

/ CHAPTER 2
PEOPLE AND DIVERSITY IN SPACE

WHAT IS THE FINNISH MODEL OF SUBURBAN PUBLIC SPACE?

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FINNISH MODEL

“A new type of public space was formed using existing features and densification possibilities. The suburban labyrinth supplements the previous two types creating a third atmosphere. It has different combination of active/passive activities where different target groups can find a place for themselves.”

The area of Haaga is extremely green and full of different nature activities like urban agriculture (community gardens), dog parks, and interesting terrain alterations with exposed rocks where walking paths emerge. Moreover, residents tend to keep their private land plots as green as possible, resulting in biodiversity which, in some way, connects with the Scandinavian “Friluftsliv” concept of outdoor living. Gelter (1999, p. 78) describes this as a “philosophical lifestyle based on experiences of the freedom in nature and the spiritual connectedness with the landscape.” Furthermore, green space morphology shows the need for connected greenery with corridors – the locating of green spaces between new developments. This results in a “branch” type built environment with quiet and remote residential pockets where surroundings illustrate a perceptual and existing image of suburban living (Figure 1).

The distribution of recreational and public services is quite even, but with a few emerging clusters (Figure 2). In North-Haaga a lot of public services gather around “Degernyr-parken” sports center, near the Rhododendron Park, while in

the South-Haaga - a lot of educational and leisure services are situated close to the Eliel Saarisen road and the ring road. These, together with commerce, are places where people gather and communicate, and are places where suburban public life happens. Education and sports facilities are the biggest part of public services in Haaga and they are places of importance. Architect Pålsson (2016, p. 36) evaluates spaces near schools and other institutions as the ones where “we experience and define ourselves in relation to other people”. Therefore, socialization can happen in these active spots, which play an important role in personal development, no matter the age.

A street is an essential element of public life. Livability of an area often depends on how streets function. There are several types of streets in Haaga which create different atmospheres and possibilities for social interaction (Figure 3). The whole area is surrounded by high-speed roads, while the center has serving /mixed use streets. The majority of small connections are through residential streets which are situated between private and multi-storey houses. Residential streets have an atmospher-

ic quality that suburban residents appreciate - quiet, less intense, narrow. Furthermore, there are several pedestrian paths situated between private land plots, which serve as shortcuts to get from one street to the other. There are quite a few dead-end streets which reduce car flow by attracting only those who live in the area. In South-Haaga, the street network is more connected while in North-Haaga it is more dispersed and with breaking elements, such as parks.

In Haaga, there is 39% of private space and 61% of public space where the main function remains residential. 82% of this area is dedicated to a large amount of green and recreational public areas, meanwhile, only 18% is dedicated to streets (Figure 4). The division between public and private territories is visible in the schematic above, showing an interesting squeezing in public spaces, which is covered with greenery. Moreover, a few non-walkable areas appear - rail tracks surrounded by a fence and high-speed roads which are no place for humans. In general, Haaga is divided into two parts and it has its own connection dependent structures.

EXISTING MODEL OF A SUBURBAN PUBLIC SPACE (THE CASE OF HAAGA)

Each urban space contains patterns of features which are distinctive from others, while also showing some consistencies with other areas' features. There is always the main base pattern connected with one or several complementary ones. In order to understand Finnish suburban public space in the Haaga context, several main pattern types were defined (Figure 5).

The first one - "the mall labyrinth" - is a closed space with a clearly planned and regulated pattern for the flow of people, with focus points and designed interconnections where unforeseen communication may happen extremely rarely (like street musician spontaneously playing in the mall alley). This consumption based public space is becoming more popular with the rising amount of attractions put inside the box. During the last eight years, a total retail area in Helsinki and in all of Finland has been growing fast and attracting more residents (Finnish Council of Shopping Centers, 2018). In addition, the survey we conducted (USP, 2018) on Haaga residents showed that 47,7% still choose a car to travel to more remote areas where supermarkets are located. It has a negative impact not only on the climate but also on public space and social patterns which are broken by "programmed" car commutes.

The second defined pattern is "the forest labyrinth" - a wide

green area with sports facilities, trails, dog parks, and schools or simply without them. This type of public space, where people have a lot more space for themselves compared with the supermarket, is extremely appreciated by Finns. 86.3% (102 people) of our survey respondents preferred to live close to the forest than near the shopping mall. On the other hand, 82,5% of respondents spend their leisure time indoors. As a result, the green area surroundings are highly important in the suburb.

There is a small contingent of inner neighborhood commerce in Haaga, which shows the existing need for services (see article by Mathew Page in this publication) which is closely located and accessible by foot. It creates fragments of more active streets in North- and South-Haaga, though street life is quite vague, still being oriented to car culture.

These findings confirm the conceived model of the suburbs. Increasing population and city densification drives the need to find ways of how we can appreciate existing values and strengthen them. In addition, there is a need for a new shift from consumerist-based social interactions into a more inclusive atmosphere where each resident can relate with their home public space.

BASIC ELEMENTS FOR A NEW PUBLIC SPACE MODEL

In order to design a new public space model in the Haaga context, several elements were chosen to define the main influencing aspects (Figure 6). There are four main questions addressing strategic factors for new public space development:

1. Who brings people to the public space?

The planned light rail - connecting Haaga inner territories. Existing rail - bringing people from the outside. Intense traffic - remaining traffic artery for regional needs.

2. Where are the active zones?

I created the heat-map based on research on public space types and activity points, in an attempt to identify the main action centers which are kept as part of a new concept.

3. How green public space are distributed across Haaga?

Green areas are part of Finnish public spaces and key to defining its identity. The concept consists of green area networks which are small cores of each agglomeration in varying scales. The biggest element - Central Park - remains untouched.

4. Where densification has the greatest importance?

The ring area surrounded by five different territories and transport arteries. Densification around the ring area will connect Haaga with the main sports centers (marked in blue) and create an active area, while the central part of the neighborhood is densified with the infills.

These elements bring people, commerce, services and new activities where new public space networks can emerge. The aim is to activate specific nodes and create multi-functionality with a calm core, where each resident can easily create their own route of activity stops. As Alexander (1977, p. 65) states “the use of cars has the overall effect of spreading people out, and keeping them apart”, therefore this new public space should be in between main public transport arteries and accessible by foot. Moreover, a bigger density supports more services and as a result, assures that the new model can survive competition from the big shopping centers. In order to understand what possible qualities emerge from this public network, further detailing is proposed.

HOME PUBLIC SPACE - THE SUBURB LABYRINTH

This new model creates a different pattern of public space compared with the two existing ones (Figure 7). It gives the possibility of new social interactions and a mix between active and passive leisure places. In this particular Haaga situation, densification is proposed with new multi-storey residential buildings. The ones situated on the street have an active ground floor with commerce and services. It brings more people to the outer shell of this district and creates a livable street. With the residential apartments on the other floors, the design encourages “eyes on the street”, as in the concept presented by Jacobs (1992, p. 35) where safety is regulated by the community for the entire community. Moreover, the inner core of the district remains green and filled with a natural and semi-natural environment. The main element of the concept is the connection between a street-active and inner-passive place. With the help of different architectural forms, new extensions on the ground floor appear to connect several buildings with a half-inside, half-outside space under a roof. In this way, services and play-areas appear indoors and outdoors to serve for different weather, and seasonal, conditions. Spaces on this first-floor mix depends on the types of facilities it houses: classrooms divided by a promenade, indoor basketball court with transparent windows to the com-

munity, a gathering place which has an extension outdoors or sauna and tub area near the recreation corner with suburban camping for children. The “under the roof areas” extend to the green core, which are cut by several paths for walking and special surface paths for running. In addition, as Gehl (2010, p. 41) has said “if ground floor facades are rich in variation and detail, our city walks will be equally rich in experience”, therefore, these paths serpentine through multiple atmospheres and, in a smaller space, gives a wider area feeling. Path network do not end in the district but extends to other areas, connecting multiple districts.

Furthermore, play-areas for children are not strictly dedicated but are part of the network where new opportunities emerge. As the central core is car-free, full of greenery and local residents, the place is safe, accessible and interesting for the children and other age groups. In conclusion, a few more studies on network nodes need to be done to distinguish different characteristics and activity-dependence between the street and inner green core. This model provides easily accessible, close-by services, for various residents’ needs.

EXAMPLES OF CONNECTING PUBLIC SPACES

The first example is a combination of indoor and outdoor recreation accessibly close to your home (Figure 8). Sauna facilities have an extension to a cozy and covered terrace. Gehl (2010, p. 28) states that “public space has significant social importance as a forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions” and one of the main socialization spaces for Finns is the sauna. Therefore, a proper dedicated area for this activity can bring the community and neighbors together.

The second place worth distinguishing is a familiar natural forest type park in the core of the district. It has several paths for walking and running, with emerging water features in some cases. Even though the new model densifies activities, it still preserves the need for quiet and wilder nature. In addition, sustainability is connected with places that are valuable for people (Schwartz 2016). Emotional attachment shows the importance of existing structure as part of identities and describes certain objects and atmospheres that can be reflected in the new development.

The third example is related to play-areas where free-form and creative playing can happen between newly built structures and existing natural elements. The roof provides shelter from



Figure 1. Haaga's existing public space: the green public. Mapping by Nandara Mendes and Eglė Pilipavičiūtė.



Figure 2. Haaga's existing public space: service public and recreation public. Mapping by Nandara Mendes and Eglė Pilipavičiūtė.



Figure 3. Haaga's existing public space: street public. Mapping by Nandara Mendes and Eglė Pilipavičiūtė.



Figure 4. Relation between public and private space.

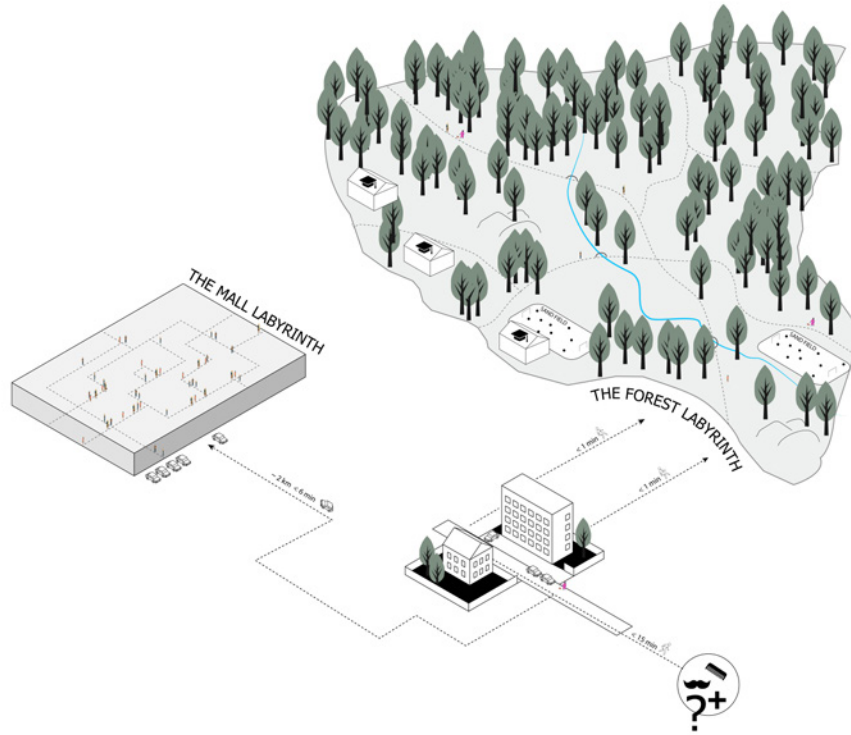


Figure 5. Existing model of a suburb public space (based on Haaga's case).



Figure 6. Base elements for a new public space model.

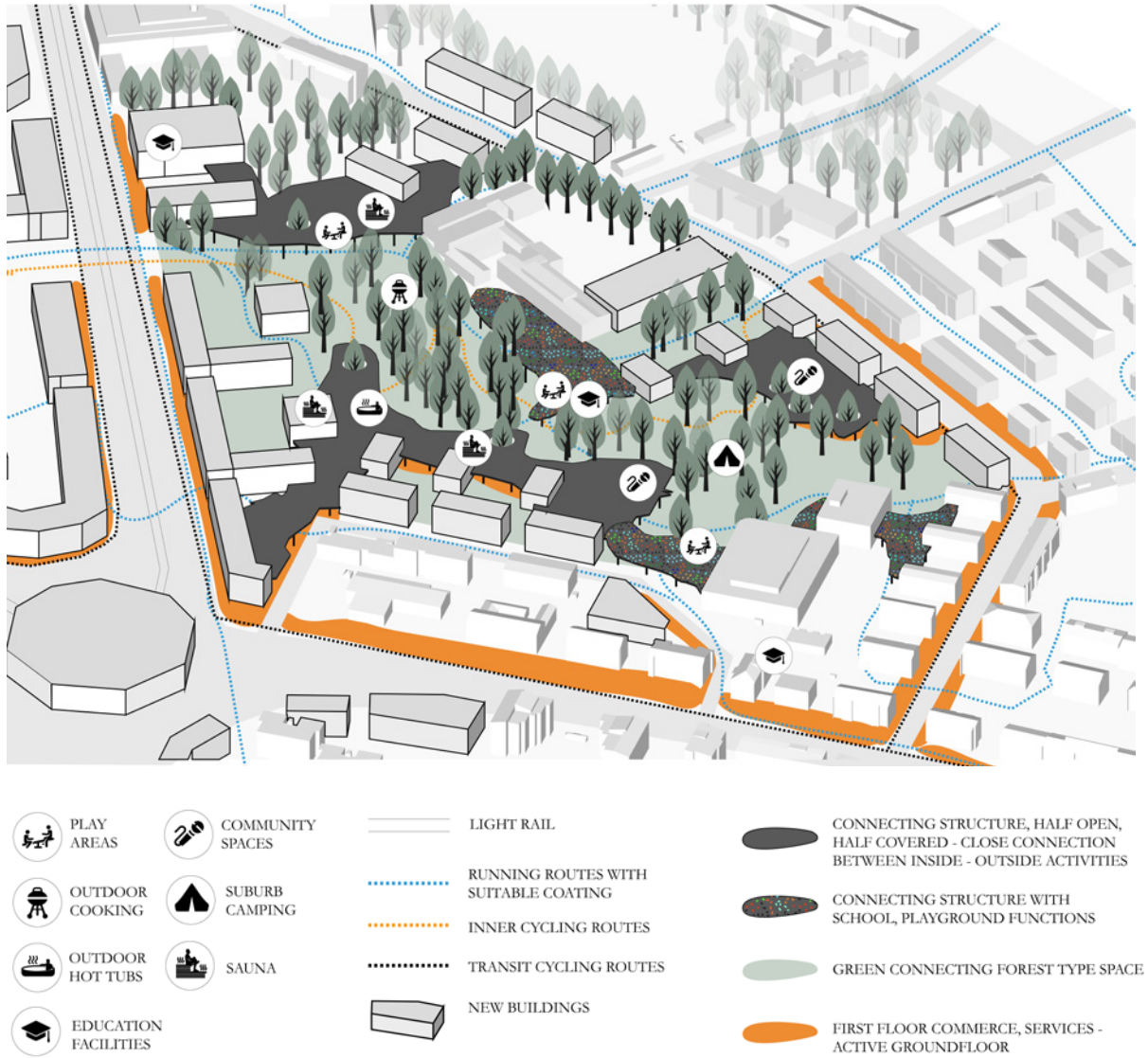


Figure 7. Home public space – the suburb labyrinth.

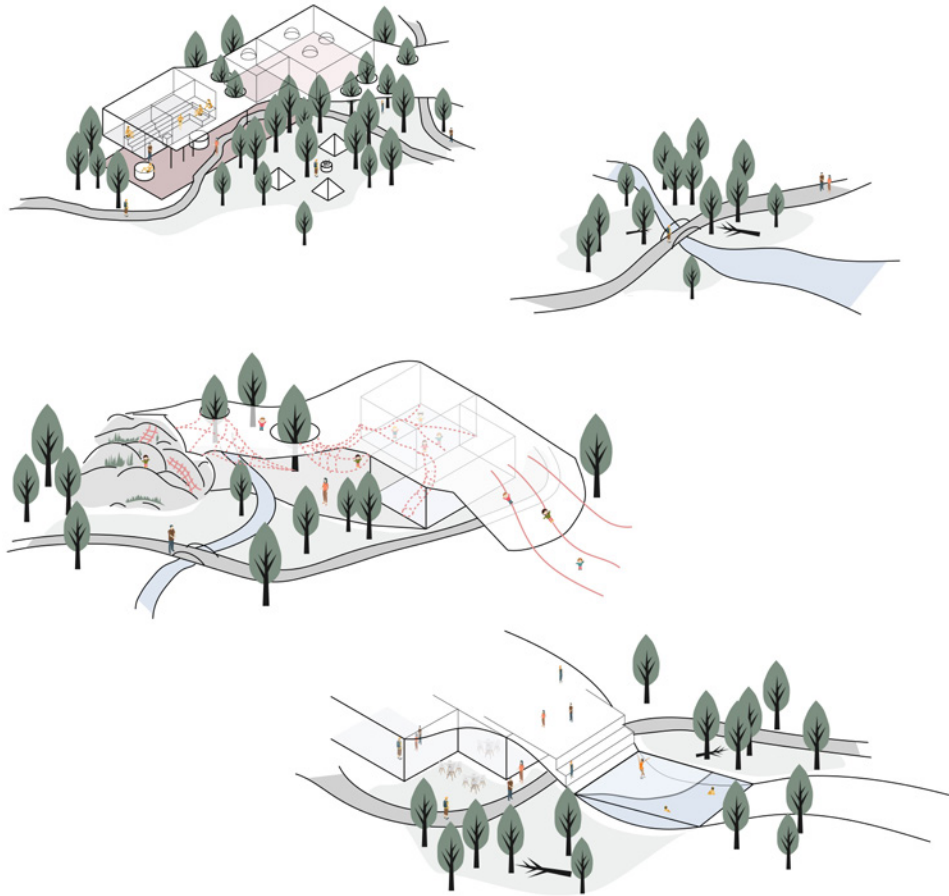


Figure 8. Examples of connecting public spaces.

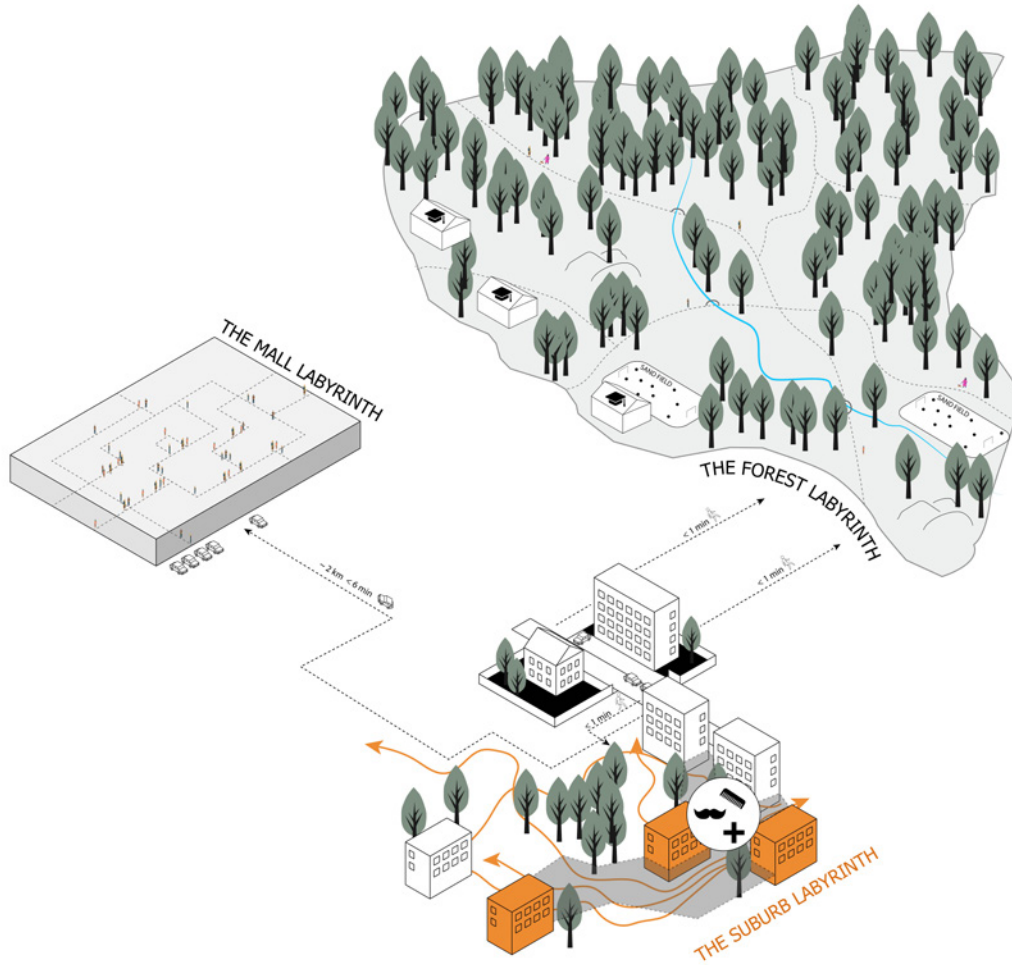


Figure 9. The triangular division between spaces.

bad weather and the playground continues inside. Moreover, indoor spaces can host cafes where parents can stay and easily watch their children playing. The connecting structure is organic and adapts to the terrain, imitating its height changes itself.

The fourth environment is an example of sport, commerce and leisure combination. An outdoor organic pool/fountain can work as a swimming or ice-skating area depending on season and capabilities. Easy connection with indoors, where more sports facilities can emerge. In addition, school classes are part of the covered connection, so institutional boundaries in some cases disappear. These connections require further floor planning, target group, amount and size calculations.

To conclude, multiple combinations of functions and activity levels are available depending on the particular location, existing program, and relation with other “labyrinth” places as they each have to preserve their own characteristics.

TRIANGULAR DIVISION

A new type of public space was formed using existing features and densification possibilities (Figure 9). The suburban labyrinth supplements the previous two types creating a third atmosphere. It has different combinations of active/passive activities where different target groups can find a place for themselves.

In addition, triangulation is an interrelationship where enjoyable processes develop (Whyte, 1980). Furthermore, these three models will always be close to one another, so a new pattern will work as a missing link between the shopping center and forest park, offering the best of both worlds. As Alexander (1977, p. 156) describes “people want to be close to shops and services, for excitement and convenience and they want to be away from services, for quiet and green.” His idea is visible in the USP survey results where the biggest part of respondents want to live near the green forest, but appreciate comfortable services and indoor leisure. Furthermore, the suburban labyrinth provides a densification opportunity while keeping public space.

