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# **BUILDING A CREATIVE CITY BRAND THROUGH AN INTERNATIONAL MEGA- EVENT**

**Case: World Design Capital Helsinki 2012**

Master's Thesis  
in International Business

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background for the study

Facing economic and cultural globalization cities, regions and countries have for long been in active competition with each other for attention, jobs, investments, visitors, residents and significant events (Kotler, Asplund, Rein & Haider 1999, ix; Zhang & Zhao 2009, 245). Attracting new activities and place-users in all of these fields in addition to keeping existing occupants satisfied, is essential for the development of places (Kavaratzis 2005, 329). This phenomenon of “place wars” has pushed places to adopt more entrepreneurial and proactive policies to cope with competition (Kotler et al. 1999, 16; van den Berg & Braun 1999, 987). The world carries more than 300 cities with over a million inhabitants and all of those cities compete for the status of the most attractive one (Rainisto & Moilanen 2009, 3).

The economy increasingly focusing around knowledge, cities have had to profile themselves in the eyes of knowledgeable and talented workers. Along the need for renewed city images, city marketing and branding practices have gained popularity among city administrators. (Florida 2002, 8; Hospers 2003, 262; Zenker 2009, 23.) To come up with successful enough attraction factors, original and clever urban strategies and solutions need to be developed. Landry (2007, 3) suggests a few examples of rethinking competitive potential; the city’s ability to tie imaginative partnerships to achieve even greater benefit, seeing design as an inherent part of development instead of solely an add-on, turning waste into a commercial resource and revive the locals’ passion for their city. On the part of city authorities, the local population and businesses this demands a great deal of creativity. In other words, cities ought to become creative cities (Hospers 2003, 262). Gertler (2004, 1) states, that with this kind of economical shift, creative cities have become key pillars for the creation of economic value. Many authors even talk about the Creative Age (see Seltzer & Bentley 1999; Earls 2002; Florida 2002).

Each phase of the economic history can be illustrated by specific forms of urban development. The 19<sup>th</sup> century capitalism was associated with classical factory towns mostly found in Germany, Britain and France. Onto the 20<sup>th</sup> century towns developed into large industrial metropolises, like Detroit, that marked the Fordist mass production era. Today the economy is moving away from massive production structures and rigid labor markets characterizing fordism, depicting a new form of urbanization. In the contemporary economy, growth and innovation is driven by sectors like high-technology industry, business and financial services, neo-artisanal manufacturing and cultural-products industries that generate a new economy, also widely referred to as a knowledge

economy. (see i.e. Hospers 2003, 260; Scott 2006, 3; Collins, Felton, Graham 2010, 104.)

Richard Florida's (2002) book, *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (2002), quickly became an international bestseller and a public-policy phenomenon and put the urban creativity concept under the spotlight (Peck, 2005, 740). Florida's (2002) work appears abundantly in literature or discussion on the creative economy, creative cities and the creative class; these notions will be thoroughly presented later in this study. Creating new industries and employment opportunities by mobilizing creativity, mostly present in art and culture, is at the heart of this concept. As a consequence, urban areas around the world have put a growing emphasis on investment in cultural resources and the objective of creating a vibrant sense of space (Atkinson & Easthope 2009, 65). Ponzini and Rossi (2010, 1039) refer to this economical shift as "a wide-spread cultural turn in urban and regional policies". As a response cities have undertaken renewal and regeneration programs with the objective of remodeling their images in order to attract larger flows of visitors. Major investments in cultural flagship projects, architectural masterpieces, leisure centers and the like are being made by cities with the intention to attract the wanted high talent; Florida (2002) refers to this knowledge and talent intensive groups as the creative class (Hospers & van Dalm 2005, 8). The leading edges of this new direction consist of a dynamic combination of both non-material and material factors. The soft non-material factors seek to develop a cultural atmosphere, a sense of vibrancy, enthusiasm and creativity, whereas the material factors such as a regenerated physical environment, monuments and cultural artefacts form the more concrete part of revitalizing urban spaces in this new knowledge-based economy. (Ponzini & Rossi 2010, 1040.)

In recent years, policymakers have increasingly been attracted to the idea of a cultural and creative economy. This derives in part from the expected economic and social benefits that these fields might bring, and in part from the success of developing reliable empirical measures of activity. Nevertheless, this growing interest has been challenging to resolve through policy tools, as an in-depth understanding of cultural and creative industries is lacking. Pratt states, that policymaking in this field has therefore rather been aspirational than practical. (Pratt 2009, 9.)

Within the context of creativity the city of Helsinki has experienced a lifting swing during the past few years. The most recent recognition is that of Helsinki being nominated World Design Capital 2012 by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (Icsid). The thought of an Open Helsinki that is "embedding design in life", highlighted in the application for the nomination, will be a dominant theme during the design capital year. (WDC 2012.) Even though it all seems to climax to the WDC 2012 nomination, other recognitions and rankings have raised Helsinki into the spotlight. It is not deniable that Helsinki cannot compete with the greater cities such as London or Ber-

lin, nevertheless within various other dimensions Helsinki can provide with higher standards of living. (Mustonen 2010, 13.) Namely, twice in a row, the Monocle magazine (Nykänen 2008, part A; Nykänen Andersson, 2009, part A) nominated Helsinki the fifth most livable city in the world after Zürich, Copenhagen, Munich and Tokyo. Additionally, The Times (The Times 2009) positioned Helsinki within the six new alternatives for romantic getaways, considering gastronomy and restaurants above all. Through these examples it can be deduced that the capital of Finland differentiates through its high quality of life, its gastronomy and its design orientation. (Mustonen 2010, 13.) Nevertheless, the competition being so intense, effective ways of marketing and branding cities, such as Helsinki, are constantly being researched and developed.

### ***1.1.1 From place marketing to place branding***

It has come to a point where places have found themselves marketing in more sophisticated ways, comparable to the marketing of products and services in private companies (Rainisto 2003, 14). Companies have already for a long time, substantially increased their incomes through the power of brands. Over viewing recent brand literature, growing academic interest towards branding places; nations, regions and cities, is apparent (see i.e. Rainisto 2003; Morgan, Pritchard & Pride 2004; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005; Anholt 2007). In practice, this phenomenon is also visible, with the high motivation of places to apply various branding methods in order to emphasize their uniqueness. When strategically implemented, places can indeed achieve competitive advantage through branding (Rainisto & Moilanen 2009, 3).

The marketing of urban places isn't a new subject; according to Ward (1998) it has been practiced since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Gold and Ward (1994, 40) mention the efforts of the "new towns" to attract migrants to endeavor into the unknown already during the colonial expansion age and the tourist attraction campaigns of seaside resorts during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However Kavaratzis (2004, 59; 2005, 330) states that examples mentioned in the early literature of this field, were only random promotional activities undertaken by individuals or organizations that attempted to promote a place. What started to be new, in the early 1990s, was the tendency of public planning agencies consciously applying marketing approaches from a wider spectrum. Instead of using marketing measures as additional tools to solve occasional planning problems, a whole philosophy of place management gained growing footing. (Ashworth & Voogd 1994, 39.)

Kavaratzis (2004, 59) attributes the link between city administrators and marketing to the rising notion of the "entrepreneurial city". Entrepreneurialism refers to a more businesslike approach of running a city; taking risks, innovating, promoting and motivating profit became closer to city planning (Hubbard & Hall 1998, 1–23). This entre-



preneurial governance was expectedly followed by city marketing practices. In lack of experience in marketing among the city governors, practices were mostly limited to previously mentioned, random promotional actions. (Kavaratzis 2004, 59.) The emergence of the theoretical base of place marketing entrenches to three developments within the discipline of marketing; marketing of non-profit organizations, social marketing and image marketing. Through these branches, challenges in transferring marketing knowledge from its original field of industrial goods and services to places were solved. Especially through the field of image marketing, city governors realized that places could be marketed through their generalized images, without the necessity of delineating the related goods and services. (Ashworth & Voogd 1990, 18-20; Kavaratzis 2004, 60.)

Cities and their users mainly encountering through perceptions and images, city marketing is tightly linked to the construction, communication and management of the city's image (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005, 507). Supporting this idea, Firat and Venkatesh (1993, 246) state that marketing is “the conscious and planned practice of signification and representation”, which leads us to the basics of city branding (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005, 507). The growing emphasis of city branding in implementing marketing practices in cities has found its way through not only product branding but also through the popular concept of corporate branding (Balmer 2001; Balmer & Greyser 2003).

### ***1.1.2 The era of creativity***

The competition getting more intense, new ways of differentiation have arisen. Vanolo (2008, 370) states that in addition to technological and organizational driving forces of our capitalist economy, a new factor of human force has developed to play a prominent role. Florida (2003, 27) also refers to a *new kind of capitalism based on human creativity*, that calls for a people climate favorable to talented, creative individuals. Radical changes in the conditions of the global economy and, more importantly in regard to this thesis, the growing importance of the ‘creative economy’ compared to other economic sectors, have set new challenges for cities to keep up with global competition (Mommaas 2004, 520–521; Scott 2006, 3).

The notion of **creative economy** crystallizes into the generation of new ideas, rather than money of machinery. Howkins (2011) defines the creative economy as *revitalizing, manufacturing, services, retailing and entertainment industries. It is changing where people want to live, work and learn – where they think, invent and produce*. The core lies in individual talent and skill that enables new ways of thinking and acting, that is, combining existent knowledge in new ways to cultivate novel inputs. (Howkins 2011.)

The creative economy became the ‘new thing’, the source of competitive advantage, in the post-industrial knowledge economy. Typically, the creative economy translates into industries such as film, design, high fashion, architecture, visual arts, advertising and the like; however creative activities do also appear outside the creative economy (e.g. in the car industry, in administration etc.). Evidently, ambiguity surrounds this concept since the term of creative economy roofs other notions such as the creative industries, the cultural industries, creative clusters, cities and the creative class. (Pratt 2009, 12; Howkins 2011.) In order to achieve a deeper understanding of this seemingly complex field of creativity, the abovementioned terms will be outlined in regard to each other in the following paragraphs and with the help of the figure below.

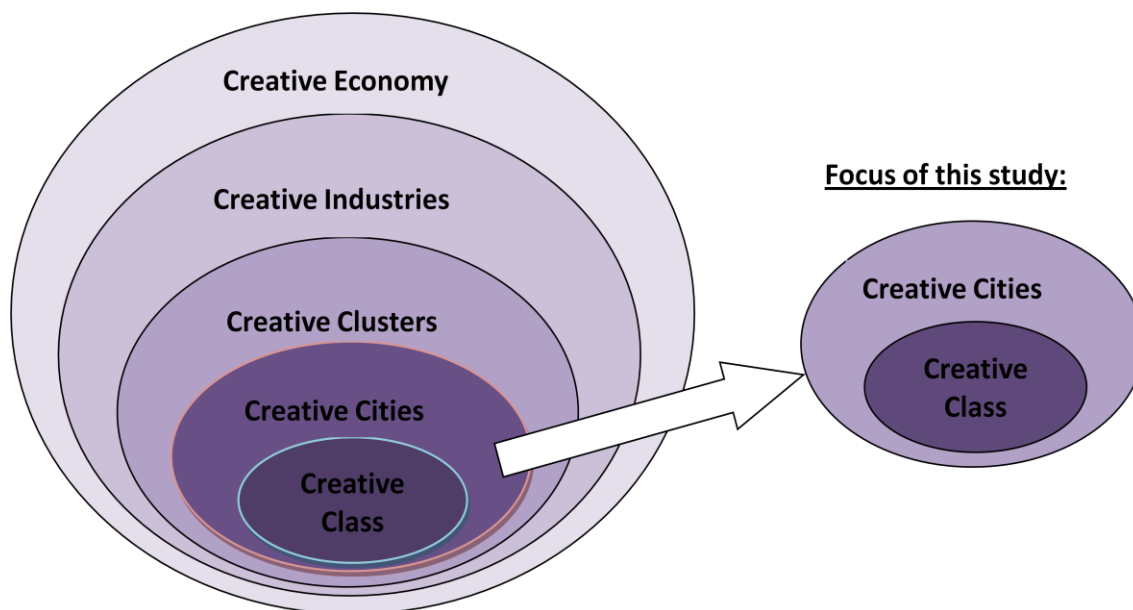


Figure 1 Layers of the creative economy

The notions of **cultural industries** and **creative industries** are often used interchangeably. However, a certain path of history outlines a slight gap between the two concepts. Boiling down to the 1980’s London, Garnham (2005, 15–16) writes about adapting notions of the cultural industries to industrial policy making in London. Cultural industries were partly used as a contribution to job creation in the de-industrialized cities, and in part as political mobilization of the youth (Pratt 2009, 11). Recognizing the importance of cultural sectors for the economy The Department of Culture, Media and Sports in the UK, showed their support and rebranded the cultural industries term as the creative industries. This shift in terminology seems to date back to the Greater London Council (GLC) defining cultural industries as more ‘artist centered’ and the creative industries as a more mass market oriented term that was based on technological reproduction. Clearer explanations about this shift are not to be found; the word creative simply showed to be more popular in people’s mouths. (O’Connor 2011.) Through the inception of the Creative Industries Task force and the publication of the first Creative

Industries Mapping Document in 1998, Britain supported the claim that creative industries form the fastest growing economic sector and emphasized the importance of educating creative workers and protecting intellectual rights. (Garnham 2005, 15, 25–26; Jarvis, Lambie & Berkeley 2008, 1.) The most recent Creative Industries Mapping Document (2001, 5) lists the following fields as part of the creative industries: advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio. The changes in elevating creative industries as a national policy, first in London, then vastly in other cities of the UK, had a significant influence on metropolises around the world. Consequently, numerous similar reports to the UK were initiated around the world (Pratt 2009, 11).

A **creative cluster** can be understood as a concentration of creative industries, it is an essential contributor to the creative economy. According to the UK's newest Creative Industries Mapping Document of 2001, the creative cluster can be defined as *the industries that have their origin in individual creativity, skill, talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and protection of intellectual property* (Creative Industries Mapping Document part 1, 2001, 5). In addition to commercial enterprises, artists, public and non-profit organizations are also included into the creative industries that directly or indirectly produce cultural products. Unified by cultural creative features, the creative cluster is nonetheless challenging to define, due to its coverage of numerous different economic sectors. Not forming a cohesive nor discrete sector, in the traditional sense of industry cluster, it has only recently adopted the title of a cluster in itself, demanding investment and policy coordination. (Unesco – Culture – Files – The Rise of the Creative Cluster – Chapter 1, 2011, 2.)

Consequently, creativity as an urban growth factor has become a stressed theme in city-planning and urban-branding policies worldwide, introducing the notion of the **creative city** (Vanolo 2008, 370). Landry (2006, 15) refers to an extensive list illustrating the expansion of the concept of the creative cities. In the UK examples range from Creative Manchester to Creative London, in Canada there is Toronto with its Culture Plan for the Creative City; Vancouver and the Creative City Task Force, in the US you find Creative Cincinnati, Creative New England. Then Australia adds on with the Brisbane Creative City strategy and in Japan, Osaka setting up a Graduate School for Creative Cities in 2003. Today the list may be extensively continued from Landry's (2006), put together in 2006. Moreover these initiatives have visibly been promoted through associations such as: the UNESCO through its Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity launching a Creative Cities Network in 2004, the European Union with its initiative of "European Capital of Culture" that the city of Turku celebrated in 2011, and the ISCID through the World Design Capital nomination, that the city of Helsinki received for 2012. (Landry 2006, 15.)

Florida (2003, 31) describes the creative city as an urban environment that communicates openness, diversity and dynamism. Despite abundant criticism (see i.e. Peck 2005; Zimmerman 2008, 241), reviewed later in this thesis, Florida's (2003) view of creativity as an economic growth generator has gained wide popularity within city administrators (Hoyman & Faricy 2008, 311). A former more concise notion of the "creative city", which in its original meaning, stood for cities aiming for arts- and culture-led urban regeneration process, was replaced by a much broader notion, addressing, in the words of the cover of one of the leading publications, "how to think, plan and act creatively in addressing urban issues" (Landry 2000). The creative city concept now tended to imply a city which was run creatively, whether this involved the strengthening of the local cultural infrastructure, the pedestrianization of the inner city, the stimulation of the night time economy or a more ecologically sustainable collection of waste.

### ***1.1.3 Mega-events as an effective promotional tool***

Branding a city is about building an image that summarizes people's beliefs, impressions and ideas of the city and about promoting it to potential visitors, investors or residents. Through new images cities can re-shape and re-create themselves, however initiating a renewal process of this extent requires promotion and attention. Event hosting is considered as a retentive means to boost the engagement of a renewal process. Local, national and most importantly international promotion is enabled through interest and visibility arising within the foreign media. Even bidding for such an event as the Olympics can enhance a city's reputation and visibility. Turin is a suitable example; from being a Fiat-marked city, going through the industrial crisis of the '80s, with working-class activism and strikes, Turin has ceased its chances and become a city attracting Florida's (2002) "creative class" and numerous foreign investors during the past decade. It is undeniable that a major boosting factor in embedding Turin's new image locally and worldwide has been hosting the 2006 Winter Olympic Games and winning the title of World Design Capital in 2008. (Rizzi & Dioli 2010, 42-44.)

The World Design Capital is a city promotion project that dignifies the outcomes of design in urban environments. The project is promoted by the International Design Alliance (IDA) and conducted by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID). (Torino World Design Capital – About... – The Nomination.) Held every other year, the event encourages cities to develop socially, culturally and economically using design as a tool, throughout a yearlong series of design-related events. (World Design Capital – Home.) Having enrolled for the first time in 2008, with Turin selected as the pilot city, this project is relatively new. Seoul celebrated its nomination during 2010, and in November 2009 the city of Helsinki won the bid for the title of World De-

sign Capital 2012. (World Design Capital – The Network.) Getting nominated is a unique occasion for the city to put its accomplishments in design and urban policy in global spotlight. The World Design capital web-pages list the benefits generated from being nominated, as follows (World Design Capital – The Concept – Benefits):

- Gaining visibility as a center of creativity and innovation
- Attracting investors and creative people
- Strengthening economic development
- Positioning as a leading city of design on the international stage
- Building a global image and taking part in an international design network

Mirroring these benefits to the motives of branding a city within a creative ideology, presents numerous similarities, which forms a coherent framework for this thesis.

