

# Summary and conclusions regarding the Neighbourhood Project

The present publication summarises the results of an evaluation study on the second phase of the Neighbourhood Project. A corresponding report was issued regarding the first phase (City of Helsinki Urban Facts, Research Series 2000:4). During the period 2000–2003, too, the districts of Kontula and Myllypuro were studied, but the districts of Kivikko, Vesala and Pihlajamäki (incl. Pihlajisto) were included as new objects. The eastern project areas Kontula-Kivikko-Vesala and Myllypuro are also included in the EU's Urban II Programme. The Neighbourhood Project and the Urban II project have been locally co-ordinated so as to support each other. On 1 Jan. 2003, the area had a total of over 45,000 inhabitants.

The mission of the Neighbourhood Project is stated in a decision made by the City Council on 24 Jan. 2003, according to which the project should (1) draw the outlines for general development in suburbs, draw up development programmes for single districts, organise development

measures and prepare proposals for how the city's financing should be arranged, (2) see to it that the state's allocations for housing repair and other suburban development are used, and (3) that applications for appropriate EU allocations are made.

Ever since the start in 1996, the working principles of the project have been local anchoring, inhabitant-orientation, co-operation between city departments, partnership between the city, local actors and associations, and to upgrade the public image of the areas. In practice, this has amounted to, for example, the foundation and maintenance of neighbourhood stations, establishment of partnership, promotion of housing repairs and upgrading of the near environment. Whereas the Urban II project has mostly focussed on employment and industrial policy, the Neighbourhood Project has primarily concerned the physical structures of the area. Local social work in terms of, for example, improving functional factors have been important in both projects.

## **The evaluation and the material used**

The evaluation of the Neighbourhood Project was co-ordinated by Helsinki City Urban Facts and carried out in co-operation with representatives of the project. Researchers from the University of Helsinki, the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health STAKES, and the firm Diskurssi Oy have also been involved. The evaluation has aimed to be responsive, with the purpose of supporting the strengths of the project and giving proposals of how it could be oriented in future.

The evaluation of the 2000–2003 programme period is divided into four theme wholes, namely (1) development in the project areas and inhabitants' opinions, (2) the project as a model for district work, (3) the project as an administrative process and co-operation model, and (4) the project's effectiveness from an economic point of view.

The approach of our evaluation was to see how well the project met its own purposes and addressed the structural problems and challenges in terms of ageing population, social capital, needs to improve the services, needs to revamp buildings and environments, etc. The sources used include development programmes, annual reports, descriptions of the project work, area descriptions, statistical indicators, theme interviews and inquiries among inhabitants and experts.

The evaluation of the project's effectiveness has endeavoured to account for external factors, too, as well as the project's duration and consequent delays in visible results. Among the external factors, economic fluctuations and the city's economic problems are most important. During this programme period the labour market situation, for example, deteriorated clearly, and the migration balance between Helsinki and the rest of Finland has turned negative for Helsinki. On the other hand, the migration surplus from abroad has continued.

## **The population structure and social condition in the suburbs**

Statistical indicators clearly show the effects of, on one hand, the economic depression in the early 1990 and, on the other, the subsequent recovery. At the beginning of the report, *Markku Lankinen* describes the background of the suburbs covered

by the Neighbourhood Project by comparing them with the rest of Helsinki and certain other suburbs. Most project areas were characterised by an ageing of the population – although in some place interrupted when new housing was built. In Kivikko, the population grew steadily throughout the period studied. Migration brought these suburbs new inhabitants mainly from other municipalities, whilst migration within Helsinki tends to show a deficit for the suburbs. But an important proportion of migration from the suburbs consists of young people moving away from their parents, and the falling population figures translate into smaller households and increasing housing space per capita. The proportion of owner-occupied housing is decreasing, and those figures that describe housing prices show that price differences between the suburbs and the city average are growing.

The economic depression of the early 1990s influenced the inhabitants of suburbs in different ways and contributed to internal differentiation in suburbs. In some suburbs, for example, unemployment was twice as high in council houses as in owner-occupied blocks of flats. But after the depression, differences decreased both between and within districts. Yet, recent unemployment figures show that the favourable trend has mostly been halted by the economic low that started in 2001. This also applies to employment among foreign immigrants in the suburbs.

And unemployment has started growing in many well-to-do neighbourhoods in southern and western Helsinki – but at a clearly lower level.

