

English Supplement

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Bicycling to move forward at *high speed*

Marek Salerno is bursting with energy to improve bicycling in Helsinki. He thinks that attitudes to bicycling need an overhaul.

Marek Salerno, age 31, has spent a lot of time on a bicycle saddle. His count is 350,000 kilometres on the road. He is a former racer and rode professionally in Belgium in the early years of the current decade. Finishing his studies at the Helsinki University of Technology, Salerno joined the Helsinki City Planning Department in the past summer as a bicycling planner.

Salerno is unhappy with the current situation in "bicycling Helsinki".

"Doubling bicycling is included in the City's goals, but the programmes have not moved forward," he says. "The programmes have no connection with planning and action, and they are far removed from reality."

According to Salerno, Helsinki offers excellent opportunities for recreational bicycling when one is free to choose the route. But bicycling as a daily routine, such as commuting by bicycle, lags

behind. He wants to focus on making bicycling a routine, not an exception.

The share of all journeys made by bicycle in Helsinki has remained more or less the same for more than ten years, despite plans to increase this share considerably.

"Bicycling opportunities have been increased quantitatively, but the quality of the new opportunities is such that they fail to serve the purpose," Salerno says.

He thinks that the basic failure of traffic planning in Helsinki is to regard cyclists as fast pedestrians, when in fact they should be likened to slow-moving cars.

"By law a bicycle is a vehicle, but in planning it is regarded as a pedestrian device," Salerno says. As a result, there are paths shared by pedestrians and cyclists. The two groups have been put together, although it makes the most sense to separate them.

Salerno points out that a bicycle is a vehicle, and the proper handling of a bicycle requires traffic skills. These skills should be taught more at school.





FRONT PAGE

Matti Hohlman

Turning city into a community

By Johanna Lemola

Elina Nummi, also known as Auntie Green, makes it her mission to teach the citizens of Helsinki to care for their home city.

“Exactly the way you are!” exclaimed **Elina Nummi’s** best adviser, her 6-year-old daughter **Fanny**, as Elina was wondering how best to play her new role as “Auntie Green” at the City of Helsinki Public Works Department in 1995.

She had taken six years off from work at Public Works, given birth to two children, and taken a degree in horticulture. As she returned to work in Helsinki parks, she was ticked off by children who rode their tricycles and bicycles over flowerbeds and by mothers who would not care.

“Somebody has to teach them,” Elina thought and decided to act. She came up with the character of Auntie Green,

who tours daycare centres dressed up as a tree, talking to children about the lives of plants in parks. An artist friend designed the dress, and a musician friend wrote a theme song.

Elina’s mission as Auntie Green is to teach children to care for their green urban environment from early on, doing this in the children’s own terms: through fairytale and play.

Community involvement is an answer

Today Auntie Green has stepped back somewhat on Elina’s calendar, and she focuses more time on campaigns, sponsorship and volunteer work, all

aimed at keeping the city clean and in good shape.

"We seek to make people take ownership in their environment," she summarizes the efforts of herself and her colleagues.

Close to her heart are guided walks through parks. "People learn about their home community and so gain pride in it," she explains the deeper meaning of these walks, envisioning, "When knowledge accrues, appreciation increases,

and vandalism and general damage to the environment decreases."

Elina reminds us that the City of Helsinki spends two million euros per year on picking up trash, a sum that would buy 200,000 roses, 10,000 bushes,

1,350 park benches or 500 large trees.

Lately Elina has turned her eyes to volunteer work as a way to build up community involvement. She has even sought examples from abroad: in Washington, D.C. last May, she learned about tree planting, and in New York's Central Park about volunteers working as guides or attending to plants. Guidelines for park volunteers in Helsinki are in her plans for next spring.

Trash bins that say "thank you"

Summer 2008 saw four "talking trash bins" serve people in the Helsinki city centre. The bins thanked people who used them, also delivering deeper thoughts. The number of the bins was increased to eight in summer 2009.

The latest chapter in Elina's anti-littering campaigns is the "trash video" project, where school students produce anti-littering video clips, made available on both <http://www.roskavideo.fi> and YouTube.