As a consequence, the suburban labyrinth was created as a third option for public leisure. Moreover, densification of an area brought new users - creators of public life - while an activated sidewalk provided concentrated flows of people and increased livability of an area. Also, multi-functional areas changed monotonous environments and created new opportu-

nities for social interaction and cultural integration. This model is an experimental design that has to be developed further with clearly defined target groups, active and passive places, and people flows based on a specific area and its own context.

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NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN HAAGA: THE CASE OF TWO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Kamilla Kreice

NORTH/SOUTH ANALYSIS

“Yes, there certainly is a division between North and South Haaga, which is why each library is playing a huge role within their area serving two different customer groups. The one makes the connection between e-services and citizens, whereas the other plays a mediator between the different generation views on libraries. However, the division between North and South Haaga neighborhoods is a good example how the urban planning affects the communities where the services, as libraries, just need to adapt.”

INTRODUCTION

In order to find the main reasons why Haaga is divided into North and South, it is important to look back into the history of the area. Haaga was first planned as a village with separate plots. It was an independent community with mainly wooden houses up until 1946. From the 1950s onwards, Haaga was then planned to be a district of Helsinki comprising of apartment buildings. The old and new residents never quite mixed, as it is proven by the fact that to this day, residents of North Haaga have some separate organizations from those of South Haaga (Harju, 2018). One way this has manifested is that there are two public libraries.

An animated map of the development of the residential areas in Haaga between 1906 and 2013, that was created by some of my USP peers, clearly shows that the rapid increase in residential buildings was from the 1950s until 1970s (Ahlgren, Fooladi, Piirainen, 2018). Despite the fact that both parts of the suburban area changed in the same time period, the plans

between South and North Haaga were slightly different. In South-Haaga, villas were replaced with low-rise apartment buildings, whereas in North-Haaga, some of the wooden houses were brought down to the ground in order to give space for the new, and rather tall, apartment buildings (Harju, 2018). Negative emotions within the community were described in a poem by Taira Yliluoma about the Northern part of Haaga in which she expressed how hard it was to see North-Haaga changing during the constructions and that it felt like a part of her history was being taken away (Oittinen, Tepponen, 1989). Not surprisingly this poem was about North-Haaga, which faced more radical changes in the 1950s.

In spite of the fact that both parts of Haaga were divided by the residential building plans, a joint public library was opened in 1955. The first initiatives for this were made already in 1935, while Haaga was still a separate municipality (Tikkanen, 2016). After closing Haaga library in 1964, South-Haaga library opened in the same year, in a new location. The previous Haaga library was located closer to the North side, not that far away

from where the North-Haaga library is located nowadays. From 1964 onwards the residents from South-Haaga were closer to the library. Maybe that is why the North-Haaga community took the initiative to establish their own library in 1979. The initiative was realized in 1981 and North-Haaga library was inaugurated in a former grocery store. The main purpose of this library was to serve the residents of North-Haaga and Lassila (13 300), with a force of 5 librarians and offering 15 000 books (Tikkanen, 2016). By the end of the first day, most of the library shelves were empty.

TWO PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN ONE SUBURB

In order to find out if there is a division between the North- and South-Haaga concerning the two public libraries, qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analysed. To compare the two libraries I used secondary data and conducted interviews, a questionnaire, and observations. First of all, two semi-structured, face-to-face interviews were conducted with representatives from each library. The first interview was held in the North-Haaga library with the librarian Minna Vålke, who had worked there for 20 years and is now the current substitute director of both libraries, substituting Maria Bang. Whereas the second interview was at the South-Haaga library with librarian Sari Langdon, who has worked there for 6 years. At this point, the libraries have one director and they are organized as sister libraries, meaning that they share not only the director but also the budget. After the interviews, I collected information from customers utilizing an online questionnaire, which was posted on the library's Facebook page, so as to reach the target group. Finally, short-term observations took place on different days and times to get to know the libraries as an outsider. Both libraries will be compared based on the aspects and values they share as well as on their differences.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN BOTH LIBRARIES

Considering the rich history of the North- and South-Haaga libraries, it has been already been 37 years since the North-Haaga library opened and both libraries have been working within the same locations. From a bureaucratic point of view, both libraries are part of the City of Helsinki and HELMET libraries. On paper, both of them are working towards the same values

stated by the Public Library Act. The Act was updated in 2016, with the main value being the importance of equality and the necessity for libraries to be available and accessible to all. Similar ideals are shared in the strategy “The Way Forward for Public Libraries 2016–2020” which is a guideline for the day-to-day working life of public libraries. In this document, the outlined values are equality, responsibility, a sense of community, courage, and freedom of speech. Considering the bigger picture, all public libraries in Helsinki share similar ideals but there is also a lot of variation which makes every library special and unique.

Bureaucracy is not the only thing that both libraries share. When librarians were asked to describe the main purpose of each library, they highlighted the importance of small libraries. When comparing to bigger libraries, both of the librarians expressed the importance of knowing their clients, which adds another dimension to the place and their work. The director of libraries, Maria Bang, outlined the necessity of serving the community, promoting reading and offering a safe space for citizens. As demonstrated by her saying:

More important for those who are not working or studying to have a place where to go from home without spending any money.

The librarian from North-Haaga emphasized that the library should help people by providing computers or finding books and other information. Therefore, in both libraries, staff share similar understandings of the purpose of a small suburban library.

As these two libraries have the same director and budget, they also help each other in relation to workforce.

South-Haaga librarian: I feel like we are in the same family. We do cooperate well. If someone is sick we do help if it is possible.

Both places have 5 employees each, which is tight as they are open 6 days a week. The collaboration between the employees is not only in the cases when someone is sick, but it is also useful when the staff of one of the libraries needs to have a meeting. In order to allow each library's own employees be present at a meeting, the librarians from the other library come in to take care of the customers. No wonder why Sari Langdon described both libraries as being one big family. But, as it appeared during the interview, the cooperation does not involve only Haaga libraries.

North-Haaga librarian: For Elf Pad [an event in the

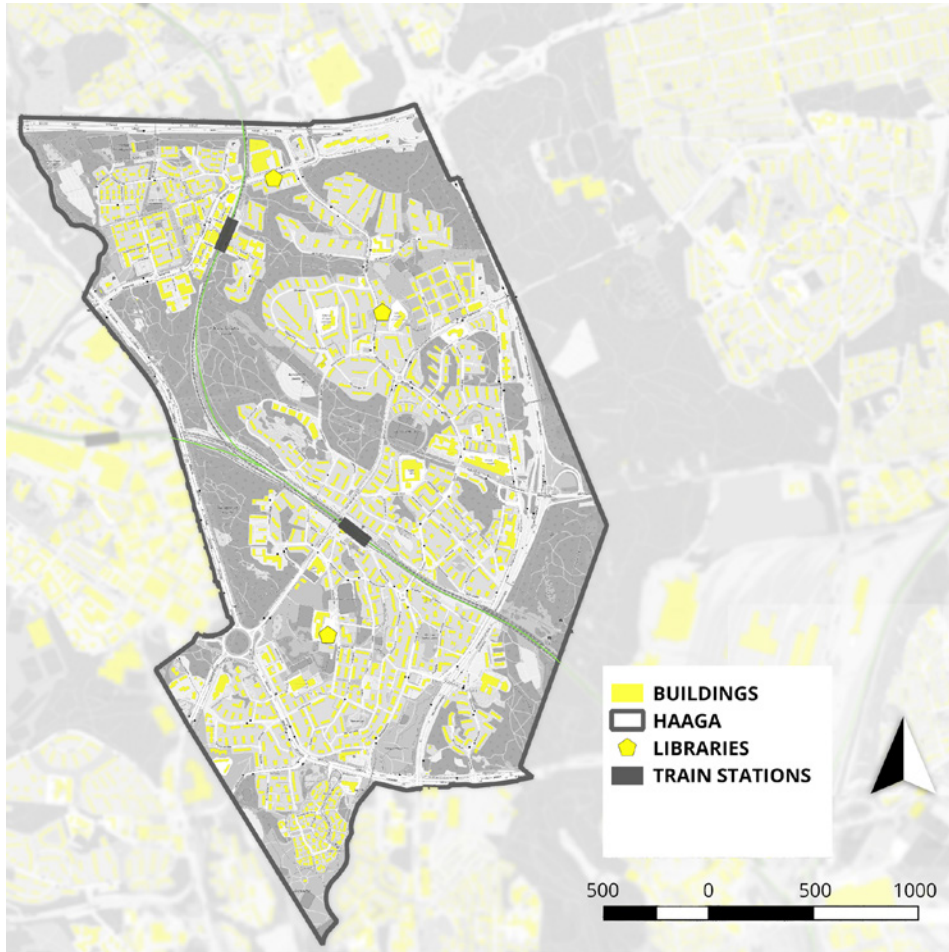


Figure 1. Map.

North-Haaga library], there is one lady coming from Kannelmäki library to help us. So it is bigger than just Southern and Northern library.

The North-Haaga librarian also gave an example of the collaboration between other libraries in order to do the necessary preparation for events. The interview was held on the 20th November and the library was already preparing for Christmas, so the help from other libraries is an important part of it. As the South-Haaga librarian explained, the Helsinki public libraries are also divided within areas, where both libraries belong to the Western area. And the point of this division is to cooperate within a wider area, not only with their sister library. The South-Haaga librarian admitted that they were hoping to

cooperate more with other libraries in the future.

Another common policy in both libraries is recycling and borrowing. In both libraries, there are shelves where people can leave the things they do not use anymore, for instance, children's clothes or books. Everyone who comes in can take these things if they find them useful. Whereas, the things which can be borrowed are gathered by the library. Usually, they are of a practical nature, for example, a drill or a pet carrier box. In this way, the libraries promote sustainability and recycling. Maria Bang claims that both Haaga libraries have been the first ones to promote recycling and borrowing within libraries. Nowadays, almost every library in Finland has a borrowing policy for different kinds of items.

Library visitors in North and South Haaga libraries per year

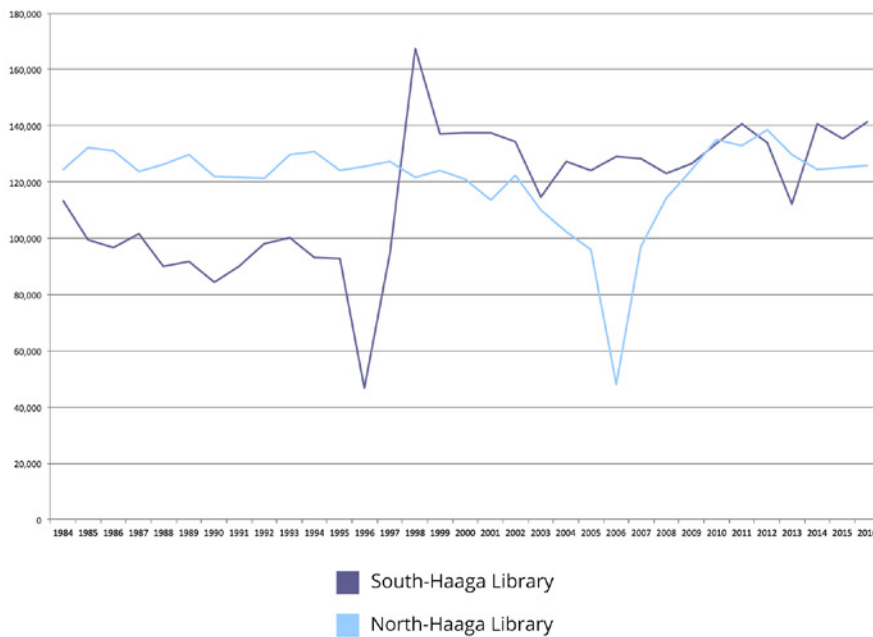


Figure 2. Graph.

DIFFERENT LOCATIONS = DIFFERENT CUSTOMERS

Each one of the two Haaga libraries has different target customers, accessibility, and size. All of these aspects affect the working environment and dynamics. Looking at the numbers of how many visitors each library has had per year, we can see some significant changes during the period 1984-2016 (graph nr.1). During the 1980s, and the beginning of 1990s, North-Haaga library had more visitors per year than South-Haaga. Both libraries have had renovations, which explains the sharp decrease in 1996 for South-Haaga library and the same range of decrease in 2006 for North-Haaga library. After the renovation of South-Haaga library, it has been the one to receive most visitors each year, except during the period of 2012-2014. The latest data from the year 2017 shows that the North-Haaga library had 119 052 visitors and the South-Haaga library had 132 503 library visitors. Knowing that the South-Haaga library occupies 620m², whereas the North Haaga library occupies just 346m², the difference between the numbers of users does not seem that significant. At the same time, it is interesting to notice that during the 1980s and 1990s, the North-Haaga smaller library was the more popular of the two.

The visitors to the libraries do not differ only in numbers. Both librarians, and Bang, highlighted the variety of customers, because of the different type of neighborhoods they are located in. Bang explains that in the North-Haaga area, there are more immigrants coming to the library. The North-Haaga librarian added that they are the people who most often need help. According to other studies, providing access to computers and the internet is closely related to one's ability to reach the e-government. The public library has become a key means of "access to Federal, State or County government" for many. Government agencies rely on public libraries as a connection to e-government services. In a time when most of the communication between citizens and the government happens through the internet, public places like libraries are crucial for those citizens who do not have personal computer or access to the internet. Interestingly, the study claims that library staff have become "experts" at most used e-services, such as, healthcare (Bertot, Jaeger, Langa, McClure, 2006). While conducting observation in both libraries, a lot of different languages could be heard in North-Haaga library, whereas in South-Haaga, the main language I heard was Finnish and a bit of English. At the same time, the public of the South-Haaga library can be seen as an exception as many are Swedish-speaking customers. The librarian from South-Haaga admitted that she has not met any Swed-

ish-speaking customers in the Northern library.

South-Haaga librarian: *People here are more skillful, they do not need as much help. [pause] Of course, we chat with our customers here as well, but it is not the same.*

Seeing that customers in North-Haaga are more heterogeneous, including a larger amount of immigrants, their skill level in using e-services might differ. For locals, it might be easier to understand the system or find someone to ask for help, whereas, for foreigners, it can be challenging, which might be the reason why the North-Haaga librarians need to assist with these issues more than their counterparts in South-Haaga.

An interesting approach in comparing the two places was used by the South-Haaga librarian, who mentioned an example of recycling shelves, where people can leave the things they do not use anymore. According to her, the South-Haaga library usually have higher quality items than in North-Haaga.

South-Haaga librarian: *I would say that here [the customers] are wealthier and less, sort of, immigrants.*

Another niche of the South-Haaga library, is that it is located next to the elementary school of Haaga. So, between the seniors, old people, families with kids, the largest category of everyday users are school kids. The busiest hours are from 12:00 to 16:00, when school kids are the most active in the library. According to the South-Haaga librarian, that usually causes friction between the school kids and people who want to use the library for quite work.

South-Haaga librarian: *So between that time [from 12:00 to 16:00], we really have to be like going around a lot and keeping order by saying "Be quiet, keep the noise down and do not shout, do not run".*

Since the library has received some negative feedback about this issue, there are plans in the future to create more silent rooms where young kids would not have access. However, this seems to be the only conflict within the library. Mary Lee Bundy, in an article on the conflicts within libraries, states that one interesting aspect is the age difference between employees. Bundy claims that the "old community" of library staff will be more likely to be conservative in their outlooks and be more resistant to changes. The conflict between older and newer staff members are common and has different consequences, but if the majority of the staff are "old community" they will resist the efforts of newer staff (Bundy, 1966). In the case of Haaga, this assumption does not seem to be present. It is, in fact, the other way

around, because the staff members who have worked there for more than 10 years are the ones working in the more heterogeneous neighborhood. Yet, the age difference is shown in the understanding of what the library is for. For instance, in the South-Haaga library's case, kids are using it for playing games and as a space to be after school, whereas the older generation has a more traditional understanding of what the library is for.

Seeing that they have a different target customer, it is not surprising that the librarians also have different duties. If the South-Haaga librarians need to think about how to keep the kids quieter, then the ones in North-Haaga need to spend more time helping and talking to their customers. Which is expected, as most of the North-Haaga librarians have worked there for 20 years already and live in the same neighborhood.

M. Bang: One employee just told us last week, that he knows a customer in 3rd generation.

One employee who knows almost every customer is considered the most unique thing about the North-Haaga library, according to Maria Bang. She later also added that Hugo the dog is another special thing about this place. Hugo is owned by one employee and they are inseparable, so whenever the owner of the dog comes to the work, so does Hugo. This is a good attraction and is added value for the kids, as they are allowed to pet the dog. Both libraries are well used by families with children, seniors, some students, and other people who need a place to work. According to the 2018 public library users survey, the North-Haaga library was overall rated 8.9, and the South Haaga library 8.77. The little difference between the overall ratings might be due to the complaints of the kids in the South-Haaga library. At the same time, the North-Haaga library might be rated a bit higher because of the closer employee-customer relationships.

Indeed, when asked about the quiet space within the library, the answers differed between the two libraries. Almost half of the respondents (49%) described the library's quiet space as "very well" or "well" in the case of the North-Haaga library, whereas the South-Haaga library's quiet space was described as "very well" and "well" by only 41% of respondents. The difference is not that significant, but, still, it makes a difference. And yet, the customer service ratings are more complementary to the North-Haaga librarians. When rating, the North-Haaga library staff were rated more often "very well" than the South-Haaga librarians. But in both libraries, more than 60% of respondents rated all of the library staff "very well" (National Library of Finland, 2018). While both libraries have the same amount of em-

ployees, the South-Haaga library gets more visitors every day, which is why the experience of the customers might also differ.

In order to obtain more specific opinions from the library users, an online questionnaire was conducted, and shared, via the library's Facebook page, reaching 58 respondents in different age groups. Out of all respondents, 60% mostly used the South-Haaga library, while 35% mostly used the North-Haaga library. On the open question - what they would like to change in their library? - 14 out of 58 respondents found it difficult to think of anything, or thought that the library does not need to change at all. Many customers mentioned a wish for longer opening hours on Fridays and weekends. Other suggestions were related to expanding the floor area and the interior redesign of the place. In fact, a renovation period will take place in South-Haaga library next year, but a similar plan to renovate does not exist for the North-Haaga library. The management hopes to receive funding for other libraries in the following years. Either way, the working hours and the aesthetics of the place are related to the budget. One comment concerning these issues was:

It is often cold inside. The playground should be improved. And the decorations are stuck in the past.

Similar things were mentioned in response to the open question concerning how the libraries should change in the future. Respondents outlined the importance of events and happenings at the library, while also describing the traditional role of the library, describing this as a type of library that does not include cultural activities. Actually, the users and the librarians used similar words, for instance, the importance of being open and supporting the community. And the same values have been stressed in the Public Library Act - equality and the importance of accessibility to anyone. Indeed, the importance of the library can be seen as a place and space. The library is a meeting place which embraces many cultural, ethnic, generational, and social lines in a complex multicultural and digitized society. A study from Oslo shows that the library is a very complex arena to examine because of the large diversity of the usage of place and space. But despite the fact that visitors are strangers to each other, the people are not categorized by social status, which contributes to social inclusion (Audunson, Aabø, 2012). The users of the Haaga libraries described the library as a place which supports the community by providing services which are needed by the users. Each customer is an individual actor, but all of them go under the umbrella term, "library user". Trying to be a part of a community takes some time and courage from each individual, but the library is an opportunity to be a part of the

community without major actions. Today you do not even need a library card in order to step into the public library and use the computers, printers or wi-fi.

In addition to its traditional role, the library can be a center for events, meetings, and cultural activities, which would also support the community. Libraries should be like an open living room in the area, where you can have fun in many ways. Game clubs, poems, novel hooks, language clubs, and digital training are just like this. Despite that, there were many suggestions about how to improve the libraries in the future, such as the importance of already existing events, happenings and other services. When users were asked to pick three main reasons why they used the library the top 3 choices were lending and returning books, reading magazines and newspapers, and to attend events. 29% of respondents answered that one of the three reasons they used the library is because of events. The appreciation of the work that libraries do proves their importance.

Another aspect which was mentioned by Bang, the librarians, the Public Library Act and the library users was, accessibility. The two libraries are located within 2.5 km of each other, where the North-Haaga library is within an intense area and the South-Haaga library has a highly intense area quite near (see in this book Intensity map by Pilipaviciute, Mendes). Also, the 2018 survey for public library users showed a very high rate for both libraries by location. The location of the South-Haaga library was rated as “very well” and “well” by 93% of respondents, and the location of the North-Haaga library received 94% (National Library of Finland, 2018). Each library has its own accessibility advantages. As an example, the North-Haaga librarian appreciates the railway station which is quite near.

North-Haaga librarian: *We have this railway station here, which helps a little bit. People from Kannelmäki come here very often.*

Although the train station is not that far away from the South-Haaga library, the librarian and Bang thought that there is a lack of direct public transportation to the library, which is similar to other libraries.

M.Bang: *There is not even a bus coming here. For example, a lot of people are using Töölö library because there is a bus station next to it. Here you must live quite close or have your own car. It is strange that there is no bus root here.*

The accessibility issue was also mentioned by library users. One respondent mentioned that the library should be more accessible, despite the user's living location. Map nr.2 and Map nr.3

shows the real situation of how close the train station and public transport stops are to both libraries. The North-Haaga library is located closer to the train station and other public transport stops, whereas the South-Haaga library is a bit further away from any public transport.

But accessibility does not involve only public transport; one South-Haaga library user complained about the bike stand, describing it as unusable. And how about wheelchair users? None of the respondents mentioned, or complained, about the accessibility by a wheelchair or a baby pram. The only comment about prams was that there should be clearer directions where to park them.

It would be nice to have a clearly indicated space where to park the prams (outside & inside).

From 58 Facebook respondents, 48% lived in the South-Haaga area, 26% in North-Haaga, 10% in Lassila and a few came from Kivihaka, Kannelmäki, Munkkivuori, Pajamäki, and Pitäjänmäki. The ones who come from Lassila and Kannelmäki use the North-Haaga library, but people from Kivihaka and Munkkivuori go to the South-Haaga library. When the North-Haaga library first opened, it was supposed to serve Lassila and North-Haaga, which explains the 10% of users from this area. Interestingly, the South-Haaga library is used not only by their closest neighbors from Kivihaka, but also the ones from Munkkivuori. As this library does not have any public transport stops next to it, the people who live in Munkkivuori most likely go there by car or bike. Throughout the observation, the parking area was always full of cars, which might be the primary transport used, especially since South-Haaga customers were described as wealthier. Nevertheless, the school is just next to the library and might be easily accessible to parents who bring their children to the school by car

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, both libraries share one staff, budget and mandate. From the employee's point of view, they are one big family when it comes to helping out each other, or taking shifts for others. The same stands for policies, such as recycling and borrowing. Being under the same bureaucracy makes North- and South- Haaga libraries look like twin sisters on paper.

