

Local Residents' Perceptions of Christmas in Helsinki for City Brand Development

Noora Hentilä & Iiris Koivunen

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Authors

Noora Hentilä & Iiris Koivunen

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This thesis was commissioned by Helsinki Marketing, the city marketing company of Helsinki. The aim of Helsinki Marketing and its city marketing includes reinforcing the pride of the locals in relation to Helsinki, improving the availability and attractiveness of the experiences and services offered in Helsinki while increasing the appeal and recognition of Helsinki as a place.

In regards to the commissioner's goals, the purpose of this thesis is to explore what the local residents consider typical for the Christmas in Helsinki and how they would like to develop it further. The aim of the research orientated thesis is to gather deeper knowledge about what are local residents' opinions about the Christmas in Helsinki and how they would like to see it developed so that Helsinki Marketing can take the residents' perspective into consideration in their future development projects.

The theoretical framework includes basics of marketing and place marketing as an introduction to more covered topic of branding and place branding, city image, thematic branding and residents' role in place branding. In addition Christmas in Finland is being discussed together with Christmas events in Helsinki and abroad.

The thesis was implemented by mainly quantitative online questionnaire complemented by qualitative methods. The survey was executed between 10th and 21st of April 2017 and the survey was answered by 174 residents of Helsinki. The results of the questionnaire were analysed by both descriptive statistics and content analysis accompanied by cross-tabulation.

The results of the survey show that the timing of Christmas should follow the traditional Christmas season. The most typical aspects of Christmas in Helsinki were Christmas Street, Christmas markets and Christmas lights, decorations and tree. The previous Christmas seasons in Helsinki were perceived as traditional, welcoming and plain whereas the respondents would like to see them as welcoming, joyful and versatile. In addition more diverse events and services were wished for the upcoming Christmas seasons.

The recommendations are based on the results of the survey and focused on the development of the events and service offerings especially at the end of the Christmas season. Attention was also given to collaborations and co-operations regarding the Christmas events in Helsinki.

Keywords

Christmas, Place branding, Residents, Place image, Helsinki

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1 Introduction

In this chapter, first the commissioning party of the thesis will be introduced following with the actual thesis commission and its background. Also the purpose and aim of the thesis as well as the structure will be presented.

1.1 Helsinki Marketing

This thesis topic was commissioned by a company called Helsinki Marketing, previously known in the context of marketing as Visit Helsinki, which is a city marketing company owned by the city of Helsinki. Helsinki Marketing as a corporate group is responsible for the operative city marketing and company co-operation with close collaboration with the fields of business in the city of Helsinki. Besides company co-operations and partnerships Helsinki Marketing takes care of the marketing for tourism industry, congresses, and events. They are also responsible for tourism information, event management and attracting skilled individuals and professionals to Helsinki. (Pecker 2017 in Väiliranta 9 May 2017.)

The mission of Helsinki Marketing is the marketing of an attractive Helsinki together with the industry and the residents of Helsinki with a vision of Helsinki Marketing being the most impressive and influential city marketer in Europe by 2020. The main target markets for the city marketing are the residents of Helsinki and international travellers, decision-makers and experts. In the year 2020, Helsinki will be the city of influential and impressive people, actions and encounters. (Pecker 2017 in Väiliranta 9 May 2017.)

The aim of the Helsinki marketing and its city marketing includes reinforcing the pride of the locals in relation to Helsinki, improving the availability and attractiveness of the experiences and services offered in Helsinki as well as increasing the appeal and recognition of Helsinki as a place. They also want to attract new business operations, especially key fields' corporations and experts as well as research, development and innovation activities that would lead to the creation of high expertise positions in Helsinki. (Pecker 2017 in Väiliranta 9 May 2017.)

1.2. Background of the thesis topic

This thesis was commissioned to be part of a larger project of the brand development of the city of Helsinki. The research and its results are part of the development project concentrating on the tourism marketing and especially the Christmas season in Helsinki. A concept of the Christmas in Helsinki is to be created based on the residents of Helsinki

and Helsinki as a city, as the experience of the “Helsinki Christmas” should represent its residents and its unique characteristics as a city. The new Christmas concept can be easily and more effectively used in marketing activities as the tourism marketing will be built on one of a kind unique events as well as interesting culture and art experiences Helsinki offers to its residents and visitors. (Lassila 11 May 2017.)

Helsinki Marketing will find out the possible Christmas offerings and services that could be offered by the companies and other stakeholder groups in Helsinki as well as will activate them to take part in the marketing activities of the Christmas in Helsinki. This thesis, as explained later on, focuses on the local residents’ opinions about the Christmas in Helsinki as it is crucial that the residents perceive Helsinki as a Christmas city. Based on this thesis and its results, Helsinki Marketing will know where they stand with the branding of Helsinki as a Christmas city in the perspective of the local residents and how far they are from having the residents feeling the Christmas in Helsinki represents them and Helsinki as a city. (Lassila 11 May 2017.)

1.3. Purpose and aim of the thesis

According to the commissioner’s wishes the purpose of this thesis is to explore what the local residents consider typical for the Christmas in Helsinki and how they would like to develop it further. Therefore the aim of this thesis is to gather deeper knowledge about what are local residents’ opinions about the Christmas in Helsinki and how they would like to see it developed so that Helsinki Marketing can take the residents’ perspective into consideration in their future development projects. This will allow Helsinki Marketing together with the local tourism industry to develop their service offerings according to the needs and wishes of the local people as well as to build a strong Christmas season brand and image of Helsinki in line with the locals’ views.

Based on the purpose and aim of this thesis a main research question with three sub questions to support it were created in order to assure that the research will fulfil its purpose and aim. The research question and its sub questions can be found below.

Main research question:

- What are local residents’ opinions about the Christmas time in Helsinki?

Sub questions:

- What local residents consider as appropriate starting and ending period for Christmas themed services and events?

- What local residents think of as typical aspects, events and experiences of the Christmas in Helsinki?
- How would local residents like to develop the Christmas in Helsinki?

1.4. Structure of the thesis

After the introduction to the topic of this thesis, the chapter two will present the theoretical framework related to the topic. First a short introduction to marketing and place marketing will be given in order to form a base and connection to one of the main theories covering the topic of the thesis, branding. In relation to branding theory and literature, place branding, place image, thematic branding and residents' role in branding will be discussed. In addition literature concerning the other main topic of the thesis, Christmas in Finland, will be covered discussing its historical background, timing and most visible Finnish Christmas traditions. Also some of the current Christmas events in Helsinki will be presented with a short overview of different type of events arranged abroad.

The chapter three will cover the methodology of the thesis research. There the different methods will be discussed and chosen methodologies will be presented and justified. Also the form of data collection and data analysis used will be introduced. The chapter four will then again present the results of the research. Last in the chapter five the key findings will be shortly presented as well as recommendations for the commissioner concerning the results and future research suggestions are discussed. Also the reliability and validity of the research will be evaluated, limitations discussed and lastly there will be reflection over the authors' own learning process.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework relating to the topic of the thesis. First short introduction to marketing and place marketing will be given with transition to branding and place branding and further to place image, thematic branding and residents' role in place branding. Secondly the other main topic of the thesis, Christmas in Finland, will be displayed in form of its history, timing and Christmas traditions in Finland. Also current Christmas events in Helsinki will be shortly presented with some interesting Christmas events organized abroad.

2.1. Marketing and place marketing

Marketing essentially is about discovering customer needs and providing matching products in order to satisfy the arisen demand (Appannaiah, Hundekar & Reddy 2009, 12; Fuat 2012, 80; Nirmala, Prasad, Salvadore & Sherlekar 2009, 7). Marketing can also be seen as an act of "creation and delivery of standards and styles of life" (Appannaiah & al. 2009, 12). In the before-mentioned context of marketing a product can be anything with demand varying from goods to services and ideas to persons (Fuat 2012, 80).

Marketing in its magnitude includes all activities and resources involved in distribution of products and satisfying consumer demand from market research to delivery of the product (Appannaiah & al. 2009, 12; Nirmala & al. 2009, 2-7). One of these activities is branding (Childers, Kemp & Williams 2012, 508.) which is a part of marketing which is introduced later on in this theoretical framework.

In today's world places are facing increasing competition over resources, residents and visitors between each other mainly caused by ever-rising globalization and technology. Therefore places are forced to create competitive advantage thru place marketing in order to differentiate from other places. (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2008, 154-163; Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 3; World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 17.) In this context of place marketing places can be anything from cities to regions and even countries (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 15-161).

In place marketing what is being sold is the geographical location. Therefore what separates conventional marketing from place marketing is that the place is not only used as means to identify products but the place itself is the actual product being sold. (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2008, 153.) The basis of place marketing is to provide appealing lifestyle in order to attract talented and skilled individuals who will contribute to the place's society by living, working, studying or visiting the place (World Tourism Organization & European

Travel Commission 2009, 15-16). Places try to increase their attractiveness by creating uniqueness which will differentiate them from the competitors (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2008, 154).

It is suggested that the goal of place marketing is eventually increasing the living standards of the local residents. This can be achieved by improving the place's attractiveness as mentioned before and in consequence bringing in external investment and develop and increase tourism. (Kavaratzis 2004, 71.) As these are all objectives of place marketing they are also goals of place branding which is one way of implementing place marketing (Kavaratzis 2004, 71; Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 27.) and will be introduced later on in this theoretical framework.

Identifying the customers and understanding their needs is essential to place marketing in order to create a successful place product (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 25; Rainisto 2003, 233). "The place product needs to be developed and changed according to the customers' needs" (Rainisto 2003, 233). These target customers in place marketing can be divided into four main categories: visitors, residents, businesses and export markets (Kotler, Asplund, Rein, & Haider 1999 in Rainisto 2003, 35). Out of these four categories the importance of residents will be described further on in this thesis.

2.2. Branding

From one perspective "brand is name, term, symbol or design or a combination of themes, which is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition" (Appannaiah & al. 2009, 67). Branding is a process including various activities like giving a particularised name to a product or group of products, creating a brand logo and making them familiar and well-known among the public. Establishing a brand enables for instance a product to be quickly recognized and distinguished from other products and promotes brand loyalty among customers. (Appannaiah & al. 2009, 31-67; Nirmala & al. 2009, 110-113.)

A brand can also be defined as "an impression perceived in a client's mind of a product or a service" (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6.) or in other words "brand refers to the collection of perceptions that a person has of a product (or destination) based on the product's (or destination's) observable characteristics" (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 157). What separates the two perspectives is that the above mentioned definition only considers tangible elements of the brand whereas the latter acknowledges also intangible attributes consumers identify with the brand. Thus ac-

According to this definition a brand is eventually "created and shaped in the consumer's mind". (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6-7.)

In the latter approach to brands and branding there are three closely related and important concepts; identity, image and communication. Here a brand identity is how the brand owner hopes the brand to be perceived by the consumers and then this identity is communicated to the target segments. On the contrary a brand image is what the consumers actually think of the brand. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6-7.) The approach considering both tangible and intangible elements is the one chosen as the base for this thesis and thus as most relevant to the subject, the brand image will be discussed more detailed later on.

2.2.1. Place branding

As products, services and companies can be branded, in the same sense branding strategies can also be applied to places (Childers & al. 2012, 508; Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 3). However a distinctive form of branding is required as places are not conventional products or corporations (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2008, 159.) as they possess complex attributes such as heritage and culture (Childers & al. 2012, 508). When branding places, relying on traditional branding strategies and tools is unlikely to generate optimal results and success, thus applying a specific strategy called place branding is highly recommended.

In place branding a place is seen in a holistic way taking into consideration all of its different aspects from business to culture and politics (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 161). In more detailed definition "place branding is the practise of applying branding strategies and other marketing techniques to the economic, political and cultural development of cities, regions and countries" (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009; Elliot, Papadopoulos & Kim 2010; Ryan & Silvano 2010 in Childers & al. 2012). In even more specific definition place branding is using the afore mentioned brand related concepts of identity and image as tools for creating beneficial associations for a place with a goal of attracting new corporations and visitors thereby enhancing the value of the place (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 25; Rainisto 2003, 233). Thus place branding in essence is about recognizing and promoting assets that increase the place's attractiveness for potential residents, investors and such (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 16).

As already noted in the definition, the goal of a place brand and place branding itself is to present a place as "attractive to live, visit, work, do business with and study in" (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 15). In other words place branding can be used to improve competitive advantage of a place (Kavaratzis 2004, 70; World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 24.) and to enhance the place's acknowledgement within target audiences (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 24). The purpose of creating competitive advantage thru place branding is ultimately to increase economic growth of a place (Jensen 2005, 15; Kavaratzis 2004, 70). All the above mentioned factors can lead to regional development of a place as well as fortifying communal identity and supporting residents' identification with their domicile (Kavaratzis 2004).

In place branding it is considered ideal that all the different parties involved with the brand would support the brand identity of the place with consistency among them. Having coherency among all the parties the customer can associate the brand with, would be beneficial considering the brand development. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 18.) The relationships and communication with the parties surrounding the brand are in great importance when talking about the success of the brand as they reinforce the brand with their actions. The significant relationships related to place branding can be divided into four main categories (see Figure 1). These relationships surrounding the very heart of the brand are consumer relationships, primary service relationships, brand infrastructure relationships and relationships with media. The consumer relationships as a group refers to "the residents and employees of local organisations as well as other stakeholders' perceptions of their own town or city" whereas the primary services consist of the relationships with the service providers close to the core brand with the focus on producer-consumer relationships. The media relationships include the relationships with the media and all the communication channels of the brand. Brand infrastructure on the other hand can be described as the build environment where the services related to the core brand take place at as well as the connections with transportation and hygiene services. (Hankinson 2004, 115-117.)

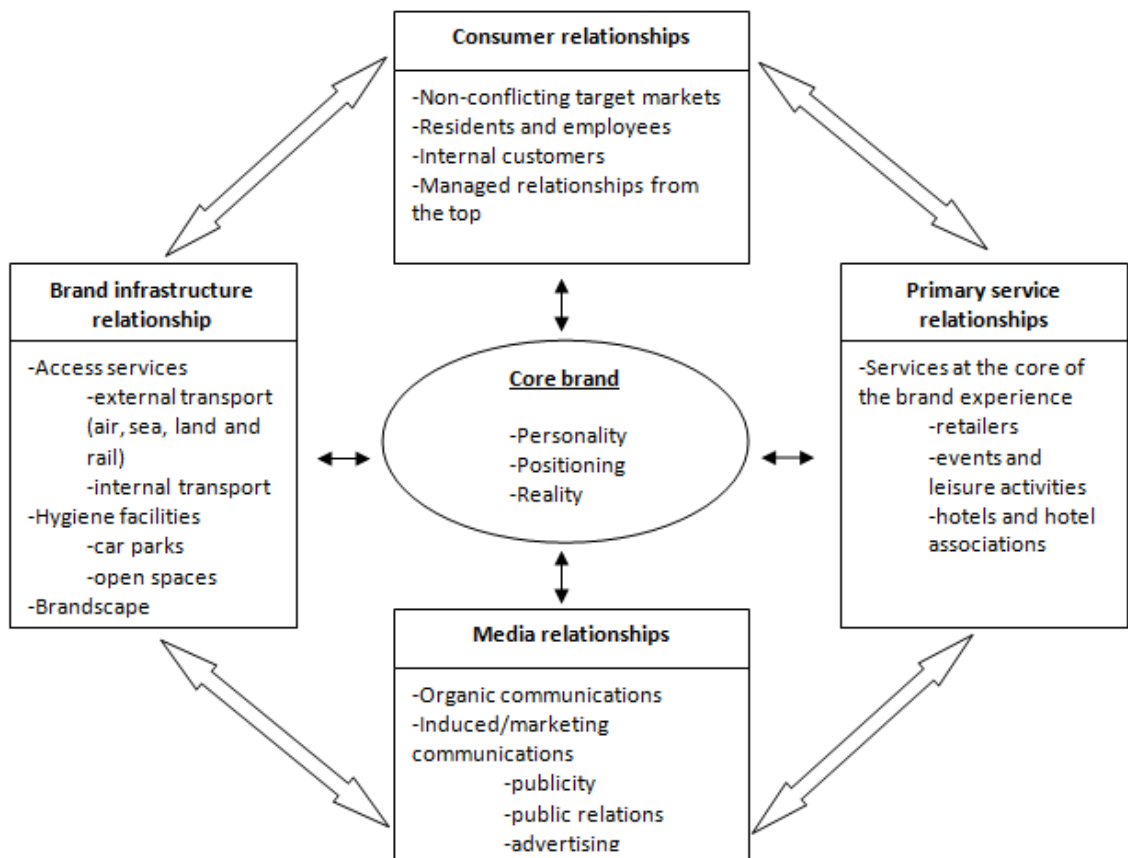


Figure 1. The relational network brand (Hankinson 2004, 115.)

The heart of the brand, also known as a core brand, represents the identity of the place, which fundamentally works as "the blueprint from developing and communicating the place brand". The core brand consists of three aspects; brand personality, brand position and brand reality. Brand personality can be defined as the traits that describe the visitor experience whereas brand positioning refers to the traits that the place shares with other places, the similarities with them and then the traits which differentiate the place from others, the traits that are unique in that specific place. (Hankinson 2004, 115.) Having unique features the customers' value is crucial to the place and its success as that is how the customers can become interested in the place (Rainisto 2003, 75). The last aspect, brand reality, is the foundation on which the previous two aspects should be based on. The brand personality and position need to be in line with reality if the brand wants to successfully create the experiences it promises to the customers. (Hankinson 2004, 115.)

In place branding useful tools such as personality association, signature building and design and thirdly event hallmarking are used broadly all over the world. The first tool, personality association, happens when a place is linked to a famous or well-known individual with the intention of associating the place with the qualities and the characteristics of that particular individual. Signature building and design on the other hand deals with the visual

aspects of the place, focusing on differentiating from the other places thru unique details and overall appearance that can be easily recognized and associated with the place. The last tool, event hallmarking, uses the associations that can be made to both the content of the event and the organisation of the event. Cultural events are generally preferred as they provide high visibility and add value to the place. Event branding is said to be "often most effective if combined with personality branding". It should be noted that both positive and negative associations can take place, hence it is crucial to carefully consider who is chosen for the personal association partner. (Ashworth 2009, 11-19.)

