit within the city organisation.”

As a city department, Urban Facts is one of the smallest in the City of Helsinki administration. However, few cities in Finland or even elsewhere in the world can boast a research facility of comparable size.



Cantell claims that this testifies to Helsinki’s long-term commitment to exploiting city data in decision-making. “Helsinki is one of the leading cities in data-driven management.”

The Urban Facts department celebrated its centenary four years ago. Its predecessor, the City of Helsinki Statistical Office was founded in 1911.

“Part of the statistical series maintained by the city run even further to the past. The earliest were established already in the 19th century.”

Timo Cantell is fond of the thought that Urban Facts has a 500-year perspective on the city that its duty is to describe. The Helsinki City Archives forms a part of the department, and the oldest document stored there is the letter of privileges by King John III to the burghers of Helsinki in 1569.

“Although the most part of our statistical and research activity is focused on the present day, we also produce for instance a population projection until 2050.”

“Another field where we have to be far-sighted is electronic records management. As we are the authority in charge of the City Archives, this means that we have to ensure that our historical documents as well as today’s administrative records will be maintained in good shape till far in the future. It is about fostering our cultural heritage.”



Combine data sources to create new insights

Today, information is in an electronic format and it is created in ways that differ remarkably from those of the past.

"I am confident that digitisation will open up new opportunities for cities and also for us," states Timo Cantell.

A digitally networked city engenders huge quantities of data every day, stemming from various sources such as mobile devices and sensors or the information systems related to local public services. Part of all that data can be harnessed by the city administration, part of it belongs to the private sphere.

"We are not yet fully aware of all the ways in which these vast data flows could be utilised by the city to produce benefits for the residents."

"As a department of information experts, Urban Facts must aim to constantly improve its readiness

to identify and access new data sources, as well as to exploit more efficiently the information resources that city itself accumulates," says Cantell.

"In the future, useful knowledge and insights will be created increasingly by combining data from multiple sources. Another trend is the growing importance of collaboration between public sector experts and private enterprises, universities and research institutes."

Accumulating data is not the be-all and end-all. Researchers and other experts should use the data to be able to better explain and understand different urban phenomena and their causes.

"In what respects does Helsinki's development, for instance, follow that of its peer cities Stockholm, Hamburg or Tallinn, and in what respects does it differ from these?" Cantell asks.

Studying the development of the 'Helsinki-Tallinn twin city region' is one of the more exciting

questions for Helsinki in the present time and near future. "We wish to collaborate with Tallinn to strengthen our common information basis on this issue."

One of the traditional core tasks of Urban Facts is to have a detailed understanding of Helsinki's population structure and to make future prognoses for its development. "This is one of the fields where our expertise is used very frequently for decision-making."

Another forte is the thorough knowledge of Helsinki at the neighbourhood level, including understanding the health and welfare differences between the city districts. Thanks to its long statistical time series and an established research tradition, the department is capable of studying the current changes in these issues in their proper context.

"Understanding urban dynamics is key", argues Cantell. "All differences between the districts are not negative, for instance. A certain degree of variance is natural for a dynamic, developing city. But development can also entail certain types of differences that are of a negative kind, and we must be able to identify these."

Harnessing the skills of citizens and public officials

Helsinki is a pioneer city in open data. Timo Cantell has heard such accolades several times from international urban experts, and they were once again confirmed by South American researchers at a reception he hosted in May in connection with a data science conference held in Helsinki.

"They regretted not having similar opportunities in their own cities to make use of data resources produced with public funds."

"The success has not come automatically to Helsinki. It is the result of unwavering support from our council and mayors as well as the persistent efforts of officials."

Cantell remarks that the work is not nearly complete, and the pioneering position can be easily lost without continuous, purpose-driven development.

Until recently, public authorities have developed their information systems, statistics and reports firmly within the office walls. They themselves have also been the main users of the information.

"In the future, citizens must be part of the process where city data is produced. Citizens, private businesses and other local actors will also be encouraged to use all the data for their own best interests and needs. It would be good to know more about the subjective experiences of the citizens and their habits in "using" the city", Cantell explains.

He is also interested in finding ways how the city administration could benefit more from the vast experience of its 40,000 employees. "They know the city closely and they have an enormous amount of different perspectives to its everyday life."

In order to bring together these enormous data and information resources – whether they be from citizens, enterprises, experts or civil servants – Urban Facts needs to stay well-connected within the city also in the future.

"We must put out feelers to observe the urban life around us, including of course what is going on in the social media and other digital communication channels." ✨

PIA HOUNI & HELI ANSIO

Coworking spaces

– creative sparks in the urban milieu

PHOTOS: MARJA VÄÄNÄNEN



Coworking spaces shared by creative professionals and knowledge workers have become increasingly popular in Helsinki in recent years. For people who work alone, these spaces provide not only social contacts and like-minded colleagues but also the opportunity to discover professional support and networks that benefit the work.

CITIES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN hubs for all kinds of economic activity. They are sites of trade and commerce but also services and industrial work. The current transformation of working life will have an effect on the temporal and spatial dimensions of urban work.

Coworking spaces are one of the new phenomena that have emerged in this field in the 2000s. The concept describes various freely formed, shared workspaces, where people from different backgrounds engage themselves in creative, knowledge-intensive work. There are at least dozens of such workspaces in Helsinki.

From workplace to coworking space

Most of us are likely to have observed people working in cafés, windowfronts, trains and buses or other public spaces during the past few years. Many of us also work in the same way ourselves.

A special feature of working in a public place is that the work bears no particular relationship with the space. The space is a place, an environment – it is essentially an opportunity where people from different fields and professions can carry out their assignments. The work that was previously hidden in offices, buried away in the depths of organisations or confined to isolated workrooms has become a visible part of urban culture. The workplace has dissolved into places of work.

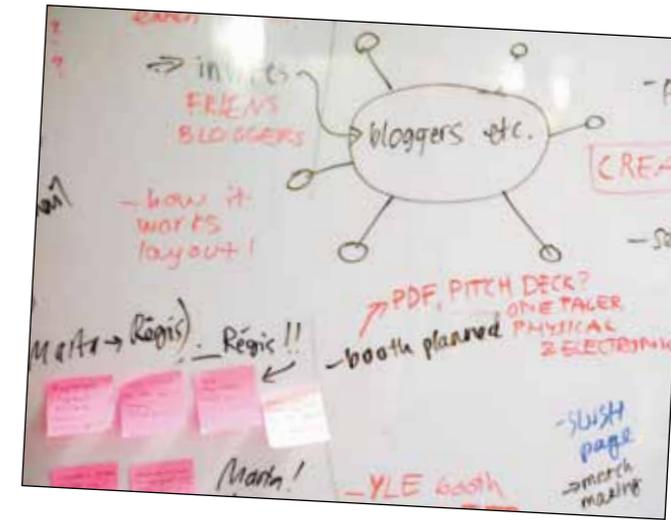
For most people, the concept of workplace refers to a physical location – a building – which is managed by a particular employer and where people work. The concept and the related infrastructure have changed enormously within a short time.

As a consequence of the IT revolution, work has spread out to virtually all places where a Wi-Fi connection can bring two people into contact. A workplace can be almost anywhere if no other tools are needed but a laptop and one's own skills and competences.

The 'prehistory' of the phenomenon can be traced to the work of artists and other creative people: they have always travelled to work in residencies, new workspaces, countryside, cities and abroad, and they have also carried out their creative work among other people in different kinds of spaces.

The same applies to those who are occupied today with independent, self-directed and/or creative work. They have conquered new places and spaces in the urban milieu for their own work.

In addition to public spaces, work is increasingly done in specific coworking spaces. Those who occupy coworking spaces are usually not connected by the same employer. Instead, they share the workspace with other freelancers, people working on a grant, individual entrepreneurs or microenterprises.



THE GROWING NUMBER OF COWORKING SPACES is an international trend. The birth of the coworking phenomenon in its current form can be traced to the United States in the early 2000s. It has grown rapidly especially during the economic recession with the increase in self-employment. In practice, many freelancers and individual entrepreneurs cannot afford their own office premises, so they share them with others in the same position. (See Gandini 2015, Merkel 2015, Moriset 2013; on self-employment in Finland: Pärnänen & Sutela 2014, Vallander & Douglas 2015.)

The increase in coworking is also connected to the sharing economy and the megatrend of shared use. In the cities of the 2000s, people borrow, swap and recycle things and use them together with others. If cars, flats, power drills or clothing can be shared, why not also workspaces? (On sharing economy, see Lahti 2015, Lahti & Selosmaa 2013.) But as indicated above, neither the sharing economy nor shared workspaces are completely new phenomena as such – they are long-established practices for instance in artistic work.

What is a coworking space?

In English, the term 'coworking space' is used for shared workspaces, whilst working in them is referred to as 'coworking'. There are no established Finnish translations for these terms. Instead, the Finnish language has the relatively unique concept *yhteisöllinen työtila* (roughly 'communal workspace').

Coworking spaces are also referred to by using other concepts such as creative workspaces or occasionally cultural centres, hubs or clusters, and often simply as workspaces, workrooms or offices. The concept of communal workspace (*yhteisöllinen työtila*) is particularly interesting, because in contrast to the English term 'coworking space', it implies that the activity is based on a particular degree or kind of communality.

During 2014, we conducted an ethnographic study in three coworking spaces in Helsinki. We sought to find answers – through observation and interviews – to the questions of what kind of work is done in coworking spaces and what makes them 'communal'. In addition to this material, we have also actively monitored, both before and after this fieldwork phase, a Facebook group called Mushrooming that acts as a peer network for leasing workrooms or desk space in coworking communities.

THE COWORKING SPACES IN FINLAND have not been listed anywhere, and no statistics have been compiled on their incidence. It is reasonable to assume that most of them are located in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, especially in Helsinki proper. In Finland, the creative industries – whose representatives are the main users of the coworking spaces – are strongly concentrated in Helsinki and the surrounding Uusimaa region (Metsä-Tokila 2013). There are some coworking spaces in other larger cities, and there have also been a few attempts in rural municipalities.

As a rule, the coworking spaces in Helsinki are located in the inner city. The principal tenant of the space may be one person or a small enterprise that sublets the workspace to other users. Alternatively, every user of the space can draw up a separate lease agreement with the owner of the space. Usually the practical issues related to the workspace, such as basic cleanliness or purchasing shared supplies, are handled collectively. Many workspaces have appointed a hostess/host or a 'person in charge' who holds the final responsibility for managing the common and shared things, receiving new tenants, as well as facilitating communality in the workspace (see Merkel 2015).

The people occupying the coworking spaces in Helsinki include professionals from different arts fields, design, information technology, marketing, communications and science. According to our research, the work done in coworking spaces is individualised and highly personal work which our interviewees also saw in terms of self-expression and self-fulfilment. (See also Julkunen 2008.) They perceived work as an important part of their identity. On the other hand, our interviewees felt that it was important to maintain a good work-life balance. Working in a shared space could offer some boundaries in time and space, for instance, to creative workers who may lack a clear distinction between work and leisure.

In a coworking space, a self-employed person can find colleagues and a work community. According to our findings, this was the most important reason

for using a coworking space. Working at home or in a café was, by contrast, perceived as solitary. At home it was also difficult to maintain the networks that are central to the work and constitute social capital for a self-employed person (Gandini 2015). The workspace community was also seen as an opportunity to find help in the everyday problems at work. Moreover, such communities offered a chance to find partners for cooperation. In our interpretation, the communities in working spaces are typical postmodern communities, characterised by fuzzy limits and changeability. Despite this, people could feel a deep sense of belonging and solidarity in the workspaces.

Helsinki's coworking spaces as part of urban milieu

The coworking spaces in Helsinki show how "new work" has taken over the spaces of "old work": former factories and business premises. Many workspaces have emerged in industrial spaces or old cornershops and cafés, as the users of the space have renovated the space by themselves to suit their taste.

Internationally, coworking is associated with an idea of spaces that do not much resemble a traditional office (for example, *unoffice* in DeGuzman & Tang 2011). The workspaces in Helsinki also aim to create a non-office-like atmosphere with their interior decoration and visual look. The workspaces can be cosy, café-like, or vintage-style; they can range from simple Scandinavian to 'hipster' and/or industrial romantic style.

Whatever the design, a common preoccupation of the workspaces is the pursuit of aesthetic beauty, personal style and a pleasant environment. In our interview data, many people working in the workspaces said that they were attracted by the large windows in former shopfronts or the high rooms in converted industrial spaces. In the Mushrooming network, workspaces are marketed like high-value real estate: the selling points can include location in an Art Nouveau building or proximity to the sea.

In our study, the aesthetic and locational values of the workspace to its users do emerge, but together with the content areas (i.e. what fields of work the occupants are involved with), they also form a kind of brand or image – a collective – to external observers. This is important because of the kind of community image that people want to be attached to and how it can support their own work. The positive image of a coworking space has an exchange value to the individuals working there, and vice versa. A well-assembled group of professionals can make the shared workspace flourish and generate external credibility (it may even become a guarantee of quality).

Spaces located at the street level are often active participants in the life of their district, and they are a visible part of the milieu of a certain street or block. In terms



of architecture, the workspaces located in old shopfronts are semi-public, like stores or cafés. Many coworking spaces create a cultural reference to a café with their architecture and interior decoration, and they have a kind of a tensioned combination of public and private, open and closed, work and leisure (cf. Mäkelä & Rajanti 2000).

In these semi-public workspaces, the interface between the street and the workspace may be porous and it may leak in both directions. On the one hand, there may be a direct view into the workspace from the street, and uninvited guests may pop in. On the other hand, the functions of the workspace may also spill out to the street. Some people working in such spaces say that they sometimes go out to the street to make private telephone calls – paradoxically, since an inner-city street is not a particularly private space. The street has also been used as a place of work by carrying seats from the workspace to the pavement outside. This provides the workspace with a kind of a terrace, as in a café or a restaurant.



vaasankatu



In the street-level workspaces, the field of street sociability and the *theatrum mundi* being played on the street (see for example Sennett 1977, Mäenpää 2005) expands to include the workspace, whose architecture already invites people to participate in a café-like urban life rather than ensuring that people can work in peace. The workspaces located on upper floors attract less traffic in and out. The same applies to spaces located further away from the inner city or in industrial buildings – outside the 'stage' of leisurely street life and its various forms of performative practices. These spaces may be more peaceful environments to work in, just like spaces with less frequent visits from customers or other contacts.

Regardless of their location (street level or upper floors, city centre or further away), many workspaces actively participate in the life of the local community of their district. For example, a Mushrooming advertisement may state that the occupants of a workspace have participated in Restaurant Day or Cleaning Day, held an open doors day for the neighbourhood or organised events targeted at both the workspace community and the people living nearby. Some professionals may choose their workspace on these grounds if they wish to be actively involved in neighbourhood activities, as was the case for one of the spaces in our study.

Coworking spaces represent globality and locality at the same time. The coworking spaces in Helsinki are part of the international coworking community, which is an imaginary community in the sense referred to by Benedict Anderson: its members cannot all meet each other even in theory (see Anderson 2007). At the same time, coworking spaces participate in a new kind of local and community-based urban culture that has rapidly become a trend (see for example Keskinen & Kotro 2014, Jyrkäs & Luoto 2014).

How can the city support the work of creative self-employed people?

Urban culture, great parties or neighbourhood events are not the principal *raison d'être* for coworking spaces. First and foremost, coworking

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spaces exist so that self-employed people can get their work done. The City of Helsinki has addressed the needs of mobile workers, for instance, by developing the Loft Helsinki concept (see Diagonal Mental Structure Oy 2013). The Urban Workshop and the Urban Office of the Helsinki City Library also serve all citizens with an occasional need for a workspace. Further efforts would be needed to ensure a flexible way of acquiring empty spaces in Helsinki for use as offices by small independents in the creative industries.

Coworking spaces represent one new form of urban work and one possible scenario of the future of work. This suggests a possible future trajectory where today's various organisational structures become obsolete or are transformed into different kinds of 'cells' defined by multiple jobs and changing workplaces and working methods. The world of coworking has already knocked on the door of traditional work culture, and soon we are likely to see how wide that door will open. What shape will future operational culture take? We can already see the sparks of things to come in these coworking spaces. ✨

PIA HOUNI and **HELI ANSIO** are researchers at the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. The article is based on their book *Duunia kimpassa. Yhteisölliset työtilat Helsingissä* (City of Helsinki Urban Facts, 2015).

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Helsinki's

POTENTIAL

as a travel destination
for young people

PEKKA MUSTONEN

» Survey responses of young people from 10 countries portray Helsinki as a city with a great natural environment and as a safe city and an unusual destination. Although evaluated as a relatively interesting destination for young people, Helsinki lags slightly behind other Nordic capitals.

Background

During the past decades, Helsinki has developed into a small metropolis with its own distinctive character. Helsinki has succeeded in struggling out of the shadow of other cities, such as Berlin and Stockholm, and has taken a number of top spots in international city rankings. The list is long (City of Helsinki 2015). Despite this success, Helsinki has not managed to steal its share of the global tourism growth. During the first six months of 2015, the number of bednights has declined in Helsinki whilst in Stockholm and Copenhagen the tendency was in the opposite direction.

Without forgetting other tourist segments such as active seniors, the marketing of the City of Helsinki is more and more focusing on young people. According to WYSE Travel Confederation (2013), the travelling behaviour of young people has changed. They travel more than before, spend more money than before and the trips are longer. According to the same report, young travellers represent one fifth of international tourism.

