



HELSINKI - RESPONSIBLE RECREATION

LIVING CITIES / 2

**REIMAGINING ARCHITECTURES
BY CARING FOR THE INHABITED MILIEUS**

27.3.-30.7.2023

Summary



Lagoons of the Villinki Island © Material Bank of Helsinki, 110th Street Productions

THE SITE'S PARTICULAR CHALLENGES WITH REGARDS THE THEME

Helsinki's eastern archipelago is a unique maritime milieu with valuable natural and cultural-historical sites and varying landscapes. The public use of the eastern archipelago has so far been low compared to the number of islands and the extent of the area, but in the future new landing sites for boats of different sizes and related structures, constructions and buildings will be an essential part of promoting the general recreational use of the archipelago and improving its services and accessibility.

The challenge is to improve the recreational use of the islands while repairing the damaged and worn out natural areas and enhancing biodiversity - and protecting vulnerable and sensitive nature and landscape from new wear caused by expanding recreational use.

Landing sites (the coastal areas suitable for landing and arriving to an island by various modes of movement, like boats, water buses and canoes) should also be social meeting places where different user groups share the same areas and functions, benefitting from their closeness. Building conditions on islands and in other coastal areas create challenges for the proposed structures, which should enhance the values and characteristics of different islands and provide a holistic solution for the responsible recreation in the eastern archipelago.

THE SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS OF THE CITY

Besides the docks, jetties and pontoons needed for archipelago water traffic, small boats, paddlers and rowers, other elements need to be located within the vicinity of the landing sites include for example: cafes, kiosks, saunas, barbeque shelters, fireplaces and firewood storages, toilets and waste containers, and equipment to routes and trails such as info boards, signs, fences and duckboards. The goal of the competition is to conceive a design concept and an architectural system for these diverse elements which can be easily adapted to various sites and situations, and can be tested on different kinds of pilot sites. The system should be flexible and simple enough in order to be easily expandable and relocatable, and the visual concept should reflect the spirit of Helsinki archipelago.

- **How to improve the services and accessibility of the archipelago while considering the characteristics of local culture and nature?**
- **How to encourage the city residents & visitors towards more responsible maritime recreation by means of architecture and new structures, constructions, buildings and services?**
- **How can recreational structures guide visitors of different skill levels to act responsibly on the islands and increase their environmental awareness?**

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0. / Competition information

CALENDAR 2023

27 March: Launch of the competition on the European website and the opening date for registrations

4 April: Kickoff event 9:00-10:00, see european.fi

11 May: Site visit, see european.fi

2 June: Deadline for submitting questions on the sites and rules

16 June: Deadline for answers to the questions on the sites and rules

30 July: Deadline for submitting documents

31 July: Publication of a temporary listing of submitted projects on the European website

4 August: Publication of the definitive listing of submitted projects

Aug./Sept. All the entries to Finnish sites will be displayed anonymously after the first jury meeting on www.european.fi, dates TBA.

4 December 2023: Announcement of the results on european-europe.eu and european.fi

December 2023: National prize-giving ceremony in Helsinki

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS / UPDATE OF MATERIAL

Please use and check the forum online: european-europe.eu

COMPETITION RULES

european-europe.eu

NATIONAL JURY

- **Anssi Lassila (chairman)**, Architect (SAFA), Professor of Contemporary Architecture, University of Oulu, OOEPEAA Office For Peripheral Architecture
- **Elisa Lähde**, Professor of Landscape Architecture, Aalto University, Landscape Architect (MARK)
- **Pia Kuusiniemi**, Landscape Architect (MARK), LOCI Landscape Architects Ltd, President of the Finnish Association of Landscape Architects
- **Jonas Nordgren**, Architect MAA, SAR, Schauman & Nordgren Architects, Denmark
- **Dan Mollgren**, Architect (SAFA), Head of City Planning, City of Porvoo
- **Arto O. Salonen**, Professor of Sustainable Well-being, Department of Social Sciences, University of Eastern Finland
- **Helena Wessberg**, Urban Planning Strategist, Architect SAR/MSA, City of Stockholm, Sweden.

Site representative **Sofia Kangas**, landscape architect (MARK), will have a voting right in the first jury meetings.

Competition secretary: Kirsti Rantanen, general secretary of European Suomi Finland

SITE LOCATION

The islands of Vartiosaari, Villinki, Kotiluoto, Malkasaari and Pikku Niinisaari in the Eastern Archipelago, Helsinki.

SITE FAMILY

Living Cities - Let the birds sing!

SITE PROPOSED BY

City of Helsinki

SITE REPRESENTATIVE

Sofia Kangas, landscape architect (MARK), City of Helsinki, Urban Environment Division, Urban Space and Landscape Planning.

TEAM REPRESENTATIVE

Architect, landscape architect.

See the rules european-europe.eu.

EXPECTED SKILLS OF THE TEAM

Competitors are strongly encouraged to form multidisciplinary teams of architects and landscape architects, and other professionals from relevant fields such as engineering, art, sociology, geography, biology, environment and ecology, for example.

PRIZES

There will be a first prize of 12 000 € and a runner-up prize of 6 000 €. The jury can also award special mentions when appropriate (no reward). According to a decree by the Finnish Ministry of Finance, the prizes for the Finnish European 17 competition paid in Finland are tax free (www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/2022/20221137)

TYPE OF COMMUNICATION AFTER THE COMPETITION

Awarded teams will receive travel grants to attend the prize-giving ceremony and a kick-off seminar in Helsinki, as well as to the European International Forum of Results in the autumn 2024, dates and places TBA.

FURTHER MEASURES AFTER THE COMPETITION

The intention of the City of Helsinki is to commission the winner(s) to design the pilot site(s) at the level of landscape and construction design. When negotiating the follow-up commission, it must be noted that the working group has sufficient expertise and competence at its disposal for the implementation phase of the project and that the design costs remain reasonable.

General conditions for consulting KSE 2013 apply to the procurement of further work, with the exceptions of the City of Helsinki Urban Environment Division.

USAGE RIGHTS OF THE COMPETITION ENTRIES

All material submitted to the organisers becomes their property, including reproduction rights and research purposes. The intellectual property rights will remain the exclusive property of the author(s) of the entries. The organisers reserve the right to publish all the projects submitted to them. Projects are exhibited or published under the names of their authors after the official announcement of results.

The commissioned designer and the City of Helsinki have the right to use the themes and ideas of awarded or purchased proposals in accordance with the Finnish Copyright Act.

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.europan.fi, www.europan-europe.eu

ATTACHMENTS OF THE COMPETITION BRIEF

The competition documents consist of this brief and the following attachments:

- Guide map of Helsinki
- Base maps (pdf, dwg)
- Aerial photos
- Photos from the project and the reflection areas
- Video of the design areas (3 min)
- Detailed plan extracts

Helsinki Map Service <https://kartta.hel.fi/?setlanguage=en>

Including maps and data about different themes, such as:

- Aerial photographs
- Built cultural environments of national significance (RKY), areas and buildings protected by detailed plans and other cultural environments
- Nature reserves, protected habitats and other protected attractions
- Important bird areas and other valuable nature areas
- Network of urban forests and wooded areas and meadow network
- Threatened habitat areas
- Local ecologically significant marine underwater areas (PEMMA)
- Geotechnical maps

See also:

- Map Service: User Manual: <https://kartta.hel.fi/help/internet/en/>
- Helsinki Region Infoshare (HRI) service: https://hri.fi/en_gb/

Other source material and additional reading material (available in English)

- Helsinki Maritime Strategy 2030: <https://www.hel.fi/static/kanslia/elo/helsinki-maritime-strategy-2030.pdf>
- City of Helsinki: Assessment report 2020 (p. 83-87): Have the objectives of the City Strategy for a maritime Helsinki and the measures of the Helsinki Maritime Strategy 2030 been furthered? <https://www.arviointikertomus.fi/sites/default/files/pdf/en/Assessment%20Report%202020.pdf#page=83>

- LUMO programme: City of Helsinki Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2028 : <https://www.hel.fi/static/liitteet/kaupunkiymparisto/julkaisut/julkaisut/julkaisu-25-21.pdf>
- Weather and climate risks in Helsinki (Publications of the Urban Environment Division 2019:32) <https://www.hel.fi/static/liitteet/kaupunkiymparisto/julkaisut/julkaisut/julkaisu-32-19-en.pdf>
- 3D city models of Helsinki <https://kartta.hel.fi/3d/> (to change the language from Finnish to English, please choose "asetukset" → "Valitse kieli" → "English")

Other source material and additional reading material (available in Finnish only)

- Helsingin itäisen saariston hoito- ja kehittämissuunnitelma 2021-2030 (2021) <https://www.hel.fi/static/liitteet/kaupunkiymparisto/julkaisut/julkaisut/julkaisu-12-21.pdf>
- Helsingin merelliset huvilapuutarhat (2015) https://www.hel.fi/hel2/ksv/julkaisut/ymparisto/Helsingin_merelliset_huvilapuutarhat.pdf
- Vartiosaaren osayleiskaava Kaupunkisuunnittelu ja rakentaminen -verkkosivustolla: <https://www.hel.fi/fi/kaupunkiymparisto-ja-liikenne/kaupunkisuunnittelu-ja-rakentaminen/hae-suunnitelmia-ja-hankkeita/vartiosaaren-osayleiskaava>
- Vartiosaaren osayleiskaavan luonnos ja muu valmisteluaineisto: <https://paatokset.hel.fi/fi/asia/hel-2021-012184>
- Kotiluodon puutarhahistoriallinen selvitys ja kasvillisuusinventointi (2012): <https://www.hel.fi/static/liv/B45%20osa1.pdf>
- Muuttuva saaristo, mukautuvat suunnitelmat - Helsingin saariston systeemanalyysi ja adaptiivisen kehittämisen periaatteita (2022): https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/bitstream/handle/123456789/115056/master_Kangas_Sofia_2022.pdf
- Valtioneuvoston kansallinen virkistyskäyttöstrategia <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/164145>

In the garden of a villa, Vartiosaari. @ Private album / Rosenius



1. / Introduction



Kotiluoto swimming cabin. © City of Helsinki

1.1 COMPETITION TASK

The competition calls for new solutions for sustainable recreation both for the inhabitants of Helsinki and for tourists. The competition is looking for comprehensive thinking and concepts combining different planning and scale levels, as well as new ideas for an architectural system that can be implemented at different sites.

The task is to design a concept for landing sites (the coastal areas suitable for landing and arriving to an island by various modes of movement, like boats, water buses and canoes) and their surroundings for maritime recreation in the Helsinki archipelago, a unique milieu formed in the interactions between humans and nature. The new landing sites and related structures, constructions and buildings for maritime recreation will be an essential part of promoting the general recreational use of the archipelago and improving its services and accessibility in accordance with the objectives of Helsinki's Maritime Strategy. Despite their small size, much significance is concentrated in the landing places. They have traditionally been, and still are, natural nodes of services and different modes of transport and meeting points between the land and the Baltic Sea. In addition, they are important gateways to the islands, offering essential services for sustainable recreation.

The City of Helsinki's objective is to find new ideas for the development and implementation of the landing sites in the eastern archipelago. The competitors are expected to understand and show how the landing sites are linked to each other, and how the whole is more than the sum of its parts, creating an identity not only for individual islands but also for

the whole. Competitors are expected to come up with ideas with a multiscale and holistic approach, where the solutions range from the design of a single structure to island-specific general plans and all the way to the creation of a service concept that connects different recreation islands and shoreline areas. Competitors are encouraged to work in multidisciplinary teams, to find new perspectives and solutions to the sustainability challenges related to maritime recreation.

