Tampereen yliopisto
Tampere University

Advanced Urban Analysis 2020

SYSTEMIC WELLBEING IN URBAN STRUCTURE

FOCUS IN SHRINKING AREAS AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

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Tampere University School of Architecture
in collaboration with HYMY and PLANCITY

Systemic Wellbeing in Urban Structure – Focus in Shrinking Areas and Vulnerable Groups
Advanced Urban Analysis, Spring 2020
Tampere University School of Architecture

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PREFACE

Advanced Urban Analysis, a new course at Tampere University, is an example of a collaboration between different faculties and disciplines that share a common major theme – green transition and supporting sustainable urban structure. In the Fall 2020, the theme was looked through spatial boundary conditions of a wider spectrum of wellbeing. The course was carried out in a collaboration with HYMY, a project coordinated by Tampere City Region. The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare and the cities of Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Lahti and Tampere were also involved. The HYMY project provided the students some valuable background information about how to perceive wellbeing and measure its components.

Four different methods of analysis were applied to the course, and they were applied in different cities and in different contexts. This publication showcases two studies with two different research methods. First study that was conducted as an Interner survey using Place Standard tool developed in Scotland, looks at three different areas in Kuopio. The second one is a a map-based Maptionnaire survey of Huhtasuo district in Jyväskylä. Interviews with people at risk of marginalization, which were planned to be carried out as part of Huhtasuo's research, were eventually prevented by Coronavirus restrictions. One student group performed spatial data analyzes of factors affecting wellbeing, e.g. parks and services. These analyses will be published separately later.

The Place Standard tool piloted in Kuopio proved to be a very effective tool to assess wellbeing factors related to a place or area. In accordance with the wishes of the city's representatives, the survey was directed to three very different types of districts, Vehmersalmi, Kurkimäki and Petonen-Pyörö. A total of 140 people responded to the survey. Rural areas were suffering, as expected, from weak public transport and a lack of services and jobs. The larger suburban center Petonen-Pyörö received a better rating from the respondents. Surprisingly, in the vast majority of themes, different types of areas appeared to be similar to each other. Nature, identity and a sense of security got good grades everywhere. Petonen-Pyörö's poor reputation was not reflected in the results of this survey, but the area seemed to be well-liked. An interesting result was that respondents felt that their ability to influence on things in their own area is quite poor in all three places. Hence, there might be a need to consider different participation and involvement methods.

Huhtasuo in Jyväskylä is a very typical Finnish forest suburb completed in the 1970's that consists of Kangaslampi, Sulu and Kaakkolammi. In 2019, the population of the area was 9323. The look of the area was renewed in 2015, when the Huhtasuo school and kindergarten center was completed next to Huhtakeskus, the commercial core of the area. The Maptionare survey, conducted in the spring 2020, was answered by 441 people. The amount of answers can be considered quite good, even though there were significantly more women than men among the respondents. One recognised strenghts of Huhtasuo was its closeness to nature, and many of the routes drawn by the residents in the survey passed through nature areas. Respondents to the survey considered Huhtakeskus' services to be reasonably good, but the center is in poor condition and would require urgent renovation. The overal look of the whole area was seen quite deteriorated. However, residents wanted more diverse services and a resident structure, more diverse housing options and better public transport to the city center. To increase the number of inhabitants, one option could be to condense and diversify the Huhtakeskus environment when the mall is renovated. The Huhtasuo School and Kindergarten Center is a promising start to this work.

Warm thanks to Heli Suuronen and Satu Kankkonen from the HYMY project, Ilona Mansikka from Helsinki-Uusimaa Region and the cities of Jyväskylä, Kuopio and Lahti, who were involved in various stages by a large number of designers and other officials.

In Tampere, the 21th of May 2021

Course's teachers Damiano Cerrone,
Markus Laine & Panu Lehtovuori

ESIPUHE

Yhdyskuntasuunnittelun analyysit on uusi kurssi Tampereen yliopiston tarjonnassa. Kurssi on esimerkki tiedekuntien ja tieteenalojen välisestä yhteistyöstä yhteisen suuren teeman – vihreän siirtymän ja sitä tukevan kestävän kaupunkirakenteen – ympärillä. Syksyllä 2020 tähän kysymykseen otettiin tulokulmaksi laajasti ymmärretyn hyvinvoinnin tilalliset reunaehdot. Kurssi teki yhteistyötä Tampereen kaupunkiseudun koordinoiman HYMY-hankeen kanssa. Hankkeessa on mukana Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos sekä Jyväskylän, Kuopion, Lahden ja Tampereen kaupungit. HYMY-hankkeesta saimme opiskelijoille paljon taustatietoa hyvinvoinnin hahmottamisesta ja sen osatekijöiden mittaamisesta.

Kurssin oppisisällöksi valikoitui neljä erilaista analyysin menetelmää, joita sovellettiin eri kaupungeissa ja eri konteksteissa. Tässä julkaisussa tuodaan yhteen Kuopion kolmelle alueelle tehty tutkimus, joka tehtiin Internet-kyselynä sovittaen Skotlannissa kehitettyä Place Standard -työkalua ja Jyväskylän Huhtasuon kaupunginosaan tehty tutkimus, jonka aineistona on karttapohjainen Maptionnaire-kysely. Koronaviruksen aiheuttamat rajoitukset estivät lopulta marginalisoitumisriskissä olevien ihmisten haastattelujen tekemisen, joita kaavailtiin osaksi Huhtasuon tutkimusta. Yksi opiskelijaryhmä teki paikkatietoanalyysejä hyvinvointiin vaikuttavien tekijöiden, mm. puistojen ja palveluiden, saavutettavuudesta. Nämä analyysit julkaistaan myöhemmin erikseen.

Kuopiossa pilotoitu Place Standard -työkalu osoittautui varsin toimivaksi paikkaan tai alueeseen liittyvien hyvinvointitekijöiden arviointivälineeksi. Kaupungin edustajien toiveiden mukaisesti kysely suunnattiin kolmeen hyvin erityyppiseen kaupunginosaan, Vehmersalmelle, Kurkimäkeen ja Petonen-Pyöröön. Kyselyyn vastasi yhteensä 140 ihmistä. Maaseutumaiset alueet kärsivät odotetulla tavalla julkisen liikenteen heikkoudesta sekä palveluiden ja työpaikkojen niukkuudesta. Suurehko lähiökeskus Petonen-Pyörö sai näissä teemoissa vastaajilta paremman arvion. Yllättävää on se, että valtaosassa teemoja eri tyyppiset alueet vaikuttavat keskenään samanlaisilta. Luonto, identiteetti ja turvallisuuden tunne saavat hyvät arvosanat kaikkialla. Petonen-Pyörön huonohko maine ei näy tämän kyselyn tuloksissa, vaan alue vaikuttaa hyvinkin pidetyltä. Kiinnostava tulos on se, että vastaajat kokevat mahdollisuutensa vaikuttaa oman alueen asioihin melko huonoksi kaikissa kolmessa paikassa. Tämä saattaa antaa aihetta pohtia osallistumisen ja osallistamisen menettelyjä.

Jyväskylän Huhtasuo on varsin tyypillinen 1970-luvulla valmistunut Suomalainen metsälähiö, joka koostuu Kangaslammesta, Sulusta ja Kaakkolammista. Vuonna 2019 alueen väestö oli 9323. Alueen ilme uudistui vuonna 2015, kun alueen kaupallisen ytimen, Huhtakeskuksen, viereen valmistui Huhtasuon koulu- ja päiväkotikeskus. Keväällä 2020 toteutettuun Maptionare kyselyyn vastasi 441 ihmistä, jota voidaan pitää varsin hyvänä, vaikka naisia oli vastaajien joukossa huomattavasti miehiä enemmän. Huhtasuon vahvuutena nähdään luonnonläheinen ympäristö, ja monet asukkaiden kyselyyn piirtämistä reiteistä kulkevat luontoalueilla. Kyselyyn vastaajat pitivät Huhtakeskuksen palveluita kohtuullisen hyvinä, mutta keskus on huonossa kunnossa ja vaatisi pikaista uudistamista. Myös koko alueen ilme on monin paikoin rapistunut. Asukkaat toivoivat kuitenkin monipuolisempia palveluja, asukasrakennetta, monipuolisempia asumisen vaihtoehtoja ja parempia joukkoliikenneyhteyksiä keskustaan. Yksi vaihtoehto olisi lisätä asukasmäärää tiivistämällä, ja monipuolistamalla Huhtakeskuksen ympäristöä, kun ostoskeskus uudistetaan. Huhtasuon koulu- ja päiväkotikeskus on tälle työlle lupaava alku.

Lämpimät kiitokset HYMY-hankkeen Heli Suuroselle ja Satu Kankkoselle, Uudenmaan liiton Ilona Mansikalle sekä Jyväskylän, Kuopion ja Lahden kaupungeille, joista oli eri vaiheissa mukana iso joukko suunnittelijoita ja muita virkahenkilöitä.

Tampereella 21.5.2021

Kurssin opettajat Damiano Cerrone,
Markus Laine & Panu Lehtovuori

KUOPIO

PLACE'S QUALITIES AND THE PRODUCTION OF EXPERIENTIAL WELLBEING

Maiju Ratala, Simo Saari & Mikko Toivanen

ABSTRACT

The physical structure and the environmental qualities of an area have an impact on the well-being of its residents. While people can feel well in areas that differ considerably in spatial qualities, there seems to be some common aspects that improve the experiential wellbeing of residents in general. The spatial qualities relate to the social aspects of an area, which can further affect the residents' wellbeing. Focusing on three neighbourhoods of Kuopio, a medium-sized city in Eastern Finland, this paper aims to clarify what kind of aspects in the built environment contribute to the experiential wellbeing and how those aspects could be further developed by the means of urban planning.

