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*PURE Regional Visit Report (RVR1)*

*HELSINKI, FINLAND*

*8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2009*

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## 1. Introduction

This report summarises the learning from the first visit of the Consultative Development Group (CDG) to the Helsinki Metropolitan Region in March 2009. The Helsinki Metropolitan Region encompasses the Cities of Espoo, Helsinki, Kaunainen and Vantaa, although the City of Kaunainen is not participating in this project. For convenience, the report refers typically to 'Helsinki' or the 'region' meaning the HMR, and not the broader Helsinki Region (of 14 municipalities). Where the reference is to the individual Cities of Helsinki, Vantaa or Espoo, this is mentioned explicitly.

The purposes of the initial visit were:

- to familiarise key stakeholders in the region about the PURE project and process;
- to enable the CDG to properly understand the nature of the Helsinki Metropolitan Region, the main developmental priorities and aspirations in the region, and the context in which these developments are being pursued;
- to form preliminary views on issues relating to the engagement of higher education institutions (HEIs) in the region on priority developmental themes; and
- to establish a foundation for Helsinki's participation in local Action Planning, benchmarking and participation in cluster groups, in the next year.

### Programme for the visit

The Review took place from 8 – 11 March 2009, beginning with a dinner meeting between the Regional Consultative Group (RCG) and the CDG on the Sunday evening. This initial meeting provided for discussion of the PURE process, and some exploration of key issues within the region. There then followed a series of meetings with representatives of various City officers, representative of HEIs and other key stakeholders. These meetings enabled extensive sharing of information on key initiatives, structures, issues and policy challenges, with opportunities for the CDG members to probe issues and gain insights to various perspectives on key themes. The City of Espoo hosted the CDG for a meeting on the Tuesday afternoon, and a more informal gathering over dinner at the Gumböle Manor, which proved to be very enjoyable. A final meeting between the RCG and the CDG was an opportunity for the CDG to provide some initial feedback to key stakeholders in the region.

The visit was very well and thoroughly planned, providing the opportunity to meet a range of people (particularly from the three key Cities of Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa and HEIs) and to get some detail about a wide range of initiatives. The one group that could be represented more in future meetings would be business stakeholders, and possibly some NGO representatives. Invariably, people were open and generous with their time and their willingness to speak frankly and to explore issues with the CDG.

The Regional Profile and the Briefing Paper that were circulated in advance were a very useful foundation for the CDG's visit, providing a very helpful introduction to important complexities in the region, and identifying some of the significant initiatives and issues that emerged as being central to our work. Inevitably, it was very challenging to get deep insights in three days and an evening;

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nevertheless, the generosity of the stakeholders and the extensive program for the three days has enabled the CDG to prepare this report. It has four key purposes:

- a) to hold up a mirror in which the region can see itself through outside eyes, as a basis for ongoing local reflection and discussion;
- b) to offer some external observations on the issues which had been raised and others which emerged;
- c) to offer the RCG a further resource for its own action planning, and for considering how best it might participate in the wider PURE project, especially the cross-regional themes; and
- d) as a source of information about Helsinki for the other PURE regions.

The four members of the CDG complemented each other well. Three were from other PURE regions (Thames Gateway, Flanders, and Melbourne) and therefore had had experience in working with CDGs, and embracing other activities within PURE. The fourth, Markku Sotarauta from Tampere, is an eminent Finnish academic working on various aspects of innovations systems in Finland, with a good overview of many aspects of the situation in Helsinki.

The members of the CDG express their warmest appreciation to those who played a key part in the visit, notably Ida Bjorbacka, City of Helsinki, Asta Manninen, Director of Urban Facts in the City of Helsinki, Markku Takala, City of Espoo, and Aulis Pitkälä, City of Espoo, who hosted the dinner on the Tuesday evening, as well as to all others who gave so generously of time and energy to inform the work of the visit. The level of interest, and the energy shown in most of the discussions were remarkable. Helsinki has much to offer to other PURE regions, as well as prospects for significant learning. The benefit will be an improved capacity for engaging higher education in the region's development.

## 2. Context

There are three important aspects of the context in which the discussion of priorities, processes and practices in Helsinki should be placed:

- a) the economic, social and demographic characteristics of the Helsinki Region;
- b) the particular structure of Finnish state (national) and municipal government, and the realignment of governance arrangements; and
- c) the new legislative environment of Finnish higher education.

The outline of these aspects draws on the Regional Briefing Paper, information provided during the consultations, and a range of documentation gathered from various sources.