However, both libraries face different situations in real life. Beginning with location, and ending with the differences between the librarian-customers relationships, the most influ-

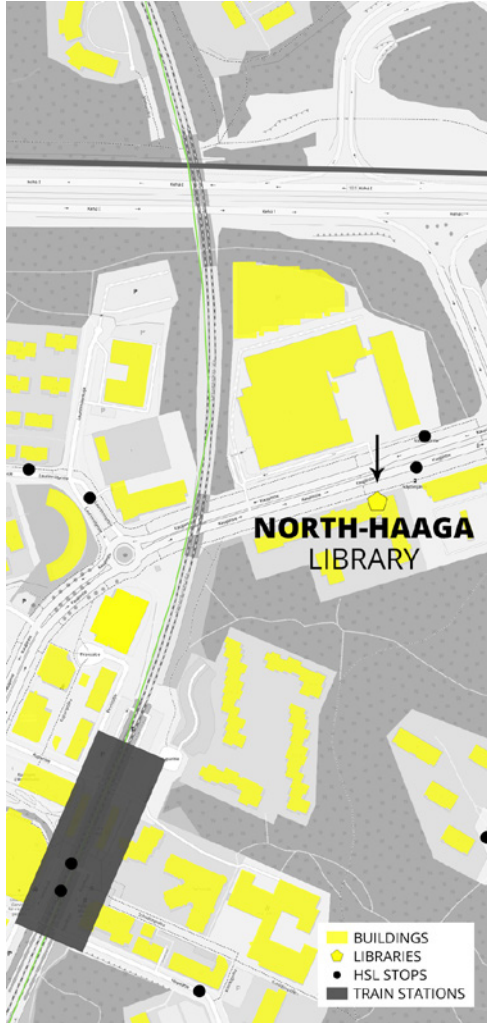


Figure 3. Map 2.



Figure 4. Map 3.

ential factor, still, is the community they are serving. From a historical point of view, the location was the most crucial aspect concerning the demand from the Haaga and Lassila residents to open the North-Haaga library. In a way, nothing has changed. The North-Haaga library serves a different community to that of the library in South-Haaga, because of the pre-existing difference between these two neighborhoods. The main purpose of the libraries is to serve the community, emphasizing that they serve an already existing community, or two different communities as it is in this case. The only way the library can affect the community of the neighborhood is by being there for them and changing along with the customers, and their needs. At the same time, they provide a platform for social inclusion and allow an opportunity for everyone to be a part of the library user community.

Libraries find themselves having to balance the demands of the municipality and HELMET, while adjusting to the needs of the community. But the customer views about how the library should look in the future are shared by the director and librarians, as demonstrated by their points of view. Yes, there certainly is a division between North- and South-Haaga, which is why each library plays a huge and vital role within their own areas, serving two different customer groups. One makes the connection between e-services and citizens, whereas the other plays a mediator between the different generational views on libraries. However, the division between North- and South-Haaga neighborhoods is a good example of how urban planning affects communities through services, such as libraries, and how they need to adapt to the demands of the community.

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WHAT CAN CHANGES IN INFRA- STRUCTURE IN ETELÄ-HAAGA TELL US ABOUT SPATIAL SOCIAL MIXING?

Rachel Jones

CHANGE IN INFRASTRUCTURE

“Finland’s spatial social mixing policies have caused drastic infrastructural change in pursuit of goals aiming to reduce spatial segregation. These changes are evidenced in the physical environment of Etelä-Haaga, bringing with them some issues not previously experienced. The dense living situation combined with a tall and alienating physical structure may discourage neighbourly interactions, negatively impacting integration in an area.”

INTRODUCTION

Finland has long been presented as a stronghold of Nordic welfare policies, a key aspect of which was introducing spatial social mixing. Many studies have been conducted examining the social impact of such schemes. However, few studies have examined how these social policy changes have impacted the physical environment. Between 1955 and 1975, 900,000 new apartments were built in Helsinki (Vaattovaara, et al. 2018). This suggests that the physical landscape has been vastly changed as part of the initiative. This article aims to address this issue in the district of Haaga, Helsinki. The article will first examine spatial social mixing and apartment living literature, before discussing the methodology used in this study, my fieldwork findings and reflecting on the issue as a whole.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Apartments have existed in various forms since Roman times.

Apartment blocks have often been constructed to save land space and increase urban population density. But despite their apparent popularity with governments, there have been worldwide movements against multi-unit dwellings. These have been successful in increasing building codes and standards but have done nothing to stem the tidal shift towards high density living across the urban world (Nelson 2018, pp.45-56). Therefore, it is important to understand the impact that the shift towards apartment living is having on the urban environment.

Spatial segregation has also long been a topic of interest to social scientists. Laura Vaughan (2018) documented the history of social cartography, noting that 19th century texts often portrayed immigrants and the poor as marginal to society, with Vaughan stating that ‘overcrowding was linked with immorality, while poverty was associated linguistically with the animal’ (p. 16). This indicates a lack of understanding and empathy for the poor in society, which is not beneficial when attempting to enact change. Vaughan also described Charles Booth’s 1889 *Descriptive Map of Poverty*, based in London, which led to Booth

being hailed as the first ‘true’ social scientist. Although the *Map* has been critiqued for its subjectivity, it clearly illustrates that ‘pockets of poverty’ existed in London’s urban structure at the time. It is these ‘pockets of poverty’ which Helsinki has aimed to eliminate, with varying success (Vaattovaara & Kortteinen 2003). Although Booth’s map promotes subjectivity and bourgeois ideas of poverty, describing the lowest class as ‘semi-criminal’, his work provided a good basis for understanding the spatial dimensions of segregation. Despite Booth’s efforts however, no drastic changes have ever been enacted in London to address spatial segregation.

Reardon & Bischoff (2011) defined income segregation as ‘the uneven sorting of households or families among neighborhoods by income’ (p. 1097). Although their study is set in the U.S., where segregation is much more pronounced than in Finland, the paper makes empirically sound findings which can be applied in a Finnish context. The study used census data to address issues such as income and ethnicity, finding that income inequality grew from 1970 to 2000, with strong ethnic trends. It is true that Finland, as well as Europe as a whole, has avoided creating the same such spatial inequalities, particularly with regard to the U.S.’s ethnicity issues. However, it is important to note that these issues do still exist in the Finnish context and cannot be ignored.

In contrast to Booth’s London, Helsinki has taken noticeable steps to reduce spatial inequalities. In the 1960s and 1970s, Helsinki’s planning goal was to reduce social inequalities, which was pursued as part of a wider move towards a Welfare State. To achieve this, it was decided that municipal rental housing should be mixed amongst other housing tenure types to prevent large rental areas from developing (Vaattovaara, et al. 2018). As I will not be using data on rental types or income in this study, I cannot make observations on whether this goal has been achieved. However, it seems inherent that pursuing this goal would require entirely new infrastructure to be constructed, as it may prove challenging to move people out of their existing homes and relocate them to ‘worse’ areas. These changes may inadvertently shift the aura of the place away from an area that encourages community spirit, towards one where people mistrust and avoid their neighbours, if not planned appropriately. For me, the concept of spatial social mixing is futile unless residents actively interact with each other.

In addition to spatially mixing income groups, it is also important to consider the role of immigrant groups in spatial social mixing goals. As Vaughan noted of immigrant marginalisation in the 19th century, there is also a modern issue with

immigrant integration. *The Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers*, introduced in Finland in 1999, aimed to promote integration and equality for the migrant community. Miiikka Pyykkönen (2007) suggested that the Finnish Government should liaise with some of the 700+ immigrant associations in Finland to improve integration, allowing the goals of the 1999 *Act* to be achieved. I agree that it is important for the Government to liaise with such groups, but steps must also be taken at the infrastructural and community level, with appropriate areas existing to promote interactions between neighbours. In addition, Vaattovaara & Kortteinen (2003, pp. 2138-2139) argued that the effectiveness of mixing policies has progressively weakened, with pockets of poverty forming, predominantly in eastern Helsinki. This could evidence issues with immigrant integration in the city, which should be addressed.

These studies have addressed key issues of apartment living, social cartography and spatial segregation. Based on these issues, this study will analyse the physical changes to the Haaga area since spatial social mixing policies have been implemented, as well as whether these areas currently promote community interactions. This will allow an overview of how Haaga has changed to be created as well as allowing an assessment of whether such schemes have been successful from a visual perspective.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the goals of the study, two key forms of data are required. First, it is important to establish what the district of Haaga looked like before spatial social mixing policies were enacted. To do this, it was necessary to collect historical photographs of the region. Helsinki City Museum’s online archives were explored, as they provide a wealth of materials and background context to historical photographs of Helsinki. Using the Museum’s online database, a search for ‘HAAGA’ was used, which returned 385 results. I decided to limit the search to pre-1970, leaving 223 photographs to sort through. Many of the earlier photographs are of people. Although they are interesting and provide an insight into life at the time, these images were excluded from this project as it focusses on residential or semi-commercial buildings only. Other photographs were excluded due to a lack of location data or due to them being aerial photographs of large areas, which would be impossible for me to photograph from street level. Following this analysis, nineteen relevant photographs were selected for further study.

Secondly, it was necessary to determine the current infra-

structural environment in Haaga. Following the desktop analysis, I went out into the field on November 15, 2018 to examine the modern environment that exists where the nineteen historical photographs were taken. In the case of four photographs, it was impossible to locate their exact geographic location, so these were excluded from the study. Following this fieldwork, my new modern photographs were compared to the fifteen remaining historical photographs. From this, eight photographs displayed strong changes in infrastructure since the historical photographs were taken, seven of which were in Etelä-Haaga. This may suggest several things. Firstly, that poorer people were bunched together in Pohjois-Haaga earlier than spatial social mixing policies reached Etelä-Haaga. It may also suggest that Etelä-Haaga's wealthy may have protested the demolition of their houses for longer than the residents of Pohjois-Haaga. At this stage in the project it seemed astute to omit the single Pohjois-Haaga point, instead focussing purely on Etelä-Haaga's infrastructural changes. Figure 1 shows the geographic locations of the seven sites in Etelä-Haaga selected for further study.

It is important to note the shortcomings of using only photographic data in this project. Images are often highly selective and can lead to narrow and biased views of a situation (Jokela 2011, p. 53). In the case of the historical photographs used,

it is impossible to determine the exact context of each image. This, along with my own subjectivity, means that comparisons drawn are speculative and should be viewed as the author's own opinion. My own field observations were carried out on a single day without prior knowledge of the regions being analysed. This should remove some biases from my photographs, but they are still biased by issues such as my ability to take photographs due to safety reasons, such as buildings' locations near busy roads, or the challenging nature of precisely locating now demolished buildings. The analyses are predominantly based on describing the changes in infrastructure and discussing the ability of residents to interact. This study only explored the external infrastructure of buildings, so does not discuss whether buildings have inside areas to interact, for example club rooms, but these areas in themselves require residents to actively attend group sessions, compared with random interactions with their neighbours throughout the day which may occur in outdoor meeting places.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

In this section, the key changes in each area will be discussed in-

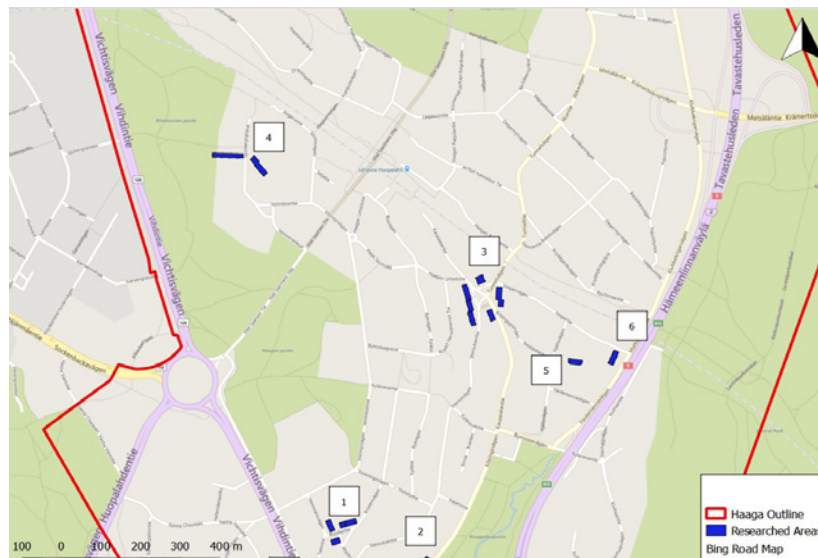


Figure 1. Locations of Researched Areas within Etelä-Haaga.

dividually, as well as the ability for neighbourly interactions, before a wider discussion of the implications of these findings. The areas are listed alphabetically by their modern street name(s). The numbers 1 to 7 are used to show geographic location on Figure 1. The modern photographs are presented in black-and-white form to prevent biases occurring in photograph comparisons. In each case, the historical photograph is on the left, or top, of the comparative illustrations.

1. AHJOKUJA/TALONTIE (FIGURE 2)

This area was already well built-up by 1955 but has been further developed since. The green areas in this region have been significantly reduced since 1955 and the housing typology has also changed, with larger spaced-out houses being replaced by denser and closer together homogenous housing blocks. The buildings have also increased from 1- or 2- storey buildings to 3-storey apartment buildings. Despite this increased density, there are no obvious communal areas for residents to meet and intermix beyond passing each other on the street or meeting at bicycle parking areas. The area also has a slightly complex road crossing system which may cause accessibility issues.

2. KAUPPALANTIE (FIGURE 3)

Although the building pictured has not seen any significant changes since 1930, the main difference being the conversion of a door (marked A on the image) into a window, the building's surroundings have changed vastly. To the west and north of the building, large apartment blocks have been constructed.

These buildings have reduced the amount of green space in the area. In the case of the western buildings, the brick design has been used to mimic the Elanto building, showing its continued significance to the area. There is also a large parking area which has been constructed under the building, showing the density of the area. There is a small outdoor seating area, in front of the building in the top right image, which can be used for group discussions.

3. PALOKAIVON AUKIO (FIGURE 4)

When entering this region in the modern day, it is quite an overwhelming environment, with tall buildings surrounding the square and complicated road crossing systems making navigating the square challenging. This is in stark contrast to the quiet and open environment depicted in the historical photograph from 1956. This area has clearly undergone considerable change, becoming a commercial and residential hub. The square now contains two grocery stores and other services. There is also a small taxi rank and several areas for parking. Despite this high activity, there is nowhere for people to stop and communicate, as the area is fast moving and there are no seating areas. Nearby there is a playground and an English-language nursery. This suggests that integration is being focussed on the children of the area, with childless citizens being ignored in this regard. During my fieldwork, there was a group of older people conversing around the corner from the square. It seems this group did not perceive the square as an appropriate place for casual conversation, as they broke up their conversation before heading into the square itself. Nandara Mendes's entry in this book,



Figure 2. Ahjokuja/Talontie. Historical Photograph: Helsinki City Museum/Jansson 1955. Modern Photograph: Rachel Jones.



Figure 3. Elannon Liiketalo, Kauppalantie 2. Historical Photograph: Helsinki City Museum 1930 (Top Left). Modern Photographs: Rachel Jones Buildings to the west of Elanto building (Top Right). Elanto building photographed from south side (Bottom Left). Buildings behind Elanto building photographed from east side (Bottom Right).



Figure 4. Palokaivon Aukio. Historical Photograph: Helsinki City Museum/Grünberg 1956b. Modern Photograph: Rachel Jones.

Public interactions: understanding of Finnish suburbs public life — the case of Haaga, provides a deeper insight into the potential of this square.

4. RIISTAVUORENKUJA (FIGURE 5)

In this area, there is no sign of the large building photographed by Grünberg, or any other large independent buildings. The urban landscape is now dominated by flats, with reduced green areas present. The areas between buildings are reserved for car parking, so are unsafe for group conversations. However, there is a forested area, Riistavuoren puisto, behind the flats, which is frequented by dog walkers. This provides some opportunity for interaction, although the area has no seating areas, so interactions are likely to be short. I have visited Riistavuorenkuja on two occasions and both times it was exceptionally quiet, especially compared to its immediate surroundings. This indicates that some potential for improvement exists in this area, although, of course, arguments could be made that the quietness of this area is a positive aspect. Consultation with residents would be beneficial in determining the best way forward for each of the areas in this study.

5. SANKARITIE (FIGURE 6)

The historical photograph of Villa Johannislund was taken shortly before its demolition in 1969. It has since been replaced with a large area of homogenous apartment buildings. The area is also very hilly, making access challenging. This, combined with the homogeneity of the tall housing blocks may contribute to an alienating environment. There is a large green area, Kauppalanpuisto, south of this area, which may encourage interactions between residents and the wider local community, as well as easing the alienating effects of the physical environment.

6. VESPERTIE (FIGURE 7)

This area is located just east of Sankaritie 9, contributing to a large area of apartment blocks. This area shows vast differences in infrastructure, with the large historic building with plenty of space around it being replaced by a modern area dominated by large apartment buildings. Behind the modern building illustrated is a small grassy yard. There is only one plastic chair in that yard, which provides little opportunity for social interaction.

7. VIHINTIE (FIGURE 8)

This building, as well as the street as a whole, has undergone

vast changes since 1956. The most significant change is to the west of the building, where the major multi-lane 120 road has been constructed, causing vast amounts of traffic to run alongside the area. This change would have altered the vibe of the area significantly, making it louder and busier and reducing the opportunity for on-street interactions with neighbours. The area's green spaces have also been reduced to make room for the new constructions. Trees between the building and the road are small, so are ineffective in reducing noise pollution, but may be more beneficial as they mature.

DISCUSSION

When discussing these infrastructural changes, it is important to firstly note that these changes are not linked to population change. In 1970, Haaga had a population of 28,658. In 2017, the population was 27,392, displaying no statistical difference despite the passage of time (Data: City of Helsinki 2003, 2018).

When I was walking between the fifteen original sites, it was apparent that the landscape of Haaga is dominated by flats. I only saw one 'independent' house during my fieldwork, which was surprising. Another obvious change are the busy tarmacked roads, vastly different from the dirt tracks of the historical photographs. This indicates the increased significance of road transport in the modern world. In addition, the construction of a large number of flats across the region has altered the sightlines of Haaga, with the taller buildings blocking out sunlight and long-distance vision. Whether these changes significantly impact the experience of place and safety in Haaga should be studied further to complement this study.

Of the seven sites studied, five of them display significant reductions in green areas. Riistavuorenkuja's green areas are the most conducive of interaction, but still require improvements, which could be easily achieved through installing a seating area or outdoor gym. Another key finding was that there are virtually no adult communal areas, outside of bars which exclude people from non-drinking cultures or people who simply dislike bar environments. The only obvious communal areas are children's playgrounds. Six of the seven sites had no obvious outdoor areas allowing residents to interact, showing wasted potential for the spatial social mixing project.

From these findings, it is clear that although people may be physically mixed in Haaga's housing blocks, there is nowhere for residents to socially interact with their neighbours outside of fleeting "hellos". This is causing wasted potential for the spatial



Figure 5. Riistavuorenkuja. Historical Photograph: Helsinki City Museum/Grünberg 1965.
Modern Photograph: Rachel Jones.



Figure 6. Sankaritie 9. Historical Photograph: Helsinki City Museum/Hakli 1969. Modern Photograph: Rachel Jones.



Figure 7. Vespertie 2 (formerly Ladugårdsvägen 2, Karjakartanontie 2). Historical Photograph: Helsinki City Museum/Grünberg 1930-1958. Modern Photograph: Rachel Jones.



Figure 8. Vihdintie 1. Historical Photograph: Helsinki City Museum/Grünberg 1956a. Modern Photograph: Rachel Jones.

social mixing project and may suggest new Government targets are required, as if spatial social mixing targets are met it is unlikely that legislation is concerned with whether people living together actually have the opportunity to interact. The lack of opportunity for interaction may also create loneliness despite the dense living conditions. This phenomenon could prove damaging to people with mental health difficulties and requires careful attention. I feel the issue could be remedied by installing more seating areas, which could be used for get-togethers or to facilitate longer discussions that stem from random interactions. This would be more beneficial in warmer months, and likely ignored during winter months. Therefore, it is important to ensure indoor meeting areas still exist.

As mentioned, there are limitations to this study. Selectively choosing seven sites that display 'strong' changes biases the study. However, the changes induced by spatial social mixing policies are important to address, so biasing the study in this manner proved beneficial. Selecting more sites in a less biased way as part of a wider study would be useful as the next stage of research into this topic. In addition, by using minimal demographic data, the focus of this study was more on infrastructure than people. Residential buildings are nothing without the residents, so it is important to also consider their characteristics in future studies.

CONCLUSION

Socio-spatial segregation has been discussed in social sciences since the age of Charles Booth, with many policies trialled to counter the issue. Finland's spatial social mixing policies have caused drastic infrastructural change in pursuit of goals aiming to reduce spatial segregation. These changes are evidenced in the physical environment of Etelä-Haaga, bringing with them some issues not previously experienced. The dense living situation combined with a tall and alienating physical structure may discourage neighbourly interactions, negatively impacting integration in an area. Therefore, it is important that the social element of spatial social mixing is considered appropriately in studies and Government policy, as although Government targets may be met, people may still experience a socially mixed neighbourhood negatively. Going forward, it is important to combine this study with a study into issues of 'weakening' spatial social mixing and integration issues. It would also be interesting to conduct a wider study into this topic across the Helsinki region, as well as to see how these new trends are represented in the cityscape in another 50 years.

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THE CASE FOR STRONG NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES IN HAAGA

Mathew Page

NEIGHBOURHOODS

“Whilst densification within Haaga may contribute to more footfall, the bulk of the densification is occurring on the west and concentrated along Vihdintie. The existing centres would need to offer a point of difference in order to attract residents. With a larger population, there could be an opportunity to reinstate some cultural/recreational service such as the cinema which has appeared in several of the original schemes got the Pohjois-Haaga centres.”

INTRODUCTION

Strong commercial neighbourhood streets and centres can make a neighbourhood more lively, create a sense of community and provide a space where one can encounter new people and experiences (Mehta, 2013). Jane Jacobs (1961, p56) argues that small, independent neighbourhood businesses, and the associated trivial everyday interactions which occur alongside, are essential for creating strong communities, defining neighbourhood character, and fostering trust.

Aside from the social benefits, the presence of local community services can also improve residents' health. Reduced need for car travel and the associated ills of passive transport have been linked to a reduced chance of obesity (Courtemanche and Carden, 2011). A strong community with opportunities for social interaction can also improve mental health. Recent research suggests that loneliness and lacking social connections can be as damaging to one's health as other well-established risk factors for mortality such as smoking and alcohol consumption, and is

more damaging than physical inactivity and obesity (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010). This is particularly problematic for the elderly and the less mobile. Researchers at the University of Hertfordshire (2018) have found that “for some older people the weekly trip to the supermarket represented the only opportunity for social interaction within the local community”.

Through field work and observations, this study aims to identify the existing neighbourhood centres in Haaga and the diversity of uses found within these areas. Using these examples within Haaga, we can also track the development of commercial areas through time. Finally, the impact of future urban development and transport projects on these centres will be analysed, including the boulevardisation of Vihdintie, and the new Raide-Jokeri light rail line.