The spatial qualities of three areas (the former municipality of Vehmersalmi, rural district of Kurkimäki and the suburban housing estate of Petonen-Pyörö) were assessed using a modified version of the Place Standard tool in the form of an internet questionnaire. The results show that even though the areas differ greatly in their physical configuration, their residents seem to appreciate similar qualities in them. Methodologically Place Standard Tool was useful in studying the interaction between places and its residents, and all the different aspects of wellbeing were covered in the questionnaire. Overall, the tool can be used in spatially localizing the issues connected to experiential wellbeing. Therefore, it can be seen as a worthy instrument in providing background information for planning and policy.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Alueen fyysinen rakenne ja ympäristön laatu vaikuttavat eittämättä alueen asukkaiden hyvinvointiin. Vaikuttaa siltä, että vaikka ihmiset voivat tuntea olonsa hyväksi alueellisilta ominaisuuksiltaan huomattavasti erilaisillakin alueilla, on olemassa joitakin ominaisuuksia, jotka parantavat asukkaiden yleistä kokemuksellista hyvinvointia. Nämä puolestaan liittyvät alueen sosiaalisiin ominaisuuksiin, mikä edelleen myötävaikuttaa asukkaiden hyvinvointiin. Tässä artikkelissa pyritään selvittämään, millaiset rakennetun ympäristön ominaisuudet vaikuttavat kokemukselliseen hyvinvointiin ja miten näitä ominaisuuksia voitaisiin kehittää edelleen kaupunkisuunnittelun avulla. Selvitystyö on tehty katsomalla tarkemmin Kuopion, keskisuuren itäsuomalaisen kaupungin, kolmea kaupunginosaa. Kolmen alueen (entinen Vehmersalmen kunta, Kurkimäen maaseutu ja Petonen-Pyörön esikaupunkialue) alueelliset ominaisuudet arvioitiin käyttämällä muokattua versiota Place Standard -työkalusta. Verkkokyselyn kautta saadut tulokset osoittavat, että vaikka alueet eroavat fyysisiltä rakenteiltaan, niiden asukkaat näyttävät arvostavan alueiden samanlaisia ominaisuuksia. Metodologisesti Place Standard -työkalu on hyödyllinen tutkittaessa paikkojen ja sen asukkaiden välistä vuorovaikutusta, ja kaikki hyvinvoinnin eri osatekijät on käsitelty kyselylomakkeessa. Kaiken kaikkiaan työkalua voidaan käyttää kokemukselliseen hyvinvointiin liittyvien kysymysten tilallisessa paikantamisessa. Siksi sitä voidaankin pitää arvokkaana suunnittelua ja kaupunkipolitiikkaa tukevien taustatietojen tuottamisvälineenä.

INTRODUCTION

The built environment and our everyday life are inevitably in a constant interaction with each other. The decisions that are made in a planning process will define widely the environment that people are experiencing. When aiming to increase residents' wellbeing in a specific location, it is important to understand and study the interactions of people and their built surroundings.

First of all, wellbeing is a combination of different physical, social and psychological elements. One of the most credited wellbeing-theorists, Erik Allardt (1976), divides individual wellbeing in three different factors. In his theory, the physical side of wellbeing is related to health, material wealth and education. In other terms, physical side of wellbeing is something to have or possess. Social wellbeing is related to social capital, belonging to a community and quality and quantity of social relations. Physical wellbeing is related to self-expression, identity and dignity. In Allardt's theory, all of these different sides of wellbeing are simplified in three different descriptive words – having, loving, being – while complete wellbeing is a combination of all of these factors. Wellbeing is a holistic integrity that cannot be explained with only health-related factors.

The same division is relevant to spatial locations and places. When interaction between person and place is formed, the process could be analyzed through 1) the person itself, 2) the psychological process that the person is undergoing and 3) the attributes of a place as a social and physical location (Scannell & Gifford 2010).

The bond between a place and a person that is related to the characteristics of the person itself occurs both in personal and in group levels. In personal level, meaningful tie to the place could be formed through previous experiences, personal memories or realizations. In group level, tie to the place could be formed through symbolic and cultural meanings that place has to the group of people. At psychological level, the person-place bonding involves emotional connection to a place. Also, the place itself could be provoking specific behavioral patterns in specific locations. (Scannell & Gifford 2010.)

The third element, the place as a physical and social entity, includes built environment in the process. However, the built environment includes also the people that are using the place and forming the base of social connections (Scannell & Gifford 2010). Therefore, it should be pointed out that the built environment is not only physical – it is also an intersection of different people that allows social interaction.

When these three elements are well presented in a place and a solid and meaningful bond between a person and a place is present, *place attachment* is formed (Hidalgo & Hernandez 2001; Relph 1976). In many studies, strong place attachment is significantly connected to the increase subjective wellbeing. (Rollero & De Piccoli 2010; Scannell &

Gifford 2017.) When analyzing relations between places and wellbeing all the factors that increase place attachment – social, physical and psychological –, should be covered in the analysis. In other words, the built environment itself does not answer to the promotion of wellbeing but combined with the actions, behavior and emotions of actual people that are using the space covers the topic much more fundamentally.

However, many studies in environmental psychology suggest that specific environments have positive effects on health. Green environment, like forests, have been associated with increasing psychological wellbeing and reduced stress levels compared to the urban environment. (Takayama & al. 2014; Tyrvänen & al. 2014; Bornioli & al. 2018.) Also, urban blue environment, like lakes and seaside, are associated with increasing wellbeing (Völker & Kistemann 2013). Furthermore, spatial openness, visual order and good maintenance of buildings and public spaces are associated with 'likeability' of the built environment, with effects to behaviour and wellbeing (Nasar 1998). Overall, health promoting environments have characters like easy access to greenery, walkability, perceived safety and perceived pleasantness (Abraham, 2010).

HEALTH AND WELLBEING CORRELATION IN KUOPIO AREA

Health and wellbeing are two different states and they are not necessarily correlating to each other. In Allardt's theory (1976), health is something that is a part of wellbeing, but not fundamentally needed to achieve a higher state of wellbeing. If the physical factor, (in Allardt's theory, having) is inadequate, overall wellbeing could be rather high if the social and psychological factors are still solid enough to contribute to the overall subjective wellbeing. In the Kuopio area, this has been the situation according to national health and wellbeing statistics. In the statistics on population health by region and population group (THL 2014-2016), Kuopio is very close to the bottom ten percent of the unhealthiest municipalities in Finland. When looking at the bottom ten unhealthiest municipalities, four of them are next to the city of Kuopio. When looking at the mental health statistics, Kuopio is ranked at bottom 16th and out of the bottom 20 municipalities, seven are located in 70 km radius from Kuopio.

However, these health issues do not seem to correlate to the subjective wellbeing in Kuopio. In EuroHIS-8 survey (2015), the percentage of Kuopio residents who rate their quality of life good, was 57 %. Compared to the average result in the whole country, Kuopio's result is three percent above the average. Also, in the National School Health Survey for Schools (THL 2017 & 2019), Kuopio ranked above the Finnish average result when asking about if students are very satisfied with life in general.

City of Kuopio has carried out a survey about the experienced well-being of its citizens independently (Nieminen 2019). Even though the answers of the survey are not comparable on the national level, the results are in line with the previous national subjective wellbeing survey results. In the survey, in the scale of 1-10, answers to the question "If every different aspect of life is considered, how happy you are?" got the result of 7,72 in average for men and 8,14 in average for women.

This observation indicates that the state of wellbeing is something more than only health-related aspects. Wellbeing should be analysed through social, physical and psychological connections that people are having within the interaction with the built surroundings and physical and social places. In other words, residents themselves, environment and social connections are contributing to the overall subjective wellbeing of the residents.

CASE AREAS

The case areas of this study were selected based on suggestions by the Kuopio city planning authorities and therefore present different kind of qualities and issues to be assessed. The former municipality of Vehmersalmi presents case of rural shrinkage with issues of ageing and declining population and partial depletion of local services. Petonen-Pyörö in turn serves as a case of a Finnish suburban housing estate. Although being younger than most of the suburban housing estates in Finland, it has many of the qualities that are usually associated to these kinds of environments. The rural village of Kurkimäki has been included in the study with a comparative purpose and in contrast to Vehmersalmi represents a well-doing small near-city rural village with a stable population and comparably high level of employment even on the national level.

VEHMERSALMI

The former municipal centre of Vehmersalmi is located approximately 50 km southeast from Kuopio city centre. In general, the area of the formerly rural municipality is mostly comprised of forest and agricultural land. The municipal centre is built sparsely with mostly residential small houses with some larger commercial units and public facilities, and only two multi-storey apartment buildings. Some cultural heritage exists in the centrer (e.g. old parsonage, school building, church), the oldest buildings being from the mid-19th century (Pohjois-Savon liitto 2006, 92-94). However, the majority of the building stock in the centre was built during the years 1970-1990. The centre contains basic services, including a health care centre, a library, an elementary school and a grocery store. The public transport (bus) operates three times a day on weekdays, the travel time to city centre being one hour.

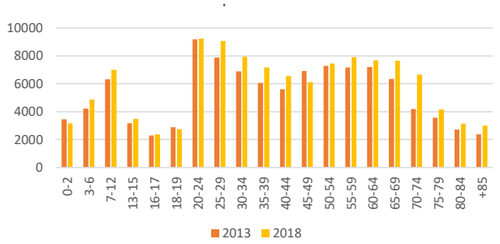


Diagram 1. Kuopio's population according to age.

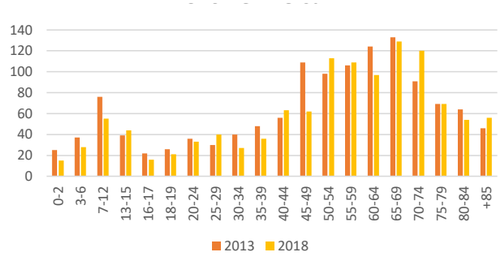


Diagram 2. Vehmersalmi's population according to age.

In 2005, the municipality was annexed to Kuopio. Its population was mildly decreasing already before the annexation and has continued to decrease. In 2013, the population was 1275, reaching 1187 in 2018. The age distribution is pronounced in the ages over 50. Between 2013 and 2018, the population has decreased or remained the same in most of the age groups. The unemployment rate in the area in 2017 was 12,6%. (Tilastokeskus.)

PETONEN-PYÖRÖ

Petonen-Pyörö is suburban housing estate, or a so-called "new town", located approximately 10 km from the city centre. The core of the area (Pyörö) comprises of mostly multi-storey apartment buildings built around a curved central esplanade (Pyörönkaari). Widespread single-family housing surrounds the core. The general planning of the whole area started in the beginning of 1980s. The area was envisioned as a "softened compact city": extensive single-family housing with irregular street alignment, connected by parks and natural areas, was planned around the more orthogonal centre. (Kosonen 2007, 18; Purdy 2010, 58). Concerning the amount of services, the area was supposed act as the regional centre for the whole southern urban area of the city of Kuopio (Purdy 2010, 56).

In 1984, an open ideas competition was arranged to design the Pyörä centre. One goal of the competition was to find new alternatives for the generic suburban housing estate typologies of the 1960s and 1970s. The competition resulted with two second prizes awarded to proposals by architects Reino Helminen and Olli Elo. Neither one of the proposals was realized as such, but ideas from both were used in the planning. (Purdy 2010, 56.) The construction of the area started in 1986 and continued to the late 1990s (Kosonen 2007, 18). The recession of the early 1990s had a significant impact on the realization of the area. Some of the planning principles (especially concerning the commercial services) had to be compromised and the amount of rental housing became higher than what was originally planned. The area still received a prize of excellence from the Finnish

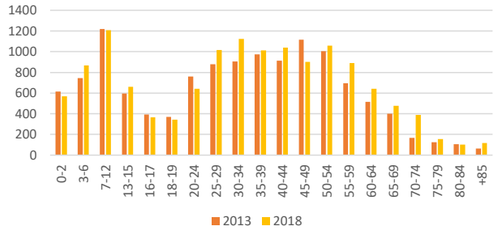


Diagram 3. Litmanen's population according to age.