### *Economic, Social and Demographic*

There are at least three layers in describing the demographic, social and economic profile of Helsinki: the City of Helsinki (575,000 people); the Helsinki Metropolitan Regional Area (1 million people), encompassing the Cities of Espoo (243,000), Helsinki, Kauniainen (8,500) and Vantaa (197,000); and the Helsinki Region (1.3 million), which embraces a further ten municipalities (from the KUUMA and the 'Neloset' municipalities). The different levels are important, because while there is an increasing focus on cooperation at each of the second and third levels, the City of Helsinki is the largest single municipality and continues to be a significant actor in its own right.

There are two official languages in Finland, Finnish and Swedish, and many people also speak English. While the Swedish-speaking community is small, it is influential and is strongly represented



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in some parts of the country. In the Helsinki region, one university and one polytechnic teach predominantly in Swedish.

The City of Helsinki's Urban Facts provides a remarkable wealth of additional information about Helsinki, for each of the levels of region. This is a unique and significant unit which supplies knowledge and services to ensure that decisions about its futures are based on thorough understanding. Their numerous publications also include extensive international comparisons, highlighting areas where further investigation might be warranted. Overall, Urban Facts provides a very rich source of information on almost all aspects of life in Helsinki, in its regional and international context. This information is very interesting and provides a terrific platform for planning interventions to achieve social and political objectives.

As Urban Facts' research and publication has shown, knowledge generation and application, and the higher education sector are very important in Helsinki. While the Helsinki Region has about 25 per cent of Finland's population, it has 30 per cent of the labour force and more than 40 per cent of research and development investment - 4.4 per cent of the Region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), whereas Finland's nationally is 3.5 per cent of GDP which itself is significantly higher than Europe's. At the time of this visit, there are nine universities and six polytechnics (or universities of applied science as they are known increasingly). These vary widely in scale, as the University of Helsinki, as a comprehensive teaching and research university, has 35,000 students whereas the Academy of Fine Arts, a specialist institution, has 246. The Metropolia University of Applied Science has 14,000 while Humak has 1,400. The polytechnics date from 1991, formed to have a strong vocational focus and delivering three- or four-year degrees, without minimal research responsibility.

## *Structure of Finnish State (National) and Municipal Government*

The relationship of the higher education sector takes particular significance when linked with the importance of the regional authorities. Municipal government in Finland is a very large provider of services, including infrastructure services including public works, water and energy utilities, waste disposal, health care, transport, social welfare, culture and leisure facilities and services, and all levels of education (except for universities). Even polytechnics, or universities of applied sciences as they are known increasingly, are owned partly by the Cities. The City of Helsinki now also has a strong resource focused on international relationships.

The scale of municipal responsibilities means that the Cities are very large employers. The City of Helsinki, for example, has 39,000 employees while Espoo employs 14,000 people. Their budgets represent a very substantial part of the local GDP.

Discussions are underway about the possible merger of the Cities of Helsinki and Vantaa. Prompted at least partly by the search for reduction in public sector expenditure and the search for new service innovations, this development would increase the scale of municipal importance even further. Already, some services, such as waste management, are becoming managed on a collaborative basis. This applies already to traffic-planning and environment-issues, and to the Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa.

## *New Legislative Environment of Finnish Higher Education*

While the CDG's discussions were based very much on current experiences and perspectives, serious changes are foreshadowed for Finland's higher education sector. These changes are being made in the context of serious concerns about the status and performance of the Finnish innovation systems, which needs radical reform according to a Review published in October 2009. Led by Professor Reinhilde Veugelers, a large international evaluation panel reported that Finland's once highly rated innovation system had begun to decline because it has become complicated and



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fragmented. It was lacking also in its international relationships. The report supported the reforms proposed for higher education, clarifying roles and reducing fragmentation.

A number of university mergers have been foreshadowed, most importantly the formation of Aalto University. From 1 January 2010, the Helsinki University of Technology, the Helsinki School of Economics and the University of Art and Design will be merged to form Aalto University, a single entity designed to facilitate more effective fusion of the disciplines of design, technology and business, as a foundation for greater international competitiveness. The new university will have approximately 19,500 students. Benefiting from a significant investment of resources, Aalto is expected to strengthen the quality of teaching, particularly from enhancing collaborative processes, and to enhance its international connectedness.

Across the whole sector, the reform process is intended to provide Finnish universities with greater flexibility, and to strengthen their capacity to compete for international research funding. This is to be achieved through measures to provide greater independence and diversity in funding sources. In short, the reforms will involve:

- a) new legal status for universities;
- b) ownership of their own properties;
- c) new governance arrangements; and
- d) a reduction in the number of institutions.