The objective is, that the new structures will form a coherent and functional totality that will be able to safeguard the diversity of the archipelago nature as well as offer the city residents opportunities to enjoy nature. The concept and the mix of its diverse elements should also be easily adaptable to different types of places and situations. In order to test and prove the flexibility and scalability of the proposal, the competitors are asked to present the concept on five pilot islands of different size, history, identity, possibilities and nature, all located in Helsinki's eastern archipelago.

In this task, ecological transformation can be interpreted in the ways of seeing nature and the preservation of natural values not only as part of planning task but also as the most critical starting point of planning when occupying new recreational areas on islands. Competitors are encouraged to explore how architecture, structures and services can encourage city residents to undertake recreational activities in a responsible way, creating new habitats of intertwined nature and people, where a vibrant nature supports the well-being of human beings.



Jetty. © Helsinki Material Bank / Jules Hatfield & Christine Williams, Helsinki Partners

1.2 THEME: LIVING CITIES

European 17 continues to develop the theme Living Cities of the previous E16 session, while emphasising the need for a profound change in the manner of envisioning projects in a context of ecological transition. This transition entails a transformation in the ways of thinking about and imagining the city and architecture. The aim is to explore the regenerative capacities of living milieus amidst new architectural, urban and landscape ecologies that attempt to overcome the opposition between nature and culture and anthropocentrism. The climate emergency, overexploitation, pollution, inequality and iniquity – all these ills, upheavals and disorientations demand actions of “care” that address the coexistence and interrelationship of all the elements of the living world, and thus mandate a radical shift in paradigm. Sensitivity, responsibility, and creativity are aspects of care and of interest in other beings.

Helsinki is in the sub-group Living Cities – Let the birds sing! together with the following sites: Barcelona (ES), Chiva (ES), Grenoble (ES), Groenewoud (NL), Guerande (FR), Ingolstadt (DE), Karmoy (NO), Larvik (NO), Le Palais (FR), Lochau (AT) Makarska (HR), Regensburg (DE), Rouen (FR) and Torrelevaga (ES).

How to integrate the presence of man (tourism, walking, cycling, resting, etc.) in a subtle and non-disruptive way on sites with mainly natural elements? How to reinforce the resilience and biodiversity of the environment?

Read more on the theme at: www.europan-europe.eu

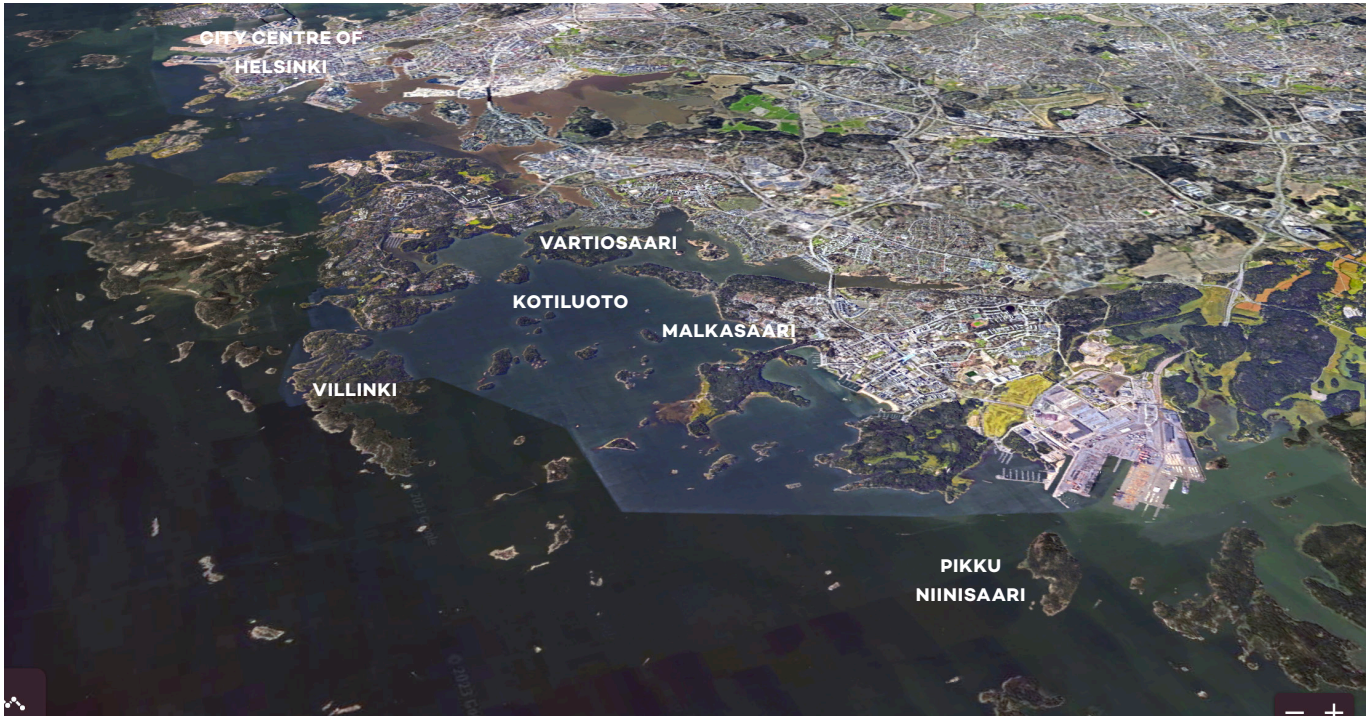
1.3 IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The competition is organized by the City of Helsinki in collaboration with European Finland. The competition is part of the broader, ongoing development work of the eastern archipelago and the implementation of the local detailed plan ratified in 2020. The intention of the City of Helsinki is to commission the winner(s) at the level of landscape and construction design. The commission will involve developing further the ideas in the winning competition proposal and to work with the city and the local residents to promote sustainable recreation in Maritime Helsinki. The goal is to build and test the winning design on one or more of the project sites.

Steam Boat “Östra Skärgården”, 1900-1920. © Espoo City Museum / Henrik Forsström



2. / Site information



Eastern Archipelago of Helsinki and the five pilot sites. © GoogleMaps

2.1 HELSINKI AND EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO

Helsinki is the capital city of Finland as well as the country's most important centre for politics, education, finance, culture, and research. It is also the largest city, with a population of 659 000 inhabitants and in the greater metropolitan area over 1,5 million inhabitants. Helsinki is also marketed as a nature and bird capital. The city's inhabitants are always close to real nature, as 40 percent of the city consists of green areas, along with 130 km of seashore open to all.

There are hundreds of islands and islets in Helsinki. The presence of an archipelago next to a capital city is a rarity also internationally. Together with the "Green Fingers", a maritime entity of shorelines and islands creates the "Blue Palm" of Helsinki's green and recreational networks. In addition to recreational use by the city's inhabitants on weekdays and weekends, the islands are also suitable as destinations for sustainable tourism, such as staycations. Special characteristics and attraction factors of the Helsinki archipelago include its marine and refreshing climate, the unique archipelagic nature and cultural history, the communities of islanders, authenticity, exoticism, and novelty, as well as calmness, quietness and the sense of both isolation and freedom. Even moving by water and the moments just before arriving at the destination can be considered as memorable experiences.

Green and maritime Helsinki: <https://www.hel.fi/static/liitteet/kaupunkiymparisto/julkaisut/esitteet/esite-01-18-en.pdf>

With the increasing level of public awareness about the archipelago, Helsinki's growing population trend, and the post-

pandemic popularity of local recreation areas, the pressure to use nature areas has also grown. Careful land use planning and structures that support recreation and other services can guide the use of nature areas and curb the effects of the kind of recreational use that erodes nature.

According to the Helsinki City Strategy (Helsinki City Strategy 2021-2025), the aim is that "Helsinki will continue to boldly develop its maritime environment with improvements to connections, waterfronts, jetties and base camps, as well as support for the sector's entrepreneurs. Helsinki has a responsibility to care for the Baltic Sea and its shoreline, as well as to reduce maritime emissions." The city's operations are also guided by the Maritime Strategy 2030, whose goals include, among other things, that maritime services and recreational opportunities are available to everyone, and that Helsinki treasures its marine nature.

Helsinki Maritime Strategy 2030: <https://www.hel.fi/static/kanslia/elo/helsinki-maritime-strategy-2030.pdf>

Helsinki's eastern archipelago is a unique maritime milieu with valuable natural and cultural historical sites and varying landscapes, from the sheltered inner archipelago to the barren and open outer archipelago. Compared to Helsinki's western archipelago and its historical fortress islands popular with tourists, the use of the eastern archipelago is more focused on outdoor activities and small-scale recreation. However, the public recreational use of the eastern archipelago has so far been low compared to the number of islands and the

extent of the area. Two of the main challenges has been poor accessibility and the lack of services, and the vicious circle formed by them. Private boating or kayaking is often the only way to access the area's public recreational islands. In addition, some of the islands do not have public jetties or other places suitable for landing.

2.2 LANDSCAPE AND NATURE

The ground of the islands is largely rocky and firm, even outside the areas of exposed rock. The effects of the last ice age can be seen in the eastern archipelago in numerous ways: the smooth glaciated granite rocks of the archipelago have been ground by the continental ice sheet and the large erratic boulders and boulder fields were transported by the ice. Since the retreat of the edge of the continental ice sheet, land uplift in the area has continued until the present day (currently lifting by about 2.5 mm per year). The smallest and lowest islets of the eastern archipelago have only been above sea level for a few hundred years. In the future, however, sea level rise is estimated to be greater than the land rise.

The landforms of the eastern archipelago are varied. The highest points of the eastern archipelago are about 25 metres above sea level, but there are also very low-lying and gently sloping islands in the area. Shore types vary from steep rocky shorelines to shallow smooth granite rocks and from natural sand beaches to boulder fields. Often the southern shores of the islands are more open due to the erosion by coastal forces. The average depth of water in the inner bays is only a few metres, but in the archipelago zone it varies from 10 to 20 metres. The difference between the highest and the lowest measured water level is more than two meters. These sea level variations are mainly caused by wind and air pressure or the ice conditions in winter. In Finland, the tide has an effect of only a few centimeters.

The silhouette of the entire eastern archipelago is intact and in its natural state, which can be surprising for a coastal area in the capital region. The shorelines are also mostly in their natural state. The eastern archipelago is characterized by tree-covered islands and sea views punctuated by islands of different sizes and with different characteristics. The views of the area are defined by layering: there are islands near and far, but long vistas all the way out to the horizon are rarer. Some of the islands belong to the outer archipelago, where the islands typically are rocky, with few or no trees, have open sea views and an open horizon.

Despite its natural appearance, the eastern archipelago is also a cultural landscape. Human activity has affected, among other things, the plant species. The large gardens built in connection with summer villas were often designed by the most famous landscape architects of the time and were skilfully built with various stone structures. Some of the gardens are still in a good condition, while others have become overgrown or have essentially disappeared. However, many traces of these

latter gardens can still be found in the terrain, such as stone structures and old garden vegetation.

The varied soil and landforms of the eastern archipelago, the exceptionally long and strong human influence compared to other Finnish archipelago regions, as well as other circumstances have led to the formation of a rich and versatile archipelago nature, from the cultivated plant species of the fortress islands to areas with exceptionally untouched nature. The archipelago has, for example, more native plant species than elsewhere in Helsinki. The archipelago nature is often sensitive to wear, and wear and littering have become problems on some islands. The wear caused by outdoor activities is most pronounced in rocky areas and in the heath forests of the central parts of the islands.