Branding as a strategy and approach is a great base to build on considering the management of the place's image. The marketing and branding of the place are highly connected to the image of the place hence holding a great importance to each other. "City marketing application is largely dependent on the construction, communication and management of the city's image, as it is accepted that encounters with the city take place through perceptions and images." (Kavaratzis 2004.)

2.2.2. Place image

The place image is the objective of place marketing (Kavaratzis 2004, 62.) and it can be managed thru promoting the desired identity of the place (Rainisto 2003, 73-75). As mentioned earlier an identity refers to how the brand owners wish consumers to see the brand (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6-7.) and can try to affect the place image by communicating the ideal place identity (Rainisto 2003, 73-75). The place image which the brand owners are interested in affecting is basically consumers' perception of the place (Kavaratzis 2004, 62-67; Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 17).

"An image of a place is an attitude-based entity comprising feelings and values, which is created in interaction with the person's self-image, group identity and information about the place" (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 17.) and therefore the place image is formed individually in the mind of each person based on their personal experiences, characteristics and values (Kavaratzis 2004, 62-63; Rainisto 2003, 75-76). A place image is constructed in people's minds via three principal elements of contact; people's individual experiences of a place; place depictions such as movies and articles; and conscious physical place design (Ashworth 2009, 10). As the place image consists of both the physical elements of a place and of intangible elements in the perceivers mind, it can be said that place image is the point of interaction between these tangible and intangible factors (Kavaratzis 2004, 63).

In addition it should be pointed out that not all authors use the term place image but also a term "sense of place" is being used. As sense of place can be defined as

"The overall 'feel' of a place (whether a city, region or country), which reflects its core values. This is mostly associated with its physical appearance and cultural heritage –from its built and natural environment to the way that it manages and presents its public realm and the type of events it puts on; the products it makes or is associated with; and the way its citizens behave."

(World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 161.)

It can be seen that the two terms are being used more or less to describe the same phenomenon. In order to avoid confusion, instead of using the two terms simultaneously, only the term place image is used in this thesis.

The place image exists in the minds of multiple customer groups (Rainisto 2003, 76; World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 17.) and in an ideal situation the place image is shared by each of the target groups as this can lead to a positive sequence of events (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 17). This sequence of events can then for example affect the economic state of the place. If considering the residents of the place and outside customers, the local residents' behaviour positively affects the perception of the place image for the outside customers and consecutively these positive outside perceptions can lead to incoming business for the place which in return strengthens the local residents' pride of the place and positively affects their life with an increase in quality and sense of pride. (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 17.) The same ideology applies also to corporations as they can benefit from the place's image if they positively interact between each other and the place while promoting the same place image (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 26).

2.2.3. Thematic branding

As place branding involves branding of locations within certain geographical limits utilizing the place's unique features that differentiate it from other places, places can also be branded from the perspective of theming. This approach is called thematic branding which in its core is "a brand structured around a theme." In thematic branding a theme is chosen in a way that it appeals to a specific target customer creating greater market appeal than the place otherwise would have. Instead of theming a certain location it is also possible to develop a greater regional brand according to a certain theme that can be used to unify

the regions in a way that the entire area benefits from it. (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 19-161.)

It is also noted that place branding and thematic branding don't exclude each other as thematic brands can actually be used as sub-brands for place brands. Thematic brands can complement place brands by defining the place better in the consumers' minds and even by becoming a crucial part of the actual place brand. A place can even have several thematic brands as long as each of them brings additional value to the place improving its competitive advantage. In other words the theme has to be meaningful to the specific place. (World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 19.)

In addition that thematic brands support place brands they can be highly beneficial as they are able to create emotional associations unlike regular place brands. Because there is a distinctive story to be told, thematic brands can establish powerful emotional connections already with potential customers who have yet to even visit the place. (Kavaratzis 2005, 4; World Tourism Organization & European Travel Commission 2009, 18-19.)

2.2.4. Residents' role in place branding

Since "people, capital and companies have become more footloose" it has become absolutely crucial for all places not only to attract new stakeholders but also to keep the existing ones happy in order for them to stay (Kavaratzis 2005, 1). The internal stakeholders of places include for instance a local government, corporations and residents and furthermore it is stated that place branding is very probable to fail without buy-in from these stakeholders (Childers & al. 2012, 508). Thus place marketing and branding should not only consider the place as a tourism destination (known as destination branding) since this approach will not consider the needs and expectations of the residents of the place (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2008, 162). Residents "form the most prominent audience for place branding" (Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker 2013, 22.) and therefore should not be ignored when planning and implementing place branding as the following roles will show.

There are three recognized roles of residents when it comes to place branding. Firstly residents act "as an integral part of the place brand through their characteristics and behaviour", secondly they work "as ambassadors for their place brand who grant credibility to any communicated message" and thirdly the residents operate "as citizens and voters who are vital for the political legitimization of place branding" (Braun & al. 2013). This does not only mean that residents are very important target customers in place branding

(Braun & al. 2013.) but also that they are co-creators and co-managers of the particular place brand (Kavaratzis 2012, 15).

The first role of residents as a coherent part of the place brand clearly speaks for considering the residents as brand co-creators of the place, as the social environment of a place is formed thru the residents themselves but also thru their interactions with other residents and visitors. In addition of residents creating the brand and image within the place, they can also affect other target audiences such as potential new residents as they will consider the current residents as part of the place brand, thus it is well justified that the residents are in fact "an integrated part of the place brand". (Braun & al. 2013, 20-22.)

The next role is the residents being the place brand's ambassadors. Considering the external target markets the local residents hold great power and are of high importance as they can be considered insiders and holders of the genuine and reliable information about the place. Place marketers should recognize and understand the importance of the residents being brand ambassadors since if executed properly, the satisfied residents can be considered the most valuable and beneficial ambassadors for the place whereas unhappy and displeased residents have a high possibility of turning into the exact opposite, spreading negative opinions and information about the place. As "the online world has emphasized the co-creational process of brands in general and, at the same time, made participation in this process more freely available and more desirable" (Kavaratzis 2012, 15) the residents as individuals or together as a community can communicate and share their authentic knowledge and opinions about the place for example in social media where the potential future visitors and movers can uphold word-of-mouth information of the place thru discussions with the local residents. (Braun & al. 2013, 20-23).

The residents should be involved and participating in the place branding practises as that has a high possibility of turning the residents into brand ambassadors. Thru participating in the place branding the residents will most likely feel more responsible when it comes to the place brand's development and reputation among outsiders. (Braun & al. 2013, 20-23.) Having the residents participating will also increase the likelihood of the residents accepting the place brand and identifying with it (Braun & al.2013, 20-23; Childers & al. 2012, 509). The "attitude toward the brand, perceived brand quality and perceived brand uniqueness are brand associations that are predicted to be antecedents of self-brand connection". Pride of the place and its brand helps the residents with the process of connecting with and being attached to the brand as they are more likely to identify with something that is seen valuable and high in quality. The pride stemming from the uniqueness of the place can also be felt as superiority over rivalry places, which can also be seen as an

act of positive enforcement for the residents towards their place and the place's brand. (Childers & al. 2012, 509-511.)

If the self-brand of the resident fits the place brand and is connected to it, in turn identifying with the place brand works in favour of the residents becoming brand ambassadors for the place's brand (see figure 2) (Braun & al. 2013, 20-23; Childers & al. 2012, 511). Besides the above mentioned benefits, the residents becoming brand ambassadors for the place brand can lead to various positive outcomes such as economic growth of the place thru an increase in tourism and the residents themselves spending money inside the place instead of purchasing products and services from other places. Additionally the residents who are involved and connected with their place might be less likely to move away, hence contributing to the place's economic growth in that sense. (Childers & al. 2012, 512.)

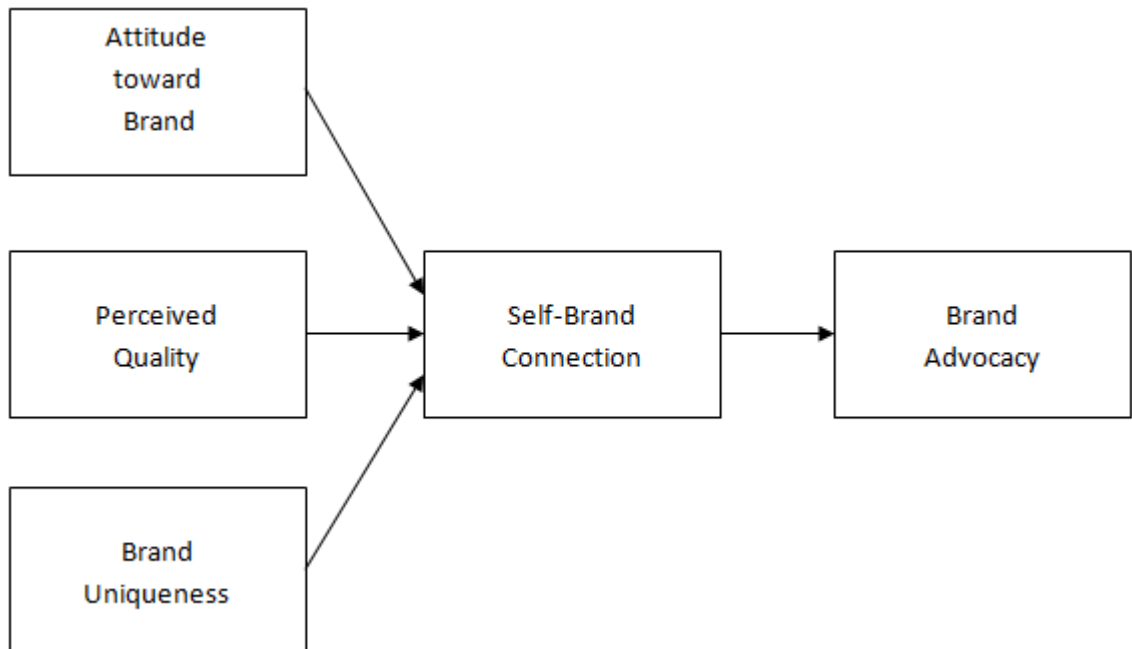


Figure 2. City self-brand connection and brand advocacy model (Childers & al. 2012, 509.)

The third and yet most overlooked role of residents is their role as citizens of a particular place. Very much like it is residents' right and even duty to "choose their local government officials, have political power and participate in political decisions", they should also be considered to have the same rights when it comes to branding their own domicile. In other words democratic legitimization of the place brand by the residents of the place is absolutely necessary as they can either "make or break" the whole brand. This basically means that if the residents don't agree with the brand they can start to challenge it and

act against it or if they agree with it they can start to act as brand ambassadors, as mentioned above, therefore speaking up for the brand. (Braun & al. 2013, 21-23.)

In order to reinforce the chances of residents becoming brand ambassadors and accepting the place brand they should be treated as citizens. This requires firstly authorities to keep the public informed of any place brand related decisions and actions such as the brand values and campaigns. (Braun & al. 2013, 21-23.) In addition to this the residents as part of the decision-making process are involved in the creation of the brand and by that they are partly owning the place brand, (Kavaratzis 2012, 15.) hence it can be said that residents should also be granted opportunities and power to participate in the brand creation (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2008, 162; Braun & al. 2013, 21-23; Hankinson 2004, 117). Another point of view to the importance of the residents' involvement is that as the residents can be associated to the place brand and all is basically done in their name, it is crucial to include them in the place branding process (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2008, 162).

The residents' and other stakeholders' participation to the place branding should be planned in advance and there should be a chance for the involvement throughout the different stages of place branding strategies (Kavaratzis 2012, 13). The residents can be involved with place branding with such tools as surveys, for instance asking for their opinions and ideas (Braun & al. 2013, 24.) about the place and its development or with participating in the spreading of positive word-of-mouth of the place in order to promote the place to outsiders and external parties (Childers & al. 2012, 512).

It shouldn't be forgotten that the residents too are consumers of the place brand and it is vital that they support and accept the brand (Hankinson 2004, 117.) as established earlier in the theoretical framework. Possible demolition of the place's inherent culture might take place if the target visitor segments are not in harmony with the residents' characteristics and ideologies (Hankinson 2004, 117). On the other hand a resident gap is formed when the current residents and the potential new residents are incompatible in values, behaviour and culture for example. The effect of this kind of situation is undeniably negative as the potential residents might avoid moving into the place and the current residents might start moving out of the place. (Braun & al. 2013, 22-23.)

The resident gap can also appear among different resident groups inside the place if one of the resident groups has nothing or extremely little in common with the rest of the resident groups that together form the community. The gap might lead to uneasiness and tensions between the residents and the resident groups with different views and identity of the place. For this reason place branding should "understand itself as a process of conflict

management, with the aim of integrating as many residents as possible" (Braun & al. 2013, 23.)

2.3. Christmas in Finland

In this chapter the background and significance of Christmas in Finland will be discussed starting from its history, moving to the timing and lastly to the most visible traditions in Finland.

2.3.1. History of Christmas

Many people today consider Christmas as a religious Christian celebration of the birth of the baby Jesus (Forbes 2007, 32; Vuolio 1981, 9.), however early Christian did not commemorate Christmas at all and it has been only celebrated since the fourth century (Forbes 2007, 17; Lahtinen 2003, 11). Actually the first time Christmas has been celebrated as we nowadays know it, on 25th of December as the observance of the birth of Jesus, was in Rome in the year 354 (Laaksonen 2016, 29; Lahtinen 2003, 12; Vuolio 1981, 9.), which can be seen as the starting point of Christmas.

Before the year 354 Christmas co-existed with numerous other mid-winter festivities, but since the Christianity grew stronger it started to replace original pre-Christian festivals with religious ones while absorbing traditions and habits from the pre-existing celebrations. So, actually many of our Christmas traditions are a mixture of several primeval winter celebrations of various nations. (Forbes 2007, 46; Lahtinen 2003, 11-12; Vuolio 1981, 10.) Some of these pre-Christian celebrations being absorbed into Christmas are for instance the festivities of Saturnalia in ancient Rome and Yule (or Hjul or Jul) in northern Europe (Forbes 2007, 7-11; Lahtinen 2003, 11-12; Vuolio 1981, 10).

The reason why this type of celebrations got emerged into Christmas is because they were celebrated during the winter time and around the turn of the year as the title "mid-term festival" suggests (Forbes 2007, 7-8; Lahtinen 2003, 11). What's common with all of these mid-winter festivals are the elements of evergreen branches, lights and candles, exaggeration with food and drinks, spending time with family and friends and sharing gifts (Forbes 2007, 5-11; Lahtinen 2003, 11.), which can be all seen in today's Christmas celebrations and traditions as being described later on.

As the Christmas spread thru Europe it finally came to Finland in the 12th century via Germans (Vuolio 1981, 185). The Finnish word for Christmas "joulu" has actually evolved from the German and Scandinavian name of their winter festival Yule (Lahtinen 2003, 12;

Vuolio 1981, 10.) which by that time had already started to signify Christmas (Forbes 2007, 10-11). As in other regions, in Finland Christmas also adopted features from the local celebrations, mainly from a harvest festival called “kekri”. Many of the typical elements of winter festivals were also part of “kekri” such as feasting and evergreen decorations but also local elements such as bathing in sauna and from house to house travelling and gift gathering “kekripukki” have been adopted into the Finnish Christmas celebration in one form or another. (Lahtinen 2003, 12-13.)

All in all although Christmas is considered as Christian celebration it is evident that many parts of it are not, thus the celebration of Christmas is merely a combination of Christian meanings and winter celebrations important to people despite their religiousness or non-religiousness (Forbes 2007, 5-32).

2.3.2. Christmas time

The whole twelve day period, between Christmas Day (25th of December) and Epiphany (6th of January), has been thought of as the time for Christmas celebrations. This time is called either the twelve days of Christmas or the Christmastide and it traditionally ends in the Twelfth Night celebrations on the night preceding Epiphany. Later on also special time for Christmas preparations was born called the Advent. (Forbes 2007, 27.) The Advent and therefore the entire Christmas time are considered to start from the first Advent Sunday which usually is the closest Sunday to 30th of November (varying between 27th of November and 3rd of December). The Advent time lasts all the way until Christmas Eve (24th of December). (Forbes 2007, 27; Laaksonen 2016, 29; Lahtinen 2003, 17; Vuolio 1981, 23.) Traditionally the Advent time was meant for “spiritual preparation for Christmas” (Forbes 2007, 27.) which included simple life with fasting, prayer and going to church (Laaksonen 2016, 29; Lahtinen 2003, 17). Nowadays however the preparation time for Christmas tends to start already earlier (Vuolio 1981, 45.) and is no longer a serene and serious time but full of joy and pre-Christmas parties (Laaksonen 2016, 29; Lahtinen 2003, 17; Vuolio 1981, 23).

The most significant days within the Christmas time in Finland are Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Epiphany. The Christmas Eve is the day when traditionally the entire of Finland quietens down for Christmas celebrations after the official Christmas peace proclamation. Other traditions for the day are bringing in the Christmas tree, decorating it and lighting up candles. (Laaksonen 2016, 92-107.) In addition many people go to Christmas church (Laaksonen 2016, 92.) and remember their lost loved ones by visiting their graves (Vuolio 1981, 77). Also bathing in Christmas sauna (Laaksonen 2016, 92.)

and gathering together with family and friends for generous Christmas supper is vital part of Finnish Christmas Eve celebrations (Laaksonen 2016, 92-110; Vuolio 1981, 102-104). Additionally for children it is custom to play different kinds of games while waiting for the Finnish Santa Claus to visit and bring gifts, which also is one of the Finnish traditions itself (Laaksonen 2016, 92-115).

On the other hand Christmas Day in Finland, as in other Northern countries, has traditionally been very serious and devout as the day of the birth of the baby Jesus. It has been even so serious that children were not let to play outdoors nor any visits were allowed. (Vuolio 1981, 9-21). In fact only established traditions for the day are mentioned as visiting the early morning church service (Laaksonen 2016, 128; Vuolio 1981, 21.) and afterwards spending the rest of the day home in peace and tranquillity singing hymns. (Vuolio 1981, 21).