Teaching and learning and research will continue to be their main responsibilities, supported by government funding.

### 3. The Story We've Heard

Altogether we met with more than 40 City, university and non-government representatives in 14 separate sessions over the three days. A full list of the participants is included in the Attachment provided for us by Ida Björkbacka, the Regional Link Partner. Many different initiatives and issues were explored, with some recurring themes, but also quite distinct threads as well. The account which follows will inevitably be partial and will neglect some important comments. However, it is intended to bring together the major points which were made as a basis for understanding the more general observations which are offered in the concluding section. This section also provides the basis for identifying both some priorities for the Cities' Action Planning for the next phase of PURE, and for developing case studies of good practice which can be shared with other PURE regions.

For the purposes of discussion, our learning from the interviews is presented under the headings of: strategy; structures and cases. For reasons of space, the summary of the cases is very limited: some of these would have warranted a full report in their own right!

#### Strategy

We were informed on many occasions about specific strategies which were being implemented, with implications for the higher education sector. Some of these were sponsored by the state (the national government), where as others were generated by either the Cities or the regions. The national government is responsible directly for policies related to the universities and to international relations, and initiates other strategies which are implemented in accord with the decisions of other key actors at regional and city levels. Consequently, the cities also have a comprehensive framework of strategies and policies that address their various areas of responsibility. During the course of the CDG's discussions, a broad range of strategies and policies

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were presented to us. Central to much of the strategic thinking in the region is the vision for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area:

The Helsinki Metropolitan Area is a dynamic world-class centre for business and innovation. Its high-quality services, arts and science, creativity and adaptability promote the prosperity of its citizens and bring benefits to all of Finland. The Metropolitan Area is being developed as a unified region close to nature where it is good to live, learn, work and do business.

For the most part, there is a close correspondence between state and regional strategy. This was reflected clearly, for example, in the role of the Ministerial Working Group for Public Administration and Regional Development which had cooperation and partnership as a clear principle of implementation. This was achieved through specific procedures to document agreements and roles and responsibilities, as well as broader coordination of various projects. Helsinki is clearly the major metropolitan area within Finland, so cooperation with the municipal authorities within the region is very important.

This was reflected in the relationship between the national Metropolitan Policy, and the urban research program that involved a significant investment in the universities. Whereas the national Policy focused on: land use, housing and traffic; strengthening international competitiveness; multiculturalism, immigration and bilingualism; and social coherence, research and cooperation program was targeted at: living environment and urban structures; multiculturalism and immigration; welfare policies and services; economy and competitiveness.

Innovation and competitiveness policies were another important dimension of national and municipal policy. National innovation policy has been the subject of intense scrutiny and redevelopment. The new approach has four key threads: increase the global presence of Finnish actors; strengthen 'demand and user' orientation; encourage entrepreneurs; and restructuring of systems to encourage greater flexibility and dynamic innovation involving the public sector. The new emphases build on continued strength in science and technology development, and on the strategy which promotes decentralised Centres of Expertise, and strategic centres for science, technology and innovation. The Centres of Expertise were an important part of the CDG's discussions, as they are in their third iteration and now focused as regionally-based national competence clusters. Helsinki is involved in nine of the Centres of Expertise, and coordinates three of them. While there is a clear emphasis on creating a national critical mass in each centre of expertise, they are also seen as key resources for regional development.

Alongside the national innovation framework, the Helsinki Metropolitan Area has adopted a Competitiveness Strategy, *Prosperous Metropolis: Competitiveness Strategy for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area*. Led by the Economic Development Working Group of the Cities of Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kaunaienen, the Competitiveness Strategy is seen to be critical in achieving the vision for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area as:

... a dynamic world-class centre for business and innovation. Its high-quality services, arts and science, creativity and adaptability promote the prosperity of its citizens and bring benefits to all of Finland. The Metropolitan Area is being developed as a unified region close to nature where it is good to live, learn, work and do business.

The Strategy identifies four priorities:

- Improving top-quality education and know-how;
- Building good quality of life as well as a pleasant and secure living environment;
- Strengthening user-driven innovation environments and developing public procurements; and
- Internationalization of the metropolitan area and its connection to global networks.

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The Strategy then spells out a number of 'actions' to be undertaken in relation to the four priorities. In the first set of actions, universities and polytechnics are integral to four out of five; to one of five in the second priority; two of four in the third priority; and one of three in the fourth (and it might be said that they are implicit in all of them). Even apart from those actions which have direct implications for higher education institutions, there is a clear intent to channel much activity through Culminatium, a key agency in which the higher education institutions are clear stakeholders.