The health of these neighbourhood centres must be read against the context of local business drying-up in many parts of the world, with a shift to peri-urban ‘big-box’ and hypermarket developments, as well as the growing impact of e-commerce. France and the United Kingdom are both fighting to keep their

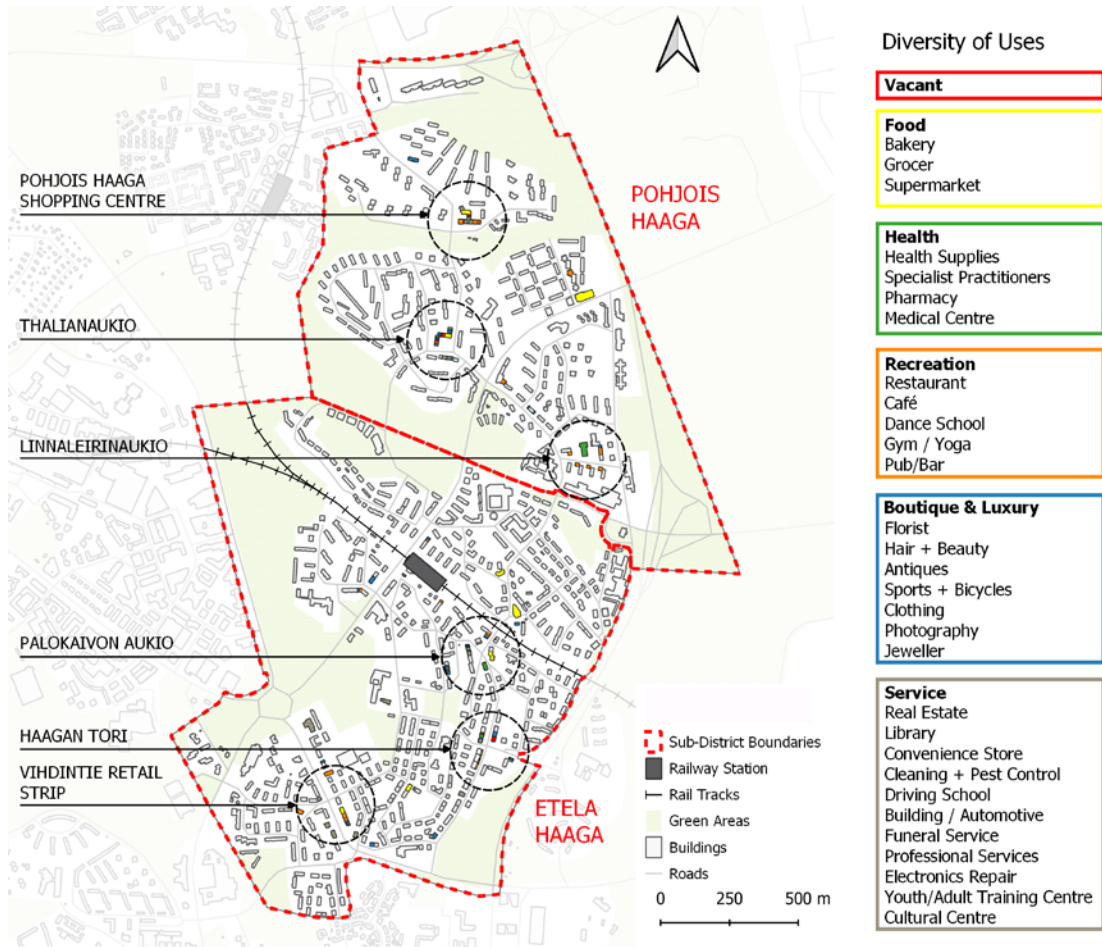


Figure 1. Existing neighbourhood centres in Haaga. Building uses are categorised (coloured) based on the type of use.

high streets and medium-size towns alive (Razemon, 2017; Wood, 2018). In Finland, retail sales growth in shopping centres outperformed retail sales growth in general in 2017, with over 8% growth in shopping centres in Helsinki (KTI Finland, 2018). This was accentuated by the liberalisation of trading hours in Finland in January 2016 which hurt the competitiveness of small businesses (Mähönen & Oravainen, 2018).

IDENTIFYING EXISTING CENTRES

A field survey was undertaken to identify the existing neighbourhood centres in Haaga. Although services such as parks, sport facilities, educational and cultural facilities can be beneficial to a neighbourhood and its residents, this study has concentrated on the commercial spaces in order to limit its scope. Having a mix of uses is key to creating successful streets and squares (Jacobs, 1961; Mehta, 2013; Gehl & Steenhard, 2013). Accordingly, a distinction was made between the uses of the stores, in order to evaluate the relationship between building functions and patterns of activity in neighbourhood centres. The shops and services were categorised into 5 groups; Health, Food, Recreation, Boutique & Luxury, and Services (Figure 1). Additionally, there were a number of vacant tenancies which were noted accordingly.

Haaga does not have a single town centre; its development has followed a decidedly polycentric spatial arrangement. Based on the identified business clusters, spatial arrangement, and pedestrian activity, six neighbourhood centres were identified. Each of these centres has a different development context and history, as well as contributing to a larger story about the evolution of neighbourhood centre and retail design. The survey results (USP2018 Survey, 2018) confirmed this poly-centricity was felt by residents and pointed to a distinction between Pohjois-Haaga and Etelä-Haaga. This separation is evident in the development patterns of the activity centres. Whilst Etelä-Haaga developed earlier and contains remnants of Eliel Saarinen's 1915 Munkkiniemi-Haaga plan in its spatial arrangement, Pohjois-Haaga developed in three distinct phases, each designed to be a self-contained community.

ETELÄ-HAAGA

Haaga's early development was clustered around the Huopalahti railway station, extending south along the Haaganpuro stream towards the road now known as Vihdintie. Historically this road and the railway line were the two main access routes from Helsinki (Frenckellin Kirjapaino Oy, 1940). This area, now known as Etelä-Haaga, contains three main commercial activity centres. The existing spatial arrangement of Etelä-Haaga has

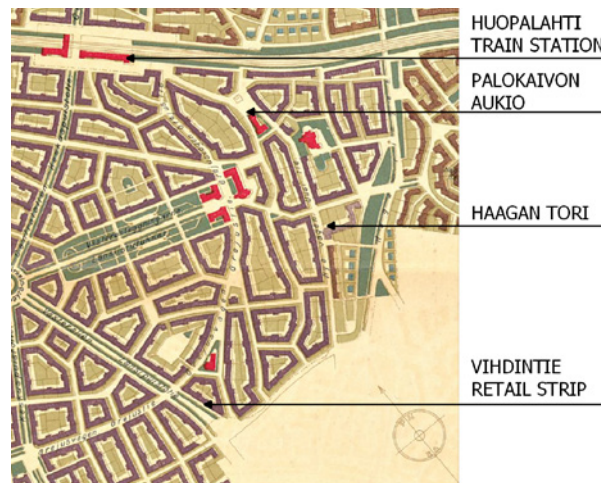


Figure 2. Location of current centres with relation to Eliel Saarinen's 1915 Munkkiniemi Haaga Plan (Saarinen, 1915).

been influenced in a large part by Eliel Saarinen's largely-unrealised 1915 Munkkiniemi-Haaga masterplan, and even earlier by Lars Sonck's 1901 plan for a villa suburb (Aspiala et al., 2007, p.208). Whilst the spatial arrangement has not diverged greatly from earlier plans, the building styles and the functions of the squares have deviated from the architects intentions.

HAAGANTORI

The location of Haagan Tori (Haaga Market) was defined on Saarinen's 1915 plan by a 3-4 storey L-shaped building which framed the square to the south and east (Saarinen, 1915). Saarinen's plans indicated some landscaping in the square, suggesting it was not intended to be a permanent market square.

Haagan Tori today is bordered by a retail and service strip on Kauppalaantie (built in the 1950's) and some services on Kylänvantie, as well as a bus stop which connects into central Helsinki. Neighbourhood retail strips such as this historically emerged as they provided an opportunity for businesses who could not afford the higher rents of the city centre, whilst simultaneously catering for local residents who did not want to travel into the city (Liebs, 1995, p.14). The stores today are more service-oriented, with several hardware and trade suppliers, as well as a bar, pharmacy and dance school. There are also several vacant stores.

The Haaga Region Plan 2007-2016 identified Haagan Tori as being an urban and historic landmark, however noted it is currently being used more as car park than a market square (Aspiala et al., 2007, p.203). The potential of this square has been somewhat undermined due to its positioning at the periphery of the suburb, next to the Kauppalaanpuisto park. Early plans of the area suggest that the area of Kivihaka was expected to house more intensive development, and Haagan Tori would have been the link between the two suburbs (Ab F. Tilgmann Oy, 1925). There was also an early tramline in operation from 1914 to 1953 which appears to have passed nearby Haagan Tori (Suomen Raitiotiesseura ry, 2018).

PALOKAIVON AUKIO

Palokaivon aukio (fire well square) is situated at the intersection of Kauppalaantie, Tunnelitie and Steniuksentie. It is the oldest square in Haaga and was already visible on Lars Sonck's 1901 city plan (Aspiala et al., 2007, p.208). Saarinen's 1915 plan included a prominent public building and an ornate sculpture in the centre of the square, neither of which were realised (Saarinen, 1915). Whilst the form of the constructed buildings and their uses are not consistent with Saarinen's vision, the spatial

arrangement is largely intact. A roundabout now takes the place of the sculpture, and a commercial premises exists where the public building was to be located.

Today, the square contains services at the ground-floor level on all sides of the square, including a supermarket, several convenience and boutique stores and some health services. Whilst the intersection is now dominated by a roundabout and vehicular traffic, pedestrians have a greater separation from cars than in other parts of Haaga. There are no cafes or restaurants in the immediate square, and no sidewalk terraces, so there is very little overflow of activity in the street.

VIHDINTIE RETAIL STRIP

Vihdintie was the first main road connecting Helsinki to Haaga and onwards to Pori and Turku (Helsingin matkailijakartta, 1940). Vihdintie was maintained as major road by Saarinen, and was designed as a large tree-lined boulevard on a monumental axis radiating from the roundabout. The spatial arrangement in this area deviates more from Saarinen's plan than the other two centres. Today, there is a service station and substantial retail strip at the south end of the street near Talontie. Most of the buildings in this area were built between 1956 and 1960.

The defining factor of this centre is its proximity to transport. There are 4 major bus stops on the busy thoroughfare, which has 3 lanes of traffic in each direction, plus an additional slip lane on the east side. The parking situated off the slip lane allows vehicles to park directly in front of the stores and to access the shops without having to compete with through-traffic, reflecting the growing requirements for planning around the automobile.

POHJOIS-HAAGA

Pohjois-Haaga developed later than Etelä-Haaga, and was entirely master-planned in three stages, developing progressively north from the 1950's (Figure 6). Following the leading planning principles of the time, each development phase had a deliberately planned square which was intended to act as a functional and urban neighbourhood centre (Karlsson et al., 2012, p.42). The squares were all framed by residential buildings with ground floor retail and services. Whilst there was less than 10 years between the first and third stages being signed-off, there are significant differences in the design of Linnaleirin aukio, Thalian aukio and the modern Pohjois-Haaga shopping mall.



Figure 3 - Haagan Tori, looking towards Kauppalaantie, and street map illustrating diversity of services (photo: Mathew Page).



Figure 4. Palokaivon aukio, looking north, and street map illustrating diversity of services (photo: Mathew Page).



Figure 5. Vihdintie retail strip, looking east, and street map illustrating diversity of services (photo: Mathew Page).

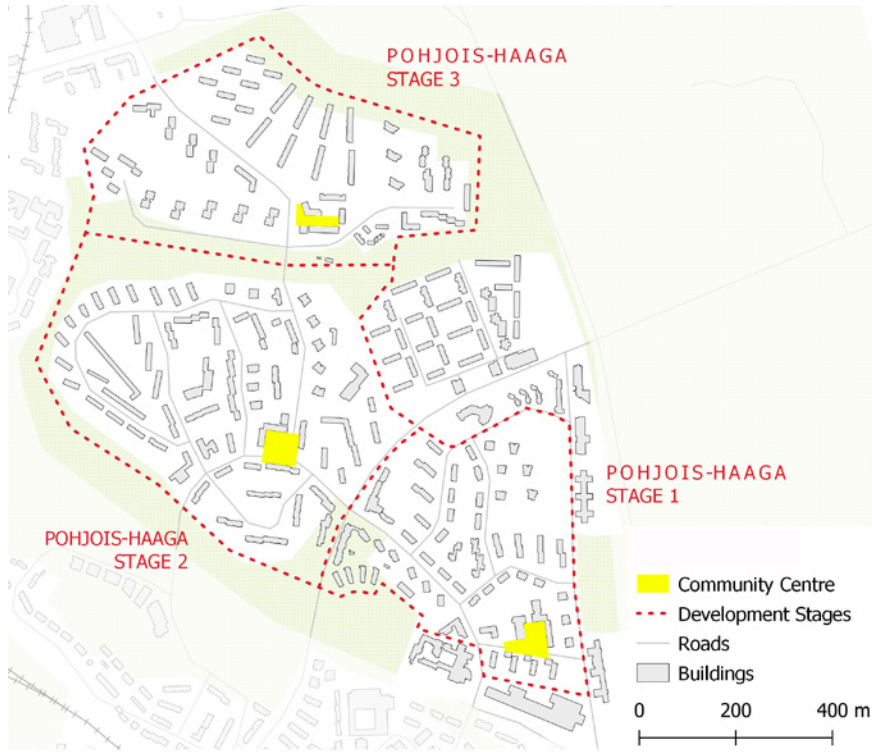


Figure 6. Pohjois-Haaga Development Stages and Planned Community Centres.



Figure 7. Linnaleirinaukio, looking north, and street map illustrating diversity of services (photo: Mathew Page).

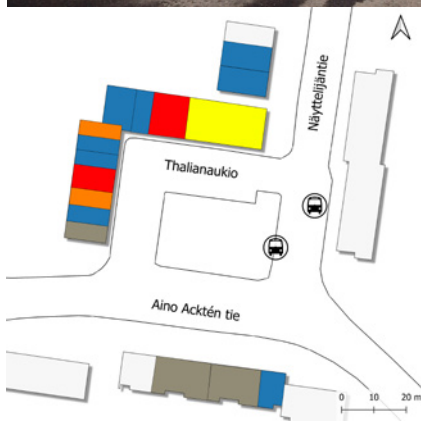


Figure 8. Thalianaukio, looking north-west, and street map illustrating diversity of services (photo: Mathew Page).



Figure 9. Thalianaukio was modelled after Guldhestorget in Gothenburg, Sweden (Bruno, 1945).

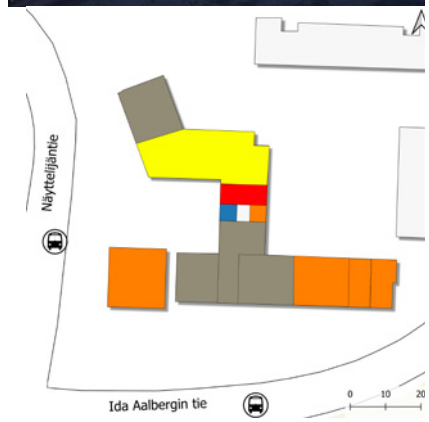


Figure 10. Pohjois-Haaga Shopping Centre, looking east, and street map illustrating diversity of services (photo: Mathew Page).

LINNALEIRINAUKION

Linnaleirinaukio was the first square to be built in Pohjois-Haaga, under the initial Stage 1 plans which were approved in 1950 (Karlsson et al., 2012, p.29). The square is defined by a 3-storey L-shaped building (Huovitie 3, 1956) which borders the square on two sides. The building was designed with shopfronts on the ground floor and residential apartments above. Upon opening, the building housed a movie theatre, a café and a restaurant (Karlsson et al., 2012, p.47). These tenancies have largely been lost, with only a barber shop and bar remaining. Opposite the square there are three restaurants in detached stand-alone buildings. The other prominent building on the square is a Medical centre, which was built later in 1986. The square now mainly acts as a carpark.

THALIANAUKIO

Thalianaukio (Thalia square), was conceived to act as the service and community centre of Stage 2 in Pohjois-Haaga's development, which was approved in 1952 (Karlsson et al., 2012, p.34). The square was modelled on the Guldhedstorget in Gothenburg, Sweden (Figure 9) which was constructed a few years earlier in 1945 (Karlsson et al., 2012, p.23). The L-shaped building (8 Aino Ackten tie, 1955) which encloses the square was anchored with a supermarket upon opening, and housed several banks as well as a pharmacy (Pro Haga ry et al., 2013, p.36).

Originally designed as an open market-style square, it was later landscaped and parking provided out the front of the stores. This format reflects a shopping centre typology which had developed in the US, as the L-shaped plan helped attract attention from motorists and encourages visiting multiple shops once parked (Manning, 2009, p.17). The centre currently houses a café, restaurant, several boutique stores and a supermarket. There are two vacant tenancies in the centre.

POHJOIS-HAAGA OSTARI

The Stage 3 development plan for Pohjois-Haaga (approved 1955) adopted a new concept for its community and service centre (Karlsson et al., 2012, p.39). The Pohjois-Haaga shopping centre was one of the first of its kind in Helsinki and has subsequently been awarded Grade 1 status by the Helsinki City Museum. Designed by Airi Seikkala-Viertokangas and constructed in 1959 the shopping centre was originally composed of 3 interlocking buildings in two intersecting wings, framed in the west by a courtyard opening in the direction of Näyttelijäntie (Karlsson et al., 2012, p.46). In addition to retail and

office premises, at various stages the plans included a cafe, a movie theatre, a youth club, a three-storey residential building and a garage (Karlsson et al., 2012, p.46).

The longest building block, located on the southern edge of the shopping centre is a single-storey building which today houses restaurants and bars. The northern wing is in the form of an open V, turning towards Näyttelijäntie and houses a supermarket and a convenience store. The central connecting building is two-stories high, and has an adult education centre and a youth centre current under construction. There is a vacant tenancy on the ground floor of this building. There is a separate car park, and a designated delivery zone demonstrating further evolution in design principles on the basis of the motor vehicle.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND FUTURE PROJECTS IN HAAGA

Haaga has remained mostly unchanged in recent decades, and no new centres have been created within the suburb. Most of the impact on these centres has come from outside, including wider societal lifestyle changes.

As already illustrated, the private car has had a significant impact on Haaga's centres, and suburban living more widely. The latest of these centres was built in 1959. Whilst already on the increase, deregulation of the passenger car trade in 1962 fuelled growth in private vehicle ownership in Finland (Statis-

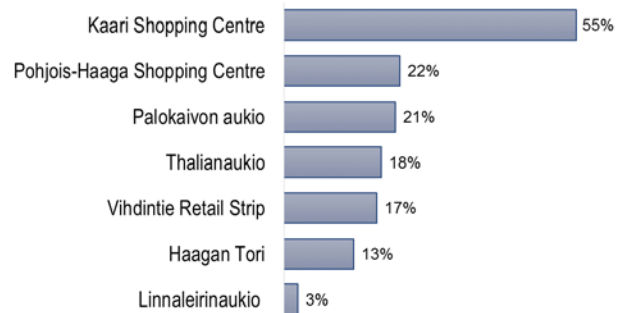


Figure 11. Frequentation of centres in Haaga. Percentage of survey respondents who visit these centres at least once a week (USP2018 Survey, 2018).

tics Finland, 2007). This extended the distances that could be reasonably travelled and reduced the attractiveness of the local centres. The large commercial office precinct which has developed at the north end of Nuijamiestentie and the adjacent large supermarket, designed mainly for car access, demonstrates the change in design thinking towards car-oriented development and big box store and hypermarkets. Indeed, the Kaari Shopping centre located just north of Pohjois-Haaga, with its 1700 car spaces, is currently the 5th largest in Helsinki and had 6.9 million visitors in 2017 (Finnish Council of Shopping Centers, 2018, p.46). Over 50% of survey respondents (USP2018 Survey, 2018) reported shopping at Kaari shopping centre at least once a week (Figure 11). The survey results also suggested that accessibility was not seen as being as important as other factors, such as price and diversity of stores and products, when choosing where to shop.

RAIDE JOKERI LIGHT RAIL

Connection to the east and west will soon be improved via a new light rail line. The Raide Jokeri will replace the bus line 550 which connects Itäkeskus in Helsinki with Keilaniemi in Espoo. Currently the busiest bus line in Helsinki, with 40,000 passengers on a weekday, this is expected to increase to over 100,000 passengers on the new light rail line by 2040 (Raide-Jokeri, 2018). Traversing Haaga, the line will follow Eliel Saarisen tie, with major connections at the Huopalahti train station, and the roundabout on Vihdintie in Etelä-Haaga (Raide-Jokeri, 2018).

BOULEVARISATION OF VIHDIINTIE

Vihdintie, which delineates the entire western boundary of Haaga has recently been approved for conversion into a boulevard. Whilst the plans are still at a preliminary phase, the intention is to increase the density of the existing districts, and bring a vibrant city-like environment active ground floors and urban squares and parks (City of Helsinki, 2018d).

Car traffic will be reduced to make way for the tram and two-way bicycle paths. The pedestrian environment will be improved by the greater density, providing walkable access to services and transport stops. This increased pedestrian flow between transport stops will provide additional opportunities for businesses and services (City of Helsinki, 2018d).

EXTENSION OF TRAM LINE 10

Tram line 10 will be extended along Vihdintie from Pikku Huopalahti to Pohjois-Haaga Station, intersecting with the Jokeri light rail at Vihdintie roundabout which is planned to

become a major transport hub (City of Helsinki, 2018c). It is planned to have tram stops every 500-600 metres along Huopalahdentie and Vihdintie. The Tramway Master Plan is expected to be approved in 2019, with construction to commence in the mid 2020's (City of Helsinki, 2018b).

ONGOING INFILL DEVELOPMENT NEAR TRAIN STATION

There is also a small amount of infill development in progress between the Huopalahti train station and the Etelä-Haaga library, which will increase density in this area.

IMPACT ON EXISTING CENTRES

This planned future development will have varying impacts on the existing centres in Haaga. Due to their planned self-sufficiency and insulated locations within the parks and forest, the centres in Pohjois-Haaga of Thalianaukio, Linnaleirinaukio and Pohjois-Haaga shopping centre will likely see limited impact. Connections will not be majorly improved, and there is no densification planned in these areas. There may be a limited impact at Thalianaukio with the additional passenger numbers expected on the Jokeri light rail, as there will be a stop nearby.

With improved connections to Huopalahti train station with the light rail line, there is potential for increased rail passenger numbers as the connection time into the central train station is just over 10 minutes, and transitioning here may become a quicker option for some bus users. The densification along Vihdintie will also increase rail passenger numbers. Palokaiwon aukio's spatial arrangement and proximity to the station could provide an opportunity for growth, however the additional population pressure will all be on the west and will be served by the new ground-floor services on the boulevard.