On the contrary to Christmas Day, Boxing Day in Finland has been the day of going out and visiting neighbours and relatives. Also different type of horse related traditions have been custom in many European countries and in Finland they have been usually in form of sledge riding but also horse riding and just taking a walk are well known Boxing Day traditions. Then as last is Epiphany, which in religious contexts means celebration of the three Wise Men. However in Finland Epiphany has established a meaning mainly as the end of Christmas. Nowadays Epiphany signifies for Finns basically the time for clearing away Christmas decorations. (Vuolio 1981, 18-21.)

2.3.3. Christmas traditions in Finland

One of the most important aspects of the Finnish Christmas is the Finnish Santa Claus. The predecessor of the Finnish Santa Claus, and Santa Claus in general, is considered to be Saint Nicholas who was a popular benefactor and saint known for instance as a patron saint of children by the Catholic church (Forbes 2007, 72-73; Laaksonen 2016, 119; Vuolio 1981, 128-132). Originally Saint Nicholas was celebrated on the day of his death on 6th of December, which is still the day when many European children receive their gifts from Saint Nicholas (Forbes 2007, 72-73; Lahtinen 2003, 19; Vuolio 1981, 128).

When Saint Nicholas actually got first connected with actual Christmas was when the character, which Dutch call "Sint Klaas", spread with the Dutch colonists to America and more specifically to New York (Forbes 2007, 72-79; Laaksonen 2016, 19; Vuolio 1981, 128). The nowadays widely known tradition of Santa Claus got formed in the United States where the gift giver not only moved from early December to Christmas (Forbes

2007, 73.) but also got its current appearance. The even today known jolly, chubby, white bearded, red nosed man in red clothing with white fur got its final appearance already in 1931 by Haddon Sundblom who created the new look of Santa Claus for Coca-cola's Christmas advertisement campaign. (Forbes 2007, 92; Laaksonen 2016, 118; Lahtinen 2003, 19-20.)

When Santa Claus finally came to Finland, a Finnish Santa based on the Finnish folklore already existed (Vuolio 1981, 132-136). The original was based on two ancient Finnish celebration where there were two originally scary characters "kekripukki" (Laaksonen 2016, 21.) and "nuuttipukki", animal-like characters, who travelled house to house either collecting gifts for the death or begging food and drinks and giving gifts for the good kids while twigs for the bad (Laaksonen 2016, 21-119; Vuolio 1981, 132). As the concept of a gift giving "joulupukki" was already familiar to the Finnish public accepting the concept of American Santa Claus was easy. The original Finnish character was basically overran by the new Santa Claus as pretty much only things remaining from the original "joulupukki" are the name and the fact that the Finnish Santa actually comes to visit the children each Christmas unlike its American cousin. (Vuolio 1981, 132-136.)

In fact Finnish children are very lucky as they get to meet the Finnish Santa personally as meeting the gift giver is very exceptional in other cultures where the Santa is mainly seen in commercial contexts like in shopping malls (Lahtinen 2003, 20; Vuolio 1981, 137). The whole event and the question Santa asks when visiting Finnish families, "Are there any nice children?" are very much a part of the particularly Finnish Christmas traditions (Laaksonen 2016, 119; Vuolio 1981, 137). Yet another detail being exclusively part of Finnish Santa Claus tradition is that it has been told since the 1920's that the Finnish Santa Claus lives in Korvatunturi in Finland, which is the only truth acceptable for the Finns (Lahtinen 2003, 20; Vuolio 1981, 119).

Also a Christmas tree is a very clear symbol of Christmas. The very first known Christmas trees were in Germany (Forbes 2007, 50; Laaksonen 2016, 104; Lahtinen 2003, 18; Vuolio 1981, 138.), depending on the source, either in the 16th (Vuolio 1981, 138.) or in the early 17th century (Lahtinen 2003, 18). There the first Christmas trees were communal, set up for instance in hospitals, and only later in the 17th century the tree started to appear also in homes and elsewhere in Europe and eventually in the entire Christian world (Vuolio 1981, 138-140).

The tradition of Christmas trees finally spread to all the way to Finland in the early 19th century (Vuolio 1981, 142.) and the first known Christmas tree has been in a private home

on Christmas 1829 (Lahtinen 2003, 18). However the tree was not common in Finnish households until in the early 20th century (Lahtinen 2003, 18; Vuolio 1981, 142). Also churches started to have candle lit Christmas trees in 1920's, the first Christmas tree with electric lights was set up in Helsinki's Senaatintori central square in year 1930 (Lahtinen 2003, 18.) and nowadays the search for a Christmas tree, whether from a forest or from a market place, has become an important ritual of the Christmas time in Finland (Laaksonen 2016, 107).

In the beginning of the Christmas tree tradition, the trees were decorated with fruits like apples (Laaksonen 2016, 104), other sweets, paper ornaments and small presents (Forbes 2007, 123; Laaksonen 2016, 107). However since manufacturing of the glass Christmas ornaments started in Germany in the mid-19th century (Lahtinen 2003, 18; Forbes 2007, 123.) the Christmas ornaments in general have moved from handmade to commercial decorations (Forbes, 2007, 123). Regardless, the traditional Christmas decorations in Finland have included different type of ornaments made of straw, window decorations such as stars and snowflakes made of paper and cardboard and candles. The more modern decorations then again include such as gingerbread houses, door garlands, Christmas flowers, different types of electric lights replacing candles (Vuolio 1981, 21-181.), Christmas themed textiles and Christmas gnomes and animal figurines dressed for Christmas. The colours for Christmas decorations are usually red, gold, silver, green and white. (Laaksonen 2016, 75.)

A Christmas church service is the oldest and most essential part of the entire Christian Christmas and it has existed ever since Christmas itself. In the beginning the main service was the midnight service as the early Christians were mainly slaves and other workers who could come together only when there was no work. (Vuolio 85-86.) The midnight service has formed as essential part of Christmas for many Christian over the past nearly two thousand years. Also in Finland the midnight service use to have its place (Laaksonen 2016, 128; Vuolio 85-86.) as old myths and stories tell about the midnight services of the deceased (Vuolio 85-86).

However after the Reformation (during the 16th and 17th century) many of the Christian celebrations and services were cut back (Vuolio 1981, 87.) and only the morning and evening services were left to the Lutheran church (Laaksonen 2016, 128). Afterwards the early Christmas morning (25th December) service was the one that became most establish in Finland (Vuolio 1981, 87) as it was set in the Church Code already in the 1686 and has remained until today (Laaksonen 2016, 128). In addition in Helsinki there have also been afternoon services on the Christmas Eve since the 1880's and some congregations

in Helsinki have also started to arrange midnight services during Christmas (Vuolio 1981, 98).

Besides for the services themselves, during Christmas churches in Finland fill up with people as they gather to sing Christmas songs together (Lahtinen 2003, 23). In Finland also the people who do not go to church in Christmas time usually listen to religious Christmas music (Vuolio 1981, 91). Actually, the religious type of Christmas music is the oldest, most traditional and most common form of Christmas music (Vuolio 1981, 92.) and it was born in Catholic Germany, French and Italy where the purpose of the music was to make Christians to feel solidarity and the joy of Christmas (Laaksonen 2016, 90).

The religious Christmas songs can be divided into traditional hymns and carols (Forbes 2007, 129; Vuolio 1981, 92.) where the difference between the two is that the fore-mentioned songs have been accepted into hymnals (Vuolio 1981, 92.), are part of church services and have often been “written by monks, theologians, and classical composers over the years” (Forbes 2007, 129). These Christmas hymns have existed already since the 4th century, where all in Latin until 13th century (Vuolio 1981, 92.) and started spreading into Finnish hymnal in the end of 16th century (Laaksonen 2016, 90). The Christmas carols or folks songs, as someone might call (Forbes 2007, 129.), have also been well established in Finland as their tradition started in Finnish homes already in the 19th century (Laaksonen 2016, 90.) and they are “the favourite, familiar religious songs that people like to sing” (Forbes 2007, 129).

Yet, there is a one more group of Christmas songs, the most recent, commercial Christmas songs. They have only evolved during the last century and have been composed foremost for commercial purposes (Forbes 2007, 130). These type of Christmas songs were introduced to Finland in the mid of 20th century as they spread all over Europe from America (Vuolio 1981, 94). The popularity of these commercial Christmas songs is based on beautiful melody (Vuolio 1981, 94.) or popular artists who have recorded them (Forbes 2007, 130). Unlike other Christmas songs, the commercial songs, usually don't included religious themes but cultural aspects of Christmas (Forbes 2007, 130; Vuolio 1981, 91).

Lucia Day (13th of November) is the day for celebrating Saint Lucia (Laaksonen 2016, 36; Lahtinen 2003, 18; Vuolio 1981, 61-67.) who's known as a patron saint for the blind, disabled and sick (Laaksonen 2016, 36). However the modern celebration does no longer have any connections to the religiously known Saint or any old time traditions of Lucia Day (Laaksonen 2016, 39). In fact In Finland (and Sweden) Lucia has become just a character

of a costume parade (Laaksonen 2016, 39.) and is being connected to Christmas only because her day is during the Advent season (Laaksonen 2016, 37; Vuolio 1981, 64).

Originally in Finland, there hasn't been any Lucia Day traditions (Vuolio 1981, 65). The modern, beauty queen Lucia, and the Lucia parade have been copied from Sweden where the first Stockholm's Lucia was chosen in the year 1928 (Laaksonen 2016, 38; Vuolio 1981, 66) and the same tradition took place in Helsinki in the year 1930 (Laaksonen 2016, 39; Lahtinen 2003, 18; Vuolio 1981, 66). However because of the wars the tradition in Helsinki really started only in 1949 after which each year a young woman has been selected to be the Lucia of the whole Finland (Laaksonen 2016, 39; Vuolio 1981, 67.) by a competition arranged by magazine called *Hufvudstadsbladet* (Lahtinen 2003, 18; Vuolio 1981, 67.) where the public gets to vote their favourite girl while donating money for charity (Vuolio 1981, 67).

In Helsinki, each year, on Lucia Day the just selected Lucia starts her parade from Tuomiokirkko and travels thru the city to Finlandia house where there is a big Lucia celebration and a charity event (Lahtinen 2003, 18; Vuolio 1981, 67). Part of the tradition is also that before Christmas the Lucia will do visits in different type of institutions like retirement homes in order to spread Christmas spirit (Vuolio 1981, 67).

On the same year the first Lucia parade took place in Helsinki in 1930, also the first Christmas Street in Helsinki was set up (Laaksonen 2016, 48; Vuolio 1981, 57.) in Kluuvikatu as the shops on the street designed Christmas lighting together (Vuolio 1981, 57) and it is considered to be first lit Christmas Street in the entire Finland (Lahtinen 2003, 18; Vuolio 1981, 57). The idea was again copied from Sweden (Laaksonen 2016, 48; Vuolio 1981, 57.) and originally the tradition of Christmas Streets was born in the big cities of North America and Europe where department stores started to decorate their windows and then entire streets during Christmas time (Laaksonen 2016, 48). Afterwards Aleksanterinkatu became the official Christmas Street in Helsinki in the year 1947 (Lahtinen 2003, 18; Vuolio 1981, 57.) and has been the most significant Christmas Street in Helsinki and in Finland ever since (Vuolio 1981, 57).

Last of the Finnish Christmas traditions presented here is Christmas sauna. Although in many countries people have prepared for celebrations by bathing and Christmas bath is known even in Southern Europe possibly even since the ancient Rome, Christmas sauna is considered to be specifically Finnish tradition (Vuolio 1981, 95). The tradition has very strong roots since the 19th century when Christmas sauna was very significant part of the peasantry's Christmas traditions (Laaksonen, 2016, 109; Lahtinen 2003, 16; Vuolio 1981,

95). The purpose of the Christmas sauna was to finish the everyday haste and allow people to wash up for the celebrations. Therefore the bathing was started only when all Christmas preparations and chores were finished. (Laaksonen 2016, 109.)

However the tradition was that the bathing was started already at noon or in the afternoon and the sauna had to be left empty before dark at Christmas (Laaksonen 2016, 109; Lahtinen 2003, 16; Vuolio 1981, 95-96). This was because there used to be many beliefs and myths related to sauna (Laaksonen 2016, 109). Some thought that there was good luck for those who got out of sauna first whereas the one coming out last would face troubles during the upcoming year (Laaksonen 2016, 109). Others believed that elves and gnomes (Lahtinen 2003, 16.) or that the deceased would come to the sauna during the traditional bathing time in the evening after dark (Vuolio 1981, 96).

2.4. Christmas events

In this chapter a general overview to Christmas events in Helsinki will be given along with separate listing of events arranged during 24th, 25th and 26th of December. In addition different types of Christmas events abroad will be presented to provide information on what kinds of Christmas events are organized all over the world.

2.4.1. Christmas events in Helsinki

There are numerous different Christmas events and activities available in Helsinki throughout Christmas. The different types of events are divided into six categories and presented shortly below. More thorough list of specific events can be seen in Appendix 1 which includes a listing of example events in different categories that took place during the previous Christmas season in Helsinki.

The first category of Christmas events is Christmas markets. Numerous Christmas markets are organized in different areas of Helsinki each year. Most of the markets take place between mid-November and end of December while only few are open after 23rd of December. Most Christmas markets have a variety of domestic and/or foreign vendors selling their produce such as crafts, design and goods. In addition there are usually food and drinks available and Christmas music is being played. It is also common to have Santa Claus visiting markets on certain days and hours. Most of the Christmas markets in Helsinki have no entrance fee.

Next category is cultural events. The Christmas themed cultural events in Helsinki take place from early November until beginning of January. The selection of cultural events

includes variety of concerts, theater and even circus performances. Thirdly comes family events. This category includes all sorts of events, such as cultural and outdoor events, which are suitable and targeted to the entire family. The examples cover for example ballet, puppet theater and Christmas trails.

Religious Christmas events are presented next. In Helsinki during Christmas season the religious events almost entirely comprise of church services which are organized by most of the churches in Helsinki. The specific Christmas services take place from the beginning of Advent and until 6th of January. Then comes the category of New Year's events. These events in Helsinki are organized on 31st of December and comprise mainly of parties and different types of performances. New Year's events and parties arranged by the city of Helsinki are usually free of charge and open for everyone.

Last is a category of other events. This group includes mixed variety of Christmas themed events in Helsinki. Example events are such as Christmas Streets, Lucia celebration and parade, Christmas trails and Christmas saunas. In Helsinki these mixed Christmas events usually start to appear in the end of November and they are offered until the end of December.

However as there are differences between these aforementioned Christmas events in general and Christmas events offered during 24th, 25th and 26th of December also another short list of events is presented in Appendix 2. This list showcases event options that were presented taking place in Helsinki during the above mentioned days during last Christmas. The variety is briefly described below day by day in order to bring out take limited variety and amount of events offered during those days.

On Christmas Eve in Helsinki only couple of Christmas markets were open in the morning and early afternoon. Not one single cultural event is shown on the listing. Religious events were offered in the form of services in some churches. One family event was mentioned for the Christmas Eve. Other events recommended mainly comprised of clubs open in the evening and one sport event in the morning. Then again on Christmas Day the variety of events was even narrower. One cultural event was mentioned in form of movie showings and again just one family event was presented. Other events recommended were open cafes, bingo and Christmas disco in the evening.

Out of the three days, Boxing Day's event selection in Helsinki was the richest. Couple of Christmas markets were mentioned to be open again and the variety of cultural events was also widest as theatre, movies and tours were taking place. Also religious church

events were recommended for the day. Several family events were presented as well like theater, trails and skating. Other events showcased were sledge and pony riding and multiple clubs open in the evening.

2.4.2. Christmas events abroad

Variety of Christmas events are also arranged all over the world and below are some Christmas related events that differ from the ones offered in Helsinki during the Christmas season. Hongkong for example offers events such as “SantaCon”, where people can put on their Santa Claus costumes and take over the streets, filling them with Holiday spirit and multiple “Santa Clauses” at once. One can also take part in cupcake workshops and learn how to decorate the pastries in regards to the theme of Christmas. 3D light shows are also arranged as well as meetings with Santa in midst of fun and excitement at a local amusement park. (Lai 2016.)

In Quebec one can take part in Christmas themed guided tours arranged all over the city. During the tours the visitors are able to get familiar with historical buildings and learn some of the stories they hold inside them. (Quebec City Tourism 2017.) Baltimore on the other hand offers tours of Christmas decorated historic houses, buffet breakfast at a local Zoo with Santa Claus and a weeklong science exhibition called “12 days of Science”, which entertains the visitors with such events as Christmas themed workshops and shows at a Science centre (Meaney 2014). Other events in America include such events as cookie exchanges where 50 people bring their cookies to a restaurant and swap cookies with the other participants as well as give voluntarily food donations for charity organizations present at the event. For adults Christmas themed cocktail seminars are arranged where the participants can learn how to prepare Christmas themed cocktails while having fun with their friends. Also themed movie watching is offered for those who are ready to take the Christmas movie watching to the next level with such events as “Polar Express’ Pajama party” for example. Culture lovers can also experience the Christmas of 1945 and learn how Christmas was celebrated in the past. (Washington Post Staff 2016.)

Ireland offers the adults with festive and competitive spirits an event called “12 Pubs of Christmas”, where the participants are able to put on their Christmas sweaters and attempt to have 12 alcoholic beverages at 12 different pubs during one evening (Thompson 2016). In Belgium at the heart of Brussels a Christmas spectacle called “Winter Wonders 2016” was arranged during the Christmas season of 2016. This city centre wide event included “a Christmas market with more than 200 chalets, fairground attractions, a cov-

ered ice rink for skating, a Christmas tree and sound and light show on the Grand-Place and a concert by Lost Frequencies.” (City of Brussels 2016.)

3. Methodology

In this chapter the methodology used in the thesis will be presented. First the actual research methods will be discussed along with the questionnaire design and then the data collection form will be presented finalizing with the methods used for the data analysis.