Motives seem to be changing as well. More than ever, young people travel for work-related purposes and for educational and cultural reasons. From this perspective, it is no surprise that tourism developers want to take this economic potential seriously. Information spreads rapidly amongst young people, and it can be assumed that marketing funds spent on this active demographic would generate returns in the longer term.

LAURI ROTKO

Due to the rise of interest towards Helsinki, it sounds like there might be a niche for the Finnish capital.

However, the situation is challenging. The competition is harsh, and creating a differentiated image is difficult. How could Helsinki attract a bigger share of the young people who are planning to travel but have no particular destination in mind? Without knowing the preferences of the target group, this is impossible to achieve. To understand future tourists and their motives, focusing on the heterogeneous groups of young people is thus obviously pivotal.

The study

In the end of 2014, the marketing unit of the City of Helsinki started a project aiming to examine young people's opinions of Helsinki. The data was gathered by TNS Gallup in 10 countries by utilising extensive internet panels in each country. The countries were Sweden, Britain, Germany, France, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Russia, South Korea and Japan. All the respondents were 16–25 years of age and had travelled abroad at least once during the last 12 months.

The questionnaire was constructed with the help of City of Helsinki Urban Facts and was made up of four parts. The first part consisted of basic background questions on gender, age, employment status, education, welfare (subjective assessment), travelling frequency, preferred travelling company and foreign experience. In this article, the background determinants are examined only briefly. A more detailed study report will be published later (Mustonen 2015).

In the second part, respondents were asked to evaluate their interest towards different cities by using a 1-to-5 Likert scale. The cities that were presented here were the most important

competitors of Helsinki: Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Tallinn, Berlin, St Petersburg and Amsterdam.

The third part of the questionnaire concerned Helsinki and contained a series of questions including the open-ended question: "What comes to mind when you think of Helsinki?" Respondents were also asked to evaluate how well they knew Helsinki and to rate whether their view of Helsinki was positive or negative (1–5). They were also asked to consider 23 statements and assess how applicable these were to the context of Helsinki – again on a scale of 1 to 5. Further on, the same statements were presented as motives for a trip and the respondents were asked to choose the five most relevant for themselves.

By utilising these two question patterns, it was possible to evaluate how well the motives of the potential tourists are in line with the opinions concerning Helsinki. The last section of the questionnaire concerned consumption, lifestyles and values.

Research questions

The process of image-building varies between different target groups. We must know what kind of issues are considered important to perform well in marketing. Traditional marketing activities are not necessarily effective amongst different segments of young people especially when taking into account the cultural differences. Thus, one aim of the study was to produce recommendations for marketing and brand work, having this particular target group – young people – in mind.

From this perspective, the main objective of the survey was to obtain information of how young people in the ten selected countries see Helsinki and what are the main differences and similarities between countries. This kind of research setting is new and unique.

Results

The size of the whole combined data was 4,031 respondents and the sample sizes of different countries varied from 401 to 413. All the respondents had travelled abroad during past year; this was the precondition for being chosen in the sample. About 80% of the respondents travel at least once a year and 40% at least twice. Thus, according to the data, it seems that those who travel, travel quite often.

Young people throughout these data seemed to be interested in other cultures and travelling. They would also be happier if they had more money. Shopping and new experiences were among the main interests. Nevertheless, the results at the other end were somewhat surprising. When looking only at these variables in the context of the whole data, it seems that young people were less environmentally conscious than could have been assumed. Also differences between the countries were greatest in the

case of the statements at the bottom of the list such as the ones concerning flea markets, consumption-centred life, organic products and eating out.

The questions examining the personal values of the respondents turned out to receive somewhat higher mean scores all down the line, compared to the ones concerning consumption. From the viewpoint of values, young people from these ten examined countries appear quite similar. Possibilities to travel and see new places, being successful at studies or at work, contacts with family and friends, as well as the freedom to set their own schedules were evaluated with the highest scores.

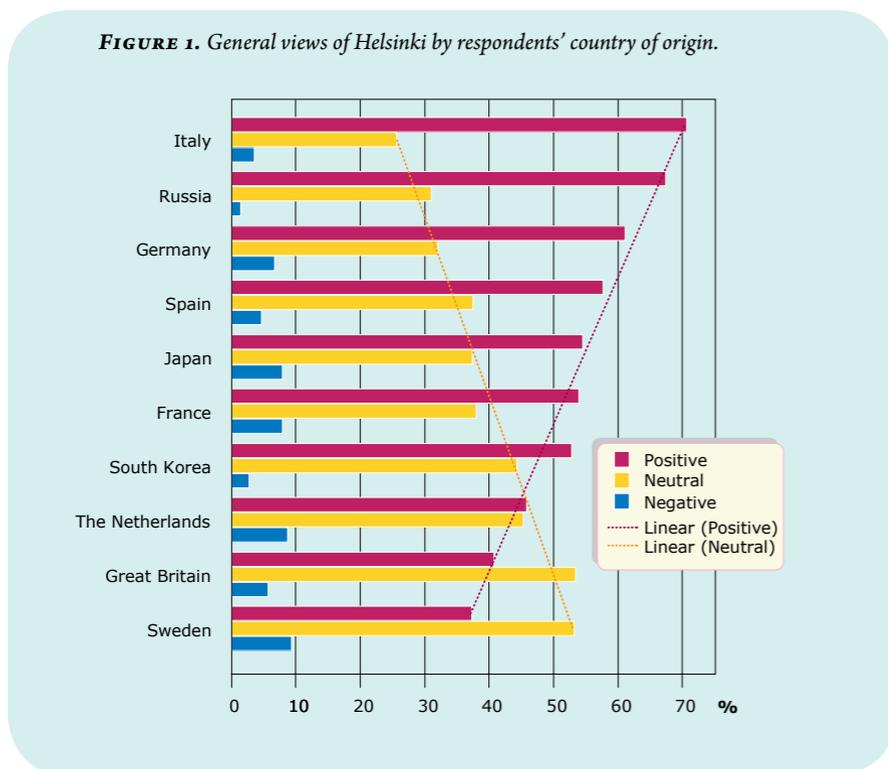
General views and statements concerning Helsinki

Respondents were asked whether their general views of Helsinki were positive or negative. The scale was from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive). The



results show some very interesting results (see Figure 1). Negative views were quite rare; opinions were either neutral or positive.

Interestingly, it seems that neutral and positive opinions were negatively connected to each other. The “hourglass” shape is clearly visible when looking at the results in Figure 1. If the views were positive, the share of neutral views was smaller and vice versa. In general, the amount of neutral views was remarkable. There were probably many respondents who did not have enough information of Helsinki. When someone has inadequate information, giving negative opinions seems unlikely. This might explain why there were very few negative views.



The questionnaire contained one open-ended question. Respondents were asked to write down three words that come to mind when thinking of Helsinki. This was the first question concerning Helsinki and thus the first time the respondents heard that the questionnaire actually was about Helsinki. The answers of Italian, Japanese, South Korean and Dutch respondents were not examined in this article.

The data elicited as a response to this question contains hundreds of different words. Despite this, the most commonly mentioned words stand out clearly. There were also great differences between respondents from different countries. The top five was, however, very stereotypical and very similar regardless of the country. “Cold” was mentioned almost a thousand times, which is a remarkable amount especially considering that part of the respondent countries were not

included in the examination in this article. “Finland” came second and “Snow” third. The list continued with “Beautiful”. Snow was mostly mentioned by the British, French and Spanish – all these are countries where snow can be considered somewhat exotic.

Negative associations were rare (although of course “cold” could have been considered negative by some respondents). Most of the comments were either positive or neutral. Amongst Britons, positive comments such as “interesting”, “food”, “nice” and “funny” occurred quite often. French and Germans mentioned “scenery”, “Scandinavia” and “nature” more than others. Spanish respondents mentioned “culture” and “school” a number of times, and in addition to these, “darkness” was mentioned several times as well. Swedes differed from the rest. Among them “Moomin trolls”, “boat trip” and “shopping” were rather frequent associations. Russians, too, mentioned “shopping”, but also “churches” and “Santa Claus”.

Thus, cultural differences were evident here. Also the proximity of Helsinki obviously counts since Russians and Swedes mentioned a larger number of words than respondents from the other countries. They, of course, know more about Finland than, for example, Spanish or French respondents.

TABLE 1. ‘Words that come to mind when you think of Helsinki.’ Number of mentions by respondents' country of origin.

	GREAT BRITAIN	FRANCE	GERMANY	SPAIN	SWEDEN	RUSSIA	Total
<i>Cold</i>	160	224	180	283	68	79	994
<i>Finland</i>	40	62	82	30	103	38	355
<i>Snow</i>	58	87	38	91	15	47	336
<i>Beautiful</i>	32	34	29	41	16	35	187
<i>Capital</i>	13	38	26	10	42	26	155
<i>Northern</i>	5	40	42	21	3	10	121
<i>Finnish language</i>	9	5	16	5	44	37	116
<i>Sauna</i>	1	5	17	3	41	25	92
<i>Beer</i>	20	7	3	12	12	19	73
<i>Sea/Baltic sea</i>	13	7	15	11	3	21	70

In the next part, the respondents were asked to assess 23 statements and say how applicable to Helsinki they found each of these to be. Respondents evaluated the statements using the five point Likert scale. Some of the statements were purposefully quite stereotypical as we wanted to know whether these images often used in marketing are in line with the perceptions.

The results are presented in Figure 2. Bars of different colour indicate the shares of respondents who agreed or disagreed. The shares of those who could not decide are presented in Figure 3. About half of the respondents agreed that Helsinki has a great natural environment, is a safe city, is an unusual destination and is located in an interesting part of the world.

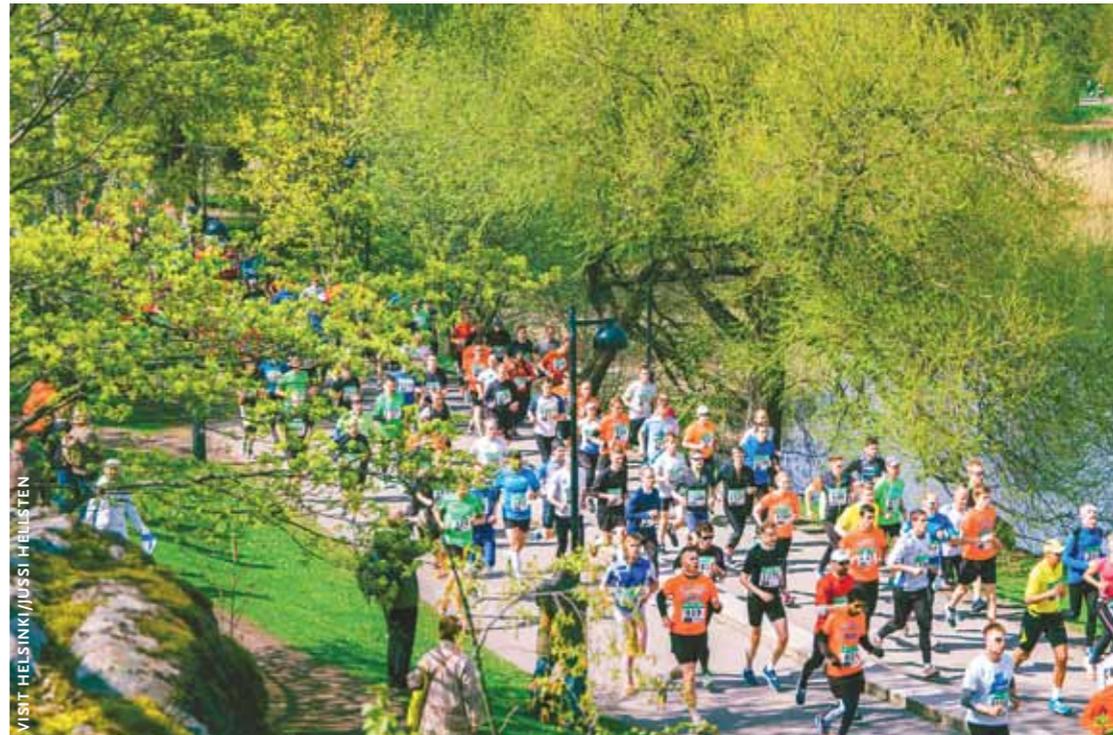
When compared to the open-ended associations, there were only a few images that actually matched; namely “It has a great natural environment” (“beautiful” in Table 1) and “Weather is too cold” (“cold” in Table 1). When the results were examined by looking at mean values, the results were somewhat similar although differences remained more in shade as opposite ends of the 1–5 scale obviously cancelled out each



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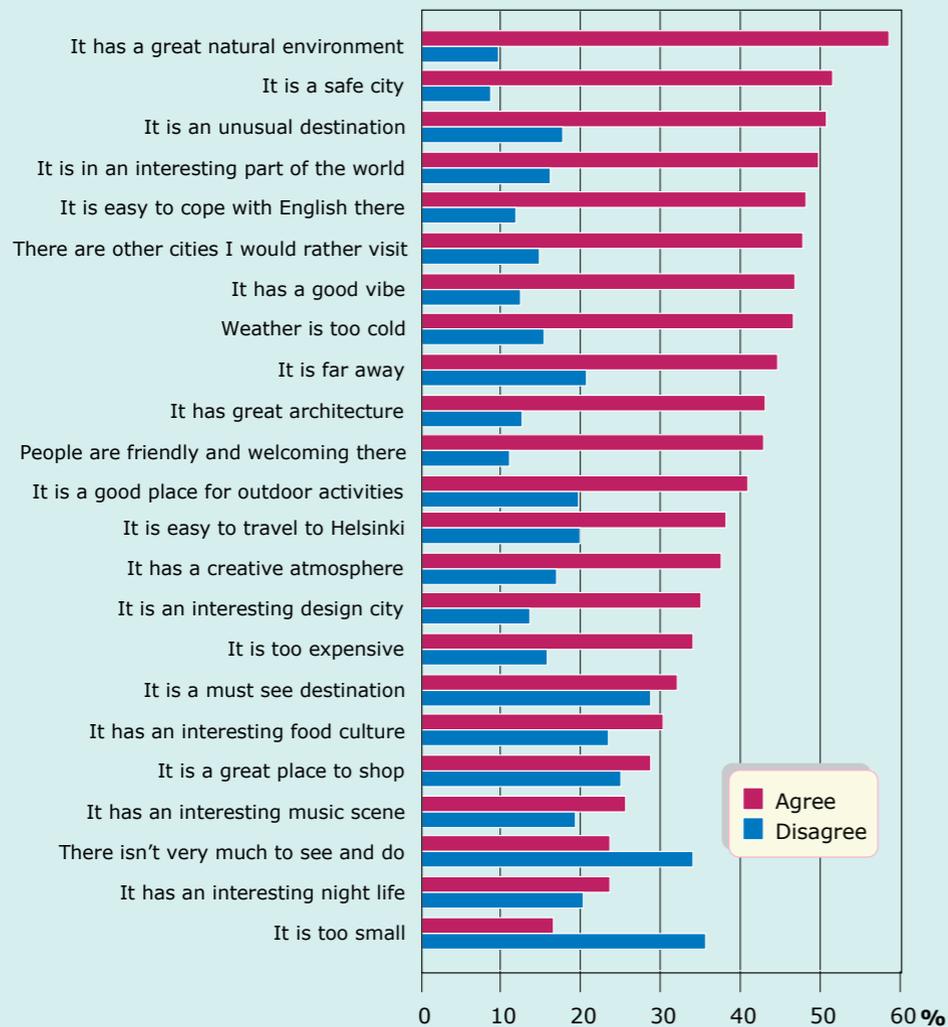
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other. Results were thus quite neutral. The mean value of “Great natural environment” was the highest, 3.7, and “It is too small” had the lowest, 2.8.

When approaching the bottom of the figure, the share of respondents who could not decide was remarkably high (see also Figure 3). And also in the case of the most common stereotypes, the shares of respondents without a clear opinion were quite remarkable.

A great share of respondents did not know whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements concerning creativity, design, food culture, shopping, music or nightlife. These were amongst the issues that at least according to the stereotypes make Helsinki’s competitors interesting. Therefore, if Helsinki wants to market itself as creative and design-driven, or to highlight our food culture or shopping possibilities, there is much work to do.

FIGURE 2. Shares of respondents who agreed/disagreed with the associations concerning Helsinki.