The income level of the population fell after the depression, both in suburbs and the entire city. Since post-depression income levels rose slower in the suburbs, income differences between districts grew – faster and faster – up until the year 2000. But subsequently, drastic falls in capital and option income have reduced income differences between districts. A prominent feature in the comparison between tenure statuses are the big income differences between those renting vs. owning their homes. Those receiving housing subsidies and income benefits are mostly tenants of suburban council houses. 1996 was the year when these subsidies were most common. Subsequently, recipient proportions decrease up until 2000, but since then, decrease has not been as consistent.

Changes in the educational structure of the population have taken the same course in suburbs as in Helsinki as a whole. Yet, the proportion of highly educated people has grown faster in other districts than in suburbs, so differences in income level have not decreased. Kivikko and Myllypuro districts are exceptions: new housing production has attracted young families and thus raised the level of education faster than elsewhere in Helsinki.

The number of foreign immigrants in Helsinki has grown. A great proportion of them live in the eastern suburbs, in some of which their proportion is clearly greater than in the city as a whole. A few years ago, immigrant proportions started to level out, but 2002 saw increasing local differences again. In certain age groups, immigrants are over-represented: in the Neighbourhood Project areas on average, 20% of 0-6 year olds and 15% of 7-12 year olds have a foreign mother tongue. But differences between suburbs are great. This implies pressures on the city's public services in the area.

## The Neighbourhood Project in the eyes of the inhabitants

The fact that suburbs differ from other parts of Helsinki in terms of various statistics does not seem to influence the well-being of their inhabitants. In his article based on an extensive telephone inquiry made by *Taloustutkimus Oy*, *Erkki Korhonen* shows that many people like their own neighbourhood and that these areas have even become more attractive to the inhabitants in recent years. In Myllypuro, Kontula, Vesala and Pihlajisto, 40% of respondents said their neighbourhood had improved.

Judging from the interviews, the inhabitants have noticed and appreciated many small improvements in their neighbourhood and repairs in the buildings. Among novelties introduced by the Neighbourhood Pro-

ject, family workers, neighbourhood workers and suburban sports instructors have been welcomed. The neighbourhood stations have consolidated their position as congregation and leisure premises for the inhabitants and associations in the area and as bases for the local project workers.

Although many good things had happened in the suburbs during the Neighbourhood Project, interviewees also mentioned problems and needs for improvements, primarily concerning maintenance and tidiness, disturbances due to intoxicant abuse, and security. In Myllypuro and Pihlajamäki, people also wanted better services in their local shopping centre.

Judging from the inhabitant interviews, the Neighbourhood Project influenced people's well-being in many ways. If we want to raise the status of these areas on the housing market the emphasis of development measures should concern tidiness, prevention of the disturbances of intoxicant abuse, security and the ageing shopping centres. Families with children, in particular, higher-educated and elderly people pointed out these factors. And the Neighbourhood Project's traditional strategy to revamp the environment and buildings should not be forgot.

In her article, *Pirjo Turtiainen* views the suburbs as a housing environment from the angle of young people, and the Neighbourhood Project's opportunities to meet inhabitants' expectations. Young people,

too, had identified both positive factors and problems in their neighbourhood. They were just as disturbed as adults by the intoxicant abusers. Although their own neighbourhood was not as important to all young people, expectations were similar: a safe and tidy neighbourhood with varied opportunities for various pursuits. Some of these young people also analysed their neighbourhood as an arena for people in various situation in life. Many knew about those plans that had been made for the area.

These interviewed young people were also aware of the attention that their neighbourhoods attracted. In Myllypuro, many believed that people at large had an unfavourable idea of the area. The interviews also revealed signs of a "collective memory", because young locals knew about things that had happened ten years ago or more but still influenced the area's reputation. However, change to the better had also been noted by the young, who also reflected on their effect on the area's status. Young participants in group interviews thought, for example, that such large projects as the sports centre *Liikuntamylly* boosted the reputation of the area. Interviewed adolescents in Myllypuro were not very familiar with the Suburb Project, although some of them had participated in group activities arranged by the project. Yet both the telephone interviews and the group interviews suggested that many of the local forms of activities were seen as im-

portant, even by those not participating. It seemed that the mere awareness that things happened in the area that you could participate in was important. To the inhabitants it is not essential by whom activities are arranged, and since many of the Neighbourhood Project's sub-projects include other partners as well, inhabitants may not get a clear picture of who the main responsible is.