Another significant strategic framework was the Regional Competitiveness and Cohesion Program for the Greater Helsinki Area (COCO-GHA), which included the City of Kirkkonummi as well as the four HMR cities. The COCO-GHA aims to provide a framework which brings together the HMR competitiveness strategy, as well as the national innovation strategy and the metropolitan and urban policies. In addition, it focused on the priority of well-being and of improving service design and delivery. In particular, it focuses on strengthening competence in the labour force, and strengthening the capacity of the cities to integrating international expertise. These initiatives focus particularly on cooperation with higher education institutions, as they are central to the supply of expertise, and to the housing and integration of international students and staff.

There is strong commitment to thinking strategically in Helsinki which, at several levels, positions the higher education institutions as an integral resource for the development of innovation and expertise. This is at the heart of the vision for development in Helsinki, and in Finland more generally. The examples cited above are only part of the story as we had some insight into a broader set of examples of policies in relation to well-being and education (at all levels). Internationalising of Finland and its economy was also a prominent concern.

A consistent theme here was breaking down traditional barriers and building cooperative relationships amongst the large and traditionally separate municipal organisations, as well as with higher education institutions. There was a strong sense that gains had been made in recent years in achieving a framework for constructive collaboration and in engendering a new climate for innovation, one that was oriented particularly to greater interaction with international partners.

## Structures

The CDG encountered a range of examples of structural arrangements which facilitated cooperation. These were of at least three kinds:

- a) municipal level forums for cooperation, reflected most formally in the HMA and the Helsinki Region, and their various working forums. Examples include the Mayor's meetings, the Helsinki Metropolitan Area Advisory Board, and the Helsinki Region Cooperation Assembly;
- b) formal opportunities for municipal authorities to meet with higher education institutions. For example, the Mayors of the City of Helsinki meet with the rectors at the University of Helsinki and the Helsinki School of Economics each year to discuss arrangements of shared interest; a similar pattern is developing between the Mayor of Espoo and the Aalto Rector. The municipalities also have membership of the Boards of the polytechnics (universities of applied sciences) where they are part-owners; and
- c) various specific purpose companies that might have municipal, university, business or other stakeholders represented in their ownership, management and operation. Culminatium is one very good example of this type of collaborative forum, but this seemed to be a common arrangement, whether on a regional or city basis. These kinds of bodies sometimes have a key role as intermediaries, in which they are charged with linking the various partners in projects, or as direct service or innovation firms in their own right.

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## Cases

During the course of our consultations, we were offered insights into many examples of engagement by universities, or their staff and students, with regional initiatives. There is insufficient space here to discuss any in detail, but there are several that should be considered for documenting as examples of good practice, to be shared with the other PURE regions. The examples included:

- a) **Culminatum:** a company formed by the three participating cities, the Uusimaa Regional Council, universities, polytechnics and businesses to manage the Centre of Expertise program in the Helsinki Region. Formed in 1995, Culminatum coordinates three of the national competence clusters, and plays a key role in coordinating funding and expertise from various sources in the interests of business and job development. As a long standing intermediary that is crucial to the implementation of the HMA Competitiveness Strategy, Culminatum is an extremely interesting example of collaboration in PURE Helsinki;
- b) **T3:** a very interesting longer term project that seeks to link the science expertise at Aalto in Otaniemi, with the business district of Keilaniemi, and the garden city of Tapiola (science, economy, art). It reflects a commitment to creating neighbourhoods which can facilitate the kinds of unexpected encounters which can lead to creative initiatives. Drawing on the notion of a cafeteria that might link the three areas, it seeks to foster interactions that link science, art, design and technology, recognising the importance of 'immaterial values'
- c) **Active Life Village:** this is a relatively-new initiative sponsored specifically by the City of Espoo and the Laurea University of Applied Sciences, with a range of service and technology companies as partners. It is a business incubator for new businesses drawing on technological innovation to provide new opportunities in the welfare sector. It has a strong commitment to involving potential users both in product development, and as a means of empowering their lives. Both Laurea and the University of Technology have been involved, with significant implications for student engagement at Laurea;
- d) **Metropolitan Policy and Urban Research program.** This is a remarkable project in which the Cities, the Ministry of Education and the University of Helsinki and the Helsinki University of Technology have funded nine professors in various fields of urban studies. The appointments are distributed across various fields and departments within the two universities. It is in its second five-year period of funding, having been subject to evaluation and then expanded in 2007 (the 'KatuMetro' program). The aims of the project are oriented specifically towards a research agenda that can inform the implementation of the Metropolitan Policy, drawing on research of the highest quality, and influence university curricula to give greater priority to urban issues;
- e) **Aalto University:** formed from the merger mentioned above, Aalto carries great hopes that it can lead Finnish science and technology into a new era of global competitiveness. It will draw on the three sets of science, business and arts disciplines to offer degrees and research that is genuinely interdisciplinary and oriented towards enhancing innovation for global markets. Its activities will be structured around three 'Factories' in Service, Design and Media, to build a strong culture of application of science in partnership with industry;
- f) **the Helsinki Education and Research Area (HERA):** is a consortium of 19 universities and polytechnics that have joined forces with join forces with the municipalities, provinces, industrial and civil organisations and other key operators of the region to create a network for development projects that will enhance the recruitment of foreign students. They have focused particularly on issues related to housing, transport, and measures (including language support, for example) to encourage international students to become more committed to being in Finland. The Student City is a key focus of this work, creating an environment to which a diverse student body will be drawn, with benefits for all the city from their vitality and energy;
- g) **the Baltic project** is led by the City of Helsinki as one of its key projects in implementing Helsinki's International Strategy. The City exercises leadership in fostering cooperation in the