3.1. Research methods

As the purpose of this thesis is to explore what the local residents consider typical for the Christmas in Helsinki and how they would like to develop it further, large amounts of data are required to be collected and analysed. Therefore the chosen research method for this thesis is quantitative. In quantitative research the purpose is to collect and analyse large amounts of numerical data for instance by questionnaire surveys in order to acquire reliable results. Out of the different approaches to quantitative research this thesis is statistical quantitative research exploratory in nature, as the purpose is to gather new, yet unexplored, data. (Veal 2011, 34-35.)

Another method for conducting the research could have been qualitative approach which relies on analysing information gathered by observation, interviews and texts (Veal 2011, 35). As qualitative research methods focus only on few individuals at once, gathering deeper knowledge of the topic, the results are not applicable for generalization as they don't represent the full population (Veal 2011, 35.) and thus the approach would not have been appropriate for the purpose of this thesis. However since qualitative research methods lead to more elaborate results some of qualitative features described later on have been incorporated to the research as complimentary elements to the quantitative methods.

As the commissioner had requested for a questionnaire, there were two options for conducting the research: online questionnaire and face-to-face questionnaire. Online questionnaire was chosen for this research as it is fast, lower in cost and more efficient than face-to-face surveys, it reaches widely distributed population more conveniently and enables direct data analysis (Ritter & Sue 2012, 5).

Then again for the type of online questionnaire two different options were considered: Internet survey and email survey. One of the main disadvantages of email surveys is not having access to an e-mail list appropriate for the research (Ritter & Sue 2012, 17.) which was also one of the key factors why the method was not selected for this thesis as suitable e-mail list was not available. –From the commissioner's side only an email list of Hel-

sinki Christmas Market was available which was not sufficient enough considering its size and that it does not represent the desired target population as a whole.

An Internet survey was selected as the method of this research. In Internet surveys a link to the questionnaire is posted on websites which allows data collection from individuals you might not otherwise reach. The advantages of using Internet surveys are for instance anonymity of respondents compared to other methods, which allows respondents to answer more truthfully. Also there is a possibility to affect the target audience based on which websites the survey is posted on and the more popular the websites the higher potential of receiving large quantity of answers. (Ritter & Sue 2012, 17-18.)

The research is conducted by an Internet questionnaire which belongs to the self-completion survey category. Hence Internet questionnaires have the same benefits as self-completion surveys for example absence of interviewer bias and ability of the respondents to answer where and when suitable for them. (Brace 2013, 23-27.)

3.2. Questionnaire design

Webropol –software was selected as the platform of the questionnaire as it is available from behalf of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. It also allows data to be collected and analysed in the same software. In addition it is the most familiar questionnaire platform for the researchers based on their previous research experience.

As making sure that surveys are accessible to everyone, including those who speak different language, is important in order to reach as many individuals within the target population as possible (Ritter & Sue 2012, 101.) distributing the questionnaire in English was considered. However as the existing Christmas events and services are mainly in Finnish and given the time restrictions of the research, it was decided to focus only on the Finnish speaking population, hence the questionnaire was created only in Finnish.

Questionnaires should consist of questions constructed in a way that they are short, unambiguous and self-explanatory and of common language (Davies & Hughes, 2014, 73-77; Ritter & Sue 2012, 51-52). Thus the questions were written as short as possible, avoiding jargon, wording the questions so that only one question is asked at a time and including instructions for answering each question.

To ensure the validity of the results a questionnaire should consist only of questions that are relevant to the purpose and aims of the research (Brace 2013, 28; Ritter & Sue 2012,

52). A questionnaire should also include a set of questions for instance demographics gathering information for analysing purposes (Brace 2013, 29). For this reasons the questions for the questionnaire are based on the main research question and its sub-questions that can be found below.

Main research question:

- What are local residents' opinions about the Christmas time in Helsinki?

Sub questions:

- What local residents consider as appropriate starting and ending period for Christmas themed services and events?
- What local residents think of as typical aspects, events and experiences of the Christmas in Helsinki?
- How would local residents like to develop the Christmas in Helsinki?

Based on the above mentioned research questions the questions on the questionnaire (total of 20) are divided into four themes: background information, timing of Christmas, perceptions of prior Christmas seasons and needs and wishes for future. The contents of all the questions representing the four themes are presented below. The questionnaire in its original form in Finnish can be found in Appendix 3 and the translated version in English can be seen in Appendix 4.

For background information the questionnaire includes seven questions about the respondents' age, gender, marital status and whether they have children or not and of which age. In addition there are questions about the respondent's past Christmas experiences and of their knowledge about the current Christmas events and services in the city of Helsinki.

Next theme, timing of Christmas, answers to the research question of "What local residents consider as appropriate starting and ending period for Christmas themed services and events?" In the questionnaire there are all together seven questions about this theme including the appropriate starting and ending period for the visibility of Christmas (e.g. decorations) and for Christmas themed events, products and services. Also preferred timing and type of Christmas events are asked.

The third theme which is perceptions of prior Christmas seasons answers to the question of "What local residents think of as typical aspects, events and experiences of the Christmas in Helsinki?" The four questions related to this theme cover the aspects of

how respondents describe Christmas in Helsinki and its most typical aspects. Additionally the respondents are also asked to estimate the amount of Christmas events and to describe their favourite Christmas experience in Helsinki.

The last theme covering the needs and wishes for future provides answers to the research question of "How would local residents like to develop the Christmas in Helsinki?" In relation to the theme the questionnaire asks the respondents two questions, firstly to describe Christmas in Helsinki in the future and secondly share their wishes and ideas regarding possible new Christmas events and services.

Ethical guidelines underline the importance of presenting certain information to respondents before they make the decision to participate in a survey. For example the following aspects should be clearly stated: name of the organization, topic of the research, anonymity, use of the retrieved data and length of the survey. (Brace 2013, 201-202.) The aforementioned matters were included in the Finnish cover letter of the questionnaire which can be found in Appendix 5.

To make sure that the questionnaire will work as intended with the real respondents, a pre-testing should be carried out with few members of the target population (Brace 2013, 195; Ritter & Sue 2012, 73). Hence the questionnaire was tested with a test group of five participants representing different demographics (e.g. age, gender, family status) within the target population. Based on the feedback from the test group the questionnaire was remodelled, for instance by rephrasing some of the questions in order to make the questions more comprehensible.

All surveys should also go through informal piloting where feedback is collected from a small number of colleagues (Brace 2013, 194). In this research the format of the questionnaire and the related materials were edited according to the thesis commissioners', Helsinki Marketing, and thesis supervisor's remarks. In addition related materials were created to accompany the questionnaire. Short posts on social media channels and a news article for the city website were created to inform and attract potential respondents. The texts can be found in Finnish in Appendices 6 and 7.

3.3. Data collection

The data collection was implemented in the form of an Internet survey, as explained earlier, thus the questionnaire was published on several websites provided by the commissioner. The websites were the website of the city of Helsinki (www.hel.fi), Twitter account

of the city of Helsinki (twitter.com/helviestinta), Facebook accounts of Tuomaan Markkinat (www.facebook.com/tuomaanmarkkinat) and of the city of Helsinki (www.facebook.com/helsinkikaupunki).

The questionnaire was published on the different sites by the commissioner. On 10th of April 2017 the questionnaire was posted on the website and Twitter account of the city of Helsinki and Facebook of Tuomaan Markkinat and on 13th of April 2017 on the Facebook of the city of Helsinki. On the website of the city of Helsinki the questionnaire was published as a news article written by the authors which can be seen in Appendix 7. On the social media sites the questionnaire was published as a post containing the link to the questionnaire platform. The questionnaire was open for answering until 21st of April (for 12 days in total) and the amount of responses collected during the time period was 174.

3.4. Data analysis

The data collected by the questionnaire survey was analysed in two phases. First the quantitative portion of the data was analysed by quantitative analysis and then the qualitative portion generated by the open-ended question by qualitative analysis methods.

Descriptive statistics were used in analysing the quantitative data, which means that the basic features of the statistics were described for instance by frequencies and percentages in order to summarise the results of each question (Davies & Hughes 2014, 153; Ritter & Sue 2012, 150). In more detail frequency distributions of the data were created, which allows inspection of the data's central tendency and range (Brotherton 2015, 240; Davies & Hughes 2014, 153; Ritter & Sue 2012, 151).

In addition to the very basic data analysis also cross-tabulation was used to get more accurate results. Cross-tabulation, or contingency tables, refers to the comparison of data thru two nominal variables which allows inspection of relationships between the two chosen variables (Brotherton 2015, 246; Davies & Hughes 2014, 152; Ritter & Sue 2012, 160). The two variables chosen for the cross-tabulation for this thesis were respondents who had no children and respondents who had children aged 15 years or younger. The two groups are compared throughout the results in order to see the possible differences within the responses as the differences in results could bring additional value to the commissioner and event industry in Helsinki when developing Christmas season events for the different target groups.

In the general frequency distribution as well as in the cross-tabulation the results were mainly analysed and presented in form of modes. Modal values were used as they show the most frequently occurring score for each question and because they are suitable for all types of data including nominal data (Brotherton 2015, 241; Davies & Hughes 2014, 123-124; Ritter & Sue 2012, 156.) which is the most common form of data resulted from the questionnaire of this thesis.

In addition it is noted that the results are mainly presented in percentages in order to make comprehension of large amount of data easier. Also all the results are rounded to integers and the decimals have been left out to present the results in a simpler form. Furthermore also graphs have been created of the most complex results as “visual data presentations assist in comprehension of information and makes numbers easier to grasp and compare” (Ritter & Sue 2012, 191). The whole quantitative analysis for this thesis was performed and the graphs created by the same Webropol –software as the questionnaire was created in order to keep the process as fast and efficient as possible.

Then again a content analysis was used for the qualitative part of the data as it is suggested as an appropriate method for handling information gathered thru open-ended questions on questionnaires (Davies & Hughes 2014, 209). Content analysis refers to a qualitative data analysis method which uses “counting, or enumeration, of key words, phrases, images and so on to produce frequencies” (Brotherton 2015, 275-276). The content analysis for this research was implemented by unitising, which means choosing for instance words or phrases as a focus for the analysis, and by coding, referring to creation of categories by which the data can be organised (Brotherton 2015, 272).

A method of counting individual words was used for analysing short (even one word) answers gathered from multiple choice questions’ “other, what” responses. Then again for longer answers from the actual open-ended questions also interpreting and recognising meanings of larger text blocks was used as it is suggested to be “the best way of achieving a high degree of reliability in the conclusions drawn” (Davies & Hughes 2014, 210). Besides only counting most frequent answers also so called weak signals were paid attention to and are mentioned later on in the results as well as used as a base for recommendations whenever appropriate.

The aforementioned cross-tabulation was also applied in the open-ended questions along with the content analysis in order to recognise possible differences between the comparison groups. However it is noted that the last open-ended question on the questionnaire was entirely left out of the analysis as the responses did not provide appropriate answers

to the main research question and for this reason the answers were irrelevant for the aim of the research. The content analysis of the qualitative data was implemented manually as the aim was to interpret the data as thoroughly as possible.

4. Results

In this chapter the results of the research are presented. The results of the different questions have been divided into four themes of background information, timing of Christmas, perceptions of prior Christmas seasons and needs and wishes for future Christmases.

The results of each theme are presented question by question first presenting the overall results with 174 respondents and then comparing the results of respondents who do not have children (56 respondents) with those who have children of the age of 15 years or younger (50 respondents).

4.1. Background information

The background information was collected via seven different questions on the questionnaire. These questions below provide answers considering the respondents' gender, age, marital status, whether they have children and of what age if they do, how well do they know the current Christmas events and services in Helsinki and whether they participated in any of these events during last Christmas or not.

When asking the respondents' gender it came out that out of the 174 respondents 90% were women, 9% men and 2% did not want to answer. Out of the 56 respondents who did not have children 88% were women, 11% men and again 2% of the respondents did not want to answer. In comparison 94% of the 50 respondents with children aged 15 years or younger were women when 6% were men.

For the total age of the respondents there were more variance as 29% were of the age 50-59, 24% 30-39, another 24% 40-49, 10% were of the age 20-29, 9% 60-69, 2% over 70 years of age and the last 1% did not want to answer the question. The total age distribution of the 174 respondents can be seen in the Figure 3 below.

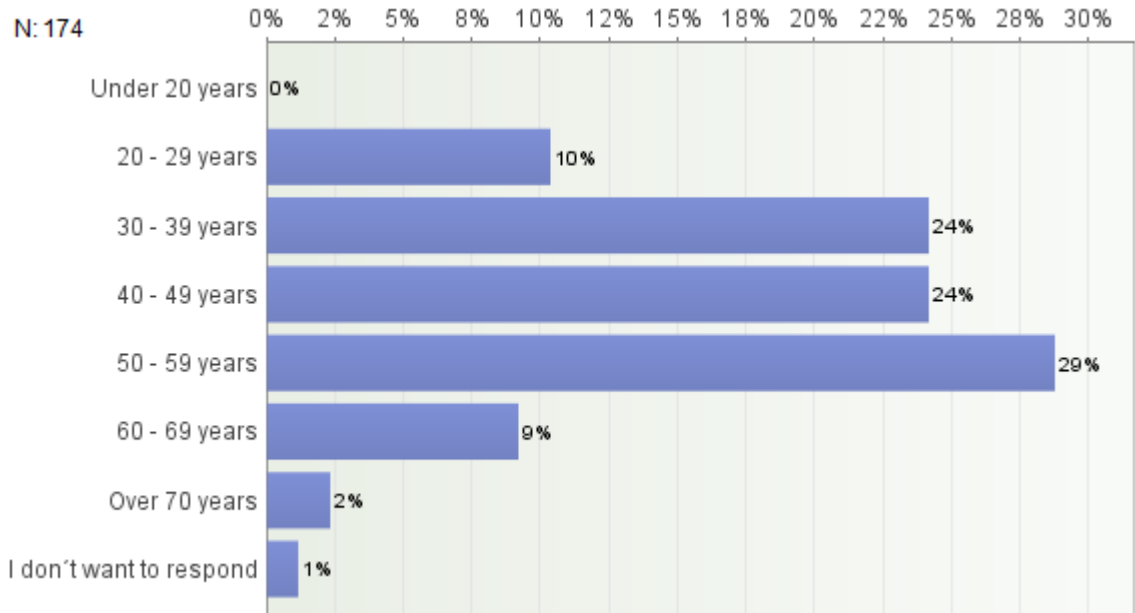


Figure 3. Age distribution of the respondents

For the 56 respondents with no children the age distribution came out in a way that 32% were 20-29, 29% were 30-39, 23% were 40-49, 11% were 50-59, 4% were 60-69 and the remaining 2% were over 70 years of age. Then again out of the 50 respondents with children 50% were 30-39, 42% were 40-49 and 8% were 50-59 years of age. The age distribution of the two respondent groups compared can be seen on the Figure 4.

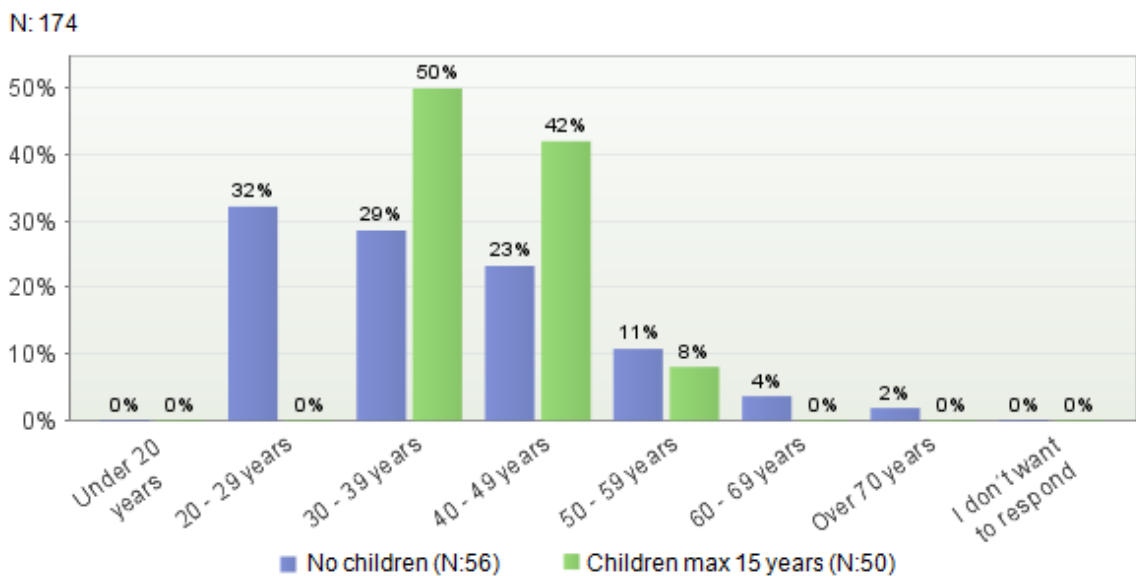


Figure 4. Age comparison between focus groups

For the marital status 48% of the total respondents were married, 34% were unmarried, 8% divorced, 2% were widows, 1% was in registered partnership and the remaining 7% did not want to answer. Within the 56 respondents without children 77% were unmarried,

18% were married, 4% were divorced and the remaining 2% did not want to answer. Then again out of the 50 respondents with children 15 years or younger 64% were married, 18% unmarried, 12% were divorced and the rest 6% did not want to answer.

Out of the 174 respondents 35% had children living in the same household with them, 32% didn't have any children, 30% had children who live in a different household and the remaining 2% did not want to answer the question. Out of the 50 respondents who had children 15 years of age or younger 98% had their children living in the same household whereas 2% had their children living in a separate household.

The question regarding the age of the children was answered in total by 114 respondents. 64% of the respondents reported having children of the age of 16 or older, 19% had children age of 8-11, 18% had children aged from 12-15 and the ages of 4-7 together with younger than 3 years old were reported by 12% of the respondents each. 1% of the respondents did not want to answer the question. The age distribution of the children of the total respondents can be seen in Figure 5.