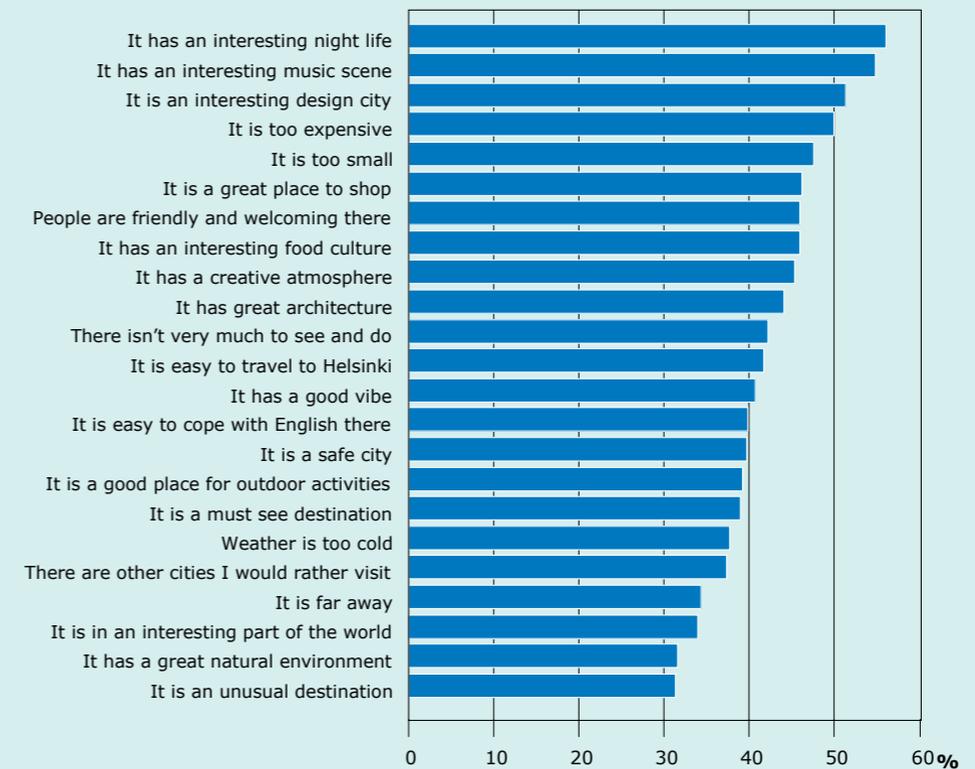
Negative issues are another story. Only 17% of the respondents were of the view that Helsinki is too small (Figure 2). Thus, the relatively small size should not be considered as a disadvantage: 48% of the respondents could not give an opinion on this (Figure 3). What about weather, high prices or location? These are stereotypes that we Finns often associate Helsinki with. To some extent, these stereotypes are in line with reality in light of the data. A little less than half of the respondents feel that Helsinki is too cold or too far, and about one third consider that prices are high. But the results reveal the flip side too: 38% of the respondents did not have an opinion of the weather, 34% of the location and 50% of the prices.

Motives behind choosing a destination

Now we know something about how young people think of the issues often associated with Helsinki. However, this knowledge is not much help if we are unaware of how important they consider these issues to be.

This problem was approached by asking respondents to choose five statements from the same list they were asked to evaluate in relation to Helsinki earlier. It was assumed that the first one they chose was the most important one. When examining these first choices, “good feeling”, “unusual destination”, “a must-see destination”, “interesting part of the world” and “interesting architecture” formed the top five. Now when we compared

FIGURE 3. Shares of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed with the associations concerning Helsinki.



these to the results presented in Figure 2, we can see that with the exception of “a must-see destination”, all the others were associated with Helsinki relatively well.

When all the five choices were summed together, the list turned out to be slightly different (Figure 4). Most of the choices on top were also associated with Helsinki (Figure 2). Some very interesting observations can be made regarding the issues at the bottom of the list. It could have been thought beforehand that issues concerning nightlife, creative atmosphere, shopping or music would have been more important. However, at least according to these data, young people do not seem to consider these issues important when choosing where to travel.

If nightlife or design is not important for people when they choose the destination, does it matter how they see Helsinki’s nightlife or if they know

about Helsinki’s design initiatives? But this is not the matter at issue here. They may enjoy nightlife even if they do not mention it as an important factor. The question is about marketing and which issues to prioritise.

Helsinki vs. competitors

As shown above, the respondents were asked to evaluate their views of Helsinki on a negative-to-positive scale (Figure 1). It turned out that these views were mainly combinations of neutral and positive. The questionnaire contained also another question concerning general opinions and in this case, the respondents were asked to rate Helsinki together with other cities on a 1–5 scale (“not at all interesting” to “very interesting”). The purpose of this question was twofold. First of all, the results would complement the other findings such as those presented in Figure 1. Secondly, the aim was to

position Helsinki into a matrix with its competitors. How interesting is Helsinki compared to, say, Copenhagen? Where does Helsinki stand?

The results are presented in Figure 5. Swedish and Russian respondents clearly stand out from the rest. Russian respondents considered Helsinki more often interesting than respondents from the other countries. 65% of Russian respondents stated that Helsinki is interesting whilst amongst the Swedes the share was only 21%.

In general, it seems that here most of the respondents had an opinion. Only 25% of the respondents answered with a “3” (meaning that Helsinki was neither interesting nor uninteresting). This is a considerably lower share than, for instance, in the negative vs. positive evaluation where 40% of the respondents chose the neutral option. Thus, at least one conclusion can be drawn from this result. The positive views of the respondents do

not necessarily mean that they consider Helsinki interesting, and vice versa, of course.

And then on top of everything, where does Helsinki stand when its competitors were evaluated using the same scale (Figure 6)? Amsterdam and Berlin were clearly the most interesting destinations. Stockholm, Copenhagen and Oslo came next. According to these results, Helsinki was in same league with St Petersburg whilst Tallinn was behind all the other cities. However, the differences are not substantial, and Copenhagen and Oslo, for example, are not far ahead of Helsinki. Moreover, a point to keep in mind is that the results of Helsinki are somewhat skewed by the fact that the ratings given by the Swedish respondents were markedly different from the assessments they gave to all the other cities.

FIGURE 4. Statements that matter the most when choosing a destination. All five choices summed together. (% of all respondents)

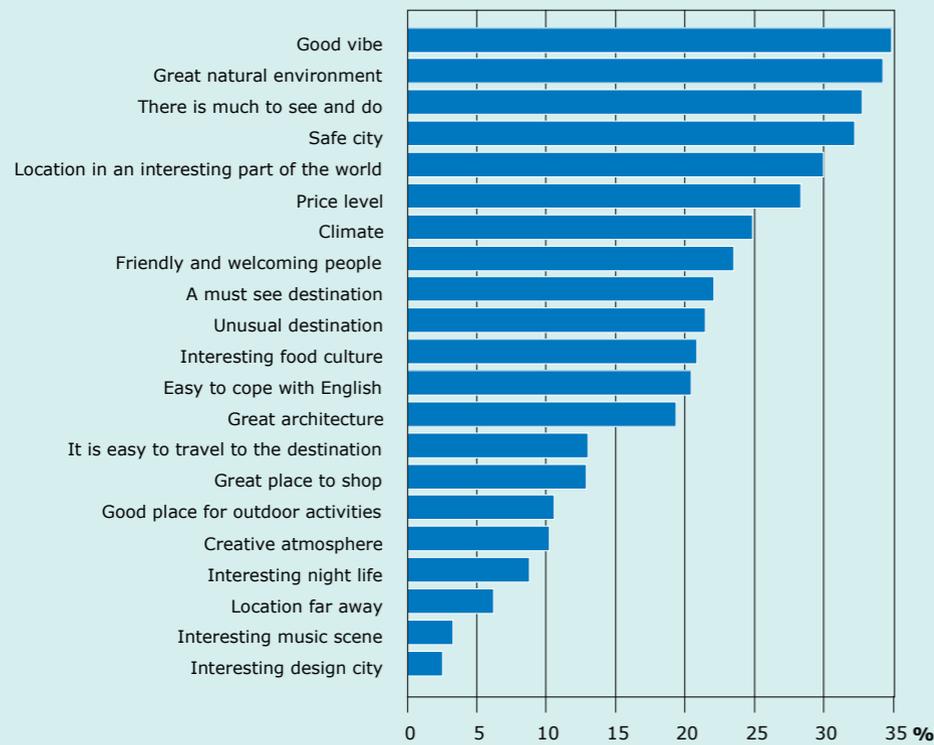


FIGURE 5. “How interesting do you think the following cities are as a holiday destination?” Scores for Helsinki (% of respondents by country of origin).

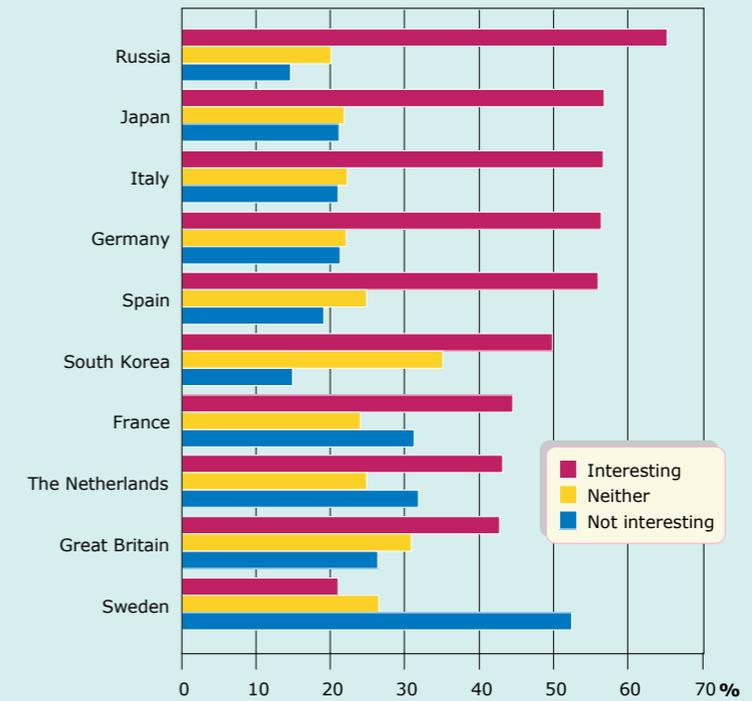
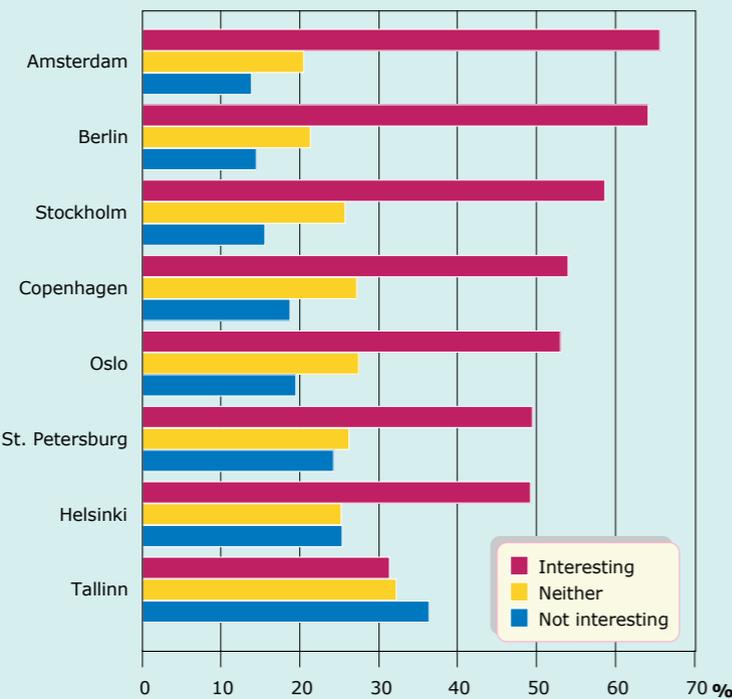


FIGURE 6. “How interesting do you think the following cities are as a holiday destination?” Scores for Helsinki and its competitors (% of respondents by country of origin).



Conclusions

The aim of the study was to obtain more information on the preferences of young people around the world and to find out what kinds of perceptions they have on Helsinki. The extensive data was analysed thoroughly, but only the most important results could be presented here.

Young people form anything but a uniform group. Lifestyles and motives in terms of touristic behaviour vary a lot and when different nationalities are taken into account, the results is a complex matrix with multitude of preferences. The observed young people, who were 16-25 of age, have of course many things in common. They seem to be interested in other cultures and they enjoy travelling. They want to shop and search for new experiences. They appreciate possibilities to travel and want to be successful at work and studies. In addition to these, traditional values bind people from different cultural backgrounds together. Family, relatives and other important people remain in the centre when values are examined.

When asked about Helsinki, a striking observation was that it was difficult for a substantial share of respondents to give opinions. On the one hand, negative opinions were rare but, on the other hand, neutral opinions were relatively common. It can be assumed that having negative views requires at least a certain degree of knowledge. Interestingly, positive and neutral views were somewhat contrary when examined by country.

Respondents were asked to write down three words that best describe Helsinki. Not surprisingly, the top five was dominated by rather stereotypical images such as “cold” or “snow”. Even in a data of hundreds of different words, negative issues were almost absent. Cultural differences were clearly visible here. The variety of issues mentioned by Russians and Swedes, to whom Helsinki is more familiar, was remarkably greater than with the others.

When asked to evaluate different statements of Helsinki, neutral answers were frequent as well. Quite a remarkable share of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements concerning creativity, design, food culture, shopping, music or nightlife. Thus, if Helsinki wants to attract tourists with these, the word must be spread. However, when asked in a separate question pattern, these issues are not necessarily the most important determinants behind the choice of destination. They might have been assumed to have had more weight. Far more important were the propositions that Helsinki had a “good vibe”, that it is an unusual destination and in an interesting part of the world.

Now what to do with these findings? From the viewpoint of marketing, it is good to know that young people’s impressions of Helsinki are relatively positive, or, to be more precise, they are not negative. The differences between the countries must be taken into account similarly as different lifestyle segments. Same marketing strategies do not work everywhere. And it must be remembered that the positive views do not automatically mean that Helsinki is considered especially interesting. It seems that young people consider other cities – Helsinki’s competitors – more interesting than Helsinki. Interestingly, the scores given to Helsinki by Russian respondents were the highest when respondents from different countries were compared. Russians form an important target group, and in light of these results, this could be the case also in the future. ✨

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LAURI ROTKO

Skilled migrants face difficulties with housing in Helsinki

ELINA ESKELÄ



VISIT HELSINKI/JUSSI HELLSTEN



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The Helsinki Metropolitan Area hosts growing numbers of foreign professionals who are vital for the competitiveness of the city region. Besides working, the migrants also establish their everyday lives within the built environment of the city. What are their housing experiences, and does the local offer of housing support their settling into the city region?

Economic competitiveness, city regions and the global race for talent

International migration has become a normal activity for many highly educated workers. Cities are striving to attract and retain these skilled migrants in order to increase their competitiveness in the new economy, which is highly dependent on innovation and knowledge. What influences the location choices of skilled migrants – and what makes them stay at a certain location?

Over ten years ago Richard Florida's (2004) writings on the "creative class" started discussion on cities from the perspective of talented people. Florida claimed that



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the so-called soft factors, such as tolerant atmosphere, urban amenities and quality of life are more important for the talented workers than the so-called hard factors, such as work opportunities and regional economy. The debate on the meaning of soft and hard factors as attracting factors for the skilled workers continues, but it has been noted that soft factors play an important role as retaining factors that root these workers into a city. For example, if local housing supply responds to the needs of skilled people, it supports their staying in that location.

This article is based on a dissertation in urban geography (Eskelä 2015), which investigated the determinants of residential satisfaction among skilled migrants living in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Residential satisfaction has been identified as a key determinant of whether a person stays or moves to another location (Speare 1974), and it can be seen as a predictor of behaviour. As skilled migrants are usually in a socio-economically good position, chances are that they will migrate if not happy with their lives in the host cities. Therefore, skilled migrants' experiences and opinions on housing offer relevant information for the cities that aim to host these migrants.

Qualitative approach helps reveal opinions on housing

Although skilled workers are acknowledged as influential drivers of economic growth, the literature focusing on cities and their competitiveness tends to portray them as somewhat anonymous actors who “flow” in global networks. In order to reveal the experiences and the “human face” of skilled migration (Favell et al. 2007), the qualitative study underpinning this article drew on 70 semi-structured interviews with skilled migrants and with experts on migration and housing in the city region.

The research setting was designed to maximise the cultural and socio-economic as well as locational diversity within the limits of recognised skilled migrant groups.

The interviewees included workers of creative and knowledge-intensive industries, international degree students at Aalto University and University of Helsinki, and Indian skilled migrants.

In analysing the housing issues of skilled migrants, the study utilised the concept of housing pathways (Clapham 2005). Housing always relates to wider life circumstances, and social relations play an important part. Immigrants' housing needs and preferences are influenced by their cultural, socio-economic and personal backgrounds, and previous housing experiences are contrasted to the current housing situation. This general framework – studying the interaction between the individual's norms and the situational conditions – has been described in Parsons' (1967) *unit act*, which in essence describes how the normative orientation of an individual and the changing situational conditions are always present in action. Therefore, the study has mapped the housing pathways of these migrants, i.e. all the dwellings where migrants have lived in Finland and in other countries, and analysed their reasons for changing and choosing particular dwellings.

Experiences on housing strikingly similar

The interviews showed that many skilled workers migrate to Finland with almost non-existent knowledge of the country. Furthermore, they usually did not have specific expectations regarding the built environment and housing in Helsinki. For most of the migrants, professional or academic reasons were motivating factors in the migration decisions. However, also travelling, experiencing a new culture and social relationships were mentioned as motivating factors.

When arriving in a country, finding accommodation is often the first task. The level of assistance with housing-related issues varied among the migrant groups:

whereas the corporate-driven Indian migrant group enjoyed the settlement help offered by their employer, the more diverse group of employees in the creative and knowledge-intensive sectors did not receive as much help. Most of the international degree students were offered student housing when they arrived in Finland. The functioning of the housing market was problematic for non-Finnish-speakers, especially at first when information was scarce and they had yet to develop supportive social networks.