The islands are mostly tree-covered, with forest types varying from dry pine forest on the rocky summits to lush spruce and common alder woods, and even outer archipelago groves. The birdlife of the eastern archipelago is very diverse: there are several valuable birding sites in the area due to both the abundant species of nesting birds and the abundant common basic species. The shallows of the archipelago also have resting places for migrating birds. Of the mammals, bats are the most notable. Also worth noting is the archipelago's underwater nature, such as fish spawning grounds and the presence of bladder wracks.

The quality of the sea water off Helsinki is affected by the general condition of the Gulf of Finland, the discharge areas of the region's wastewater, and the spring and autumn floods of the rivers. The sea water is eutrophic to some extent, and in the summer, when the sea water warms up, the blooming period of toxic blue-green algae prevents people from swimming.

2.3 CLIMATE AND SEASONALITY

The Finnish climate has four distinct seasons. The average temperature of Helsinki in July is +17 – +18°C and in February -4 – -5° C. Also, the differences in the amount of daylight between summertime and wintertime are great: in the wintertime, darkness falls early (around 15:30), whereas in the summertime the daylight lasts long into the night. Some winters the sea freezes, and some years it remains open. The route to Vuosaari Harbour is always kept open and ice-free.

The school summer holiday period, from June to mid-August, and especially the period after Midsummer, is the most active time for island excursions. In terms of nature values, especially spring and early summer is a sensitive time for the sustainability of the archipelago's recreational use. Birds nest around the period April-July. On the other hand, the upwelling and settling of sediments caused by the propeller currents of boats can make it difficult for algae to multiply in early summer. The amount of recreational use and the number of users vary, depending especially on the weather, because people like to



A jetty from the 1920's in Mustikkamaa Island. © Helsinki City Museum / Kalle Havas

visit the archipelago in sunny and suitably calm weather. For example, sunny summer weather, public water transport and new services can attract large numbers of new visitors to certain islands in a relatively short time. Also, the presence of blue-green algae and the overcrowding of the islands can affect people's decision to visit an island. In wintertime, when the sea freezes sufficiently for people to comfortably walk on it, new routes open up in front of the city, and some of the islands can be reached, for example, by walking, ice skating and skiing.

The prevailing direction of the wind is from the south-west, and even during the hottest heat waves in the city it is always fresh in the archipelago. Due to climate change, extremities such as heavier rains and stronger winds in the wintertime and hot, dry summers are to be expected in the future. Increased windiness due to climate change may hinder maritime recreation, such as boating and fishing. Even a short-term rise in the sea level above the usual range affects shoreline structures, saunas and other buildings built in low-lying places near the shore.

2.4 SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT AND SERVICES

The earliest settlements in the eastern archipelago were fishing settlements. Another feature that markedly shaped the built environment of the eastern archipelago occurred at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries with the era of villa construction on the islands: the capital's wealthy bourgeoisie and civil servants spent their summers in their villas in the archipelago, from

where they travelled to work on frequently running steamboats. For example, amidst the milieu on the island of Pikku Niinisaari one can see all the stages of the construction of the Helsinki archipelago, from the early settlement of the archipelago to the construction of modern summer villas. In addition, in the eastern archipelago there are buildings and structures built for the needs of the Finnish military, and they form a significant historical and military-historical building heritage. The way in which many islands were used during the villa era has now changed, but the logic of their land use still reflects the principle of villa life and travelling by steamboat.

Except for local, small-scale recreational services related to outdoor activities, the eastern archipelago mainly relies on mainland services for its public services. For that purpose, the public services and public transport of the city's eastern suburbs are made available. There are only a few private commercial tourism services, such as cafes, restaurants or accommodation in the eastern archipelago.

Water bus services are currently mainly operated by private entrepreneurs. The expenses of transportation, limited accessibility and timetables can limit the opportunities for visits. During the summertime, there is one route operating in the area of the eastern archipelago to some islands owned by the city and by the church. The island of Vartiosaari, for example, can be reached by a solar-powered ferry, financed with the help of project funding voted for by the residents. In the summertime, Finland's last shop boat also operates in the area, stopping at several islands.



Water bus arriving at Vartiosaari. © Helsinki Material Bank, 110th Street Productions

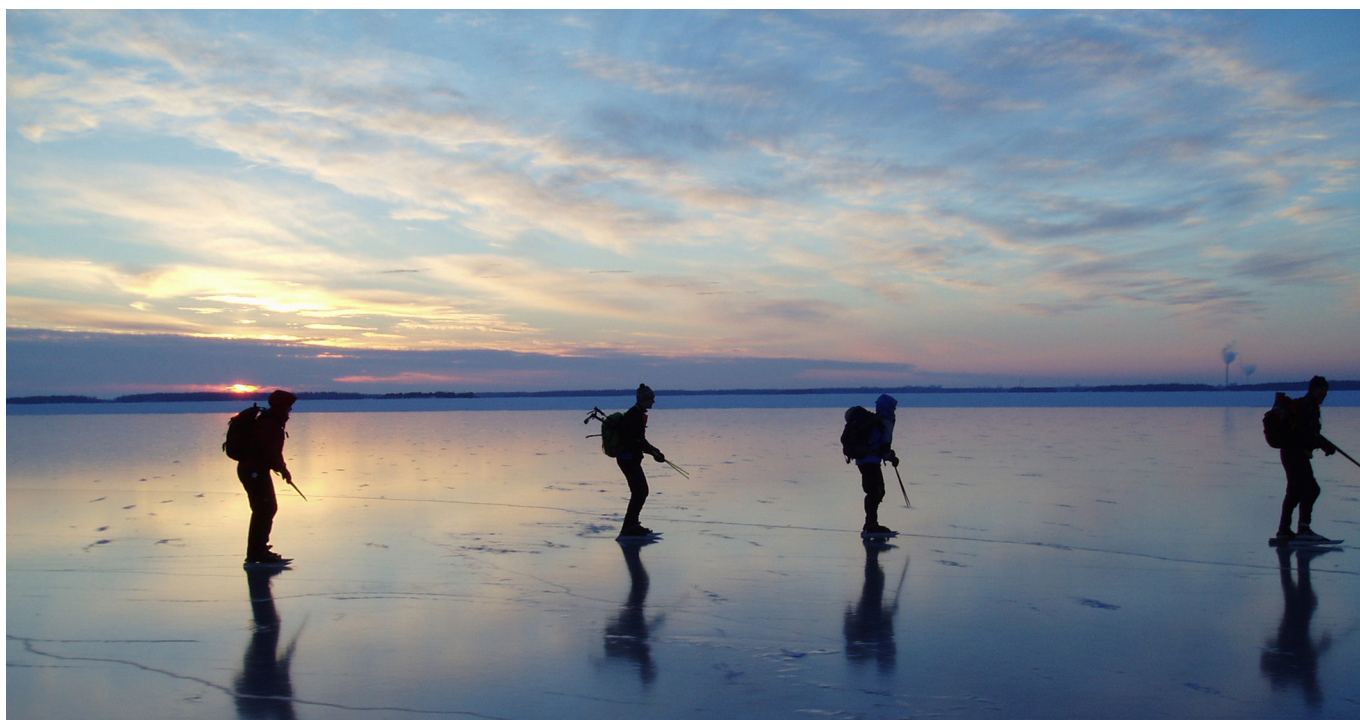
There are plenty of different stakeholders in the archipelago. The administration of the islands, including land ownership, rental and maintenance, is divided among several parties. In the City of Helsinki, two different divisions are currently responsible for the maintenance of different types of islands; in addition, some of the recreational islands open to the public are owned, for example, by the state or the Helsinki-Uusimaa Outdoors Association (UUVI). New cafes, saunas and accommodation facilities would probably be built and maintained by private entrepreneurs or communities/associations. Similarly, the operation of the buildings on the areas for tourism can be run by an operator other than the city. The city can steer the development of the archipelago in the desired direction through planning and the sustainability of procurement. But ultimately the entrepreneurs and communities that provide services and, above all, the visitors influence how sustainable or unsustainable the recreational use of the islands is through their own choices, behaviour and activities.

The aging of the Finnish population has increased the demand for barrier-free and easily accessible recreational islands and services. At the present moment, not all the city's inhabitants have the same opportunities to access the recreational islands. The lack of suitable landing places can prove an obstacle that limits the use of the archipelago, especially for novice boaters, people with reduced mobility, the elderly and those visiting with small children.

The central challenges when developing the archipelago are the diversified needs and wishes of the city's inhabitants, as well as the related conflicts in values and disagreements about what people want from the archipelago and how the desired result can be achieved. As recreational use increases, more and

more inexperienced hikers move around the archipelago, who do not necessarily know how to act sustainably on the islands. There are other user groups on the islands as well, not just occasional visiting hikers. Of the islands that are competition sites, Villinki in particular comprises plenty of privately-owned villas, and also Vartiosaari and Pikku Niinisaari have privately-owned and rented summer villas in addition to the buildings and recreational areas owned by the city. The villa on Kotiluoto, on the other hand, is rented out for the use of two private associations. On some of the recreational islands owned by the city, the boundaries between private and public space are unclear and the control of the use of the islands is insufficient, which can lead to conflicts between different user groups and usages.

The use of many of the islands, the number of visitors and, for instance, the profitability of business operations are limited by the small size of islands and the various operations' sensitivity to the weather conditions. The maintenance and construction of the island sites is more difficult and expensive compared to mainland sites, and the annual budget of the city for building new structures and maintaining them in natural areas is limited. Some of the islands currently do not have, for instance, a pontoon suitable for maintenance services. The lack of technical infrastructure also limits the use of the islands. Electricity, water and sewage pipes have been laid on some of the islands, but overall the recreational islands are outside the technical maintenance networks. Therefore, most of the villas rely on carried water, and the toilets are different types of dry toilets. On the other hand, for this very reason, the archipelago is very suitable for experiments with different off-grid solutions that are independent of technical maintenance networks.



Skating on sea ice. © Helsinki Material Bank, Timo Niukkanen

2.5 ZONING STATUS AND OTHER PLANS

A local master plan is currently being prepared for the island of Vartiosaari.

Regarding the other islands, a local detailed plan for the eastern archipelago was ratified in 2020. The aim of the local detailed plan is to open up the eastern archipelago to more versatile and open use, to improve access to the islands and to increase opportunities for recreation and tourism, considering the archipelago's natural and cultural-historical values and other special features. Marked in the local detailed plan are, among other things, hiking and outdoor recreational areas, conservation sites, landing sites, access routes and sites for the development of the islands' holiday and recreational use and archipelago tourism services.

The Development Plan for the Helsinki Eastern Archipelago, completed in 2021, deals with, among other things, improving the accessibility to the archipelago, the protection of landscape and cultural-historical values as well as nature values, the development of recreational services, routes and signposting, and the management and maintenance of the islands.