## **1.2 Purpose of the study and structure of the study**

The notion of city branding has gone through a relatively fast and abundant development just during the past decade (see i.e. Rainisto 2003; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005; Trueman & Cornelius 2007). However being such a recent field of research there are recognizable gaps with regard to the branding process of cities in general (Hankinson 2001) and real case studies in particular (Anholt 2002; Rainisto 2003). The concept of creative cities is currently a popular theme both in the academic research field and in practice. Nonetheless, only a few researches have been conducted on the branding of creative cities through mega-events ( see i.e. Zhang & Zhao 2009).

The purpose of this study is to evaluate how Helsinki brands itself as a creative city through an international mega-event. The sub-aims are to:

- ➔ Map the factors behind the creative city and their relation to the city of Helsinki
- ➔ Describe the city branding process
- ➔ Evaluate the role of the Helsinki World Design Capital 2012 mega-event in Helsinki's creative city brand building

This study brings together three themes; the creative city, city branding and mega-events. The goal is to delineate how these fields encounter and what kind of benefits come out of this synergy. The figure below outlines the research gap with the help of the three themes present in this study.

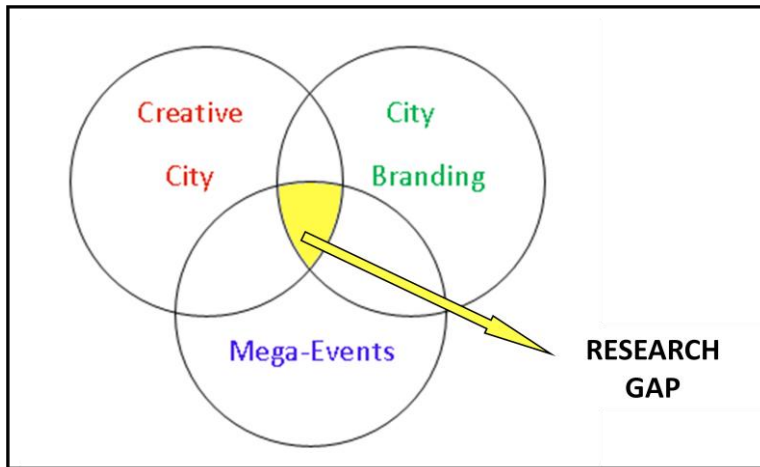


Figure 2 Research gap

All three fields of Figure 2 will have its own chapter in order to get a thorough insight of their dimensions and interrelations. The first theoretical chapter will introduce the dimensions of the creative city concept; how it is described in literature and what it implies for cities. The second chapter will present city branding; how it differs from corporate branding and how the process is described in literature. Mega-events and their role in city branding will be analyzed in the following part. The empirical part will re-group these findings under the context of the city of Helsinki. This is a thesis based on qualitative data that will be gathered through three interviews, Helsinki's economic development strategy report and Helsinki's application report for the WDC 2012 nomination.

## 2 THE CREATIVE CITY

### 2.1 Conceptualizing the creative city

#### 2.1.1 *The rise of the creative class*

The idea of the creative city has developed from the late 1980's onwards, branching out to many directions. The idea has grown into a rich concept, however due to its diversity of meaning, it still causes confusion. Explored from numerous perspectives (see i.e. Hall 2000; Florida 2002; Hospers 2003; Scott 2006; Landry 2008) the creative city has gained substantial popularity with almost solely positive virtues (Landry 2006, 15). This paper will focus on the findings of Florida (2002) and Landry since they are the most commonly referred to in this field of research (see i.e. Vanolo 2008; Ponzini & Rossi 2009; Atkinson & Easthope 2009; Okano & Samson 2010; Sasaki 2010). Moreover their breakthrough pieces, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (Florida 2002) and *The Creative City* (Landry 2000) seem to have formed a cornerstone within academic and urban growth research. Theories from other researchers will be introduced superficially to enable comparison, criticism or support.

Even though research on the concept of creative cities has been conducted since the late 80's (Landry 2008, xxi), Richard Florida's book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, published in 2002, gave a significant boost to the topic. His views on creativity, being an economic growth machine has gained substantial popularity among recent economic development policies embraced by cities, and is therefore presented first (Hoyman & Faricy 2009, 311).

The core of Florida's theory manifests itself through the growing economic need for creativity and consequently the rise of a new class, which he calls the *creative class*. A cluster of people who tend to think, feel and behave similarly and share common interests can be defined as a class. The similarities that unify these classes are essentially determined by economic functions; that is by the type of work they do for a living. Nowadays, as more and more people are doing creative work for a living, a creative class has emerged. (Florida 2002, 8.) The function of "creating meaningful new forms" through their work is what distinguishes the members of the creative class. Two components form this new class; *the super creative core* and *the creative professionals*. Members of the super creative core fully engage in the creative process. Regularly working in this field these people both produce new forms or designs that are readily transferable and extensively useful, and solve or find problems. As just a few examples, scientists, university professors, writers, artists, designers, architects and opinion-

makers belong to this core. In addition Florida includes the group of creative professionals to the creative class. These are people who work in an extensive array of knowledge-intensive industries such as financial services, high-tech sectors, legal and health care professions as well as in business management. The creative professionals are highly educated and engage in creative problem solving. (Florida 2002, 69.)

Florida (2002, 9) states that since 1980 alone the American creative class has more than doubled its size. In the United States, in 2002 the creative class, representing 30 percent of all employed people, was larger than the traditional working class, for example workers in manufacturing, construction and transportation. In addition to its increasing size, the creative class characterizes as a relatively wealthy, high income class, with its members earning nearly twice as much as the average members of other classes. (Florida 2002, 9.) It appears, along Florida's breakthrough book that the larger amount of talented people a city has the more creative class members will be attracted. The rise of a creative class, is manifesting itself as a fundamental growth factor in today's new economy.

According to Florida (2002, 249–250) the key to power regional growth lies in attracting this creative class, who favor places that are diverse, tolerant and open to new ideas. The more diverse mixes of people, the more combinations of ideas and innovations are generated, the more high-tech businesses are attracted, and jobs are generated and therefore the more the economy grows. Florida's work has vastly divided opinions. His theory has been criticized as too narrow, ignoring the low-waged and –skilled workers slowing down regeneration (see i.e. Scott 2006, Leslie 2005). Some see his theory as a homogenization of geographies, leading small, backward to desperately attempt to make themselves look like, London, Boston or San Francisco (Oakley 2004, 71; Collis, Felton & Graham 2010, 106). Wilson & Roger (2008, 841) even argue that the poor should represent the creative class, with their substantial contribution to the contemporary urban economy, and their daily ingenuity and creativity to keep up with daily life. Peck (2005, 768) criticizes Florida's approach in an almost sarcastic tone, and concludes his article by stating the following: "The cult of urban creativity is therefore revealed in its true colors, as a form of soft law/lore for a hypercompetitive age." Leslie (2005, 405) notes that applying Florida's work in a way that narrowly supports an elitist notion of culture, is a mistake from the city. Critiques seem abundant, however it ought to be noticed that Florida's theories have widely been applied, as some types of practical guides to urban policy-making, by city administrations around the world (Ponzini & Rossi 2010, 1040). Another popular guideline influencer is Charles Landry and his consultancy firm Comedia.



### 2.1.2 *A favorable environment for creative solutions*

Landry's (2008) work focuses on people and how they can think, plan and act creatively in the city; it describes a new method of strategic urban planning. Facing periods of globalization and of deep transition, cities are to rethink and reassess their position and role. The goal is to get beyond the thought of creativity exclusively referring to artists and technical innovations; social and political creativity prevail as well. He suggests that conditions enabling people to think, plan and act with imagination in introducing opportunities or addressing tedious urban problems, need to be created. From addressing problems such as homelessness to enhancing the city's visual environment, if successfully exploited, creativity can be the solution. (Landry 2008, xi, xxi; Landry 2006, 15–16.)

Landry's (2006, 16) creative city necessitates infrastructures beyond the hardware; buildings, roads or sewage. Soft infrastructures are to be combined, including the mental infrastructure as well. The soft infrastructure consists of highly skilled and flexible labor force, a large formal and informal intellectual infrastructure, strong communication linkages internally and with the external world and an overall entrepreneurial culture. (Landry 2006, 16.) Skills, flexibility and intellectuality seem to correlate with Florida's (2002) work, giving an emphasis on the inside characteristics of the city. However, Landry (2006, 16) adding the importance of networking, the conditions for creativity to be set by city governance and an entrepreneurial culture, suggests a more hands-on approach. The city itself through the actions and insights of the policy-makers are seen as an essential pillar for a creative environment. In contrast, Florida's (2002) perception suggests that the growth as a creative city comes primarily indirectly from the outside of the city, by attracting the creative class. Complementing each other or not, many other views have generated from this creativity discussion. A brief overview of these alternative approaches will be presented in the following paragraph in order to adduce the complexity of the subject.

Similarly, Landry (2008, 105–130) sees nine criteria for a creative city that are explained below. As Florida (2002) focuses on tangible measures available from national census documents, Landry (2008) approaches the concept through intangible elements, as for instance local culture, social harmony and the people's identification with their city.

The most essential foundation for a creative city is its *personal qualities*. Having creative individuals who think out of the box with flexibility and reflexivity and have the willingness to take intellectual risks enable a city to engage into a cycle of creation and re-creation stimulating others and the formation of new possibilities. Creative people being the engine, they need others around to execute and develop their ideas, therefore results will only show by mixing imaginative qualities.

Growing as a creative city requires proper *will and leadership*. Harnessing energy to visualize new goals, dynamism, discipline, focus, readiness, patience and tolerance to name a few, all contribute to a strong will. However, willingness needs execution and that is when leadership becomes necessary. Understanding what people want and having coherent ideas appropriate to local circumstances are vital. However developing a story about what their creative city could look like and planning the way to get there maintains the core flow.

*Human diversity and access to varied talent* makes up Landry's (2008) third foundation for a creative city. This feature resembles Florida's tolerance and diversity dimension. Cultural diversity and the attraction of outsiders are seen important under this title. As Florida's approach has been criticized for its elitism and one-sidedness (Scott 2006, 4; Peck 2005, 740; Wilson & Keil 2008, 841–842), Landry (2008) adds an emphasis on social diversity as well as insiders. He points out the importance of a city's self-reliance to the culture of voluntary groups for example, where meaningful creative solutions for social problems have generated from.

A creative *organizational culture* enables innovations and openness. Its structure is less rigid, with horizontal projects and learning happening through empowerment. A sense of experimenting and breaking rules promotes these goals. Failures may be seen as possibilities for renewal and a learning experience. (Landry 2008, 112 – 117.)

*Urban spaces and facilities* play an essential role in building a vibrant atmosphere. Neutral territories generate creative ideas, they help inhabitants to feel comfortable, and at the same time stimulated and challenged by a socially heterogonous environment. Public facilities such as schools and universities enable knowledge and experience transfers, which in turn is an attraction factor for skilled and talented inhabitants.

Last but certainly not least is the importance of *networking and associative structures*. Two aspects arise: networking with the city and networking internationally. As communities become more mobile the nature of networking is changing. Landry (2008) sees networking and creativity tightly together; the more connection points are formed in the net the more the capacity for reflexive learning and innovation is developed. Looking at a city, with its numerous actors, public, private, voluntary, each with its own organizational culture and agenda creating a functioning network becomes challenging. The key is to find motivation and reasons for collaboration and creative together. Once this type of culture is identified creativity can be seen as embedded into the roots of the city.

### 2.1.3 *Further approaches on the creative city enablers*

The earlier researches on the structures and pre-requisitions of creative cities date back to a period far sooner than the creativity boom of the turn of the century. The work of Andersson (1985, 19) focuses on defining characteristics of creative processes and environmental conditions that can stimulate regional creativity at a social level. He outlines five preliminary characteristics of a creative city:

1. High levels of competence
2. Many fields of academics and cultural activity
3. Excellent possibilities for internal and external communications
4. Widely shared perceptions of unsatisfied needs
5. A general situation of structural instability facilitating a synergetic development

Andersson (1985, 18) highlights the importance of the synergism of different competences in order to form creative thinking. This supports the views of Florida (2002) and Landry (2000) presented above; *diversity* combined with talented people is a crucial preliminary base for a creative environment, being the creative city in the context of this thesis. The emphasis on diversity arises in earlier literature through the thoughts of American publicist, Jane Jacobs. Her most notable books, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) and *The Economy of Cities* (1969) were published during the so called Industrial Age, however her thoughts still influence modern creative city researchers, such as Richard Florida. In the 60's Jacobs pleaded for urban diversity, community involvement and local uniqueness, which contradicted most of the city planning policies of the time. Diversity, both in spatial, social and economic terms is the key to creative urban environments. The combination of old and new buildings and different types of people in compact neighborhoods is what will favor the creative potential of cities, and consequently also pay off economically. (Hospers & van Dalm 2005, 10–11.) More modern studies such as Hospers's (2003, 264) also bring out diversity as a factor favoring the chances of urban creativity. Here, diversity is explored through a wide spectrum, ranging from not only variation between the citizens, their knowledge and skills but to the image the city projects through its buildings as well. That is, diverse human capital, infrastructure, and physical factors contribute to an environment favoring creativity.

Another feature that has shown to enhance the development of creative cities is *concentration*. It is one thing to attract a diverse population with various skills but what stimulates urban creativity in the first place is a substantial number of people at a certain location. Concentration enables human interaction and communication, which favors new combinations of knowledge. (Hospers 2003, 264.) Both Hospers (2003, 264) and Gertler (2004, 2) refer to the importance of this so called, critical mass. First, a critical

mass of occupationally similar colleagues concentrated in a specific place signals the existence of a well-developed labor market that offers the possibility to be involved in an exciting work environment where colleagues can learn from each other by working at the leading edge of a particular discipline. Second, the concentration of “dissimilar creatives” presents itself as an equally important pellet to a city’s competitiveness. The opportunity for cross-disciplinary learning pushes the creation of new solutions and ideas. Moreover, it signals the presence of tolerance of difference in the social environment, low barriers to entry - into both labor markets and social networks. (Gertler 2004, 2.)

In his vast research on city development through history, Hall (1998, 285) points out that creative cities have nearly all been cosmopolitan; talent from all directions were attracted and a continued renewal of creative bloodstream was present. These views not only support the diversity factor mentioned above, but also the thoughts of Florida on diversity of people bringing more combinations of ideas and innovations (see pp. 16). Densely attracting a diverse set of people into a specific location is one thing, however without dialogue and intense exchange of thoughts this leads to a dead end. *Communication*, therefore, within a city and to its outside is considered essential for creative potential. Both Andersson (1985, 19) and Hall (2000, 644) recognize the need for transmitting information and communication between various groups of competence, which is a familiar point of view from Landry’s (2008) work presented on page 17 of this thesis. Törnqvist (1983, 97–107) mentions a creative city requiring a density of communication that is rich and old-fashioned and even overcrowded, up to a sense of chaos which supports Hall’s (2000, 646) statement on creative cities being locations of social and intellectual turbulence that are far from being comfortable places.

In addition to human work, *coincidence and unexpected circumstances* are noted as part of a creative environment. Creativity culminates in the capacity to think up new solutions to everyday problems and obstacles. A creative mind sees the same things as everyone else but processes it differently. That is old ideas are linked together in new ways, creating innovations. It is thus misleading to think that forcing creativity or “constructing” a knowledge-intensive city is possible. Creativity develops organically perhaps through unexpected encounters between different branches of knowledge. (Hospers 2003, 263.) This point of view gives some counterweight to Florida’s work that strongly seems to emphasize attracting the creative class to cities as a key to becoming a creative city. Scott (2006, 11) depicts this incongruity in his article on conceptual issues and policy questions of creative cities. He states that the presence of creative people is not alone enough to sustain urban creativity in the long run. Scott (2006, 11) criticizes Florida’s work for linking the creative class and economic development by a direct consequential arrow. Scott highlights the importance of complex interrelationships that ought to be present before a dynamic creative city is likely to emerge. This

view takes into consideration the specifics of time and place, which supports Hospers statement on creativity growing organically. To sum up, creative cities cannot be built from scratch. Coincidence, unexpected circumstances and timing all have their role. Especially, unstable times and periods of crisis come out in literature as auspicious for creativity.

In order to activate an effective synergism of competences, Andersson (1985, 15) emphasizes the necessity of structural *instability*. A phase of structural stability ought to be interrupted by a short period of instability, which then encourages the launch of a creative process to find a new phase of stability. Hall (2000, 646–647) exemplifies this instability phenomenon by looking back at Europe from 1400 to 1600. This period of history marked the transition from feudalism to capitalism, and in parallel initiated a fundamental change from a medieval world-view to a modern world-view. Most importantly, this period of change and revolution began with the famously creative era of the Renaissance and culminating in 16<sup>th</sup> century London, flourishing through for example Shakespeare. Hall (2000, 646) deduces that to a remarkable extent, the highly creative cities have been the ones challenging an old-established order. In addition to 16<sup>th</sup> century London, Hall (2000, 646) gives the examples of 1900 Vienna (artistic flourishing), 1890 Paris (constructions of boulevards and new buildings under Napoleon III) and 1920 Berlin (flourishing of arts, philosophy, music etc.). “A period of crisis, confrontation and chaos” (Hospers 2003, 264) and “a state of uneasy and unstable tension” (Hall 1998, 285) are depicted as favoring factors for a city to embrace creativity. Mirroring back to Landry’s findings (pp. 17) which link the birth of creativity to periods of globalization and of deep transition, similarities in literature are perceptible. The financial crisis that hit us in 2008 might as well be a trigger for cities to becoming more and more creative in order to find new solutions to grow.

## 2.2 Dimensions of a creative city

Though Landry states that today, everyone is in the creative game and that creativity has become a prevailing context of our age (Landry 2006, 15), it is still apparent that creativity is not something a city can entrench instantly. Scott (2006, 15) notes that becoming a creative city is an organic process that requires a complex networking of relations of production, work and social life in a particular urban context. Importing members of the creative class, through skateboarders, gays, bohemians or computer hackers, referring to Florida’s creative class, does not automatically make a creative city. (Scott 2006, 15; Sasaki 2010, S4.) Moreover, Hospers (2003, 265) adds that even though the basic ingredients for creativity existed, what really clinches is the recognition of being a creative place; perceptions are what forms an image of reality. Various conditions or as

some authors might say, ingredients, are listed in literature. These conditions that, enhance the chances of becoming a creative city, differ among different authors, however certain overlaps and similarities do appear among them. After presenting the different point of views a synthesis of these conditions will be made at the end of this chapter.