In the telephone interviews, young people said the Neighbourhood Project related to leisure and hobbies, revamping of the environment and buildings, various happenings and local development in general. Their ideas of what the project does pretty well corresponded to what they wanted to happen in their neighbourhood. So, the conclusion must be that a revamped environment and more varied leisure opportunities in a suburb will promote the well-being of its young inhabitant, too.

## The Neighbourhood Project as a model for local activities

During the second period of the Neighbourhood Project, new forms of activities have consolidated their position among both inhabitants and the local work of city departments, says *Pekka Karjalainen* in his assessment of the work forms of the project. A number of creative experiments have been enabled by the project – and thereby new and more effective work forms. Suburban sports

and community arts have both tried many different kinds of solutions.

For example, the work of suburb architects has supported integration between old and new areas. The vitality of areas has been increased by infill construction, face-lifting repairs and maintenance and by improved functionality and comfort. The work has amounted to supporting those local development processes that the goals of the project mention, to making priorities and activate civic participation. The basic goal in revamping the buildings has been reached, which means that those council houses in need of repair have been improved thanks to state financing and that those allocations and subsidies available for housing repair have been used by the housing companies.

Those innovative elements recognised by our evaluation study are, on one hand, the crucial role of neighbourhood stations as local centres for information and resources and, on the other, the model with long-term family work and, finally, the role of suburb architects as promoters of the local housing environment and civic participation. Suburban sports and community arts have proved to be great attractions, and they have also given birth to, for example, the girl group *Juliat* (pulled by the family workers of the Social Services Department). All those early adolescents involved in the group have started going to school and stopped abusing intoxicants. A common feature with all these work

forms have been their freedom from prejudice.

All the work forms of the Neighbourhood Project have promoted the status of the areas, their variety and their uniqueness. Kontula and Myllypuro, in particular, have benefited from their renowned sports facilities. Pihlajamäki's public image has been strengthened by pointing out that the blocks of flats from the early 1960s have been classified as architecturally unique. The multicultural dimension as a special feature has also been successfully used by the eastern districts.

A challenge for the future is how good practices are going to be preserved after the project period. In the field of social development, abstract wholes and social capital are often created. So-called silent knowledge lives on in the form of experiences and skills among those involved. A special challenge is to find those parts of the organisation that are vital for consolidating the new models. To spread best practices is a task that is not completed just because the project has ended.

Starting from interviews and observations of her own, *Jenni Puustinen* discusses in her article which role the urban stations will play when the development projects will no longer be on. The old tall-house dominated part of the Vuosaari estate was included in the Neighbourhood Project from 1996 to 1999, and after that the Social Service Department decided to continue the activities of the neighbourhood

station in the northern shopping centre, and allocated it a paid neighbourhood worker and regular opening hours. Employment programme employees, too, have had an important role at the station.

One of the functions of the neighbourhood station has been to provide inhabitants and associations with opportunities for independent activities. Many have grabbed the chance, among whom the *Mannerheimin lastensuojeluliitto* child welfare association, the local parish, the local association for jobless, and the city's youth authority. The neighbourhood worker has been very pleased with the free social work model applied. And since voluntary work is always dependent on how actively people participate, activities receive continuity when there is someone professional around.

Suburbs are an important everyday environment especially for those who are not involved in working life. To them, the opportunities opening up in the near environment are vital. In this sense, the neighbourhood station has an obvious mission. According to the neighbourhood worker's hunch, the majority of those visiting the station are not involved in working life. The idea has been to lower the threshold to participation as much as possible, and judging from responses from visitors interviewed, it has been successful. Activities have been brought close to the inhabitants and at the same time people have had the opportunity to meet and socialise. Isolation can be prevented

pretty efficiently through small means. As an example, those ladies that pole-walk together also meet at other times, and the members of the Monday Club, too, have formed small internal care networks.

A strength of the neighbourhood station has been the fact that it houses many kind of activities and that it has been developed to meet the inhabitants' wishes as much as resources allow. People have been able to ask for advice with the neighbourhood worker, who has also functioned as a link between inhabitants and administration. The fact that there has been activities of many kinds has probably improved the opportunities to activate people threatened by social exclusion. At the Vuosaari neighbourhood station, this has been achieved by giving service to intoxicant abusers. In this sense, at least, community work and the neighbourhood station seemed to have reached their goal of building up social networks.

### **The Neighbourhood Project as an administrative working model**

Besides being a promoter of local well-being, the neighbourhood station also has an important role as a local information desk and an information channel for the actors of various city departments, as *Pia Bäcklund* and *Harry Schulman* note in their article. The guiding principle of the Neighbourhood Project has been to intensify co-operation be-

tween city departments. Thus, the project can be seen as a development project for the suburbs and for the administration.