- region, and in strengthening its position in the European Union. It has particular interest in projects that will improve cross-border transport links;
- h) the RFID Lab and Forum Virium Helsinki: while the CDG was not able to gain direct insight into either of these initiatives, they also are two other strongly partnership-based organisations that aim to develop marketable new products and services from collaboration amongst different kinds of partners. Both are oriented around information and communication technologies, while RFID has a more particular focus on automatic identification. RFID was an initiative of Metropolia University of Applied Science, with 4 universities, Nokia and other companies. The City of Vantaa has established an innovation centre that is collocated with RFID;
  - i) Maria-Vantaa: a new precinct development in the City of Vantaa that is being planned as a 'living lab', with active involvement of Metropolia and Laurea. This is conceived as a 'quadruple helix' project, a philosophy for planning the whole area involving not only the cities, business and the universities, but also citizens. They are involved in the planning, particularly in relation to the distribution of service points and environmental questions such as sustainable construction.

This is a small selection of the various examples of cooperation for which the CDG was able to get a good feel. Many others were mentioned, often arising directly from the closer interaction that occurs with the professional areas of health, welfare, hospitality and construction in the universities of applied sciences. A new, innovative rehabilitation hospital in Espoo was a very good example. Typically, as key service providers, the cities were the key partners for the HEIs in these initiatives. After the CDG visit had occurred, the University of Helsinki released a Programme for Societal Interaction 2010-12 which proposes that the University will be 'a responsible actor within the community, an advocate of knowledge and a valued partner in all forms of cooperation'. The supporting actions will be implemented from 2010 onwards.

#### 4. Helsinki Regional Priorities

Both in the briefing papers and in our direct discussions, the Regional Consultative Group identified a number of priorities with which they were looking for new insights by participating in PURE. These included:

- a) Service Innovation. The new national innovation policy has identified the need for the public sector itself to be engaging in innovation in service design and provision. This might be related to the ways in which the cities and other public sector agencies support the broader process of innovation, but it also concerns directly the public sector's activities in health, welfare, utilities, waste and transport. Introducing private sector contribution to service delivery is one key example of how this kind of innovation might proceed;
- b) Immigration. There are two parts to this issue: one is the need to attract greater numbers of international students and workers to support a labour force that will be struggling to keep up an adequate labour supply, and how to integrate international residents with Finnish language and customs; the other is how to deal with immigrant groups who might struggle with skills, customs and generally be more marginal to Finnish social systems;
- c) Internationalisation. This clearly overlaps with the immigration question, but it is broader because it concerns taking Finland to the world, as well as bringing the world to Finland. While the Finnish language is seen to create difficulties for immigrants, the challenge in taking Finland to the world is more one of outlook and of developing relationships; an outward rather than an inward orientation;
- d) Place of polytechnics in Finland. As the reform of universities proceeds, clarification of the role of polytechnics and how they contribute to the broader framework of education and research requires clarification. In their early years, the status of polytechnics as teaching institutions, providing many graduates for skilled occupations on a regional basis was accepted; as they now become 'universities of applied sciences', and involved in more and more research and



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- development projects, questions arise about their role and how best to position their contribution;
- e) Contribution to regional innovation. As the Finnish innovation system is reviewed and restructured, questions arise about the number and focus of intermediaries that seek to link universities, cities and business at a regional level;
  - f) Developing a student city. This is a priority both in relation to attracting international students, and in creating an environment in which students are retained in the local labour markets and involved in creating a milieu in which innovation can flourish;
  - g) Models for collaboration. There are many models for collaboration amongst all kinds of partners in Helsinki: do some work more effectively than others?
  - h) New jobs in new growth areas. As the economy is revitalised and evolves further, what kinds of employment opportunities will emerge and what policies will be necessary to develop those opportunities in Helsinki.