In order to understand this new economic geography of creativity and its effects on economic outcomes Florida suggests the theory of the 3T's of economic development: *Technology*, *Talent* and *Tolerance*. This list seems to be the most cited in this context. A place, or city, ought to possess all three dimensions in order to spur innovation and economic growth. Having only one of these characteristics on itself is insufficient to attract creative people. (Florida 2002, 249 – 250.) As a reminder, Pratt (2008, 108) notes that the 3T's do not make creativity, creative cities or workers; they are a simple set of attraction factors.

Through a Talent Index (measure of people possessing a bachelor's degree or above), an Innovation Index (patents granted per capita), and a High-Tech Index, which measures both the size and concentration of a region's economy in sectors such as software, electronics, engineering services and biomedical products, Florida measures correlations with the location of creative class concentrations. The results of a the study made in the United States show that innovation and high-tech industries (*Technology*) strongly correlate with locations of both the creative class and talent (*Talent*). Moreover, the correlation between the creative class and talent is among the strongest of variables in Florida's research. (Florida 2002, 249–252). Deducing from these results, a city ranking high on the Technology or Innovation Index also shows talent which explains a high rate of the creative class, which finally leads to the core of Florida's theory in which the creative class acts as an essential factor in modern economic growth.

According to Florida diversity within a city's population indicates *tolerance*. The more tolerant the city attracts the more diverse it will be. Creative people favor diverse places that are tolerant and open to new ideas. *Diversity* combined with a high level of concentration, as within a city, attracts representatives of different groups of people which enable new combinations and faster flows of knowledge generating higher rates of innovation, business formation, job generation and consequently economic growth. (Florida 2002, 249.) Hospers (2003, 263) also sees concentration and diversity as key dynamics for increasing the chances of creativity; however he also states that these alone do not make a creative city. Other affecting factors will be presented further on in this chapter.

One of Florida's diversity variables is the Gay Index. As homosexuality has met substantial opposition in our society, therefore openness to gay community represents low entry barriers of human capital that is vital for creativity and diversity. Results demonstrate that the Gay Index is a strong predictor of a city's high-tech concentration and its growth. Moreover a high ranking on the Gay Index correlates with the amount of for-

eign-born residents, which reinforces urban diversity. Another measure of diversity that seems to be the most illustrative, is the Bohemian Index, which measures the city's number of designers, writers, directors and actors, painters and sculptors, dancers and photographers. Results show that the number of bohemians strongly predicts a place's high-technology base and both population as well as employment growth. (Florida 2002, 255–260). To conclude, a city with a flourishing cultural and artistic environment and an open approach towards a diverse population are strong attraction factors for the creative class. Consequently, creative economic outcomes and overall economic growth is generated, which in turn contributes to the city's competitive edge.

### **2.3 Creative city policy – challenges and implications**

Through scholarly literature and case studies, Neil Bradford (2004a, 12) finds that creative cities are significant contributors in meeting local and national policy goals; ranging from economic innovation to social inclusion and environmental sustainability. As stated earlier in this paper, in today's knowledge-intensive global age, creativity is seen as a new solution to respond to social and economical challenges that tend to concentrate in cities. (Bradford 2004a, 12.) Despite creativity having caught on as a compelling urban-development imaginary among a wide range of cities, Peck (2011) takes a rather critical stand towards the actual implementation of creative city policies. Instead the creative wave seems to have instigated a rather unimaginative sequence of urban-policy makeovers (Peck 2011, 11). Foord's (2008, 98) survey on creative policies in Barcelona, London and Berlin supports Peck's point of view by stating that creative policy strategies protest themselves remarkably similar in form and presentation to generic business support initiatives. Amsterdam, which appears to be an exemplary creative city in literature (Peck 2011) has shown gestures towards creative policies, however they have mostly remained on a tentative level missing their actual target. Fruitful creative city policy ought to facilitate the development of a flexible discursive frame, questioning existing ideologies and practices aligning and repackaging them with what politicians commonly consider as favorable investments. Creative city successes cannot be duplicated by policymakers, since the philosophy of creativity itself implies uniqueness that cannot be repeated. (Peck 2011, 14–15.) Despite the difficulty of grasping the meaning and implications of creativity, literature outlines some guidelines for creative city policymaking.

### 2.3.1 *Types of interventions*

As building a creative city strategy is not a straightforward task with universal execution models the subject is approached from various viewpoints and spectrums in literature. Mulgan (1999, 104) approaches the subject from a general, grass root perspective. In his article he brings out four different domains through which creativity can start to be cultivated in modern cities. The basics of the *education* system are a logical starting point to develop creative minds at an early stage. Encouraging a more imaginative use of the range of intelligence by for instance mixing learning and doing, emphasizing understanding rather than repetition and supporting interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, are areas to consider. Instead of adding creativity as another block to the educational curriculum, learning is built on through a new kind of chemistry that brings out potentials otherwise crushed. Secondly, *enterprise* is highlighted; finding new solutions, putting together packages and making things happen. However, especially in Europe a prevailing culture of avoiding personal risk-taking stumps the willingness of investing in ideas and possibilities rather than in patents, buildings or factories. Mulgan (1999, 108 - 109) challenges the machine-like, compartmentalized character of city planning and governing by presenting an ideology of a city as a whole. *Holistic thinking*, with general benchmarks and targets for quality of life, for example in budgeting, is seen to boost a city as a whole of complex systems from waste to education, traffic to air, health to jobs. Finally, a city needs *symbols*, to communicate its creative values. Spectacular events, as well as role models and leaders form a mean to showcase a city's creative mind. Creativity is possible to integrate into city management and structure, however while widening the spectrum towards more experimental approaches; some part of the governing ought to remain like a machine, in order to convey a sense of consistency and reliability. (Mulgan 1999, 108-110.)

The aforementioned points mostly linked to encouraging a creative climate within the mindset of policymakers. The prosperity and continued success depend on actual interventions, discussed later in this thesis, which in turn, demand a high level of organizing capacity. A vision and a strategy are vital components to a high quality urban management, integrating and directing all policy efforts. The public sector usually initiates, analyses and elaborates a vision and strategy, in partnership with metropolitan and local authorities. To get the support needed it is advisable to allow private parties, such as trade corporations, housing societies and politicians, to participate in this phase. (Berg, Bramezza, Braun & Vand De Meer 1999, 114- 116.)

Taking a more hands-on perspective, Gertler (2004, 7) outlines a complex set of initiatives required to foster the development of creative, competitive and cohesive places under federal, provincial and local levels. One of the main federal responsibilities that have a direct impact on the creative capacity and character of a city is federal cultural



policy that drives direct support for art organizations, through subsidies and tax incentives to companies and individuals producing cultural products and through protecting local cultural industries from foreign domination. Additionally, freedom of expression and protection of intellectual property (IP) is ensured through regulatory and legal frameworks. (Gertler 2004, 7.)

Through survey analysis of case studies conducted in Barcelona, Berlin and London, Foord (2008, 97–98) indicates six categories of practical interventions within the cities' creative strategies: a) *property and premises strategies*, b) *business support services*, c) *grants and loans*, d) *fiscal/tax schemes*, e) *physical and IT infrastructure* and f) *soft infrastructure*. Most of the outlined interventions resemble economic development support seen in generic business support initiatives; providing creative education to enhance business management skills, networking and loans and access to trade events and new technology. As within the traditional economic support, many of the initiatives were directed at start-up businesses and SMEs and managed by intermediary public or voluntary sector agencies. Some initiatives were exclusive to the creative sector including financial incentives such as tourist taxes, direct tax relieves for creative artists, which can along with business support services be placed under Gertler's (2004, 7) federal initiative level. (Foord 2008, 97–98.)

To some extent provincial policy goes hand-in-hand with federal policy, such as health care, education social assistance and housing policies. Major investments in hard infrastructure, comparable to Foord's (2008, 97) physical and IT infrastructure category, are usually discussed at a provincial level. Water supply networks, highways and public transit are suitable examples. Moreover maintaining a balance between heritage and novelty; preservation of ethnic neighborhoods versus development an alternative to automobile travel; is a challenge tackled by provincial policymakers (Gertler 2004, 8 & Bradford 2004a, 6). Reinforcing a city's "connective tissue" and social networks, through for example events, bringing various communities together is also seen as a crucial role within the provincial policy initiative. This facilitates the circulation of local knowledge and therefore supports the drivers of a successful creative city. (Gertler 2004, 8–9.)

Actions taken on a local level are probably more visible to citizens. They are likely to cover provincial initiatives as well. A couple of examples from Helsinki, also noted in literature, seem to suitably reflect local level actions. The substantial investment in the Arts and Design University area located in Arabianranta is often mentioned as concentration of creativity and consequently also attracting many firms in the proximities. (Foord 2008, 97; Evans 2009, 1007; 1013 & Mustonen 2010, 19.) Another example is Helsinki's Design District that has settled in an area of the city long favored by "creatives" and has later on become a fashionable area of which prices have gone up. It is a cluster of almost 200 creative businesses somehow related to design as well as a

neighborhood association offering residents and visitors shopping, dining, accommodation and experiences. The area is concentrated within a few central blocks. It could well be characterized as the center of nightlife or “foodies’ paradise”. (Mustonen 2010, 13–14 & Design District 2012.) Kaapelitehdas, an old cable factory originally manufacturing telegraph, electricity and telephone lines from 1942 to 1985, has today become a significant center of creativity. The facilities are rented out to numerous artists, bands, theaters, companies and museums. (Kaapelitehdas 2012.) This example refers us to Gertler’s (2004, 9) findings on the development of a similar case in the city of Toronto, Canada. Two areas in the inner-city had undergone a steady decline over decades; however their renewal was averted by restrictive zoning bylaws. The turning point presented itself when a major institutional innovation, a new approach to zoning, was set to initiate a new process of regeneration. The theory behind this innovation was to accommodate a wider range of and more diverse mix of activities, from residential to light industrial uses. Since, the area has experienced rapid redevelopment through investments mainly associated with arts, entertainment, and other cultural activities. (Gertler 2004, 9.) Foord’s (2008, 97–98) category for premises and property strategy, as well as, the soft infrastructure link to these kinds of actions, ICT (information and communications technology), education, the support of networks and marketing, also being part of this soft infrastructure (Evans 2009, 1028). Letting go of rigid regulatory restrictions and innovating within the institutional context gives the opportunity for the citizens to come together in richer mixes that then enable creativity to contribute to the regeneration of city districts and economic growth.

Even though divided into categories, it has to be noted that in more developed strategies, these interventions are likely to be combined and integrated simultaneously. More developed strategies usually form a 10-year plan, such as in Amsterdam, Barcelona, London or Singapore, providing a guideline for the main trajectories of intervention and mechanisms designed to promote and support creative cities and economies (Evans 2011, 1028.)

### **2.3.2 *Facing the challenges***

Challenges within understanding what difference creativity makes to an enterprise or local economy posed problems among practitioners. The challenge of finding a suitable language and framework to pursue effective growth within the creative industries revealed counter productiveness in some fields. Not being able to develop production and innovation processes in craft-industries, for example, showed a reversed trend of not supporting employment growth and subsequently dismantling the target of boosting the

economy through creative industries. In this case the creative city strategy is flawed. (Evans 2008, 1028.)

Outlining challenges, varying from entrenching immigrants, educational cutbacks targeting cultural attributes of curriculums and excessive restraints between upper level government and municipalities, Bradford emphasizes the importance of collaboration among the many policy actors of a city as a solution. In a study on cultural policy-making, which also reads itself under creative city policy, Mommaas (2004, 508) identifies a change in tendency. In earlier days, cultural policy-making was mainly limited to redistributing decision making within a vertically organized public arts sector. Today, horizontal linkages have had to step in to act and think on a more comprehensive level; actors such as economic development agencies, urban planners and private investors have started to involve themselves in cultural policy-making. (Mommaas 2004, 508.) More precisely, Bradford (2004b, 4) suggests strengthening collaborative skills between government departments, across levels of government, and among governments, the private sector, community organizations, and engaged citizens including artists and cultural workers themselves (Bradford 2004b, 4). This kind of collaborative and creative public policy making might enable coherency and consistency between government interventions and the visions that the communities have for themselves. (Bradford 2004a, 12.)

Creativity is something that cannot always be controlled or planned; it often depends on a certain “messiness” or tension between projects and visions. Creative cities are unsettled places; rational, formal planning may not always be involved. An excessively rigid form of planning may be counterproductive. In order to channel synergies into beneficial directions, spaces allowing dialogue expressing differences are valued. This creative urban planning is about *synthesizing different traditions and seizing unexpected opportunities*. (Bradford 2004b, 10.)

### 3 BUILDING A DISTINCTIVE CITY BRAND

#### 3.1 Defining the city brand concept

##### 3.1.1 *From marketing to branding*

Today, selling cities successfully is said to require a powerful brand in order to compete in a globalized economy. As described in the introduction of this thesis, promoting cities isn't a new subject. Marketing cities has been practiced for several decades; however applying branding techniques to cities is a more recent phenomenon (Haddock 2010, 18&21). City branding widely relies on the perceptions and images of the city. This arouses questions about the definition of the city as a product, the delineation of the city's market and the nature of the place consumer. (Kavaratzis 2002, 58 & 63.) It is the interaction between the 'external' city (buildings, landmarks, specialties etc.) and the 'internal' city (social inclusion, diversity of population, lifestyle etc.) (Graham, 2002) that creates the core of city branding. (Kavaratzis 2004.)

Mostly, branding cities has been linked to making them attractive in the eyes of visitors and investors, with the aim to gather resources and improve local and national economy. From this perspective branding cities has initially been seen as marketing. (Hernandez & Lopez 2011, 95.) Andersson and Ekman (2009, 41) state that promoting a place's attractiveness for business, tourists, residents and students has widely started to use various marketing practices. It is however noticeable that no defining line between place marketing and place branding arouses from literature. Should place branding be considered as part of place marketing or the other way around? It seems that the terms are still being used interchangeably. (Skinner 2008, 920; Kalalandides & Kavaratzis 2009; Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2010.) This complex relationship between marketing and branding a city is discussed below.

In Kavaratzis's (2004, 58) article city branding is seen as an appropriate tool to implement city marketing. Briefly defined, city marketing is applying marketing techniques and tools developed within the field of selling goods and services to the promotion of a city as well as the use of marketing as an instrument for urban policy (Haddock 2010, 18). Paddison (1993, 348) also pinpoints the fact that the process of marketing can be used to various goals set by the city, it should not solely be discussed from an economical perspective. In the corporate world the aim of marketing is to reach an acceptable return on investment in the eyes of the company's owners, whereas with the case of cities no single objective prevails. Instead, it contains a series of different, yet related objectives reflecting the needs of a rather diverse range of stakeholders. Improv-

ing a city's competitive position, attracting inward investment, enhancing the city's image, exemplify a fraction of these objectives. (Haddock 2010, 19.) City marketing has a strong social dimension to it as well; it covers the residents' need for well designed health care and education (Van Den Berg & Braun 1999, 993) and it is a way to build a sense of community and a plural identity (Evans 2003,420–421; Trueman, Cook & Cornelius 2008, 43). Kavaratzis defines city branding as follows:

*City branding is understood as the means both for achieving competitive advantage in order to increase inward investment and tourism, and also for achieving community development, reinforcing local identity and identification of the citizens with their city and activating all social forces to avoid social exclusion and unrest (Kavaratzis 2004, 70).*

The following figure (Figure 3) will serve as a framework for this city branding chapter. It outlines the essential actors and processes of city branding and demonstrates the interrelations between them.

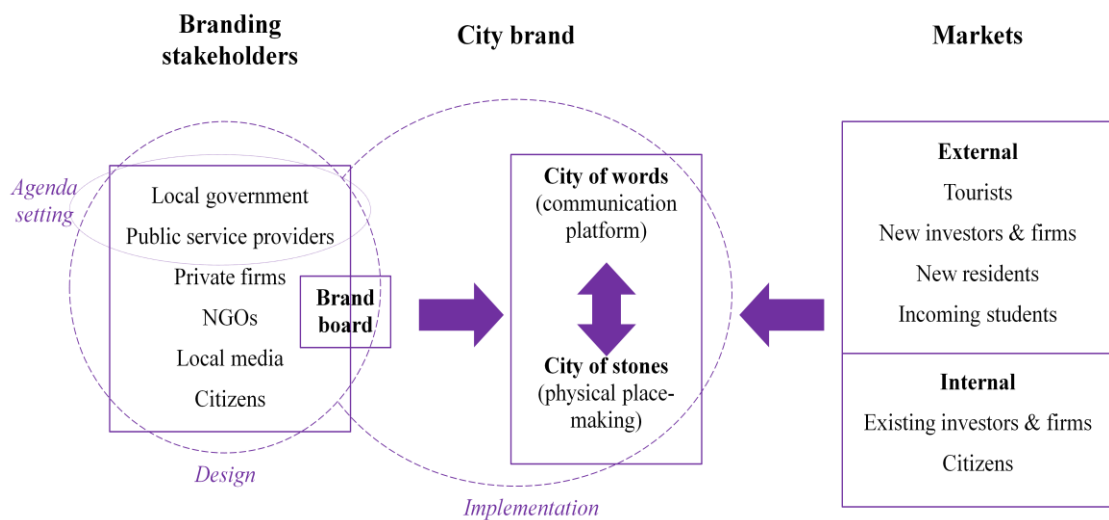


Figure 3 Place branding actors and processes (Therkelsen, Halkier & Jensen 2010, 143)

Firstly the markets will be presented, followed with the design process and finally the implementation process will be opened up.

### 3.1.2 The markets of city branding

Urban management has long focused on the internal dimension of traditional community building, however as pointed out throughout this thesis the focus grown out to external dimensions; having investors, tourists and incoming students to take into considera-

tions in urban planning. Therkelsen, Halkier and Jensen (2010, 139) highlight the widespread attention to Florida's as a strong influence to this shift. In addition to sustaining the well-being and interests of local citizens, urban planning is now addressing the ideology of selling places to attractive markets. (Kotler, Asplund, Rein & Haider 1999, 33; Therkelsen, Halkier & Jensen 2010, 139.) That is, the market or target groups of city branding are wide and therefore needs delineation.

Rainisto (2002, 34) refers to the terms of place product and place customers. Place customers are also called place markets. Kotler, Asplund, Rein and Haider (1999, 33) divide the place four main markets: visitors, residents and employees, business and industry and export markets. Therkelsen, Halkier and Jensen (2010, 143) outline the markets more precisely, grouping them into external and internal markets.