The Vihdintie retail strip and Haagan Tori are two contrasting examples to look at in further detail, as in many ways they are similarly located at the periphery of the suburb (east and west) and both either abut or are in close proximity to a major national road. In fact, Hämeenlinnanväylä was also proposed to be converted to a boulevard, however this was rejected by Helsinki Administrative Court in November 2018 (City of Helsinki, 2018a). The implications of the boulevardisation plans (whether realised or rejected) on these two areas will be more profound. To better understand how these areas are currently functioning, some detailed behavioural observations were carried out.

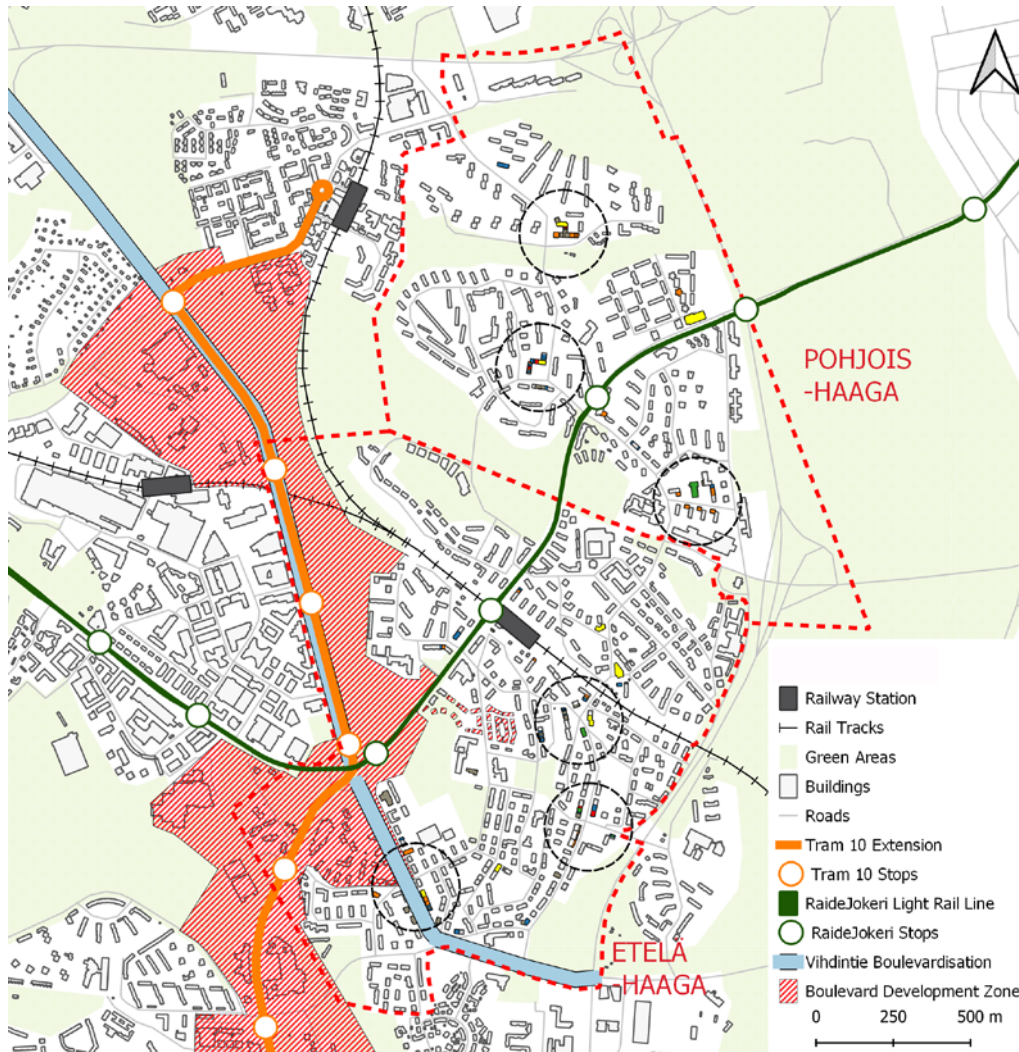


Figure 12. Future Development Plans in Haaga.

OBSERVATIONS

Direct observation of activities and behaviours is an effective method for studying how spaces are used by inhabitants (Gehl & Steenhard, 2013). Adapting the method of Farahani et al. (2018), user activities at Vihdintie and Haagan Tori were recorded and mapped to determine how the centres are functioning, and how their diversity of uses is affecting patterns of use. The observations were conducted on Thursday 29 November 2018 in natural settings with no interactions with residents. Each hour from 8am to 7pm, the two areas were visited, and all of the activities occurring at that time were mapped. Each observation was completed in approximately 2 minutes. The intention was to provide a snapshot of how these areas operate and change throughout the day. As the temperature was close to zero degrees during the observation, there were limited interactions occurring on the street. Each person entering or exiting a store during the observation period was noted as well as those on terraces or standing outside stores. The different categories of use were linked to the activities on the maps in order to clearly demonstrate their impact. Both centres had one side of the street which only had one or two activities during observations, so the observations presented (figures 14 and 15) are from one side of the street only. Residential uses between commercial areas have been truncated for visualisation purposes. The elevation line is presented on the maps.

Vihdintie had considerably more activities than Haagan Tori, and this can be linked in a major part to transport connections. During observations, most pedestrian movement was as a result of the bus stops. Indeed both of these areas are supported in a large way by the presence of these bus stations. There is large difference in terms of scale however in the number of alighting passengers. There are 4 stops immediately out the front of the Vihdintie retail strip which are served by 19 bus lines, most of which connect to the central train station and Kamppi. The total passengers checking on at these stops each day averages 2079 passengers (HSL, 2018). By contrast, the 2 stops on Kauppalaantie outside Haagan Tori serve only two routes which go into Kamppi and the central train station, and the total average passengers per day checking on at these stops is 366 passengers (HSL, 2018). Should any bus routes be discontinued as a result of the tram or light rail, the impact on these centres could be profound.

From the observations, the impact of food (e.g. supermarket) and recreational uses on the activity in an areas is quite evident. The supermarket on Vihdintie is quite small, however the prox-

imity to the school and the bus stops provides a steady flow of people. There are only two activity centres in Haaga which do not have supermarkets; Haagan Tori and Linnaleirinaukio. Vihdintie has mainly recreation and boutique & luxury uses, with several services (driving schools and real estate agents) on the opposite side of the road. These services did not have any activity during the observations. Haagan Tori by contrast has a large number of service uses, and limited recreation and boutique uses. This diversity of uses on this street has not provided a local shopping centre for residents in this area.

A diversity of uses attracts a diversity of users. This can be seen when comparing the activities at the pharmacy with the dance school. The pharmacy was visited mainly by accompanied elderly residents during the morning, whilst the dance school was frequented by young families. Very few elderly people were observed after lunch or in the evening. The distribution of uses is also important to maximise the number of activities in the area.

With the boulevardisation, the connection from Pikku Huopalahti to Pohjois-Haaga station will be greatly improved. Due to the slow speed of the tram, many commuters would likely change at the Vihdintie roundabout interchange to access the Etelä-Haaga train station. Increased traffic between this roundabout and the Pohjois-Haaga train station will encourage more intense retail and services in this section of the boulevard. The industrial zone to the west of the boulevard development zone is currently planned to remain unchanged, however it is likely that this will see many conversions and development in the near future. The Vihdintie retail strip is located south of the development area. Whilst it will see transport passenger numbers increase, the shops may come into competition with services in the new area.

CONCLUSION

It is important that these centres continue to survive. The squares were original designed with the idea of creating a neighbourhood centre and a place where residents can come together as a community, particularly in the case of Pohjois-Haaga. The Haaga Regional Plan 2007-2016 identifies the importance of these existing squares as a service and meeting place (Aspiala et al., 2007). Indeed, in a 2005 study completed by the City of Helsinki (Aspiala, 2005, p.2), in response to a question about which street areas or squares act as a place of encounter and places to stay, Haagan Tori (27%), Thalianaukio (23%) and Palokavon

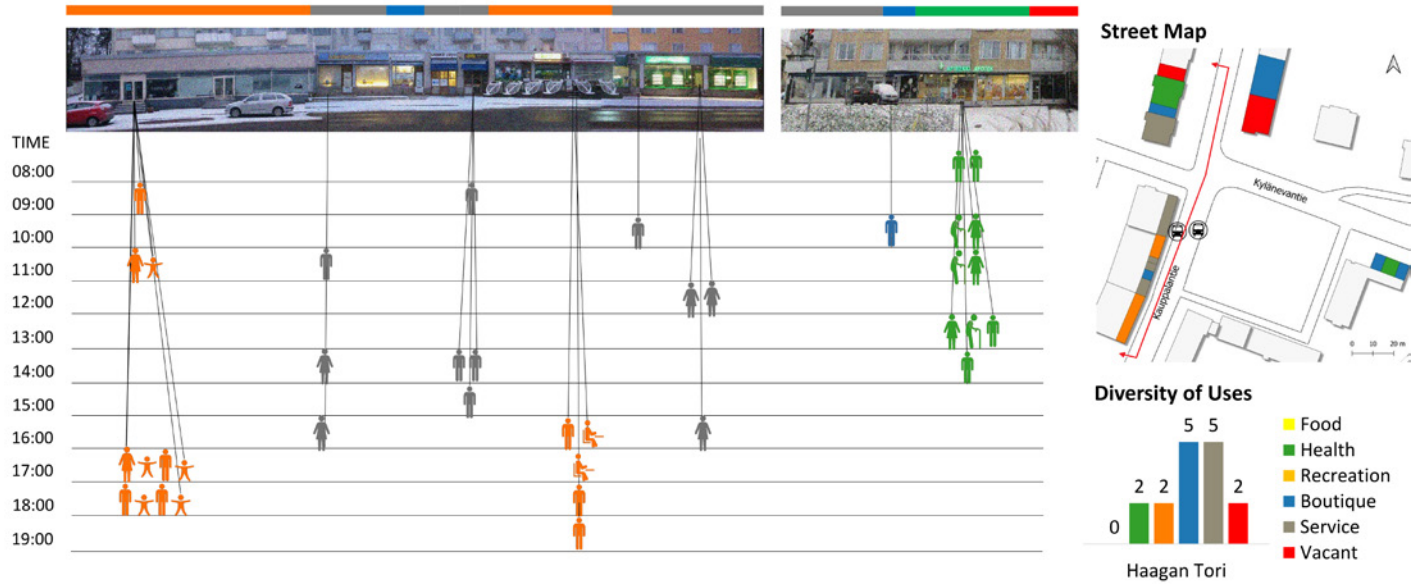


Figure 13. Observations mapping at Haagan Tori on Thursday 29 November 2018 from 08:00 am to 19:00 pm. Diversity of uses highlighted with colours.

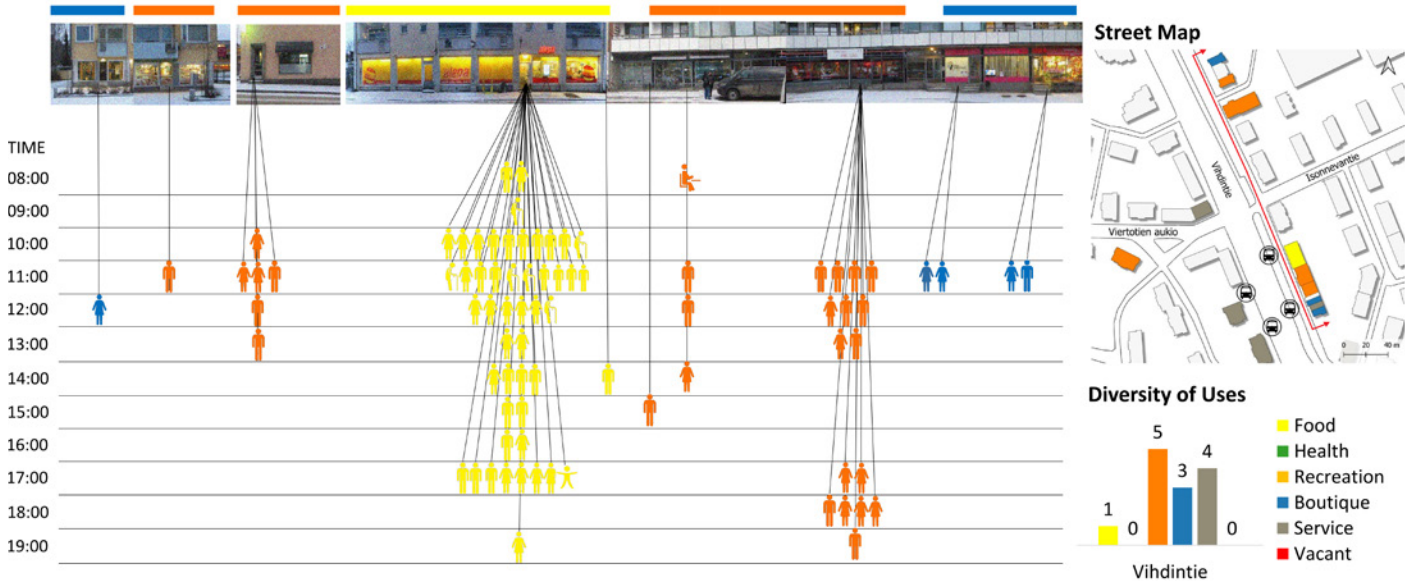


Figure 14. Observations mapping on Vihdintie on Thursday 29 November 2018 from 08:00 am to 19:00 pm. Diversity of uses highlighted with colours.

aukio (21%) headed the list.

Whilst densification within Haaga may contribute to more footfall, the bulk of the densification is occurring on the west and concentrated along Vihdintie. The existing centres would need to offer a point of difference in order to attract residents. With a larger population, there could be an opportunity to reinstate some cultural/recreational service such as the cinema which has appeared in several of the original schemes got the Pohjois-Haaga centres. Enterprises such as a local cinema would likely need some sort of association status or subsidy from the city or the building corporation in order to operate. It is quite likely that at least one new supermarket will open on the Vihdintie boulevard. Given the importance of these tenancies on activity level, it is important that this does not displace an anchor tenant at one of the existing centres. The impact of having a diverse range of shops and services has been demonstrated and adjusting the balance could aid struggling centres.

Overall, it appears that, with the exception of Vihdintie, most of the existing centres will neither be bolstered nor particularly injured by the future development. These centres, when functioning as intended, can serve as an asset to Haaga, bringing neighbours together, bolstering community solidarity and helping to improve residents physical and mental health. Small local businesses are declining in many cities throughout the world. In Finland, the recent liberalisation of trading hours has negatively impacted small retail stores and also put increasing stress on the business owners, who struggle to compete with the extended hours of the shopping centres and hypermarkets, as well as the continued growth of online shopping. The ongoing survival of these centres may ultimately depend upon the lifestyle choices of Haaga's residents, and whether these local businesses are valued for the positive impact they can have on the wider community.

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HOW DO PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM MENTAL ILLNESS EXPERIENCE THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT?

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF HAAGA FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF SERVICE USERS OF A DAY CENTRE FOR PEOPLE IN RECOVERY FROM MENTAL ILLNESS IN ETELÄ-HAAGA

Asta Hiippala

THE EXPERIENCE OF
A CERTAIN GROUP

“From the perspective of people recovering from mental illness, Haaga has many positives. It is safe and quiet, green, and has good transport connections. Two actors in the area offer day centre activities, and there is also a fair amount of supported housing available. Some of its major flaws are typical of many mid-century suburbs in Helsinki.”

In a promotional brochure for its 2017-2021 strategy, the city of Helsinki states that it aims to be a city of functionality where “each resident —whether young, old, or functionally impaired— has the opportunities to lead a quality and eventful life and to receive the support and services needed for all stages of life.” (City of Helsinki, 2017a, p. 9) One of the most common ‘functional impairments’ in Finland is mental illness: a fifth of Finns experience it in their lifetime (Oksanen, 2017), and it was the most common reason for a disability pension both nationally and in Helsinki in 2016 (City of Helsinki, 2017b, p. 41). How do people recovering from mental illness experience cities? How could areas like Haaga be more supportive of the recovery process? This study looks at the experiences of people recovering from serious mental illness and attend a day centre in Etelä-Haaga. By focusing on three aspects — green spaces, housing and income, and services and public life — this article evaluates Haaga as a supportive environment and proposes several points that should be taken into account in its planning.

INCLUSIVITY IN PLANNING

As the Helsinki strategy shows, there is increasing recognition that people are individuals and experience the city differently due to differences in gender, abilities, ethnicity, age, and socioeconomic class. The aim of inclusive design is to “bring [those with different abilities] into the mainstream of society by ensuring equal opportunity and eliminating discrimination based on disability” (Steinfeld & Maisel, 2012, p. 15). At its simplest, it means understanding the barriers — physical or non-physical — that prevent or make it more difficult to participate in society as a fully fledged individual, and eliminating them through smart planning and design (Steinfeld & Maisel, 2012, pp. 1-3). A common misconception is that inclusivity is about designing for ‘special needs’; this type of thinking views inclusion as a luxury, and often ends up underlining a person’s difference rather than enabling them to function despite of it (Steinfeld & Maisel, 2012, pp. 17-23). For a plan to be truly inclusive, it has to come with a perspective shift: the ability to recognize different barriers and to have their elimination as the starting

point (Steinfeld & Maisel, 2012, pp. 23–24). Inclusivity is about recognizing the varied nature of humanity.

THE EFFECTS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD ON THE RECOVERY PROCESS

Recovery from mental illness is a complex and long-term process that varies between individuals (Doroud, Fossey and Fortune, 2018, p. 110; Bierski 2016). In addition to nurturing a positive self-image and trust in the future, it also encompasses “social recovery, which focuses attention on the interpersonal and community arenas in which people’s everyday lives are embedded” (Doroud, Fossey and Fortune, 2018, p. 110). It is increasingly understood that the neighbourhoods in which people in recovery live can have significant supportive or detrimental effects on the outcomes of the recovery process (Piat & al, 2017; Duff, 2012; Doroud, Fossey and Fortune, 2018; Townley, Kloos and Wright, 2008; Pinfold, 2000).

Various ways of understanding the links between health, place and community have been conceptualized. These include therapeutic landscapes (places that have positive effects on recovery), restorative places (e.g. places that enable recovery from stress), and enabling environments (Duff, 2011, p. 149). Based on these previous conceptualizations on the relations between individuals and place, Cameron Duff has developed the interlinked concepts of *enabling places* and *enabling resources* (Duff, 2012, pp. 1388–1389). The former is described as

“a relational account of place incorporating its diverse material, social and affective constituents. Relational understandings of place and social context acknowledge the spatial or geographical dimensions of place, in addition to various social, cultural and affective aspects consonant with the experience of ‘dwelling’ in place. Place is in this respect constituted in an intimate web of associations, processes and transactions that enmesh people and places, ‘person’ and ‘context’.” (Duff, 2012, p. 1389)

The latter encompasses social resources such as social capital and networks; material resources such as the physical structures and services and flows such as employment; and finally, affective resources such as a sense of belonging to a place (Duff, 2012, pp. 1389–1390).

In addition to Duff’s interlinked concepts, this study has benefited from Aubry and Myner’s three-dimensional process model of integration to a community. It encompasses the physical

aspect, or daily living and moving in the community; the psychological, or the sense of belonging to a place; and the social, or interaction with different (non-mentally ill) people in the community (Aubry and Myner, as paraphrased in Townley, Kloos and Wright, 2008, p. 521). Although this study does not employ similar methods of study as Duff or Aubry and Myner, the concepts they have outlined have helped in understanding Haaga as an environment.

STUDYING URBAN ENVIRONMENTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HAAGAN TOIMINTATALO

To study urban environments from the perspective of people recovering from mental illness, I approached service users and staff members at Haagan toimintatalo, a day centre for people recovering from mental illness in Etelä-Haaga. It is run by Niemikotisäätiö, a foundation that was created by the City of Helsinki in 1983 (Niemikotisäätiö, 2018a). The centre had 193 service users in 2017; most of them have been referred to the centre through health or social care.

The average service user is a middle-aged man with schizophrenia and a long history of psychiatric care, but with no current substance abuse problems (NS, 2018a). Their challenges are the lack of social networks and life management skills (NS, 2018a). The centre offers work in areas such as running the centre (e.g. reception, kitchen) and packaging, as well as a variety of classes, workshops and excursions, and even publishes its own magazine (Haagan Haiku, 2017, p. 4). Service users participate in decision-making about the activities offered, and their attendance is adjusted to their needs (HH, 2017, p. 4). They can also become peer support workers or experts by experience.

This study employed three methods: a survey, focus group discussions and interviews that were concluded either through email or in person, depending on the participant’s preferences. All three methods focused on mapping out the elements that the participants felt affected them and their recovery positively or negatively. Out of the 45 survey participants, many of whom were also interviewed, 59% were men and 41% were women. Their ages ranged from 29 to 65, with most being between the ages of 40 and 60. In addition, three staff members were interviewed from their professional perspective.

This article is not intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the ways in which people with mental illness experience

	Number of people who rated this element as very or extremely important	Percentage from all replies
Forests and parks	26	65 %
Cultural events and museums	17	42,5 %
Participating in a group or an organisation	15	39,5 %
Spaces aimed at people recovering from mental illness, such as the Haaga day centre	35	89,7 %
Cafés and restaurants	19	46,3 %
Libraries	20	50,0 %
Calmness/quietness	34	82,9 %
Hustle and bustle of cities	11	28,9 %
Family and friends	31	75,6 %
Church, mosque or other religious community	19	47,5 %
Spaces for physical exercise	19	46,3 %
Having services close to home	18	60,0 %

Table 1. How important for your mental health do you find these elements? Percentages of replies rating the elements 'very important' or 'extremely important'.

the city, but to map out possibilities for further research by focusing on the experiences of one small representative group. It should also be noted that due to the participants coming from different neighbourhoods, in most cases I focused on asking about their general experiences rather than specifically on Haaga. I have mostly applied what I learnt to my own observations of the area's present and future.

GREEN SPACES AND PEACEFULNESS

According to a 2016 World Health Organization review of evidence of the health impacts of urban green spaces —defined as forests, parks, or even waterbodies—, green areas present wide-ranging benefits to mental health in particular (WHO, 2016, pp. 9-10). These include reducing stress hormones, creating a sense of belonging and safety, blocking disruptive noise, and promoting both recreational and non-recreational physical exercise. Although many studies have focused on the links between green space and increased physical activity, there is

research showing that even viewing greenery from a window affects mental health beneficially (WHO, 2016, p. 16). It appears that the benefits are linked to proximity, with those living closest to green space having better mental health, and greener neighbourhoods having less health variance between different socioeconomic groups (WHO, 2016, pp. 9-10, 18). Green spaces have also been found to have especially favourable health effects on minority or at-risk groups (WHO, 2016, p. 18). A previous study concluded in Helsinki also found that the amount of and proximity to green space in a neighbourhood affects the activity levels of people (Neuvonen et al, 2007).