Despite the cultural, socio-economic and locational heterogeneity of the interviewees, their experiences of housing in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area were notably similar. Principally, their assessment was that housing is expensive, cramped and uniform. In other words, skilled migrants struggled to find reasonably priced and satisfactory housing. This was a surprise to many of them, since they thought of Helsinki as a remote and small city region compared with many other global destinations. The price of housing was generally considered high, and even those who had money to spend faced difficulties in finding accommodation to suit their needs. The high price of housing was a burden especially to freelancers and those working on temporary contracts; also families with children missed affordable family housing. The small size of dwellings in Helsinki was contrasted to previous experiences on housing. For example, many professionals were used to living in single family houses, which are only sparsely available for renting in Helsinki. The experienced uniformity of housing related particularly to the dominance of apartment housing and the sameness of the built environment.

Although accommodation tended to attract critical comments, most of the migrants were satisfied with their neighbourhoods and highly appreciated the safety of the residential areas as well as the whole city region. Most of them lived in suburban areas, usually because of the lower house prices and the larger dwellings compared to the city centre, but also because of the greenness and peacefulness.

All of the families with children lived in the suburbs. Although the “creative class” is often assumed to appreciate urban amenities, the results of the study indicate that the family life cycle guides housing choices in the Finnish context. Many childless migrants, too, chose quiet suburban residential areas over the city centre buzz. The singles and couples who lived in the city centre enjoyed the variety of urban amenities.

Earlier studies (e.g. Murdie & Teixeira 2003) have showed that among immigrant groups with a lower socio-economic status, homeownership is a predictor of settlement and commitment to the host country. Among Indian skilled migrants, however, homeownership was not a simple indicator of the intention to stay in or leave the region. As the price level of rental housing is high in Helsinki, many chose homeownership based on economic grounds. Furthermore, the tightly knit Indian community strengthened the Indians’ willingness to move to homeownership, and also affected their choice of neighbourhood. On the other hand, some migrants who had strong intentions on returning rather invested their funds to the home country.



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Skilled migrants struggle to find reasonably priced and satisfactory housing in Helsinki. This has come as a surprise to many of them.



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Social aspect of housing significant for the migrants

The interviews revealed that social environment is very important in creating residential satisfaction among skilled migrants. Almost all of the interviewees wanted to have more interaction with their neighbours. This is a somewhat surprising result. Given that skilled migrants tend to be considered relatively footloose, and that today's communication technologies allow the maintenance of physically distant social relationships, it might be assumed that local social ties are not so important.

The study indicates that the supply of local, neighbourhood-based social ties is particularly limited in the case of Helsinki, and that this has a negative impact on the residential satisfaction of skilled migrants. Contacts with the neighbours and roommates (in the case of international degree students) were scarce; the underlying reasons for this were cultural differences, individuals' personalities and the lack of common spaces.

As a rule there was no need to develop deep friendships in the neighbourhood, but the migrants would have liked brief daily encounters and acknowledgement from the people who lived near them. The finding complements previous results on the difficulties skilled migrants have in penetrating professional and personal networks in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (Kepsu et al. 2009) in showing how these difficulties are also manifested in their residential areas.

Although international degree students in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area are allocated the same student housing as the Finnish students, and even live in the same shared dwellings, the physical closeness does not automatically create social interaction. In some cases the interviewees did not even know with whom they would be living, never having seen their roommates. Furthermore, the structural element of housing seemed to have an effect on local social ties: among international students the extent of such ties varied according to the housing form.

Those who lived in the housing offered by the Foundation for Student Housing in the Helsinki Region (HOAS) had less local social contacts than those who lived in the student flats of Aalto University in Otaniemi or in private rental dwellings.



Weak social ties develop in everyday encounters, which happen more often in housing forms other than HOAS student accommodation. One student, for example, said that elderly people in his building were happy to practise their German skills with him, and another told the interviewer how she had started to talk to families with children who lived in her building because she liked children. A versatile population structure and voluntary neighbourhood work (private rental housing), as well as familiarity through studies and student parties (the Otaniemi campus), facilitate such encounters.

The lack of local social ties is problematic from at least two perspectives. From the migrants' personal perspective, they would have wanted more local social interaction, which would increase their residential satisfaction. Furthermore, a lack of social ties weakens migrants' attachment to the neighbourhood and their chances of joining the social networks that could benefit career development. More generally, it has been shown that local social ties are beneficial in the establishment of innovative environments (Glaeser 2011), which are important for the vitality of the city region.

Recommendations for housing policy

Although many skilled migrants are in a good socio-economic position, they are not immune to problems

related to finding suitable housing. The skilled migrants investigated in the study critically observed their life and residential environment in the host country. Despite the cultural and socio-economic variation, the interviewees gave surprisingly similar assessments of local housing conditions. Currently, the housing market in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area does not respond well to the needs of skilled migrants, which affects their overall assessment of the city region. According to the above results on residential satisfaction, retaining skilled migrants in Helsinki seems challenging.

The study shows that housing availability, quality and affordability are significant factors in enhancing residential satisfaction among skilled migrants. Furthermore, given that local social ties have a mediating role with regard to the residential area as well as to society, policy-makers should also work to ease the formation of such ties among migrants. These aspects of housing should be acknowledged when wishing to accommodate and retain global talent. *

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NETTA MÄKI

Changes in life expectancy by district in Helsinki 1996–2014



VISIT HELSINKI/JUSSI HELLISTEN

The overall life expectancy of the population of Helsinki has increased during the nearly twenty-year period examined in this article. However, the growth has slowed over the last four years, especially among women. The development is also unequal between different parts of Helsinki. In some of the major districts, life expectancy has even slightly decreased compared to the previous five-year period.

Differences in life expectancy between areas are significantly larger in men than in women. On the average, the differences have decreased among men but increased slightly among women. The most important causes of death behind the area differences are cardiovascular diseases, alcohol-related causes, accidents and violence.

Background

According to several indicators, the health status among Finns appears to have improved during the past couple of decades (e.g. Koskinen et al. 2012). Meanwhile, differences in health and mortality between population sub-groups (Valkonen et al. 2007; Mäki 2010) and areas (Blomgren et al. 2011) have stayed the same or even increased. Earlier research has shown that area-level variation in mortality and life expectancy is considerably large in both Helsinki and the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (Valkonen and Kauppinen 2001). In the areas where life expectancy was highest to begin with, it has also increased the most, both in absolute and relative terms (Valkonen et al. 2008). However, there is no information on developments in Helsinki after 2005.

Socioeconomic segregation of city areas, as well as the possible concentration of deprivation, have been a prominent topic of research and political debate both in Finland and abroad in recent years. These questions have also been debated in Helsinki, and research has shown that differences between areas have in fact increased. Socioeconomic and ethnic differentiation of areas is relatively well-established development in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, and it has even strengthened in recent years. To date, however, there are no areas in a vicious circle of socioeconomic deterioration (Vilkama et al. 2014).

There is no recent research on socioeconomic differentiation possibly being reflected in changes of mortality and life expectancy. This article will present the most up-to-date available information on the development of life expectancy in Helsinki and its areas. Life expectancy is a widely used, straightforward and easily understandable measure of mortality. It summarises mortality in different age groups into one single figure, which is unaffected by changes in the age



structure over time or by different age structures in different population groups. In addition, the analysis is expanded by discussing healthy life expectancy in each of Helsinki's major district. This method divides life expectancy into years that a person can expect to live in "full health" on one hand and in less than full health on the other on the basis of a selected indicator of health or ill-health.

Data and methods

The analyses in this article were performed using tabulated register-based multivariate data obtained from Statistics Finland (TK-52 – 197–14 and TK-52 – 140–15). These data include yearly information on population and deaths classified by age and sex for major districts and basic districts. The life expectancy was calculated using the mortality and life table. The area-level variation and change in life expectancy was examined further by calculating the mean deviation of life expectancy from the city-level average in Helsinki. Weighted by the population of the areas,

the figures will show whether area-level differences in life expectancy have increased or decreased. The change in life expectancy between two time periods was also examined by taking into account the change in mortality from different causes of death as well as the effect of this on the growth of life expectancy. The analysis was conducted by applying the decomposition method. Mortality for different causes of death was age-standardised by using the overall age structure of Helsinki as the standard population. The healthy life expectancy was calculated using the so-called Sullivan method (Sullivan 1971). In the method, the distribution of the variable describing health or ill-health in different age groups is used for dividing overall life expectancy into healthy and non-healthy years. The variable chosen for the analyses in this article was the share of residents receiving disability pension. Disability pension requires a medical diagnosis of significant disability, which makes it a suitable indicator for describing the share of residents suffering from illness. In addition to the overall

life expectancy in Helsinki, some of the tables also show the life expectancy of the dwelling population. This is because the district-based calculations only include the dwelling population, whilst excluding permanently institutionalised persons.

The data employed in the analyses of this article is slightly different to what has been used in previous studies. The information on the number of deaths,

for instance, has been available for all ages. This enables the results to be shown as life expectancy at birth. On the other hand, the present data includes slightly fewer variables describing individuals than earlier research. To make the results of this article uniform and comparable over time, they will be presented for a period that has already been covered partly by earlier research.

TABLE 1. Life expectancy at birth and 95% confidence interval in major districts of Helsinki, 2011–2014

REGION	MEN		WOMEN	
	Life expectancy, years	(Confidence interval 95%)	Life expectancy, years	(Confidence interval 95%)
Southern major district	79.5	(78.7–80.2)	85.7	(85.1–86.3)
Western major district	78.5	(77.8–79.2)	84.1	(83.5–84.7)
Central major district	74.6	(73.7–75.4)	82.8	(82.1–83.6)
Northern major district	79.8	(78.7–80.9)	84.1	(83.0–85.0)
North-eastern major district	77.7	(77.0–78.4)	83.0	(82.3–83.7)
South-eastern major district	78.7	(77.8–79.7)	82.8	(81.8–83.7)
Eastern major district	76.6	(75.9–77.3)	83.3	(82.7–84.0)
Helsinki, dwelling population	77.8		83.8	
Helsinki, total population	77.3		83.2	
Finland	77.5		83.6	

Results

DIFFERENCES IN LIFE EXPECTANCY BETWEEN AREAS ARE CONSIDERABLE IN HELSINKI. In 2011–2014, life expectancy at birth in Helsinki was 77.5 years for males and 83.3 for females (Table 1). Life expectancy has typically been slightly lower in Helsinki than elsewhere in Finland. During this most recent period, the difference was 0.2 for males and 0.4 for females. However, differences between the eight major districts of Helsinki are large: up to 5.3 years for males and up to 3.0 for females. Life expectancy was highest in the Southern and Northern major

districts, and for women also in the Western major district. It was lowest in the Central major district. Although the confidence intervals are rather wide, the lower male life expectancy in the Central major district was statistically significant compared to the rest of the major districts, and the higher life expectancy in the Southern and Northern major districts differed from the figures of most other major districts.

The higher female life expectancy in the Southern major district was statistically significantly different compared to all other parts of Helsinki except the Northern major district.

FIGURE 1. Life expectancy at birth and 95% confidence interval in selected basic districts of Helsinki, 2009–2014

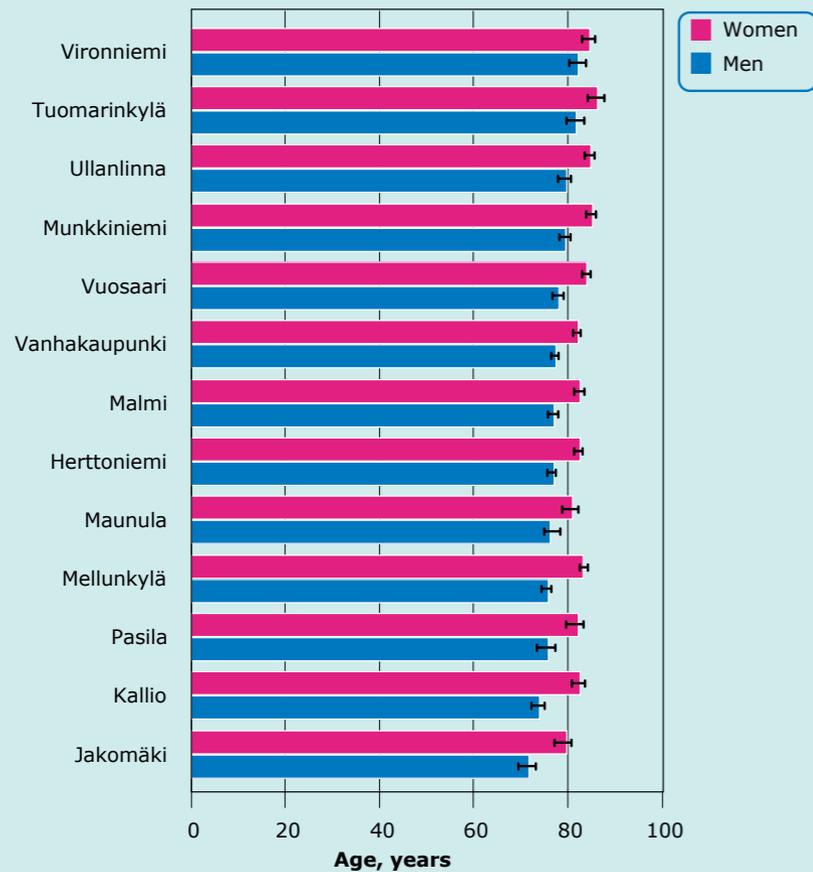


Figure 1 shows some examples of life expectancy in the basic districts in 2009–2014. The basic districts are a rather heterogeneous group in terms of their population size. To prevent statistical uncertainty from affecting the results, the largest basic districts were selected from within each major district. Also included were such basic districts where the level of mortality deviates considerably from the average for Helsinki. The differences in life expectancy between the basic districts are naturally higher than in the case of the major districts, which are larger geographical areas. The difference between the basic district with the highest and lowest life expectancy was 10.5 years for males and 6.5 years for females. One highly significant result was that in two of the basic districts examined, Vironniemi and Tuomarinkylä, male life expectancy exceeded 80 years. Moreover, in the district of Vironniemi the difference between male and female life expectancy was not statistically significant.

Life expectancy can also be examined by dividing it into expectancy for healthy and non-healthy years. The quantity of these depends very much on the indicator of illness or disability chosen for the purpose. The validity of the indicator must also be considered. The analyses in this article used the share of residents receiving

disability pension as an indicator. This will only measure differences among working-age people. Consequently, in life expectancy at birth, the non-healthy years form a rather small share. Nevertheless, the indicator is very valid and well suited to making area-level comparisons. Figure 2 describes the extent to which the different areas deviated from the average for all of Helsinki during 2010–2014, regarding both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy. In the Southern major district, the life expectancy of men was two years higher than the average, but the healthy life expectancy was three years higher. Conversely, in the Central major district, the life expectancy of men was approximately three years lower than the average, but the expectancy of healthy years was nearly four years lower. The difference in life expectancy between the best and weakest major district was thus approximately five years, but the difference in healthy life expectancy was as high as seven years. In women, the results were very similar, but the difference between the extremes was smaller: slightly under three years for life expectancy, but four for healthy life years. Thus, especially in the Central but also the Eastern major district, not only is life expectancy lower than the average of all of Helsinki, but the population in these districts also suffers more ill-health during this shorter life.

FIGURE 2. Difference (years) in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between major districts and the average for Helsinki, 2010–2014.