Figure 4 Markets of city branding (Therkelsen, Halkier & Jensen 2010, 143)

The two views are mostly similar and will both be used, however the above Figure 4 will be used as a main guideline for its thoroughness and its more recent publications. The visitors/tourists market has expanded substantial during the past decades. Already in 1999, this sector counted for more than 10 per cent of global GDP and investment, directly and indirectly. The employment rates in this sector are constantly rising as well. Two wide groups form the visitors market; business and non-business visitors. Business visitors mainly travel to buy or sell something or to attend meetings or conventions. Non-business visitors consist of both tourists and travelers who visit their friends and families. History has shown trouble in target prioritizing. Tourist brochures for example are often targeted to a vast group, without any careful marketing strategy that would consider market needs and differences. Important groups that ought to be focused on are easily left unexploited. A destination should constantly create new value. In order to attain this, additional benefits are to be developed to attract increasingly specific target groups through a value-added process. Examples of specified visitors subgroups are

fishermen, wine lovers, fashion enthusiasts, children etc., to name only a few. (Kotler et al. 1999, 33-35.)

The group of new investors and firms consisted of attracting business, industry and economic investment, has the longest tradition. Businesses are becoming increasingly aware and skilled in place-buying or place-hunting. Consulting firms are gaining popularity while advice for what places to invest in is needed. Location strategy development, labor market evaluations, business tax comparisons and relocation project management are among others, services in demand. In order to understand location and investment decisions of firms, placemarketers need to examine their attraction factors, which mold the local business climate the businesses base their decision upon. These attraction factors, mentioned in the introduction of this study, divide into two group; hard factors (i.e. economic stability, costs and communication infrastructure) and soft factors (i.e. quality of life, culture, personnel and flexibility). (Kotler et al. 1999, 40-43.)

As unemployment rises, the strategy is to recruit educated and skilled workforce; inventors, multilinguists, wealthy and healthy seniors, and stable tax-paying residents for example. Therkelsen, Halkier and Jensen (2010, 143) also outline incoming students as a separate target group. This is a group that stands out in Helsinki, due to the attractive new Aalto University and the low costs of studying in Finland.

### **3.1.3 *The city as a product***

Places are multi-layered products forming a diverse set of services, each marketed as a product in its own right. In order to develop the wanted brand, the most compatible group of services is to be highlighted. However, this goes both ways, since consumers also form heterogeneous groups that also assemble their own bundles of services fitting their own unique needs. The city as a product is therefore co-consumed, imposing that the product experience of one group can be disturbed by the actions of another group seeking another experience. The challenge here, with regard to city branding is to ensure that the combination of services defining the brand is compatible to various consumer segments without causing interference. (Hankinson 2010, 29.) A city offers different ranges of experiences, such as shopping, leisure, education or entertainment. Today, new types of consumer demand blend and re-combine the aforementioned domains of experience, which in turn requires new types of urban spaces. Spaces of multiple-consumption are fuelled by the increasing mobility of people as well as by tourists wanting to see multiple facets of the urban experience; not just going after tourist attractions. (Haddock 2010, 25.)

Having such a multifaceted “line of products”, that are highly interdependent and difficult to isolate from the environment, countless producers are also involved (Van den

Bergh & Braum 1999, 994). The producers range from public and semi-public to private organizations. (Rainisto 2002, 38.) Van den Bergh & Braum (1999, 994) divide the place product into three levels: the individual urban good or services (e.g. tourist attractions); the clusters of related services (urban tourism or port facilities); and the level of the city agglomeration as a whole. Likewise, Ashworth and Voogd (1990, HAE KIRJA!), distinguish different spatial levels, that places operate at. First, the product can appear different from the place marketing point of view and the consumer experience point of view. This is due to the fact, that each consumer assembles their own product from the array of spatial levels offered by the place. Second, space can be sold to different consumers, for various purposes, from different producers. Therefore, places can be considered multifunctional. (Ashworth & Voogd 1990.) These complexities make place marketing and branding a challenging task (Hankinson 2003, 112).

Places are easily assumed to possess the characteristics of identity, differentiation and personality and can therefore be managed to maximize equity, value and awareness. However the shift in the meaning of these characteristics has to be taken into account when applying them to place product. Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005, 510) view place from an end-user perspective, in terms of the way the place is sensed, understood and used. Place marketing consists of complex features. First of all being intangible and mostly nonmonetary, place-pricing is generally indirect. Moreover, places are sold as products to various groups of consumers and customers, who each have their own individual needs. (Rainisto 2002, 38.) The process is multidimensional and therefore also raises suspicion on whether cities can be handled as marketable products. Strong critiques state that places are simply far too complex to be treated like products and that both place branding and marketing are impossible because *places are not products, governments are not producers and users not consumers* (Kavaratzis 2005, 510). Nonetheless, the field of place branding is constantly growing and places seem to find a way to prove themselves as a marketable products.

## **3.2 Designing and implementing the city brand**

### **3.2.1 *Image and identity***

Going back to the classics of branding (Aaker 1996), we can find basic pillars that can be adapted to the branding of places. Aaker distinguishes five factors essential to brand equity: brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image, perceived quality, brand associations and property rights. When successfully tied to the brand name and symbol, these pillars bring enhanced brand equity. In this case, a valuable city brand. The theo-



retical framework of city branding starts from the acknowledgment that all encounters with the city take place through perceptions and images. Image is what is primarily showed to the world in order to attract interest. Moreover, what a city is determines how it behaves, and behavior determines how it is perceived. (Anholt 2010, etsi sivu!.)

Image is often strongly related to the notion of identity, nevertheless a distinction between the two is in place when discussing place branding. In literature identity is referred to as what something really is, whereas image refers to how something is perceived, a reputation that may or may not match the identity. (Dinnie 2008, 42; Anholt 2007, 5.) Kotler, Heider and Rein (1993, 141) define place image more specifically: *"A place's image is the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have of a place. Images represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with the place."* Moreover Kotler et al. (1999) make a difference between the highly generalizing and simplifying notion of stereotyping and the more personified character of image that can vary from person to person. However, Dinnie (2008, 42) points out that stereotypes, clichés or racism, can take over the perceptions that form the actual image, which may affect the place's competitive position. Therefore one of the objectives of place branding is to take apart false image and build a true and competitive city identity. (Dinnie 2008, 41-42.)

Rainisto (2003, 73) considers identity as the active part where a place can generate influence, whereas image is the passive part that is the process result of marketing communication and sometimes unexpected occurrences. The following figure illustrates the multidimensional nature of identity and image in the city-brand context.

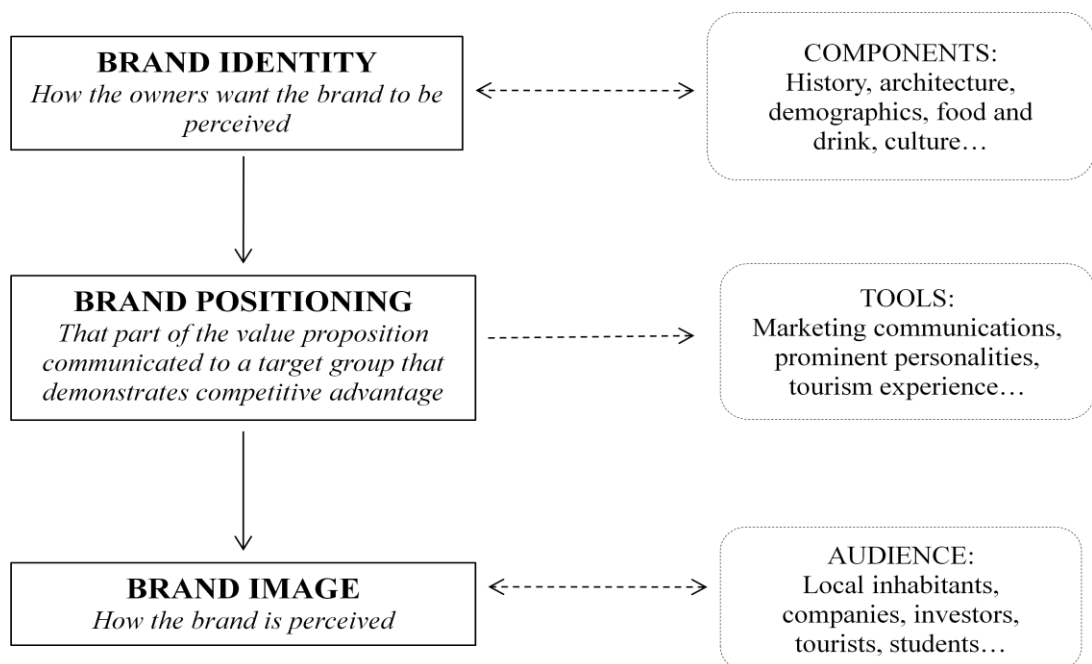


Figure 5 From city brand identity to brand image (adapted from Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005, 508; Dinnie 2008, 49)

At one end there are the owners of the brand to be perceived, who seek to position the brand in a competitive way. This refers to the commonly accepted identity formed to satisfy a wide range of consumers who form a brand image at the other end. From the consumer's perspective perceptions of quality, values as well as brand associations and feelings are central. (Kavaratzis & Asworth 2005, 508.) The rich history of a place, a well designed public transport infrastructure or the architecture of a city are essential components in forming perceptions. Trueman and Jobber (1998, 598), namely relate image to aesthetics, appearance, and style. This brings us to the importance of visual evidence, such as attractive tree-lined avenues, refurbished parks, prosperous high technology firms and lively streets which communicate the impression of a vibrant, secure and well managed city. (Trueman, Klemm & Giroud, 2004, 321.) These are also notions that are essential to supporting the creativity of a city.

In planning a new city marketing campaign or designing a new brand, the starting point is researching what the city really is; that is, research its identity (Kalindade 2011, 286). The above figure describes identity as how the owners want the brand to be perceived, which conflicts with Kalandides's statement. Is identity in the hands of the owners or is it something that is already marked in the minds of its witnesses? That is part of the complexity; how is the place seen and especially by whom? As mentioned previously, a city has various target groups with various needs and wants; therefore the delineation of one common identity is not obvious.

While constructing their city brand, different cities will select different components and communicators of identity to pursue their personal brand objective. In a nation-brand context Dinnie (2008, 49) points out the example of having such a strong brand export as Nokia, and Finland most likely wanting to integrate Nokia as a communicator of its nation-brand identity. In a same way the soccer team of Real Madrid might be wanted to be tied to the brand of Madrid. Similarly, in the context of this thesis the role of the Helsinki WDC 2012 mega-event in regard to Helsinki's city brand is researched. The true essence of the place is represented by the place-brand identity components. From there on place-brand image is derived through communicators such as, marketing communications, brand ambassadors, sporting achievements and so on. Nevertheless the external consumers are the ones who determine which brand exports are commercially sustainable, which sets challenges to achieving a completely accurate place-brand image management. (Dinnie 2008, 49-50.)

### **3.2.2 *Stakeholder dynamics and forming the message***

Branding cities demands long-term commitment and organizational capacity; mere image-building campaigns do not suffice for long term benefits. Aligning the visions and

needs of tourists, investors, exporters, policy-makers and cultural organizations require long-term development strategies. (Van den Berg & Braun 1999, 995; Roig, Pritchard & Morgan 2010, 116 – 117.) Identifying distinctive and defining characteristics of a city is the starting point of city branding. These characteristics range from functional to non-functional qualities: city appearance, history, cultural attractions, demographics, governance, people’s experience and perception of the city. Reaching a common point-of-view between the city authorities and the general public on the city’s identity and core values is crucial to successful city branding. In addition to consensus between parties, a city’s identity ought to be easily marketable, presentable and at a reach for daily experiencing. As mentioned above the city is a multi-layered product with an array of stakeholders, each having their own values and interests. Therefore, creating and profiling an identity from diverse values is a challenge. Moreover the set of ingredients (culture, infrastructure, architecture, landscape, history among others) for forming a commonly accepted identity is abundant; therefore conflicts over competing identifications and understandings are inevitable. (Trueman, Klemm & Giroud 2004, 321; Zhang & Zhao 2009, 246.) Therkelsen, Halkier and Jensen (2010, 141) present a place branding triad to illustrate the dynamics between different parties and branding factors (also see Implementation phase in Figure 3)

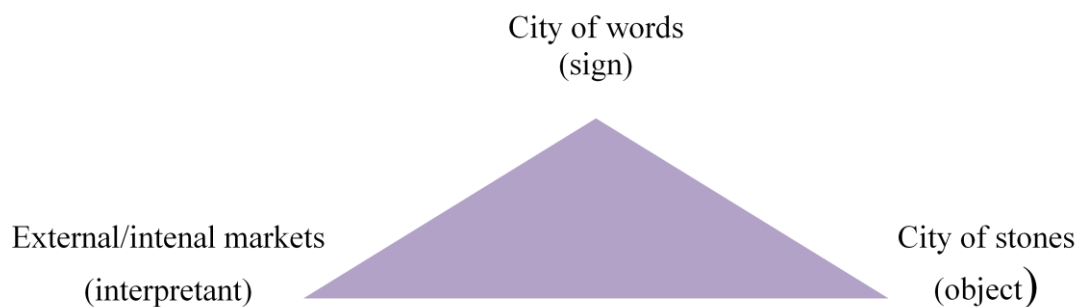


Figure 6 The place branding triad (Therkelsen, Halkier & Jensen 2010, 141)

Physical changes are often as important as mental images. At its best city branding links and coordinates physical transformation into urban (re)development initiatives. At times, linking the place and the words is a point where city branding fails. The place branding triad illustrates this interrelationship together with their dependence on the market. Although the branding stakeholders presented above are within local frames, it is essential to think beyond the city’s borders. Cities need to position themselves in regional, national and global context as well. The ‘city of words’ (communication) is the sign that stands for its object ‘city of stones’ (physical side); these ought to be in a close relationship. Considering that the sign is interpreted by markets that each mold themselves based on their socio-cultural backgrounds and experiences with regard to the object the range of interpretations will differ among the internal and external markets.

(Therkelsen, Halkier, Jensen 2010, 141.) Kavaratzis (2005, 336) states that a place should be treated as a whole entity of place products, in order to achieve a coherent message to send. Similarly to the ‘city of words’, Kavaratzis points out that “stories” should be connected to the place in order to communicate an attractive general picture. These “stories” shouldn’t solely consist of a slogan next to the name of the place or of an idyllic picture, isolated from the whole. “Stories” are built into the place, they consist among other features of, infrastructure development, city design and planning and most importantly of a general attitude communicated through promotional activities. (Kavaratzis 2005, 336.)

Forming an attractive image is one matter however it also needs good communications, effective operations and substance. Communications give promises, and operations execute them. Accompanying communications with a recognizable face is the next step; the name of the city, logo, printed materials, sponsorships, PR events and image advertisements are examples of tools for this. This recognizable face is comparable to the ‘city of words’ or sign of Therkelsen Halkier and Jensen (2010, 141). Building a credible image comprises long-term activities that can result in a unique character of the city. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 12–13.) However, many more areas of activities are to be included in strategic and responsible city branding. Numerous contemporary city branding practices have been misled by the difficulty to identify the confusion between city branding and promotion, leading them to an exclusive use of promotional tools. (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2010, 43.) This supports the ideology behind the place branding triad, emphasizing the interdependence between three different pillars, instead of only focusing on the ‘city of words’/promotional tools.

Support to the importance of interrelationships and communications is also found in the work of Kavaratzis’ (2004, 67–69), that focuses more on the nature of communications. His framework distinguishes three levels of communication within city branding communication. The first, unintentional communication, relates to messages diffused by the city when communication isn’t a main focus point. This unintentional communication can be divided into four areas of intervention: landscape strategies (public art, urban design, architecture...), infrastructure projects (projects giving a distinctive character to transport, communication, tourism and other types of necessary infrastructure), organizational structure (government structure, public-private relationships, citizen’s participation in decision-making), the city’s behavior (the city leaders’ vision for the city, the strategies adopted, events organized to promote that strategy...). This unintentional level links closely to the previously highlighted visual aspect in strengthening a city brand and regaining public confidence (see. Trueman & Jobber 1998, 598; Trueman, Klemm & Giroud 2004, 321). Kavaratzis’s second level of city-brand communication is intentional referring to conventional marketing practices such as advertising and PR presented previously. Finally the third level of communication is word of

mouth, supported by the media and not controllable by marketers. The two first levels of communication have a goal to reinforce this third level. (Kavaratzis 2004, 67–69.)

In Kavaratzis's & Ashworth's (2005, 507) article on city branding, place branding is paralleled to mental maps and images, that are generated by arranged activities designed to shape a place and its future. Interactions with places may occur "*through direct experience or the environment or indirectly through media representations*" (Holloway & Hubbard 2001, 48). The mentally processed information formed through interactions and arranged activities then build cognitive and learned images of a place. Consequently, place brand management is about influencing and handling these mental maps by means that are considered useful to the place, from a present and future perspective. (Kavaratzis et al. 2005, 507.)

### **3.2.3 City Brand Management**

A study made on city branding in Kazakhstan (Gaggiotti, Cheng & Yunak, 2008, 116-118), outlines the model of City Brand Management (CBM). It provides a framework for building a city brand and identifying strategic guidelines and tasks for building a brand. The aimed result is an improved overall city strategy, enhancing the quality of life through economic growth, wealth and investment generation, as well as attracting talents and resources.

The CBM model consists of four stages. Firstly, the multiple parties designing the brand strategy ought to thoroughly assess the city's current assets and resources, answering the question of "what we are now?", taking us back to city identity already discussed earlier in this chapter. This situational analysis of present strengths serves as a basis for the future strategy; the same way a SWOT analysis is executed in the corporate world. The key elements to this initial stage of city brand strategy are: place, people, processes and partners. The place pillar consists of the city's geographic location, heritage and history, natural environment, transportation infrastructure, economic sectors and industry clusters. While referring to the diversity of the population, talent, mentality and attitudes of the locals, the people element, or human capital, strongly links to the characteristics emphasized in a creative city. Processes look at administrative matters such as, the advancement of legal systems, law enforcement, the extent of economical integration on a regional and global basis, level of corruption and environmental friendliness; that is, anything that affects the economic and social development of a city.