2.6 SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES OF THE MARITIME RECREATION

"Everyman's rights", or the freedom to roam, provide people with the freedom for hiking, and the islands are widely used for public recreation. This is a significant pull factor, but at the same time it means that the use and landing cannot be denied or limited by means of prohibitions and regulations, unless it is, for example, a nature reserve, a military area or the grounds belonging to a private villa. Because of this, there is a need to find ways to steer the use of the archipelago in a more sustainable direction, for instance through land use planning. For example, by constructing cooking shelters and barbeque areas, the number of unauthorized campfires can be reduced. And by offering firewood, damage to the nearby forest and cases of people making fires with rotting wood (valuable for biodiversity) can be reduced. By indicating suitable landing places, boaters and canoeists can be steered away from more sensitive shorelines and the erosion of coastal vegetation can be prevented.

By increasing the recreational use of the archipelago, the health and well-being of city residents can be promoted. On the other hand, excessive recreational use can exceed the island's ecological bearing capacity and reduce the island's attractiveness and recreational values. The nature of the archipelago is not necessarily adapted to human influence and can therefore be sensitive to various disturbances. That is why the use of the islands and its effects on nature must be monitored, and, if necessary, routes and the location of services must be changed if wear and erosion increase. The increasing number of visitors to nature sites requires responsible methods of operation and activities that support sustainable recreational use.



Trekkers. © City of Helsinki

Various questions related to the sustainability of the archipelago's recreational use are summarized below:

- How can the islands' recreational services better consider the needs of different groups of visitors?
- How to make the islands more accessible? How would it be possible to respond to different needs and make recreational activities on the island equally attainable for all city residents?
- How can recreational structures guide visitors of different skill levels to act responsibly on the islands and increase their environmental awareness? How can architecture promote a sustainable way of recreational use? How, for example, can the planning, implementation and maintenance of services and structures be used to curb littering, noise, congestion of services, erosion of vegetation and pollution of water bodies?
- What kind of structures are easily duplicated and cost-effective, and can be constructed with the limited budget reserved for marine areas, but still take into consideration the values and special features of the islands and make use of each island's own strengths? How can the structures be made such that instead of vandalism, they encourage visitors to take care of nature and common marine values?
- How can structures and services influence how different types of recreational users feel welcome on an island? How does one clarify the differences between private, semi-private, semi-public, and public, shared and common spaces and prevent city-owned recreational areas from being monopolized only by certain, limited user groups? What kind of purposes and operators could be on the islands, so that they would support the general recreational use of the islands as optimally as possible?
- How can a vulnerable and sensitive nature and landscape be protected from wear caused by recreational use? How can the goals and measures of biodiversity be integrated into the development of the archipelago (see the LUMO programme)? How can the archipelago adapt to the effects of climate change?
- How can one look at the islands and the archipelago as a whole, and not according to administrative boundaries?
- How can one improve the accessibility of the islands in a sustainable way? How can city inhabitants be encouraged to be active and use sustainable, emission-free forms of water transportation? How can one reduce the costs and carbon emissions of the construction and maintenance?

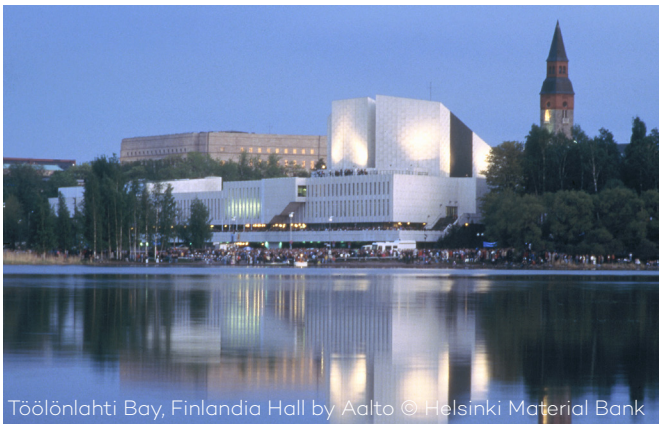
Photos from the City Centre of Helsinki



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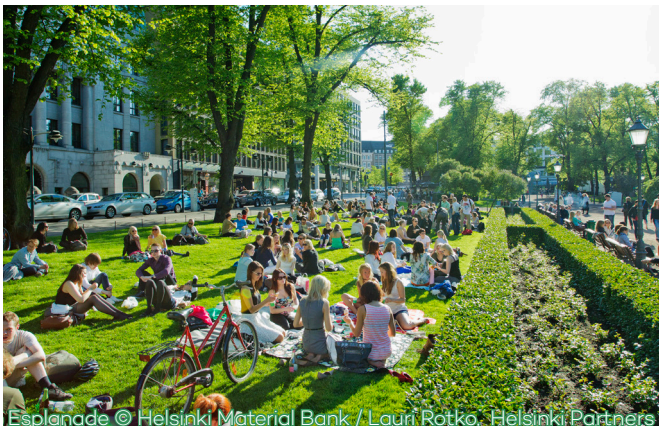
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Ice fishing © Petri Tapola



Midsummer bonfire © Helsinki Material Bank



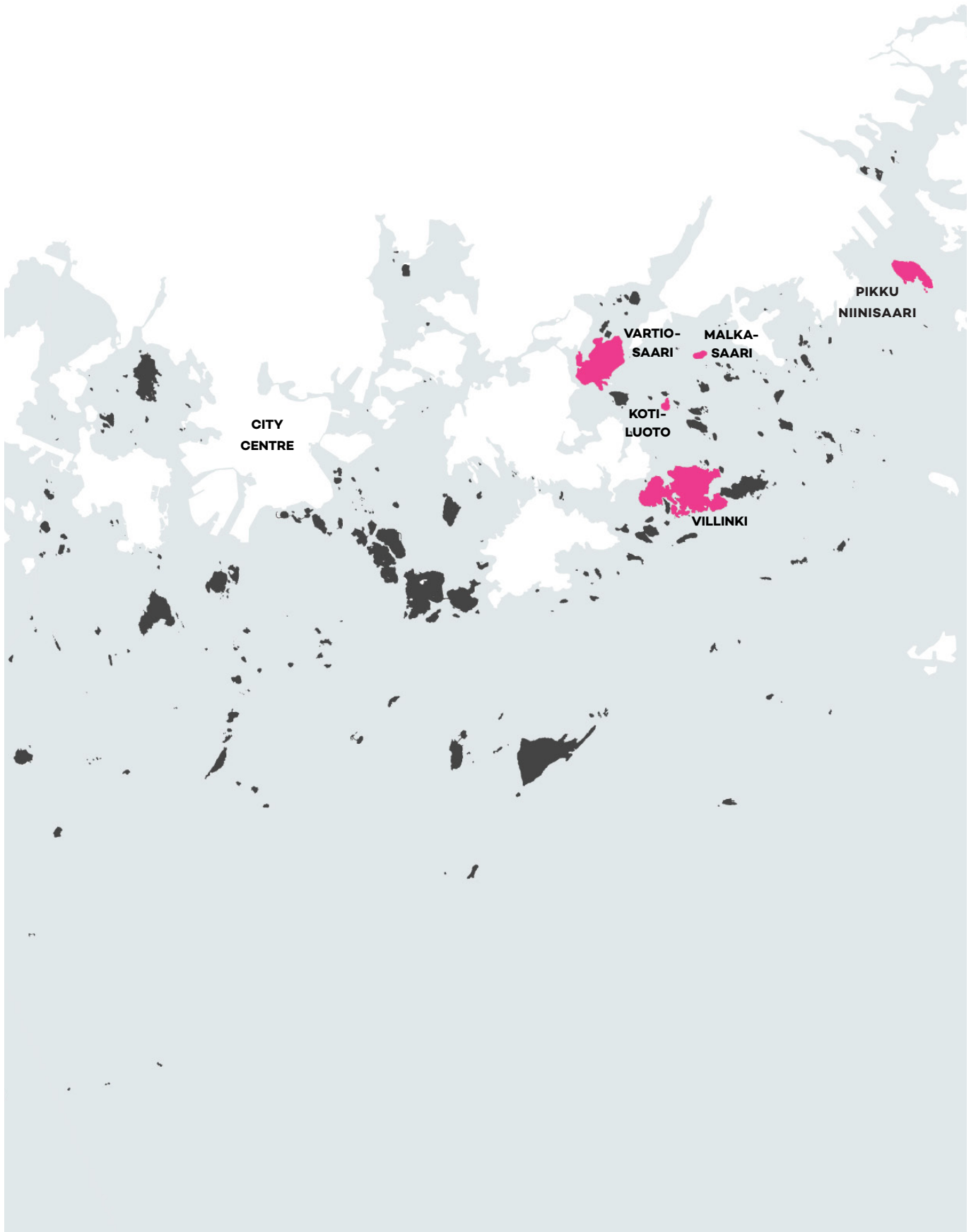
Camping © Helsinki Material Bank

Photos from Helsinki Eastern Archipelago



Photos from the Development Plan for Helsinki Eastern Archipelago, City of Helsinki, if not mentioned otherwise.

3. / Presentations of the islands





Cliffs of Vartiosaari. © City of Helsinki

3.1 VARTIOSAARI

Vartiosaari is an island of about 82 hectares in eastern Helsinki, located between the city districts of Laajasalo and Vuosaari. Vartiosaari is one of the best-preserved villa communities in Helsinki. About half of the villas are privately owned. The island has a nature trail and lookout cliffs. Often during the summertime, sheep from the Haltiala farm roam the island and assist in landscaping work. There is a boat connection to Vartiosaari from Laajasalo, Hakaniemi and Vuosaari during the summertime. In addition, during the summertime, solar-powered ferry takes passengers across the 150-metre-wide Reposalmi strait.

Vartiosaari is regarded as a nationally valuable cultural environment, which is currently mainly in holiday and recreational use. Its shorelines comprise mainly of summer homes and villas from early 20th century. One of the key components of the area is a rich villa garden culture.

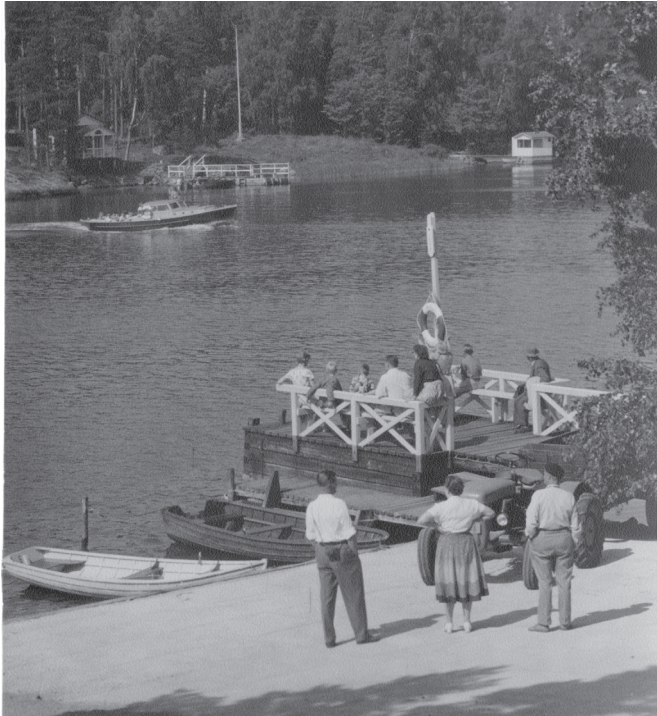
Landscape and nature

Vartiosaari is very important in terms of scenery, with its highest point rising 32 metres above sea level; from the island's

rocky summit views open far out to sea. Further south, on the eastern ridge, the views towards the sea are partially covered by trees.