Elina "Auntie Green" Nummi visited Watkins Elementary School in Washington, D.C. in May 2009.



Tuomas Grisen

Health services in Helsinki

In the event of an accident or emergency or need of urgent medical care due to illness, people of all ages living in Helsinki should first seek help from their **local health station**. The opening hours of the health stations are Mon–Fri 8–16.

In the evening and at weekends, when local health stations are closed, hospitals' Emergency Health Centres are open till 22 in the evening. In cases of acute illness or accidents, hospitals' Emergency Departments accept patients 24 hours a day.

Inhabitants of Eastern, South-eastern, North-eastern and Northern Districts are attended to at Malmi Hospital, Talvelantie 6, tel. (09) 31067468, (09) 310 6611.

Inhabitants of Southern, Central and Western Districts are from Thursday 24 September on attended to at the new Haartman Hospital, Haartmaninkatu 4, building 12, tel. (09) 31063231.

Children (under 16 years) in urgent need of medical treatment are attended to at the **children's emergency health centre** at Lastenkliniikka: Mon-Fri 16-8, Sat-Sun 8-22. At night, i.e. between 22.00 and 08.00, children in urgent need of medical treatment should be taken to **Lastenkliniikka's Emergency Department**.

Information about health services 24 hours a day call (09) 10023

Information about swine flu, see next page



Maria Hospital moves to the new Haartman Hospital in Meilahti district, address Haartmaninkatu 24, building 12. The emergency services open in Haartman Hospital on Thursday 24 September.

Do you think you have influenza?

The symptoms of A(H1N1) influenza, also known as "swine flu", are sudden fever (adults 38 Celsius or over, children under the age 3 at least 38.5 Celsius) together with respiratory symptoms such as sore throat, cough, or runny or stuffy nose.

Most influenza patients will recover well without needing any medical care, with about a week's rest at home. The symptoms can be relieved with painkillers, if needed. The home care instructions for the influenza can be found on the website of The National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) at www.thl.fi.

The risk groups are pregnant women and those suffering from long-term illnesses like

a heart or lung disease or diabetes needing regular medication,

sore throats?

chronic insufficiency of the liver or kidney, a disease that weakens the immune system, a disease that is treated with medication that weakens the immune system, a chronic neurological disorder or neuromuscular disorder, severe obesity.

If you belong to any of the risk groups and have influenza symptoms, call the Laakso influenza health station, tel. (09) 310 47936 Mon–Sun 8–16; at other times, call the Telephone Health

Service, tel. (09) 10023. All others who suspect they have

coughs?

the influenza may also contact Laakso influenza health station, open every day from 8 to 16, address Lääkärintätkatu 8 R, 00250 Helsinki. Also for children. Please call before you come!

The national influenza phone is at your service from Mon to Fri from 12 to 18, tel. 0800 02277 (Finnish), tel. 0800 02278 (Swedish). This phone service will not provide any instructions concerning the caller's own health.

In urgent matters, please call emergency number 112.

Health Glossary

English – Finnish

Influenza – *influenssa*

swine flu – *sikaflunssa*

fever – *kuume*

sore throat – *kipeä kurkku*

cough – *yskä*

risk group – *riskiryhmä*

pregnant – *raskaana*

long-term illness – *pitkäaikaissairaus*

health station – *terveysasema*

emergency number – *häätänumero*

www.hel2.fi/terveyskeskus/english/whatsnew/influenza

swine flu?

fewer?

Managing student liaisons

By Hanna Päivärinta translation Päivi Manner-Ståhlberg

Ida Björkbacka is starting a very intensive autumn as the first co-operation person of university students.

The City and the University of Helsinki have had a joint advisory committee for more than 30 years and organised research together with the Helsinki University of Technology. However, never before has there been an employee appointed to manage student liaisons. The objective is to intensify co-operation with universities and colleges. Along with this, Helsinki wants to develop into an international university city of several campuses.

Why does the City wish to invest in university relations right now?

"If we have top class education, we also have skilled professionals available which for its part attracts business enterprises to settle in the metropolitan area and the region nearby. I have been recruited by the Economic Development of the City of Helsinki which I think tells where the main emphasis of the co-operation lies: universities and colleges support the business world. The issue gains topicality by the internationalisa-

tion of our City and the much discussed retirement of the baby boom generation.