The partners element is one that appears in most of the place branding framework suggestions in literature (Kavaratzis 2012, 9) and is therefore going to be discussed somewhat more thoroughly than the other CBM pillars. Urban management is not solely a subject of public administration; interaction processes between public actors and pub-

lic, private or individual target groups are essential as well (Van den Berg & Braun 1999, 995). In addition to Gaggiotti, Cheng and Yunak (2008), both Rainisto (2003, 77) and Trueman and Cornelius (2006), point out the importance of public-private partnerships (PPPs). For efficient development participation and cross marketing between for instance public space and private companies might be required (Rainisto 2003, 77). Hankinson (2004, 111) provides a model where he conceptualizes brands as relationships with stakeholders. He states that a brand has a personality that enables it to form a relationship with the consumer; this point of view is particularly apparent in service brands where the service provider's and the customer's relationship directly have an effect on the overall experience. Gaggiotti, Cheng & Yunak, (2008, 116-118) relate this to how policymakers ought to expand cooperation with different parties in order to support creativity. Working together with corporations, NGOs or industries is pointed out as important in the CBM model. For instance, Milan is often labeled by its popular fashion industry, which in turn might be something to consider in the planning of a city brand strategy. These partnerships enable communication between stakeholders which provides a useful platform for a shared vision of the future, a plurality of identity and consequently a strong sense of brand ownership (Trueman, Cook & Conelius 2008, 32).

### **3.3 Mega-events as catalysts for a creative city brand**

#### **3.3.1 *Mega-events as a marketing channel***

The Olympic Games, the World Expo, the FIFA Cup etc. are easily categorized as mega-events however it is a challenge to define their key characteristics that would outline and explain their transformational impact on the host cities. What we can rule out from the mega-event list are all the small and large commercial events that take place around the world at all times. Despite their effect on a city atmosphere refer to them as "business as usual". Mega-events are special; they make a city step out of its comfort zone through a large long-term commitment and acting in partnership with multiple stakeholders. Mega-events usually set a milestone in the history of the city. The most successful cities are the ones that act entrepreneurially, coming up with innovative ideas and are able to collect public value, such as enhanced public value, safety, health and education among many other features (Shanghai Manual 2010, Chapter 10, 1-4.)

Image building is a core part of city branding; it can re-create and re-shape a city. Likewise mega-events can boost the renewal process and serve as a tool in creating an attractive and distinctive image for the city. The mega-event strategy has become more

and more popular among cities. (Rizzi & Dioli 2010, 43.) Andranovich, Burbank and Heying (2001, 127) note two main incentives in engaging in this type of strategy: gaining extensive media exposure at low cost and forcing quick decisions to define a clear timeline for development projects. A clear link between mega-events and local development; whether in regard of capturing tourist or investor attention or local development incentives, is noticeable.

Mega-events are considered as an opportunity to broadcast a city, locally nationally and internationally, moreover the attention paid by foreign TV and newspapers enable exceptional promotion. Even the sole process of bidding for a mega-event highlights a place. Turin hosted the 2006 Winter Olympic Games and managed to design a consistent strategic plan and a carefully planned communication program for the mega-event. Great attention was paid to promoting Turin's new look; its advertisement campaigns were conceived both in Italian and English within the frames of a few simple and accurate ideas. The concepts of passion ("Passion lives here"), movements ("Always on the move") and discovery appeared all over the city. What is to me marked is the involvement of feelings. These types of narrative and rhetorical communication techniques, often using stories, facilitate the construction of local identities. (Rizzi & Dioli 2010, 43.) The aim is to create associations in the minds of visitors, potential visitors and the public in general; associations with the city's variety of entertainment and leisure offerings as well as with the wealth and value of the local culture (Kavaratzis 2012, 4). This aim reflects well the idea of the creative city that seeks to build on vibrancy and diversity. This also points out that the visitors and investors are not the only ones who are told the stories; locals are also strongly included which enables the formation of a stronger brand identity and sense of pride that in turn reflects on the outside target groups as well.

The effects of bidding and hosting for the Olympic Games have vastly been researched; however mega-events such as Cultural Capital of the world or Capital of Design have got less attention within the mega-event literature (see for example Essex & Chalkley 1998; Cashman 2002; Gold & Gold 2008; Andranovich, Burbank & Heying 2011).

### **3.3.2 *Long-term effects of hosting mega-events***

Large international events are triggers for local development by producing tangible benefits. Hosting a mega-event provides an opportunity for a city to upgrade its physical infrastructure, strengthen its image by stepping into a onetime spotlight as well as accelerating the execution of new urban policies. (Shanghai Manual 2010, 285.) Consequently, many cities see the hosting of events as an essential element to integrate into

their city-brand building process (Dinnie 2011, 96). Regardless of their relatively short duration, especially in the case of the Olympics, hosting mega-events or in this case being nominated as the World Design Capital is a considerable investment. In the case of WDC Helsinki 2012 the total budget is 16 million €, including the organization of events, marketing, organizational costs etc (WDC 2012 Facts). The Summer Olympics 2012, hosted by London has a budget of £9,3 billion (BBC 2011). Often a valuable justification for bidding for mega-events is lies in long-term benefits generated. These events often act as key factors in the city's major programs of regeneration and improvement. (Essex & Chalkley 1998, 187.)

The city of Turin that once was stuck in the image of the industrial crisis has become able to attract Florida's creative class and the investments of a number of foreign high-tech companies. Hosting the Winter Olympics 2006 and also through winning the title of Capital of Design in 2008, has had a large influence on the perception of the city itself. Turin has shown an ability to grasp the economical impact of its design industry. (Rizzi & Dioli 2010, 44.)

### 3.3.3 *Co-branding mega-events with a creative city brand*

One essential element of the relationship between mega-events and city competitiveness is that of how images related to the event may be transferred to the city itself (Brown, Chalip, Jago & Mules 2010, 279). To understand the possibility for a city brand to be enhanced or changed through the images reflected by and associated with an event brand is a key point in regard of this thesis. Brown, Chalip, Jago and Mules (2010, 283) refer to the term of co-operative branding or co-branding, when a city brand is linked to an event brand image. In order to for the event to have an impact on the city's image a spillover effect from the event image to the city image must be present. The strongest beneficial outcomes arise when the place consumers see a meaningful match between the two brand images. The quality of fit is dependent on the direction and intensity of image transfer. (Xing & Chalip 2006, 50; Brown, Chalip, Jago & Mules 2010, 284.)

Keller (1993, 3) defines brand image as "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in memory". This refers to memory networks and the fact that consumers form a brand image based on linkages in their memory. This phenomenon has mainly been studied within the field of event sponsorship literature. For instance, the pre-existing image of a recognized athlete or celebrity becomes linked in memory with the sponsoring brand present in the event. In the context of this thesis this means that the mega-event brand is transferred to the city brand by a transfer of images. (Keller 1993, 3; Gwinner and Eaton 1999, 47–48.)



In their research on branding Australia through events, Brown, Chalip, Jago and Mules (2010, 290–291) depict a few characteristics that support destination branding. Their approach focuses on place as a touristic destination, however the findings are compatible to city branding due to their general aspect. One of the characteristic is *longevity*, which supports the idea of mega-events having long-term effects and benefits if managed correctly. Even though the event period being limited to a certain time, associations in people's memories take time to cumulate. That is why the longevity factor is to be taken into account to leverage the advantages efficiently. This time factor relates to the fact that mega-event hosting ought to be part of wider city strategies and well planned processes. Events tend to leave a more positive legacy when used to accelerate or facilitate the implementation of existing plans. Wider plans require time and a focus on long-term benefits. (Rizzi & Dioli 2010, 48.)

As mentioned previously, while discussing plural identity and the value of locals relating to the city's image, Brown, Chalip, Jago and Mules (2010, 290) present *community support* as an empowering factor. Citizens that supported events through joining the festivities, decorating streets and enjoying the atmosphere enabled higher awareness within non-locals as well. This led to better image building. At the root of each beneficial characteristic is naturally good management. It is clear that *compatibility* between the events and the city is a supportive factor. In the research on communities in Australia (Brown, Chalip, Jago & Mules 2010, 291) the example of a water-sport event and Queensland, which already had an image as a "sun, sea and sand" destination illustrated how well the two linked together. Compatibility between Helsinki and Helsinki WDC 2012 will be examined in the upcoming empirical part.

Summing up the theoretical part of this thesis, a framework that will serve as a guideline for the empirical research part can be drawn out.

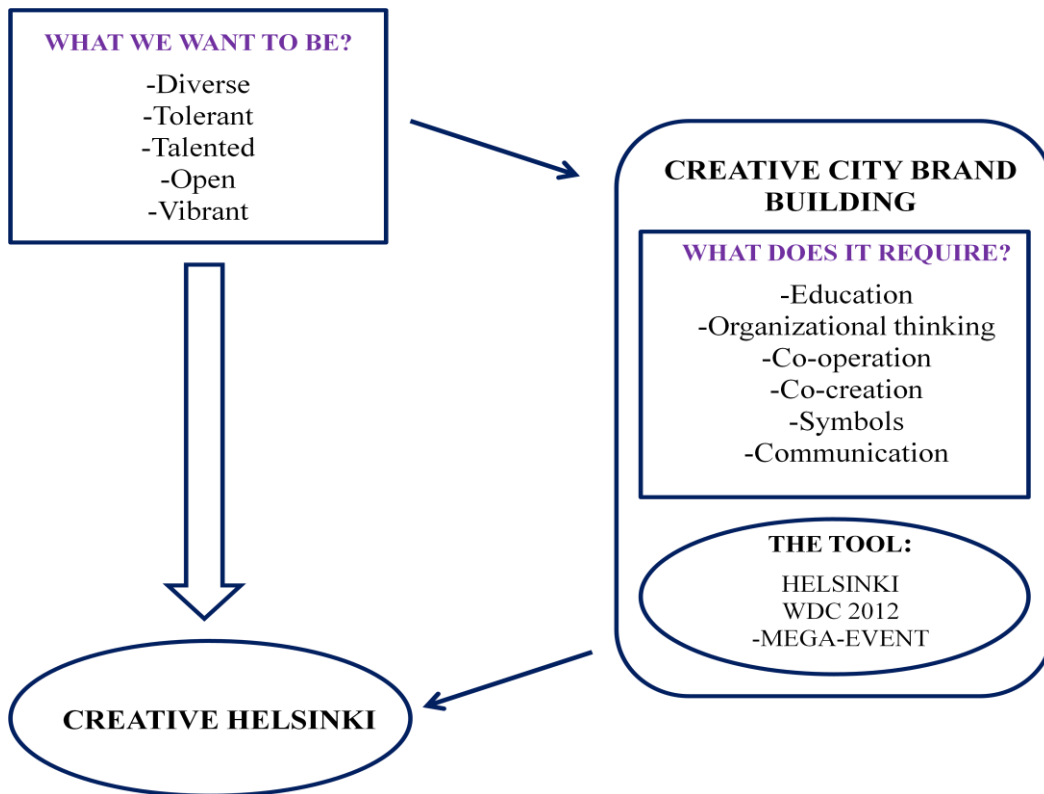


Figure 7 Empirical research framework

This thesis handling three fields of research; the creative city concept, city branding and mega-events; a framework to illustrate their interrelations under the light of the city of Helsinki is in place for clarity. Regardless of the various views and definition on the notion of the creative city certain common characteristics stood out from the theory part. Adjectives such as diversity, tolerance, talent, openness and vibrancy were found to be widely used in the creative city literature. Therefore, the city of Helsinki ought to be analyzed in the light of these characteristics to find out to what extent it fulfills the ideology of a creative city. As presented in this study, once you have a vision of what you want to be, that is a brand identity, a strategy plan for achieving this goal is in place. The box on the right side of Figure 7 stands for the supportive actions that ought to be taken into consideration while implementing this strategy plan. The importance of education, networks, organizational thinking, symbols, stories and communication were highlighted earlier in this study. These implications and actions to support the building of a creative city will be evaluated in the light of the city of Helsinki in the upcoming empirical part. Hosting an international mega-event, in this case Helsinki WDC 2012, is a one-time opportunity that serves as a useful tool in this branding process. First, research will be conducted on how Helsinki, as it is now, fits the frames of the creative city concept. Secondly the links between the WDC 2012 mega-event and the city of Helsinki will be researched in order to analyze the value of the mega-event in Helsinki's creative city branding process.

## 4 RESEARCH DESIGN

### 4.1 Research approach

Contrarily to what one might suppose, procedure is what differentiates qualitative and quantitative research, not quality. The difference is not uniquely about quantification, reflection of various perspectives on knowledge and research objectives are also essential. Qualitative research is rational, explorative as well as intuitive, moreover the skills and experience of the researcher is radical in data analysis. Its emphasis is on understanding and interpreting through a process-like approach. Quantitative research is hypothetical and deductive, with more of a result oriented perspective. Testing and verification features enable certain objectivity that is more difficult to achieve through qualitative research. (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998, 14; Ghauri & Gronhhaug 2002, 86.) As this study focuses on exploring an ideology and phenomenon; creative city branding; the research focuses on various interpretations and intuitions rather than on concrete results that can objectively be verified. The aim of this research is to map factors supporting this ideology, which according to the theory part are mostly soft factors that are challenging to measure. Moreover, as stated in the beginning of this research, the field of research is relatively recent, still focusing on conceptual definitions instead of concrete result measuring. Consequently, a qualitative research approach appears to be most suitable for this study. A tendency to choose and defend the methodology that feels to be the most familiar to the researcher, on the basis of his/hers prior knowledge, and the appropriateness of the data, are points that ought to be recognized as well (Eriksson & Koalainen 2008, 5–6). In this study, the personal preference and convenience of data at hand of the researcher did have its own influence on the selection of a qualitative research approach.

As Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara (2009, 161) state reality is multidimensional and incoherent. Therefore when exploring or analyzing a real-life phenomenon, the collected data manifests itself through complexity, which in turn sets challenges for the researcher, such as properly managing the nature and quality of data (Zalan & Lewis 2004, 514–515). Given its sensitivity to context, qualitative research usually reaches for a holistic understanding of the issue studied (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 5). Given its unstructured data nature qualitative research appears through words rather than numbers (Miles & Huberman 1984, 21). Considering the unclear and multifaceted definition of the creative city and the rather recent branch of city branding, a holistic approach to the subject felt appropriate for a deeper understanding.

## 4.2 Data collection

After choosing the research approach, the sources of data collection should be decided upon. Secondary and primary data are distinguished in literature. Secondary data is information gathered by other people for usually different purposes from ours. These can be for example internet sites, census reports, studies and reports or textbooks. Primary data is specifically collected for the research problem in question, which makes it the original source. If secondary data is not available or is insufficient to answer the research questions, primary data becomes necessary. (Ghauri & Gronhaug 2002, 76, 81.) In the case of this particular research valuable secondary data supporting the research questions were available. Helsinki's economic development strategy report 2007 (Helsingin Elinkeinostrategia 2007), the city's bid for the WDC2012 and a research report by the consulting firm Comedia to the city of Helsinki (Helsinki as an Open and Intercultural City 2010) serve as secondary data resources in this research. The economic development strategy report 2007 was found on the city's website. During the interview with the Director of Economic Development, Eero Holstila, the researcher was handed a draft of the 2011 economic development strategy. However the researcher was asked to keep the document confidential, therefore the strategy report of 2007 was the most recent available for this research. The bid for the WDC2012 was an obvious data resource to include into this research, through it the image and features that Helsinki seeks to project can be analyzed. Comedia's report was ordered by the city of Helsinki and put up in collaboration between the two parties. This report analyzes Helsinki's current state mostly in the same light as this study's theory part therefore it is a useful data resource. It reveals the city's strengths and weaknesses and recommends actions for the future. These data resources enabled the researcher to analyze strategies, themes, and facts brought up in public data resources. However, primary data was also decided to be collected in order to give more specific and descriptive answers to the research questions at hand. The operationalization chart below demonstrates how the research objectives, theory and collected data link.

Table 1 Operationalization chart

Purpose of the study	Sub-objectives	Theory	Data used
Evaluate how Helsinki brands itself as a creative city through an international mega-event.	1. Map factors behind the creative city and their relation to the City of Helsinki	2.1 Conceptualizing the creative city 2.2 Dimensions of a creative city 2.3 Creative city policy – challenges and implications	- All three interviews - Economic development strategy 2007 - WDC 2012 bid
	2. Describe the city branding process	3.1 Defining the city brand concept 3.2 Designing the city brand 3.3 Implementing the city brand	- Holstila interview - Aalto interview
	3. Evaluate the role of the Helsinki WDC 2012 mega-event in the city's creative city brand building	3.4 Mega-events as catalysts for a creative city brand	- All three interviews - Comedia's report - WDC 2012 bid - Web-pages

Qualitative data can be collected through observation, interviews, documents or audiovisual recordings (Miles & Huberman 1984, 21). Interviews are often seen as the best data collection method (Ghauri & Gronhaug 2002, 100), and that is also one of the main methods used in this research. An interview is an interaction situation where both the interviewer and the interviewee influence each other. Hirsjärvi & Hurme (1980, 86) have defined five typical characteristics for an interview: 1) it has been planned beforehand; 2) initiated and conducted by the interviewer; 3) the interviewer faces the need to motivate and keep up the interviewee; 4) the interviewer is familiar with his/her role and the interviewee learns it; 5) the interviewee has to be able to rely on a trustworthy treatment of the given information. Depending on to what extent the interviewer directs the interview situation and on the importance of the question layout, interviews can be divided into four categories (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 87). *Structured interviews* follow a certain layout that is used for all the different interviewees. The interviewee chooses from ready answer options. *Semi-structured* interviews pose the same questions for everyone, however the respondent answers freely, without any prepared answer options. *Unstructured interviews* are the closest to a regular conversation. The interviewer only gives lead questions and the interviewee has full liberty to discuss opinions. Eskola &

Suoranta (1998, 87) also include *theme interviewing* into this categorization. Within this type, discussion themes or subjects are set beforehand, without any specific form of questions. The order of the themes can vary from interviewee to interviewee. Given the multifaceted nature of the subjects involved the possibility for structured interviews was ruled out, in order to get deeper and more descriptive information on the topics involved. However, the subject being relatively vast themes were set in advance in order to limit the conversation to essential points with regard to the research questions. A list of questions was planned and sent to the interviewees in advance. Questions were designed according to the fields of expertise of each of the interviewees. Some of the general questions were the same for everyone. However the order and nature of the pre-planned questions changed during the course of the interview, making the situation sound more like a discussion. Due to this, the interviews can be categorized as unstructured shaping into theme interviews on the way.

Building a positive relationship and an open atmosphere is essential to a successful interview. The language especially during the first minutes of the interaction should be simple and understandable. (Ghuri & Gronhaug 2002, 106.) Here, as the native language of both the interviewee and the interviewer was Finnish in all three interviews, Finnish was seen as the most convenient language for a fluent and clear conversation. The fact the researcher conducts her study in English, and therefore has come more familiar to the terminology involved in English, might have had a minor effect on the clarity of questions. Nevertheless, the researcher was prepared in advance, by verifying certain translations in advance. Moreover, the respondents did place English words into their answers, all of them having to use English in their daily work as well. All in all, English was only used minorly in appropriate contexts and Finnish remained the main language of the interviews, with ease and fluency.