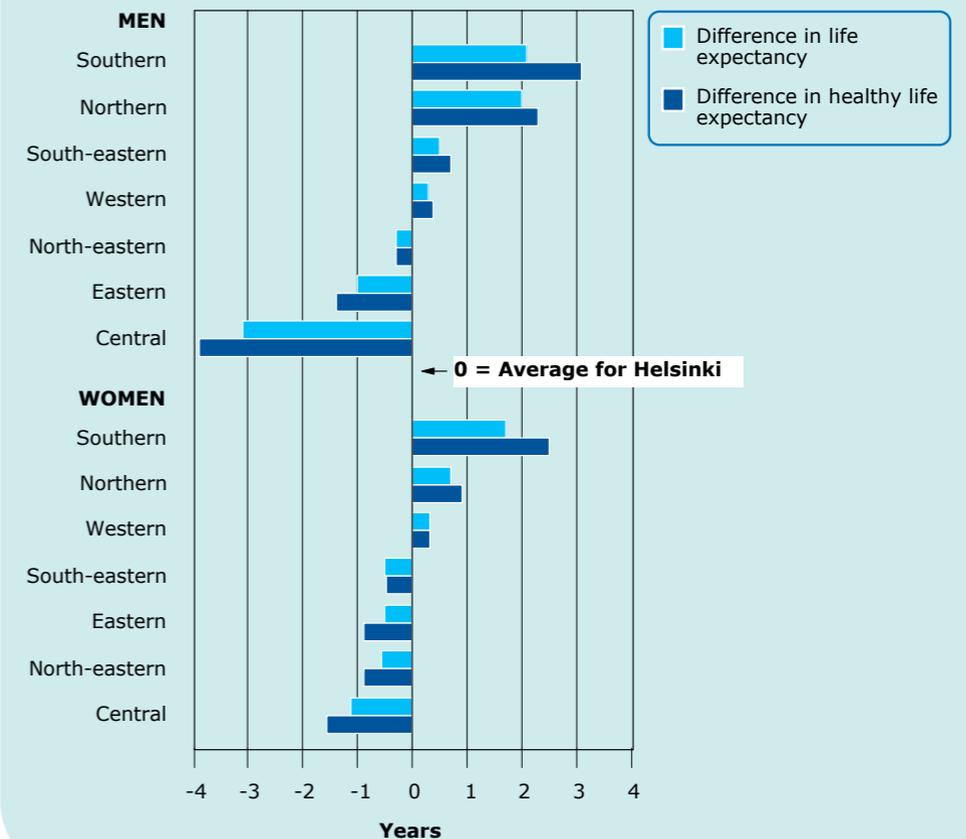
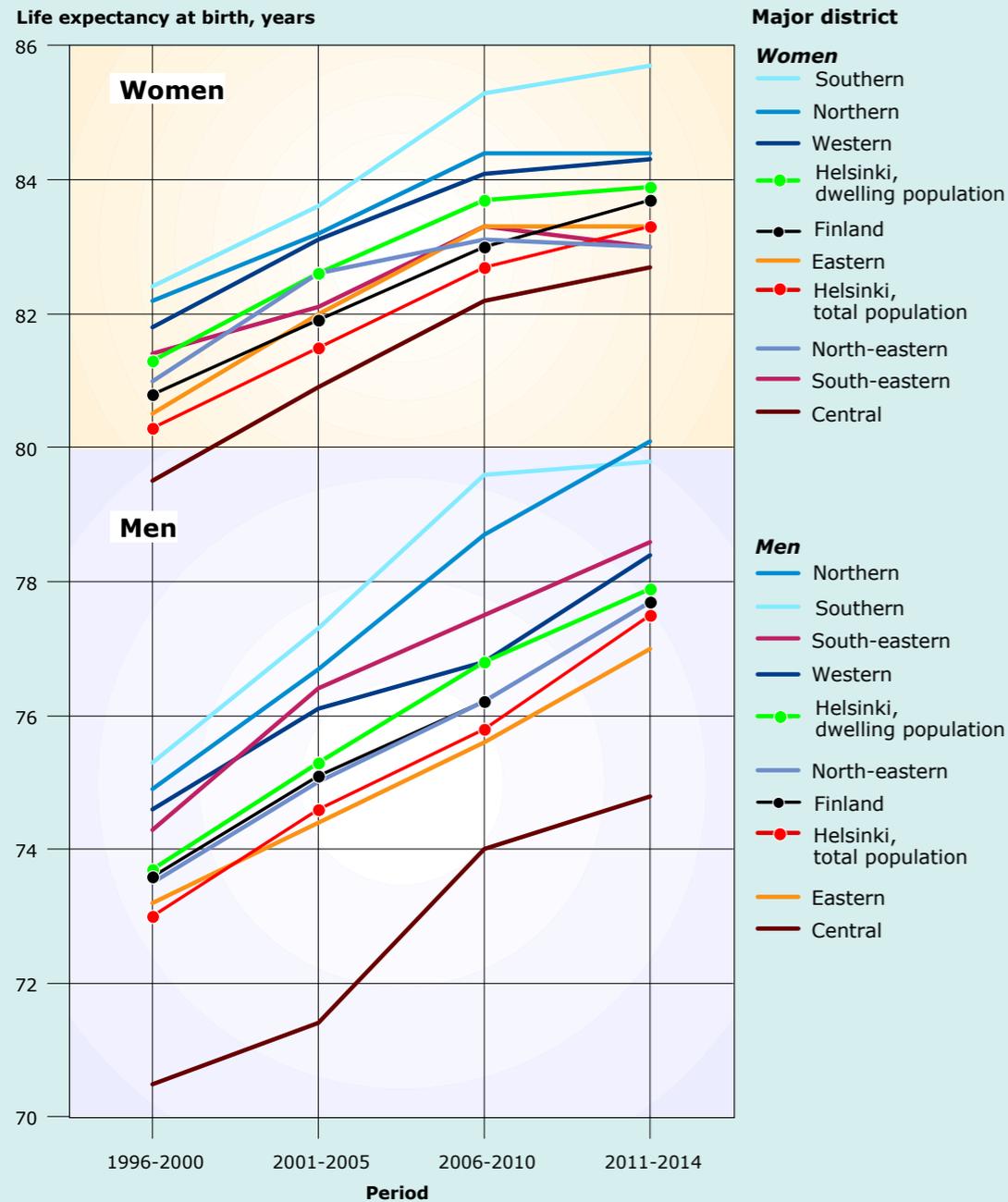


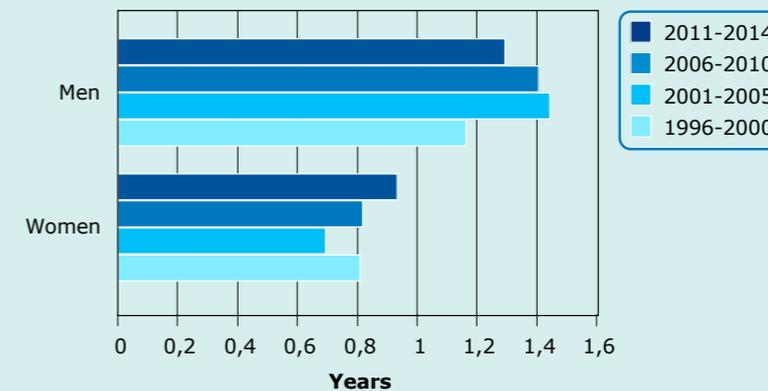
FIGURE 3. Life expectancy at birth in the major districts of Helsinki between 1996–2000 and 2011–2014



CHANGES IN DIFFERENCES IN LIFE EXPECTANCY BETWEEN AREAS. Overall, life expectancy of men and women in Helsinki has increased by 4.5 years and 3.0 years respectively between the periods under examination, 1996–2000 and 2011–2014 (Figure 3). Between 2006–2010 and 2011–2014, life expectancy in Helsinki increased by 1.7 years in men but only 0.6 years in women. If the major districts are examined in more detail, male life expectancy has increased in each of them, although the increase in the Southern major district is very slight. Female life expectancy, on the other hand, has only increased in the Southern, Western and Central major districts. Elsewhere in Helsinki it has remained the same or even decreased.

However, the results should be interpreted with caution, as the confidence intervals were rather wide, especially for the most recent period covering only four years. The difference in life expectancy between the major districts with the highest and lowest life expectancy has not increased significantly over time. For men, the difference would seem to be slightly lower than during the first decade of the 21st century, and for women, slightly higher. The area-level variation and change in life expectancy can be examined further by calculating the mean deviation of life expectancy. It shows the deviation in years of life expectancy from the overall average in Helsinki. The mean deviation takes into account the population size of the districts. It was calculated as a weighted average from the absolute values of the district-specific deviations. The larger the mean deviation, the bigger the area-level difference in life expectancy. For men, the differences in life expectancy between districts are large, but they have not increased further in recent years (Figure 4). For women, the area-level differences in life expectancy seem to be growing slightly.

FIGURE 4. Mean deviation for area-level variation in life expectancy (years, calculated for the major districts of Helsinki)



CAUSES OF DEATH UNDERLYING THE DIFFERENCES. Examination by cause of death helps us to understand the background to the changes in life expectancy and the differences across districts. This is because different causes of death have different effects on the changes, and the importance of different causes of death for the overall mortality varies slightly between areas. This article examines how the aforementioned importance of different causes of death has developed between 2001–2005 and 2011–2013. This period is especially interesting as there were major changes to the maximum allowed amounts of imported alcohol in the spring of 2004, and the price of alcoholic products also decreased considerably due to cuts in alcohol taxation. On the other hand, the increase in life expectancy during this period has been sufficiently large to enable an analysis of the change.

Between 2001–2005 and 2011–2013, life expectancy in Helsinki increased by 2.7 years in men and 1.8 years in women. Figure 5 shows the effect that the different causes of death have had on this growth. For most causes of death, the mortality rates have decreased. For example, the fall in mortality from cardiovascular diseases has caused an increase of approximately one year in life expectancy. Furthermore, mortality from accidents and violence has decreased, especially among men. On the other hand, mortality from alcohol-related diseases and accidental poisoning by alcohol (referred to below as alcohol-related causes) has increased so much that the effect on the growth of life expectancy has been negative. Mortality from dementia and Alzheimer’s disease has also risen. These figures take into account the impact of the changing age structure, but the increased prevalence of memory disorders as a cause of death is also partially explained by improved diagnostics (Statistics Finland 2012).

Area-level analysis of causes of death is challenging, as there are so few deaths in each major district that the role of contingency complicates the interpretation of the results. In this article, the major districts were combined in the manner used earlier by Valkonen et al. (2008).

FIGURE 5. Effect of different causes of death on life expectancy change between 2001–2005 and 2011–2013

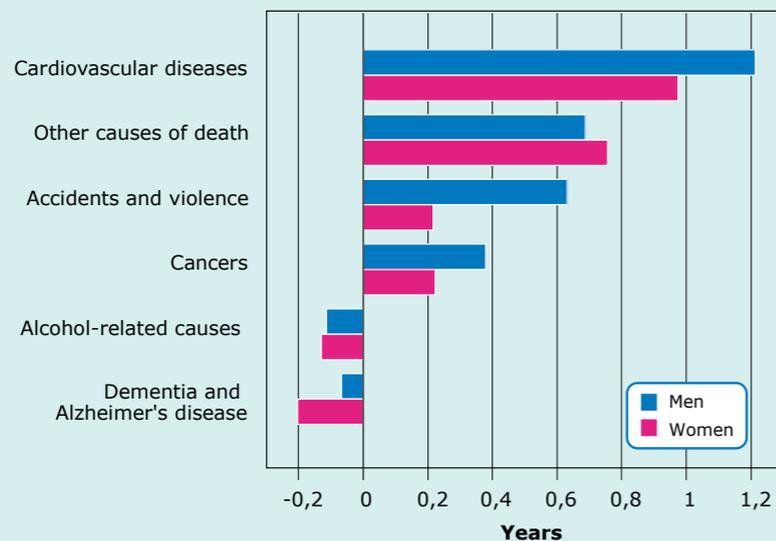
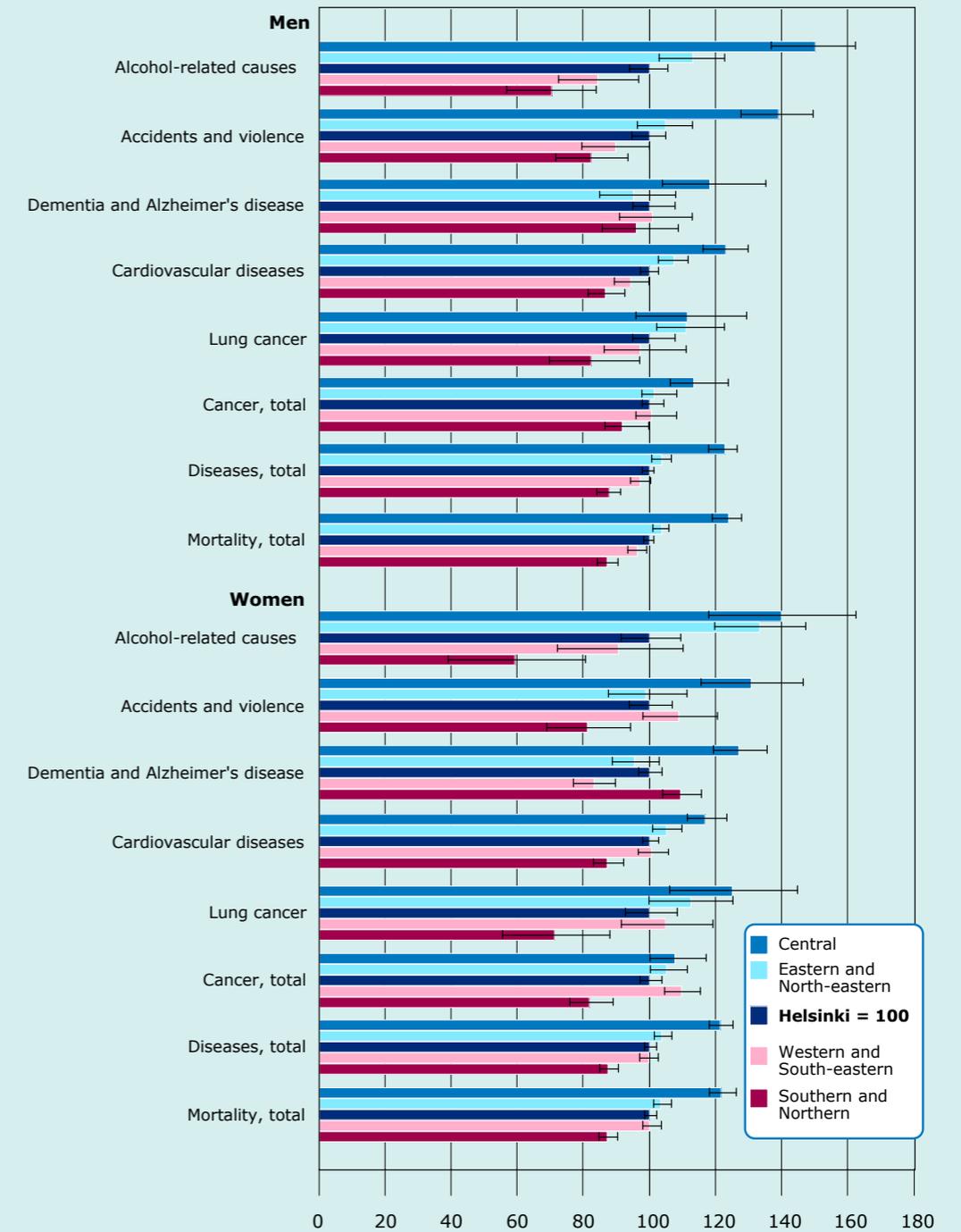


FIGURE 6. Relative age-standardised mortality (100 = average for Helsinki) for different causes of death by sex and major district, 2006–2012, and 95% confidence intervals.





Southern with Northern, Western with South-eastern and Eastern with North-eastern. Not only the areas but also the time periods under examination were grouped. The analysis focused on the most recent six years for which district-level data by cause of death is available (2006–2012). The mortality figures by area and cause of death will be shown in comparison to the average mortality in Helsinki (= 100) for the corresponding cause of death.

In both men and women, mortality from all the causes examined differed clearly according to district (Figure 6). For nearly all causes of death, mortality was lowest in the Southern and Northern major districts and highest by far in the Central

major district. When overall mortality for diseases is examined, for instance, it can be seen that mortality was lower in the Southern and Northern major districts and higher in the Central major district compared to both the average for Helsinki and the other areas. The differences are statistically significant.

In addition, among men mortality for cardiovascular diseases, alcohol-related causes, accidents and violence was lower in the Southern and Northern major districts than in Helsinki on average. In these districts, the mortality among women for all the examined causes except dementia and Alzheimer's disease was lower than the average.

Among men, mortality for cancers, and especially lung cancer, was also lower than the average, but the difference was not statistically significant.

In the Central major district, mortality among both sexes for cardiovascular diseases, alcohol-related causes, accidents and violence was higher than the average for Helsinki. In addition, mortality among men from cancers and among women from dementia and Alzheimer's disease was higher than the average for Helsinki.

In the Western and South-eastern major districts, mortality appeared to be lower for most causes of death than the average for Helsinki, but the difference was not statistically significant in the main. An exception was the lower mortality among women for dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Correspondingly, mortality among both men and women in the Eastern and North-eastern major districts was slightly higher than the average for Helsinki. The difference was statistically significant only for cardiovascular diseases in men and alcohol-related diseases in women.

Concluding remarks

During the time period examined in this article, life expectancy in Helsinki has increased, although the growth in women's life expectancy has slowed during the past few years. The growth is a result of decrease in mortality in Helsinki from most causes of death, such as cardiovascular diseases, accidents, violence and cancer. On the other hand, mortality for alcohol-related causes as well as dementia and Alzheimer's disease has increased so much that this has lowered average life expectancy.

Area-level differences in life expectancy continue to be very wide. The differences are significantly larger in men than in women, but have not increased further during the period examined in this article. For women, the area-level differences even seem to have increased slightly. However, this would appear to have been caused by the fact that life expectancy has increased faster in the Southern major district than elsewhere in Helsinki. For men, the Central major district continues to stand out for its higher-than-average mortality. Compared to the other parts of Helsinki, mortality for nearly all the examined causes of death was higher there. Due to their prevalence, cardiovascular diseases are the most significant cause of death in producing differences. However, relative differences are also large in alcohol-related causes as well as accidents and violence.

That mortality has stayed significantly higher in the Central major district than elsewhere is somewhat surprising. The social composition of the district has changed considerably, and many of the other indicators relevant for mortality do not stand out at all from the average for Helsinki. For instance, the share of residents with only primary-level education has decreased faster than elsewhere in Helsinki from the first half of the previous decade onwards. Today, the share is the second lowest of any major district. Correspondingly, the share of residents with tertiary-level education has increased and now exceeds the average for all of Helsinki. (City of Helsinki Urban Facts 2013; Statistics Finland 2012.) On the other hand, it has to be noted that in the Central major district, the share of single-person households is significantly higher than the average, and the share of families with children significantly lower (Helsingin seudun aluesarjat 2015). This may have a



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connection to the higher mortality in the area.

Development towards polarisation may be part of the background to the high relative level of mortality in the major district. Although the area is developing in a positive direction according to many measures, there is a population sub-group in which mortality has remained high for some reason. For instance, the residents with only primary education, whose number is shrinking, may become even more vulnerable in a society that is changing in many aspects. There are also more residential services for homeless people and alcoholics in the Central major district than elsewhere in Helsinki. As mortality in these population sub-groups is higher than in the rest of the population, this may be part

of the explanation for the lower life expectancy. It should be noted that these groups are currently counted as part of the dwelling population, due to the general shift in recent years from institutional to assisted living. However, according to the scenario calculation made for this article, the higher mortality of this population group will only contribute at most a 0.6-year decrease to the average life expectancy in the Central major district. It will therefore only explain a small share of the lower life expectancy. Moreover, it must be kept in mind that corresponding assisted-living services are also available elsewhere in Helsinki. The life expectancy in all major districts would increase slightly if their users were excluded from the calculations, largely preserving the existing

difference between the areas. On the other hand, geographical polarisation may occur within a single major district, for example when basic districts develop in opposite directions. Answering these questions will be important in the future.