## 5. Our Observations

In the space of three days, it is very difficult to gather sufficient insight to make strong statements about the regional engagement of higher education institutions. That is not the purpose of the exercise. However, it might be useful for the RCG to have some sense of our initial impressions, as a basis for their own reflections and planning for ongoing participation with PURE.

Overall, the character of the universities obviously influences their approach to engagement, and its effectiveness from a city perspective. The University of Helsinki has a record and aspirations to be recognised as a leading international research university which offers education across a range of fields. Aalto, on the other hand, is much more focused on application of research and direct engagement, even though it will also have aspirations for international recognition. The polytechnics, or universities of applied sciences, as either name suggests, begin with an assumption about applied knowledge and have a particular role in developing labour supply for skilled employment (at least).

There are a range of other more specific observations. These are not presented in any particular order, but should be taken together in considering any response.

### Dynamic Helsinki

There is a strong sense that Helsinki Metropolitan Region is really on the move! There are many dynamic initiatives, many actors involved, and broad issues being addressed. As it was put to us in the final meeting, much of the energy comes from the Cities and many other partners 'joining forces'; it is not so much a management exercise, as a coincidence of important organisations with interests in common coming together to enhance the economy and quality of life in their region.

The HEIs are engaged, although whether this is consistent across institutions, and a result of clear strategy, or individual parts of the HEIs getting involved, was unclear in many cases. Nevertheless, the sense of urgency in identifying and taking initiative was palpable.

### Strategic Coherence?

The range of formal strategy documents is impressive, from state, region and city, as are many of the documents themselves. After a number of discussions, the question started to emerge about the coherence of these policies and strategies; perhaps even more pointedly, is there too many to get real focus into the implementation. Clearly, an effort is made to achieve alignment, and the HMA Competitiveness Strategy is clearly significant. However, perhaps too much is expected, for



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example, of a small organisation such as Culminatium; a narrower, more focused approach might be more effective.

Another dimension to this issue is the degree of variation with which cities or regional organisations are associated with various strategies. While it no doubt makes sense locally, it is not clear why the Regional Council would be associated with some initiatives and not others, or why one city would sign up to a strategy and not others.

## Complex Changes in Higher Education

The HE sector is complex and in great flux. In the current climate, there is some potential for contradictory developments to emerge. For example, the universities have been encouraged to lift their international research performance; with greater flexibility, they might make decisions that will reduce their capacity to be involved in applied activities.

## Urban Studies Project

This is a very interesting and ambitious initiative that warrants a separate story being told. However, the CDG was intrigued at the decision to distribute the professorships across a number of different settings, rather than concentrating them in one or two units which would have demonstrable critical mass. We were not persuaded that the current arrangement, notwithstanding the new emphasis on networking, will deliver the benefits for understanding the special features of the region that is sought by the Cities and the Ministries.

## Cultural Aspects of Change Management

Enormous change is proposed for large organisations, particularly the universities and the municipal authorities themselves: how is the cultural side being supported? This can be very difficult, especially if it is not planned. It is one thing to support this within an organisational context, and quite another to do so in a network setting.

## Systemic, or Project-Based?

Notwithstanding the many examples which we saw, it was not clear whether the engagement is supported systemically by the universities, or is project-based? Clearly, the cities have adopted a very coordinated approach to influencing change.

## Service Innovations

There are clear opportunities for Cities to initiate service innovations, and it seems apparent that Helsinki can draw on the wider PURE network to explore support for this. The City of Helsinki has an exceptional resource in Urban Facts for engaging with universities; it is not clear whether they have other capacity to communicate with experts in more technical areas, to initiate innovation.

## Research, Not Curriculum

Universities engage on research, not curriculum (noting that there are exceptions, especially with the universities of applied sciences).

## Social Networks and Innovation

It became apparent over the course of the three days that many of the same individuals have been involved in significant initiatives over the past 10-15 years. While the record of innovation is



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remarkable, it raised the question of whether or not the level of social capital is a barrier to innovation. Perhaps the important question is how this key network can keep refreshing itself with new participants.