Some of the fixed points of the university co-operation are the Aalto University now under development and a project

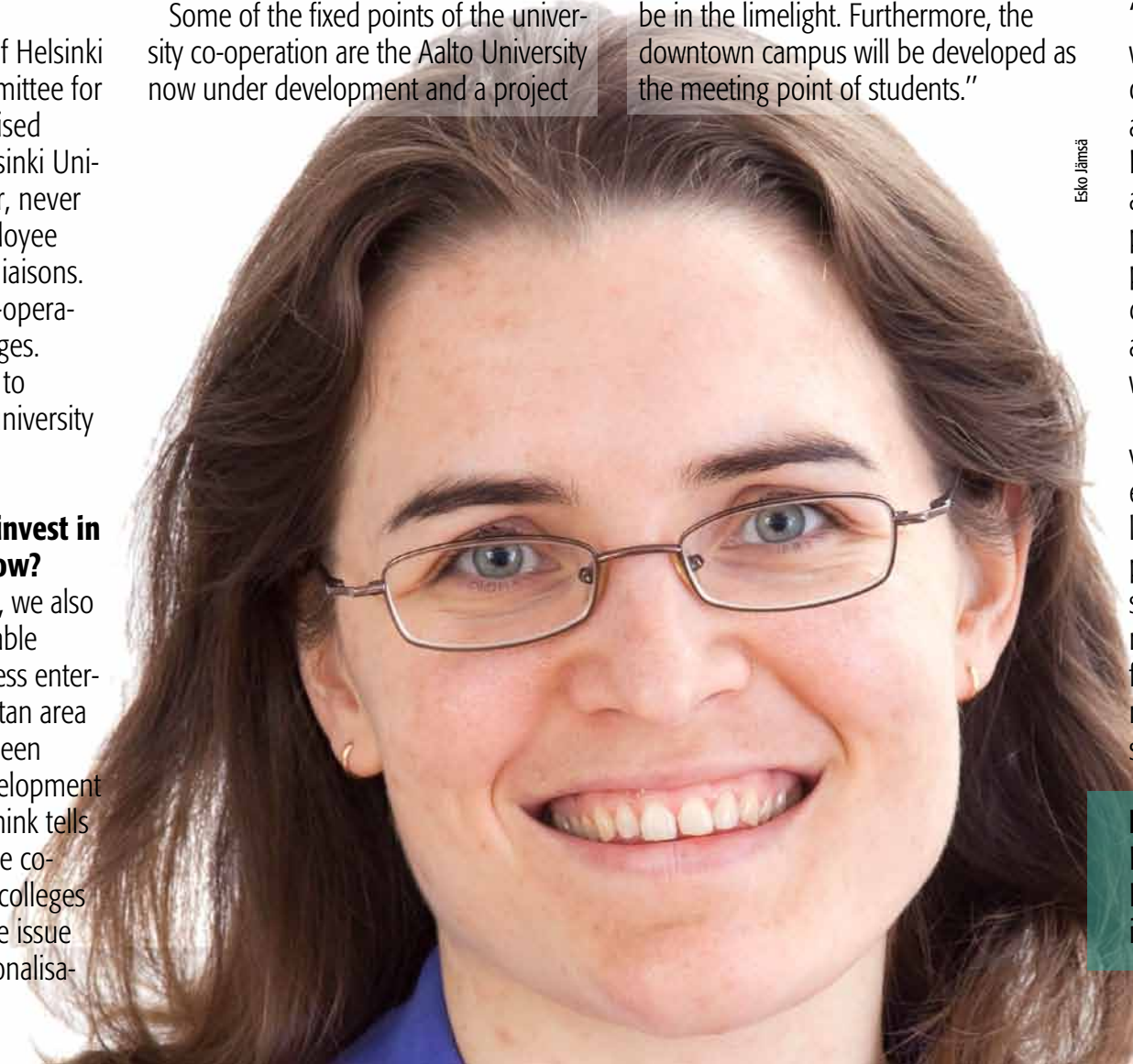
for planting foreign students in the Finnish working life. Finnish design too will be in the limelight. Furthermore, the downtown campus will be developed as the meeting point of students."