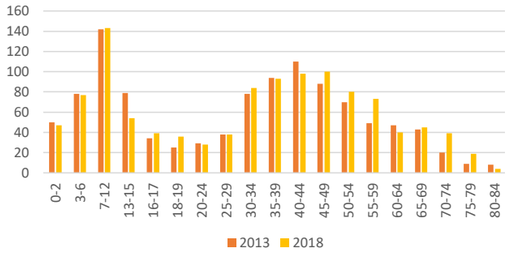


Diagram 4. Kurkiamäki's population according to age.

Association of Architects (SAFA) in 1991. (Kosonen 2007, 18; Purdy 2010, 59-60.)

The central area of Pyörö has many services, including three supermarkets and a swimming hall, and frequent public transport connections to the city centre. A campus of the National Emergency Services Academy is also located in the area. In 2012, a large shopping mall Matkus was built in Matkus 4 km southwest from the area. The central neighborhood has a bad reputation, which in some sources is said to be mostly exaggerated (see e.g., Seppänen 2015; Jauhiainen 2018). It is nevertheless represented in the crime statistics as one of the more restless and violent subdistricts of the city. (Kuopion kaupungin turvallisuussuunitelma 2012-2015, 18).

The population statistics of Petonen-Pyörö (zip code area Litmanen) shows an increment in the population (a total of 12 551 in 2013 and 13 572 in 2018), with the age distribution being somewhat similar to the rest of the city. The population has increased in most of the age groups. Litmanen is the area with the highest number of foreign residents in Kuopio (397, or 3% of the area population in 2017). The unemployment rate in 2017 was 13,7%. (Tilastokeskus.)

KURKIMÄKI

Kurkimäki is a small rural village and a subdistrict of Kuopio located approximately 25 km southwest from the city centre. It was one of the most significant residential villages of the former rural municipality of Kuopio (*Kuopion maalaiskunta*) (Pohjois-Savon liitto 2006, 82). A railroad passes the village on the east side, with an old historically significant station area located approximately 50 meters west from it. The passenger traffic has been discontinued, and the railyard is now used for loading timber. The central part of the village is mostly built with residential small houses of various ages arranged close to the passing road. It has an elementary school (classes 1-6), a library and some private small businesses but lacks other basic services. The public transport connections are infrequent, with only one bus line operating twice a day in weekdays to the city centre, and once in the opposite direction, the travel time being 30-40 minutes.

The population of Kurkimäki has remained more or less the same with a slight increase in recent years (1098 in 2013 and 1148 in 2018). The age distribution is somewhat similar to Petonen, pronouncing more to the younger age groups. Between 2013 and 2018, the population has grown especially in the older age groups, as well as in the ages between 16 and 19. The unemployment rate in 2017 was 5,9% (Tilastokeskus).

ADDRESSING POPULATION CHANGES IN RURAL AREAS

Finland is one of the least urbanised countries in Europe with 95% of the country's area being classified as rural and 31% of the population living in these areas (Rural Policy in Finland). In the Finnish urban-rural -classification, rural areas are divided into four classes: local centers in rural areas, rural areas close to urban areas, rural heartland areas and sparsely populated rural areas (Helminen et al. 2014). The two study areas of this paper represent two different classes: the former municipality of Vehmersalmi located at the sparsely populated rural area and the village of Kurkimäki being a rural area close to an urban area.

The different types of areas present different issues to be assessed. Many rural areas in Finland as well as in the rest of Europe are declining in population, and many of them are shrinking (ESPON 2020, 2). However, not all of the areas that are declining in population are facing the phenomenon of *rural shrinkage*, and if the population balance is distorted, the area can experience shrinkage even if the population in total is not declining. Moreover, rural areas differ and some of them seem to be statistically quite well-off, as in case of Kurkimäki.

While depopulation is usually used as a primary indicator of rural shrinkage, it is considered more as a "symptom rather than the cause". The actual phenomenon of *rural shrinkage* is a result of interrelated socio-economic factors. With the restructuring of agriculture and job and study opportunities concentrating on urban centres, some areas are facing out-migration of especially younger residents, which leads to lack of investments and disadvantageous population balance. This creates a cycle that is "intensifying the inherent disadvantages of rural areas". (ESPON 2020, 3.)

Traditional top-down planning culture has long been based on the assumption of growth, both of the economy and of the population. Therefore, the traditional ways of planning are not necessarily the best in responding to the changes in areas that are either declining in population or shrinking. As an alternative to the traditional planning culture, Hermans et al. (2018) have presented what they describe as *the culture of degrowth.* They argue that understanding the dynamics of shrinkage requires a paradigm shift: the perspective of growth has to be contested, and an alternative approach to understand shrinkage as an individual phenomenon has to be adopted. (Hermans et al. 2018, 18.)

Hospers & Reverda (2015) have explained the differences between the approach to planning in the situation of growth vis-à-vis the situation of shrinkage. The traditional growth-based planning is focused on the production of mere physical building volume. This is rooted in the scarcity of space, which occurs in the situation of a growing population: too large population exists in too little space, and thus more space has to be built. However, in shrinkage a surplus of spatial resources exists and too few people are using them. Shrinking areas thus need to "narrow down", which in turn needs assessment of the services and amenities

that the people of the area can and cannot do without. (Hermans et al., 2018, 20; see also Verma & Taegen 2018, 10.) To maintain the quality and meaning of life of the residents, the focus of the planning has to be put on to the qualitative aspects of the environment (Hermans et al., 2018, 20), leading in good cases to "smart shrinkage" or "smart decline" that adds societal value in a resource-efficient way (Hollander & Németh 2011; Popper & Popper 2002).

Important is the active role of citizens. Reverda (2011) has noted, that shrinking areas tend to naturally turn inwards and away from "modern networks". Therefore, it is important to encourage the residents in developing their area. Kerstin Faber and Philip Oswalt (2013) describe the active residents in shrinking regions as "co-owners and co-producers" of space. The interaction of people can be seen to form *social capital* which is especially important for shrinking regions. (Hermans et al. 2018, 23-24.)

In connecting the social and qualitative aspects to the actual planning practice, Verma & Taegen (2018, 11) have noted that the "actions related to planning and service development should contribute to social cohesion within the community". Since the number of elderly residents in shrinking regions is growing, it is important to keep their needs in mind in the development of services and aim to include them in social activities. However, in order for the area to be attractive in the future, it has to provide services also for other age groups. (Verma & Taegen 2018, 10.)

SPATIAL AND SOCIAL QUALITIES OF SUBURBAN HOUSING ESTATES IN FINLAND

Suburban housing estates *("lähiö"* in Finnish) are a type of urban environments that were mostly built during the 1960s and the 1970s. They were usually designed away from the city centres and comprised mostly of prefabricated concrete multi-storey apartment buildings. (see e.g., Kemppainen 2017, 31.) Even though most of the suburban housing estates were planned and realized during the 1960s and 1970s, some areas that can be described as such were built also later on, for example, the central area of Petonen-Pyörö in Kuopio. Many of these areas have gained poor reputation and have been associated to different structural and socio-economic problems, such as social segregation, housing decline and high levels of unemployment. (e.g., Van Aerschot & Salminen 2018; Kemppainen 2017; Stjernberg 2015.) The problems increased remarkably after the recession of early 1990s and, in many cases, have since continued to grow (Stjernberg 2015).

The suburban housing estates have been a much discussed and recurring subject in both general and academic discussion. The academic discussion on the subject has concentrated mostly on the problems (Kemppainen 2017, 38). However, several studies have indicated that the problems are rooted not only in the social conditions and often relatively high percentage of social housing in the areas, but also in their physical and spatial properties. The typical fragmented structure of the housing estates with often vaguely defined outdoor spaces, poorly constructed and often bleak physical environment and lack of meeting places for the youth complement the different social issues. (Kemppainen 2017, 39.)

However, in spite of the issues, the residents of these areas can still perceive them as preferable places to live in (Van Aerschot & Salminen 2018, 249). Generally, residents seem to value the good accessibility and the availability of local services and the greenness and openness of the areas. The reputation of the areas does not always relate to the residents' experience of places, especially among the middle-class inhabitants. (Vilkama & Vaattovaara 2015, 217.) Moreover, the suburban housing estates in Finland differ greatly. Their development is mostly dependent of the development of the wider urban area, and some of them are even considered doing rather well (Stjernberg 2015, see also Kemppainen 2017, 33). As in shrinking rural areas, the *social capital* formed in the interaction of the residents can be seen as crucial for the quality of life (Saarinen et al. 2013; Van Aerschot & Salminen 2018).

PLACE STANDARD TOOL IN ASSESSING SPATIAL QUALITIES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

We used a modified version of the Place Standard tool to study residents' opinions on their neighbourhood and formed online questionnaire based on the original tool. The Place standard tool is a method for assessing places and it is developed as collaboration between the Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland (National Health Services) and Architecture and Design Scotland. The tool evaluates the nature of a chosen place using 14 themes that are moving around, public transport, traffic and parking, streets and spaces, natural space, play and recreation, facilities and amenities, work and local economy, housing and community, social contact, identity and belonging, feeling safe, care and maintenance, influence and sense of control. Each theme has its own question that is assessed from 1 to 7. The Place Standard Tool examines physical elements and social aspects of place that can also have an effect on health and wellbeing of the people. Its aim is to help identify the targets of development and strengths of the place. (Place Standard.)

Our online survey consisted of background questions and multiple-choice questions about the quality of the respondent's neighbourhood. These questions were translated to Finnish from the Place Standard Tool and covered 14 themes concerning the living environment. Respondents assessed the place with rating from 1 to 7 and had the possibility to give one's reasons for the rating verbally. We did our best to retain the meaning of the questions in the translation, but it is important to notice that some words had a slight difference in meaning when translated into Finnish. For example, *amenities and facilities* turned into "palvelut" in Finnish which is closer to the meaning of services and *play and recreation* was translated to "virkistys ja vapaa-aika", which means recreation and free time in English. Also *moving around* was translated differently in Finnish ("kävely ja pyöräily", meaning walking and cycling). At the end of the questionnaire there were five open questions that concerned the facilities and amenities used in the residential area and outside of it, the targets for development, the redeeming features of the area and general comments. The survey was carried out online and passed on to the respondents via regional Facebook-groups and residents' associations.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

There were 144 respondents to the online survey. 107 of them were female, 35 were male and one respondent did not want to answer or was other than female or male. The women's share is emphasized in the survey compared to the distribution by gender. 11 respondents were under 25 years old, 24 respondents were 25-34 years old, 31 were 35-44 years old, 33 were 45-54 years old, 26 were 55-64 years old and 19 respondents were 65-74 years old. None of the respondents were over 75 years old. Comparing the respondents' age structure to the age structure of the population in Kuopio, age groups in the middle of the age spectrum are over-represented whereas the ages under 25 and over 74 are largely under-represented. There are no distinctive differences in respondents' age structure when comparing them by gender.