## Access to Universities

There was some feedback that it can be very difficult for small and medium firms to get access to universities. Large companies are involved readily, and the incubators provide a resource for new initiatives to get off the ground. However, there is a question about how a SME can find out where to go to get support.

## The Priority of the International

This was a striking theme in our conversations, and one that will be pursued in PURE. It seems that policies and strategies in relation to international links and immigration are at an early stage.

## Free Higher Education

This also became a recurring question. While having free HE is laudable in this era, it is important to be clear about the policy objective which is being addressed, especially at postgraduate level and for international students.

## 'Immaterial' Values and the Cafeteria

This topic arose in one interesting interview, but it is important to have it on the public record: what is the place of HEIs in saving the world? The "cafeteria" concept was an important idea in creating spaces where these kinds of conversations can occur without a predetermined agenda.

## 6. Next Steps

The RCG will have its own thoughts about this report and the issues it raises. In relation to PURE, there are a number of activities which will be helpful to undertake.

### Action Planning

The RCG is expected to develop an Action Plan for the work which it undertakes over the next 12 months. To make the most of PURE, these actions should include:

- a) use of the Benchmarking Instruments (see Briefing Paper 16);
- b) local projects to address the priorities, drawing on insights gained from the first CDG visit, the benchmarking or participation in cluster groups (there are examples already on the PURE website);
- c) participation in PURE cluster groups. Given the priority areas, the Regional Innovation Systems cluster and the Social Inclusion and Active Citizenship cluster would both seem to be relevant. Others might also seem useful (see the PURE website and the platform which has been developed to support cluster interaction);
- d) identifying examples of good practice to be written up and shared across the PURE network. There are many examples of good practice which could be shared, including all of the 'cases' mentioned above. This would be time-consuming, so it might be best to;

At a later stage, in 12 months or so, the RCG will need to determine when it would be appropriate for the CDG to visit again.



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## PROGRAMME

### Consultative Development Group

- Bruce Wilson, Co-Director of PASCAL, Dean, Prof., School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning at RMIT University (CLR, leader of the review team)  
<http://www.rmit.com.au/browse;ID=du8boxh7uyyt>
- Alison Bowerbank, Team Leader, Thames Gateway and *Olympics Directorate*, Department for Communities and Local Government, UK (member of the team)  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/thamesgateway/>
- Jan Geens, Dr., Flanders Agency for Mobility and Cooperation in Higher Education (member of the team)  
[http://www.flandershouse.org/study\\_in\\_flanders](http://www.flandershouse.org/study_in_flanders)
- Markku Sotarauta, Prof. Tampere Univ. (member of the team)  
[http://web.me.com/markku.sotarauta/tiede/sotarauta\\_homepage.html](http://web.me.com/markku.sotarauta/tiede/sotarauta_homepage.html)

### Regional Coordination Group

- Marko Karvinen, Chief Policy Advisor, Economic and Planning Centre, City of Helsinki.
- Markku Takala, Development Director, City of Espoo.
- Leena Pääkkönen-Tarvainen, Social Welfare and Health Care, City of Vantaa.
- Asta Manninen, Acting Director, Urban Facts, City of Helsinki.
- Ilpo Laitinen, Research Director, Evidence Based Management-project.
- Ida Björkbacka, Senior Planning Officer, Economic and Planning Centre, City of Helsinki.

### Sunday 8.11.2009

Everybody from the RCG and the CDG were present for dinner at Restaurant Vltava at 19-21 hosted by Urban Facts/City of Helsinki. Alison Bowerbank joined us at the end. Additionally Manna Torvinen, Development Director from the Social Welfare and Health Care of the City of Vantaa was present.

### Monday 9.11.2009

All interviews were held at the Theodor-hall at Ensi linja 1.

#### 10.45-12.30 Interview: Regional competitiveness

- Kari Ruoho, Director of Economic Development, City of Espoo.
- Pasi Mäkinen, C.E.O., Culminatum Innovation Oy Ltd.
- Helena Elkala, Head of the Administration Dept., City of Espoo.
- Merja Koski, Manager for the Urban programme/ COCO-GHA, City of Helsinki.

#### 13.30-15.00 Interview: Metropolitan policy and Aalto-university

- Peter Fredriksson, Senior Adviser, Ministry of the Environment.
- Jarmo Suominen, Professor of Mass Customization, University of Art and Design Helsinki/Aalto-university.
- Markku Takala, Development Director, City of Espoo.