One rather surprising result emerged from the analysis of life expectancy in certain selected basic districts. In Vironniemi, there was no statistically significant difference between male and female life expectancy. Both in that district and in Tuomarinkylä, male life expectancy exceeded 80 years. The result shows that the average life expectancy among men, too, can reach very high levels. Significantly, this finding concerns an entire population sub-group and not only exceptionally long-lived individuals. The basic districts are not examined here by cause of death, as the low number of cases entails an element of contingency. However, the analysis suggests that mortality from cardiovascular diseases in particular, but also alcohol-related diseases, is significantly lower in Tuomarinkylä and Vironniemi than elsewhere in Helsinki.

The results on the area-level differences in life expectancy generate important practical information from the perspectives of service demand and service production. From the viewpoint of research, it would be interesting to examine the extent to which the differences are due to the so-called compositional effect – the assumption that people living in different areas have, for instance, different social characteristics – and to what extent the social characteristics of the districts are linked to differences in life expectancy. These questions have been examined earlier in Helsinki, but the most recent results are from 2005. Further research using this approach is therefore necessary. ✨

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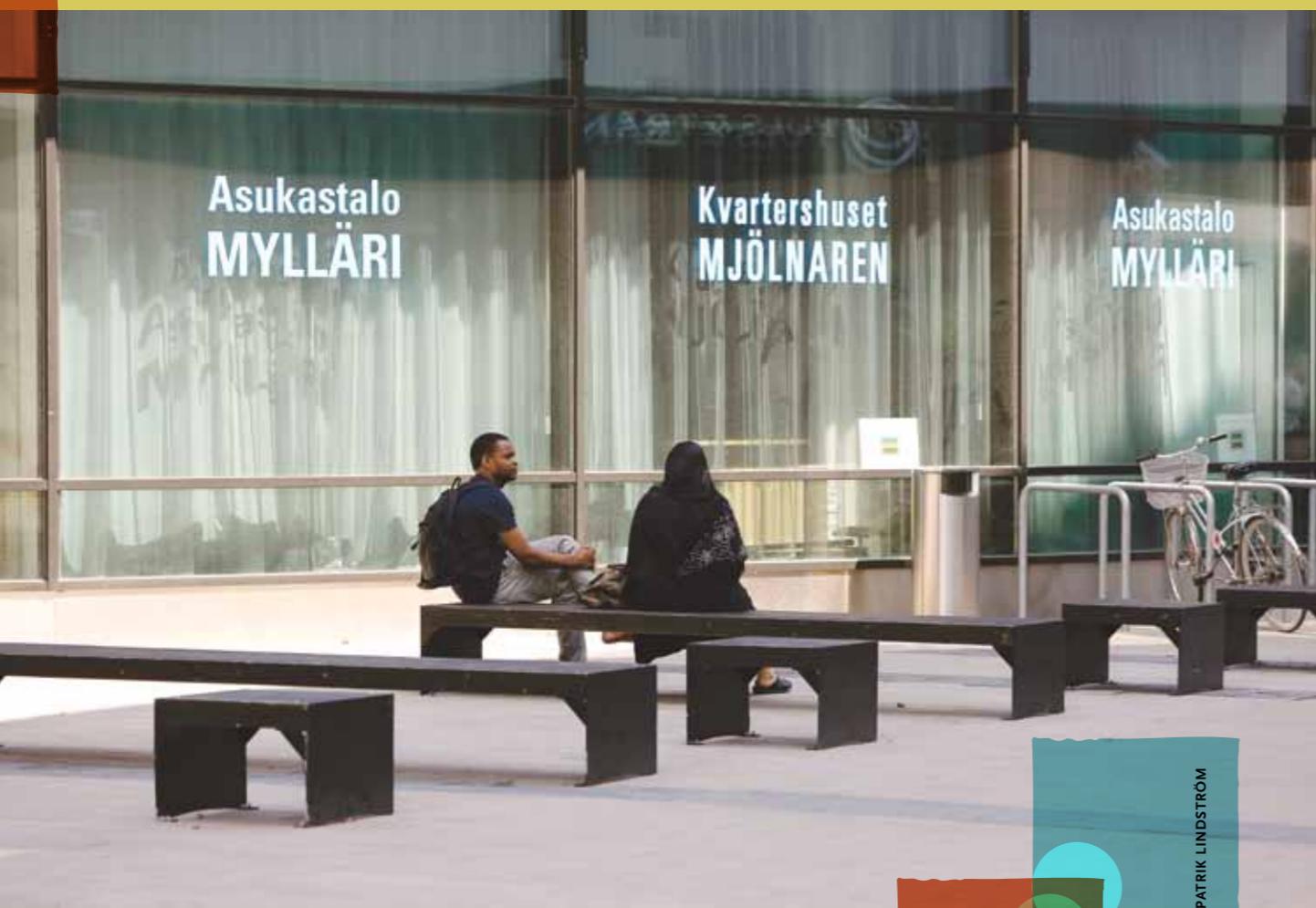
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SOMALIS IN FINLAND

have entrepreneurship potential

TUULA JORONEN



PATRIK LINDSTRÖM

A scarcity of capital, a limited customer base and gaps in entrepreneur skills hinder the growth of Somali-owned enterprises in Finland. Potential keys to future success include the exploitation of international Somali networks and the possibilities opened up if second-generation Somalis pool their resources with native Finns.

These results are based on a study in which we investigated the opinions of Somali entrepreneurs and other Finnish Somalis about entrepreneurship in Finland. (Joronen & Mohamed 2015.) In spring 2014, we interviewed a total of seven Somali entrepreneurs, six of whom lived in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and one in the Tampere region. Two of the entrepreneurs were women and five were men.

In addition, we held a series of group interviews where we invited Somalia-born individuals who were interested in entrepreneurship but who had not yet embarked on business activities. Fourteen people participated in the group interviews: six women and eight men. They were a heterogeneous group in terms of age, educational level and the length of time they had spent in Finland.

The interviews were mainly conducted in Finnish. If necessary, a researcher with Somali background worked as an interpreter. English was also used in one group interview.

I will discuss below why previous entrepreneurship experience, and operating models favourable for entrepreneurship, have so rarely led to the establishment of enterprises in the case of Somalis in Finland. What has made it difficult to establish enterprises? I will also discuss what could be done to remove some of these obstacles.

Social capital alone does not generate business

Social capital is usually considered an important source of resources for the emergence of immigrants' ethnic business activities. The examination of the Somali communities of different countries has shown that these communities have a great deal of ethnic social capital which moreover can be characterised as transnational social capital, meaning that it transcends the boundaries of nation states. (E.g. Jones et al. 2010; Ram et al. 2008; Kloosterman et al. 1999.)

Somalis have utilised this social capital in establishing businesses particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom. (Carlson et al. 2012; Carlson 2010; Jones et al. 2010.) It has also been observed that this social capital accelerates the migration of Somalis to the resources needed at a given time. Information about the opportunities offered by the different regions of the world travels effectively in the local and international networks of Somali refugees. The tradition of hospitality which has its roots in an old nomadic culture in turn facilitates the migration and reduces its costs. Consequently, Somalis have moved actively from state to state in the United States and from country to country in Europe. (Huisman 2011; Osman 2012.)

BASED ON the strong tradition of entrepreneurship as well as the active cooperation networks so characteristic of the Somali culture, it could be assumed that entrepreneurship would also play a much stronger role in the employment of Somalis in Finland than it does currently.

The threat of unemployment is often the triggering factor pushing people to take up entrepreneurship. However, it does not seem to work that way in the case of Somalis in Finland. Even though unemployment has been a constant and difficult problem among the group, a solution has rarely been sought in self-employment. In Finland, people with a Somali background have established businesses less often than other demographics with a refugee background and substantially below the average of all those with immigrant origin (Joronen 2014; Joronen 2012). In 2013, there were only 32 Somali-speaking entrepreneurs in Finland (Statistics Finland 2015).

Based on the strong tradition of entrepreneurship as well as the active cooperation networks so characteristic of the Somali culture, it could be assumed that entrepreneurship would also play a much stronger role in the employment of Somalis in Finland than it does currently.

One would expect the necessary skills and competence to be available as well. After all, it has been 25 years since the first wave of migration arrived in Finland, bringing with it a great number of well-educated people who have since studied in Finland (e.g. Joronen 2005).

What kinds of obstacles to starting entrepreneurship activities have the interviewees experienced?

Religion restricts loan-taking

Small-scale family entrepreneurship had been very common in Somalia before the civil war. Almost all of the Somalis interviewed for this study had family members who had been entrepreneurs in Somalia. Some interviewees had even owned a small business themselves before moving to Finland.

In addition to entrepreneurship experience, the Somalis' communal mode of operation emerges in the interview data. Both the Somali entrepreneurs and those interviewees who had not yet established an enterprise repeatedly highlighted the different ways in which the members of the community help each other.

Thus, the Somalis in Finland characterise themselves and their culture as very communal, on the one hand, and very entrepreneurial, on the other hand. Similar

comments regarding the entrepreneurial spirit and community-oriented nature of the Somali culture have also emerged in other reports on Finnish Somalis (e.g. Mubarak, Nilsson & Saxén 2015).

One reason why this entrepreneurial spirit has not led to the establishment of businesses on a wider scale is the lack of capital. Somali immigration to Finland has remained brisk throughout the 2000s. The proportion of the newly arrived of the working-age Somalis is large and consequently their unemployment rate has remained elevated. Moreover, the high proportion of large families and single-parent families, as well as the financial obligations towards relatives, have kept the Somali communities of Finland relatively poor.

Many Somalis regularly send money to Somalia and to their relatives who are still in refugee camps. Especially the first generation – those born in Somalia – feel that the obligation to send money is very compelling. They would rather cut back on their own consumption than fail to fulfil this obligation (e.g. Mubarak et al. 2015, 265-266; cf. Hammond 2011; Horst 2006).

As elsewhere in the world, the Somalis in Finland also avoid taking out bank loans because Islam prohibits the payment of interest. Most of the Somali entrepreneurs that we interviewed had been in paid employment before establishing a business and had raised capital solely by using their own savings – or at most by borrowing from friends. Many of the Somalis who were planning to start a business in the future were also reluctant to rely on bank loans.

Instead of bank loans, Somalis often set up rotating credit associations based on collective savings (*ayuuto, hagbad*). With their help, potential small-business owners, for example, have gained access to the necessary financial resources for establishing an enterprise. The capital raised in this way moves flexibly from country to country and through Somali-owned money transfer businesses (e.g. Lindley 2009).

Nevertheless, the insufficiency of capital has been a problem. Because most of the Somali communities that have settled in various parts of the world are still relatively poor, their own savings – albeit sufficient for starting businesses – have not been large enough to develop these businesses further. This has been evidenced, for example, in the United States and the United Kingdom where Somalis have established a large number of businesses but most of them have remained in the ethnic markets. (E.g. Golden, Garad & Heger Boyle 2011; Golden, Heger Boyle & Jama 2010; Samatar 2008.)

Poor knowledge of Finnish society and market

According to a number of respondents, the lack of motivation for entrepreneurship is connected with the high level of social security in Finland. This view was put forth by some of the Somali entrepreneurs who participated in the interviews and also many of the Somali men who had studied in Finland and who were in paid employment at the time of the interview.

Especially among the women who were born in Somalia, there are also individuals who have no formal education at all. Those with a low level of education can only enter very low-paid jobs. The parents of families who are dependent on social security and have many children are often afraid of losing their benefits. If the housing benefit and other possible benefits cease because of employment, the

financial livelihood of the family can even decline. The families dare not take that risk, and that is why they would rather continue living on social security payments.

In light of these comments, it is surprising how much entrepreneurial zeal especially Somali women have despite their low level of education. Most of the Somali women who participated in the interviews were stay-at-home mothers. They indicated that they would rather work, saying they felt they were no longer needed at home as the children are grown up. However, it was difficult to find work because most of them lacked an adequate level of Finnish and their formal education was limited to comprehensive school completed in Somalia. That is why they dreamed of establishing their own company and being self-employed. Many had experience of entrepreneurship through family members and some had even engaged in some business activities themselves in Somalia before moving to Finland.

The aspirations of the Somali women centred on small businesses in the retail sector, including cosmetics stores, clothes shops, supermarkets and ethnic restaurants. Other Somalis were seen as the primary customer group of the stores. Consequently, the low educational level, poor language skills and lack of work experience in Finland were also reflected in the business ideas. In other words, a relatively small and impoverished ethnic market consisting only of the Somali population cannot be a source of living for many entrepreneurs.

Surprisingly, the business ideas of the Somali men who participated in the interview also moved along similar lines than those of the stay-at-home mothers, even though most of the men had acquired vocational education and work experience in Finland. Many men also aspired to establish, for example, a restaurant specialised in Somali cuisine even if their education is from a completely different field. The transportation industry was another favourite among the men. Educated women, on the other hand, were also thinking about the social and health care sector where they would be able to take advantage of the education they had acquired.

Men were more conscious than women of the fact that profitable businesses could not rely solely on their own ethnic community and that business ideas oriented towards a broader market should be developed. Even while realising this, they felt they did not know the Finnish society or Finnish consumer habits well enough to be able to sell goods and services to the majority population. That is why they were not very willing to take the risk of becoming entrepreneurs.

How to further develop business ideas and necessary resources

The Somali men interviewed for the study believed that the knowledge gap related to understanding the Finnish market would correct itself over time as the second generation who have grown up in Finland enters the job market more extensively. The men believed that young people would benefit from their social networks that they have developed going through the Finnish education system. All in all, the youth are assumed to have better knowledge of the Finnish society than their parents.

Young people were also believed to be more open-minded towards the Finnish society than their parents who still look back on the negative reception they experienced in the 1990s. The immigration of Somalis was regarded as a very negative thing in Finland at the time and it was almost impossible for them to find employment. The Somali men who participated in the interview felt that, as a result of that negative

INTEGRATION TRAINING should not be limited to the immigration phase. The curricula in comprehensive and vocational education should also aim to decode the philosophy behind the structures of the Finnish society and the typical practices of the majority population.

attitude, the Somali communities in Finland had become very withdrawn.

Consequently, the fact that young people had grown accustomed to functioning with Finns from an early age and that their social networks were more diverse than those of their parents were seen as their advantages. It was also believed that the problems related to the business funding would lessen with the new generation. The men believed in the emergence of joint enterprises between the Finns and the Somalis. It was assumed that such joint enterprises would enjoy not only the benefits of extensive networks but also the kind of know-how that would generate completely novel businesses. The problems regarding loan-taking would be solved when the Finnish partners could take out a bank loan and the Somalis could collect their share of the required capital with the help of their own rotating credit associations.

However, not all Somalis in Finland believe in the sustainability of the mutual networks of the majority population and Somalis. For example, the young Somalis interviewed for the book *Suomen somalit* ["Somalis in Finland"] (Mubarak et al. 2015.) expressed also opposite views. For example, the importance of religion as a factor that separates young people with different cultural backgrounds was discussed in the book. Many Somalis had had the teenage experience of becoming alienated from their childhood friends when the young Finns had begun dating and using alcohol or drugs. The young Somalis who wanted to adhere to the values of their community could not participate in this.

On the other hand, these comments from young people also reflect how superficially many Somalis who have grown up in Finland know the Finnish society. The way of life of the young people hanging out on the street or at shopping centres is just one subculture among many, and it is not sufficient grounds for making generalisations about Finnish youth as a whole. A different way of life is led by those young people who are active in their hobbies and studies or enjoy staying at home. Even the deeply religious young Somalis might find more in common with these youth.

If our society wants to increase the entrepreneurship of Finns of Somali origin, it seems that education is the key. In addition to strengthening the Finnish language and vocational education, there appears to be a need to develop integration training further as well. Refugees come mostly from countries where there are no formal systems of social security or they are very limited, and the administration may

be corrupt. In such cases tax systems and other structures of the welfare state are foreign to people. Integration training should give more emphasis to acquainting the newcomers with the structures of the Finnish society and the values that underpin these structures.

Integration training should not be limited to the immigration phase. The curricula in comprehensive and vocational education should also aim to decode the philosophy behind the structures of the Finnish society and the typical practices of the majority population. One lesson worth emphasising is the importance of hobbies and leisure activities for finding a field of study, employment and a social network.