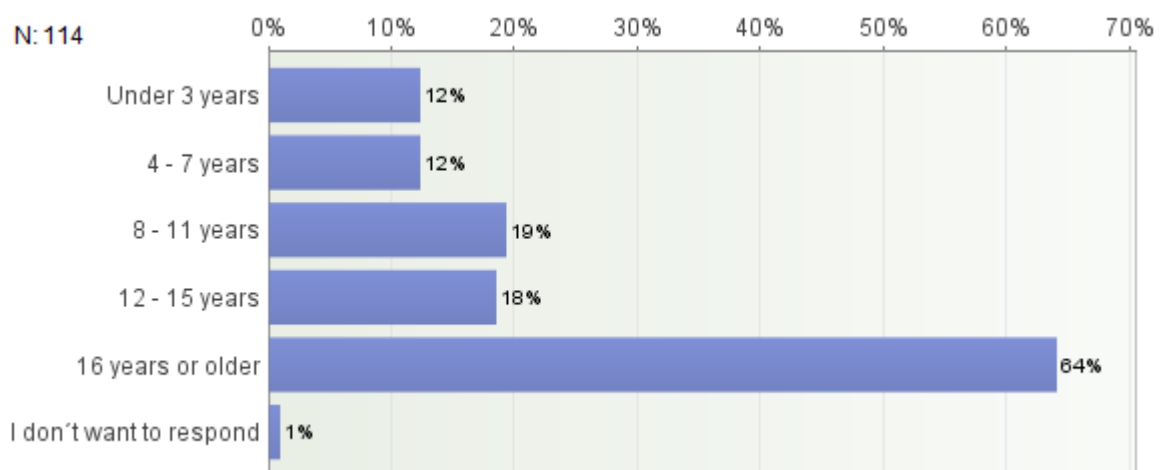


Figure 5. Children's ages

Out of the respondents who had children of the age of 15 or younger 44% had children 8-11 years of age, 42% had 12-15 year-olds, under the age of 3 as well as children 4-7 years of age had 28% of the respondents each and last 20% of the respondents reported that they had also children the age 16 or older. The children's age division among the 56 respondents with children 15 years or younger is presented in the Figure 6 below.

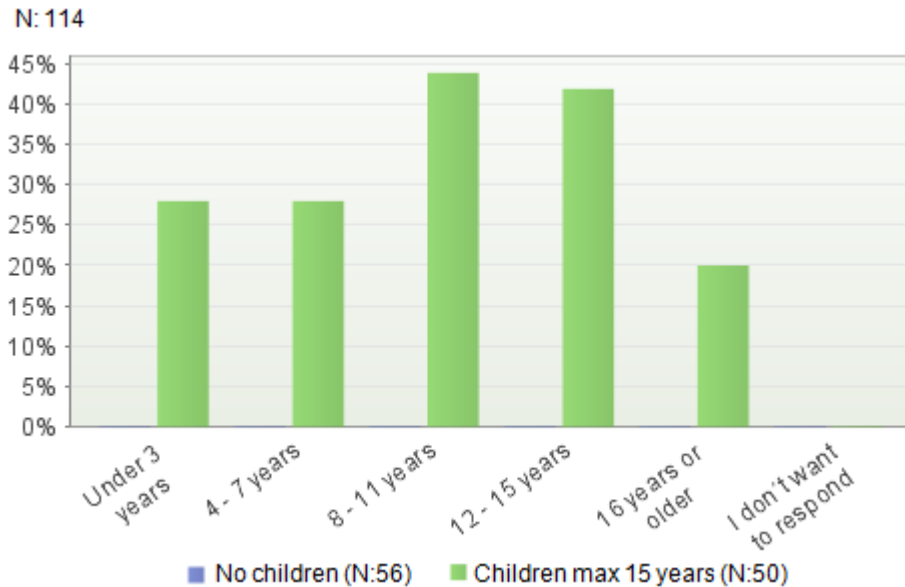


Figure 6. Comparison of children's ages between focus groups

Next the respondents were asked to tell about their prior knowledge about the current Christmas events in Helsinki which were divided into seven different categories and can be seen in the Figure 7 below together with the overall results. Within the total responses Christmas markets were known very well by 42%, well by 39%, moderately by 14%, weakly by 4% and very weakly by 1% of the 174 respondents.

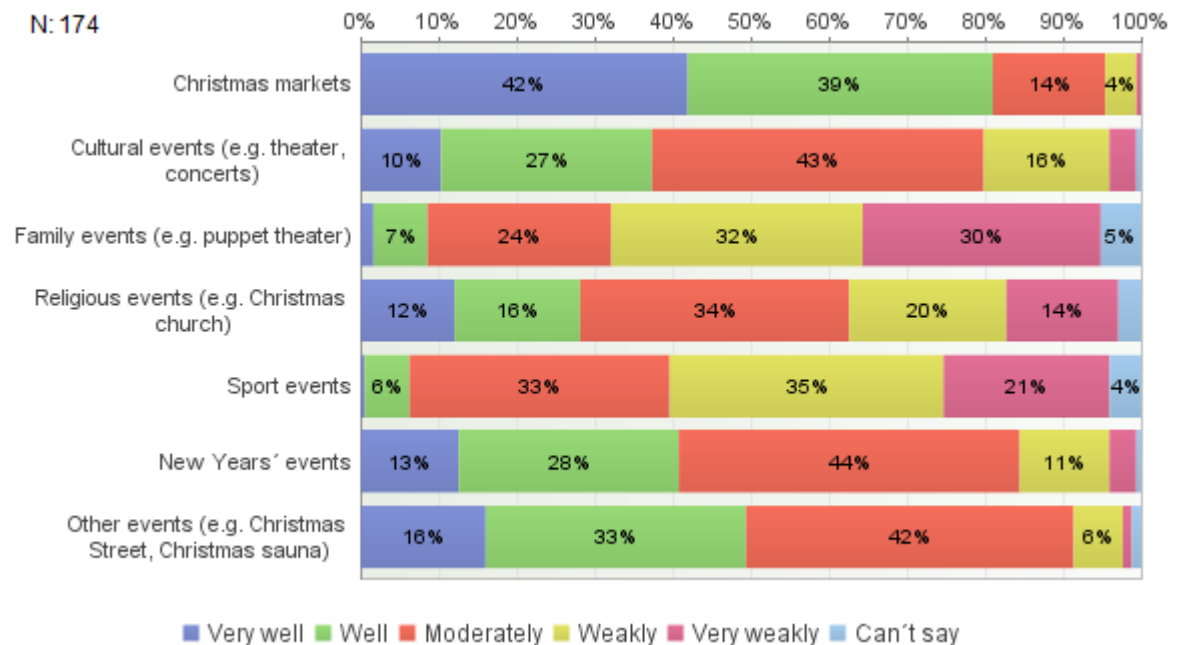


Figure 7. Knowledge of the Christmas events in Helsinki

Among the 56 respondents with no children Christmas markets were known well by 48%, very well by 30%, moderately by 14%, weakly by 5% and very weakly by 2%. Then again

the 50 respondents with children 15 of younger 48% knew the markets very well, 32% well, 16% moderately and 4% weakly. The results of the two focus groups concerning the Christmas markets can be seen in Figure 8 below.

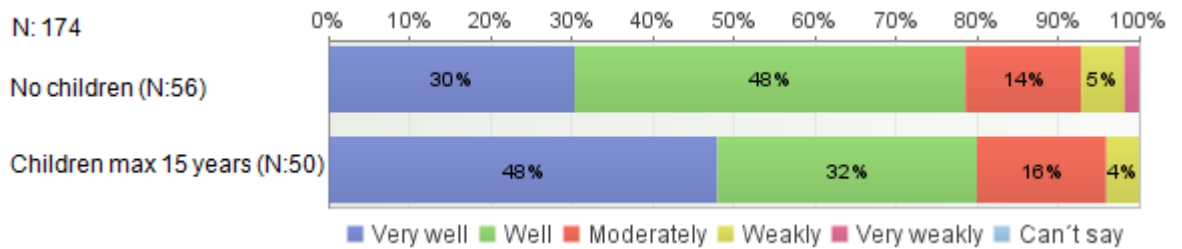


Figure 8. Focus groups' knowledge of Christmas markets in Helsinki

Then again cultural events like theater and concerts were know moderately by 43% of the total 174 of the respondents, well by 27%, weakly by 16%, very well by 10%, very weakly by 3% and last 1 % of the respondents could not tell whether they were familiar with this type of events. 48% of the respondents without children knew the cultural events moderately, 21% knew them well, 18% weakly, 7% very well and 5% very weakly. The answers by the respondents with children were somewhat similar showing that 46% of them knew the events moderately, 32% well, 18% weakly, 2% very well and another 2% could not tell how well they knew the events. The responses of the two focus groups are presented also in the Figure 9.

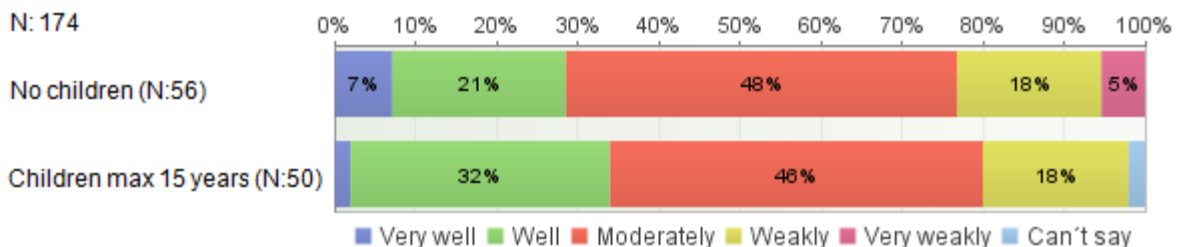


Figure 9. Focus groups' knowledge of cultural events in Helsinki

Next in the question was the category of family events such as puppet theater which was weakly known by 32% out the 174 respondents, very weakly known by 30%, moderately known by 24%, well known by 7%, very well known by 2% and the remaining 5% could not say whether they knew the events. The family events were known very weakly by 46% of the 56 respondent with no children, weakly known by 32%, moderately known by 12% and 9% could not identify if they knew family type of events. On the other hand 40% out of the 50 respondents with children knew the events moderately, 28% weakly, 18% well, 8% very weakly, 4% very well and the remaining 2% could not tell their familiar-

ity with the events. The familiarity of the family events within the two focus groups can be seen in the Figure 10.

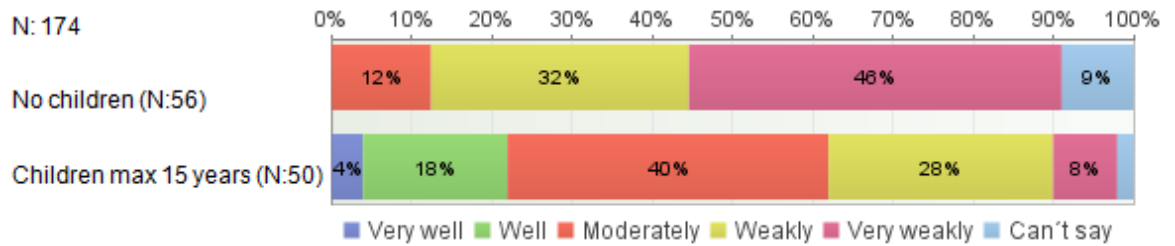


Figure 10. Focus groups' knowledge of family events in Helsinki

Religious events such as Christmas church were then again known moderately by 34%, weakly by 20%, well by 16%, very weakly by 14%, very well by 12% of the 174 respondents when the remaining 3% could not say whether they were familiar with religious events at all. The results for the 56 respondents without children are very similar as 38% of them knew the events moderately, 21% very weakly, 16% weakly, 14% well, 5% very well and another 5% could not indicate how well they knew this type of events. Also the 50 respondents with children gave very similar responses 40% of them knowing the religious events moderately, 22% weakly, 14% well, 12% very weakly, 8% very well when the remaining 4% could not say if they knew this type of events. The two focus groups' results are presented in the Figure 11 below.

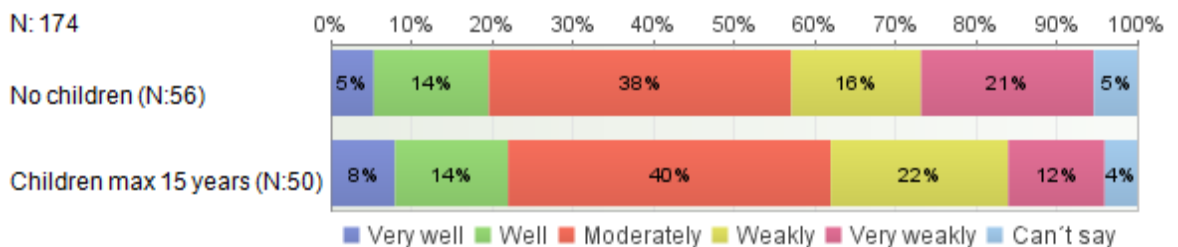


Figure 11. Focus groups' knowledge of religious events in Helsinki

Then the respondents were asked how familiar they were with Christmas themed sport events. 35% out of the 174 respondents told they knew this type of events weakly, 33% moderately, 21% very weakly, 6% well, 1% very well and the last 4% could not say how well they knew sport events if at all. Out of the 56 respondents without children 34% knew this type of sport events weakly, 30% knew them moderately, 27% very weakly, 4% well and 5% could not indicate how familiar these event were. The results of the 50 respondents with children 15 years-of-age of under were slightly different as 44% of them knew the events weakly, 34% knew them moderately, 12% very weakly, 6% well and the re-

maining 4% could not tell if they were familiar with Christmas themed sport events. The answers of the two groups can be seen in the Figure 12.

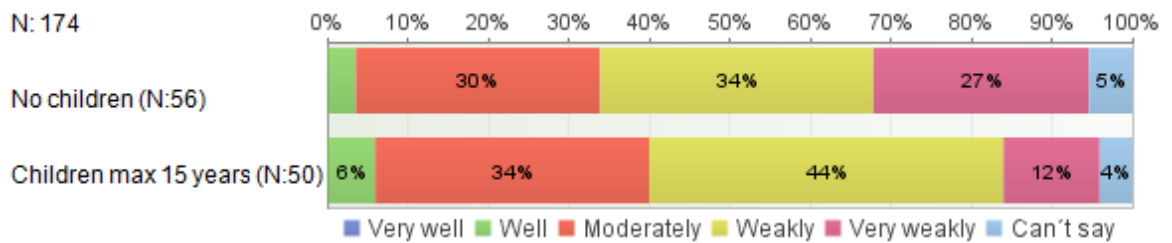


Figure 12. Focus groups' knowledge of sport events in Helsinki

Next it came out that 44% of the total 174 respondents knew New Year's events moderately, 28% well, 13% very well, 11% weakly, 3% very weakly and again the remaining 1% could not tell if they were familiar with these type of events. Out of the 56 respondents with no children 50% knew the New Year's events moderately, 30% well, 9% weakly, 7% very well and 4% very weakly. Then again 40% of the 50 respondents with children knew the same type of events moderately, 28% well, 16% very well, 14% weakly and 2% very weakly. The familiarity of these events within the two groups is presented in the Figure 13.

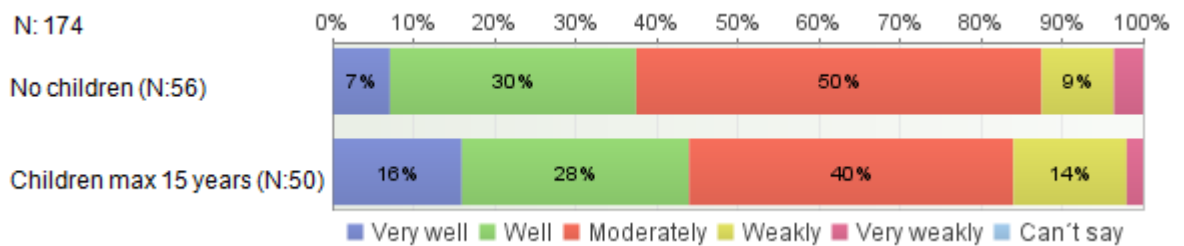


Figure 13. Focus groups' knowledge of New Year's events in Helsinki

Last the respondents were asked about their familiarity with other Christmas events such as Christmas street and saunas. Total of 42% of the 174 respondents answered they knew other Christmas events moderately, 33% knew them well, 16% very well, 6% weakly and 1% each answered that they either knew the events very weakly or could not say if they knew them in the first place. 46% of the 56 respondents without children then again answered that they knew these type of other events moderately, 32% knew them well, very well and weakly they knew 9% each and 2% each knew them very weakly or could not tell how well they knew this type of events. On the other hand 46% of the 50 respondents with children answered that they knew the events also moderately and 34% knew them well while 18% knew them very well and 2% knew the events weakly. The comparison of the two groups can be seen on the Figure 14 below.

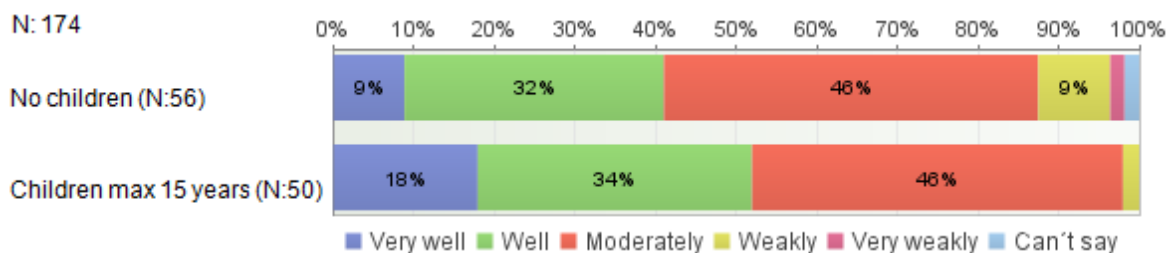


Figure 14. Focus groups' knowledge of other Christmas events in Helsinki

The last background information question covered the respondents' participation in the seven different types of Christmas events during the previous Christmas season. The question was answered by 173 respondents in total. For the comparison the questions were again answered by 56 respondents without any children and by 49 respondents with children aged 15 or younger.