The island's vegetation is very diverse. Smooth granite rocks and sandy beaches by the shorelines change into dark spruce woods or lush groves when moving inland. The ridges are drier and the dominant tree species is pine. The summit areas, on the other hand, are characterised by snags (i.e. kelo), lichen and heather. The open valley in the middle of the island is former farmland that is in the process of becoming overgrown. In places there are meadows, some of which are natural forest meadows.

In the grounds of the largest villas, there are horticultural garden compositions and exotic vegetation, such as hardwoods. In the draft local master plan, several new nature conservation areas have been proposed for the island. Vartiosaari is also one of the most valuable bat habitats in Helsinki, and there are also two valuable bird habitats.



Reposaari Jetty.. @ AlkoArchives / Jalas

History

The island's impressive nature is enriched by the old and architecturally interesting villas, the earliest of which were built at the end of the 19th century. The island's cultural history extends, however, beyond the villa period. The island has, for instance, a prehistoric burial mound. According to oral tradition, the top of the island was also a lookout point for Vikings. It is known that small-scale agriculture was practiced in the central parts of the island as early as the end of the 18th century. Most of the island became the property of the City of Helsinki in the 1980s.

Present use and future plans

There are about 50 villas and holiday homes on the island, as well as around 100 other buildings, the condition of which varies. Most of the buildings are used mainly during the summertime, and currently less than 10 people live on the island all year round. About 90% of the island's area is owned by the city. There are important boat routes in the waters surrounding Vartiosaari, and in recent years the island has been accessed by solar-powered ferry in the summertime and over the ice in the wintertime.

A City Council initiative suggested, in accordance with the City of Helsinki's Maritime Strategy, to promote the recreational use of the island of Vartiosaari through temporary measures until the situation in the area regarding city planning is made clear. Several new features were introduced on Vartiosaari in 2020: trails, signposts, toilets and waste management were improved and access to the island is facilitated by increasing water traffic. The development of the island's infrastructure and services has continued, based on the feedback received from users.

A local master plan is being drafted for Vartiosaari. The island will mostly be assigned for recreational use, and it will also be



Allotment garden in the middle of Vartiosaari. @ City of Helsinki



Villa Tirrebo. @ City of Helsinki

developed as a tourist destination, as part of maritime Helsinki. The area's cultural and natural values will also be considered and their conservation promoted. The island is located just a short distance from the mainland, and the construction of a bridge connection is being explored, so as to enable year-round recreational use of the island.

<https://www.hel.fi/en/urban-environment-and-traffic/urban-planning-and-construction/search-plans-and-projects/the-local-master-planning-in-vartiosaari>

Project sites

For the European competition, two different types of landing sites on Vartiosaari have been chosen as project areas: Reposalmi and Pässilähti. The Reposalmi jetty is the stopping point for the island's incoming water transport routes, and the location serves as the crossing point of the strait during ice-covered times. The crossing from one side of the strait to the other takes about five minutes. The strait is so narrow and heavily trafficked that the jetty is not suitable for the docking of small boats. Due to the short distance, people have expressed a wish for a better landing place than at present for rowing boats. The Reposalmi jetty is directly connected to the Sunnavik villa property. The villa currently does not have a tenant, but the plan is to use it for tourism services.

Pässilähti bay, on the other hand, is presently, and probably also in the future, a place where boaters arriving at the island can land and dock their boats. There are also sandy beaches suitable for canoeists around the bay: it is a rather shallow yet sheltered bay. According to the draft local master plan, the buildings around the bay could be serving tourism and recreational use in the future.



The Myrskykalliot cliffs on the southern shore of Villinki. © City of Helsinki

3.2 VILLINKI

Landscape and nature

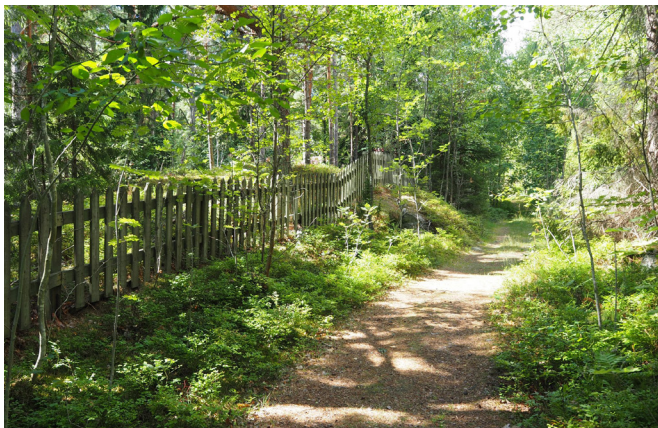
With its 140 hectares, Villinki is the largest island in the eastern archipelago. The island's topography is varied, and its landscape is characterized by numerous ridges, with valley depressions in between. The island's shoreline is meandering, and thus sheltered, lagoon-like inner bays are formed along the shoreline, from which open up limited views of the sea. Villinki's special scenic spots also include the cliffs of Tulikallio and Pukkiluoto in the central part of the southern side of the island, as well as Vuorilahdenlampi, which is a gloe lake cut off from the sea. The Myrskykalliot cliffs, located in the southeastern part of the island, offer wonderful views of the outer archipelago.

Villinki's natural environment is particularly valuable, and the island has many nature sites, including valuable forests and geologically and ornithologically valuable sites. The island is also one of the best places for bats in Helsinki.

History

Villinki is the largest and architecturally most significant of the villa islands in Helsinki's eastern archipelago, and it is also regarded as built cultural environment of national significance (RKY) Most of the villas have been well preserved, some of them almost in their original condition. The island's own manor milieu, with its main building and park, has also been preserved.

The old villas had large grounds, and these were often designed by the most prominent landscape architects of the time. Some of these wonderful old villa gardens are still in superb condition today, some are kept as extensive open lawn areas, while others have become overgrown or have completely disappeared. Old garden structures such as terraced paths, stone walls, steps and retaining walls, as well as plenty of old garden plantings and a wide selection of plant species remain. Other significant parts of the built environment on Villinki include the shoreline walls, saunas, jetties and bathhouses that form part of the shoreline landscape.



Photos of Villinki: private landing site, Villa Stigen (located next to Kylänlahti bay landing site), Archipelago trail and Kylänlahti bay.
© City of Helsinki

Present use

Currently, the main use of Villinki is for summer residences. There are dozens of summer villas along the shoreline of the island, most of which are privately owned. Lately, some of the buildings owned by the city have been empty and without tenants. In the local detailed plan, the city's properties are marked as areas serving tourism, so in the near future new tourism services may develop in Villinki. The island's potential is raised by the fact that Villinki has a fairly good technical infrastructure compared to the rest of the archipelago: the island has an electricity network, and a water supply cooperative has also been formed, which has built a water mains and sewer to the island.

Despite private land ownership, recreational use of the island's nature areas is possible, as small, fragmented recreational and outdoor areas owned by the city are connected by an island trail. However, there are no public recreational services on the island. Currently, not many people visit the island due to the lack of regular water bus connections, a boating pontoon for general use, and other recreational services.

The land on the island is mostly privately owned. The land areas owned by the city are small, "base-like". General recreational use is based on trails and forest and rocky areas that are open to everyone under the principle of the "right to roam".

Villinki is a wonderful and culturally historically valuable site that should be accessible by water transport. The small recreational areas owned by the city in Villinginlahti and Kylänlahti will be developed into activity hubs, where general recreational services such as information boards, jetties, resting areas, cooking shelters, dry toilets and similar recreational services will be placed.



Cliffs of the northern end of Kotiluoto. © City of Helsinki

3.3 KOTILUOTO

Landscape and nature

Located relatively close to the mainland, Kotiluoto is an island approximately 3 hectares in size, with a distinct character, comprised mostly of woodland. The island consists of two rocky ridges and a valley depression between; the topography of the island varies, with the highest points being almost +11 m above sea level. On Kotiluoto there are large, impressively-sized erratic boulder, including what is presumed to be the largest erratic boulder in Helsinki.

The vegetation on Kotiluoto is diverse, due to the history of the island's use and the extensive grounds of the old villa. The island thus differs a lot from the other islands of the eastern archipelago owned by the city. The flora include species native to the archipelago as well as planted garden species, and garden species that have gone wild. The vegetation of the herb layer of the pine wood in the island's northern rocky area is heavily eroded, though elsewhere the flow of people is guided onto the paths. The shorelines are mostly rocky meadow shores.

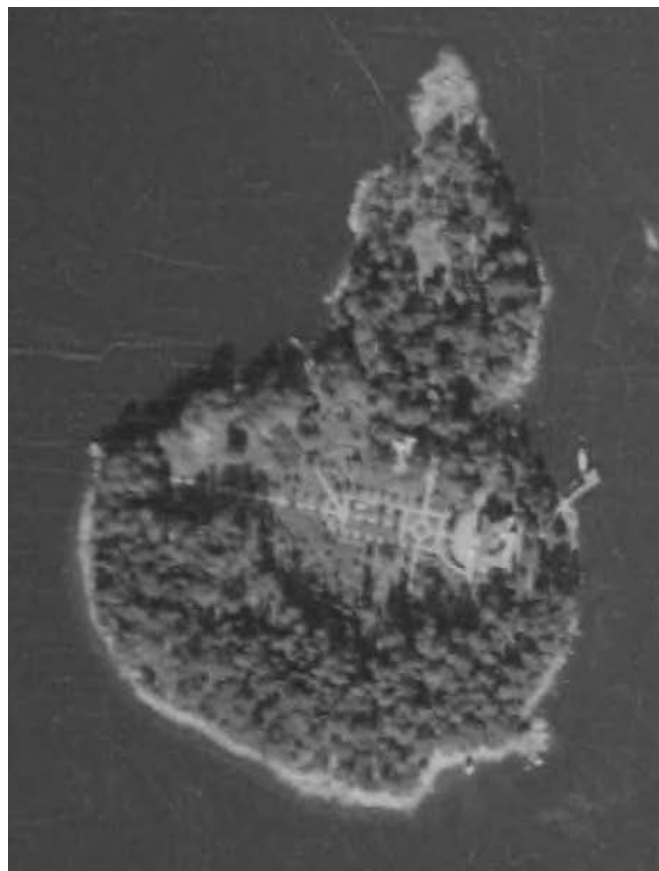
History

The first crofters moved to Kotiluoto in the 1810s, and from the 1880s onwards Kotiluoto was in use as an area of summer villas. The Art Nouveau-inspired stone villa, completed in 1920, also included an extensive, imposing garden, which was influenced by both geometric and straight-lined Baroque gardens and the idea of forest-like parks. The garden was once an unusually representative example of the archipelago's villa gardens with hundreds of fruit trees, rose gardens and an axial layout. Many of the garden's structures, such as stone steps and embankments, park paths and garden vegetation can still be made out in the terrain.

Kotiluoto was sold to the City of Helsinki in 1966 and was, among other things, rented out for summer camp activities of boating clubs, but it began to deteriorate due to lack of maintenance. The garden and the stone villa were left unmaintained, and some of the old buildings were demolished. Kotiluoto's once glorious garden has become overgrown and a lot of old species have been destroyed. Along with the main building, the toadstool-looking bathing cabin is the only remaining old building on the island.



Kotiluoto shoreline and the main building. © City of Helsinki



Kotiluoto and its Baroque style garden in 1932. © Puolustusvoimien Tiedustelukeskus 76/2014

Present use and services

The main building on Kotiluoto is protected and has been rented out to the Helsinki Navigation Club and the Eastern Helsinki Yacht Club. There are also two guest jetties on the east side of the island for use by tenants. On the west side, is a swimming pontoon in connection with a sauna. The island does have a waterbus jetty in a good condition. There has been no water bus connection to the island in recent years, but it is planned to be implemented as an experiment in the summer of 2023. There are landing spots suitable for canoeists on both the east and west shores of the island, and boat mooring rings on the northeastern and southeastern shores.