60 respondents answered from Vehmersalmi, 19 from Kurkimäki, 31 from Petonen-Pyörö and individual answers came from Maaninka, Nilsiä, Karttula, Muuruvesi, Palonurmi, Pitkälähti, Palonurmi, city centre, Rönö, Kelloniemi, Pihlajalaakso, Pirtti, Särkilahti, Saaristokaupunki, Haapaniemi, Julkula, Rypysuo, Hiltulanlahti, Riistavesi, Jynkkä and Juankoski. Also, the postal code area was asked in the survey. 50 respondents told that their postal code area was 71310 (Vehmersalmi), the postal code area for 30 respondents were 70820 (Litmanen) and 17 respondents told that their postal code area was 71480 (Kurkimäki). There were also individual answers outside these postal code areas.

The respondents were asked about their highest completed degree. The educational background for 13 of the respondents were comprehensive school. Upper secondary level degree (general upper secondary education or vocational education and training) was highest for 54 of the respondents. 69 had finished higher education at a university or a university of applied sciences. Postgraduate degrees (i.e. licentiate and doctoral degree) was highest degree for 5 of the respondents and 2 respondents had completed none of the previous. The majority of the respondents lived in a single-family house or a terraced house and had a car in use. 116 respondents lived in a single-family house or a terraced house, 22 lived in a block of flats and 6 chose the option "something else". 121 respondents had a car in use and 23 did not.

THE PLACE STANDARD RATINGS

Moving around (namely walking and cycling) was scored remarkably higher in the Petonen-Pyörö area compared to the other two areas. The open answers from Petonen-Pyörö showed

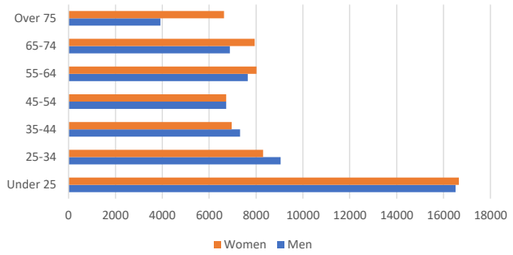


Diagram 5. Kuopio's population's age structure

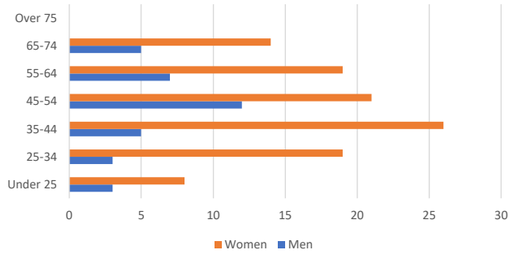


Diagram 5. Survey's respondents' age structure

contentment to the facilities of walking and cycling, whereas the respondents of Vehmersalmi and Kurkimäki hoped for more biking and walking paths. A wish for a biking path from Kurkimäki to the city centre of Kuopio was brought up in several answers. *Public transport* was the theme that had the most distinct differences when inspecting the results regionally. For example, in the Petonen-Pyörö area the average was 6,23 and in Kurkimäki 1,63. This can also be noticed from the open answers where respondents could give their reasons for the rating. The open answers for Petonen-Pyörö were mainly positive about public transportation but the respondents of Vehmersalmi and Kurkimäki criticised the public transport timetable.

The differences in these two categories can be obviously seen to result from the denser and the more urban physical structure of the Petonen-Pyörö area, its nearness from the city centre and its role as a suburban housing estate vis-á-vis the more rural and peripheral character and the low density of the built structure in the two other areas. As mentioned already in the area descriptions, the service level of the public transport is weak in Vehmersalmi and Kurkimäki, which is clearly represented in the questionnaire. *Traffic and parking* and *streets and spaces,* in turn, were scored somewhat similarly across the three case areas, the former being 4,96 and the latter 4,87 on average.

The *natural space* was rated superbly regardless of the region (6,54 on average). Taking into consideration the different character of the study areas, it was surprising that they did not show a distinct difference of rating in this category. In the open answers the respondents of Vehmersalmi brought up the fact that they lived in the middle of nature, but also the open answers from Petonen-Pyörö and Kurkimäki were generally positive about the natural space and closeness of it.

Play and recreation was scored slightly higher in the Petonen-Pyörö (5,68) than in the other two areas (4,69 in Vehmersalmi and 4,83 in Kurkimäki), and so was the *facilities and amenities.* The latter was especially poorly rated in Kurkimäki where the average was 3,00. Vehmersalmi scored slightly better, the rating for it being 4,07, and Petonen-Pyörö exceeded with the rating of 5,65. Again, the results can be seen to somewhat reflect the different rate of urbanity and the density of the areas. The respondents of Kurkimäki hoped for a grocery store in their open answers but Petonen-Pyörö and Vehmersalmi seemed to have the basic services that the respondents expect. The lack of a grocery store probably affected the poor ratings in Kurkimäki.

The overall average for *work and local economy* was 3,3. This was notably low compared to other ratings, and in addition to *public transport* was the only category rated under 4 in general. In the open answers the respondents of Vehmersalmi and Kurkimäki brought up that in the areas themselves there are not a lot of job opportunities and therefore people mainly commute to the city centre. *Housing and community,* in turn, was rated somewhat similarly across the areas, the overall average being 4,94. Here, the respondents of Vehmersalmi seemed to be concerned with the remaining of the existing services in the area.

Social contact displayed the best ratings in Petonen-Pyörö (4,81). Vehmersalmi was second with the rating of 4,26, and Kurkimäki was rated 3,58 respectively. *Identity and belonging* was rated evenly across the areas, the rating being 5,3 on average. Several open answers from Petonen-Pyörö mentioned the bad reputation of the area but the respondents disagreed with that in the numeral ratings. A wish for spaces for people to socialize and spend time was brought up especially in Petonen. The current restaurant selection was said to comprise mostly of bars and pubs, and a wish for a local café was made. In the rural areas the open answers showed a wish for common spaces of gathering, but nevertheless emphasized the good belonging to the place. The practice of social contact in these areas was reported to be mainly up to one's individual activity and everyday encounters.

The overall average for *feeling safe* was 6,06. In addition to *natural space* this was the other theme in which the average was over 6. The ratings showed only slight differences, and in general, the respondents felt safe regardless of the area. *Care and maintenance* and *influence and sense of control* also scored evenly across the areas, the overall average for the former being 4,52, and for the latter 4,24. In the open answers Petonen was considered safe despite of its reputation. The ability to affect to the decisions made by the city authorities

	Kurkimäki	Petonen-Pyörö	Vehmersalmi	All
Moving around	4.61	6.16	4.53	4.92
Public Transport	1.63	6.23	2.17	3.25
Traffic and Parking	5.06	5.67	4.79	4.96
Streets ands Spaces	5.21	5.45	4.55	4.87
Natural Space	6.74	6.45	6.53	6.54
Play and Recreation	4.83	5.68	4.69	4.93
Facilities and Amenities	3.00	5.65	4.07	4.39
Work and Local Econonmy	2.67	4.13	3.00	3.30
Housing and Community	5.17	5.55	4.74	4.94
Social Contact	3.58	4.81	4.26	4.25
Identity and Belonging	5.63	5.19	5.24	5.30
Feeling Safe	6.32	5.52	6.16	6.06
Care and Maintenance	4.47	5.06	4.16	4.52
Influence and Sense of Control	4.76	4.23	4.14	4.24

Averages of survey results in different study areas and average of all the answers.

Kurkimäki N = 19, Petonen-Pyörö N = 31, Vehmersalmi N = 60. Under average results underlined, over average results bolded.

concerning the rural areas was considered very weak, but the local governance in these areas was seen to be working rather well.

In general, compared to the overall averages of the whole survey, Kurkimäki got under average results in *moving around, public transport, play and recreation, facilities and amenities, work and local economy, social contact* and *care and maintenance*. Petonen-Pyörö got under average results in *natural space, identity and belonging, feeling safe and influence* and *sense of control*. Vehmersalmi got under average results in *moving around, public transport, traffic and parking, streets and spaces, play and recreation, facilities and amenities, work and local economy, housing and community, identity and belonging, care and maintenance* and *influence and sense of control.*

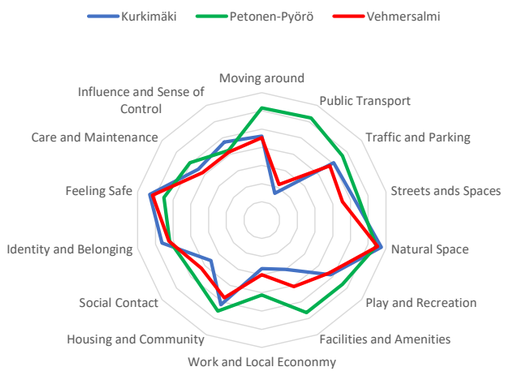
OPEN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

135 respondents had answered to the question "What facilities and amenities/services you are using the most in the target area?" The main difference between the areas was, that the respondents of Kurkimäki do not have a grocery store to use, so it was not mentioned in the answers. 132 respondents had answered to the question "What facilities and amenities/services you are using the most elsewhere?" The main similarity between the answers were that shopping centres, supermarkets and specialized shops were mentioned.

106 respondents answered to the question "Is there something missing in your neighbourhood? What would be the most important targets for development to you?" The respondents of Vehmersalmi hoped for another grocery store, more distractions, restaurant and remaining of the existing services. In Petonen-Pyörö, the respondents wished for a more diverse supply of restaurants. In Kurkimäki, a wish for a grocery store, local train connections and a local café were brought up.

114 respondents had answered to the question "What is particularly good and practical in our neighbourhood?" Nature was mentioned in all the studied areas. In Petonen-Pyörö respondents were also especially satisfied with the diverse services and public transportation of their neighbourhood. In Kurkimäki also the feeling of spaciousness, community spirit as well as outdoor and free-time activities were mentioned. In Vehmersalmi respondents were satisfied also of the specific services in addition to nature.

In the end of the survey, the respondents had the possibility to give other comments and remarks or tell what city planners should know. Many respondents from Petonen-Pyörö hoped that nature and forests would be preserved if the built area would be expanded in the future. The respond-



CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In general, the rating and responses reflect the inherent qualities of the studied places and their typologies. The rural areas are generally seen to lack viable transport options, local services, work opportunities and certain amenities, while the suburban housing estate of Petonen-Pyörö exceeds in these categories in comparison. What was surprising, however, was the similarity of rating that the areas displayed in many other fields.

The high rating of *natural spaces* was somewhat anticipated for the rural areas, and in the case of Petonen, can be seen to reflect the successful realisation of the original planning priorities. However, whether these answers reflect the true quality of natural spaces or the general importance of them to the residents, is open to interpretation. Still, the importance of natural space should be kept in mind in planning, a point which was also made in the open answers. The ratings in *identity and belonging* confront the poor reputation of Petonen-Pyörö but conform to the presumption of unity in small rural communities. This goes also for the high ratings in *feeling safe* across all of the areas.