A key element for the opportunities of field workers to co-operate is that the offices' and departments' management groups, as well as the Project Group and the Steering Group for the neighbourhood stations form a functioning contact network.

The Neighbourhood Project's importance for strengthening their co-operation expresses itself differently in different departments. According to an inquiry made among the members of the network some of them have mostly seen the project organisation as an information channel, while others have seen it as a common will-creator outside the administration. Since the various actors have had different ideas about the importance of the network, they have had different ideas of its usefulness.

Judging from the inquiry, the "multi-administrative" project organisation has contributed to an understanding of each other's needs and working principles among offices and departments. Some of the actors emphasised that talks fact to face create commitment and trust, which is important. When experts from various administrations meet, discussions are born that help learn about new angles.

According to the inquiry, the functionality of the network depends on many concrete factors. For exam-

ple, the actors of the network need the support of their own departments and superiors to be able to give their full contribution. It was also felt that the co-operation between departments became difficult unless the actor network had a clear position and mission in relation to the basic functions of the departments. It is also essential for the co-operation between representatives of departments that the actors of the network know what each single actor expects from the network and their partners.

The different actors of the Neighbourhood Project saw many challenges in the co-operation. If co-operation is not encouraged, if the resources needed are not allocated, and if co-operation is not seen as something that promotes result goals, conditions for co-operation are poor. Today the tight economic situation of the city seems to hamper co-operation, although investment in co-operation would, in the long term, create savings and more efficiency. An important precondition for strengthened co-operation is that offices and departments have more time to plan common projects and that these are encouraged.

In spite of difficulties there have been many concrete forms of co-operation in the project suburbs, as when, for example, sports and social work have been matched. In Kontula, the revamping of a day care centre and an elementary school have been carried out in the form of a common play yard. Co-operation with other actors in the area has been

intensified, too. As an example, the business counselling desk of eastern Helsinki has stimulated debate between local entrepreneurs and the city planners of the area. The Neighbourhood Project Network, which consists of representatives of the offices and department, is an important element in the concretising of co-operation forms although, of course, the occurrence or absence of co-operation mainly depends on the working conditions of the field workers.

Vitally important to the Neighbourhood Project is how well it manages to reach and address local reality and inhabitants' wishes in the project area. With the second four-year period of the project, a work form was adopted which consisted of common goal-setting and feedback workshops for inhabitants, other local actors, and representatives of the city administration. In his article, *Juha-Pekka Turunen* describes how these workshops were implemented in practice and how this work form can be used for setting up goals for local development projects and for evaluating how well goals have been reached.

From a planning point of view, the workshops are good for promoting participants' learning and commitment and for the working climate. Discussion may concern the contents of planning or matters relating to the working practices or organisation of the project. The goal setting workshops were held partly as an experiment while the second phase of the project was planned,

and the purpose was, above all, to collect opinions and thoughts from the participants to help draw up and perfection various development programmes.

Judging from the discussions at the workshops, people thought the neighbourhood stations had succeeded well in increasing civic activity, preventing social exclusion, and increase social well-being. With the stations, the planning of improvement projects has been brought closer to the inhabitants, and at the same time those in charge of project planning have felt the stations have helped create a dialogue with the neighbourhoods. Representatives of the offices and departments also felt that the neighbourhood stations had improved their co-operation. It was felt that the stations had become local nodes where local actors can get acquainted and receive information about each other.

According to commentaries from the workshops, the Neighbourhood Project's suburban sports and community arts have managed to activate such people who do not participate in the activities of the conventional inhabitants' organisation or other associations. It seemed obvious that some of those joining in would not have done so if it had not been in their own neighbourhood. Various happenings, exhibitions and festivities were also seen as important for the neighbourhood spirit. It was felt that the work forms introduced by the project responded to local needs better than the conventional inhabit-

ants' organisations or other associations did.

Judging from experiences of the goal setting workshops, such workshops seem to provide a kind of forum for planning-orientation and for emphasising certain angles. Yet, the contents of development programmes cannot be determined too much on the basis of these workshops. The duration and width of the Neighbourhood Project require smooth co-operation, and they also enable a number of advantages in the co-operation. In view of collecting experiences and adjusting the work forms it is important to participate in the evaluation debate on the project.