The Christmas markets were visited once by 38% of the total respondents, twice by 24% and 13% reported visiting the markets three times during the Christmas season. 12% reported visiting four times or more and another 12% reported not participating to the markets at all. 1% of the respondents couldn't say how many times they had visited the Christmas markets the previous Christmas. Out of the 56 respondents without children 34% had visited the Christmas markets twice, 30% once, 16% 4 times or more, 13% hadn't participated at all, 5% had visited the markets three times and the remaining 2% could not tell if or how many times they had participated this type of events. Then again 37% of the respondents with children had reported they had visited Christmas markets during the previous season once and in addition 18% each had visited the markets three times or not at all, 16% four times or more and the last 10% had participated the events twice.

The next category in the question was cultural events such as Christmas concerts and theater. 43% of the 173 respondents had not participated in any cultural events and 33% stated visiting the events only once during the last Christmas season. The cultural events were participated twice by 13% and three times by 7% of the respondents. 4% reported participating four times or more and 1% couldn't say whether they had participated in the cultural events or not. Similar type of answers were also given by the 56 respondents with no children as 55% had not participated any cultural events, 25% had participated once, 9% twice, 5% three times and another 5% four times or more. Slightly varying results were provided by the respondents with children as 51% had not visited any cultural events, 31% had visited once, 12% twice and 6% three times.

Family events such as puppet theater hadn't been participated by the majority of the 173 respondents, 89%, and 9% reported visiting the events once during the last Christmas season. The answers of participating to the family events twice, three times and four times or more were each reported by 1% of the respondents. Very similar answers were also provided by the 56 respondents without children as 96% of them had not participated family events and 2% each had participated once or twice. Then again the 49 respondents with children gave somewhat different answers as 71% had not visited the events but 22% had visited them once and 2% each had visited them twice, three times or four times or more.

Religious events including Christmas church hadn't been participated at all by 66% of the total respondents whereas 26% participated the activities once during the previous Christmas season. 6% of the respondents reported taking part in religious events twice and 1% each stated participating in the events three times and four times or more during the last Christmas season. Out of the respondents without children 79% had not taken part in religious events, 16% had participated once, 4% twice and 2% four times or more. The respondents with children had then again participated slightly more as 67% had not participated the events but 27% had participated them once and 6% twice.

The sports events during the previous Christmas season hadn't been participated by 90% of the 173 respondents making it the majority of the respondents. 5% reported participating twice and 4% once to the Christmas season sports events. The sports events were participated three times and four times or more by 1% of the respondents each. On the other the respondents without children had visited this type of events even less as 96% had not visited them at all and 2% each had visited them either once or twice. Compared to the previous group the respondents with children had answered to have participated the sport events a little bit more as 86% had not participated them but 6% each had participated once or twice and 2% three times.

New Year's events were not attended by 62% of the total respondents whereas 33% stated participating once to the events during the last Christmas season and 4% reported visiting the events twice and 1% four times or more. The responses of the 56 respondents without children are very much similar as 59% had not participated New Year's events, 36% had participated once, 4% twice and 2% four times or more. Then again the 49 respondents with children had visited this type of events somewhat less as 67% had not visited any of the events, 31% had visited once and 2% had visited twice.

The last type of events, other events, included events such as Christmas sauna and the Christmas Street in Helsinki. These types of events were participated once by 32% of the total respondents and never by 28%. During the last Christmas season 18% had visited the events twice and 12% four times or more. In addition 10% of the respondents reported participating to the Christmas events such as Christmas sauna and the Christmas streets three times during the previous Christmas season. Then again 34% of the respondents without children had not participated other Christmas events at all, 29% had participated once, 20% twice, 11% three times and 7% four times or more. The respondents with children had visited more of the other Christmas events than the group above as 35% had visited this type of events once, 31% had not visited any, 18% had visited twice, 10% four times or more and the remaining 6% had visited them three times.

4.2. Timing of Christmas

The second theme, timing of Christmas, includes another seven questions which provide answers to the appropriate starting and ending period for the visibility of Christmas as well as for Christmas themed events and services and the preferred timing and type of Christmas events in Helsinki. Other questions in this group were answered in total by 174 respondents except the one open-ended question about the type of events during 24.12.-26.12. which was answered by 91 respondents. In the same way the first six questions were answered by 56 respondents without children and 50 respondents with children 15 or younger and the last open-ended question was then answered by 17 respondents without children and 25 respondents with children.

The respondents were asked to choose their preferred time for appearance of Christmas in Helsinki meaning the decorations, lights and Christmas songs. 31% of the 174 respondents preferred the beginning of the Christmas to be around 22.11.-30.11., 26% preferred 15.11.-21.11. whereas 1.11.-7.11. was preferred by 21%. 10% of the respondents preferred the first week of December 1.12.-7.12., 5% preferred 8.11.-14.11., 3% preferred prior to the beginning of November, 1.11. and 1% wanted the appearance of the Christmas to be later than 7.12. 2% of the respondents chose the option "other" and gave answers such as starting from the first Advent Sunday, 1 of December and 13.12. (Lucia Day).

Out of the respondents without children 29% preferred Christmas decorations and such to appear during 22.11.-30.11. whereas 25% preferred 15.11.-21.11., 23% preferred 1.11.-7.11., 9% preferred 1.12.-7.12., 5% preferred 8.11.-14.11., 4% preferred to have the decorations and like to appear already before 1.11., 2% preferred later than 7.12. and the re-

remaining 4% chose option "other" stating that 13.12. (Lucia Day) and first Advent Sunday would be suitable options. On the other hand 28% of respondents with children liked the option of 15.11.-21.11.2. whereas 26% each liked 1.11.-07.11. and 22.11.-30.11., 8% liked 1.12.-7.12., 6% liked the decorations and such to appear already earlier than 1.11., 4% liked 8.11.-14.11. and the remaining 2% liked to have them later than 7.12.

Next the respondents were asked to choose the preferred time for the removal of the Christmas related decorations and such. Almost half of the 174 respondents, 49%, preferred 1.1.-6.1., 37% preferred later than 6th of January and 1% preferred earlier than 1st of January. 11% chose the option "other" with answers such as 15th of January by one respondent, 6th of January (Epiphany) by five respondents, 13th of January ("Nuutinpäivä") by seven respondents, 31.1. by four respondents, 1st and 28th of February each was preferred by one respondent. It was also suggested by three respondents that the lights should be removed no earlier than February.

Out of the 56 respondents with children 54% wished the decorations and like to be removed during 1.1.-6.1., 32% wished them to be removed later than 6th of January, 2% preferred it to happen already before 1st of January and the remaining 13% chose the option "other". The 50 respondents with children provided very similar answers as 50% preferred time of 1.1.-6.1., 40% preferred later than 6th of January, 4% earlier than 1st of January and the last 6% answered "other". For option "other" both above groups gave similar answers varying between mid and the end of January.

The respondents were also asked to give their opinion about the appropriate starting time for the Christmas themed events, products and services in Helsinki. 26% of the total respondents preferred 22.11.-30.11., 22% 15.11.-21.11. and 20% 1.11.-7.11. 15% of the respondents preferred 8.11.-14.11., 8% 1.12.-7.12., 7% preferred earlier than 1st of November and 1% chose later than 7th of December. 1% of the respondents chose the option "other", answering the first Advent Sunday for the starting time of the Christmas themes services, products and events.

Out of the respondents without children 32% preferred the Christmas themed events, products and services to appear during 22.11.-30.11, 20% each preferred either 1.11.-7.11. or 15.11.-21.11, 11 % preferred them to appear 8.11.-14.11., 9% 1.12.-7.12., 7% earlier than 1.11. and 2% later than 7.12. On the other hand respondents who have children replied that starting period during 1.11.-7.11. and 8.11.-14.11. would be preferred by 20% each. In addition 20% preferred 22.11.-30.11., 16% preferred 15.11.-21.11. and 10%

each liked the idea of 1.12.-7.12. or before than 1.11. for the Christmas themed events, products and services.

The preferred withdrawal of the Christmas themed events, services and products was perceived to be 1.1.-6.1. by 63% of the total respondents. 20% of the respondents preferred the time to be later than 6th of January and 10% of the respondents preferred earlier than 1st of January. 6% of the respondents chose the option "other" with answers of 24th of December and 26th of December by one respondent each whereas three respondents preferred 6th of January (Epiphany) and 10th and 13th of January were also given by one respondent each. 31st of January was answered twice and 28th of February was chosen by one respondent.

The responses from the two respondent groups gave very similar results. 61% of the respondents without children preferred the withdrawal to happen during 1.1.-6.1., 20% preferred it to happen later than 6.1., 16% earlier than 1.1. and 4% replied "other" providing answers of 26th of December and 31th of January. Then again 66% of the respondents with children thought that 1.1.-6.1. would be suitable, 24% preferred timing later than 6.1., 8% earlier than 1.11. and 2% gave answer "other" stating that 24th of December would be a good time.

The question regarding the preferred timing of the Christmas events on the Christmas season excluding Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day (24.12.-26.12.) was answered by 174 respondents and it should be noted that as respondents were able to choose multiple answering options the percentages will not add up to 100% in total. The most preferred times according to the total of 174 respondents for Christmas events were weekend afternoons according to 87%, weekday evenings 78% and weekend evenings 65% of the respondents. Next came weekends before noon by 47%, weekday afternoons by 29% and weekdays before noon by 9%. 3% of the respondents did not want to participate in any Christmas events during.

The respondents with no children thought that evenings during weekdays and afternoons during weekends are equally suitable as 82% of the respondents supported each. Additionally 68% of the respondents supported weekend evenings, 41% weekends before noon, 20% weekday afternoons and 7% each either wanted events during weekday mornings or did not want to participate the events at all. Out of the respondents with children 86% wanted events during weekend afternoons, 84% weekday evenings and 60% weekend evenings. Furthermore 56% wished for events during weekends before noon, 28%

weekday afternoons, 12% weekdays before noon and the remaining 2% did not want to participate any Christmas events.

Next came the preferred timing of the Christmas events during Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day (24.12.-26.12.). It should be noted that as respondents were able to answer with choosing multiple options the percentages will not again add up to 100% in total. On Christmas Eve 48% of the total respondents did not want any events for that particular day, 33% wished to have events before the noon, 18% during the afternoon and 16% during the evening. On Christmas Day 43% of the respondents wanted events for afternoon, 41% during the evening and 39% did not want any events for this day. Christmas Day before noon was chosen by 13% of the respondents. On Boxing Day the afternoon was chosen by 69% of the respondents, evening by 57% and 23% preferred events to be before the noon. 17% did not want any events for Boxing Day.

Out of the respondents without children 45% wished no events during the Christmas Eve whereas 34% wished events before noon, 20% during the evening and 18% during the afternoon. On the other hand 52% of respondents with children did not wish events during the Christmas Eve, 38% wished events before noon, 16% in the afternoon and 12% in the evening. During Christmas Day 43% of the respondents without children did not wish for any events, 41% wished events in the evening, 39% in the afternoon and 14% before noon. The respondent with children had similar wishes for Christmas Day as 42% did not wish for events, 40% wished events during the afternoon, 34% during the evening and 20% before noon. For the Boxing Day the respondents with no children wished events during the afternoon by 71%, in the evening by 55% and 20% each wished events for before noon or no events at all. The respondents with children gave somewhat similar answers as 66% wished events during the afternoon, 54% in the evening, 30% before noon and 20% did not wish any events.

In the last question of this theme the respondents were asked what kind of events they would like to participate on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. The question was open-ended so the results are divided into six different themes, each of them covered separately. The themes are Christmas markets, cultural events, religious events, outdoor events, communal events and other events. The results are mainly presented based on the total of 91 responses and the two groups of respondents without children and respondents who have children aged 15 years of younger are only separated if they have provided significantly different answers.

For Christmas Eve all together ten respondents had wished for Christmas market styled events. It was also suggested that a deposit style Helsinki Christmas mug could be available throughout the Christmas season where both local and foreign tourists could buy mulled wine from the different market venues. Noticeable in this theme is that it was mainly respondents with children who stated they would participate Christmas markets during Christmas Eve by seven responses compared to only one respondent without children. Then again cultural events for Christmas Eve were on the wish list for 18 respondents. Mainly the type of events wished for were Christmas concerts and other music events (also in outdoors), but also quiet cultural events such as art displays were requested. Cultural events were clearly more preferred among respondents without children with 7 responses mostly related to concerts compared to the three responses by respondents with children.

Another theme identified was religious events as 19 respondents would have liked to participate in such events on Christmas Eve. Most of the respondents stated that they would like to attend church services (also midnight services) but couple of respondents also wished for devotional services for cemeteries. The religious events were equally mentioned by both of the compared groups. Next theme is outdoor events which were requested by four respondents for Christmas Eve. Two respondents wished to have traditional Christmas sleigh rides and another two wished for similar type of Christmas parades as during the opening of the Christmas Street in Helsinki. There were again no differences between the two control groups in within the theme.

Communal events for Christmas Eve were then again asked for by 13 respondents. These type of events included for instance Christmas sing-along by five respondents and communal porridge and other food gatherings by five respondents. Noticeable is that communal events directed specifically for lonely people were also mentioned by three respondents. Out of them one mentioned events for the disadvantaged requesting for free events as another respondent wished for the opposite in form of an event with admission fee including food, music and games for people living alone. In the communal events the biggest difference between the two control groups was that only the respondents without children had requested events for lonely people whereas respondents with children did not.

Other events for Christmas Eve included variety of different type of events. Opportunity to meet Santa Claus was mentioned by four respondents. Christmas sauna was reported by six respondents and also opportunity to visit sauna as a couple was mentioned. There were also two respondents who wished Helsinki to have its own Christmas peace procla-

mation as a Christmas Eve's event. Requests by single respondents also included expanding restaurants' opening hours on Christmas Eve, sport events for the morning like outdoor swimming and some kind of children's event. With the fore-mentioned events biggest differences were that the respondents with children were mainly the ones who wished to see Santa Claus and they also had asked for children's events.

As for the answers concerning Christmas day events, all together seven respondents wished that the Christmas markets would be open also on that day. Here is noted that only respondents with children had answered they would like to participate Christmas markets on Christmas Day. The next theme of cultural events was most requested for Christmas Day. Out of all respondents 41 wished to have cultural events on that day. 31 of them wished Christmas concerts, where also specific ideas of family concerts and outdoor music events were introduced. Other cultural related ideas mentioned were theater by four respondents, movies, art displays, puppet theater and Christmas themed circus by one respondent each. On Christmas Day the respondents with children requested cultural events with 14 responses slightly more than the respondents without children who had 10 responses related to culture. However, there were no significant differences about the content or type of the cultural events within the two groups.

Then again next theme risen was religious events as six respondents reported they would like participate Christmas church service on Christmas Day. Here respondents without children had not reported wanting to participate on religious events on Christmas Day whereas two respondents with children stated they would like to attend these events. Concerning the theme of outdoor events single responses were submitted requesting for Christmas parade, some kind of Christmas trail and just over all outdoor events. Responses between the two control groups did not differ. Also communal events were wished for the Christmas Day. All together four respondents mentioned they would like to participate to communal events such as sing-alongs and communal dining. Two of the respondents requested events specifically designed and targeted for lonely people. Only way the two groups' responses varied in this theme was that events for lonely people were mentioned again only by respondents without children.

Falling into the theme other events four three people wished for free sport events for Christmas Day. Additionally there were four people who would like to participate light outdoor sports such as guided walks. Also food events, such as brunches, were mentioned by three respondents. Then again two people each wished to participate Christmas sauna, light carnival and a peaceful event reminding of a Christmas church. Also a "candle event", charity events, crafting, dancing, visiting Santa Claus and watching drive-in

movies with Christmas theme and a Christmas party were mentioned once each. In addition together six respondents mentioned they would like to participate some kind of family events in general. Only significant distinctions here were that Santa Claus meeting was requested only by respondent with children and responses related to events for families were also stated by respondents with children.

Last was Boxing Day events, where eight respondents replied they would like to participate Christmas market type of events during the day. Again no respondents without children had stated for wanting to participate Christmas markets but four respondents with children had. The cultural events was again the most requested group as out of the 91 respondents 58 told they would like to participate this type of events. 23 of the respondents requested concerts including also other than Christmas concerts and free concerts and another 10 respondents wished for music events in general. In addition 11 respondents told they would like to go to theater on Boxing Day. Five people requested for culture in general that would be also suitable for children and families. Other responses were art displays and museums by four respondents, movies by three and opera and puppet theater by one respondent each. Here ten respondents without children had mentioned cultural events whereas they were mentioned by 19 respondents. Otherwise the content of the responses was similar except that only respondents with children has listed cultural events suitable for families and puppet theater.

Unlike the other two days, religious events were not wished for Boxing Day. However different outdoor events were wished for the day in total by 17 respondents. Traditional Boxing Day sleigh riding was mentioned five times and horse or pony riding four times. Generally outdoor events for different target groups, such as families, lonely people, young elderly and single, were mentioned by three respondents. Other individual responses included parades, kick sledging and street events. The different outdoor events and activities were equally mentioned by both groups with or without children. Falling into the theme of communal events three respondents wished for events like sing-alongs. In addition for Boxing Day two of the respondents wished communal events specifically targeted to people who are lonely (and single) and don't have anyone to spend Christmas with. Again the only difference between the two groups was that only respondents with no children wished for events designed for lonely people.

Last in the Boxing Day events are the other events. In total 20 respondents reported they would like to participate sport activities and events on Boxing Day. Ten of them wished for light outdoor recreation like walks whereas other ten actual sports and exercise events. One idea suggested was a winter sports day when Helsinki could be full of different sports

activities. In addition eight respondents said they would like to participate in Boxing Day dances. It was also mentioned seven times that different events and activities suitable for children and families would be needed. Then again six respondents reported they would like to have food related events. Other suggestions for the day by one mention each were a Christmas carnival, open house events in places where public usually can't go, bingo, a Christmas event in Suomenlinna, a light carnival and Christmas sauna. Santa Claus was no longer requested for Boxing Day. The two group's responses considering the above events and activities were very much the same with one difference that only respondents with children requested events for children and families.