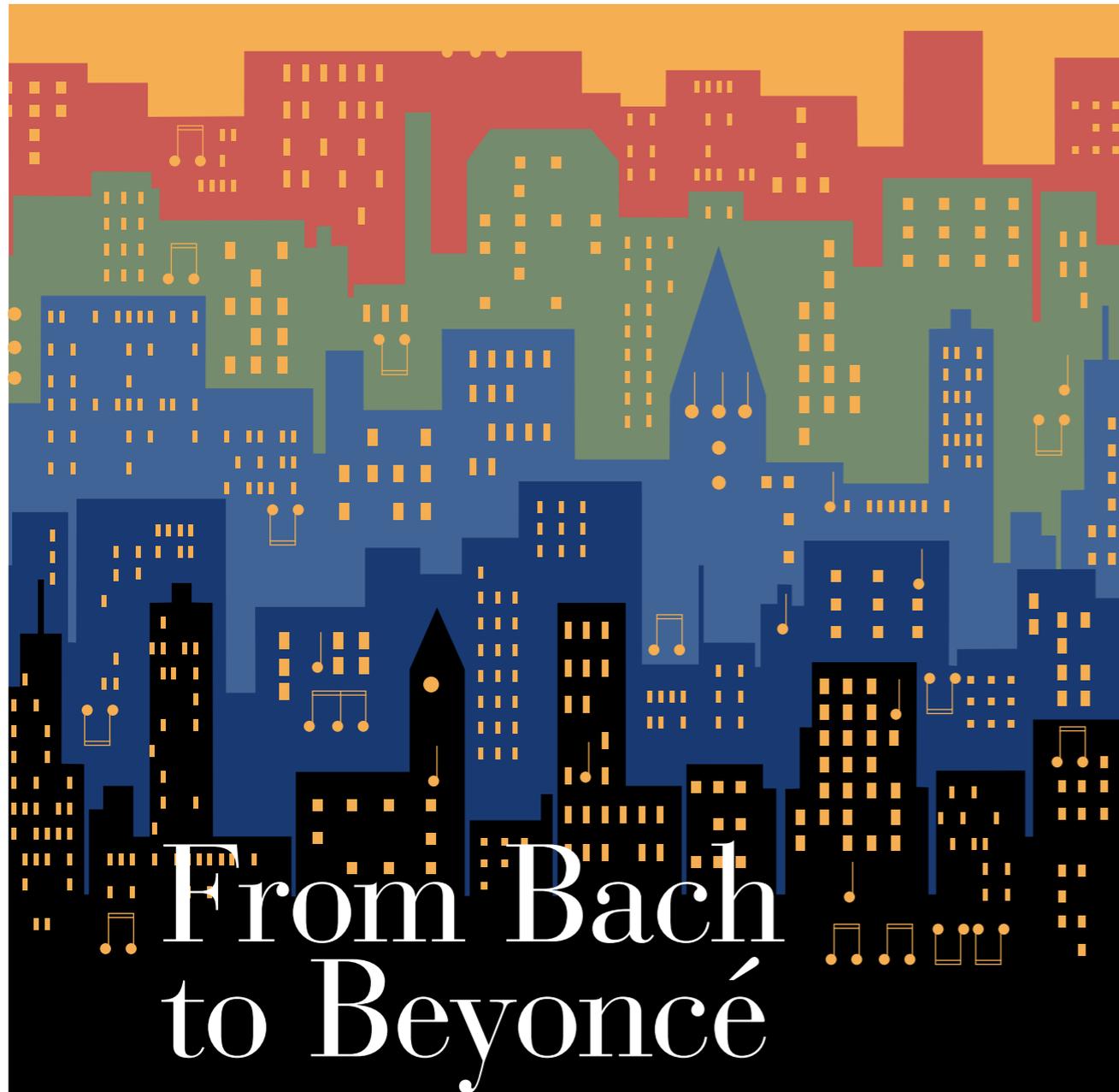
Entrepreneurial guidance and courses on entrepreneurship have been organised for immigrants in Helsinki since the mid-1990s. Joint courses for immigrants and the native population have provided a natural forum for exchanging experiences and networking. However, Somalis have used these services relatively little up till the present. In our interviews, the Somali men expressed the belief that the use of entrepreneurial services might increase if the guidance were given by an adviser with a Somali background. Besides general entrepreneurship education, the Somali community would also welcome short informative events aimed particularly at aspiring women entrepreneurs. These events could be organised on the premises of Somali associations and should include an opportunity for discussion. ✱

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From Bach to Beyoncé

– examining musical preferences in Helsinki **VESA KESKINEN & JERE JÄPPINEN**

This article presents the interim results of a study based on a music taste test that is part of an ongoing Helsinki City Museum exhibition. The participants' three favourite genres so far are rock music, easy classical and old jazz. By contrast, electronic music, contemporary art music and heavy metal are the most likely to cause the listeners to tune out.



PHOTOS: HKM / JUHO NURMI

An exhibition that puts the listener in the centre

THE HELSINKI CITY MUSEUM exhibition 'Music! Echoes from the Past of a City' opened at Hakasalmi Villa in March and will continue until early 2017. The exhibition breaks new ground in approaching the history of music by presenting the music memories of ordinary people instead of focussing on composers, instruments and professional musicians. No division is made between classical and popular music.

THE AUDIENCE was invited to take part in creating the exhibition because the aim was to strongly highlight the vibrant and diverse music culture of contemporary Helsinki, alongside nostalgic objects and photographs. Therefore, the preparation for the exhibition, which took several years, involved extensive filming and collection projects through which music enthusiasts were able to participate in its creation.

THE HABITS and behaviours of music fans were observed and recorded at a symphony concert, a jazz club, the Tuska and Flow festivals and a 'Eurovision viewing party'. There was also a visit to meet students of a music institute in Malmi, including toddlers in a musical nursery school and drummer teens. Group pictures and badges were collected from choirs. The audience shared both their best and worst memories related to music and music lessons.

THE EXHIBITION itself also gives a large role to audience participation. Music is played in many parts of the exhibition, of course, but in a contemporary museum the visitor can do more than just watch and listen. One of the rooms is an old-style classroom where visitors can play a 'school song game' and have a new go at the singing test that most of us remember from school years. In the 'historical dance school', visitors can learn popular dances from the 16th-century galliard to the hip hop of the 1990s.

THE TOUR OF THE EXHIBITION begins with a music taste test. It is a touchscreen game where the player "browses radio stations" and reacts to a series of music samples by pressing buttons indicating like or dislike. At the end, the test reveals whether the player's musical taste is focussed on high culture, traditional, rock-inspired or contemporary pop music, or if it is omnivorous.

THE FUN AND EASY TEST has been well received by museum visitors, perhaps because it appeals to people's desire to test themselves, increase self-knowledge and compare themselves with others. Whilst being entertaining, the test is based on recent Finnish socio-musicological research on taste. The test also provides researchers with a new kind of data based on playable samples and spontaneous reactions, to be used in a forthcoming study on musical preferences. ✨

Designing the test

The planning for the music taste test began as a collaboration between the Helsinki City Museum and City of Helsinki Urban Facts in 2013. The objective was to obtain information about visitors' musical preferences through an interactive exhibit, and the first challenge was to decide on a set of musical genres that would best serve to highlight the differences in individual tastes.

On the basis of previous research, and following lengthy discussions, sixteen genres of music were finally decided upon. Music can, of course, be divided into countless subgenres, but our aim was to keep the number and duration of the music samples in the test limited so that museum visitors could complete it during their visit to the exhibition.

The next task after selecting the music genres was to choose a one-minute long sample to represent each style. This should be a typical example of the genre but not too easily recognisable (to eliminate the impact of the participants' pre-existing preferences or dislikes towards individual songs or performers). As could be expected, choosing the pieces of music was not easy, and the final selection can of course be debated. The following music genres and samples were chosen for the test:

1. EASY-LISTENING CLASSICAL

Johann Christian Bach: Oboe Concerto in F-major, T291: 1. Andante

2. OPERA

G. Rossini: 'Bel raggio lusinghier' from Semiramide

3. CONTEMPORARY ART MUSIC

Magnus Lindberg: Engine

4. FINNISH FOLK MUSIC

Helsingin pitäjän spelarit: Oskarin polkka

5. WORLD MUSIC

Rachid Taha: Ya rajah

6. OLD JAZZ

New Orleans Rhythm Kings: Jazz Me Blues (1934)

7. NEW JAZZ

John Coltrane: Countdown

8. OLD FUNK, SOUL, DISCO

Sly and the Family Stone: Underdog

9. RAP

Ville Kalliosta feat. Davo, Petos, Puppa J: Se mitä puhutaan lujaa

10. CONTEMPORARY RNB, "PLAYLIST MUSIC"

Beyoncé: Single Ladies

11. TECHNO, HOUSE, ELECTRO

Norman DJ: Go Back

12. HEAVY METAL

Kreator: Civilization Collapse

13. ROCK MUSIC

Creedence Clearwater Revival: Travelin' Band

14. FINNISH ROCK

Verenpisara: Suunta

15. OLD FINNISH SCHLAGER

Olavi Virta: Yön kulkija

16. CONTEMPORARY FINNISH SCHLAGER

Anne Mattila: Kaipuuni on uskomaton



The music taste test is a touchscreen application designed to resemble browsing radio stations. The test was programmed by Mainio Tech, with graphic design by Mia Kivinen.

The result displayed to the user at the end of the test is calculated by categorising the music samples into four groups based on socio-musicological research on taste. The test adds up the points for each group.

HIGH CULTURE	TRADITIONAL	ROCK-INSPIRED	CONTEMPORARY POPULAR
Classical music	Old Finnish schlager	Rock music	Contemporary RnB
Contemporary art music	Contemporary Finnish schlager	Finnish rock	Techno
Opera	Finnish folk music	Heavy metal	Rap
New jazz	Old jazz	Old funk, soul, disco	
World music			

The result is presented to the player as a visualisation showing the preponderance of each 'genre group' in his or her musical preference. After finishing the test, the player also has the option of seeing the titles of the samples, the genre classifications as well as the scores given. In addition, the player can comment on the accuracy of the result.

The background variables in the test were age (9 age groups), language in which the test was taken (Finnish, Swedish or English), education (primary education; secondary education; Bachelor or equivalent degree; Master's or higher degree), place of residence (Helsinki; the rest of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area; other Finnish city; small locality; countryside; overseas) as well as postal code.

During the test, the music samples are played in a random order and unidentified. The player evaluates each sample on a three-level scale – in practice, by pressing a touch screen button with one of the following options to which the game assigns the weight of 5, 3 or 0 points.

- *Awesome music!* (5)
- *I could listen to this* (3)
- *Oh no, change the station!* (0)

The test application stores the song-specific scores and the respondents' background information for all completed taste tests. In addition, the time spent on each reply is measured and recorded. This is presumed to reflect the certainty of taste, concerning both the pleasure derived from favourite music and the rejection of the most disliked music.

First impressions of the data

The exhibition has pulled in over 20,000 visitors in the first six months from March to August 2015. The music taste test has been taken 1,634 times, which may seem like a small number in comparison. The relatively low number of responses is partly due to technical problems in the initial phase, but another explanation is that the museum visitors are often part of guided group tours which do not allow enough time for everyone to take the test. The log shows a rather large number of unfinished tests.

The majority (78%) of those who took the music taste test were from the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Almost 150 international museum visitors also completed the test.

TABLE 1. Respondents by place of residence (N=1,634)

PLACE OF RESIDENCE	N	%
Helsinki	996	61.0
Rest of Helsinki Metropolitan Area	285	17.4
Other Finnish city	167	10.2
Overseas	147	9.0
Countryside	27	1.7
Small locality	12	0.7
Total	1,634	100.0

As is the case with many other cultural surveys, the majority of the respondents of the music taste test – two out of three – were women. The ages of the respondents were more evenly distributed between different age groups. The age breakdowns of men and women were very similar.

TABLE 2. Respondents by age group (N=1,634)

AGE GROUP	N	%
7-12	94	5.7
13-17	114	7.0
18-24	176	10.8
25-34	279	17.1
35-44	223	13.7
45-54	294	18.0
55-64	283	17.3
65-74	138	8.5
75+	33	2.0
Total	1,634	100.0

TABLE 3. Educational background of respondents by gender

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL %						
	Primary education	Secondary education	Bachelor or equivalent degree	Master's or higher degree	%, total	N
All	15.4	22.6	28.8	33.2	100	1,634
Women	14.3	24.3	29	32.3	100	1,105
Men	17.6	18.9	28.4	35.2	100	529

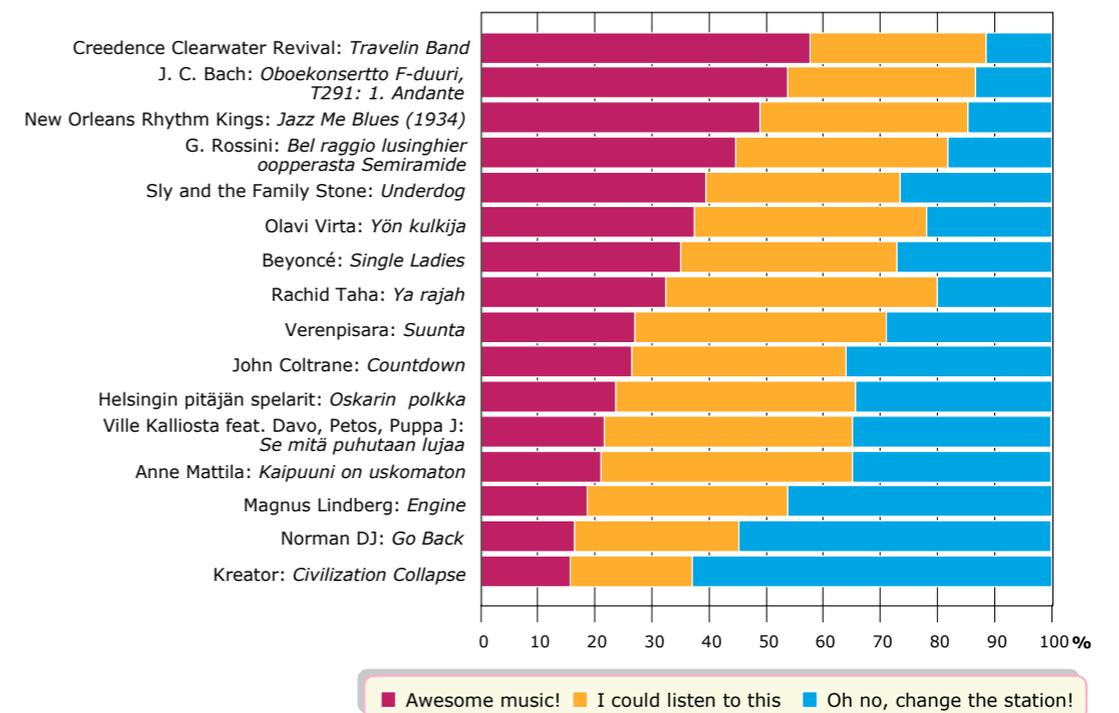
Three tunes stood out

The selection of 16 tunes contained three samples which were rated 'awesome music' by around half of the respondents. The result in itself signals that the respondents represent a very heterogeneous group. That said, it can be speculated whether the three most popular tunes are more in the mainstream of their respective genres than the rest of the samples and whether this affected the ratings.

There were also three widely disliked genres: electronic music, contemporary art music and heavy metal. It was the assumption of the authors even when choosing the samples that the Kreator heavy metal song, for example, would strongly divide the opinions of the test participants. That is exactly what happened.

The share of respondents choosing the middle option ('I could listen to this') was relatively even across all music samples, which can indicate two things. On the one hand, the respondents seem to have been rather omnivorous. On the other hand, this result can also be taken to mean that music no longer necessarily invokes very strong passions in either direction, with the exception of two or three genres of music.

FIGURE 1. Sample titles in order of likeability (N=1,634)



The musical tastes of men and women differed noticeably from each other with regard to a couple of pieces of music. The various genres of rock, electronic music and modern jazz (Coltrane) were better received by men than by women. Women favoured opera and 'traditional' classical music. The most drastic differences were recorded with two genres typically placed at opposing ends of the taste spectrum, namely heavy metal and opera. This is in line with the results of more extensive studies on musical preferences (Purhonen 2014).

The fact that the respondents consisted of museum visitors was expected to increase the popularity of both classical music and opera also among men. A small detail to be noted is that the male respondents liked contemporary art music more than women. It can be asked whether this is a similar phenomenon to the popularity among men of another 'difficult' genre: progressive rock.

It was also interesting that the Contemporary RnB genre was judged so much more positively by women than men. Since the sample was a relatively recent, easily recognisable hit track ('Single Ladies' by Beyoncé), the respondents' opinions may have been affected by their personal attitude towards this particular track or artist rather than the entire musical genre. It is a matter of speculation whether another song in a similar style would have been received differently.