What are the City's means to intensify co-operation with students?

"The aim is to set up idea workshops with students to discuss how Helsinki could be developed into a yet more attractive and functional university city. Important issues from the students' angle are certainly housing, public transport, pedestrian inner city and general pleasantness. Hence one of my first duties is to contact the students' unions and ponder with them how the idea workshops would be best realized.

There is quite a lot to do and innovate, but the commitment is strong even on the highest City Administration level. In fact, the Mayor and the Principal of the University of Helsinki will send a co-signed letter of greeting to new university students. Furthermore, foreign students will receive a greeting note in English when arriving here to study."

Esiko Jämsä



Further information:

Economic Development of the City of Helsinki Economic and Planning Centre, ida.bjorkbacka(at)hel.fi

Helsinki Region on-line information

The service for immigrants living in Finland is now better than ever. The multi-lingual webpages of Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen, which are linked to the national Info Bank online service, were launched on 7 September. Updated information for Helsinki appeared at the same time.

The information on the Info Bank website appears in 15 languages and

covers such topics as housing, education, Finnish and Swedish language teaching, permits and employment. The new Helsinki Region section serves both those already living in Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen, and those planning to move to the region.

The Helsinki Region page can be found at:

www.infopankki.fi/helsinkiregion



Student housing to Jätkäsaari

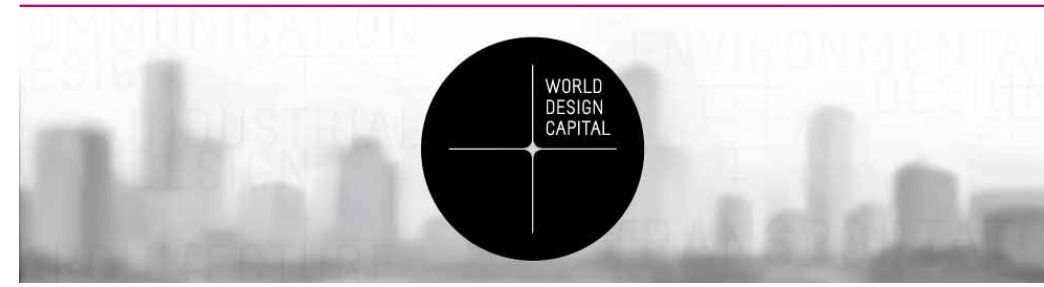
Jätkäsaari is part of the Länsisatama (West Harbour) redevelopment project. The area is comprised of over 200 hectares of former industrial land on the southwest waterfront of Helsinki.

Jätkäsaari is planned to house some 15 000 residents.

The winner of the first architectural competition for the area is a high-quality solution for state-subsidized student housing. The winner entry called "Breakfast on the lawn" by Helamaa and Pulkinen Architects comprises a variety of housing types, from dormitory rooms to two-bedroom apartments, a total of 208 units. Construction work is scheduled to start in 2010.

**Länsisatama – West Harbour:
downtown by the sea**

HOAS



Design to build better communities

Helsinki seeks nomination as world Design Capital 2012 and has been short-listed together with Eindhoven, the Netherlands, for the final round of evaluation.

Altogether 46 cities from 27 countries applied for the 2012 nomination. The international council of Societies of Industrial Design (Icsid) will announce the nomination in the Icsid World Design Congress in Singapore on November 25, 2009.

Helsinki's umbrella theme for the World Design Capital Year 2012 is "Open Helsinki – Embedding Design in Life". The aim is to activate all design-related potential in society to build better communities. The programme of the year also celebrates the achievements of the Grand Masters of Finnish design.

www.designhelsinki.fi

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Info kit

Information for immigrants

Info Bank is an online service aimed at immigrants, offering information on Finnish society and life in Finland in 15 languages. The website also contains local information on Helsinki.
www.infopankki.fi

Information for all residents

Virka Info telephone service (09) 310 11111 (Mon-Fri 9-15) and information point in the City Hall lobby, address Pohjoisesplanadi 11-13 (Mon-Fri 9-19, Sat-Sun 11-17). www.virka.fi