The overall low ratings in *care and maintenance* display that actions concerning it should be taken up in all areas. However, a remark has been made in the HYMY project that improvements in infrastructure are not connected to improvements in wellbeing. Another category scoring poorly overall was the *influence and sense of control,* which indicates that in the scale of the whole city decision-making, regional interests are not widely recognised. This was also underlined in the open answers, and neighbourhood democracy was not seen as a truly effective way to influence the decisions that are made by city officials. However, all of the study areas have some kind of organised regional association or they are part of the Kuopio city rural council. In terms of decision-making, these actors have a key role in promoting the interests of residents of the areas. In the survey, this could be seen as rather high results in the theme *identity and belonging*, when regional and organised operations strengthen the group identity of the specific area.

One part of the health and wellbeing promotion work in the city is collecting sufficient data about the trends in health and wellbeing. However, according to the results of this study, characteristics of different locations should be emphasized in the data acquisition and spatial information is necessary to keep in the dataset. If the data is collected from the whole population of the city area, it is hard to recognise and locate the places that are facing lower states of wellbeing. From the perspective of city officials, it should be asked what is the scale of the collected data so that it would support health and wellbeing promotion work as well as possible and what kind of data is important when analysing the everyday life of residents in specific locations in terms of wellbeing promotion. Also, the collected data should lead to concrete actions that are visible to the residents and health and wellbeing promotion work should be

assimilated part of the city's strategic management and planning.

Methodologically Place Standard Tool offers a useful tool-set to research interaction between places and its residents. All of the different aspects of wellbeing – social, psychological and physical – are covered by the Place Standard Tool questionnaire. Overall, the Place Standard Tool represents the holistic view of wellbeing, localized the issues spatially. Open answers are also very useful when aiming to collect more detailed data from specific locations.

However, the connection between actual city planning and the regionally collected database remains blurry. Even though wide data collection is made about the topics of wellbeing in different areas it is not evident that the data is used as part of the planning process. A large database, especially qualitative data, needs resources to process and planning processes are usually tightly scheduled and time for advanced research is hardly granted. Place Standard Tool offers a quite fast and efficient way to visually present data, thus making it accessible for decision-making and city planning.

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HUHTASUO

AN ANALYSIS OF URBAN RENEWAL NEEDS OF A LOCAL SUBURBAN CENTER

Samppa Saarivirta, Thamires Rocha & Markus Laine

ABSTRACT

Finland has a long history of suburbs (Hankonen 1994) and neighborhood planning (Jalkanen et al. 1997). From 1960s on new suburbs emerged around bigger Finnish cities. Now many of those suburbs are in an urgent need of renovation. This provides an opportunity to analyze the original idea of a Finnish suburb, and reconsider the idea from residents' perspective, who were ignored in in the initial planning phase. We will do this by focusing one Finnish suburb, Huhtasuo in Jyväskylä.

The aim of this article is to support Jyväskylä authorities to understand and analyze the quotidian of the residents of five local communities: Pupuhuhta, Kangaslampi, Sulku, Kaakkolampi and Huhtakeskus, with the intention of perceiving how Huhtakeskus, a commercial center located in between the communities, has an impact on their daily lives.

This paper traces the origins of the Huhtasuo neighborhood with the ambition of understanding its history and design, tracing back the theories that inspired its urbanization processes and the impact, after many years since its implantation, of it on the local population daily lives.

Furthermore, through the analysis of a questionnaire's answers it's sketched the impact of Huhtakeskus on the neighborhood, the area's qualities and flaws and the relationship between the local community and the space they inhabit.

Keywords: Neighborhood Unit; Finnish Suburbs; Local Center

TIIVISTELMÄ

Suomessa on pitkä historia lähiöiden (Hankonen 1994) ja asuialuesuunnittelun parissa (Asuinaluesuunnittelu 1997). Kuusikymmentäluvulta lähtien uusia lähiöitä alkoi ilmestyä lähelle suurimpia suomalaiskaupunkeja. Nykyään moni näistä lähiöistä on kiireellisen korjaamisen ja kunnostamisen tarpeessa. On siis ajankohtaista tutkia suomalaisen lähiön historiaa ja alkuperäisiä suunnitteluideoita sekä katsoa niitä paikallisten näkökulmasta joita ei alunperin suunnitteluvaiheessa ole kuultu. Me keskitymme yhteen suomalaiseen lähiöön joka on Huhtasuo Jyväskylässä.

Artikkelin tavoitteena on auttaa Jyväskylän viranomaisia ymmärtämään ja analysoimaan asukkaiden päivittäistä elämää viidellä eri asuialueella; Pupuhuhdassa, Kangaslammella, Sulussa, Kaakkolammella ja Huhtakeskuksessa. Tutkimme kuinka Huhtakeskuksen palvelukeskittymä vaikuttaa sen ympärille rakentuneiden aluiden arkielämään.

Artikkelissa käydään läpi Huhtasuon syntyyn vaikuttaneita tekijöitä kaupunkisuunnittelun teorian näkökulmasta, tavoitteena ymmärtää alueen historiaa ja suunnitteluperiaatteita. Tämän paikalliskeskuksen syntyyn vaikuttaneita teorioita ja vaikutuksia pakalliseen sosiaaliseen elämään tulkitaan nykyhetkessä, monta vuotta alueen toteuttamisen jälkeen ja verraten alueen nykyisiin olosuhteisiin ja asukkaiden tyytyväisyyteen ympäristöstään.

Kyselytulosten pohjalta tehttiin analyysi joka valottaa Huhtakeskuksen vaikutusta asuinseutuun, alueen koettuihin vahvuuksiin ja vikoihin ja asukkaiden suhdetta elinympäristöönsä. Paikallisia kommentteja apuna käyttäen ehdotamme konkreettisia mahdollisia ratkaisuja tämän lähiön ongelmiin.

Avainsanat: Asumalähiö, Suomalaiset lähiöt, Paikalliskeskus

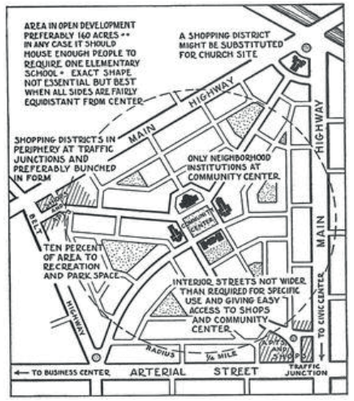
INTRODUCTION

The concept of "neighborhood unit" was introduced, internationally, by Clarence A. Perry (1872-1944) in 1929 on as a part of the Regional Plan of New York and Its Environments, and since then has influenced urban planning and design.

According to Lawhon (2009) it is a "physically defined unit, with school, churches, and recreation areas at its center", breaking with the traditional grid system. The layout [Picture 1] was developed with the intention to encourage interaction and increase safety for pedestrians inside the neighborhood, so traffic system incorporates an important aspect of the units: the arterial roads (fast roads) are located on the borders of the neighborhood, defining and distinguishing the neighborhood, meanwhile inside the streets (local roads) have a sinuous design increasing safety, discouraging unwanted traffic. Other important characteristics are the size of the neighborhood that should be calculated by the sufficient amount of people to support an elementary school and at least ten percent of the land area should be set aside for parks and open spaces serving as leisure areas for the residents.

All of those characteristics, cited above, are physical, but all of them have a social impact and motivation. For instance, Perry was largely influenced by the writing of Charles Cooley[1] , who "believed the individual was shaped by society and that society was subsequently a product of the good or bad actions of individuals" (Lawhon, 2009), the Community Center and Settlement House Movements and the Garden Cities concept, developed by Ebenezer Howard, in England, which it's possible to identify many resemblances with.

The garden cities movement originally presented in To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Form (1898), stimulated Perry's aim to have a charming, garden-like environment, a characteristic not commonly found in urban centers like New York.



Picture 1. Clarence Perry's neighborhood unit diagram

[1] Charles Horton Cooley was a sociologist and sociology professor of the University of Michigan, known for developing a sociopsychological approach to the understanding of society, named the "looking glass self" shortly explained in this text.

This approach has some apparent problems and has been criticized for many reasons, for example its assumed significance of local proximity for organic social life. Other city planners continued to develop the concept into suburban form, affecting American city planning and, in many cases, defined continuous suburban sprawl.

FINNISH SUBURBS

In Finland, urban planning contexts suburb (lähiö in Finnish) is a main theoretical term and idea that has defined the housing project of late 20th century. The decade after the II World War was a record of population growth in Finland. From 1950s onward, the change of economic structure lead to rural exodus and the problem of re-inhabiting the people that were moving to search for jobs and better standards of living. New modernistic suburban neighborhoods were the main solution. By the 70s, when Huhtasuo areas was established, economic efficiency, company led neighborhood development and construction was the prominent approach in Finland. This was supported by a concept of compact city, which was popular in urban design theory in Finland at the time (see Hankonen 1994).

Already in 1918, the concept of decentralized densification (*hajakeskitysperiaate in Finnish*) was present in the Pro Helsingfors - design of Saarinen and Jung which was based on independent living suburbs with their own centers and surrounded by green areas. This early version of Finnish suburban network was based on detached houses with their own gardens like in the model of Howard's Garden City. This vision and the concept of "garden city" would only be executed, in its modern form, after many decades, because of crises of World War I, Finnish civil war and economic recessions.

Otto I. Meurmann instilled the ideas of *neighborhood unit* and *neighborhood plan* (*asumakunta in Finnish*) to Finnish academic discussion with his publishing of "*Asemakaavaoppi*" in 1947. The *neighborhood unit* is a concept originated from Clarence Perry work in the late 1920s. This concept was meant to be a design tool for secure housing area in the new age of the automobile in a metropolitan context of New York. This theory introduced road hierarchy and locating the most necessary daily services inside, or at the edges, of a *cell* (of 5000 to 6000 habitants) surrounded by motor ways. One unit was designed to populate enough people to establish one elementary school.

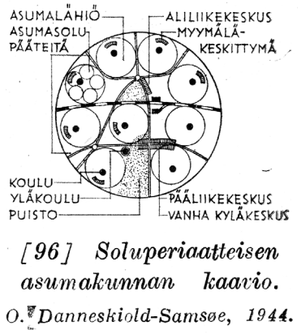
Meurmann got these concepts trough British sources, namely "County of London Plan" of 1943. His illustration is surprisingly like "County of London Plan", only texts had been translated into Finnish (see Picture 3). In Anglo-Saxon discourse the ideas of Garden City by Howard were wildly influential and the networking of bigger neighborhood units (6000 to 10 000 habitants) via high speed traffic connections was a key concept in the mentioned plan.