## Economic consequences of the Neighbourhood Project

Obviously, an evaluation of the Neighbourhood Project should involve the economic bit, too, from an input-output angle – although this may be difficult with such a multi-dimensional project. It is almost impossible to make out what effects come from the project and what from the regular activities of the city's basic services such as the Housing Programme, city planning, or the Development Project for Eastern Helsinki. Nevertheless, that is the kind of information needed to assess the effects of the Neighbourhood Project.

Nevertheless, certain calculation have been made, particularly in the case of revamping the buildings in

the project suburbs, as *Timo Ojala* shows in his article. A vital task of the Neighbourhood Project has been to ensure that the state's allocations for housing repair are used as exhaustingly as possible.

Private housing companies in the project suburbs have had the right to receive state allocations for repair, and the council houses have received repair loans. During the Neighbourhood Project, many applications for repair subsidies were filed, and in 1996-2002 the state paid a total of 4.5 million euros to the project suburbs. In all, 6.6 million have been allocated for the purpose. Less than 10% of subsidies on average have been cancelled because of cancelled repairs. Kontula district received most: 2.1 million euros. In Pihlajamäki and Pihlajisto in the North-eastern Major District the subsidy has amounted to 1.3 million each, and in Myllypuro to 1.1 million.

The majority of repairs carried out by private housing companies have concerned the facade. On average, three euros in four have been used for repair of walls, balconies, windows, doors and roofs. Between 1996 and 2002, about 3,800 dwellings were revamped in council houses in the project suburbs. Already before the start of the project, 2,100 dwellings were included in the revamping programme, and most of them were repaired further during the project.

The most extensive and visible repairs in the project suburbs have

been made in council houses, where revamping has been very thorough compared with, for example, privately owned blocks of flats. The most significant improvements in inhabitants' well-being have been seen in the council houses, where not only the facade has been revamped but dwellings have been repaired and rebuilt, too. Also, the overall improvement in tidiness on the premises has improved people's well-being – and improved the neighbourhood's appeal on the housing market. The shape of the buildings is important for the public image. Economic support to repairs has been important for reaching the Neighbourhood Project's goal of preventing local exclusion.

In their article, *Harry Schulman* and *Henrik Lönnqvist* analyse and compare the relationship between input and output in the Neighbourhood Project – what has been achieved compared with the goals set and the resources available.

The Neighbourhood Project is, above all, a co-operation project, whose main resource allocation takes place within the budgets of city offices and departments in the form of investments or operational costs. The project also has an annual operative allocation (506,000 euros in 2002, a small sum with regard to the goals of the project), which is accessed through the offices and departments. Furthermore, Helsinki's City Council has founded a Neighbourhood Fund, which also has financed projects proposed by the

Neighbourhood Project. In spite of its name, the fund has little connections with the Neighbourhood Project. Other economic resources, too, have been mobilised for suburb development, such as funds from the EU Urban, the European Social Fund and the Housing Fund of Finland.

An elementary idea within the project has been to achieve positive development and prevent undesired development. Interventions made by the project can be divided into two interacting categories. The first one is physical improvement in the project suburb, and its basic idea is to avoid a situation where inhabitants rank districts and suburbs by their outward appearance and the shape of dwellings. The idea is to improve public premises and revamp the buildings thoroughly. Such measures should influence the public image of a neighbourhood – as well as housing prices and migration to the area.

The second category of measures could be summarised in the ambition for increased social and mental capital. These goals are embodied in, for example, the activities of the neighbourhood stations, certain suburb-specific service forms and partnerships, and in other special projects. Some of the latter, such as the employment programmes with finance from the European Social Fund, have been carried out independently parallel to the Neighbourhood Project and the EU's Urban Programme.

The Neighbourhood Project has managed to back up positive development and, at least, moderate undesired developments. Nothing alarming can be seen in the overall trend in the Neighbourhood Project's suburbs but, instead, a number of positive features. Yet there has been trouble recently relating mostly to the unfavourable economic outlooks and the city's tight economy. Unemployment has started growing, and the need for income benefits has stopped decreasing.

Yet from an international perspective it would seem the shadows in Helsinki's suburbs are caused by the sharp light of the media rather than by real serious problems. It is true, however, that intoxicant abuse and the feeling of insecurity have become real problems. There is much to be improved in the public image of the suburbs, and this cannot be achieved without concrete measures. In this sense, the experiences provided by the Neighbourhood Project are reassuring.

The Neighbourhood Project has undoubtedly had positive effects on the suburbs – even in an economic sense. The housing and real estate market usually reacts quickly to such factors, but housing price statistics rather show an opposite trend: prices of dwellings in suburbs seem to be trailing increasingly rather than catching up with prices in the city as a whole.

