

Barcelona – Creativity and talent in urban environment

Wednesday 11th November 15.30-17.00

Local Polices for Creative City-regions – Deputy Major Tuula Haatainen

Helsinki Region in brief

The Helsinki Region is comprised of 14 municipalities in southern Finland. The centre of Region is Helsinki, the capital of Finland. The region makes all in all 1.3 million inhabitants and 800,000 jobs. The population in the region is growing, according to the current projections.

Creative industries create immaterial value

In the immediate past, the economic growth in the Helsinki Region has relied on development of the information and communication technology cluster. A more versatile economic structure and new, strong industry sectors are needed to complete those growing sectors.

Investments on research and development and the number of patents granted signal that the focus is on developing new technology, systems and ideas and upgrading them into real products. Described with these indicators, the investments in the Helsinki Region are top class at least on an European level. In the European Union countries, an average of 1.9 per cent of the gross domestic product was used for research and development in 2006, whereas in the Helsinki Region the figure was four per cent.

Developing entrepreneurship in traditional and creative industries

In the Helsinki Region, companies equipped with creative competence and capacity for rapid growth could be the key to new and better jobs, productivity growth and management of structural change in economics. Creative competence may create new, independent business activity, which in turn may help other industries improve their products and services.

According to Curtis Carlson, an innovation expert in Silicon Valley, innovation is something that brings additional value to the customer and produces profit to the company. "An idea or a product is an innovation only if someone uses it and finds it useful. Everyone, mastering the right skills, is capable of creating an innovation." Collaboration creates innovation. Prerequisites for collaboration develop in a fertile innovation environment.

Generally innovation environment means, for instance, functional labour market and research and education system. The location of the innovation environment is crucial, since an innovating company is in many ways involved with both the international, national and local environment. The emergence of innovation networks requires various actors to work closely together. Confidence develops from immediate and intensive interaction. Local knowledge centres help companies and research communities searching for new opportunities find each other and create new innovation communities.

Higher education and research institutes give birth to innovations, enterprises and growth

According to the European Union's study report "State of European Cities" Helsinki Region is one of the international knowledge hubs together with cities like Amsterdam, Barcelona, Copenhagen, Dublin, London, Milan, Munich and Stockholm.

Universities have always been powerful actors in developing cities and in creating international networks. Kumpula, Meilahti, Viikki and the City Centre campuses of the University of Helsinki are part of the competitive advantage of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. It is important that the

role of higher education as a fountain of innovation and growth industries will be further developed in the future, as well.

Arabia campus, too, is internationally interesting. Versatile education, traditions and an interesting environment have made the campus world-famous. In the campus you can study e.g. media and motion picture, television and production design. There are also institutes that emphasise the connection with working life and regional development.

Arabia campus area is also a pioneer in developing user-oriented living in Finland. Over 20 different development projects have been created in collaboration with the companies in the area, and at the same time a residential area of 5,000 inhabitants has been built. Arabianranta area is also a founding member of the European Network of Living Labs network that promotes development of user-oriented living.

Innovation activity and growth entrepreneurship in the Helsinki Region will soon get extra boost: Aalto University that combines the University of Art and Design Helsinki, Helsinki University of Technology and Helsinki School of Economics will provide studies on skills required in the knowledge economy.

Aalto University starts operating in January 2010 opening up a world of possibilities for multidisciplinary education and research. The goal for the new university is to be one of the leading institutions in the world in terms of research and education in its own specialized disciplines by 2020.

The other important investment to the higher education was to unite two universities of applied science – Stadia and Evtek – to one multi professional unit Helsinki Metropolia in year 2008.

The new and competitive higher education institute, which measures up to international standards, specializes in innovation and cater for the special needs of the metropolitan area. The training programmes involve close cooperation with businesses and the labour market. This has two main benefits: it improves the students' job opportunities and provides the labour market with skilled labour.

The students number some 14,000 and the staff about 1,100.

As a learning environment, Metropolia fosters the know-how, creativity and well-being of its members. As a university of applied sciences, it focuses specifically on the positive development of the labour market, culture and social aspects of the Helsinki metropolitan area by providing training of high international standard and by producing practical innovations.