This spatial division of units separated by open spaces or natural areas is evident also in the history of Finnish suburbs. Among the first of the modern suburban developments is Tapiola in Espoo, built in the 1950s, which set a model for new neighborhood unit.

The winning proposal of Tapiola's City Center Design Competition, "Don Hertzenin kylä", held in 1954, set many of the principles that are seen in the ideals of Finnish suburban centers. Some of those principles can be identified in Huhtasuo, Jyväskylä, such as the presence of one versatile and relatively dense, but just one story high shopping mall serving the locals, an open space for open air market or plantings in the middle of the mall and working spaces and utilities closely connected to the shopping center. Meanwhile, other principles were not done at Huhtasuo like the higher office building connected to the mall, serving as a focal point, the cultural services for evening time use, the fast connection to the city center, and the open space around the mall for future expansions.

At many Finnish suburbs the ideals of early modernism are seen, in Huhtasuo's neighborhood unit, for example, a main aspect is the connectivity to nature and the separated location from central urban structure. Without a quality implementation of the earlier aspects (that would provide a more manifold suburban environment) the close to nature qualities of these Finnish forest suburbs (*In Finnish: metsälähiö*) can also turn to negative aspects of lack of services and lack of active social realm.

Neighborhood unit is also a frame that is used in conversation in multiple levels (Broby, 2013): municipalities define their detail plans borders thinking of these units, media publishes news discussing a phenomenon in a unit and citizens consider the reputation of certain neighborhood. Because of the multifunctional use of the term, it is a vastly interesting question what should be our ideal for a future neighborhood unit.



Picture 2.
Otto I. Meurman's neighborhood unit diagram.

Many Finnish suburbs have lost their original appeal as a modern, clean and high-quality living condition and are in severe need of redevelopment. In some special cases like Tapiola the contemporary problem is to how to maintain the values and good properties of the original design. Mostly the Finnish suburbs resemble cases like Huhtasuo which lacks a holistic quality of early modernism or ideal compact city. The realization of a coherent and pleasant suburb is a long-lasting project.

Without a proper care and investment, a neighborhood unit can end up as a cheaply build mix of different ideas, as is the case in Huhtasuo. To revitalize these neighborhoods the municipalities, developers, construction companies and locals need to consider the physical, social and economic shortcomings of the whole area. Most effective way to develop the units is to focus on the local center that serves them and links them to each other.

CASE STUDY

HUHTASUO, JYVÄSKYLÄ

Jyväskylä is a city in the heart of Southern Finland and located in the north shores of Lake Päijänne. The city was officially founded in 1837 and has been and is known for its education; the first three Finnish-speaking schools were founded in Jyväskylä and with one university and two universities of applies sciences the city continues to be a strong center of education. Jyväskylä is also known for its modern architecture and there are many buildings designed by the Finnish architect Alvar Aalto.

Huhtasuo is a district in Jyväskylä, located in the northeast of the city, composed by Kangaslampi, Sulku and Kaakkolampi neighborhoods and is limited on south by Pupuhuhta neighborhood. The majority of those neighborhoods were planned on the 70s, with still much influences from the garden cities and neighborhood unit concepts, leading to what got known in Finland as "forest suburbs" – low density neighborhoods with a great presence of forest areas, separated from the central area of the city and a curvilinear or organic design, as a consequence of the economical constraints the space produced during that time are a dullness of prefabricated concrete facades sparsely and rigidly placed in flush green environments. In 2019, the population of the district was 9323 (https://www.jyvaskyla.fi/jyvaskyla/tilastot/aluekohtaista-tietoa-jyvaskylasta).

At Kangaslampi neighborhood the influence of "compact city" can be seen on its rational rectangular street system. However, the deeper idea of social connectivity is hard to identify in the area because it remains separated from city center and its neighborhoods are not especially connected to each other. Thus, it's perceived that the composition of this neighborhood unit lends it towards a physically segregated from the city center, which called for the development of a local commercial area, Huhtakeskus. This shopping mall and service center was constructed in modular manner with close attention paid to accessibility by private car: located next to four-lane motor way and surrounded by parking lots on two sides. Although Huhtakeskus has rather good basic services and is a decent sized suburban shopping center in a Finnish scale, it is an urgent need of renovation. The neighborhoods around Huhtakeskus are around same age, excluding the new school center and new apartment buildings around that.

Through questionnaires the main objective of this research is to understand and evaluate the relevance of Huhtakeskus on the cited neighborhoods population's everyday lives. In addition, the aim was to ask about the possible renovation hopes of Huhtakeskus and neighboring areas. Therefore, the use of a mechanism able to apprehend not only hard data, but also soft data aiming to gather information that goes beyond numbers and shows the relationship between locals and the

neighborhoods (urban space), which explains the use of soft-GIS, an internet-based survey.

As the final aim of the authorities is to purpose a renewal for Huhtakeskus it's crucial to understand what urban renewals are needed for a local suburban center. Nowadays, the services of Huhtakeskus include restaurants, dentist, healthcare center, private medical services, library, food aid and a grocery store.

METHODOLOGY

Soft-GIS surveys is methodology used in participatory techniques that combine quantitative and qualitative data, in other words, it associates "hard" registered-based GIS data with "soft" experiential data. The objective of this approach is to consider local experiences and recognize the importance of local's points of view in planning the future development of a local suburban center.

According to Kahila & Kyttä (2009) through soft-GIS it's possible to build a "bridge between planners, residents and researchers", this provides enormous possibilities because it combines not only the technique, provided by the planners and researches, but the specific knowledge, provided by locals.

The platform chosen by Jyväskylä's authorities was Maptionnaire, which gather map-based, open (dissertations) and closed (multiple choice) questions. The questionnaire created consisted on a series of 3 map-based questions, 2 open questions and 19 closed questions, based on the information gathered analyses were developed relating/ connecting the answers on an attempt to better understand the reality of the neighborhoods.

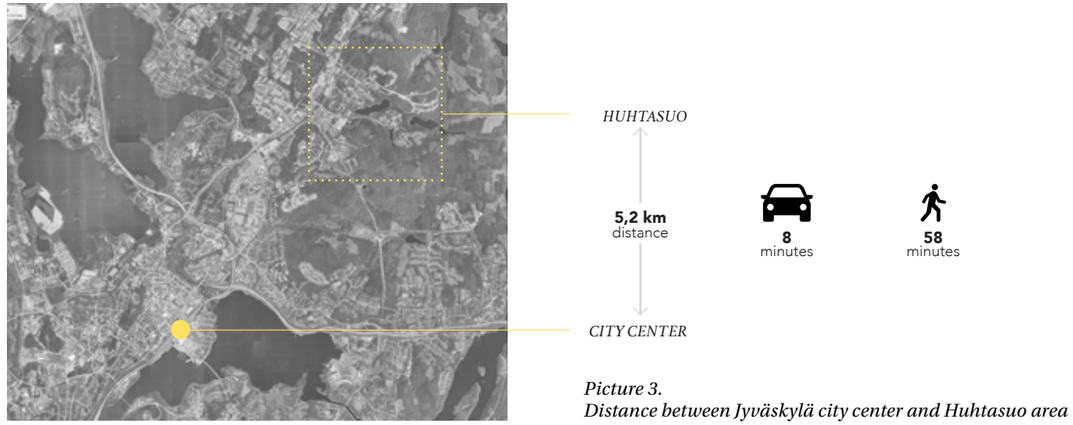
PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The survey was answered by 441 people, totalizing 890 answers, an amount that was considered good, mainly when compared to similar experiences on the area.

On an attempt to better understand the profile of the respondents, the closed questions were analyzed. It was possible to detect that the age group with the bigger amount of answers was of people who are between 35 and 44 years old, and the age group with fewer answers were of those who are over 75 years old.

On online surveys, it's predictable and expected that the older age groups are less present once most of them are not familiar with online platforms. Thus, the authorities planned to do some interviews in person, but plans had to change due to the COVID-19 or "Coronavirus" world pandemic. Comparing the age group of the respondents and Jyväskylä's population it's visible that the age group of people who are under 25 is not well represented, as well as those who are over 75 years old. On the other hand, the group who are between 35 and 44 years old were beyond a doubt represented on the questionnaire.

When it comes to language, most of the respondents are Finnish speakers along with the city's population. Finally, most of the respondents are women. Considering all the points cited above it was possible to identify the groups that were well represented and those who were not - Finnish



Picture 3.
Distance between Jyväskylä city center and Huhtasuo area

1.PUPUHUHTA
2.HUHTAKESKUS
3.KANGASLAMPI
4.KAAKKOLAMPI
5.SULKU

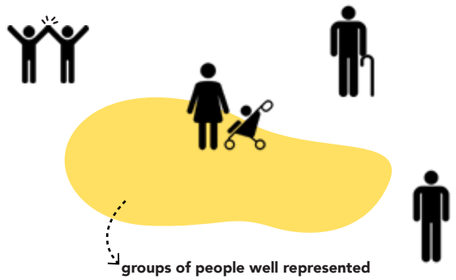
Picture 4.
The five studied neighborhoods.

women who are between 35 and 44 years old, are the ones who answered the survey the most. This group is mainly characterized for working and having kids, which is perceived in the answers - as it will be shown later. Being attentive to the profile of the respondents makes it easier to understand and analyze the answers received.

WOMEN'S AND MEN'S PERCEPTIONS

The analyses, then, proceeded to the map questions, starting with the spaces considered by the respondents as pleasant. To analyze this topic, the answers were divided between male and female respondents, on an attempt to understand the favorite places of each gender, which would expose a part of their routine.

It was possible to recognize that nature/parks and sports are among the favorite places for both men and women (being related to 37% and 43% of the answers, respectively). Services play a big hole on women's graph (24%) but not so much on male's and the opposite is true for playgrounds (being related to 16% of male's answers). Recalling the age groups helps to clarify the reasons behind it.



Picture 5.
Diagram of well-presented groups in the survey.

The spots were marked as Figure 10 illustrates. It's evident that Huhtakeskus is an area of the neighborhood that is enjoyed by the residents, being Kangaslampi's lake, also, a highlight - the park on that area cited many times as one of the best in the city. Many of the dots are spread across the forest area, mainly because they show routes of hiking and places that people gather around to play sports, such as frisbee, one of the favorites on the area.