In support of these findings, participants in this study also identified green space as a significant physical element in their recovery process. Peacefulness was another quality that was valued high both in the survey and in discussions, and it appeared that there was a strong perceived connection between these two elements, or as one participant remarked, "there must be nature

in order for there to be peacefulness”. Areas with high building density and little green space were associated with high levels of noise pollution, which in more acute stages of illness can even cause physical pain. Green space did not seem to be valuable for merely aesthetic values, but to provide tangible mental health benefits by helping to calm down and de-stress. One participant described the forest as having on several occasions saved them in the midst of a suicidal crisis, and described it as their sanctuary: “When I’m really poorly [...] I don’t call any place, I can’t talk to anybody, because it takes energy, it breaks me down [...] if I’m at my weakest I’ll just sit at the foot of a tree. [...] I’d really like to emphasize the therapeutic effect of the forest.”

The staff members also mentioned the importance of having green spaces in close proximity to service users; the centre also offers different Green Care activities. Participants living in Haaga or other areas with lots of green space, such as Pikku-Huopalahti, Niemenmäki, Länsi-Pasila, Talinranta, Myllypuro, Vuosaari, and Konala seemed to especially value the green quality of their neighbourhoods and stated it as one of the reasons why their living situation is very good. It would be interesting to study further the possible connection between the sense of attachment to a place and its proportion of green

space (question proposed by Dr. Johan Kotze during a feedback session), and the frequency of visits and activities undertaken during visits to green spaces, to see whether it is *being* or *doing* in the space that creates the therapeutic effect (Bierski 2016).

Participants with experience of the Haaga area described it in mainly positive terms, without exception stating that this positivity came from the greenness and calmness of the area. The challenge is how to retain the overall green quality of the neighbourhood when Helsinki densifies and Vihdintie and Huopalahdentie are turned into boulevards (City of Helsinki, 2016 and 2018). Conflicts have already appeared. Following a public campaign, the Supreme Administrative Court ruled against the plan to turn Hämeenlinnanväylä into a boulevard, which would have included claiming land from Keskuspuisto (City of Helsinki, 2016 and 2018; Moilanen, 2018). Another location in Haaga where green space is being proposed for infill building is Riistavuorenpuisto, which borders Vihdintie on the western side of South Haaga (City of Helsinki, 2016 and 2018, p. 26). The small urban forest blocks noise from Vihdintie and provides a recreational area to the residents of an assisted living facility for the elderly. It also functions as a connection between Tali and southern and northern Haaga for walkers and cyclists.

	Number of people who chose this option	Percentage out of 38 respondents ($n=38$)
Bad housing	12	31,6 %
Lack of money	25	65,8 %
Too few routines/activities	16	42,1 %
Loneliness	24	63,2 %
Crowds	4	10,5 %
Discrimination (e.g. street harassment)	9	23,7 %
Lack of exercise opportunities	6	15,8 %
Traffic noise	8	21,1 %
Crime and antisocial behaviour	11	28,9 %

Table 2. Have any of the following ever affected your mental health negatively? (respondents could choose more than one option).

Directly opposite, on the other side of Eliel Saarisen tie, parts of Haaganpuisto have already been claimed for new residential buildings. If the Riistavuori forest is cut down, the green corridor between the south and the north is destroyed and added pressure is placed on Aino Achtén park and what remains of Haaganpuisto.

This study supports the view that planners need to be very careful to not short-sightedly destroy green spaces in order to accommodate for population growth. Factors such as the connectivity of ecosystems and the added pressure to preserved green spaces need to be acknowledged (Holmila, 2018). Haaga could benefit from approaches similar to the proposed Alternative Masterplan for Meri-Rastila, which was done in collaboration with residents and developed solutions that would have both allowed for all proposed infill building to take place and for the area to retain its coastal forest, beloved by residents (Hughes & Berglund, 2015). Green areas have value beyond aesthetics, and for the benefits to be delivered to the people who most need them, they need to be close to where they live.

THE RISK OF BEING SEGREGATED AND MICRO-SEGREGATED

According to the survey, the most common negative element was the lack of money. Service users' low income and reliance on the public sector were also recognized by the coordinators as a significant problem. The majority of the service users of the day centre are not in the workforce but live on disability pension. Unfortunately, due to lack of time and the sensitive nature of the issue, problems of income were discussed in such terms only in the survey. However, similar issues were touched upon in focus group discussions and interviews.

Approximately a third of the survey participants stated that they had at some point experienced bad housing situations, and one interviewee even mentioned being homeless at one point. The staff members confirmed that they have witnessed many struggling to find adequate affordable housing in supportive areas, and worried about budget cuts affecting existing assisted living arrangements. Some of the service users would like to find work to supplement their disability pensions, but were unable to do so due to discrimination and lack of part-time options. Many had also experienced discrimination when seeking advice from social services, employment offices, and other similar agencies. The staff members likewise brought up the need to educate workers in the social and health care sectors about mental illness.

Low income, diminished employment prospects, and reliance on the public sector place people recovering from serious mental illness at risk of segregation and affect the social resources available for them. The growing socioeconomic differences between people and neighbourhoods are some of the most serious problems affecting Finnish cities in the twenty-first century (City of Helsinki, 2017a, pp. 20-21). Studies have demonstrated that the gap between the rich and the poor has been growing since the early 1990s recession, and the previous mosaic-like spatial distribution of the least privileged across Helsinki has given way to increased division of the region to poor and wealthy neighbourhoods (Vaattovaara & Kortteinen, 2003; Vaattovaara & al, 2018). There are also alarming differences in disease statistics between Helsinki neighbourhoods (Ahlgren-Leinvuo, 2018; Mäki, 2017).

Although the least privileged are increasingly segregated to eastern Helsinki, when examining Haaga with the GIS method and data from Statistics Finland's Grid Database 2016, it is evident that parts of Lassila and North Haaga belong to a socio-economically deprived area that stretches towards north to Kannelmäki and Malminkartano (Statistics Finland 2016). There are also other differences between North and South Haaga. It seems that the majority of supported or subsidised apartments and facilities, provided by for example Heka (Heka, 201?), Niemikotisäätiö (NS, 2018b) and Esperri (Esperri, 201?), are concentrated in the North Haaga area. As the chapter by Babak Firooz Fooladi and Mika Korhonen demonstrates, there is also a considerable gap in property prices between North and South Haaga. Further research into the socioeconomic differences between the two areas is needed, as well as how the infill building and the boulevardisation plans will affect the situation. Will the difference between North and South grow?

While making sure that differences between areas do not grow is a priority, it is also important to direct attention to the barriers to integration *within* neighbourhoods. Many people in recovery from serious mental illness live in assisted living facilities, and while providing this option is important, it is crucial to design them so that they do not mimic institutions and reproduce stigma towards the mentally ill through 'micro-segregation' (Steinfeld and Maisel, 2012).

"[it would be good] if people recovering from mental illness and the so-called 'normal' people could live in pretty much the same places, that we wouldn't segregate the people recovering from mental illness to just their own housing units, where everybody is like 'oh that person's one of them because s/he lives there' [...] that we could somehow reduce the 'line'

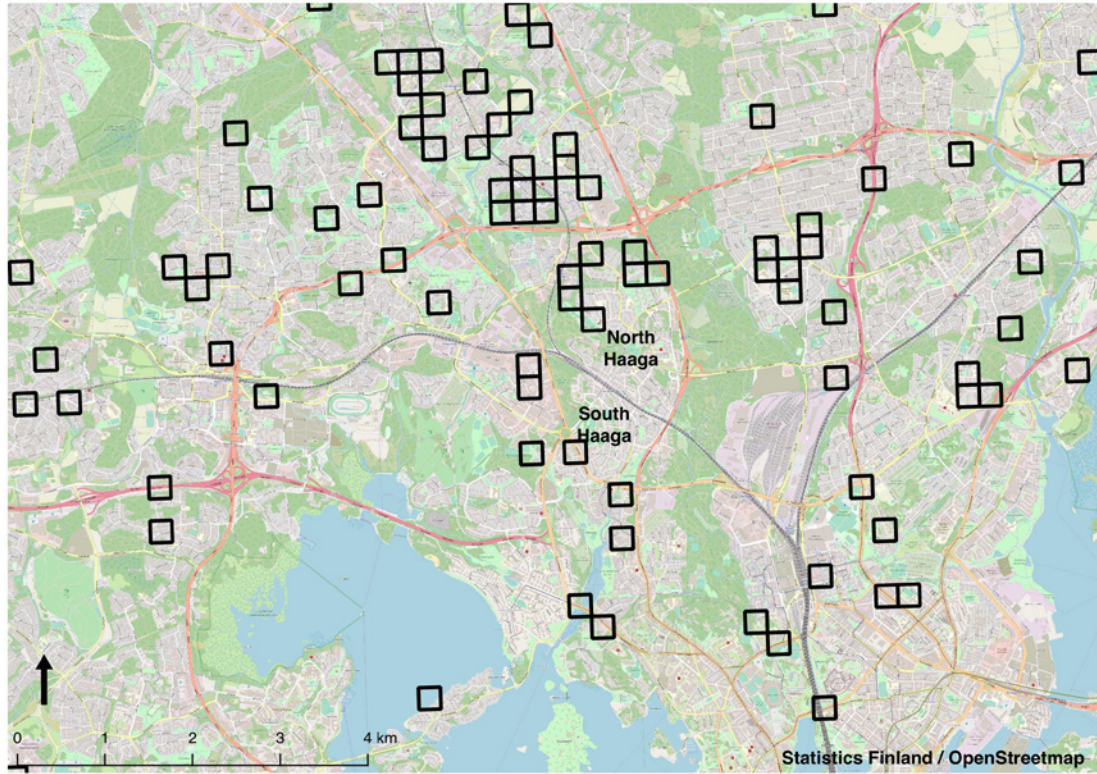


Fig. 1. A map based on data from Statistics Finland, showing the areas where the largest proportion of residents fall into the lowest income and least educated quartiles in Haaga. Each grid cell is 250m x 250m.

between the so-called 'sick' and so-called 'healthy' worlds. It would be easier if it were possible [for other people] to see me as just another neighbour, that you can also greet me when you see me taking out the trash [...] that way they would also see that we're just like other people."

"I live [...] in a block that has apartments both for people recovering from mental illness and for substance abuse. [...] I'd much rather live in a normal housing company where there are 'normal' people [Another person chiming in:] It brings a negative reputation to us who don't 'use' anything [...] so many people behave really idiotically when they're drunk, and then a lot of 'normal' people see us as the same."

As noted above, Haaga has some supported and subsidised housing, in addition to services for those in recovery from mental illness, such as Haagan toimitalo and Majakka ry's space in North Haaga. Although some service users liked living in assisted living facilities, many highlighted the need to live in 'integrated' housing, i.e. in support or subsidised apartments in otherwise private housing companies. Fortunately, at least Niemikotisäätiö has a scheme offering affordable apartments in such context. Solutions need to be developed in how to take into account the growing proportion of people with double diagnoses of mental illness and addiction disorders, so that hous-

ing actually supports people in their recovery and do not create added stigma. The study results support social mixing policies and the provision of subsidised and supported living arrangements through institutions such as Niemikotisäätiö, although again more research into the matter is necessarily.

THE IMPORTANCE OF REVITALIZING LOCAL SERVICES

'Services' is discussed here in its broadest sense, encompassing both vital needs such as groceries and health care, but also services that provide recreation and foster social interaction. Local services will be increasingly important in the future as the population ages, and can aid in reaching sustainability goals (Ilmonen ja Mäenpää, 2013, p. 7). However, the general trend in recent decades has been for services to move away from the suburbs (Krokkfors, 2013, pp. 149-150). The ongoing trends of digitalization and centralization of services —e.g. the new Kalasatama health centre, or new shopping centres such as Redi or Tripla— are argued to improve their range and accessibility. At the same time, they create a situation where services are not physically in local communities, but in large transport nodes or on laptop and smartphone screens in private homes.

The service users and staff members made it clear that this centralization-digitalization trend causes often insurmounta-

How easy do you find searching for information and taking care of for example banking online?

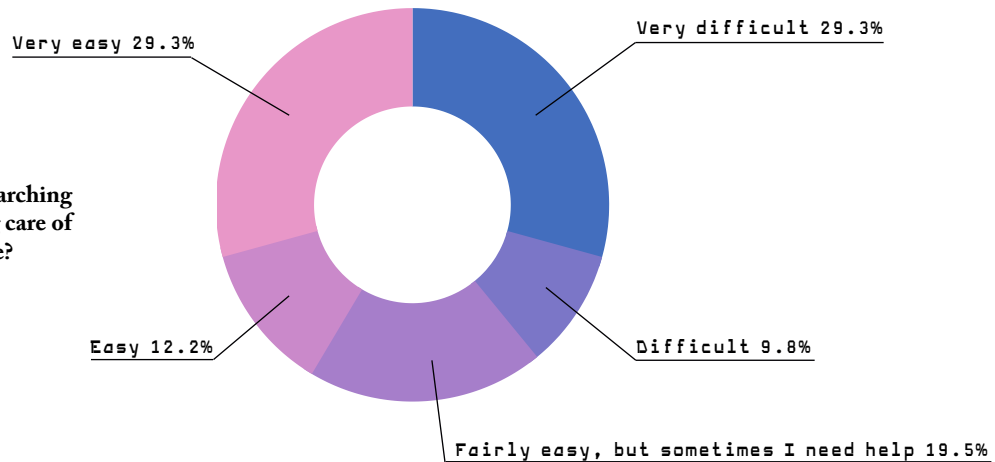


Fig. 2. Percentages of how easy or difficult people find searching for information and taking care of for example banking online

ble barriers to those recovering from serious mental illness. In the survey, most stated that it is extremely important for them to be able to access services close to their home. In the discussions, some people elaborated on this, explaining that their illness makes it difficult for them to leave familiar environments and that having to travel to a strange, noisy part of the city for their treatment often necessitates that they are accompanied by a support worker (*saattokuljetus*). The constant change in staff members that one interacts with, especially in the public health care sector, was also seen as very negative. Building up trust and familiarity with service providers was felt to be extremely important, and having to constantly deal with new people also exposed many to situations where they had to interact with prejudiced individuals. With regards to public transport, having to plan travel itineraries with many changes was difficult for many, and several people also noted that they prefer to not use public transport due to crowds and possible disruptive behaviour by other passengers. As one participant remarked: "it's ridiculous that [many services] are there in the city centre [...] many people recovering from mental illness are afraid of even taking a bus! [...] It's overwhelming, as the disability pension is so small, that you can't put money to taxis [...] without *saattokuljetus* a lot of things would not be taken care of."

Although online services can be a saving grace for many millennials who have barriers to leaving their neighbourhoods, approximately half of the participants of this study felt extremely unconfident using a computer to access information and to take care of chores such as banking. This was also one of the main concerns of the staff members, with one remarking that "discrimination also takes place when some people are left out due to digitalization".

Local services and mixed used of buildings not only provides material resources for the locals but also fosters a sense of local community, an important aspect in the sense of belonging to a place and in the creation of social networks, which themselves have strong positive health effects (Doroud, Fossey and Fortune, 2018, pp. 110-111; Townley, Kloos and Wright, 2008, p. 520). For those with serious mental illness, the chances of participating in a community are often very few, and isolation is common experience (Townley, Kloos and Wright, 2008, p. 520). This was also evident in the participants' experiences, with 63.2% mentioning that loneliness has at one point negatively affected their mental health. This was also echoed in the staff members' responses: "Many [service users] tell us that they are lonely. Their circle of friends and family is very small and at worst, the day centre is the only community they are part of."

The importance of low-threshold social places like the Haaga day centre was clear from survey results and discussions, and from the fact that many travel to it daily from the eastern side of Helsinki. While there were participants —especially among peer support workers— who are active in other organisations and groups, there was significant variance in this between different service users.

Haaga is a good example of a suburb with dwindling and homogenizing services. The service structure of the area has been analysed in the articles and blog assignments of Kamilla Kreice, Katie Butcher, and Mathew Page; I have also made observations personally, having lived in the area for 20 years and still visiting it regularly. The general survey, as discussed in Karoliina Toivettula's chapter, also lifted the lack of local services as one of the key issues in Haaga. In both North and South Haaga, many storefronts sit empty. Kesko dominates the grocery business, with five K-Markets —the least affordable supermarket chain in Finland— within walking distance from each other. The other businesses are mainly small bars and pizza/kebab restaurants. Those who have a car are drawn to places outside Haaga, such as Kaari in Kannelmäki, Sello in Leppävaara, or the more lively 1960s shopping centre in Munkkivuori. There are few open, non-commercial places for the residents of the area to meet and spend time.

There are some signs that Haaga's service structure could be revitalized in the future. The proposed infill building will bring new inhabitants to the area. This not only makes local services necessary, but will also make them more likely to have a sufficient number of customers. The Helsinki city plan also predicts that the boulevardization of Vihdintie will bring small businesses to the area; sadly the available planning materials give little indication on what basis this prediction is based on (City of Helsinki, 2016 and 2018). However, it is questionable whether such small bricks-and-mortar businesses directly adjacent to busy roads would be readily accessible for those recovering from mental illness, or that the plan would significantly diversify the service structure in the first place, given that large chain stores are much more able to pay the high rents of newly-built real estate.

Could the answer instead lie in revitalizing 1960s shopping centres, such as North Haaga's, on which Sirpa Ojansuu's chapter focuses on? Located in the centre of Haaga, it is easily accessible on foot from all corners of the area, and is next to attractive green areas. According to studies conducted in Aalto University and University of Helsinki's Ostari research project, the most feasible model for resurrecting the local shopping centres focus-

es on mixed use by public, private sectors as well as local grassroots agents, and imagines the centres as providing a variety of services, not just shopping/eating opportunities. For this to take place, changes need to be made, such as centralizing ownership and decision-making so that the centres can be approached as holistic concepts (Krokkfors 2013, pp. 158-159; Mäenpää, 2013, p. 199), understanding the needs of the local community better than previously, and the municipal sector taking a more active role (Mäenpää, 2013, pp. 199-203). Through collaboration between different stakeholders and changes to ownership and management structures, 1960s shopping centres present a potential way in which local services could be brought back and tailored to a neighbourhood's needs. The North Haaga shopping centre is seen as a potential location especially for public sector services and spaces that would be open for residents to use as their 'common living rooms'. Already, a new youth space, Lämpiö, has been opened in early 2019.

CONCLUSION: WILL HAAGA BE A MODEL FOR OTHER AREAS OR A LOST OPPORTUNITY?

In order to enable all city-dwellers to access and benefit from city living, it is important to understand that the urban environment can appear very different to different people. In the case of people recovering from serious mental illness, cities can seem terrifyingly crowded and chaotic, and some of the common strategies of increasing accessibility — such as digital and centralised services— may completely exclude people with these types of challenges. There is a growing need to revive local, low-threshold services and networks and to provide more flexible work opportunities. Preventing segregation and micro-segregation is also key to building supportive environments for recovery.

From the perspective of people recovering from mental illness, Haaga has many positives. It is safe and quiet, green, and has good transport connections. Two actors in the area offer day centre activities, and there is also a fair amount of supported housing available. Some of its major flaws are typical of many mid-century suburbs in Helsinki. Services are increasingly concentrated elsewhere and opportunities for building a neighbourhood community are scarcer. Alarmingly, there seems to be a difference between the South and the North, with the former being middle-class and more desirable for property owners, and the latter being less affluent and containing more social housing.

Haaga will see extensive changes in the near future in the form of the boulevardisation plan and infill building. There is potential for Haaga to be transformed into a human-scale neighbourhood with a revitalized local community and space for people from all walks of life. There is also the worrying possibility that the South and the North will continue on different trajectories, and that densification will change the area's current green quality. What is clear is that the assumption that 'one size fits all' cannot be the starting point in urban planning. By understanding the challenges of different stakeholders, we are making sure that everyone is able to tap into the myriad possibilities that cities at their best offer and to contribute to the society in a meaningful way.

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Additional information regarding the day centre (e.g. visitor statistics) was provided by staff members.

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WHAT IS BEHIND THE SHOP FACADE: A SNAPSHOT OF FOREIGN-BORN SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS IN HAAGA, HELSINKI

Katie Butcher

CASE: IMMIGRANT ENTRE-
PRENEURIALISM

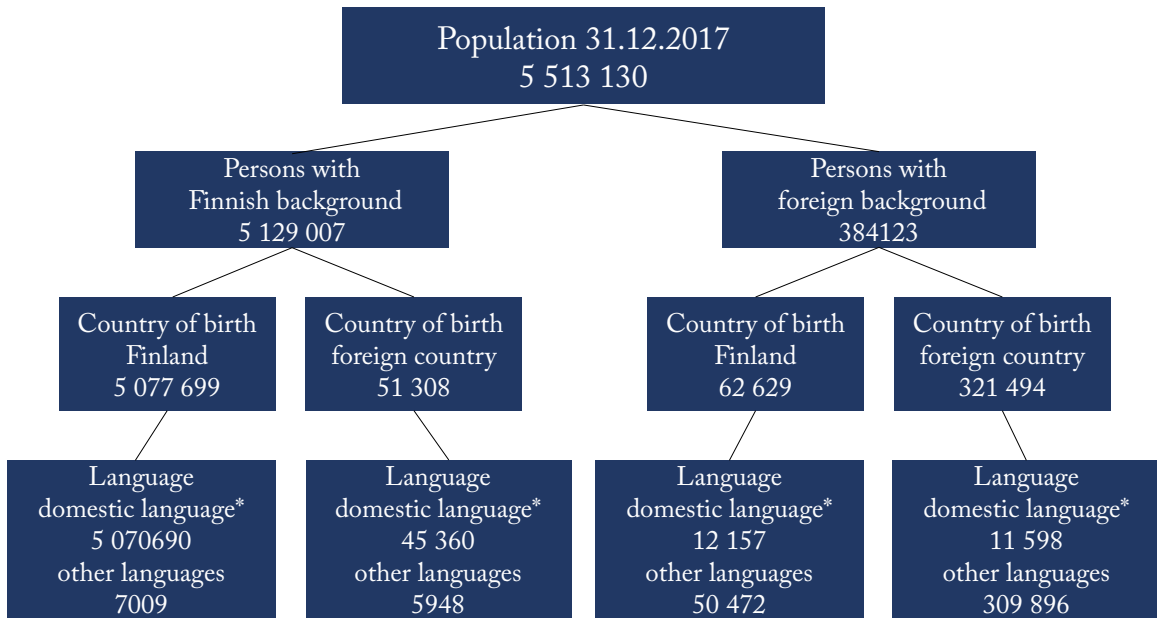
“This research documents personal experiences and barriers faced by immigrant small businesses owners in Haaga, a traditional representation of a Finnish suburb.”