There are, of course, natural reasons for this: on the whole, dwellings are older in suburbs, and so is the

population. But talking about a "weakening of the population structure" is not a correct way of describing such things as an ageing population, growing unemployment or ethnic differentiation. Infill construction in suburbs is challenging and easily meets with opposition, but at the same time, it provides great opportunities for improving the situation of the whole suburb.

## The future of suburbs and suburban development

Judging from evaluations made, the Neighbourhood Project has had many favourable effects. And although all the good things have not been caused by the project, it is clear that it has helped the city's offices and departments tackle the problem and development of suburbs.

The broad base of the Neighbourhood Project is both its strength and its weakness. Its variety and its comprehensive approach on suburban development have implied many simultaneous measures in various sectors. The broad anchoring can also be seen in the project organisation, and it has facilitated co-operation between offices and departments. At the same time, the variety of viewpoints and measures makes it more difficult to evaluate and steer the project. There have been so many sub-projects of various kinds that it is hard to tell which of them have been decisive for progress. With partnership projects, it is often im-

possible to discern the significance of each single actor involved. Judging from evaluations of the 2000–2003 project period we may, nevertheless, identify a number of essential issues for the future of the project.

- \* How does a special suburban development project suit the city's comprehensive strategy and the Neighbourhood Fund?

After certain adjustments and changes of course, the goals and working models of the Neighbourhood Project are still of interest and importance. The evaluation showed that the Neighbourhood Project relates to the implementation of comprehensive strategies approved by the City Council. Is the project working on a concretising of the comprehensive strategy, or will an additional suburban strategy be needed? How does the use of the Neighbourhood Fund relate to the Neighbourhood Project?

- \* Has the project been managed and carried out in a clear and concise manner that enables partnership?

Co-operation between offices and departments was clearly strengthened during the project period. But the project's importance for upgraded co-operation has varied depending on the office or department. The implementation and promotion

of the partnership relates to a number of very concrete and practical factors, such as the composition of the project organisation. Should, for example, the third sector have a stronger representation? Judging from evaluations, the challenges of the project organisation relate to, on one hand, recruiting for the key positions and to the goals and tasks of the various bodies, on the other. The question of the domicile or "mother organisation" of the project is important – particularly for the city's comprehensive strategies.

- \* How should the working models created by the project be ensured in future?

Among the results of the Neighbourhood Project we may include quite a number of innovative local working models. If the project does not continue in its present form, it should be resolved how working models found good will be applied in future. The neighbourhood stations, in particular, have become important local meeting places that benefit both the inhabitants and other local actors – even employees of the city authorities. When planning the future of the project, it should be decided what good practices to pick out and integrate into the routines of the city's authorities.

- \* Is the follow-up system appropriate?

In future, too, developments and differentiation between districts should be carefully monitored. The follow-up should be developed and, in fact, created already when the project is launched. The goals should be realistic and concrete enough to allow evaluation of the effectiveness of the project. The monitoring and evaluation should benefit the project from the very beginning.

Our evaluation also pointed at a number of factors showing that the tolerance limits starts to be near, if not even reached, with regard to certain phenomena. It is a sort of reverse NIMBY phenomenon, where it seems as if certain suburbs have received a little bit too many special services in their area that – although certainly useful – nobody has wanted elsewhere. In principle, the principle of equality and justice should apply to such circumstances, too. In certain areas, the proportion of foreign immigrants starts to be so great that – referring to experiences elsewhere in the world – it is likely to affect the housing market and migration, particularly if public services are not up to giving good enough basic services to the heterogeneous population of the areas.

The future of the project also depends on the question whether in future we should concentrate on comprehensive development in certain selected neighbourhoods or whether we should tackle certain chosen is-

sues as comprehensively as possible, i.e. in as many suburbs as possible. The main emphasis of the project could lie on responding to the needs of certain special groups such as jobless, elderly people, children or immigrants. In future we might imagine certain targeted measures in many parts of town instead of just focussing on certain districts.

Furthermore, it is important within neighbourhood development to strengthen the unique features of each suburb. In Pihlajamäki, for example, the international reputation of the architecture should be highlighted at all occasions. In Kontula, ethnic variation, the varied services and the urban atmosphere stand out.

During the Neighbourhood Project, the parties involved learned much about the suburbs, about life in the suburbs and various needs for change in them. This report was made to ensure this experience is stored for future needs.