USE OF SERVICES

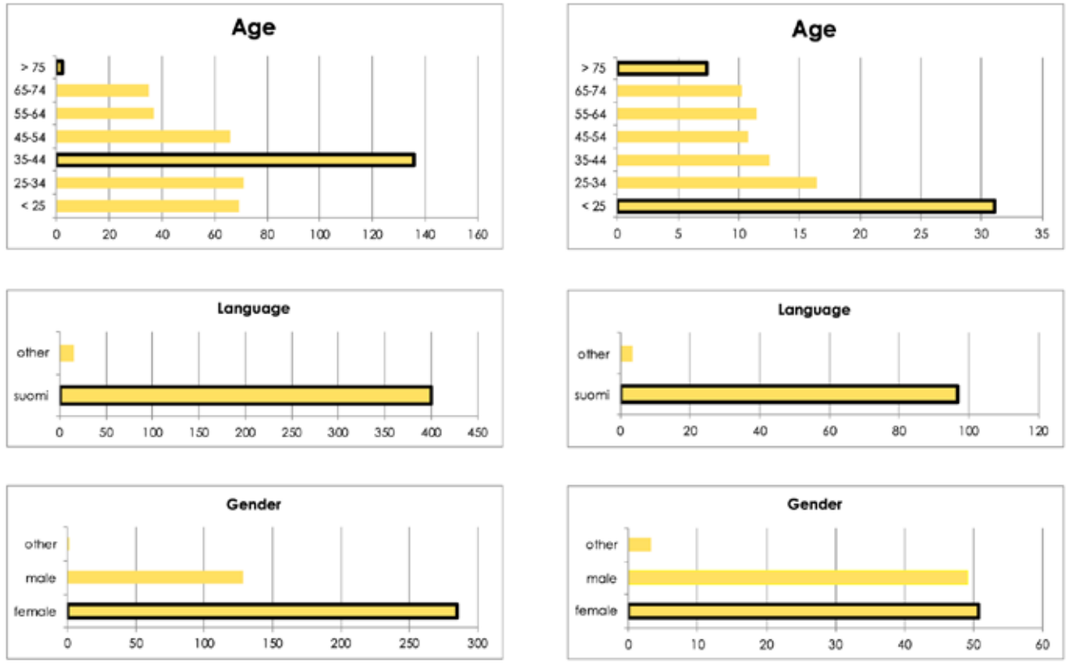
When asked about the most used services on the neighborhood the respondents answered that weekly it's the grocery shop, while monthly it's the ATM. The provision of services in Huhtakeskus is considered useful on the daily routine of the residents, although renovating the existing buildings would be very welcome by locals.

The provision of services is considered by most as satisfactory, the architecture of the area seems to be one of the biggest problems once it was considered very unsatisfactory and unsatisfactory, by most of the respondents.

CAR USERS AND WALKERS

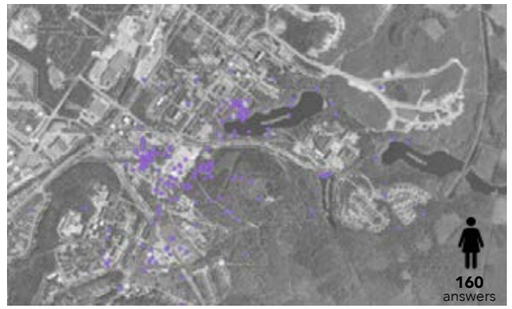
Combining the closed question answers with the map questions it was possible to further analyze some characteristics of the resident's daily

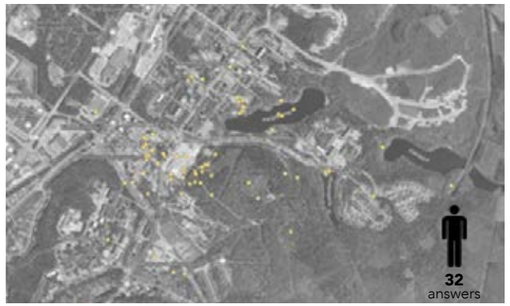
MAPTIONNAIRE'S RESPONDENTS *VS.* *JYVÄSKYLÄ'S POPULATION*



Picture 6.
Comparison between Maptionnaire's respondents (left) and Jyväskylä's population (right)

Source: Jyväskylä data, https://ugeo.urbistat.com/AdminStat/en/fi/demografia/dati-sintesi/jyvaskyla/20504703/4





Pictures 7 & 8.
Comparison between women's (top) and men's (bottom) map answers to pleasant spaces (represented by dots.)

routines. To inspect the relation between pleasant places and places in need of development one of the characteristics analyzed was the family's ownership of a private car.

Most of the respondents had a car, they marked 280 spots (57%) as pleasant places and 215 spots (43%) as spaces in need of development, on the same question those who don't own a private car marked 97 spots (58%) as pleasant and 70 spots (42%) as places in need of development.

What was interesting to observe is the range of distance that those who have cars reach, even so the concentration of the pleasant spaces and places in need of development on both cases are similar.

LOCALS AND VISITORS

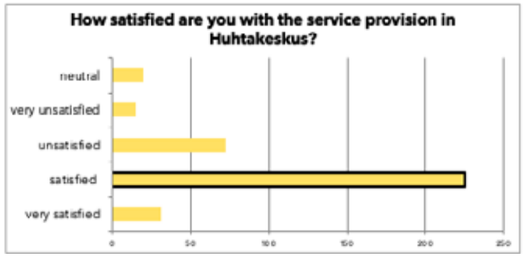
The image of a neighborhood is highly influenciated by media and Huhtasuo area has for long suffered with a bad image. Thus, it's interesting in this case to compare the image that locals have of their neighborhood and non-residents.

When comparing those impressions, it's clear that visitors have worse impression of the space than the locals. Among pleasant spaces, the keywords cited by both groups have a deep relation with nature areas and parks, while the places in need of development are mainly related with the feeling of insecurity and the overall condition of the buildings.

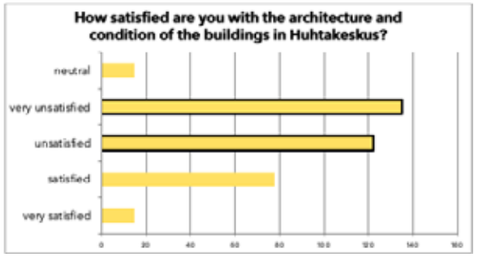
That could also be because the substance users are concentrated on Huhtakeskus area, the area

most used
weekly

most used
monthly



62%
of the
answers

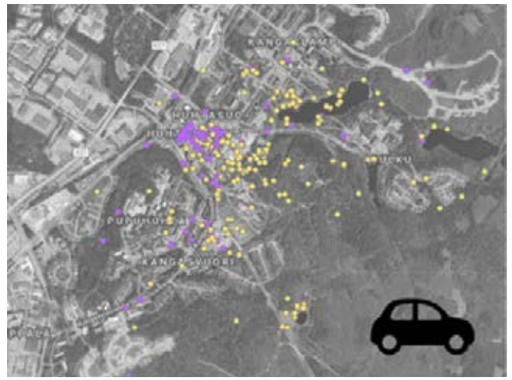


70%
of the
answers

Picture 9.
Satisfaction with provided services in Huhtakeskus and the condition of the buildings in the area.

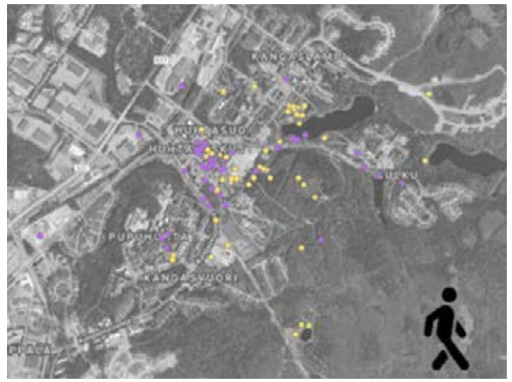
How often do you, or someone in your family, use the following Huhtakeskus' services?		weekly		monthly
	Order		Order	
Health Center		2		54
Dental Care Services/ Dentist		0		8
Neuvola (Child Care or Guidance Center?)		1		16
Pharmacy		17	4th	113
Kindergarten / School	2nd	147		2
Library	5th	36	2nd	116
Grocery Store (Sale)	1st	194	3rd	114
R-kioski	4th	41	5th	72
Post Office		5		54
Restaurant (Ravintola Vemmelsääri)		10		32
Pizzaria		6		56
Parish		26		27
Community Center (Kylätoimisto)		23		24
Employment Services (Työllisyyspalvelut)		3		8
Elämän leipä ruoka-apu		9		13
Youth Center (Perttulan nuorisotila)		21		21
Physioterapist Clinic (Fysikaalinen hoitolaitos)		3		5
Hairdresser		1		15
ATM	3rd	59	1st	133
Senior Park (Senioripuisto)		11		23
		615		**906**

Picture 10.
Chart highlighting the most used services in Huhtakeskus, weekly and monthly.



280
pleasant spaces

215
spaces in need of development



97
pleasant spaces

70
spaces in need of development

Picture 11 & 12.
Car owners' (top) and walkers' (bottom) impressions of the neighborhood.

that is aimed for non-locals, once it's where the services are, almost all, concentrated.

HUHTAKESKUS

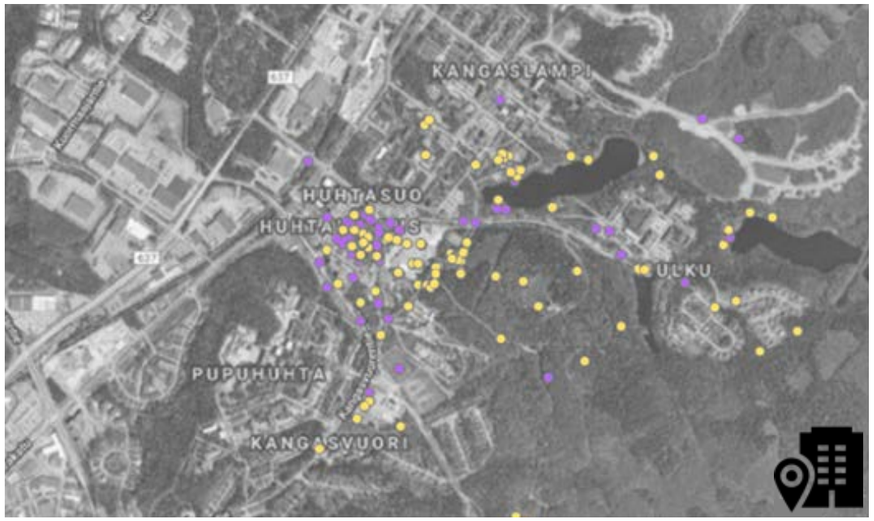
Analyzing the pleasant places and places in need of development per age group, it was possible to identify some places as the preferred amidst the respondents, such as Kangaslampi's lake and park, considered one of the best in the city, and the new school area in close proximity to Huhtakeskus, and spaces where improvement is needed, that dominate the center of the neighborhoods, Huhtakeskus area.

To better understand the relationship between the respondents and Huhtakeskus, a question was made "What else would you like to say about Huhtakeskus?".

Observing the answers, it's evident that overall safety and comfort of Huhtakeskus' area needs improvement, the substance users are often related by the respondents as a source of the feeling of unsafety, and better lightning was cited, by many, as a resolution for this problem.