The island has some recreational services intended for general use, such as a cooking shelter, a group of picnic tables and a dry toilets. Kotiluoto's trail network is, nevertheless, in a fairly good condition. The terraced paths that go around the island have been part of a landscape garden and they still provide good guidance for the flow of people. Kotiluoto also has a sauna, which the city rents out on a self-service basis; the sauna key

and firewood can be picked up from the Rastila camping site on the mainland.

Kotiluoto forms, together with three islands in the Villaluoto group ("eastern", "western" and "northern" Villaluoto) a group, with camping services; of these islands, northern and eastern Villaluoto are suitable for camping.



Shoreline of Northern side of Malkasaari. © City of Helsinki

3.4 MALKASAARI

Landscape and nature

Malkasaari is located in the Kallahdenselkä waters, quite close to the Kallahdenniemi headland. The island covers 3.5 hectares. It is a gently sloping, wooded island with rocky beaches on the north side. The island's southern shores are rocky, while the northern shores are sparsely vegetated gravel deposits, pebbles and sand.

The forest on Malkasaari is a pine-dominated dry heathland forest, sprinkled with impressive mature pines with deeply furrowed scaly bark. The island's forest is in some places lush and very resistant to erosion. The forest on Malkasaari has been subject to more regular forest management than many other forested areas in the archipelago. The abundant use of the island is evident in some places as the island's vegetation has worn out and the herb layer is dominated by grass. In the central part of Malkasaari, next to the current cooking shelter, there is a small area of meadow with low-growing grasses, which is classified as an extremely endangered habitat type. The meadow is in the process of becoming overgrown, yet also affected by wear.

History

There was at one time two residential villas on Malkasaari. Malkasaari's former main building, built in the 1910s, was demolished in the late 1960s. The island's current barbecue shelter is built on top of the stone foundation of the former villa. Other old stone structures connected to the main building have been preserved, such as the wall surrounding the yard, steps and paved walkways: a piece of stone wall in the middle of the island previously bordered the garden, and there was a steamboat jetty on the southern shoreline. Old ornamental plants still grow near the stone wall. The main building was paired with a smaller villa with a gable roof, estimated to have been completed in 1933. It still exists but is in poor condition. There is a protected sauna building on the northern shoreline of the island, built in the National Romantic style from the beginning of the 20th century.

Malkasaari became the property of the City of Helsinki in 1965, when it became a recreational island. Malkasaari has been a very popular camping island in the past. In the 1980s, there



Photos of Malkasaari: island overview, cooking shelter, sauna building and villa building. © City of Helsinki & Mira Lainiola

was permanent camping on the island, with around 30 camping locations around the island. Long-term camping caused wear on the island as well as other negative side effects.

Present use and services

The entire island of Malkasaari is used for recreational purposes. Nowadays, the island has fairly comprehensive recreational services, e.g., a cooking shelter, fireplace, dry toilet and guest boat pontoon. The city rents out the sauna on a self-service basis, and the sauna key and firewood can be picked up from the Rastila campsite on the mainland. There is a well on Malkasaari, though the water from it is not drinkable. There is no waste management, electricity or water supply on the island.

Short-term camping is allowed. There is a boat harbour on the north side, with a few mooring places. Malkasaari also has a jetty suited for water bus traffic. There has been no water bus connection to the island in recent years, but it is planned to be implemented as an experiment in the summer of 2023. The island’s gently sloping beaches are suitable for the landing of

canoes, especially on the north side of the island, where there are sheltered sand and gravel beaches.

Unofficial fireplace. © Helsingin kaupunki, Mira Lainiola





The Coastal sand beach of Pikku Niinisaari has been classified as endangered habitat type. © City of Helsinki

3.5 PIKKU NIINISAARI

Landscape and nature

At over 30 hectares in size, Pikku Niinisaari is one of the largest islands in the eastern archipelago. The City of Helsinki owns half of the island. The east and west ends of the island are in the use of private summer residences.

The highest point on Pikku Niinisaari is +16.0 m above sea level. The island is covered by forest. The island opens up to the beautiful marine landscapes of the eastern archipelago and the open expanse of the sea. The southern and southwestern shores of the island are mainly rocky, but in the middle of the southern shore there is an attractive, shallow natural sand bay, bordered by fine rocky outcrops.

Pikku Niinisaari is close to the Vuosaari harbour and offers direct views of the harbour area. The noise from the harbour can be heard, especially on the north and northeast side of the island. The proximity of the harbour also gives the island a distinctive character when large ships pass by and surprising, colourful harbour views can be glimpsed through the trees.

Pikku Niinisaari is an excellent nature destination, with excellent beaches, smooth granite cliffs, forests, lichen-covered cliffs, bogs and wetlands. There is a nature reserve in the northwestern corner of the area owned by the City of Helsinki, the purpose of which is to protect the vegetation and birds of the valuable coastal meadow. In the nature reserve, fishing and public access in the water area are prohibited from April 1st to August 15th, and public access is prohibited outside the designated routes.

Pikku Niinisaari is a geologically valuable rocky area and has a limestone deposit of three erratic boulders on the southern shore. Most of the forests owned by the city are very old, where one can find plenty of decaying wood valuable in terms of biodiversity.



Photos of Pikku Niinisaari: rocky shoreline, coastal meadow, pine forest and villa building. © City of Helsinki

History

Pikku Niinisaari was the common land of the village of Länsisalmi, until it was divided into plots in 1859. Fisherman's cottages were built on the sheltered north side of the island, many of which still exist today, including the wider group of cottages of the fishing community on the northern shore of the island. From the beginning of the 20th century, summer villas were built on the island. Many of the villas have had large and handsome gardens, some of which are still maintained today, while others have become overgrown. In the grounds of the old villas there are wild perennials as well as maples, lindens and even old large-sized horse chestnut trees. In the terrain there are also indications of the old stone structures of the gardens, such as stone walls, steps, embankments and walkways.

Present use

Although the word "Pikku" ("small") in the island's name refers to its small size, the central parts of Pikku Niinisaari form a relatively large, unified recreational area in the eastern archipelago.

Currently, Pikku Niinisaari has very little recreational use. There are no public recreational services on the island. Despite the city's extensive land ownership, it is difficult to determine the private and public areas. Landing on the island is difficult, because the island is located on the edge of a large expanse of open sea, and there is no public pontoon or even boat mooring rings. There is a path network on the island, but it has been shaped for the needs of the summer cottagers and does not form logical connections for recreational use.

4. / Competition assignment and design objectives



Existing landing site for water traffic at Malkasaari Island. © Mira Lainiola

4.1 COMPETITION ASSIGNMENT

The competition calls for new solutions for sustainable recreation both for the inhabitants of Helsinki and for tourists. The competition is looking for comprehensive thinking and concepts combining different planning and scale levels, as well as new ideas for an architectural system that can be implemented at different sites. The basic system, including typology, infrastructure and construction methods, should be flexible and simple enough so it can be adapted to various sites and situations in a cost-effective, and economically viable way. Five islands that are topical from the point of view of planning and implementation have been chosen as pilot sites. With the help of these, various issues recurring also on other islands have been highlighted, and the functionality of the concept proposed by the competitors can be tested for solving various sustainability challenges occurring in the archipelago.

The competition concerns mainly the project sites, but also the proposals for the reflection site will be taken into consideration in the overall evaluation. The reflection site usually comprises the entire area of the island owned by the City of Helsinki, while the project site is a more precise focus area around the landing site. The competitors are asked to propose a general plan for the reflection sites. New landing sites and the adjacent services should be planned on the designated project areas. The objective is to create an overall plan and visual idea that serves as the basis for the future development of the area and as a basis for the implementation of island-specific solutions.

Landing sites (project site level)

At the most precise scale level, the emphasis is on questions of 1) coordinating the different functions of the landing sites, 2) the design and materials of the structures and buildings, 3) transferring the archipelagic concept to the level of building construction and landscape design, and 4) developing it further with architectural qualities. How can various user groups share the same areas and functions? How can landing sites be developed to become places for services, tourism and island culture as well as places or the encounter between public and private space?

Islands (reflection site level)

At the reflection site level – on the basis of the land-use indicated in the local detailed plan – the character of the island is to be examined. It is also possible to propose new functions and uses that support the general recreational use of the island for the existing villas within the reflection site areas of the island, emphasising the entrepreneurial possibilities. Based on an understanding of the site's relationship to its surroundings and on-site resources, it is also possible to show how the solutions for landing sites are connected to the whole and how they complement credibly the island's other functions. How are smaller interventions connected to larger areas and sustainability challenges, local spaces and their re-conception? How should one embrace the individual identities of each island?



Info board. © City of Helsinki, Mira Lainiolo

Island groups and archipelago (territorial level)

Competitors are encouraged to find solutions to sustainability problems also at the territorial level. In addition to physical structures, the overall concept of the territorial level can include various process-related ideas as well as other intangible aspects, such as solutions related to the construction and maintenance of island structures and solutions that rely on the mainland and neighbouring islands. How can local resources, landscape and local actors be included and supplemented?

4.2 EMBRACING THE COEXISTENCE OF NATURE AND PEOPLE

The planning objective in many nature areas is to integrate recreational uses and nature values. Following the ecological transition theme of this year's European competition, the premise in this competition task is that these perspectives would not be in conflict, but rather would support each other. This is logical, because nature is the central attraction of the archipelago, and the interaction and interweaving of human activity and nature is a central factor characterising the archipelago and its development. Through ecosystem services, a healthy and vibrant nature also supports people's well-being.

Natural, cultural, social, and historical values as well as other special features of the islands must be taken into account. Competitors should look for solutions to prevent the loss of vegetation and other stress on the sensitive nature, to restore and revive nature, and to protect nature values. In the archipelago and on the shorelines, this also means taking into

account and protecting the values of underwater nature. In addition to minimizing harm, the goal is also to increase the natural diversity, including geodiversity, to support the living conditions of different species, and to encourage and guide people who visit, live or do business on the islands to operate in a sustainable manner.

When creating new landing sites, new places for communication are formed, and thus strengthening social life, facilitating coexistence and togetherness of the different groups of people. The objective is that different city residents could identify with the archipelago and that the areas and properties intended for public recreational use would not be privatized or otherwise limited to the use of only a small group. Accessibility is also an important aspect to be considered. Visitors have different needs, challenges and expectations. In order to produce accessible and equal services, planning must be user-oriented, which can be increased by involving stakeholders with different roles and interaction between islanders and private landowners in the design process.

4.3 PROMOTING FLEXIBILITY, SCALABILITY, REPEATABILITY AND ADAPTABILITY OVER TIME

Besides the docks and jetties needed for archipelago boat traffic, small boats, paddlers and rowers, other elements need to be located within the vicinity of the landing sites, including cafes, kiosks and saunas; barbeque shelters, fireplaces and

firewood storages; toilets and waste containers; equipment to routes and trails such as info boards, signs, fences and long woods. The buildings and structures typical of the islands, as well as their functional characteristics, are described in more detail in section 5.1. The goal of the competition is to design a modular concept for these diverse elements, which can be easily adapted to different types of places, contexts and situations, and can be tested on all seven pilot sites.