The first person interviewed for this study, was Timo Cantell, head of research at Helsinki's research center. He was primarily contacted in April 2010, first by e-mail and then by phone. These first contacts were mainly about developing research questions and ideas for the researchers master's thesis. Mr. Cantell was very friendly and open to further contacts and assistance when needed. In October, he was contacted again by e-mail and then by phone. This time a personal meeting was set in order to execute a face-to-face interview. As the respondent had already been contacted during the spring, and a phone discussion was held, a certain relationship was enabled. Mr. Cantell was familiar with my research well ahead and was therefore easier to meet in the fall. Eriksson & Kovalainen (2008, 55) point out the difficulty of getting someone to agree to a personal meeting. Why should they give out their time for a researcher? As a professor and researcher himself Timo Cantell has done many researches himself and most probably identified himself with the researcher's position. That could explain his interest and willingness to help. The data was collected in Timo Cantell's office, at the Helsinki re-

search center in Hakaniemi. This enabled the interviewee to feel more comfortable and didn't make him go through the trouble of travelling to another place.

The second interview was more challenging to get. First the interviewer's intention was to get to meet the mayor, Jussi Pajunen, to get holistic and strategical answers to research questions. The mayor was contacted by e-mail and then by phone in May 2011. After persistent contacting through his secretary, Pajunen finally e-mailed the researcher. Due to timely restrictions he couldn't receive the researcher for an interview. Nevertheless his e-mail had a very receiving tone, with congratulations about an interesting thesis subject and recommendation to contact the Helsinki's Director of Economic Development, Eero Holstila. A couple of e-mails were then exchanged with the secretary of Holstila, and a meeting for an interview was soon set for the 10<sup>th</sup> of May at the Industrial Policy Office in Helsinki.

The third and last interview was planned to be got from Pekka Timonen, Director of WDC Helsinki 2012. Numerous phone call and e-mails were sent during March 2011; however Timonen was not available for an interview. Holstila suggested interviewing Laura Aalto, Marketing and Communications Director of WDC Helsinki 2012. An e-mail was then sent to Aalto, mentioning the suggestion of Holstila. A meeting was then scheduled for June 2011. The meeting was held at Café Engel, a small café close to the WDC offices. Having the interview in a neutral place like a café might have had an effect on the openness of the interviewee's answers. Moreover the café was quite loud and some of the answers were not heard at first. In this case the recording was very useful in order to return to some of the answers.

### 4.3 Data analysis

The analysis of qualitative research data aims at simplifying the material in order to generate new information about the research subject. The key is to summaries the material, without losing key points, and with the aim of creating new informative value by arranging the data into a clear and fluent entity. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 138.) Once the data is collected, it is processed into a more manageable form, usually through dictation, typing up, editing or transcription. The information remains in words, but is reorganized into a clearer form of text. In Miles's and Huberman's (1984, 21) book on qualitative data analysis, this process is sliced into three phases: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing. *Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the "raw" data* (Miles & Huberman 1984, 21). This raw material either appears in written-up field notes or transcriptions. The challenge is to find meaning and value from the mass of words. Choices about how to code the data, which parts to highlight and how to organize the parts in order to make

comprehensive conclusions, have to be made by the researcher. The second part of data analysis is *data display* that is a compressed assembly of information from which conclusions can be drawn. The display may be in the form of matrices, graphs or chart, however in the past the most common is narrative text. The last part, *conclusion drawing and verification*, consists of meanings, perceptions of patterns, configurations and propositions. Through this the researcher should be able to start explaining the phenomenon.

The interviews for this study were recorded, and transcribed on a computer. Once each interview was written out and printed they were read through, at the same time essential themes or adjectives were underlined. After having underlined the most interesting parts, being answers to the research questions, a word or theme name was written down in the margin, in order to categorize the data. Here are a few examples of the theme titles that arose from the interviews: image building, organic branding, own citizens as target, open Helsinki, event brand, creative city definition, partners and networks, education, design as a window, etc. Then these theme titles were highlighted in different colors according to whether they belonged under the research areas of the creative city, branding or mega-events. The interview questions were designed to match the research sub-questions and theoretical themes. However as mentioned earlier the interviews often took new turns according to new aspects, that were not thought of before the actual interview. Consequently this coding process revealed new insights to this research. The secondary data was thoroughly read through, during which key words that supported the theory part of this research and the themes revealed in the interviews were highlighted. In the end the main findings were grouped again under the research areas mentioned above. This procedure facilitated the data reduction process and enabled the researcher to come up with a logical structure for the upcoming chapter of findings.

#### 4.4 Evaluation of the study

A crucial issue in research is to make it trustworthy. The researcher has to assess how to persuade the audience of the importance and quality of the study. To ensure persuasion four questions ought to be considered: 1) *“Truth value”*: how can confidence be established? 2) *Applicability*: to what extent are the results applicable in other contexts? 3) *Consistency*: would the findings repeat themselves if the research would be reconducted with the same subjects? 4) *Neutrality*: to what extent has personal perceptions or motivations, weither of the interviewee of the interviewer, affected the outcome. (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 290.)

Assessing the trustworthiness of a research starts with the *credibility* factor. In short, this refers to the whether the researcher’s interpretations match the respondents’ point of



views. Through prolonged engagement, meaning reserving enough time for misinformation testing, trust building and choosing a convenient site of interview, for instance. Additionally, persistent observation ameliorates credibility. (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 301–302; Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 212.) In the case of this research, a thorough overview of the subject was executed through a wide range of books, academic journals and newspapers. This enabled the researcher to be well oriented during the interview and increased the chances of recognizing misinformation. Two of the interviews, Cantell's and Holstila's, were held at the interviewees' office which minimized the possibility of personal distortion by making them feel more comfortable.

In the case of Cantell, the first contact, through e-mails and a phone discussion, was tied six months prior to the actual face-to-face meeting; a certain amount of familiarity was developed before the meeting. This in turn helped in building trust. It is nevertheless undeniable that the first meeting in person, brings some tension to the beginning of the interview. The interaction started with a brief casualty, talking about the weather, how the researcher had found her way to the office, and finding a functioning plug box for the researcher's computer charger. The first actual interview questions dealt with Cantell's career and areas of interest, which quickly helped to achieve a more relaxed atmosphere. Towards the end, the respondent added color to his answers with little jokes and personal experiences. This proved a trustworthy atmosphere. No irregularities were to be identified in the interviewee's presence or body language. He stayed calmly seated to his chair, pointing books on the shelf from time to time. Cantell was very enthusiastic with his answers. Some subjects were clearly unfamiliar to him, however he directly expressed his shortages in these fields of knowledge, which helped to avoid misleading information.

The interview with Helsinki's Director of Economic Development was clearly more intimidating for the interviewer. The large and modern office space where the interview was held felt official and fancy. The fact that the interviewer had mentioned that the mayor, Pajunen, had suggested to interview Holstila, most likely gave credibility to the situation and therefore enabled a base for trust in regard to the researcher. In the end, the interview turned out to be very fruitful; Hostila gave direct answers and didn't hesitate to disagree with renowned theories about the topics discussed. Holstila gave the interviewer an unpublished strategy guideline, and asked to keep it confidential; this revealed trust from the behalf of the interviewee.

Aalto seemed slightly distant in the beginning of the interview; however her answers were very thorough and long, which showed openness and willingness to participate. At the end of the interview the interviewer was invited to the WDC office close by to be given some reading material concerning the WDC Helsinki 2012 year. This gave a sense of trust to the meeting. Despite the good atmosphere of the meeting, Aalto seemed determined to stick to answers only concerning the WDC subject. When personal opin-

ions or insights about slightly deriving matters were asked she clearly manifested that she had no expertise in those areas and would rather leave those questions answered. Like in the case of Cantell this gave trustworthiness to the answers.

The bid for the WDC nomination was naturally meant to sell the city of Helsinki as a suitable candidate; therefore negative aspects were not included in it. The same aspect is present in the Helsinki WDC 2012 web pages, as their purpose is to give an attractive image of the city. Consequently it is highly possible that this data is somewhat exaggerated, this naturally affect the trustworthiness and credibility of this research. However the inclusion of Comedia's report for the city of Helsinki brings a more objective side to the research. This report, Helsinki as an Open and Intercultural City, has been written by the consulting firm Comedia, mentioned earlier in this study, while it has been founded by Charles Landry. The fact that the report has been put together by a outside party and reveals negative aspects and amelioration suggestions increases the trustworthiness and credibility of this study. The economic development strategy is more of a factual report of the city of Helsinki, leaving out big adjectives and focusing on settled plans and statistical reporting. It is written with a relatively neutral approach focusing on future plans rather than assessing present characteristics of the city. This enables to analyze the city development strategies.

As reality is often seen as such a complex matter, the full *transferability* of one research may be considered impossible. The purpose of transferability is however, to give a proper description of the study methods to enable possible transfer of the part of potential appliers. (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 316; Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 212–213.) Marshall and Rossman (1999, 193) see transferability as generalization, that is the research's external validity. Even though this research was executed through the case of a onetime mega-event, the WDC Helsinki 2012 case, the theoretical frames of the creative city and city branding are transferable to other researches. The WDC nomination is something that unites the cities that have been nominated; therefore results from this study could be transferred to studies concerning the WDC theme in general. The transferability was improved by a thorough description of the interview situations and the nature of the documents used. This ought to help further researches on this subject to assess the usability of the data and outcomes presented in this research.

*Dependability* assesses the extent to which the research is in connection with external factors. Here, the interview situation description facilitated the mapping of affecting factors and therefore decreased the chances of dependability. Two of the interviews were held in the interviewees' offices which enabled a calm and secure environment. One of the interviews was however held in a café which might have limited the openness and honesty of the interviewee; the risk of other people hearing confidential matters therefore augmented the dependability of the research. Essential data sources were the bid for the WDC nomination and the web pages of Helsinki WDC 2012; as men-

tioned earlier these pieces of data were designed to give a positive and marketable image to Helsinki. Therefore, it ought to be into account that this data might have been written in a different way, maybe not so positive, if it came from a more objective party such as a foreign person for example. However the thorough descriptions of the interview situations and the risk of subjectivity in the secondary data minimizes dependability. Another feature that Lincoln and Guba (1985, 324) brings out in the assessment of dependability is how the researcher has resisted early conclusions. In the case of this research the fact that new themes arose while going through the interviews and that they are taken into account and analyzed reduces dependability.

*Conformability* increases through a coherent research description that supports the data and enables the acceptance of the research's bottom line. The conclusions made should get similar conclusions from other researches of the same field. This refers to the neutrality and objectivity of the study. (see. Linclon & Guba, 1985, 323). Here various theoretical points of views and critiques have been examined and assessed to give thorough perception of the subject to the reader. The data evaluation and gathering methods have carefully been described and downsides have also been brought up in the trustworthiness evaluation of this research.

## 5 HELSINKI – ON THE WAY TO BUILDING A CREATIVE CITY BRAND THROUGH THE WDC 2012 MEGA-EVENT

### 5.1 Helsinki and the meaning of the creative city concept

Helsinki is a city that keeps up with time; it seeks to direct itself into new directions instead of being directed by others. The economic development strategy of Helsinki (Helsingin Elinkeinostrategia 2007) brings out numerous aspects that emphasize the importance of creative industries, openness, talent and international competitiveness among others. Technology, arts, creativity and learning ability are mentioned as key factors for Helsinki's and Finland's success. The economic development strategy has a chapter under the name of, fast growing industries, containing knowledge intensive services, creative industries and tourism as subtitles. The creative industries are listed as follows: architecture, design, arts, fashion and crafts, software production, music, theater, media and publishing. In addition it is specified that creative industries might also contain property rights industries that contain research, technology and industrial models. In 2006 creative industries formed an 8% share of all the jobs in Helsinki and the growth is estimated to continue during the following ten years. It seems clear that Finland as well as Helsinki have seen through the creative economy and started to value creative industries.

Having Helsinki as the research city, it reveals itself as a good example of creative clustering. Looking at the whole of Finland, Cantell states that a third of all its creative industry jobs are located in the Helsinki metropolitan area, this is due to the city's active, interesting and international environment. While discussing Helsinki as a creative city with Cantell, he referred to the work of Aku Alanen, who has pointed out that creative sectors tend to concentrate into certain areas, referred to as clustering. Helsinki is a strong example of *clustering*. Even though Helsinki forms the largest concentration of creative sectors and population in Finland, the value added from this clustering is proportionally also the most substantial. The more clustering happens the more members of the creative class and different industries will be attracted. Holstila states that the Finnish film industry makes a turnover of 200 million a year and 80% of it is generated from within the city of Helsinki. He sees it is natural that film makers work at a place where they have all their co-workers and necessities around. The clustering of technical knowledge in Otaniemi and the clustering of artistic and design knowledge in Arabianranta were also mentioned.

The theories of Charles Landry became familiar to Helsinki in the late 1990's and early 2000. As Helsinki prepared for its Cultural Capital Year 2000, Landry acted as a consult to the city through his consulting agency, Comedia. Landry, being a noted ex-

pert in the field of creative cities, it can be deduced that the city of Helsinki has given the concept not only a thought but also actions. One of the objectives for the interviews was to find out how the interviewees defined the notion of the creative city and the creative class, as these terms showed somewhat unclear definitions in the theory.

When asked to express a personal view on how to determine a creative city, Cantell mainly brought up the ambiguity and vagueness of the term. The fact that today, almost anything is considered as creative, blurs the concept. He stated that the term hasn't been clearly enough determined or delineated to be able to form an opinion of his own, he saw this as a problem. Interestingly, as a contrast to Florida's view, often criticized as elitist, Cantell questioned why construction workers couldn't be creative; he personally considers them extremely creative. Holstila also stated that such a large range of industries involve creativity that it is challenging to define; even the lumber industry needs creativity. In the end the definition of the concept was pointed out as some kind of a word game that researchers discuss to the extent of developing some sort of definition. Cantell mentions the studies of Aku Alanen, an expert in the Helsinki statistics centre, which suggest that the term of the creative cities should be abandoned, for its difficult nature of definition. Regarding the creative class term, Holstila showed an even stronger opinion; it doesn't fit the Finnish society. The word, class, refers to a class society that is far from being valued in Finland. Comedia's research report, Helsinki as an open and intercultural city, also points out the Finns' strong sense of equality and tolerance, which support Holstila's view on the inappropriateness of the creative class notion. Moreover, it is not about classes it is about talented people who make individual decisions on where they want to live, he points out. The concept seems to create confusion within the public officers of Helsinki, nonetheless it has gotten attention and thought. A report (Helsingin seudun suunnat 2006, 22) conducted by the Helsinki Urban Facts by two designers, Parviainen and Mikkonen-Young, dig into Florida's notion of the creative class. The report examines Finland and the city of Helsinki through Florida's division of the creative class into the super creative core and the creative professionals (Figure 8). These notions were defined in chapter 2.1.1. of this research.

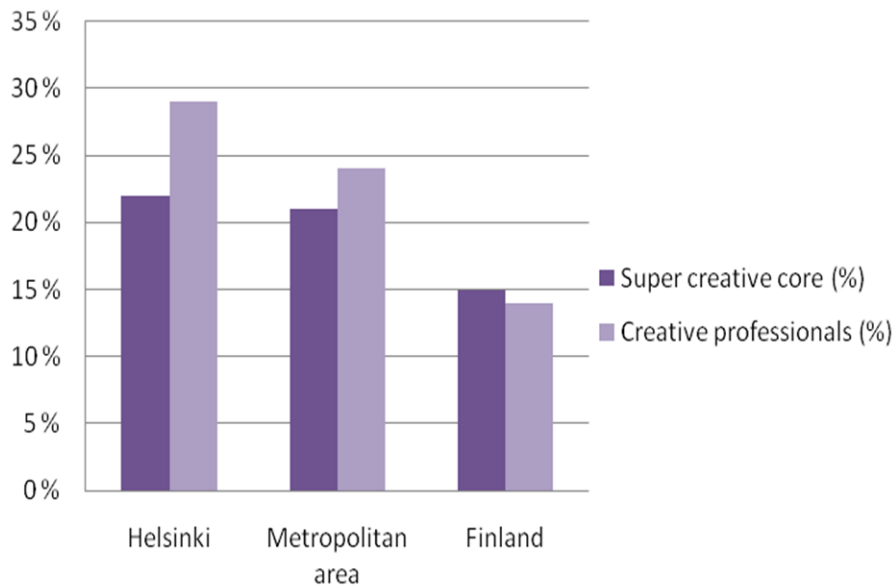


Figure 8 Helsinki's creative class divided into Florida's super creative class and creative professionals (adapted from Parviainen, A-M. & Mikkonen-Young, L. 2006, 22)

According to the research, 29% of Finland's working population categorizes under the creative class, and 15% under the super creative core. In the Helsinki metropolitan area the creative class was 45%, of which the super creative core represented 21%. The city of Helsinki itself reached a creative class percentage of the working population of about 51%. This report was put together in 2006 and the data was gathered even earlier. Taking into account Helsinki's economic development strategy seeing meaningful growth in Helsinki's creative industries, these percentages have most likely grown during the past years. Even though the interviewees were ambiguous towards the use of the creative city and class notions, it seems that Helsinki Urban Facts has been curious about analyzing Helsinki through Florida's debated definition of the creative class.

## 5.2 Helsinki – a fun and livable city

According to Cantell Helsinki has always been a city that seeks to keep up with time, it is a dynamic and proactive city that independently drives itself to new directions. Holstila also mentions the importance of *dynamism* by pinpointing its importance in the light of Florida's own experiences in his hometown of Pittsburgh. Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Florida pursued his university studies and found a job in this city. Technology was well advanced and new companies formed, however in the long run when these companies grew they moved away from Pittsburgh. That is where Florida found his

research field; to find an explanation to this phenomenon. Holstila comments by asking who would want to live in such a dull city as Pittsburgh. Keeping and attracting the young and talented by influencing their decision on where to live is the key in Holstila's opinion. Developing an *attractive* and *lively* city is also a key point in Helsinki's economic development strategy. For instance pedestrianizing wider parts of the city center and diversifying services and events of the city are planned to create the sense of a living room for both citizens and tourists. Projects such as revitalizing the area around Helsinki's market place and building a new music hall are signs of effort towards growing as a city valuing similar features than a creative city. (Elinkeinostrategia 2007, 18.)