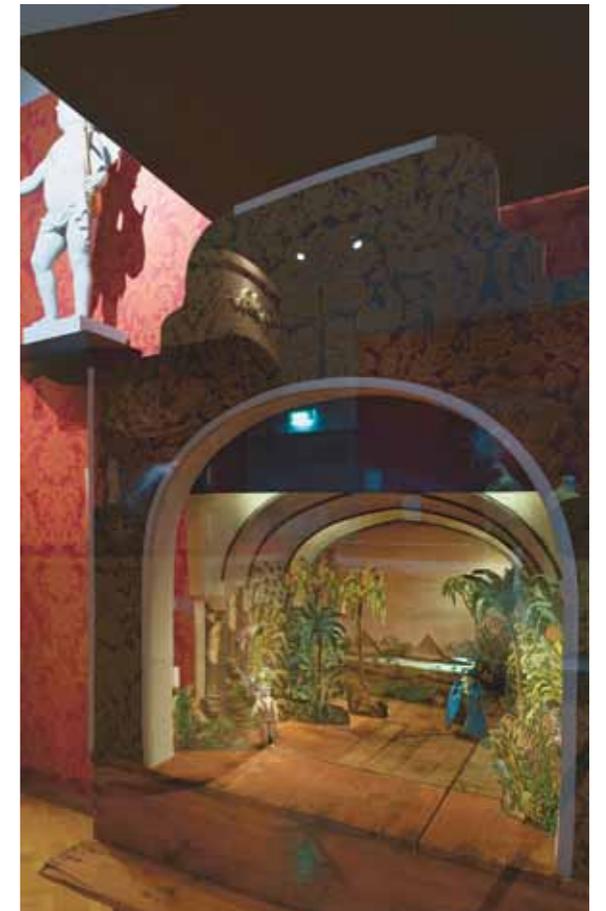


TABLE 4. 'Awesome music' according to gender

AWESOME MUSIC!				
	Women	Men	All	Difference
	%	%	%	women/men
Creedence Clearwater Revival: <i>Travelin' Band</i>	55.8	61.8	57.7	-6.1
J.C. Bach: <i>Oboe Concerto in F, T291: 1. Andante</i>	57.7	45.8	53.9	12.0
New Orleans Rhythm Kings: <i>Jazz Me Blues (1934)</i>	49.1	48.8	49.0	0.3
G. Rossini: <i>'Bel raggio lusinghier' from Semiramide</i>	48.8	35.9	44.6	12.9
Sly and the Family Stone: <i>Underdog</i>	37.9	42.9	39.5	-5.0
Olavi Virta: <i>Yön kulkija</i>	40.2	31.6	37.4	8.6
Beyoncé: <i>Single Ladies</i>	40.5	23.8	35.1	16.7
Rachid Taha: <i>Ya rajah</i>	34.3	28.7	32.5	5.6
Verenpisara: <i>Suunta</i>	27.2	26.8	27.1	0.4
John Coltrane: <i>Countdown</i>	24.3	31.2	26.6	-6.9
Helsingin pitäjän spelarit: <i>Oskarin polkka</i>	25.2	20.8	23.8	4.4
Ville Kalliosta feat. Davo, Petos, Puppa J: <i>Se mitä puhutaan lujaa</i>	23.1	18.7	21.7	4.4
Anne Mattila: <i>Kaipuuni on uskomaton</i>	22.2	18.9	21.1	3.3
Magnus Lindberg: <i>Engine</i>	17.4	21.2	18.6	-3.8
Norman DJ: <i>Go Back</i>	14.2	21.2	16.5	-7.0
Kreator: <i>Civilization Collapse</i>	10.9	25.7	15.7	-14.9
N=	1,105	529	1,634	

Age, education and taste in music

Figures 2 and 3 give rise to several observations.

- Classical music is strongly favoured by older respondents. The same is true for the Olavi Virta sample, representing older Finnish schlager.
- Electronic music, RnB and rap were clearly genres that only appealed to the younger audiences. The funk track by Sly and the Family Stone also went down particularly well with people aged 25–34 – interestingly, since the song is over 40 years old.
- Rock is music for middle-aged audiences. Many studies have noted that the audience of rock music has diversified in terms of age, whilst it was originally strongly identified with youth (Keskinen 1994, Alasuutari 2009). For example, the CCR sample in the test was well received regardless of respondents' age or education.
- The selection of 16 samples included a couple of tracks that were given more or less similar ratings across all age groups. The responses were most consistent with regard to the world music sample, 'Ya rajah' by Rachid Taha. The popularity of this piece could perhaps be explained by a certain trendiness attached to ethnic influences (also widely used in mainstream pop) and the familiar-sounding yet uncliché and slightly exotic melody.
- As the stereotype suggests, classical music, opera and jazz are favoured in particular by educated people.
- The popularity of the different genres of popular music does not vary much by educational level but more according to age.
- Figure 3 shows conspicuously high ratings for some music genres among the respondents with only primary education, but these are explained not so much by the educational level but rather the young age of these respondents.

Listening duration and favourite genres

The data also contains information about the length of time that the respondents spent listening to each piece of music. This brings a new perspective to the research. There were three baseline hypotheses:

- Favourite music will be listened to longer than an unfamiliar piece or a sample representing a less appealing genre*
- When hearing a familiar or generally pleasant-sounding song, the respondents may move quickly on to the next sample*
- When hearing a sample they dislike, the respondents will also move on to the next song immediately.*

None of the hypotheses received strong support. Some respondents did indeed stay and listen to their favourite songs for fairly long periods but this did not affect the average listening duration. Some of the less popular pieces also registered longer listening times – perhaps because these were experienced as difficult (Magnus Lindberg) or unfamiliar (Norman DJ). It could be assumed that the listeners thus needed an above-average time before giving their assessment.

The genres that registered the shortest listening times were Finnish folk music, modern jazz and heavy metal. Almost everyone listened to the 'traditional Finnish folk' sample only for a short time, which seems to indicate a strong and unambiguous opinion about the genre. The variation in listening durations was greatest with the Johann Christian Bach excerpt and the contemporary art music sample. ✨

A more detailed research report on the subject will be completed in early 2017 after the end of the exhibition.

VESA KESKINEN is Researcher at City of Helsinki Urban Facts.

JERE JÄPPINEN is Researcher at the Helsinki City Museum and the producer of the Music! exhibition.

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FIGURE 2. 'Awesome music' by age group (N=1,634)

▶ SEE PAGES 68–69 FOR MUSIC GENRE CLASSIFICATIONS.

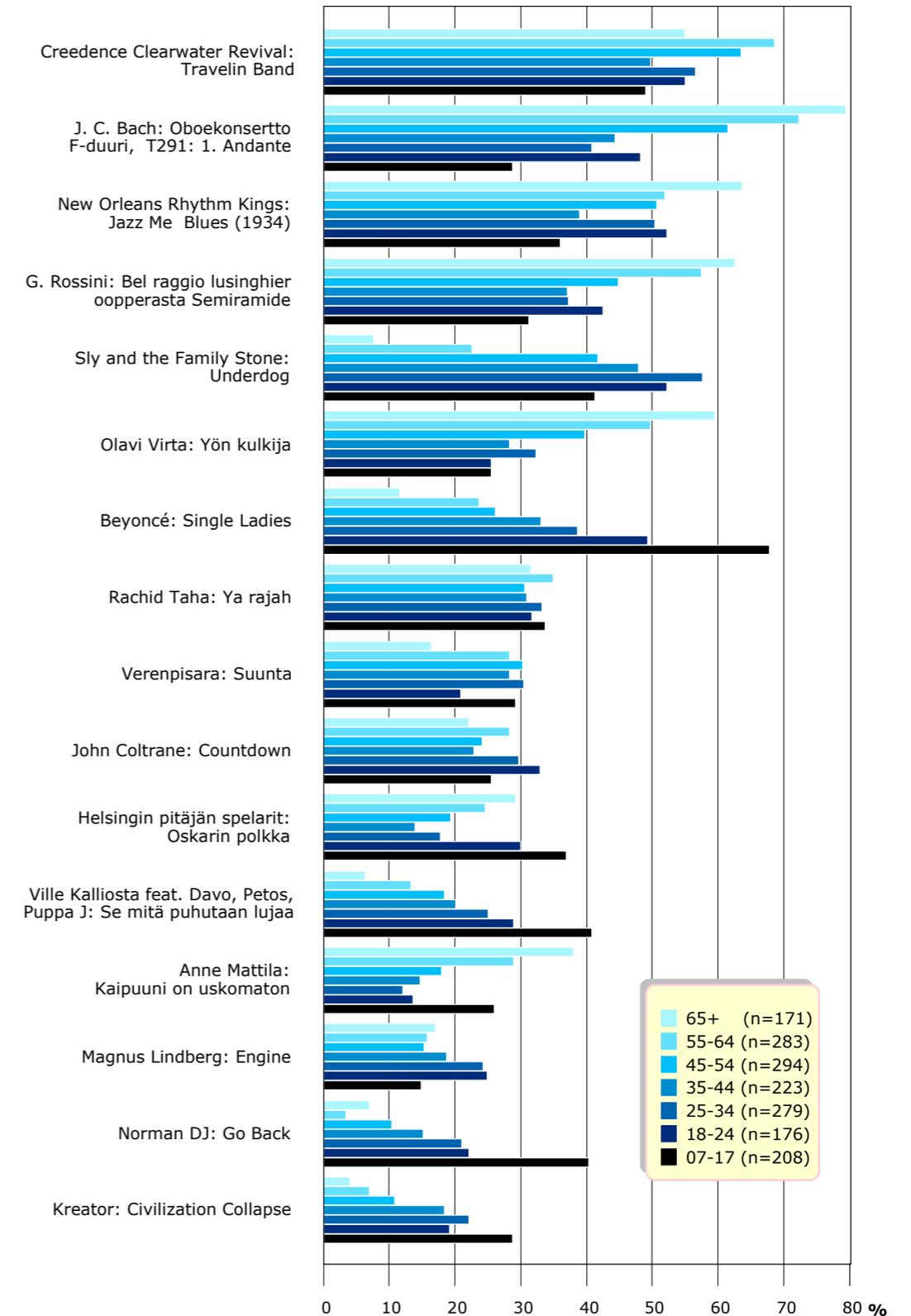


FIGURE 3. 'Awesome music' by educational background (N=1,634)

▶ SEE PAGES 68–69 FOR MUSIC GENRE CLASSIFICATIONS.

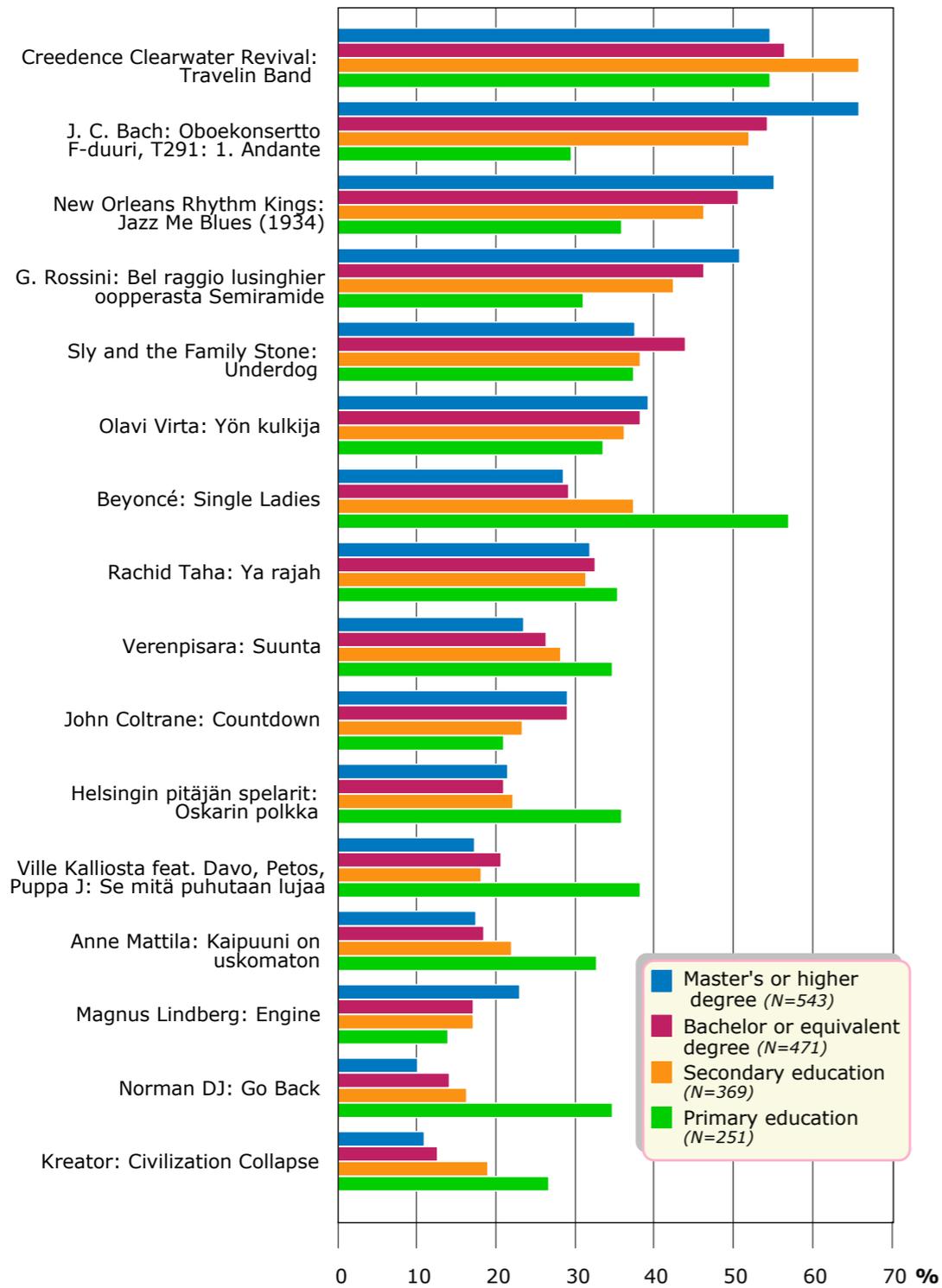
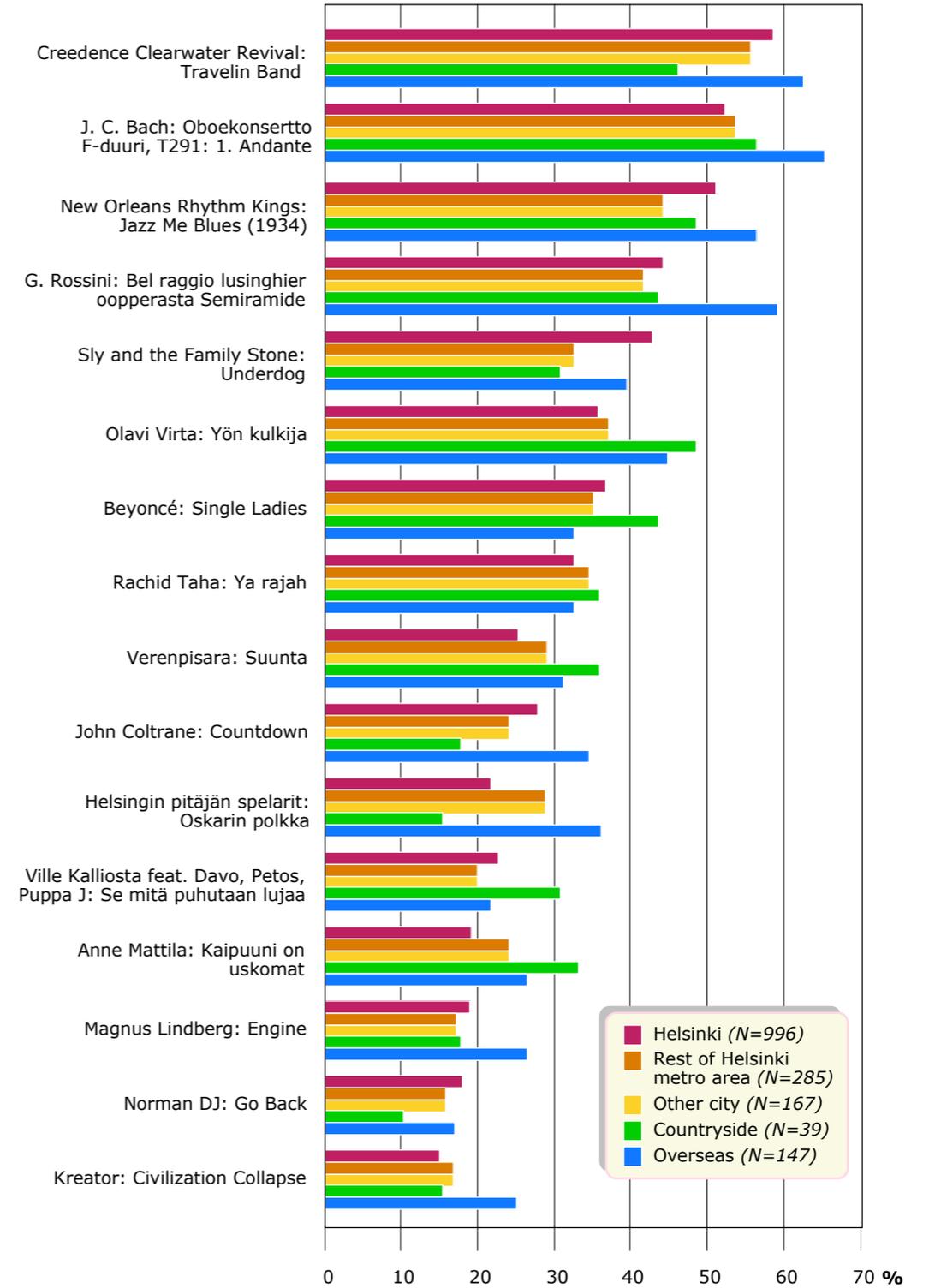
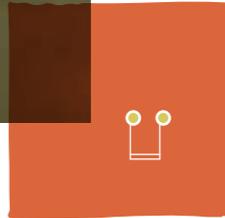
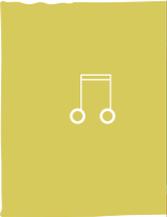


FIGURE 4. 'Awesome music' by place of residence (N=1,634)

▶ SEE PAGES 68–69 FOR MUSIC GENRE CLASSIFICATIONS.





THE HELSINKI CITY MUSEUM exhibition 'Music! Echoes from the Past of a City' opened at Hakasalmi Villa in March and will continue until early 2017. The exhibition breaks new ground in approaching the history of music by presenting the music memories of ordinary people instead of focussing on composers, instruments and professional musicians. No division is made between classical and popular music.



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