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## **15.15-16.45 Interview: Student affairs and Cooperation between the City of Helsinki and the HEI:s**

- Markus Härkäpää, Development Director, City of Helsinki.
- Niklas Piiparinen, Boardmember, Student Union of the University of Helsinki (<http://www.hyy.helsinki.fi/english/3/>).
- Matti Parpala, *Chairman of the Student Board*, The Student Union of The Helsinki School of Economics (<http://english.kyweb.fi/>).
- Markku Takala, Development Director, City of Espoo.

## **16.45-18.30 Interview: Cultural services and services for the elderly and disabled**

- Matti Lyytikäinen, Director of Services for the Elderly and Disabled, City of Vantaa.
- Iiris Lehtonen, Cultural Director, City of Vantaa.
- Markku Takala, Development Director, City of Espoo.

## **Tuesday 10.11.2009**

### **Interviews at the Theodor-hall at Ensi linja 1**

#### **8.00-9.30 Interview: Cultural Services and HEI-cooperation**

- Georg Dolivo, Cultural Director, City of Espoo.
- 10.00-12.00 Interview: Metropolitan policy and HEI-cooperation at the Cities.
- Olli Alho, General Secretary of the Urban Policy Committee, Ministry of Employment and the Economy (left at 11).
- Ulla Mäkeläinen, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Education (left at 11.30).
- Martti Lipponen, Vice Mayor, City of Vantaa (arrived at 11).

#### **12.00-13.30 Interview: Internationalization**

- Kati Kettunen, Director of Student Services, University of Helsinki (representing HERA).
- Teemu Haapalehto, Administrative Secretary for Immigration Issues, City of Espoo.
- Riikka Lahdensuo, Planning Officer at the Department for International Relations, City of Helsinki.
- Matti Ollinkari, Head of International Relations, City of Helsinki.
- Teuvo Savikko, Research Director, City of Espoo.

#### **14.15-16.00 Interview: Research-based cooperation between HEI:s and the cities**

- Hannu Niemi, Professor, University of Helsinki.
- Mika Tuuliainen, Liaison Manager, University of Helsinki.
- Asta Manninen, Acting Director, City of Helsinki Urban Facts.
- Annukka Jyrämä, Senior Research Fellow, Helsinki School of Economics.
- Erja Saurama, professor, Heikki Waris Institute, University of Helsinki.
- Teuvo Savikko, Research Director, City of Espoo.

#### **17.00-18.30 Interview: New service forms and Service-innovations**

- Jaakko Tarkkanen, Regional Principal, Laurea University of Applied Sciences.
- Juha Metso, Director of Social Affairs and Chairman of the Board for Active Life Village in Espoo.
- Markku Takala, Development Director, City of Espoo.
- Leena Pääkkönen-Tarvainen, Social Welfare and Health Care, City of Vantaa.



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**19.00-21.00 Dinner at the Gumböle Manor hosted by the City of Espoo**

- Aulis Pitkälä, Director for the Section of Education and Culture, City of Espoo.
- Helena Elkala, Head of the Administration Dept., City of Espoo.
- Kari Ruoho, Director of Economic Development, City of Espoo.
- Markku Takala, Development Director, City of Espoo.
- Leena Pääkkönen-Tarvainen, Social Welfare and Health Care, City of Vantaa.

**Wednesday 11.11.2009**

**8.00-9.40 Interview: Psycho-social services and HR-issues**

- Hannu Tulensalo, HR Director, City of Helsinki.
- Anna Cantell-Forsbom, service manager for psycho-social services, City of Vantaa.
- Asta Manninen, Acting Director, City of Helsinki Urban Facts.

**10.30-12.00 Interview: Cultural services, Education and Entrepreneurship**

- Elina Lehto-Häggroth, Deputy Mayor, Culture and Education Department, City of Vantaa.
- Olli Nuuttila, C.E.O., Active Life Village in Espoo.
- Jussi Iipponen, Project Manager, Entrepreneurs of Helsinki.

**14.15-15.15 Ending session: RCG and CDG wrap-up**

- Marko Karvinen, Chief Policy Advisor, Economic and Planning Centre, City of Helsinki.
- Markku Takala, Development Director, City of Espoo.
- Leena Pääkkönen-Tarvainen, Social Welfare and Health Care, City of Vantaa.
- Asta Manninen, Acting Director, Urban Facts, City of Helsinki.
- Ilpo Laitinen, Research Director, Evidence Based Management-project.
- Ida Björkbacka, Senior Planning Officer, Economic and Planning Centre, City of Helsinki.