In addition there was one common theme throughout the wishes for the three Christmas days; most of the respondents, no matter what kind of events they wanted to participate, wished that the events would be delightful and fun and that the activities would generate joy among the participants.

4.3. Perceptions of prior Christmas seasons

The third theme covers the perceptions of the previous Christmas seasons with answers to four questions concerning the typical aspects and describing the Christmas in Helsinki and its atmosphere, the amount of events offered during the Christmas season and the respondents' favourite Christmas experience in Helsinki. Noticeable is that the last question of the favourite Christmas experience has been left out of the results due to its irrelevance to the aim of this thesis as explained previously in the chapter 3.4. All together 174 respondents had provided answers for the three remaining questions including 56 respondents without children and 50 respondents with children 15 years of age or younger.

The respondents were asked to choose three things that are most typical for Christmas in Helsinki in their opinion and three of the most popular ones were Christmas Street with 79%, Christmas markets with 74% and Christmas decorations, lights and Christmas tree with 64%. Other options were Lucia festival and parade with 36%, Christmas concerts 20%, Christmas songs 11%, Christmas church 9%, Santa Claus 5%, Christmas sauna 2% and Christmas themed theater, circus and ballet with 2%. 1% chose the option "other" and stated that they do not want to answer the question. The results to this question can be seen in the Figure 15 below.

N: 174

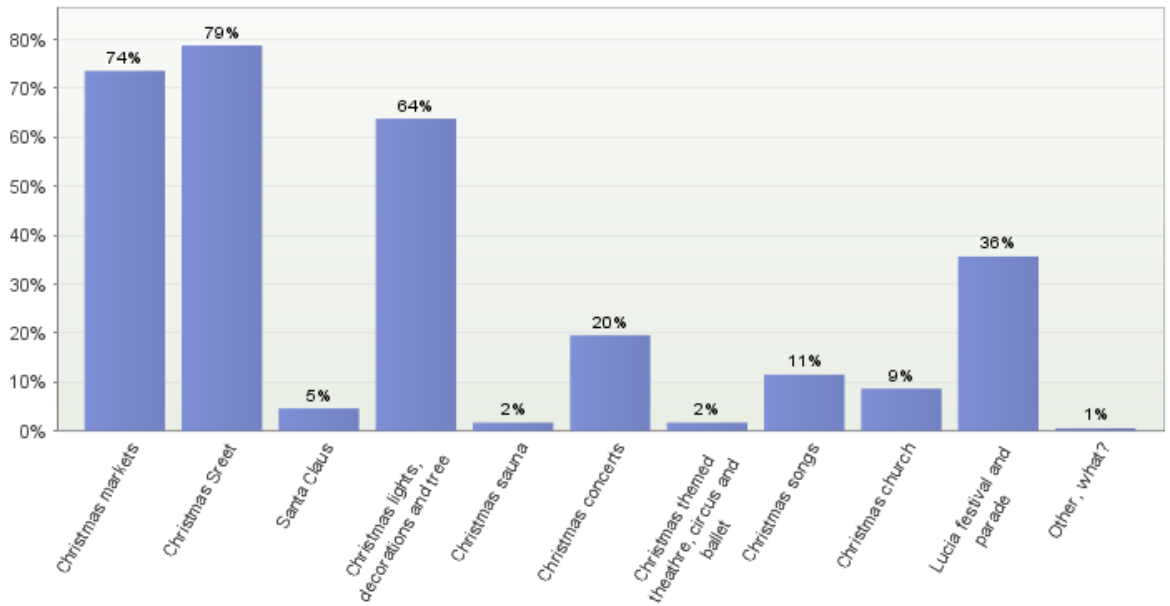


Figure 15. Most typical aspects of Christmas in Helsinki

The respondents with no children stated that in their opinion the most typical aspect are Christmas markets by 79% of the respondents, Christmas Street by 71% and Christmas lights, decorations and tree by 68%. Other things considered typical were Lucia festival and parade according to 30%, Christmas concerts 25%, Christmas church 11%, Christmas songs 9% and Santa Claus, Christmas sauna and Christmas themed theater, circus and ballet according to 2% of the respondents each. Then again the most typical aspects for the respondents with children were Christmas Street by 82%, Christmas markets by 76% and Christmas lights, decorations and tree by 56%. Also Lucia festival and parade was valued by 38% of respondents, Christmas concerts by 18%, both Santa Claus and Christmas songs by 10% each, Christmas church by 8% and Christmas themed theater, circus and ballet by 2%. These results are presented in the below Figure 16.

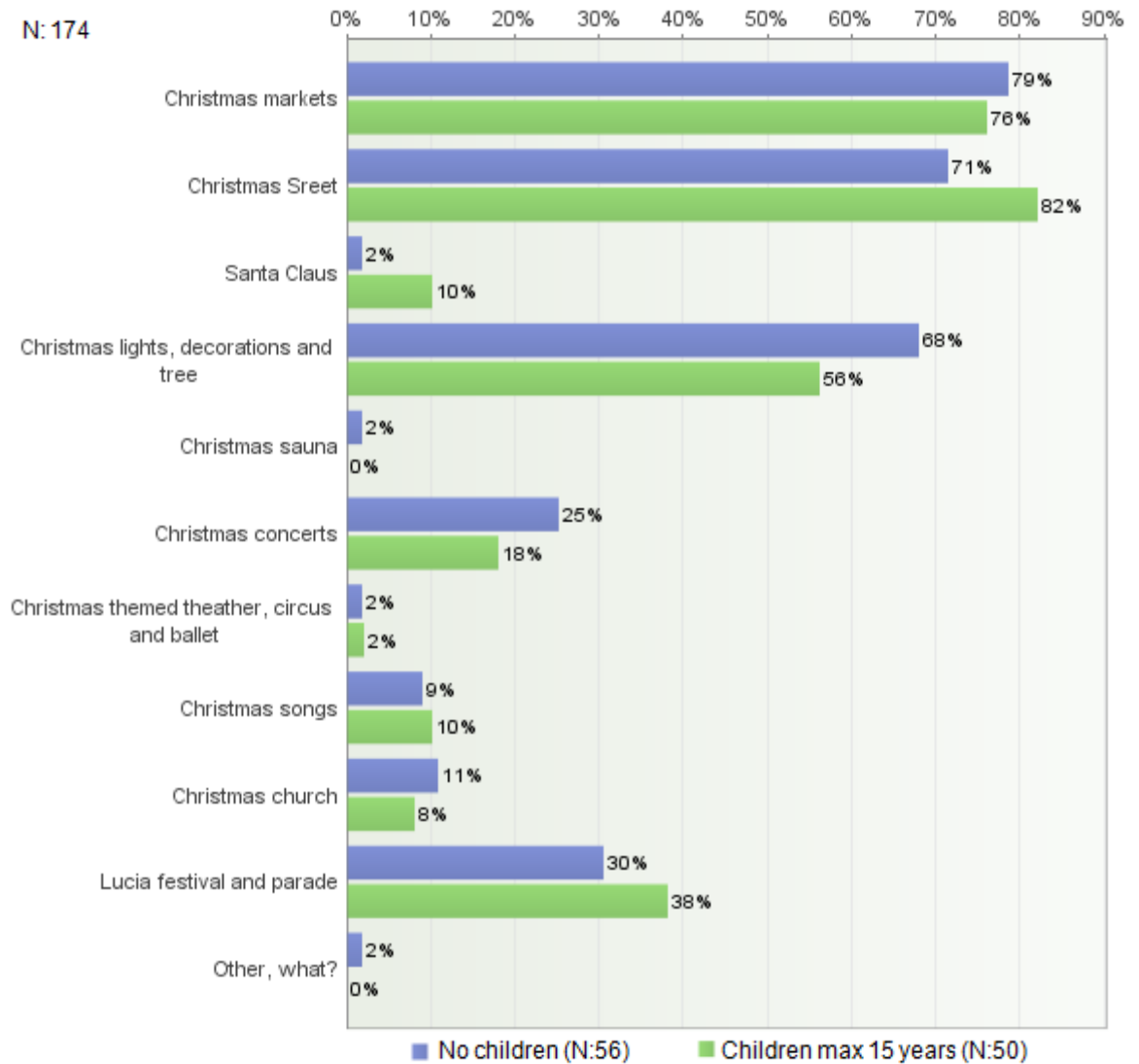


Figure 16. Most typical aspects of Christmas in Helsinki according to focus groups

Next the respondents were asked to choose three adjectives that describe the Christmas in Helsinki and its atmosphere. The overall answers to the questions are presented in the Figure 17. The three most chosen adjectives were traditional with 73%, welcoming by 50% and plain with 34%. The rest were communal with 24%, joyful 19%, versatile 18%, satisfactory 17%, monotonous 16%, boring 12%, high-quality 11%, lonely 6%, interesting 6%, annoying 2%, modern 2%, unique 2% and 7% chose the option "other". Answers for the "other" included peaceful by three respondents, evolving by two respondents, disappointing, photogenic, poor, crowded, dark, repetitive and commercial each by one respondents.

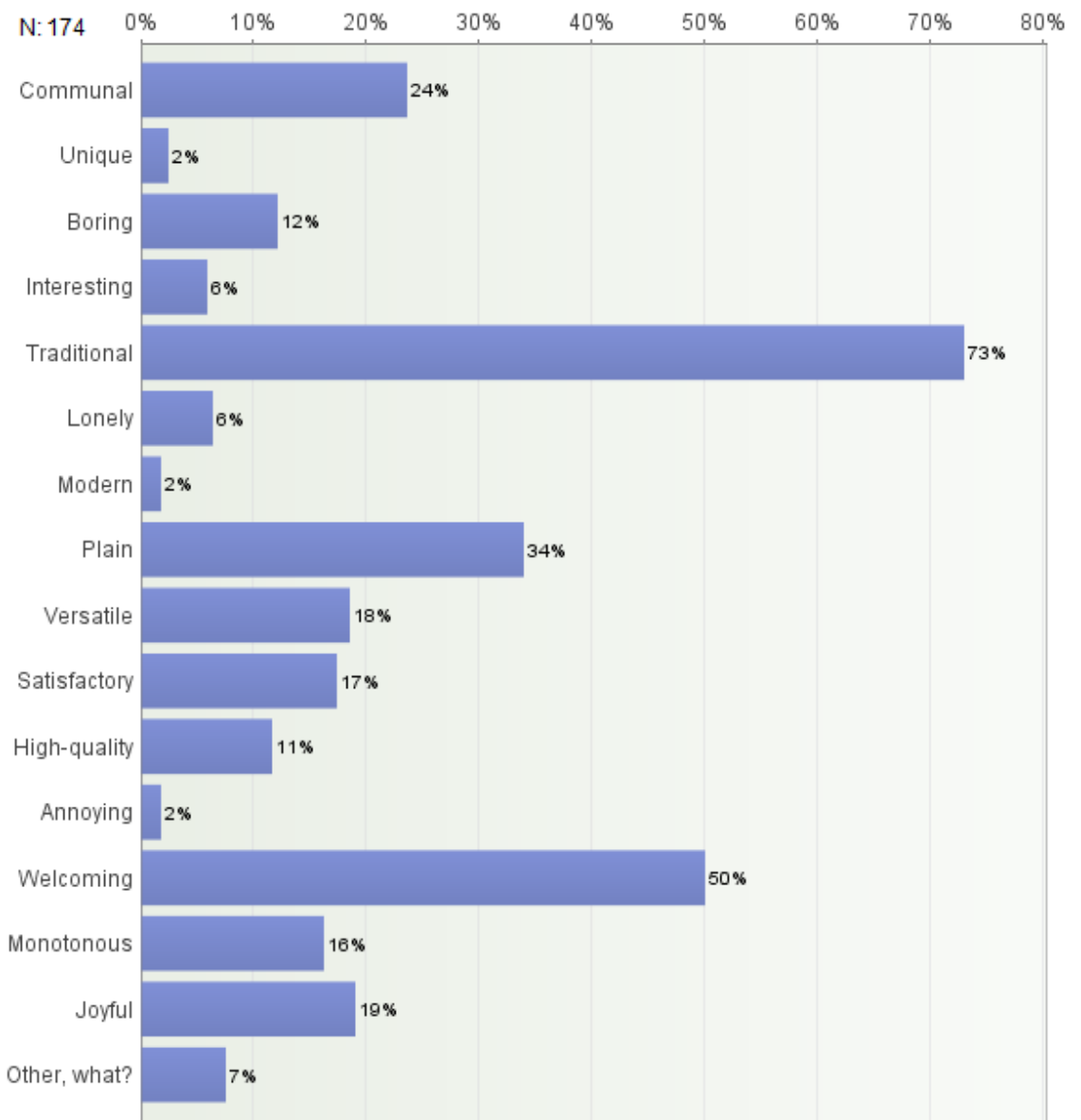


Figure 17. Adjectives describing Christmas in Helsinki

71% of the respondents without children thought that the best adjective to describe the Christmas in Helsinki was traditional, 48% chose welcoming and 39% plain. Other options were versatile by 20%, joyful, monotonous, satisfactory and boring by 18% of the respondents each, communal by 16%, lonely by 9%, high-quality by 7%, interesting by 4% and unique, modern and annoying by 2%. 9% of respondent thought that other adjectives like repetitive, peaceful (by two respondents), evolving, photogenic describe the Christmas better. Out of the respondent with children 76% considered the Christmas to be traditional, 48% welcoming and 32% plain. In addition 22% of them thought it communal and 20% each satisfactory, monotonous and joyful. 14% thought of it as versatile, 12% high-quality, 8% boring and 4% each unique, interesting, lonely, modern and annoying. 8% preferred

other alternatives such as commercial, peaceful and crowded. These responses can be seen in the Figure 18 below.

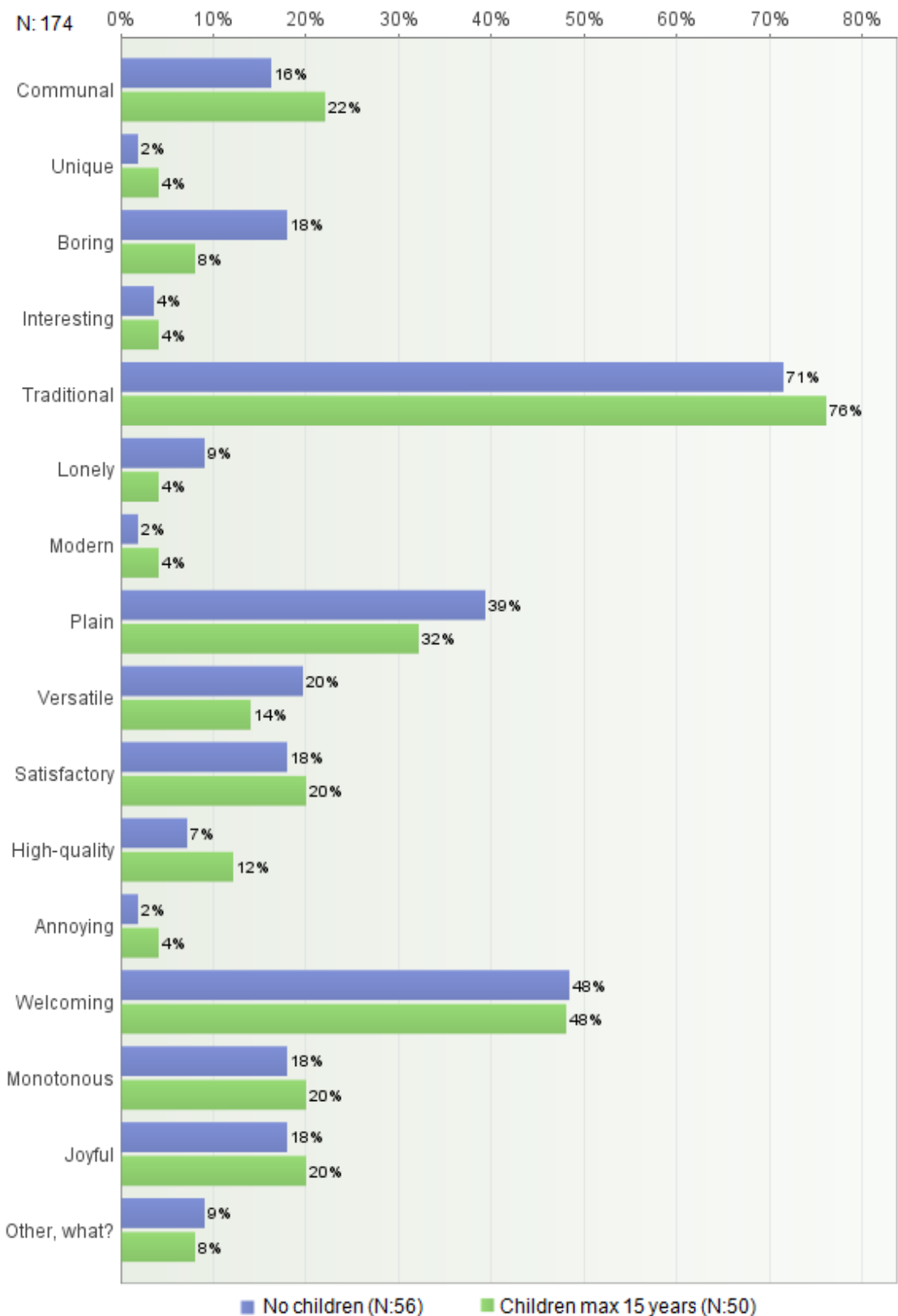


Figure 18. Adjectives describing Christmas in Helsinki according to focus groups

The amount of different types of Christmas events in Helsinki was asked to be evaluated by the respondents and the results by the total 174 respondents can be seen in the Figure 19.