The vibrancy factor is visible in the way the city is marketed. When looking further than Helsinki's diverse nature and sea, new directions have developed during the past years. Cantell referred to a travel agency's, Nordic Odity, perspectives of the city. Helsinki is seeking to be an interesting urban destination that offers more than a typical view from Koli. The agency categorized its views into three. The first view boils down to the interesting designers found in Helsinki, within the Design District for example. This perspective approaches *young consumer women* that come to Helsinki to shop interesting Finnish design clothes, instead of visiting international chain stores such as H&M. The second perspective concerns Helsinki as a *nightlife city*, through interesting nightclubs attracting young crowds for a weekend break for instance. The last view is Helsinki as a *gay city*. Nowadays Helsinki has acknowledged the growing gay market, and has even at some point profiled itself as the North's best gay city with its vast supply in gay clubs. These market categories seem to focus on young people.

In addition to Nordic Odity's point of views, the increasing number of *events* in Helsinki got a clear emphasis throughout all interviews and the Helsinki economic development strategy. The economic development strategy report states that the city's eventfulness ought to be highlighted in its marketing in order to be more attractive and recognizable. (Elinkeinostrategia 2007, 19). Musical concerts, sports events, cultural events, and mega-events such as the World Design Capital 2012, communicate dynamism and attract visitors. Holstila points out that there should be happenings every day to keep the citizens and tourists interested. The current year is referred to as an event "super year" by Holstila; Helsinki is hosting both the World Championships of ice-hockey and European Championships of athletics, celebrating its 200-year anniversary and representing the World Design Capital title. Large events require certain infrastructure and facilities and that is something Helsinki is focusing on in order to attract events in the future as well (Elinkeinostrategia 2007, 19.) Aalto admits that events are important, however she sees the essential lies in a well-designed city that offers a *comfortable and open* place to live and visit. Creativity and dynamism seem to be appreciated features within Helsinki. All in all, Helsinki's was put in a relatively positive light, valuing many similar features as the creative city described in the theory.

In addition the abovementioned values that Helsinki seeks to showcase and develop, the city stands in a competitive light in factors affecting everyday life. Cantell brings out the point of *free education* that hasn't been highlighted that much, but is in the background. As EU-projects have been conducted on the allocation of talent, especially students, Chinese and Indians have shown to be particularly interested in Finland and the schools of Helsinki. Some might consider free education as being of lower level; however Finland's success in various educational researches (i.e. PISA), prove otherwise. Holstila sees Finland's well-designed educational system as an essential platform for success in a new era where not only technology transfer suffices but where the ability to combine technology, arts, culture and creativity plays a meaningful role. Finnish education is also a virtue strongly highlighted in Helsinki's WDC application. In Jussi Pajunen's foreword of the application a paragraph is titled 'education is the driving force behind interaction and creativity'. The fact that Finland is at the edge of the inhabitable world, education is valued in order to connect and develop in regard to the rest of the world. In addition to excellent results in the OECD Pisa studies Holstila raises the importance of Aalto University, which was one of the main reasons that Helsinki was chosen World Design Capital 2012.

*Security* came up as another important feature on an international scale. The economic development strategy has its own paragraph on security and good infrastructure (Elinkeinostrategia 2007, 15). The WDC application also states that 'only a safe city can be open and welcome the people of the world' and describes Helsinki as one of the safest cities in the world. Security is a competitive advantage for Helsinki. In addition good traffic design is highlighted in the light of various improvement plans. The fact that mostly *affairs run easily* and well, gives a sense of security and functionality. The *wellbeing* of Helsinki's inhabitants, gives a competitive edge that grows the chances of generating creativity and entrepreneurialism. The excellence of the healthcare system is underlined in the WDC application for instance.

During recent years Helsinki has put an emphasis on the *regeneration* of old harbor and industrial areas. Jätkäsaari, Vuosaari and Kalasatama for example, are currently going through major rebuilding in order to offer more housing and office space (Elinkeinostrategia 2007, 17). Jussi Pajunen, mentions these regeneration projects in the WDC application as well; opening up areas by the sea is a positive move in the minds of citizens. Moreover it is stated that a quarter of the city of Helsinki is parks, offering playgrounds for children and spaces to relax. Aalto refers to Helsinki having been chosen number one by Monocle Quality of Life 2011 survey, while explaining the importance of the *livability* of a city. She says it is not only about selling the city to tourists, instead the core lies in the soul of the city, the general feeling and experience that a person gets.



Bringing people together through openness, free education and *good design* available to everyone is a theme strongly present throughout the Helsinki's WDC application. Good design and equality manifests itself through renowned architects that design for everyone from student flats to high-end apartments. Good design is stated to be a living standard in Helsinki.

The example of the Aalto University has been mentioned previously in this thesis, and mentioned again as a catalyst to combine resources and knowledge from business, technological and creative fields. This sense of wholeness and synergy is also referred to in the foreword of the WDC 2012 application, in the context of Helsinki forming a community of cities. The Helsinki region namely includes the cities of Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen. The fact that these points were underlined in the application shows that Helsinki is a place that brings different parties together. This gives the message that through co-operation and co-creation the city reaches bigger results. On the other hand, the following paragraph will present findings that put these virtues of smooth co-operation under another light.

### 5.3 Challenges to overcome

Helsinki's 348 pages long application for the WDC 2012 nomination presents statistical facts, a review of Finland's prominent designers, a list of venues available for major events, a review of finances, a description of various areas and districts and a presentation of the healthcare and educational system among many other chapters. The application is not only thorough in data but includes many photos of the city and its people and in the words of Holstila is a design product itself. As the goal of the application was to win the WDC 2012 nomination it is obvious that it brings out the best of Helsinki and gives the reader an attractive image of the city. Many of the points raised in the application do get support from the interviews however the findings of this research also reveal room for improvement.

*Openness* is a central word in the collected data. In addition to the title and slogan of the WDC 2012 application; Open Helsinki – Embedding design in life, the word appears under various other contexts. Comedia's report, written by Wood and Landry suggests that Helsinki ought to be more open in order to generate more creativity and innovations. Three points are stated to reach this goal (Wood & Landry 2010, 16):

- *involving users in designing services*
- *engaging the skills and insights of the new populations coming from abroad*
- *unleashing the skills of public sector workers whose potential can be thwarted by operating in rigid perhaps too hierarchical structures.*

Co-operation and co-creation are linked to the three points listed above. To some extent Helsinki has justified its openness. As mentioned previously the WDC 2012 application highlights openness to people and ideas. Aalto explains this statement by mentioning Helsinki's citizens' own activity in the development of the city environment; the idea is to involve the citizens in designing their living environment and promote user friendliness. Moreover Comedia's report mentions that openness is also present in the short mental distance between people from different backgrounds or status and between the citizens and the authorities of Helsinki. These are positive features that enhance the city's attractiveness. Nonetheless, openness seems to reach an obstacle within the public sector.

The economic development strategy, put together in 2007 reveals a gap in the city's co-operation abilities. It states that the interaction with the city is not flexible and effective enough, partially due to the dispersion of decision making throughout numerous offices. According to Cantell, Helsinki has over 30 offices and challenges occur in finding a common goal for all of them. Communication between public, private and third parties also show rigidity and poorness. This type of departmental thinking keeps the city from achieving joint insights which in turn reduces effectiveness. Even though this point was acknowledged in the economic development strategy plan in 2007, Comedia's report from 2010 still sees this as a major obstacle in achieving values essential to a creative city. City management and the public sector lack flexibility and openness.

From a statistical point of view Helsinki's working population grew strongly starting from 2006 and generated over 13 000 new jobs during 2006. This pace of growth tops Finland's general growth pace. According to the economic development strategy (Elinkeinostrategia 2007, 8), most of the people moving to Helsinki are young people. The amount of foreigners has regularly grown since the 1990's reaching 29 000 immigrants in 2008. While the population is getting older and the amount of retirements increase Helsinki's growth relies more and more on foreign and young workforce. This is one of the key points that justify Helsinki's need for openness towards immigrants. Comedia's report on Helsinki recognizes the city's high quality of life as an attractive factor for talent however a trouble-free process of arrival is said to lacking. The teaching of Finnish language to foreigners is stated to be inflexible and inadequate and the lack of a more efficient and comprehensive program to welcome new residents are mentioned as meaningful downsides. The economic development strategy responds to this gap by including the amelioration of immigrant integration into their action plan.

Helsinki's economic development strategy 2007 includes a chapter on stakeholder expectations, which brings out areas requiring development. One key point is enhancing communication and co-operation between bureaus. Decision making is considered slow due to the dispersal of bureaus and lack of commitment to common goals. The stakeholders wish the city to be more active and visible to companies. Efficiency and flexi-

bility ought to be more present. A few challenges for the future are presented: securing the availability of the knowledgeable workforce and eliminating obstacles for better mobility; offering housing and office space; enhancing the co-operation between universities and reinforcing knowledge and talent-based growth. Moreover the fact that Helsinki is the capital of Finland it ought to include national perspectives to its strategies and actions. According to these stakeholder expectations, Helsinki should develop itself into being more communicative and active as well as more capable to attract talented workforce. (Elinkeinostrategia 2007, 10.)

## **5.4 Organic brand building**

The interview with Holstila gave substantial perspective to the whole city branding discussion. Helsinki has no brand, not even a brand strategy, he says. Comedia's report reveals concerns in regard to institutions that seem to be too complacent about attracting and retaining talent. The research suggests that this might be due to the belief in continuous success, or to the lack of acceptance towards the importance of the attractiveness factor. This statement does indeed support the fact that Helsinki has no brand strategy yet. Some kind of lack of motivation towards collaboration and commitment to an attractiveness agenda is apparent in the collected data.

Even though Cantell talks about a Helsinki brand, or something that resembles a brand, as mentioned above Holstila clearly states that Helsinki has no planned brand. Still, Holstila admits that the ministry of foreign affairs is pressuring the Helsinki city council to put up a brand committee. Moreover the fact that Finland has had a brand committee for the country brand also pressures Helsinki to do the same; especially while Helsinki is the capital of such a small country as Finland. Holstila doesn't see city branding as something that can be put up like a sticker; instead it grows organically from within the city itself. The citizens and visitors build the brand and the city authorities can only serve as an enabler. The media and the growing amount of bloggers are bigger influencers than the city administration. This point of view shows a flexible and open attitude towards building a Helsinki brand that the citizens can relate to. Holstila and Cantell state that time has changed since the 90's and the Nokia boom. Combining technology, arts, culture and creativity is the key to long term success and competitiveness today. That is something that is valued within the city authorities. According to Cantell this also appears in the way Helsinki is governed. The city governance is slowly starting to resemble a corporation style. Bureaus seek to unify their strategies and coordinate some of their actions in order to focus on one shared aim. Cantell points out that under the time of the current mayor Jussi Pajunen, the idea of having one strategy and avoiding conflicting goals within different bureaus has strongly been highlighted. He

sees this matter being supportive to the idea of building a cohesive city brand. Cantell points out that Helsinki is not seeking to look like London or Stockholm, it clearly is reaching for its own identity.

Although the data collected didn't reveal a straightforward city brand strategy, themes and features presented in 5.2 seem to form a basis for a brand identity and image. Events especially seem to play a leading role in Helsinki's image building. This appears in the way Holstila sees actions more important than a beforehand planned brand image. For Helsinki, these actions seem indeed to be events. For instance hosting the Eurovision contest in 2007 was an action that gave the impression of a fun city, which led the city council to come up with the title, "Fun City" for their strategy instead of discussing a brand. The Eurovision 2007 hosting is mentioned in Comedia's report as well; it demonstrates how well the event was put together. In this particular case Helsinki showed its ability to break down organizational barriers within the city and therefore deal with multifaceted problems in a flexible and effective way. The WDC 2012 mega-event sets a new motivational milestone for the city to both further develop its internal structures and create images in citizens', visitors' and investors' minds. That is why integrating mega-event hosting into the city's strategy is valued within the economic development strategy as well. Profiling itself as a city full of events is an essential tool for Helsinki's organic city branding. This is something that Helsinki plans to show in its marketing and communication, through making joint efforts together with the Helsinki metropolitan area marketing company. (Elinkeinostrategia 2007, 19.) Helsinki's approach towards its eventfulness seems to be clear however some sort of inconsistency came out during the interview with Aalto. The interviewee emphasized that the WDC 2012 mega-event is not an event year with the goal to put up as many events as possible. This shows that the City of Helsinki and the WDC 2012 organization have differences in their strategies. This point will be further discussed in the conclusions under the subject of co-branding.

Holstila mentions that it is challenging to find branding pillars that would suit all target groups. Helsinki's city marketing delineates four groups: the citizens, the local companies, the people outside the city and the companies outside the city; and all of these groups have their own wish list. Holstila therefore sees that the city cannot start unifying all of its communication and marketing. Nonetheless, he sees the WDC event as an exceptional opportunity for moving closer to a planned city brand. Emphasizing the thought of design being found in almost any aspect of life, Holstila sees it as a theme that a very vast audience can relate to. Therefore it is a special time to test the attractiveness of such a theme for future city branding strategy guidelines. Holstila states that the pressure to have a city brand guideline in the future concretizes in the WDC event. More findings related to the WDC event will be discussed in the following paragraph.

The data collected shows that Helsinki is taking steps in identity building and organizational renewal, however as mentioned previously, the public sector still struggles with rigid and inflexible structures that set barriers to diversity, creativity and innovation. Holstila also states that it is a challenge for municipalities to figure out what to do in practice in order to attract creative people; it is not solely about visiting art exhibitions and concerts. The approach towards an organic brand building strategy correlates well with creative city factors however the public sector seems to slow down the actual implementation of it.

## 5.5 WDC Helsinki 2012 – broadcasting the creative city

The former CEO, Leena Strömberg, of Ornamo, an association of industrial art, was the one to make the first move towards applying for the WDC title. Then came Helena Hyvänen, director of Helsinki's art university TAIK, whose husband Tapani Hyvönen is a member of the Icsid board. These people were key in making the city of Helsinki see an opportunity in the WDC bid. In December 2008, Pekka Timonen, former cultural director and Eero Holstila, interviewed for this thesis, decided to bid for the WDC 2012 title. The decision to apply was somewhat made at the last minute. The application was to be ready in March, which left a relatively short schedule to make a winning application. The program presented in the application had to be credible and had to spread design into all branches of life. The renewal of public service and the solving of tricky societal problems through design had to be included in the plan. The application of 150 pages was written, however Holstila states that it was not enough; the application had to also look like a design product. That is where the design company Kokomo Oil stepped into the picture. The application was then sent and later in 2009 Helsinki was elected.

According to Holstila all of this boils down to four motivational factors to why Helsinki ended up as WDC 2012. Firstly, applying for the nomination gave a chance to bring together creative industries and the innovation environment to push towards a *common goal*. Second it set a good basis for *renewing the public governance patterns* and improving the city's service and institutional design. Additionally, presenting the opportunity to get international attention to broadcast the thought of being an attracting city was a motivational factor. Last, the long-run increase of competition between the companies of various localities was a motivational factor to apply for the WDC 2012 title. The number of various company partners of the WDC Helsinki 2012, bringing 4 to 5 million Euros for the year shows that companies see themselves getting something out of it.

The interview with Aalto, marketing and communications manager of WDC Helsinki 2012 foundation, focused around the World Design Capital mega-event and its dimensions. First of all the time factor was brought up; the short term nature of the event sets challenges. For such a large scale event a two-year preparation period is short, moreover the numerous parties involved create a wide *network* that requires extensive effort to reach a common goal. A point that arose in the interview with Aalto is namely the network nature of the mega-event. Initially, Helsinki applied for the WDC title on its own, however when the nomination was received the cities of Espoo, Vantaa, Kauniainen and Lahti joined as well. Other stakeholders such as the Aalto University, the Helsinki University and various ministries are also involved. The WDC event has companies from various industries as partners for the year, which according to Holstila demonstrates how creativity goes through all kinds of companies, including technology companies, for instance KONE OY. Wanting to be part of the WDC year shows how creativity and design doesn't only relate to cultural industries; the concept reaches out through all industries. This forms a vast network that requires intensive coordination and leadership. This is one of the reasons a separate foundation, the International Design Foundation, was put up to handle these synergies more efficiently.

Open Helsinki – Embedding design in life is the core of the WDC Helsinki 2012 mega-event brand. In the foreword of the WDC application, Pajunen describes Helsinki as an *open city ready for renewing and creative thinking*. He calls Helsinki as a pocket-sized metropolis, with its million inhabitants, and brings out this scale factor as being one of the main reasons to be open to the world. Closing itself from the rest of the world would lead to nothing. He sees buildings and infrastructure as just a skeleton to support the actions and needs of the inhabitants. In Pajunen's opinion people make the city through their actions. Embedded design is a relatively new word pair and has no established interpretation yet. It ties design to innovation, it tests the limits of design and seeks to broaden its meaning closer to the society. *Expanding the understanding of the concept of design* is namely one of the main communication and marketing targets mentioned by Aalto. In addition Aalto mentions making the citizens participate in developing their own living environment and getting international media attention as two other meaningful goals. The main target group is the citizens of Helsinki and the idea is to introduce design as a wider concept linking it to the design of services and systems. The interviewer asked about the influences of the creative city talk on the themes of the WDC events. Aalto stated that she didn't know what came from what, however she admitted that the creative talk had strongly been on the surface during the past years and that it strongly shows in the WDC strategy as well. The interviewee mentions Helsinki's 2011 nomination as the most livable city of the world by the Monocle magazine, as a correlating theme to the WDC goals. It is about people enjoying living in Helsinki whatever happening takes place; it is about the holistic experience. Helsinki's WDC

application also brings emphasis to the benchmark healthcare and schooling systems; good design reaches all branches of everyday life. Later in the interview Aalto states that the WDC strategy is all the way creative city strategy.

This brings us to the next point shortly mentioned previously; the fact that the WDC Helsinki 2012 mega event is not an event year. The key is to cultivate a new way of thinking within the citizens and broadcast it to the world. The international media has grabbed on to this point of view better than the domestic media; for them it is interesting to follow Helsinki as a place that approaches city development from a non-conventional way, whereas the Finnish media has put an emphasis on the eventfulness of the year 2012. Many events and galas have indeed been planned for the year however the main idea of WDC goes beyond that. Aalto compares it to a societal campaign like a cancer campaign; raising awareness and getting the citizens to participate in the making of a *pleasant city* of their own is the core. A good example of attracting the citizens to participate in city planning and conceptualizing is the open image workshop, held on the annual Helsinki Day in 2011, which invited all citizens to come and draw and build the WDC Helsinki 2012 image. This brings us to the idea of openness and embedding design in life.