INTRODUCTION

IMMIGRATION IN FINLAND

Immigration in Finland is a recent phenomenon. Owing to geographical location, small population size and Fenno-Ugric language, Finland has a mostly homogenous population of Ethnic Finns (Korkiasaari, 2014; Sandelin, 2014). In 2017 93% of the population had a Finnish background, of which both parents were Finnish (See Figure One). It has the sixth lowest immigrant population of all OECD nations and the fourth lowest within the European Union (Ministry of the Interior Finland, 2017). Traditionally Finland has been country of emigration, levels of immigration surpassed emigration for the first time in the early 1990s. The collapse of the Soviet-Union, entry into the European Union, relaxation of working visa restrictions and acceptance of asylum seeker have seen immigration numbers rise rapidly over the last 25 years (Lobodzińska, 2011; Korkiasaari, 2014). The number of foreign-born people has increased tenfold since 1990, with 321,494 now born outside of Finland (See figure One; Statistics Finland, 2018).

Finland is also increasingly becoming more multicultural. The majority of migrants still come from the former Soviet Union or Estonia, accounting for a quarter (33.2%) of all persons with a foreign background. Followed by immigrants from Iraq and Somalia, linked with refugee and asylum seeker intakes. However, in 2017 the biggest growth was of immigrants from Asia. Immigrants of Chinese origin now make up the fifth largest group born outside Finland, followed by Vietnam and Thailand (Statistics Finland, 2018). Currently moving for work or economic reasons only accounted for 26% of immigration to Finland (Ministry of the Interior Finland, 2017). Immigrants predominantly reside in major cities in Finland with over half of people with a foreign background living in the Helsinki Capital Region (City of Helsinki, 2018). Furthermore, people with foreign backgrounds increasingly have no Finnish, Swedish or Sami language skills (Figure One; City of Helsinki, 2018). Thus, making it difficult for communication, creating barriers to inclusion and social isolation. Knowing the language of the destination country is of fundamental importance and opens access to wider economic opportunities and assists in immigrant's



* Domestic languages = Finnish, Swedish, Sami

Statistics Finland / Population structure

Figure 1. Population by origin, county of birth and language 2017. Source Statistics Finland.

ability to become self-reliant citizens (OECD/European Union, 2015). A diversity of immigrant backgrounds requires a diversity and tailored integration structures of the host nation. This increases complexity and cost and poses additional challenges for integration, especially entry into the workforce.

IMMIGRANTS AND EMPLOYMENT

Finland is a highly developed Nordic welfare state, in which policies are designed to prevent exclusion and segregation: a key principle being that everyone of working age should be active in the labour market. New immigration policies such as flexibility in work permits, citizenship and equal opportunity in the labour market have assisted in increasing the number of immigrants in the workforce (Łobodzińska, 2011; Ministry of the Interior Finland, 2017). However, immigrant unemployment rate is still more than double that of the ethnic Finnish population (City of Helsinki, 2018). Active participation of immigrants in the labour market is identified by the European Commission as fundamental for inclusion within the host country (OECD/European Union, 2015). It aids in social cohesion and assists in the ability of migrants to function independently in daily life. However, there is extensive literature depicting the Finnish general labour market as closed to immigrants due to language skills, lack of recognition of previous experience and qualification, employer prejudice and discrimination of foreign-workers (Heikkilä and Järvinen, 2003; Ahmad, 2011; Olgiati, Calvo and Berkman, 2013; Sandelin, 2014; Fornaro, 2018). Several studies document racism and discrimination against immigrants in Finland, especially against immigrants that look physically different to ethnic Finns. (Valtonen, 2001; Heikkilä and Järvinen, 2003; Egharevba, 2006; Ahmad, 2011; Sandelin, 2014; Herda, 2015; Ndukwe, 2017). Although employment discrimination is illegal in Finland, these studies detail case studies of immigrants overlooked for jobs when having appropriate skills or people with Finnish names being hired when less qualified.

Additionally, loss of social capital has been widely discussed as a major influence on immigrants' ability to secure stable employment in a host nation. As stated by Salmenhaara, "Migration devalued immigrants' educational credentials and other forms of human capital acquired in the country of departure." (Salmenhaara, 2008, p.13). Hence, immigrants take up unskilled jobs, are under-employed and find it difficult to gain employment in their previous profession. For new immigrants, a way to establish new social capital is to source groups of similar ethnicities within the new country (Heikkilä and Järvinen,

2003; Ahmad, 2011; Olgiati, Calvo and Berkman, 2013; Ribeiro-Soriano, 2017; Fornaro, 2018). As the immigrant population in Finland is still small, this further limits such social networks.

It is difficult to determine an accurate number of foreign-born business owners in Finland, as country of birth is not a criterion for Statistics Finland's self-employment count. A study by Sandelin (2014) shows in 2010 there were 6,400 foreigners running businesses in Finland. There is not a strong ethnic economy; goods and services may be of ethnic origin, but customers are mostly Finns (Valtonen, 2001; Wahlbeck, 2007; Ahmad, 2011; Tamang, 2015; Bloch and McKay, 2015). Working for other immigrants, is a popular route to gain employment. However, two studies (Wahlbeck, 2007; 2008) of Turkish employees in Finland have shown situations of exploitation and working under conditions that do not meet Finnish employment standards. Immigrants often work as employees first before gaining the social and economic capital to invest in their own businesses.

CASE STUDY- HAAGA, HELSINKI

This study is set in the suburb of Haaga, which encompasses Lassila, Pohjois and Etelä Haaga. Often described as a traditional Finnish suburb, Haaga is a suburb under transition. Earmarked as a transit hub for the new Raide-Jokeri light rail, Haaga will be a critical interchange for east/west and north/south commuters (Raide-Jokeri, 2018). Furthermore, as part of the Helsinki City Plan 2050, Haaga is a key growth site for in-fill development and densification. The City of Helsinki states that Haaga's population will increase by 1,800 inhabitants and 1000 jobs will be created by 2030 (City of Helsinki, 2018). This incorporates the creation of the Vihdintie City Boulevard and associated in-fill along the western border of Haaga and the extension of tram 10 line (City Planning Department, 2018). Transport changes are designed to facilitate movement in the suburb, reduce traffic on the main streets and improve access to the city centre, in order to accommodate the extra inhabitants.

During site visits to Haaga, many businesses owned and ran by foreigners were observed. The diversity of shops and foreign ownership is not representative of the demographic profile of Haaga, which is primarily ethnic Finns, with 89% of the population speaking Finnish as domestic language (Service Map, 2018). Therefore, how so many foreign owners came to be in Haaga and motivations for opening businesses within the suburb, were of particular interest. Using, snapshot ethnography, the focus of this article is to investigate the narrative of four foreign born business owners in Haaga. The article will examine

motivations to opening businesses in Haaga with the objective of identifying barriers particularly relevant to immigrant entrepreneurs. It seeks to identify whether challenges and barriers immigrant businesses owners face in the case study of Haaga, are consistent with wider academic literature. It also looks at the reasons business owners chose to stay in Haaga and explores the connections between the business space and its place in the wider suburb. Furthermore, this paper examines whether foreign-born small business owners have awareness of or participation in the future development plans for Haaga. Finally, what factors and connections may hinder knowledge or participation in planning or local community consultation.

METHOD

Data for this research paper was obtained by visiting local business sites in Haaga to identify foreign-born business owners. Business owners were approached, asked if there were born outside of Finland and whether they would like to participate in a short interview. A total of twelve businesses were approached, ten were owned by someone foreign-born and of these four agreed to take part in the interview (See Table One).

While this study did not set a business type criterion, all twelve businesses approached were hospitality establishments: restaurants, bars or cafes. This was not intentional but representative of the overall structure of businesses within Haaga. The four business owners who agreed to take part in an interview were given a Plain Language Statement which detailed the

purpose of the research, interview method, researcher's contact details and that the research would be published. Participants were also informed on how the research data would be used. Interviews were recorded and verbal consent was given by each participant. Such methodology meets standards outlined by the Finnish National Advisory Board on Research Ethics: Ethical Principles of Research in the Humanities and Social and Behavioural Science (National Advisory Board on Research Ethics, 2009).

Qualitative, semi-structured interviews with a mixture of open and closed questions were chosen for this study as they provide a way of examining insights into personal experiences and emotions of a participants (Becker & Lißmann, 1973; Mayring, 2000). Interviews were conducted face-to-face at the interviewees' place of business in November 2018. Each of the four interviews was conducted in a different language: English, Finnish, Greek and Mandarin, and lasted from 30 minutes to one hour. The English interview was conducted between the researcher and the participant, translators were required for the three remaining interviews.

Interviews included general themes related to immigrant entrepreneurship such as reason for immigration, previous employment and motivations and challenges for starting and running a business in Haaga. Participants were also asked questions about the feeling of place in Haaga and changes over time. Of interest to this research was to gain insight into the knowledge and understanding local business owners had about future development plans for the suburb of Haaga. Participants were first

Businesses Approached	12
Foreign Owned- Interviewed	4
Foreign Owned- Declined Interview	6
Not Foreign Owned	2

Table 1.

asked if they had heard of any future plans for Haaga and then prompted with visual aids: pamphlets and maps showing the Jokeri Light Rail, Vihdintie Boulevardisation and in-fill development proposals. This methodology is an example of snapshot ethnography, in which interview data presented and analysed is not a single generalisation of the wider population but intended to give honest insight of topics discussed and what participants perceived as true and relevant at that moment in time. (Sharkey and Shields, 2008; Hougaard and Oakley, 2008). The reflexive nature of ethnographic research should also be acknowledged, data produced is always a production of spoken word, observation and the interpretation of the researcher.

This study followed the basic theory of quantitative research theory of which researcher has a pre-understanding of a possible concept that may arise. These pre-conceived understandings are then tested with the empirical data gathered (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Key principles Categorical Content Analysis were used to break down and interpret data gathered from the four interviews. Data was analysed by transcribing the recordings and reading the notes made during the interviews. Content was then arranged by identifying key topics, connections, commonalities and differences (Harrison, 2000; Saija, Katila and Laihonen, n.d.). Data was then conceptualized by systematic coding. The outcome being a coherent data entity in which themes could be categorized and patterns could be further broken down for analysis. Recurring themes were grouped together and presented for final analysis. While anomalies are widely discussed in larger qualitative studies (Harrison, 2000) due to the relatively small data set, commonalities were the focal point with the aim of verifying experiences of immigrant small business owners.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

The definition of ‘immigrant’ varies internationally, it may imply non-citizen and have connotations of certain ethnic groups. However, it commonly refers to a person born in a country which they currently not reside. Predominantly literature uses the word ‘immigrant’ or ‘ethnic’ when describing foreign born people. Research containing both literary terms were deemed relevant for this study, given only small technicalities in definition. For the purpose of this paper, ‘immigrant’ and ‘foreign-born’ person are used interchangeably, implying no inferences about visa or residency status but to define someone not born in Finland.

Each participant gave consent for the use of business and personal names for this study. However, this was not deemed

to add value to the analysis and personal data requires more extensive ethical considerations. Hence, participants will remain anonymous. A short description of each participant is provided in Table Two below. The four participants had diverse backgrounds, representing four different countries of birth with four different mother-tongues. Their time in Finland ranged from 9 months to 27 years. Each one owned a small business within the suburb of Haaga, as was the criterion for participation. One was the sole business owner, while three were joint owners. Command of Finnish language varied from no proficiency to a professional working standard. Only two participants had any proficiency of the English language.

DISCUSSION

ESTABLISHMENT OF BUSINESSES IN HAAGA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Each of the interviewees had family or friends living in Finland and had visited Finland prior to moving here. Positive experiences and success stories of those already living here were the key drives for moving to Finland. All four could be considered to have moved in search of economic opportunity and family reunification. Interestingly, each of the participants had some exposure to the hospitality industry before immigrating. Two of the shop owners interviewed had extensive experience in the hospitality industry prior to arriving in Finland. The other two, both women, had husbands who were professional chefs in their home countries, of whom were joint owners of the businesses. This is in contrast to the numerous literature which find that immigrants find it hard to secure employment in their previous profession when moving abroad. Hence, often pushed into taking the risk of opening a small business in destination country to overcome employment barriers in the local job market (Wahlbeck, 2007 and 2008; Ahmad, 2011; Bloch and McKay, 2015; Tamang, 2015; Fornaro, 2018). However, the two women interviewed were educated and skilled in other professions. One who was a businesses and economics professional, mentioned visa restrictions and language as reasons preventing her becoming employed in this field in Finland.

I am a nurse and studied in Finland and the couldn't find a job. At that time [I graduated], the economy was very bad [I] could not get a job to work in the hospital. [...] They said you don't understand Finnish, then me and [name removed] opened a small restaurant in the down town center.

Each woman turned to building businesses in hospitality,

Participants				
	1	2	3	4
Business Type	Café	Chinese Restaurant	Chinese Restaurant and Bar	Bar
Business Ownership	Sole business owner	Wife, Husband and Friend. All Chinese	Husband and Wife	Joint business owner with another Indian male
Time in Finland	4 years	9 months	27 years	15 years
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Male
County of Birth	Albania	China	Hong Kong	India
Mother-Tongue	Albanian	Mandarin	Cantonese	Punjabi
Language used in Interview	Greek	Mandarin	English	Finnish
Finnish Language Proficiency*	Elementary proficiency	No proficiency	Limited working proficiency	Professional working proficiency
English Language Proficiency*	No proficiency	Elementary proficiency	Limited working proficiency	No proficiency

*Language proficiency categories are based on the Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Level Descriptions (Interagency Language Roundtable, 2014).

Table 2. Participant profile.

finding their husbands chef skills to be more transferable in the Finnish job market. This demonstrates the language barriers faced by immigrants trying to enter the Finnish workforce. Even with professional skills, stable employment was still difficult to find as mentioned by an owner who was a professional chef with 15 years' experience:

[I] used to have a place in Vantaa and then sold it, I was out of work for 1 year and then decided to become an entrepreneur.

Hence, moving into small business ownership to gain employment. Furthermore, as highlighted by Heikkilä and Järvinen, (2003), Tamang (2015), and Fornaro, (2018), immigrants in Finland are particularly attracted to hospitality as viable businesses are possible without the native language skills. As communicated by one shop owner:

I communicate in English to the customer..... Greet them in Finnish then will change to English, but in the restaurant, it is easy to use gestures to replace language that you don't know.

The four owners did not show any particular choice for the store location in Haaga. All four of the businesses were already running with the same function prior to participants taking over. Reliance on social capital was the principle phenomena associated with the purchase of the hospitality businesses. Three of the current owners heard about the business opportunity from friends, one was previously working within the business. All received either financial support from families or opened the business as joint ventures with other immigrants. This is summed up in the extract below:

The Finnish lady that owned the café [previously] was not doing too well, so when she quit, we [husband and wife] decided why not do something from it instead of going to work for someone else in another shop, with the help of my brother [financially] we decided to create something [buy the store] for ourselves.

Others encountered problems with the Finnish institutions or bureaucracy systems:

Finnish efficiency is very low. It was difficult at the bank and in Finland it takes a long time to register a company.

The big advantage of taking over was that it was already owned by Chinese people and all the paperwork to have a restaurant here was already done..... We could talk to the previous owners in Chinese (Mandarin).

Again, this highlights the importance of social capital as evident in other studies of immigrants in Finland (Wahlbeck, 2007; Tamang, 2015; Fornaro, 2018). Relying on mother-tongue to aid in business decisions and grouping together with immigrants of a common background is a way to overcome language and cultural barriers in institutional structures. Each participant collaborated with other immigrants and used social networks for entry into small business ownership which in turn allowed them to stay and create a life in Finland.

THE CHOICE TO STAY IN HAAGA

The store location in Haaga was a choice of convenience and reliance on social capital for each business owner. The reason to remain in Haaga however, seems to be economic and tied with business survival. Two owners had previous businesses elsewhere in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area which were not successful, but cheaper rent prices in Haaga make business more profitable.

Before we had small restaurant in the downtown, but the competition is too high. In Haaga you just need to do good food and good service..... In Haaga the rent is not high [compared to downtown]. If you are in the downtown you cannot save as the salary is the same. In Haaga you pay the same salary but the rent is less, so you can get some more profit..... The location is working.

This highlights the importance of retaining retail space within a community when considering areas for future development. If small business owners are to survive, planning decisions need to promote small business ownership by having a diversity of shop sizes at varying rent prices available. These planning decisions are amplified by lack of investment in future or succession business plans by small business owners. Constant with other research internationally (Inal, Ariss and Forson, 2013; Komakech and Jackson, 2016; Fornaro, 2018) three of the four business owners were 'happy' with a simple business model and had no ambition for future expansion or diversification. A comment from one owner:

I will keep going as long as I can. As long as there is clientele.....if you were to ask me when I first came, I would also say "lets see how is goes" Time just flew, and 3.5 years just passed.....if [we] get more clientele here and [we] can expand then this is also fine. But we cannot plan it, we cannot say what will happen.

Interesting it was only the male business owner who mentioned any succession plan of future expansion. He was aiming

to buy a business for each of his two sons.

Having some degree of a work/life balance was important to all the business owners interviewed. It is important to understand the business model of immigrant small business owners, limited career choices attributed to factors described in Chapter One, mean owners may not be business minded career entrepreneurs, but instead just trying to survive.

I don't want to open a restaurant in a busy district as it would be a lot more pressure [for us]. ... Even if you are not in the business district, if your food is good or special, people will hear about it and come to there.

While rent was viewed as cheap for retail space, interestingly, residential prices within Haaga were not affordable for the shop owners. Two of the business owners used to live in Haaga and were forced out due to rental prices. All now live outside of the suburb, stating that the cost to live in Haaga is too high.

We used to live in close by [in Haaga] but moved to Konala as Haaga was too expensive.....we left because the rent was too high- 1,100 euro per month for a flat.

This brings up important considerations of housing affordability within suburbs and small business owners priced out of a market as a suburb develops and especially gentrifies. This would apply to foreign and non-foreign-born small business owners. Much of the research focuses on commercial floor space affordability and consumer choice as forces that change store composition as a suburb gentrifies (Komakech and Jackson, 2016). However, this study highlights a subtle phenomenon not adequately researched. It could be argued that inability of a small business owner to afford rent close to their business is potentially an early indicator of a suburb in transition and a predisposition to 'gentrification' in the current utilization of the word. As all four owners mentioned the importance of work/life balance, it could be assumed that a threshold would be reached in which commute time and cost would no longer make the business viable. Hence, small business owners may be forced to close or relocate elsewhere.

SENSE OF SPACE AND NOT A SENSE OF PLACE

Another aspect of this research was to explore the feeling of community and sense of place immigrant business owners felt within Haaga. When asked about Haaga and what they liked about the suburb, all four of business owners mentioned their customers. Example answers included:

I love this place because the people are very polite, the people

have the higher education and they have a good job.

Each participant was prompted about what they liked of the physical aspects and Haaga as a whole, again answers were people centric.

I like Haaga because it is quiet and peaceful and there are lots of local Finnish people. The atmosphere is quite good, and it suits me.

This indicates that as long as the customers were the same 'type' of people, the location or suburb of the business did not matter. Each mentioned they liked 'Finnish' people, they felt integrated within the internal social environment of the shop and had not mentioned any type of discrimination. There is a change in power dynamic within the shop interior in which the owner has control. Customer selection would occur: when entering a shop, customers are most likely aware it is run by foreigners. Therefore, such customers are likely to be open to meeting international people, this accounts for the positive interaction with locals shared by shop owners.

As a result of being priced out of living in the suburb as described in Section 3.2, business owners had no connection with the surrounding area. As sole business owners and operators, many left home at 6am and returned at 11pm or even later, having been within the confines of their business all day. Consequently, owners are only moving between their internal business and home environments, detached from the external suburb environment of Haaga, as one participant states-

I don't have any contact with the environment [Haaga], I come when it is dark and leave when it is dark. I knew that they were renovating the fire station as many workers were coming to buy coffee.

This demonstrates that business owners had no understanding of dynamics of Haaga and only realized changes in external surrounding when it had a flow on impact to customers within the shop. There is no sense of place, just a space of convenience for the shop. Customers are the only element of community which penetrate the physical and constructed barrier of the shop's exterior walls, to interact with shop owners. Lack of time, money and language disconnected and placed a barrier for shop owners to connect with the suburb of Haaga. This phenomenon is explained in Figure Two.

This study argues that within the internal shop, immigrants have a sense of control and space that can be tailored to their needs. The immigrant small business owners are somewhat liv-

ing in a bubble in which they can operate without the language, cultural or institutional restraints of the outside world and host country (Sandelin, 2014; Wahlbeck, 2008). Language and traditions from country of origin can be kept within the internal structures of the business and home environments. Hence making the transition to the host country manageable but ultimately causing isolation within their business/home spaces and detachment to the outside suburb and environment.

KNOWLEDGE OF FUTURE PLANS FOR HAAGA AND BARRIERS TO PLANNING INFORMATION

Arguably the most poignant theme to arise from this study was the lack of knowledge all four business owners had of future plans for Haaga. None of the owners were aware of any proposed developments or plans from the suburb. Participants were prompted by a brochure of the Raide-Jokeri and a map of Vihdintie Boulevardisation. They were particularly interested in proposed development plans and asked for further explanation and commencement dates.

*I didn't know about it [****]. "we already have tram" but it sounds great because there will be less car traffic, so it is better.*

Detachment from sense of place and constraints of running a small business as discussed in Chapter 3.3, mean that the owners feel removed from the suburb around them. Therefore, less likely to seek out information and become actively involved in decisions and changes made about Haaga.

While questions had been directed primarily about the future planning of Haaga, a more pressing finding was small business owners are not adequately informed of small infrastructure changes that could impact their business substantially. One owner describes the effect of renovating a pedestrian walk-way outside the entrance to her restaurant.

Actually, the bridge near the restaurant is newly renovated. It takes a long time to finish it in Finland...During the renovations of the bridge the customers would be stuck because it would take them further to get to the restaurant. There were less customers at this time, but after the bridge was finish customers increased [again].

The department stuck a notice on the street about the renovations in Finnish. The efficiency is quite low in Finland..... we were not given any notification directly.

Another business owner had a similar experience:

Sometimes when they [municipality] are repairing the foot-path, it will be closed for several hours and they won't tell us.

Language barriers are also a fundamental to information and deeper understanding of surroundings. As summed up by one owner:

Even if they [Municipality] came here and talk about the changes to come in Haaga, I wouldn't understand and therefore they wouldn't even try to involve me as it would be difficult for me to understand.

This statement highlights the isolation felt by not knowing Finnish, as this business owner knows they do not have the language competence to ask for information and that municipality would view it as too difficult to explain planning information to them. To a certain degree a type of ignorance and being an 'outsider' is accepted by the business owners:

As immigrants who doesn't speak the language well, we do not get information as we know in order to get the information, we need to ask for it.

While the majority of delivered mail or notifications are in Finnish, a short browse through online information on the future plans for Haaga and Helsinki reveal it is also hard to access information in English and websites are very disjointed. The City of Helsinki and Raide-Jokeri have English options only available on some pages and provide general summaries (Raide-Jokeri, 2018; City of Helsinki, 2018). The City of Helsinki website was the only page found to offer translations in other languages including Russian, French and German. These options are only available on pages deemed of interest to tourists and did not include any information on city planning (City of Helsinki, 2018). As stated by one owner, it is understood that one must learn Finnish in order to seek out information that is not otherwise provided:

the notifications are in Finnish, if you don't know it you will ignore it. I am learning Finnish.....information is important.