The solutions must support the goals of the city's circular economy and life-cycle thinking. The competitors are encouraged to examine the possibilities for the recycling and re-use of structures and other maintenance and service from the urban metabolism point of view as flows of material and energy, and to utilize various off-grid solutions for water and electricity, when needed. Frameworks and structures consisting of prefabricated parts should be easily updated, implemented, transported to the islands, assembled, dismantled, repaired, maintained, relocated, readjusted and improved. They should also be repeatable, standardised and able to be entered into serial production, and thereby promoting economic sustainability and viability as well as cost-effectiveness, where a major impact on human well-being and liveability can be achieved with limited cost and effort through the use of small, effective measures.

The landing site concept should also be scalable, so that individual elements can be combined in many different ways and the landing sites and their services can be easily expanded or contracted as needed, without losing the visual identity and consistency of the whole. This enables various experiments, temporary solutions and reacting to, for example, the fluctuations in the number of visitors to the islands and the resulting changes in the nature of the island. Flexibility is also of significance for nature conservation, as it enables the use of the islands to be changed or limited, if necessary, according to the island's bearing capacity. A well-functioning solution is adapting to the needs of each island, the period and season, and thus helps answer key sustainability issues both now and in the future.

4.4 CAPTURING THE SPIRIT OF THE HELSINKI ARCHIPELAGO AND MARITIME RECREATION

The elements must be of a high-quality architecture, distinctive, and reflect the spirit of the Helsinki archipelago and the islands' values and special features, bringing the necessary services to those islands that are best suited for it. The goal is to create high-quality outdoor space, the structures of which integrate different fragmented spaces into a balanced, hierarchically comprehensible and, on the other hand, cohesive whole. The structures will improve the comfort and quality of the islands in a way that will induce people to take care of nature and the common maritime assets.

The new set of structures should have their own distinct architectural character and reflect the spirit of the Helsinki archipelago. The buildings and structures must stimulate recreational activities on the islands, making them more easily accessible. They must fit into the present landscape, yet also create a new, higher-quality recreational environment. Competitors are encouraged to explore and utilise unused potential linked to seasonality. Currently, summertime is the main season, but for example barbecue places and saunas on the islands could also be used during the wintertime, and reached by pontoon bridge or over the thick ice.

In the spirit of the Helsinki Biennial – an international contemporary art event located on the island of Vallisaari and other locations around Helsinki – the competitors can also explore the possibilities of using buildings and structures as environmental artworks as well as explore their aesthetic and experiential dimensions. The structures act as instruments for creating the spirit of the place, and can utilize whenever possible the shapes and materials of the terrain. A successful solution achieves a balance between subtle and bold: not too anonymous nor too universal, but still tailored to the different island destinations and leaving space for each island's own characteristics and values.

Island specific design objectives



Project areas (yellow line): Reposalmi jetty area in the south and Pässilahti Bay landing site in the north.

Reflection site (red line): areas owned by the city and designated for recreational use, tourism and nature conservation.

4.5 VARTIOSAARI: TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS FOR A CHANGING ISLAND

On Vartiosaari the objective is to supplement the island's current recreational services, so that it would rise from the level of an average recreational island to one of the main destinations of the eastern archipelago. The Reposalmi jetty is currently used by solar-powered ferry and water buses, but the construction of a bridge is being explored as part of the work on the local master plan. The timetable for the implementation of the bridge is uncertain, so temporary solutions should be found for the island that can promote its recreational use even before a possible bridge is built. Of central importance in the adjacent Pässilahti bay is that the solutions are made scalable, so that they can be expanded as the recreational use of the island increases.

Vartiosaari is also an excellent site for testing the capacity of the concept presented in a competition proposal to promote the barrier-free accessibility of archipelago recreational use, especially in the southern part of the island, where the terrain is more moderate than in the northern rocky areas. The goal is that barrier-free access to the island would be possible in the future via the Reposalmi strait, either by water bus or via a bridge. Due to its good accessibility, the island is also one of the potential year-round island recreational destinations. Winter swimming would be possible, if there is a bridge needed for assuring the safety and maintenance.

Iconic views towards the sea make Vartiosaari ("the Guard Island") a great spot for new viewing platforms. Natural, cultural and historical values must be taken into account. In addition, new uses can be proposed for the villas on the project areas, for example Sunnanvik located in Reposalmi jetty area.



Project areas (yellow line): Main landing sites owned by the city, designated for recreational use and tourism.

Reflection site (red line): areas owned by the city.

4.6 VILLINKI: LANDING SITES AS RECREATIONAL HOT SPOTS

The challenge in developing the recreational services on the island of Villinki is that even though the island is one of Helsinki's largest in terms of area, the areas owned by the city and designated for recreational use in the plan are relatively small in size and located on different sides of the island. The general recreational use on Villinki relies not only on small, base-like recreation areas owned by the city, but also on certain forest and rocky areas that are privately owned yet still accessible under "the right to roam", as well as relying on the archipelago trail network that connects them. This starting point emphasizes the importance of the planning of landing sites, the totality formed by individual landing sites, the clear separation of private and public space, and the involvement of the other stakeholders on the island.

One of the most important services to be developed is the landing sites for various needs: for water buses, boaters and canoeists. Due to the different types and sizes of landing sites, Villinki is well suited for studying the scalability of solutions. In the competition, the focus is on two project areas, but competitors can also propose smaller landing sites and services for the other three reflection sites, for example, for the needs of canoeists. As a villa island, a key aspect is also the consideration of cultural and historical values. Presently there are almost no recreational services on the island, so a phased implementation, where the island's recreational services are developed step by step, would be most suitable. In the surroundings of Kylänlahti bay, it is also possible to design new buildings for accommodation services, for example.



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Project site (yellow line): main landing sites for general recreation, including sauna and unused building area proposed in the master plan.

Reflection site (red line): area owned by the city.

4.7 KOTILUOTO: RECREATIONAL STRUCTURES AS PART OF A VALUABLE VILLA MILIEU

Of key importance in considering the island of Kotiluoto is the cultural and historical values in the form language and placement of new buildings and structures. One of the most important new services is a landing pontoon suitable for public use, to be placed on the west side of the island. The location of the water bus jetty is indicated in the zoning plan and it is intended to be kept in its current location. There is 250 m² of unused building area near the jetty, which allows for the construction of a café, for example.

The objective is to renovate the villa garden in such a way that the maintenance of the result is also possible with current resources. The overall solution for the island must consider different options regarding the villa's rental situation. In their competition entry, competitors can propose a new type of use for the villa and its grounds. The proposal could support public recreational use, but the overall idea must work from the viewpoint of the general recreational use on the island, even in a situation where the use of the villa is limited to a smaller target group.



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Project site (yellow line): the area around the main landing sites and the recreational services.

Reflection site (red line): area owned by the city

4.8 MALKASAARI: AN EASILY ACCESSIBLE RECREATIONAL ISLAND FOR VARIOUS KINDS OF VISITORS

Malkasaari is an island with a wear-resistant forest type and which already now has fairly comprehensive recreational services. The main goal of the development is to improve the island's accessibility, responding to the needs of groups of different ages and special needs. Due to its gentle terrain, the island is to be developed into a fully accessible recreational island. The nature on the island has been worn down in places, and the island needs, among other things, different flow-control solutions in order to revive its forest floor vegetation and regenerate the forest itself. The objective is to build a fully accessible route to the island's most important services, along which there will also be barrier-free rest and lookout points, as well as groups of picnic tables.

On Malkasaari, consideration should also be given to the cultural history of the island, such as the old stone structures and the old garden species located near the demolished main building (i.e. the current barbecue shelter), and how the new structures fit with these. The vegetation of the valuable meadow should be taken into account when renovating the grounds.

The island is well-suited for organizing maritime business services: in the plan the area marked as an area of buildings serving tourism ("RM" in local detailed plan) has building rights for a total of 800 m², which would be suitable as, for example, buildings for ecological accommodation services. In addition, new uses can be proposed for the villa on the island. There is presently no technical infrastructure on the island, but photovoltaic electricity and other solutions independent of the city's electricity grid and water network can be used when organizing services. The needs of campers must also be considered when developing the island.



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Project site (yellow line): Main landing site.

Reference site (red area): areas owned by the City of Helsinki. Small-scale structures, mainly related to the control of the flow of people, can be placed here. The villa, currently vacant, is designated for tourist use.

4.9 PIKKU NIINISAARI: "STARTING FROM SCRATCH"

Pikku Niinisaari is well suited as a recreational island due to its size, interesting terrain and diverse, impressive nature. Currently, however, there are no recreational services on Pikku Niinisaari. New services and trails that support recreational use must be planned and implemented in such a way that the values of the valuable natural sites are not lost. The island should be a model example of how an island with unique natural values can be transformed into a recreational island in a sustainable way.

The goal is to establish the basic services for a recreational island; i.e., a visitors' pontoon, a place to rest, groups of benches and/or picnic tables, a barbecue shelter, and dry toilet, all concentrated in the vicinity of the future pontoon at the southern end of the island. The suitability of the city-owned villa for small-scale business use, such as cafe operations, could be explored. Structures with viewing and resting places, mainly serving flow control, can be placed elsewhere on the reference site.

According to the local detailed plan, on Pikku Niinisaari the pontoon and other shore structures, as well as buildings and other constructions, must be designed and implemented, in terms of both their location and structure, in such a way that the operations of the nearby Vuosaari harbour and the sea traffic in the harbour's water traffic area, together with the shipping lanes surrounding the island, and any potential associated harbour phenomena (e.g. noise, vibrations and waves), must not prevent or unreasonably hinder their use, even in the instance of increased traffic. Therefore, the island should be developed as a daytrip destination, with no new accommodation services.

5. / Competition guidelines



Viewing platform and rope fence on the island of Harakka. © Mira Lainiola

5.1 FUNCTIONAL GUIDELINES

Structures must be pleasant, attractive, safe and dimensioned according to their use. A modular solution can consist of separate and/or interconnected elements that can be easily adapted to different types of sites and situations. The new built structures might be possibly only temporary – decisions are to be made after the pilot projects and monitoring – and therefore they must be light weight, relocatable, and with a minimum impact on the ground. But they should also be expandable, if these needs should emerge.

The range of services varies from island to island; some are required and some are optional. For example, new cafes and/or saunas can be proposed for the larger islands, such as Vartiosaari and Villinki, whereas all recreational islands need the basic services, such as dry-toilets and visitor information boards. The services marked with * in the list are those that should, at a minimum, be found on all recreational islands.

Introducing the key elements and recreational services of the landing sites and their surroundings

This list is to provide an introduction to different elements related to maritime recreation and functional expectations connected to them. Although the elements are here listed separately, as the space available is limited, the competitors are encouraged to utilize spatial and temporal multifunctionality

and explore how various functions can benefit from being located next to each other.

Docks, jetties and pontoons

- Boat-traffic jetties and docks: for regular archipelago water buses and cruise boats. A jetty for the waterbus stop, but not for the docking of small boats. The jetty must have a place for a name sign with the island's name, and on the jetty or on the island in the immediate vicinity there should be a place for a shelter, seating and an information board.
- *Day-trip pontoons: for small boats, including taxi boats. A pontoon for small boats to dock during a visit. Also suitable for taxi boat traffic and similar.
- Landing sites for canoeists and rowers: A floating pontoon or a pontoon section of the jetty specifically designed for canoeists, which makes it easier to launch a canoe. The structures designated for the landing of canoeists aim to prevent the wear of sensitive habitats, such as natural sandy beaches. Near the indicated landing place, there must also be a place for lifting the canoe or rowing boat onto land.
- Swimming docks: Located next to public saunas. Swimming from the docks and jetties intended for water traffic is not allowed due to safety reasons.