What seems to be unclear even after the interviews is how the effects and benefits of hosting a mega-event such as the WDC Helsinki 2012 are measured. Each interviewee talked about long-term effects, effects that reach further than the actual year 2012. Aalto and Holstila both mentioned tourism flow as one way to measure effects. Holstila mentioned tourism as looking straight into a mirror; it tells you how attractive your city is. Aalto states that the European Culture Capital nomination increases tourism in the host city of an average of 13%. She mentions WDC Seoul 2010 as having had a 10% growth in tourism and WDC Torino 2008 an 8% growth. Other development measurement tools were not mentioned in any of the interviews.

## 5.6 Summary of key empirical findings

Summing up the key findings of the empirical research it appears that Helsinki has given some thought to the creative city thinking. However, **ambiguity** and carefulness with the use of the terms of creative city and class is sensed throughout the interviews.

Certain features appear to characterize Helsinki as a city that keeps up with time. First of all **openness** was found to be a prominent value for the city. Openness to new ideas, new ways of thinking and talent were emphasized. Moreover openness towards its own citizens was something strongly present in the goals of the WDC strategy. A somewhat customer oriented approach was apparent through for example, the workshops inviting citizens to design the WDC image.

**Knowledge and talent** came out as strong virtues for Helsinki. The renowned educational system and the merger of the business, technology and design and arts within the Aalto University were seen as essential factors in winning the WDC bid. Moreover the clustering of knowledge and talent in certain areas of the city was notified in all of the research materials.

In the light of the empirical findings Helsinki is seen as a good city to live in. **Security and wellbeing** are characteristics appeared widely. Healthcare is available to everyone and wide area **regeneration** projects take place in the city in order to offer more housing and office space. New areas are being built especially by the sea, not only high-end apartments but also more affordable ones. Helsinki's infrastructure is also valued, and is seen as something to develop even further.

Nonetheless, the city's organizational structures were stated to be stiff. **Lack of cooperation and communication** within the city authorities as well as in the private-public sector dimension was revealed. Additionally, it was speculated that the city might not entirely understand the importance of the attractiveness factor, with regard to immigrants, talent or investors.

One of the main findings of this thesis is the fact that the city of Helsinki has **no branding strategy** whatsoever. It appears that Helsinki aims at growing through actions and through its citizens; this was referred to as organic growing and image building. It is however admitted that pressure to form a city brand board is increasing and that conscious planning might take place in the near future.

Attracting major international and national **events** is however a clear strategy for Helsinki. Profiling itself as a place where there is always something happening is the aim. The large amount of substantial events to be held in 2012, shows that achievements have been made in this field. This sets Helsinki in a spotlight and attracts valuable media attention. The WDC Helsinki 2012 event is a mega-event that reaches for long-term effects starting from changing the way citizens perceive design and getting them to participate in the development of their own city.

Findings about areas of amelioration were made in the light of stakeholder perception listed in the economic development strategy of 2007. Deeper and more active **cooperation** between the city and its stakeholders as well as lowering the level of bureaucracy were two main points mentioned. Enhancing **flexibility**, efficiency and openness were stated as areas to develop. The findings show that the WDC Helsinki 2012 has formed a vast network of stakeholders. The city together with the International Design Foundation, have tied **partnerships** with various companies from different industries, not to forget the intensive cooperation with the Universities of Helsinki. Moreover within the WDC frames the flexibility and efficiency issue has been resolved by putting up the aforementioned International Design Foundation in order avoid bureaucratic obstacles and allow flowing and fast decision-making.



## 6 CONCLUSIONS

### 6.1 Discussing the empirical findings in the light of the theory

Helsinki and Finland as country have gotten attention around the world; ranking high in competitiveness, livability, education and now in design parameters, Helsinki shows itself as a city that keeps up with the course of development. As the industrial economy is slowing down, a new creative age has stepped in. Human capital; as in talent, creativity and knowledge have become crucial factors in this new economy.

It is apparent that the city of Helsinki has been following the discussion about the creative city with interest. Mirroring the findings to the definition of the creative class by Florida similarities arise. Helsinki's economic development strategy for instance, mentions the importance of the creative industries and knowledge intensive services, which by description resemble Florida's definition of a creative class. The fact that a study on Helsinki's creative class, analyzing the creative professionals and the super creative core in the light of Florida's theories, was executed by Helsinki Urban Facts shows that the city is indeed interested in this ideology at hand. It is clear that Helsinki is working on becoming a more open and creative city; working with Landry's consulting company, Comedia, a leading expert in creative city building, for many years shows Helsinki is motivated to reach new solutions to growth. However carefulness towards the use of the terms of creative industries, creative city and class was apparent in the data collected. The interviewees wanted to avoid excessive classifying as; according to them almost any line of profession requires creativity. The recognition of the importance of creativity is there, however the data also supports the vagueness towards the meaning and definition of the creative city notion, which was apparent in the theory as well. Attitudes towards the creative class notion were the strongest; Holstila didn't want to use it at all. This supports the theoretical findings that include various definitions and views on what a creative city really is. Florida's creative class notion has generated critique in literature and in the data collected for this thesis. Even though theory seeks to explain the ideology through lists of characteristics and indexes, Helsinki keeps its approach more holistic, avoiding sticking to terms that might divide opinions.

According to theory, the creative city is open, tolerant, and dynamic and offers a pleasant and safe living environment. These features ought to be embraced and valued if a city seeks to profile itself as a creative city; the box 'What we want to be' in Figure 7 gathers these factors together. These are features that are strongly visible in the findings of this research. Compared to Florida's ideology, Helsinki takes a broader approach to the creative city talk. Florida believes that the key is in attracting talent and knowledge from outside the city whereas Helsinki seems to focus on internal virtues first and then

on attracting talent. This approach is closer to Landry's view that values social and political creativity as well. This relates to the strategic goals of the WDC Helsinki 2012 that seek to widen the understanding of design and creativity as a holistic tool to reach everyday solutions.

Looking at the more practical features of a creative city certain points of the theory were visible in the empirical findings. First of all, clustering and concentration were seen as favorable for creative thinking. Helsinki being the capital of a rather small and geographically isolated country, many industries concentrate in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The concentration of creative industries was especially brought up in the empirical findings; Helsinki containing an estimate of a third of all of Finland's creative industry jobs. On a smaller scale, concentration is visible through the clustering of certain fields of knowledge in specific areas. The area of Arabianranta containing a wide group of arts and design students or Otaniemi containing mainly technology students are examples of these. Despite this type of clustering Helsinki has acknowledged the value within cross-disciplinary learning, which is a feature brought up in the theoretical part of this thesis as well. The value of the Aalto University for instance, was strongly highlighted in the empirical findings and was revealed to be one of the main reasons Helsinki was nominated WDC 2012. The conversion of old harbor areas into modern living spaces and the regeneration of former factories into cultural centers also show creativity within city management.

When discussing the city's organizational culture, room for development shows. The theory emphasizes flexible and open city management, however bureaucracy and the lack of collaboration between bureaus still seem to set some obstacles for a more entrepreneurial Helsinki. Weakness in communication with various stakeholders is also pointed out in findings. Lack of communication and collaboration keeps ideas from unifying into synergetic solutions that would better fit today's way of life. As stated in the findings, affairs run easily in Finland and Helsinki; good infrastructure, an advanced social system, successful schooling, competitive technology companies and a lot more. Nonetheless, it seems that affairs are excessively well organized and predictable. According to Hospers creativity grows organically and unexpected encounters are valuable for this kind of growth. Uncertainty and times of crisis are seen as opportunities favoring innovations and growth. Being so well managed, the city of Helsinki isn't easily exposed to uncertainty, which according to the theory might be an effective trigger to growing as a creative city. This default brings us back to Figure 7 and its box of 'brand building' where features enabling creative city brand building were gathered from the theory part. Communication and networking are part of these features and according to the findings are the main areas that Helsinki needs to work on in order to start forming a cohesive city brand. The WDC 2012 mega-event is seen an enabler in this issue. Having tied numerous partnerships with companies, universities and opening the discussion

between the citizens and the city has enabled steps towards a more entrepreneurial and open city management. The findings show that Helsinki has recognized and planned to work on its lack of bureaucratic flexibility, however at this moment it still is a feature that slows down policies encouraging creative city leading. In this respect the WDC 2012 year serves as a suitable tool (see Figure 7) to rectify Helsinki's flaws.

One of the main findings was that Helsinki has no brand board that is, no brand strategy either. City branding having been such a popular subject within literature and its practices being adopted by many cities around the world, this finding was surprising, especially in the case of Helsinki which is considered a dynamic city that keeps up with the course of time. In this regard Helsinki is lagging behind at least London and Amsterdam that both have city brand strategies. This brings us to question whether Helsinki solely focuses on promotional actions instead of building a more coherent and lasting brand image. This was a point brought out in the theory part of this study; confusion within drawing the line between promotional actions and actual branding strategies was stated. The goals and values of the WDC Helsinki 2012 negate this question due to its holistic approach to developing Helsinki. As the findings show the WDC 2012 is not primarily about organizing events and happenings during one year, it is about changing the citizens' way of thinking and involving them in the movement of ameliorating their own living environment. This looks like an approach starting from the inside rather than the outside; emphasizing identity building instead of promotional event organization.

Looking at the target groups of city branding, presented in the theory, they were divided into external and internal groups. Helsinki seems to put an emphasis on the internal target group. This is something also visible in the views of the city strategies that believe in organic brand building. This mindset can be related to Kavartzis' division between unintentional and intentional image communication. It looks like Helsinki is closer to unintentional communication, relying on word of mouth and the natural course of living and happening. However it is not to be ignored that one of the main communicational and marketing aims of the WDC years is to get media attention; naturally Helsinki also seeks to attract foreign visitors and companies by broadcasting its WDC nomination around the world, however the starting point is within the internal city. The data revealed that the message or slogan of the WDC 2012 event, Open Helsinki – Embedding design in life, has gone through to foreigners better than to the inhabitants of Helsinki. This brings us to the place branding triad (Figure 6) where the interrelations between the message, the audience and the physical environment. The fact that the message or the city of words hasn't gotten to the internal market as efficiently as expected refers to a state of unbalance within Helsinki's city branding triad. In order to avoid the slogan being just a set of words instead of being a tool to mold identity and image, it ought to be more closely linked to the physical features and actions of Helsinki. This brings us to the importance of image and identity in city brand building. The strategy

seems to be focusing on Helsinki's existing qualities and identity first and then through concrete actions communicate an image attracting talent, visitors and investors from the outside.

The data collected showed that Helsinki wants to profile itself as a fun city with things to do every day, this is where the events, small block events or global events as the Eurovision, play a meaningful role. The concrete actions, mentioned above, are the events that Helsinki organizes itself or applies to host and they might help get a more balanced state in the city branding triad. These events are an effective mode of communication, especially the WDC 2012 nomination, which brings attention on a global scale. This seems to be a city strategy and a good basis for city brand building. Helsinki sees that actions instead of a slogan and a forced brand speak for themselves. This supports the idea of letting the city brand form organically.

Stakeholder dynamics were highlighted in the theory; in order to start building a brand the visions and needs of various groups ought to be aligned. Sharing a common identity between the city authorities and different city users is essential in city branding. The findings show that this is a challenge for Helsinki; however the theme of design in the WDC 2012 year presents itself as a strong candidate as being a theme that a vast group of audience could relate to. At this time being, Helsinki seems to be in a preliminary phase of city branding. It is focusing on image building and especially identity building through depicting and highlighting its current virtues. Helsinki relies on stories and events talking for themselves and organically building up themes that start to resemble brand cornerstones. It may be asked whether Helsinki already has a brand even though it officially doesn't have any. The city sees however the WDC 2012 year as a strong enabler in the development of its city brand.

Mega-events are mostly seen as one time opportunities to showcase a city to the world. In the best cases benefits stretch out through many years after the event takes place. That is a chance strongly acknowledged by Helsinki in regard to the WDC Helsinki 2012. The nomination year is comparable to a brand ambassador representing Helsinki to its users and visitors. As mentioned a couple of times previously the year is not about putting up events, it is about the presentation of a whole new way of thinking. This hits right in the core of creativity; introducing new ways of seeing and doing things in order to develop and grow in as many fields as possible. Co-branding a mega-event and a city was discussed in the theory part; suggesting that the event in question ought to be profiled to fit the city brand, in order to reach maximum synergies and benefits. In the case of Helsinki, having no official branding strategy, the settlement appears to be reversed; the WDC 2012 mega-event is seen as a stepping board towards a planned city brand. The findings reveal that the event is an opportunity to answer the increasing pressure towards having a city brand board. The theme of design is considered universal

and as something the majority of people can relate to, which is a good starting point to transfer images and stories onto a city brand.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how Helsinki brands itself as a creative city through an international mega-event. First, factors behind the creative city concept were to be outlined and then mirrored to the city of Helsinki. The theory part discussed various views and definitions of the creative city that were then discussed in the light of Helsinki. Findings show that the city fits many of the creative city characteristics. It is constantly trying to develop itself and acknowledges its flaws that slow down its development. The terminology around the creative city concept, especially the creative class was confusion and critique among the interviewees. The second sub-purpose of this study was to describe the city branding process. After presenting the relatively recent field of city branding from a theoretical perspective, the findings gave a straightforward answer to what Helsinki's city branding process looks like; the city has no official brand agenda. However the empirical analysis revealed features around identity and image building that are essential in city brand building. At the moment Helsinki is relying on organic brand building, where actions give the direction. It was however stated that pressure to develop a city brand strategy is growing. Deducing from this, Helsinki is taking small steps towards a city branding process. Finally, in order to answer the main purpose of this study, the role of the Helsinki WDC 2012 mega-event in the city's brand building process was evaluated. As there is no official city branding agenda the WDC 2012 nomination offers an exceptional opportunity to give Helsinki's brand building a start. In that sense, the year 2012 plays a meaningful role in building a stronger city identity and image. The WDC 2012 brand supports many of the creative city thoughts and plays an essential role in defining a common brand identity for Helsinki. All in all the goals of Helsinki WDC 2012 and the city itself seem to not only support each other but also support values essential to a creative city brand. Helsinki has no official brand and doesn't call itself a creative city, however this study shows signs of the city taking steps towards building a creative city brand with the help of the Helsinki WDC 2012 mega-event.

## **6.2 Suggestions for further studies**

The research field of this study is relatively new and therefore debates on definitions and practical guidelines were present in literature. The theoretical sources used in this study were mainly from the past decade and new articles and books were published all along the process of this study. This demonstrates that the theoretical fields of this study are constantly developing; therefore further studies are most likely needed.

This study brought together three concepts, the creative city, city branding and mega-events. In order to analyze these three fields and their interrelations within the scale of a Master's Thesis, limitations were set. It is undeniable that the research fields were only partially covered, especially in the empirical analysis. Therefore in order to increase the reliability of this study, each of these themes could be analyzed separately enabling a deeper analysis of data available.

Interviews with Finnish creative city and urban development experts, together with city strategy reports and follow-up reports would enable to better delineate how Helsinki sees the creative city concept and to what extent it seeks to develop itself as a creative city presented in literature. The branding dimension could be elaborated by studying the citizens' perceptions and needs towards Helsinki. This would support Helsinki's development to becoming more open and conscious of its identity and through that give pillars for a planned city brand. The results of this study show that the branding process of Helsinki is in a preliminary stage, therefore studies following the planning and implementation phases of a possible future brand would also give greater value to this thesis.

As this study was initiated in 2010, the effects and actual course of the Helsinki WDC 2012 year were not part of the research aims. In order to improve the reliability of this study and give a deeper understanding of the effects of the mega-event on Helsinki, a thorough follow-up of the nomination year would be in place. A study on achievements and failures would help the city to improve its actions in the future. Gathering material from different media to analyze the mega-events visibility and image would be a good way to support this type of study.

All in all, it can be stated that the subject of this study is current and under the spotlight. Each of the fields of research presented in this study divide into various branches that all need further research to clarify concepts and analyze outcomes through real-life case studies.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 Interview questions by themes

#### General questions:

- What does your job consist of?
- Into what direction has Helsinki grown during the past decade?
- Finland is a rather small country, How does that effect Helsinki as a capital?
- What is Helsinki's vision or goal at the moment?
- What kind of strategies support these goals?

#### The creative economy:

- How has Helsinki approached the creative city discussion? How does it appear in the citizens' life?
- Why would Helsinki consider being a creative city important?
- How would you define the creative city concept? The creative class?
- Can Helsinki be called a creative city?
- What does Helsinki's creative class consist of?
- How much of Helsinki's jobs are in the creative industry? How fast is this number going to grow?
- How does Helsinki attract people of the so called creative class?
- A creative city is often diverse, tolerant and vibrant. How does Helsinki communicate these features?
- Does Helsinki have some kind of a creative city committee?
- Music Hall, Guggenheim, Arts University?

#### City branding:

- How has Helsinki's city management style developed during the past years?
- Is it more entrepreneurial?
- How is Helsinki branded? Do you work with advertising agencies?
- How does city branding differ from the branding of a companies?
- What are the basic pillars of Helsinki's brand?
- How does Helsinki's brand differ from other city brands?
- How is the city marketed to the citizens? Foreigners?

- How does Helsinki attract talent and knowledge? Investors, inhabitants... What kind of marketing channels?
- How do the effects of the creative economy appear in the brand?
- What should Helsinki develop in order to be more competitive and creative?

**WDC- 2012:**

- What motivated Helsinki to apply?
- What does WDC 2012 mean to Helsinki?
- Is WDC 2012 part of Helsinki's branding strategy?
- How does it support the creative city concept?
- What expectations do you have for the year? Short-/ long term benefits?
- How do the citizens of Helsinki benefit from the nomination?
- How does the WDC 2012 program differ with regard to the citizens and foreigners?
- Has the city estimated some kind of financial benefit that ought to be generated from the WDC 2012 mega-event?
- Are there downsides to the nomination?
- To what extent does the WDC organization co-operate with the City of Helsinki?
- What type of strategy has been planned for the upcoming year?
- How does the WDC 2012 strategy correlate with Helsinki's city strategy? Are they designed to support each other?
- Has the WDC 2012 nomination brought new marketing or branding themes to the city?
- Do creative city themes appear in the WDC mega-event?
- What did you learn from the Turku Cultural Capital event?