It should also be remembered that the internet is not a primary resource for everyone and that information should always be provided in a range of media. One business owner mentioned:

We don't go to internet.

There is a clear gap in information being provided by the City of Helsinki to small business owners in Haaga, especial-

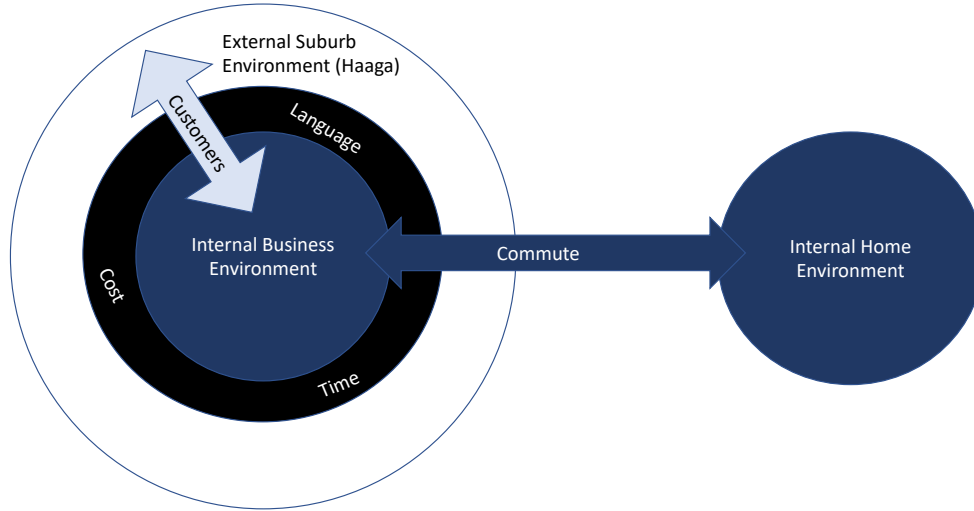


Figure 2. Representation explaining detachment from Suburb.

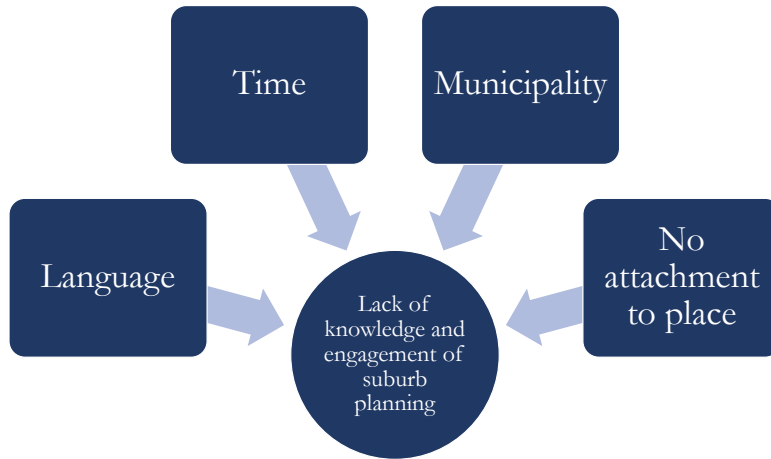


Figure 3. Contributing factors to lack of knowledge and engagement in suburb planning.

ly in languages other than Finnish. Time and detachment to Haaga also mean that business owners are not actively seeking planning information. Figure Three displays the relationship of factors attributing to lack of knowledge participants had of future changes in Haaga.

Participatory planning is a hot-topic in urban planning, also a lot of emphasis is put on the inclusivity of immigrants and 'hard to reach groups' in community consultation processes (Bradshaw, 2001; Maginn, 2007; Stewart and Lithgow, 2015; Raynor, Mayere and Matthews, 2018). Two of the businesses were located on Vihdintie, the road proposed for boulevardisation and business owners had not been consulted or provided with information in any language. A key element of boulevardisation is the vibrancy and survival of small businesses along them (City Planning Department; 2018), hence it is fundamental that they are included in the planning process. This study shows that immigrant small business owners are often overlooked as a hard to reach group and hence omitted from the planning process. Which is particularly pressing given business owners have a certain level of personal investment within a suburb and even small changes can have a big impact on their livelihoods.

LIMITATIONS

This study had a relatively small sample size and high rejection rate (50%) which could be explained by various factors. Time constraints of running the business alone and mean owners could not take time for the interview. Furthermore, particular groups may find it intrusive to be approached for a personal interview and not the cultural 'norm' to discuss experiences, views and beliefs with a stranger. Hence different approaches need to be tailored to incorporate different ethnicities, a topic cemented in academic literature particularly around participatory planning (Neufeld *et al.*, 2001).

Additionally, translators were required for three of the four interviews. The language of the interview was either the second or even third language spoken by the participant. This may have caused some miscommunication of complicated topics. As demonstrated by previous studies in which interpreter use can impact the knowledge and understanding of a participant (Butcher *et al.*, 2013). Consequently, metaphoric analysis of phrases or words could not be conducted as interviews were not translated word for word. Each translator appeared to paraphrase or inflict their own interpretation of dialogue due to inexperience. Had professional translators been used, then deeper examination of word use would have been possible.

CONCLUSION

This research documents personal experiences and barriers faced by immigrant small businesses owners in Haaga, a traditional representation of a Finnish suburb. By using in-depth interviews and qualitative research methodology, data gathering goes beyond facts and captures understandings and uncovers emotions on a more personal level. Hence giving a voice to 'silent' sections of society who are often overlooked, especially within the city planning process. Small business owners were priced out of living in Haaga which contributed to a detachment of the surrounding suburb. Combined with limited Finnish language proficiency, this attributed to each participant's lack of awareness of future development plans for Haaga. Furthermore, information provided by the City of Helsinki is not comprehensive and does not reach target audiences. The municipality should consider extending community consultation to ensure small business owners are included regardless of language spoken. With an increase in the number and diversity of foreigners moving to Finland, this research highlights the need to have information in numerous languages readily available.

This study provides a small snapshot of Haaga and further research is required to determine whether factors uncovered are representative of foreign business owners across Finland or Europe. However, the strength of providing a voice to immigrant small businesses uncovered unique results and discussion points which have not previously been identified. Concluding, although this study is small it provides a framework which could be replicated on a larger scale for future discussion.

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IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE BUZZ, GET OUT OF THE CITY?

CASE STUDY ON NOISE TOLERANCE AND WAYS OF
PREVENTING IT IN THE FINNISH (SUB)URBAN
CONTEXT

Eetu Niemi

CASE: NOISE POLLUTION,
COMMUNITY

“Those who are officially trusted with the task of supervising the laws accepted by representatives of the people, might not always be able to realize their understanding of the case. This is a natural feature in democratic system of checks and balances. Case of bar Lemon however shows the boundaries of municipal power and could work as a precedent for future cases. The worries of the public identified in the study of attitudes might prove to be correct. The right of the resident for peace of home is obviously preferred in the attitudes of people and in the sake of functioning democracy, it should be preferred in political praxis as well.”

INTRODUCTION

Life in cities differs in many ways from that of the countryside. Lifestyle and environment, inevitably, are different where people agglomerate. One of the most persistent troubles of city-dwellers is noise (Moser, 1992, p. 36), which is found to be detrimental to health and causes problems such as annoyance and sleep disturbance (Passchier-Vermeer and Passchier, 2000, p. 123). Noise might stem from various sources and may surround one's life all through the day: airplanes, traffic, construction, advertisements, ringing phones, noisy people and so on. All this public noise, still, seems somewhat tolerable, but how about noise in one's home? What sorts, and degrees, of noise are we to accept in our private domestic spheres? What tools do we have for safeguarding our peace of home from audible breaches, and are they working?

This article investigates matters of domestic noise, its prevention mechanisms, disputes and attitudes towards it in the Finnish (sub)urban context. What is the legal framework in do-

mestic noise issues and what does the public think about these issues? This is done by studying a specific noise-dispute case that has been unfolding in Helsinki's residential area of South-Haaga. The study of the case reveals the stakeholder's different viewpoints and the problems in dealing with issues of domestic noise. The study is twofold. First, the study fleshes out the crucial points in decision-making and the legal procedure in dealing with noise-disputes, and identifies what health-protection measures need to have failed if continuous domestic noise-detriment is the result. Second, the study investigates public opinions towards domestic noise and their common worries. The results imply that the system is seen as faulty if it fails to provide something that is considered a right: peace of home. Finally, we shall look at what we can conclude from the study and address possible effects of the resolutions to wellbeing, and city politics.

PEACE OF HOME

This article is about the right to peace of home, in terms of

quietness, in particular. I will begin with clarifying a couple of central concepts that will be used frequently throughout. What is meant by ‘domestic’ in this study is that which takes place within one’s home or place of residence. In western, bourgeois societies, the understanding of home is defined by separation between the private and public (Sparke, 2008; Kaika, 2004). In this separation, city-life stands for the public venue of affairs and the home for the private domestic interior. Because of this, the domestic and the urban have been confined to separate spheres and home is seen as a “sealed ‘interior’, isolated from its surroundings” (Marcus, 1999, p. 6). Home is thought to be a private haven in the urban public ocean. This might have a lot to do with the sense of control: home is a place where you understand what happens and why, who comes and goes. With the term ‘sense of control’ here, I do not mean dominating, but the sense of something being familiar, known, predictable and understandable, something non-confusing or not disorienting. In cities, the non-controllable, the wild, often seems to start right outside the wall, or at the doorstep, and that is also where the home ends. One could speculate whether, in more rural environments, residents identify their home to extend more beyond their walls. This might well be the case, if the sense of home is indeed linked with a sense of control and conceivability: where in rural dwellings the area conceived as manageable and controlled are could include the yard, proximate nature, road to village, maybe even the village itself and its familiar residents, whereas in cities the realm of no control is right outside the window. The extent of conceived control might coincide with what residents conceive as their home. The volatility of urban existence can, of course, become very familiar for city-dwellers, homelike even, but still it seems that exclusion from the public is much appreciated by western people at least.

As this study shows, people value highly their peace of home and the ability to be detached from the exterior. When it comes to the absence of noise, there seems to be good reasons for this attitude as well. According to Passchier-Vermeer and Passchier (2000, p. 125), being exposed to noise is detrimental to one’s well-being: unwanted sound causes psychological, physiological and social effects, feelings of disturbance, stress reactions, sleep disorders, hormonal changes, increased blood pressure, increased risk of myocardial infarction and impairments to general quality of life and well-being. Environmental stressors are abundant around city-dwellers, and of all stressors, noise is the one most complained about (Moser, 1992, p. 36). Of all effects noise has, stress alone has severe consequences. Delongis, Folkman, and Lazarus (1988, p. 486) have found that there is “a significant relationship between daily stress and the occurrence

of both concurrent and subsequent health problems such as flu, sore throat, headaches, and backaches”. Considering all this, it seems reasonable that residents are concerned about noise inside their dwellings.

In Finland, the right to quietness in homes is based on the Health Protection Act (HPA). The HPA is exactly about the sort of health-impairing externalities like noise, where the “purpose of the law is to uphold and enhance popular and individual health, to prevent, decrease and remove such factors of the environment, that can cause harm to health”. However, the enforcement and monitoring of these regulations is a complex and conflicted set of procedures, as we shall see when looking more closely at our case in South-Haaga. Disputes of these sort are not uncommon, but here we shall concentrate on one specific case to acquire an understanding of the events and crucial points of real-world domestic noise disputes.

CASE OF BAR LEMON

Bar Lemon is a neighbourhood pub in a quiet residential area of South-Haaga. It is located on the ground floor of an apartment building. This means that there are apartments just above the pub. Trouble with noise has been, according to Helsingin Sanomat (8.11.2018), caused, especially, by karaoke singing that is sung at Bar Lemon every Friday and Saturday evening until 1.30 am.

Because of complaints about the noise of the karaoke, the environmental authority of the Helsinki municipality had been conducting measurements in an apartment in the building of the pub (Resolution of Environmental board, 2017). During these inspections, the noise of the music was found to be such that it could cause harm to health as stated in the HPA. In the resolution of the environmental board, Bar Lemon was demanded to remove the noise-detriment, so that it would not hinder sleeping in nearby apartments. This decree was backed up with a penalty payment of 10.000 euros should Bar Lemon fail to abide. The owners of Bar Lemon, however, appealed to the Helsinki Administrative court. In the administrative court, the bar owner’s appeal was successful, and the decree of the environmental board was overruled. Bar Lemon could thus keep their karaoke business ongoing. What had happened and why was the decree of the environmental board overruled?

The administrative court could not base its decision on sense-experience only. Even though the administrative court recognised that the lyrics of the songs sung in the bar were

recognisable in apartment's bedroom and it would provide inconvenience for the resident, the decision to restrain the noise could not be made on these grounds. The problem was that sound levels had not been measured according to the instructions of the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira). In the environmental board's resolution, it was stated that sound level measurements could not have been conducted in the manner to meet Valvira's standards. This was because the apartment is stated to be located in an area with varying amounts of traffic noise and that this interferes with the measuring of music and background noise.

The statute from the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (545/2015, §12) dictates the following:

Night-time music noise or other noise that could cause sleeping disturbance and can be clearly distinguished from background noise, must not exceed 25dB in one-hour mid-sound-level $L_{Aeq,1h}$ (22–07hrs.) as measured in places meant for sleeping.

Since acceptable results, validating that this was indeed the case in the bedroom above Bar Lemon, could not be provided, there could be no sanction in the administrative court's view. This, exactly, seems to be the critical point in the discussion. When Bar Lemon got their way in challenging the decree from the environmental board, the municipal officials took the issue to the highest administrative court and tried to appeal to the validity of general assessment without objective measurements. Whether this new appeal, with less stringent measurable norms, will bear fruits for the municipal representatives remains to be seen when the highest administrative court ends its session. It will in all cases act as a noticeable precedent for future cases of the sort. It will define whether noise-detriment issues can be addressed, even when the limitations of tools of measurement are there. This, on the other hand, would give great responsibility to officials in considering, in depth, each case they evaluate, since livelihoods, places of residence and matters of health are at stake in their potentially non-objective studies.

STUDY ON ATTITUDES

This section presents the study of public attitudes towards the case of Bar Lemon and the noise-dispute. The method of qualitative content analysis was used to see what opinions the public had towards the case in question. Firstly, the aim was to identify whether the public were in favour of the resident in the case or did they think that the administrative court's decision to over-

rule that of the environmental board, was the right thing to do. Secondly, the aim was to identify the possible reoccurring themes of worries or opinions in the data. The data used for this study was compiled from the comment-section of a Helsingin Sanomat article dealing with the case of noise dispute in question.

The analysis of this study seeks to discover the underlying attitudes, sometimes not explicitly expressed. Research based on qualitative content analysis involves the researcher's interpretation, since it comprises the use of phenomenological and hermeneutic approaches to the study of material to discover the latent content (Graneheim, 2017, p. 30.). In the analysis, the comments have been divided into different classes based on the researcher's interpretations about the attitude of the commenter. Words by themselves do not reveal enough, but it is necessary to remain sensitive towards the latent meanings and attitudes within the text. This, of course, involves the risk of misinterpretation concerning what was been meant by commenters. However, when dealing with material of this nature, this risk has to be tolerated, recognised and taken into account.

The aim of this study is to look into whether people in their commentary have expressed that the resident's right to peace of home has been appreciated accordingly or not in the dispute. Would people consider this circumstance to be the resident's own fault and, as such, that officials should not do anything about it? The hypothesis is that there would emerge a significant number of comments that would blame the resident for being too sensitive to the buzz of the city or being stupid to move above a bar in the first place. Many comments are expected to convey the idea that one can and should move to a more peaceful abode if the noise that is 'naturally' part of urban existence is too much to bear.

The analysis was conducted by categorising the comments based on their implied attitude. There are several aliases that had commented more than once, so their comments would only count as one. Instead of just counting the comments, the number of commenters is used. This is to offer a more balanced view of attitudes. The categories are as follows:

- A: Commenters in favour of the resident and against the decision of the administrative court.
- B: Commenters in favour of the administrative court's decision to overrule the decision of the environmental board.

A: Tags on comments in favour of resident	2342	74,8%
B: Tags on comments in favour of the Administrative Court	131	4,2%
C: Tags on comments with neutral position/other	658	21%
Total	3131	100%

Table 1. Number of commenter's attitudes categorised in each category.

A: Commenters in favour of resident	20
B: Commenters in favour of admin. court	6
C: Commenters with neutral position/other	18
Total	44

Table 2. Number of 'well argued' tags on comments in each category

C: Commenters that could not fairly be identified as belonging to either of the previous two categories.

This table shows that 45,5% of all comments could be identified as being in favour of the resident and 13,5% favouring the administrative court's verdict. Comments favouring the court were readily recognizable as expected, but were not as numerous. This could suggest that people appreciate their peace of home quite strongly and feel that they should be entitled to that. Reasons for this pro-resident sentiment could be, and most likely are, multiple and volatile, stemming from personal issues that cannot be assumed here. However, the sympathy

seems to be with the resident, whatever the reason may be for it: only the will, not the reasoning, matters in democracy. Sympathy for the resident becomes more evident, when looking at the amount of 'well argued' tags the comments had received. These tags are used to signal agreement with a comment in the comment section. Comments in favour of the court's verdict had gathered 131 'well argued' tags in total. This is 4,2% of all 'well argued' tags given. In contrast, the comments in favour of the resident had received the amount of 2342 'well argued' tags, making up 74,8% of all tags. 21% of tags were on comments that could not be categorized to either group gathered, totalling 658 tags. If the sympathies of the public were not definite when

looking at the comments, they are more so after looking at positive tags the comments have gathered.

There were two themes concerning worries identified within the study material. First, was that of business interests trumping over the interests of regular residents. This worry was mentioned in five different comments. People are worried that their interests are not valued highly by those in positions of power and that the primacy of business interests will jeopardise their quality of living. Another recurrent worry was that people are disappointed in officials, legislation and city politics. They see the system as being at fault for not being able to provide residents the environment they think they are entitled to. The Finnish legal system is claimed, by one commenter, to be known for senseless decisions and municipal officials as being powerless in providing what they are supposed to provide. Such worries might induce a sense of abandonment and bitterness among the population and should thus be tackled one way or another. This study suggests that people care for their ability to detach themselves from their surroundings in terms of noise, and that people might be lacking faith in the official procedures to provide that to them. To people, silence, even in urban environments, seems golden, and residents do not think they themselves should be responsible in providing it.

DISCUSSION

There are several layers of health-protection control that need to fail, in order for continuous domestic noise-detriment to be the result. Firstly, planning of the uses of places has gone wrong, and in this particular case, administrative adherence to previous plans have broken down. Helsinki's building supervision had allowed the use of the business locale to be changed to a restaurant in 1997 (HS, 8.11.2018). This use, however, is not what the building was built for in the first place (Ibid.). This can be seen as the first layer of noise-control that has failed. Responsibility for this is on the planners and city-officials, and their instructions on how to go by their daily work. Secondly, the sound insulation of the building is not sufficient. The building is already quite old and the standards of noise insulation used to be different from what they are now. As such, responsibility for having proper sound insulation falls on the housing cooperative. However, in the case of Bar Lemon, the responsibility is not on the housing cooperative, since the sound insulation meets the standards of the time the building was built and that is what is taken into account. Noise coming from activities that are not even supposed to be there in the first place is difficult to address

in terms of responsibility.

The third thing that has to fail is the ability of the stakeholders to figure out their disputes by themselves. The resident could not accept the sound of the karaoke and the bar owner could not accept ending the karaoke in his bar. Finally, the legal device must have failed in providing residents what they are supposed to provide. The crucial part in the legal process is the measurement and verification of the noise-detriment. This layer of health protection breaks down if it is not possible to be able to verify the health-detracting circumstance in an acceptable way.

It is the official's task to provide circumstances that abide with regulations set in law. In this case, it appears that officials have tried to do just this, but have been unsuccessful so far. This paints an illuminating portrait of the realities of decision-making and politics. Those who are officially trusted with the task of supervising the laws accepted by representatives of the people, might not always be able to realize their understanding of the case. This is a natural feature in a democratic system of checks and balances. The case of Bar Lemon, however, shows the boundaries of municipal power and could work as a precedent for future cases. The worries of the public identified, in the study of attitudes, might prove to be correct. The right of the resident for peace of home is obviously preferred in the attitudes of people and for the sake of a functioning democracy, it should be preferred in political praxis as well.

The crucial part in health protection is the measurement of the detriment. What kind of method of noise-verification would serve in a suitable way? It seems to be the case that only measuring the noise levels might not be sufficient in assessing the possibility of health-detriment. This sort of measurement is not sensitive enough to the mechanisms of human noise-annoyance. The specific nature of the sound probably should be taken into account in assessments. Sound from karaoke, which is basically the sound of humans singing, often familiar songs, might be more annoying than, say, the steady humming of air conditioning of equal volume. Studies on the mechanics of human sound-annoyance would, of course, be required to address this point less superficially.

One step in preventing domestic noise-disputes would be to place restaurants, with nocturnal karaoke-activities, apart from residential buildings. This would be a definite way of mitigating problems of the sort addressed in this article. Other, not quite as bulletproof as the former, would be to have strong regulatory instruments in place to guarantee that adherence to legal requirements, such as soundproofing, would be sufficient. This

would require a clear vision of who is responsible in making the noise levels and ensuring they meet the set limits. Lastly, a bit of an unorthodox solution, would be for people to gain tolerance to noise, and through that tolerance, to not be as annoyed by it. This, of course, can be contested as possibly humanely unviable and further research would be necessary.

To gain a better understanding of the dynamics of the types of noise and annoyance, further studies are required. This understanding could help in creating policies that function appropriately in addressing domestic noise. The relationship of perceptions, attitudes and expectations of inhabitants, with respect to noise, and the degree of annoyance, could be studied to this end. What effects do attitudes and expectations towards noise have on the level of resident's satisfaction to her environment? There have been studies about predictors of noise annoyance, and personal factors linked with annoyance (Belojević, G. et al. 1997, Paunović, K. et al. 2009). It would be valuable to know which variables have an effect on noise annoyance and, especially, look at what kinds of attitudes can affect annoyance. It seems quite probable that expectations would affect the amount of annoyance and, thus, health-problems linked with annoyance and stress. In the bigger picture, the proposed study would be about the effects that attitudes and preconceptions have on human experience, considering that reactions like annoyance are counted as experiences and not just reactions to experiences. The proposed study cannot be seen as a guideline to how noise-policies should be set, since it could advocate some really debatable procedures. The proposed study would, however, help in understanding who gets annoyed by what and why that is the case. Being informed about these mechanisms of annoyance would serve in providing just, effective and informed policies of noise-detriment prevention.

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