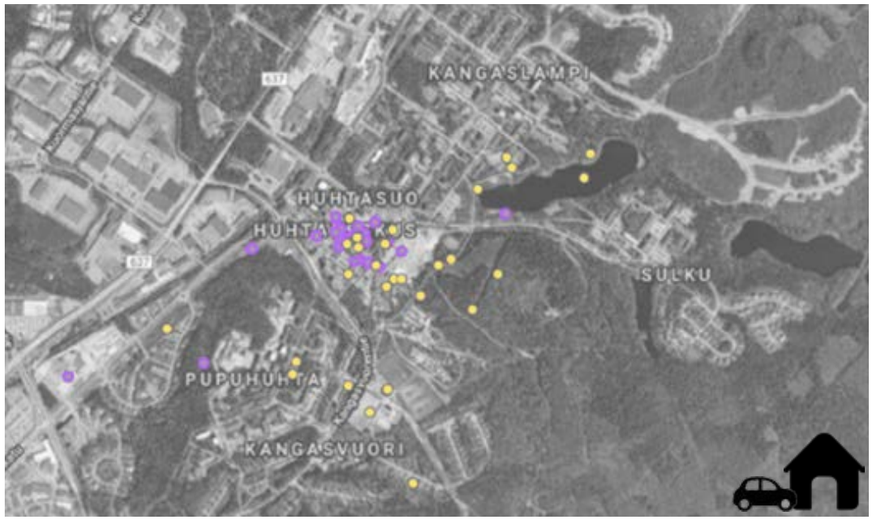
The services of the area are useful on the daily routine of most, and many would like to have more versatile services in the future, for example hobby places for the youth. The general opinion was that overall "grey" aesthetics of the area needs renovating.

Comparing the main answers by age group, it's clear that it's a consent with all that the



Pleasant places

Spaces in need of development



Pictures 13 & 14.
Locals' (top) and visitors' (bottom) impressions.

neighborhood needs some renovating, but major developing and improving safety are also main concerns of the respondents.

HOUSING POSSIBILITIES FOR THE AREA

The respondents were also asked about the development of the housing in the area: “With what kind of housing possibilities should Huhtasuo and Huhtakeskus be developed? What kind of housing could be brought to Huhtakeskus, for example?”. To that 178 answers were received, and many respondents appreciate the openness of the neighborhoods and don’t see a need for new housing.

On the other hand, assisted living or apartments suited for elderly people are also seen as fitting for the area, also the wish for family housing, such as detached houses and row houses, is popular in between many, and some suggest more owner-occupied housing to balance the **social housing** in the area.

Contrasting the answers per age group, it becomes clear that renovation is a priority for all ager groups, as well as affordable housing.

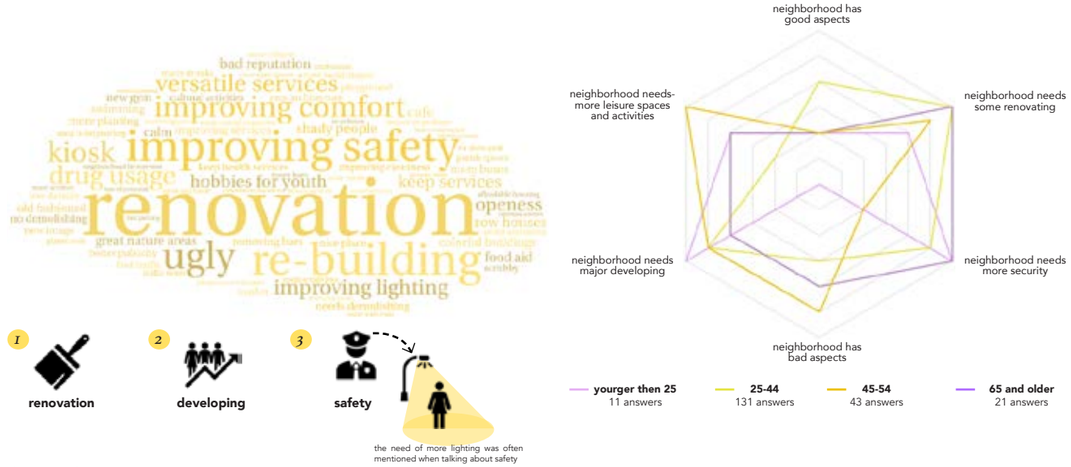
WALKING ROUTES

To understand the connections between the neighborhoods, the respondents were asked about their most common walking routes. The answers reinforced, once again, the importance of Kangaslampi’s lake on the routine of the neighborhoods. It also showed that the connections between Huhtakeskus area and Kaakkolampi and Sulku neighborhoods are strong. Kangasvuorentie,

Picture 15.
Most common walking routes.

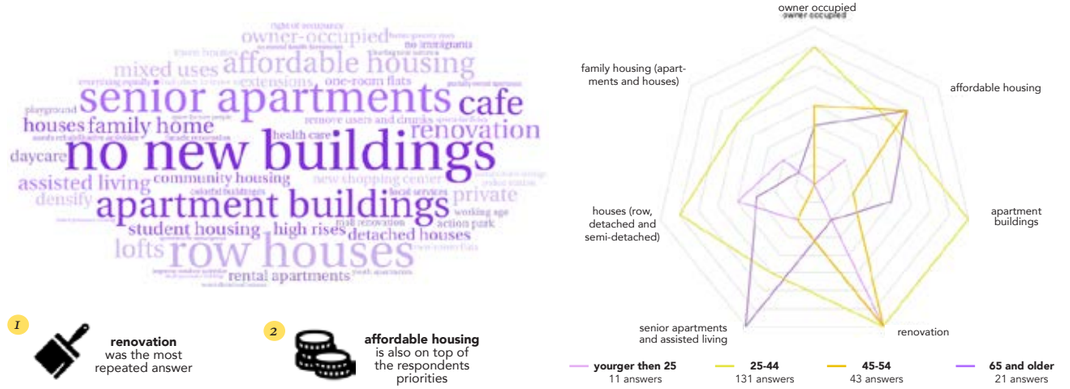
Sulintie and Kangasvuori nature path are clear links between neighborhoods, to understand this it’s important to recall the high relevance of sports on the daily routine of the respondents.

WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY ABOUT HUHTAKESKUS?



Picture 16.
Impressions of respondents of Huhtakeskus.

WITH WHAT KIND OF HOUSING POSSIBILITIES SHOULD HUHTASUO AND HUHTAKESKUS BE DEVELOPED?



Picture 17.
Desires of the respondents with housing possibilities for the future.

CONCLUSION

Based on Huhtasuo analysis, it is clear that the *lähiö* concept was, in one hand, necessary to solve the main problems caused by the population growth in Finland, on the other, the outcomes that this choice has, 50 years later of its implantation, are not all positive. Huhtasuo has suffered about prejudice, e.g., Pupuhuhta was known for a long period as "the worst Finnish neighborhood".

Some of the elements that could have led to this assumption can be understood by its isolation from the rest of the city. This topic is hard to be understood as it has many facets: when it comes to economics, it is easily understandable that spreading the city is not the wisest choice, as previously discussed, as it is a very expensive way of expanding cities; for the residents the isolation has its perks, such as the privacy and in this case the forest in and around the neighborhood is one of the local's favorite aspect of the suburb; the side that seems to be the most damaged is the feeling of safety, once this is an aspect highly cited by the respondents.

Picture 18.
Collage with some of Huhtasuo's landmarks.

Considering these aspects, it is possible to point out some solutions and next steps. First of all, to actually know if the neighborhood is unsafe further analysis should be considered, once the feeling of unsafety is not always related with real unsafety, as Teresa Caldeira (2001) points out in her book, "City of Walls – Crime, Segregation and Citizenship in São Paulo.

The feeling of unsafety makes it challenging for Huhtakeskus to work as healthy social center for the people of Huhtasuo. Analysis of the questionnaire answers helped to determinate the need of improvements and technical repairs that can ensure better future for Huhtakeskus. Enhancing the feeling of safety and creating better places for the people to meet and spend time is fundamental to improve the social quality of Huhtakeskus and to maintain and increase its status as local center. Improving the lightning of the area is cheap and should have a major positive affect on feeling of safety in nighttime. Hiring a security service that, is seen in the actual place, can also help to affirm the feeling of safety in the public.

A better integration of the area with the city center is also an aspect to be considered, once the neighborhoods are close from the downtown area, only 5 kilometers of distance, nevertheless a better access to the city center was also an aspect mentioned by the residents, once the bus connection is not entirely efficient, making it difficult for those who don't own a private car to access it, and also, public transports should be a main way of getting around, avoiding traffic and reducing the emissions of air pollutants.

The idea of having a commercial area on the center of the neighborhoods was Perry's original idea to decrease the need of going out of the neighborhood to shop. Yet, on Huhtasuo's case, even though, Huhtakeskus is indeed an important commercial area on residents' daily lives, the services remain important, mostly, for groups that do not own a private car. Those who have the choice to visit other commercial centers are not attracted by Huhtakeskus. Once again, the importance of the public transportation is reinforced: to keep Huhtasuo lively it is important to ensure good connections to city center by public transportation so that residents will have the opportunity to easily benefit from central services.

Aesthetical appearance and overall comfortability of Huhtakeskus needs urgent development to ensure a better public image and attractiveness to customers and possible new businesses. An overall renovation, rethinking the connections and spaces to gather should be a go to for future planners of the area. In case of a future demolition or re-building of the area, the new design must assure that all the good qualities of the space are maintained, once most of the respondents seems a bit skeptical due to previous urban development experiences.

A last factor to be examined is the wish expressed by the respondents of more versatile services, generating more jobs and a more versatile neighborhood overall. This is an interesting aspect to be weighted because it could, also, attract more people into the area, which could approximate residents with non-residents enhancing the overall image of the neighborhood, avoiding stereotyping and enhance the feeling of safety. Following the same line, densification could be also a positive aspect.

All in all, seems like Huhtakeskus is a place with basic services, those needed on a daily and weekly basis, in an outdated environment. In relation to international examples Finnish version of a neighborhood unit or "metsälähiö" seem to have strengths, the most obvious one is the forest in and around the area. Another strength is affordable housing. Obvious weaknesses are outdated and unilateral housing that is not attractive to residents who have a possibility to choose, limited services due to too small population and lack of density in central areas of the district. There is a vital need of investment, better quality and more versatile housing and commercial centre and better public transportation. The new school facility and housing near Huhtakeskus are a promising start.

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IMAGES

Picture 1. Diagram of Perry's Neighborhood Unit, source: Lloyd Lawhon, L. (2009). The neighborhood unit: physical design or physical determinism?. Journal of planning history. Page 115.

Picture 2. Otto I. Meurman's neighborhood unit diagram, source: Meurman, Otto-Iivari (1947) *Asemakaavaoppi*. Otava, Helsinki.

Pictures 3-5; 7-8; 11-15. Map source: earth.google.com

Pictures 5-6; 9-10; 16-17. Self-made diagrams.

Picture 18. Self-made collage.

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