Landing sites for boats, water traffic and paddlers are indicated in the zoning plan (the markings: LV, YH, and ME).

In this competition, it is highly recommended, although not compulsory, to use these areas for landing sites.

Buildings

- Cafes and Pavilions: The size of the building will vary between 150–300 m². Service and waste spaces should be integrated within the volume of the buildings. There should be seating/terraces in the vicinity of the café. In addition to the café, a new building of a similar size may also be used, for instance, as an exhibition space, nature visitors' centre, etc.
- Cafe kiosk (100 m²) and kiosks (25 m²) for summer use. Wastebins should be integrated within the volume of the buildings. The kiosk could also rent out equipment.
- Saunas: The building (200–220 m²) should consist of two sauna steam rooms as well as spaces for showers, dressing rooms and toilets. Besides storage for cleaning equipment etc., a space for firewood is also needed. Provisions for swimming are recommended, as well as for winter swimming on those islands accessible by bridge in the wintertime.
- New accommodation buildings: Glamping-type accommodation solutions.
- Shelters: A structure that shelters visitors from the rain, for example, in connection with a water bus jetty or in another part of the island where there is no cooking shelter.

Buildings must have a maximum height of two stories. Buildings must fit with the shoreline terrain in regard to their shape and placement. When designing buildings and structures as well as their extensions and repair, the intrinsic values of the shoreline should be considered, by following the lowest recommended building heights.

Campfire activities

- *Cooking shelters and fireplaces: These are to be located in a place sheltered from the prevailing wind, yet pleasantly in terms of resting and views. Seating and/or groups of picnic tables should also be placed in connection with the cooking shelter.
- *Firewood storages: The location and model should be designed so that the maintenance of the storage from the island's service jetty is as easy as possible. From the visitors' point of view, the use of wood must be convenient, yet the storage should not attract vandalism or the excessive consumption of wood. Instead of ready chopped firewood, larger pieces can be stored, such that there is a place for chopping wood in the vicinity of the wood storage or fireplace.

Auxiliary facilities

- *Toilets: On the larger islands, the functional concept can be based on the prototype of the dry toilet designed for Helsinki (the so-called Helsinki-huussi WC), for which already type drawings exist. The Helsinki-huussi WC is access-free. On the smaller islands, competitors can design their own model of WC.
- Recycling and waste containers: The design focuses on easy use and maintenance. The containers will not be built on all islands, as the visitors are primarily encouraged to partake in litter-free recreational activities; that is, they will return to the mainland with any rubbish they generated while on the island.

Equipment to routes and trails

- Accessible wooden routes: Ordinary duckboards have a well-established design model and construction method, so this competition is specifically looking for a barrier-free structure.
- *Benches and other resting places: Benches and picnic tables that suit the overall look.
- Platforms: Viewing platforms, bird-watching platforms, bird-watching hides, lookouts or other viewing structures for observing nature and viewing the landscape. The platforms also incorporate a deck on which a tent can be pitched, with the aim of sparing the forest floor.

5.2 DESIGN GUIDELINES

The new elements on the islands should be discrete and respect the nature, but also have their own distinctive character and reflect the spirit of the Helsinki archipelago. Buildings and structures must have a light-weight appearance and form a natural part of the marine landscape and the frontage of the islands, respecting the area's nature values and cultural environment. Cultural-historical values, protected villas and other such structures must be taken into account in the scale, the overall architectural design of the new structures and in the views.

When choosing materials, in addition to sustainability, ecology and recyclability, their construction and maintenance costs must be considered, so that the solutions are economically sensible and feasible. The buildings must be wood constructions and mainly clad with wood. Wood is also primarily recommended as the material for other structures, and any other materials must also be durable, ecological, long-lasting, natural and age beautifully.

The appearance of the structures must be uniform, timeless, of high-quality, following the main principles of the Sense of Helsinki and recognizable despite the variation in the properties and scalability of the modules, in order to make it easier for



Sauna on Lonna Island by Anssi Lassila. (c) Visit Helsinki, Julia Kivelä

visitors to move around in nature and identify the services that are in general use.

The Sense of Helsinki (“Helsinki-ilme”) is

- recognisable and consistent. Elements in the urban space define Helsinki and highlight the city’s role as the capital of Finland.
- structured and calm. The design paradigm promotes functionality, practicality and convenience.
- consists of a limited number of elements and is thus straightforward. Structural solutions are simple and minimal.
- designed and constructed with care. The finished look is achieved with appropriate choices for materials. The different parts, materials and elements are brought together with attention to detail.
- follows the principles of authentic and original design and materials.
- is convincing, because the choices for materials and structural solutions endure the challenging weather conditions in Finland.
- is sustainable and promotes environmental values.
- is clean, because the materials and structures are easy to maintain.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND TECHNICAL GUIDELINES

The solutions must be such that their construction or maintenance does not harm nature, and and is not too laborious. The possibility of vandalism and the ease of cleaning

are to be considered, for example, when choosing materials and equipment and how they are attached and installed.

Foundation conditions for building vary from island to island – from rocky shoreline to sandy beaches – so the elements must be adaptable to different ground conditions. Alternatives that do not require heavy foundations should be favoured, so that, if necessary, it is possible to easily dismantle and move temporary structures without leaving any traces in the nature.

Structural solutions and material choices must be evident in the competitor’s submissions. All structures should be ecologically sustainable, long-lasting, easy to install, maintain and repair, as well as economic and cost-effective. In the design of structures and the selection of materials, the different seasons and weather conditions should be taken into account as well as durability. The structures implemented on the islands should also be easy to transport and shipped to the islands.

Buildings and structures must withstand various weather conditions, such as strong winds, storms and ice. Buildings and structures must also be suitable for year-round use, so that, for example, barbecue places and saunas can also be used in the wintertime on those islands accessible at that time of the year, for example, by pontoon bridge or over the thick layer of ice.

The coastal zone and water area must be kept as natural as possible. The water area (W in the local detailed plan) must not be filled in. All the islands that are included as competition sites have important areas of bat habitats, so the shoreline structures should not be unnecessarily illuminated during the summer.



Old stone structures in Malkasaari. © City of Helsinki

Jetties and breakwaters must be floating or box-built structures. Waterbus jetties can be built as fixed piers. The deck part of the jetty is usually wood or concrete.

The structures must also take into account the requirements set by barrier-free accessibility, especially in the design of the jetties and routes on the islands of Vartiosaari and Malkasaari. Barrier-free access and recreational opportunities for different user groups are important, but should not be at the expense of the nature values. Typically, challenging routes and terrains limit barrier-free recreational use of the islands. For most islands, we are rather talking about easy access. The target level of accessibility is not precisely defined here, i.e. how accessible it is and which groups' needs are particularly emphasized. In leaving these choices to the competitors, other perspectives and values should also be kept in mind, especially nature values, and compromises will have to be made.

- See, e.g., SuRaKu mapping and assessment guide for barrier-free accessibility in outdoor spaces (in Finnish): https://www.hel.fi/static/hki4all/ohjeet/SURAKU_OPAS.pdf

6. / Evaluation criteria



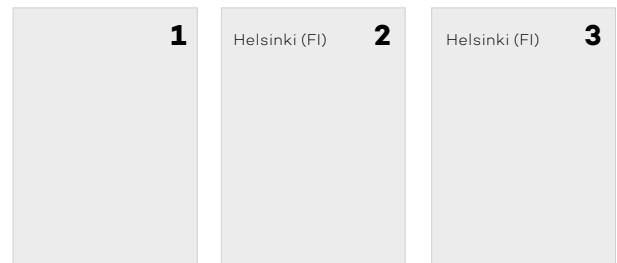
Barrier-free duckboard trails and a viewing platform leading to the island of Lammassaari. © Mira Lainiolo

In the assessment of the competition entries, the key evaluation criteria are:

- How the design objectives in section 4 have been taken into account and realized in the proposal.
- How the competition guidelines (functional, design, environmental and technical guidelines) presented in section 5 have been taken into account in the design solutions.
- Understanding and mastery of different scales, the integration of the individual landing sites and the islands within the totality of the archipelago's recreational sites.
- The quality of the overall architectural concept and its ability to adapt the different kind of islands and conditions of the Helsinki archipelago. The proposal's ability to support and promote the sustainability of recreational activities and respond to the sustainability challenges presented in section 2.5.
- The architectural and landscape-architectural quality of the buildings, co and structures as a whole and their ability to create pleasant, high-quality, appealing and unique outdoor public spaces.
- Taking the valuable characteristics of the archipelago into consideration in the design for new structures, constructions and buildings, with special attention paid to the valuable nature and cultural-historical values. Understanding of the unique and distinctive spirit and nature of the Helsinki archipelago and its reflection in the design concept.
- The overall economics, credibility and feasibility of the design solution and its life-cycle, from construction to maintenance

The overall design, functionality, quality and development feasibility of the competition proposal will be considered more important than meeting individual evaluation criteria.

7. / Submission and required drawings



See the more detailed instructions for layout next page

On three vertical A1-sized boards:

SITE PLANS OF PROJECT + REFLECTION SITES 1:3000

- Show all project areas with their adjacent reflection site areas (except in Vartiosaari not compulsory to show but the reflection site area between the project sites)
- Show built structures, routes and main functions
- Present the building masses shaded from the southwest at an angle of 45°.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF DIFFERENT ELEMENTS AND STRUCTURES

- Represent the idea of the system of the new built elements and structures.
- Describe the possibilities how the concept is flexible and how it can be implemented using different elements.

AXONOMETRIC DRAWINGS / PROPOSALS EMBEDDED INTO OBLIQUE AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS ON THE ALL LANDING SITES AND OTHER NECESSARY SITES

- Show the locations of the functions proposed for all seven project areas with their landing sites.
- Choose freely other smaller sites to represent the new elements and/or structures, which are needed to support sustainable recreation on the islands.
- Pay attention to the presentation of how the built elements and structures adapt to different places and conditions.
- Show the architectonic solutions, associated functions, planted or natural vegetation areas, built structures, main items of furniture and fittings.
- Show the cardinal direction of North.

PERSPECTIVE VISUALISATIONS

- Present at least one view from the eye level of a person standing on the ground, showing the architectural and visual idea of the design concept for the Helsinki Archipelago landing sites. In the view show surface materials and the vegetation.

DESCRIPTION TEXT

- Provide a description of the concept and its various elements, including how they are related to Helsinki and its archipelago's special features. The description should explain and justify the main design solutions included in the proposal.
- The description text should be included on the presentation boards as part of the design images.

In addition, the contestants are encouraged to present other material that they consider necessary to illustrate and clarify their proposal, such as examples on how different elements are adapted to different environments and how they can be combined with each other; their scalability and adaptivity to different seasons; materials, process of implementation, etc .

In addition to the three panels, for communication purpose the submission shall consist of:

- 1 illustrated description text, max. 6 x A4, pdf -format
- 2 images, jpeg -format / 2000px x 3000px
- a short text.

No extra panels can be presented, only the first three are accepted for the evaluation.

All material shall be downloaded to Europeans's server in digital format. **See instructions at: www.europan-europe.eu.**

40 mm
60 mm

Helsinki (FI)

2

**A1, PDF
max. 20Mo**

841 mm

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