The knowledge infrastructure in the Helsinki region is large-scale and diverse. We have nine universities and six universities of applied sciences. The R & D expenditure in the region counts for four percent of the GDP, and the share of the Helsinki region of all investment in R & D in Finland is as high as 40 %. In terms of R & D personnel the Helsinki region performs well in European comparison.

Metropolitan Policy and Urban Research: Co-operation, networking, joining forces

Already in late 1990's the City of Helsinki, the Ministry of Education and the University of Helsinki agreed to intensify their co-operation in the field of urban research. The agreement generated six new professorships at the University for a term of five years. In 2003, when I was the minister of education in Finland, this model was further extended. According to that agreement altogether nine professorships in urban research were achieved, seven professors accommodated at the University of Helsinki and two at the Helsinki Technical University.

The research fields are

- European metropolitan planning,
- urban history,
- social policy,
- urban sociology,
- urban economics,
- urban ecology,
- urban ecosystem,
- urban technological systems,
- and urban geography.

Today, the model of professorships in urban research is being further enlarged. The new structure is developed in the frame of the new national metropolitan policy. The focus of the research is on the specific needs of the metropolitan region.

For the City of Helsinki, and for the entire Helsinki Region, this is a unique opportunity to advance urban research of high quality, to cooperate in the fulfilment of a joint research program, and to make the urban dimension more visible in the university curricula.

City supports and produces creative activities

City of Helsinki has a central role in Finnish arts, culture and creativity. Helsinki dominates the cultural industries, with 35 per cent of these jobs being concentrated in the city. Also, nearly half of all Finnish artists live in the metropolitan area.

In the city of Helsinki's budget for 2009, funding for arts and culture amounted to 121 million euro or about 200 euro per inhabitant. The cultural sector accounted for three per cent of the city's budget expenses.

The city of Helsinki employs over 1000 people in cultural sector, this making up three per cent of the city's entire workforce.

Finally, let me give a few examples on current projects strengthening the creativity and talent base in our city:

- First of all I would like to mention that shortly (in a few years) the Helsinki region's strategy will be completed with a new cultural strategy where creativity and talent are in central role.
- Helsinki region is very multicultural in Finnish content – even if the number of people with foreign background is quite low compared to many other urban regions in the world. The city of Helsinki supports multiculturalism and the wellbeing of immigrant by offering school services for children. Altogether we have several international schools where pupils can study six different languages as their main language. These are - besides Finnish and Swedish - English, German, French, Russian, Chinese, in this autumn started the newest one a Finnish-Spanish school.
- City's big and important cultural investments at the moment are Sibelius Academy, Radio Symphony Orchestra and Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra
- **Helsinki Music Centre** – is under construction in the city centre near the Finlandia Hall. The music centre will not be only a concert hall for classic music. The Sibelius Academy will get new premises there and it will give better possibilities to organize visiting artists and orchestras performances in Helsinki.

- The planning of **a new, modern library and media** house is under way. The library will be located in the heart of the City near several other cultural institutions and the Finnish Parliament House. It will hopefully be a meeting point for people with different age groups, cultural backgrounds or interests and of course it will offer modern electronic library services. Our aim is to get it opened before 2017, the 100th anniversary of Finland.

Investments on events and festivals

- The cultural venues and institutions are not the only way Helsinki wants to promote the creativity in the city. The city of Helsinki's policy for arts and culture highlights festivals and urban events. Every year, Helsinki is a setting of events ranging from small, one-off fringe and experimental events to major festivals for large audiences. Festivals are held year round, but most off all in summer and autumn. Typically, they last for a few days. The largest festival is the annual Helsinki Festival attracting more than 300'000 visitors.

Public funding is important to festivals. Public subsidies cover 30-50 per cent of the average festival costs. Both the Helsinki City Culture and Library board and the Ministry of Education give grants. Additional funding is received from a number of cultural institutes. In a year Helsinki provides financial support to more than 50 festivals, attending by a total of 600'000 visitors.

- I would like to end my presentation by introducing the latest still ongoing project. Helsinki has been accepted to the final, together with Eindhoven, in the competition World Design Capital 2012. The theme of Helsinki is

Open Helsinki – City defined by design.