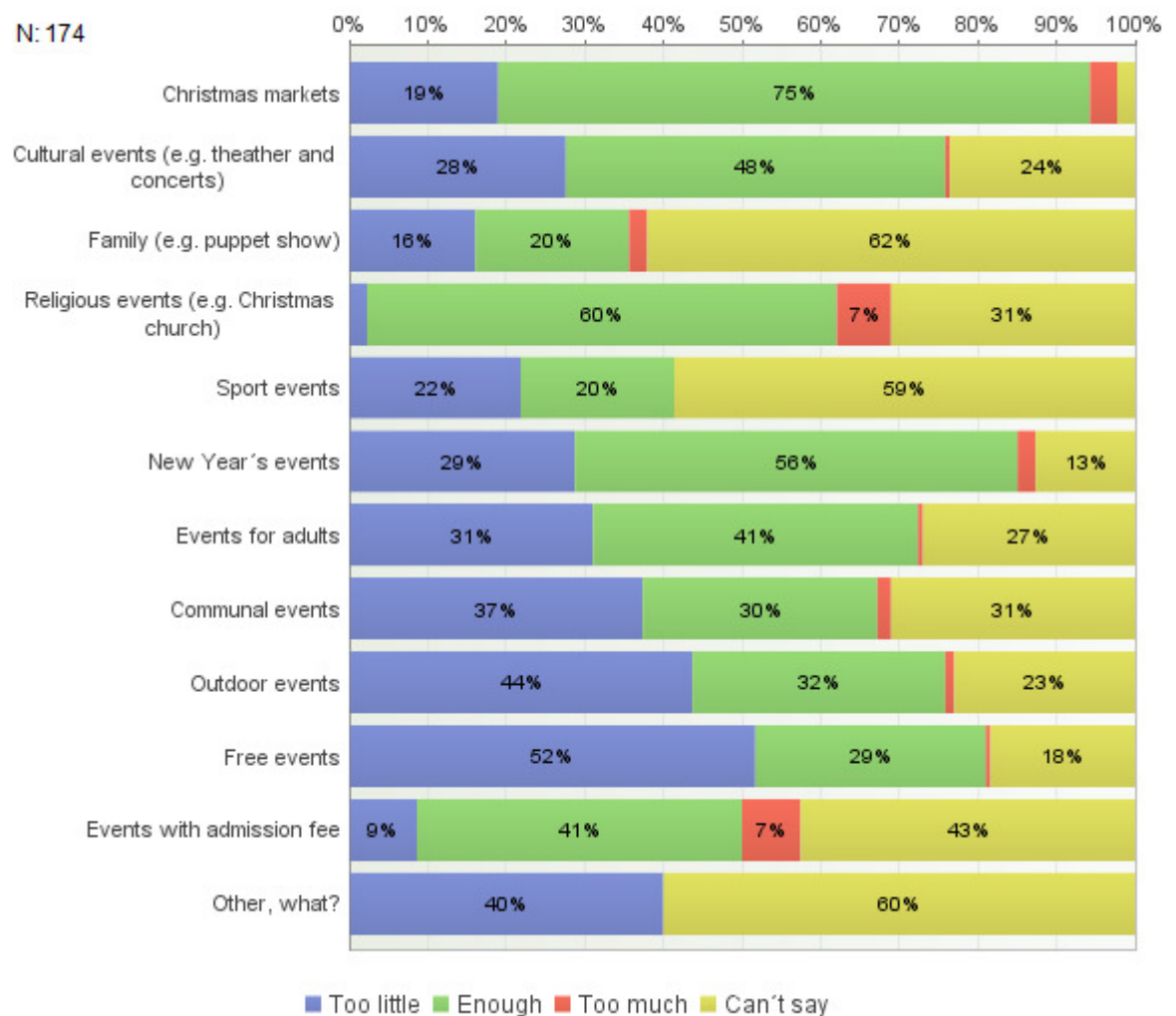


Figure 19. Amount of Christmas events in Helsinki

The amount of Christmas markets were perceived to be enough by 75% of the total respondents, too little by 19%, too many by 3% and 2% couldn't say. 66% of the 56 respondents with no children thought that the amount of Christmas markets was enough, 29% too little, 4% too much and 2% could not say. Out of the 50 respondents with children 78% considered there to be enough of Christmas markets, 16% too little, 2% too much and 4% stated they could not tell. The Figure 20 below shows the amount of Christmas markets according to the two groups.

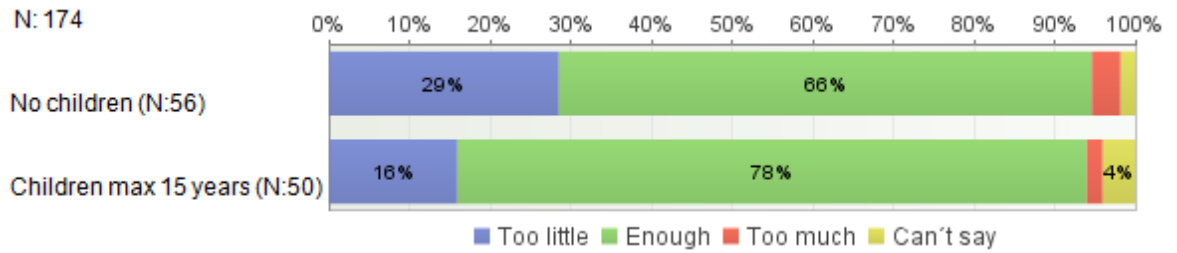


Figure 20. Amount of Christmas markets in Helsinki according to focus groups

For cultural events 48% stated the amount to be enough, 28% too few, 1% too many and 24% couldn't say. On the other hand 36% of the respondents without children thought the amount was appropriate, 32% thought there were too little of them and remaining 32% could not tell. 44% of the respondents with children then considered the amount to be enough, 36% not enough and 20% couldn't say. The two focus groups' answers concerning the cultural events are presented in Figure 21.

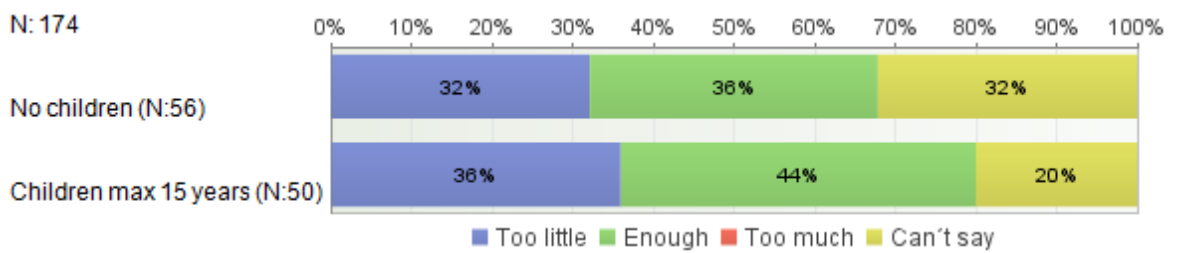


Figure 21. Amount of cultural events in Helsinki according to focus groups

The number of family events was perceived enough by 20%, 16% chose too little, 2% considered it to be too much and 62% couldn't say anything. Out of the respondents with no children 5% each considered the amount of family events to be either appropriate or too much, 4% thought there were too many of them and the rest, 86% couldn't tell. Then again 40% of the respondent with children thought of the amount as too little, 20% enough and 40% could not say if the amount was appropriate. The two groups' responses can be seen in the Figure 22. below.

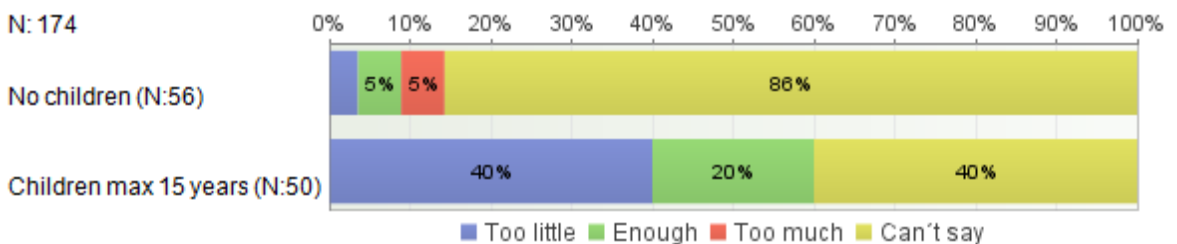


Figure 22. Amount of family events in Helsinki according to focus groups

Religious events such as Christmas church were enough by 60%, too many for 7%, too few for 2% and 31% chose "couldn't say". 48% of the respondents without children considered the amount of religious events to be appropriate, 12% too much and 39% could not identify their opinion. Out of the respondents with children 66% thought the amount to be enough, 4% too much, 2% too little and 28% could not tell. The responses of the two groups can be again seen below in the Figure 23.

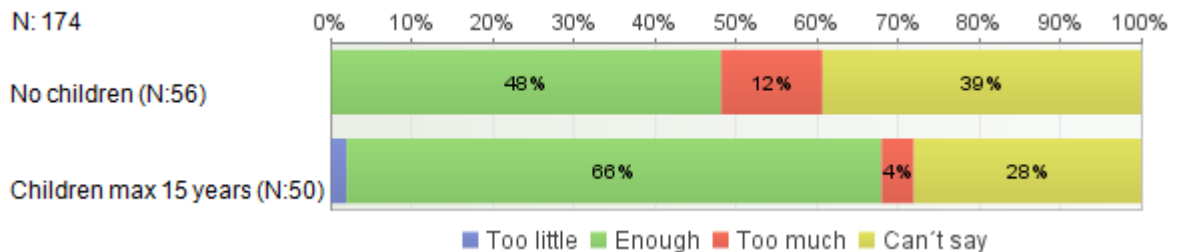


Figure 23. Amount of religious events in Helsinki according to focus groups

Sport events were considered too few by 22% of the respondents, enough by 20% and 59% out of the 174 respondents chose the option "couldn't say". 27% of the respondents without children thought there were too little sport events, 11% considered the amount appropriate and 63% could not say. Nearly the same amount, 26%, of the respondents thought the amount as too little and 22% enough whereas 52% could not tell. The results from the focus groups are presented in the Figure 24.

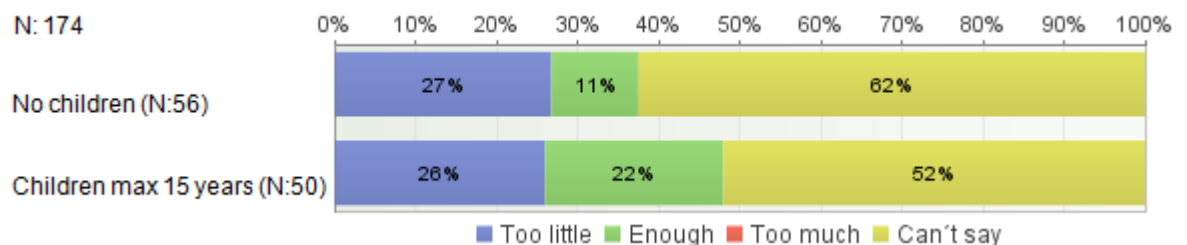


Figure 24. Amount of sport events in Helsinki according to focus groups

New Year's events were seen enough by 56% of the total respondents, too few by 29%, too many by 2% and 13% couldn't say. Very similar answers were also provided by the respondents without children as 61% of them considered the amount appropriate, 23% too little, 4% too much and 12% chose option "can't say". 52% of the respondents with children also enough, 32% too few, 2% too much and remaining 14% couldn't tell. The two groups answers concerning the New Year's events are presented in the below Figure 25.

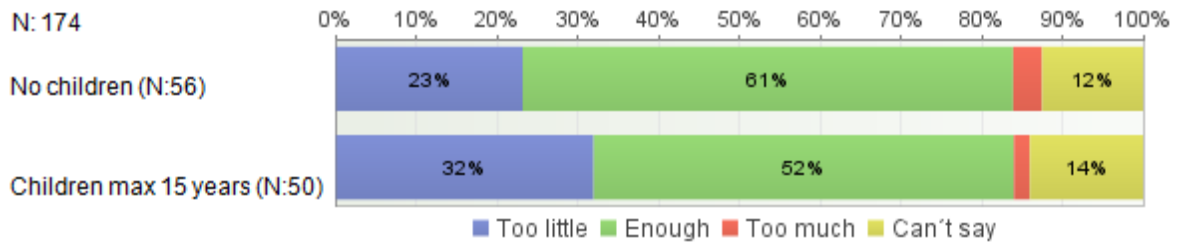


Figure 25. Amount of New Year's events in Helsinki according to focus groups

The events for adults were perceived enough by 41%, 31% considered them too few, 1% too many and 27% chose the "can't say" option. Slightly different answers were provided by the respondents with no children as 43% thought there were too few of them, 34% thought them enough, 2% too much and 21% could not identify their opinion. On the other hand 46% of the respondents with children considered the amount appropriate, 12% too little whereas 42% could not tell what they thought about the amount of the event for adults. The amount of events for adults from the perspective of the two focus groups is presented in the Figure 26 below.

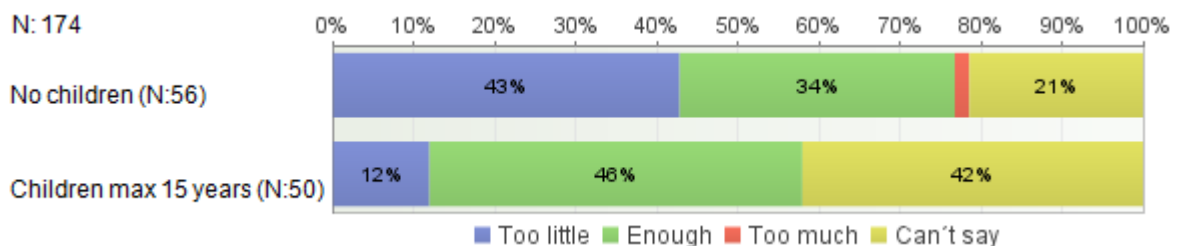


Figure 26. Amount of events for adults in Helsinki according to focus groups

Communal events were stated to be too few by 37%, enough by 30%, too many by 2% and 31% couldn't say. Almost identical results were received from the 56 respondents with no children as 38% considered the amount of the communal events too little, 30% appropriate, 2% too much and 30% in total could not tell their opinion. Answers from the 50 respondents with children were then slightly varying as 42% stated the amount to be too little, 24% enough and 34% could not say. The results of the respondents without and with children can be seen in the Figure 27.

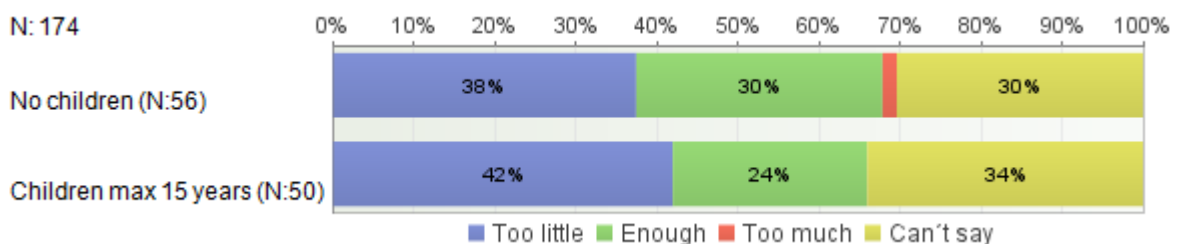


Figure 27. Amount of communal events in Helsinki according to focus groups

Next outdoor events were perceived to be too few by 44% of the total respondents, enough by 32%, 1% stated them to be too many and 23% chose the "can't say" option. Then again 39% of the respondents without children thought of the outdoor event to be too few, 36% enough whereas 25% could not tell. On the other hand 46% of the respondents with children stated that there were too few of them, 28% thought of them to be enough and 2% too much whereas 24% chose option "can't say". Answers regarding these events in the two focus groups' opinion can be seen in the below Figures 28.

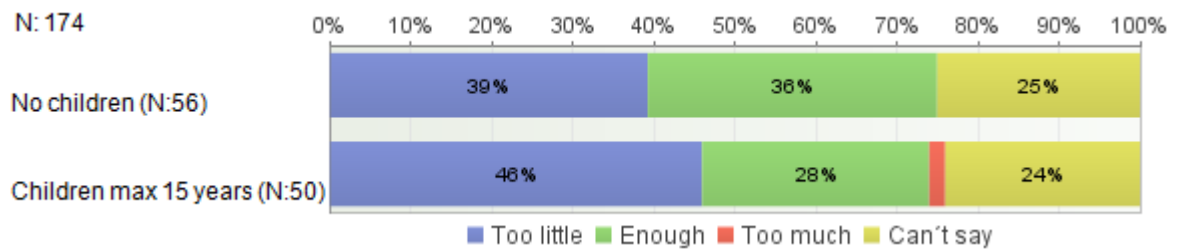


Figure 28. Amount of outdoor events in Helsinki according to focus groups

Free Christmas events during the Christmas season were perceived to be too few by 52% of the respondents, 29% considered them to be enough, 1% reported too many and 18% chose the option "can't say". 46% of the respondents with no children considered the amount of these free events also too little, 32% enough whereas 20% could not tell. Then again from the respondents with children 54% thought of the amount as too little, 26% as appropriate and 20% could not tell their opinion. These results of the two groups are presented below in the Figure 29.

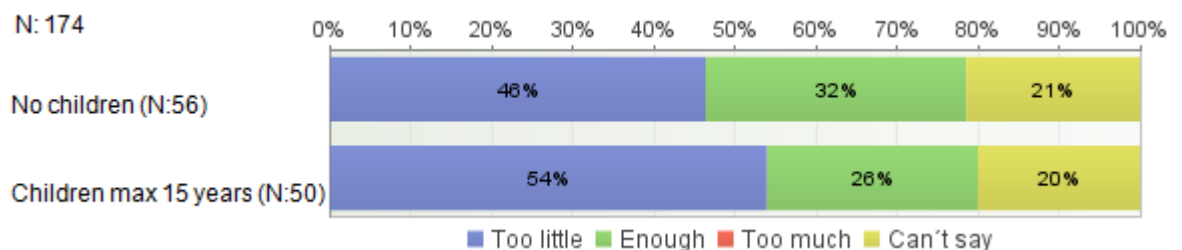


Figure 29. Amount of free events in Helsinki according to focus groups

On the other hand events with admission fee were seen to be enough by 41% by the 174 respondents, too few by 9%, too many by 7% and 43% couldn't say. 30% of the respondents without children thought the events to be enough, 11% too little, 9% too much whereas half, 50%, did not know what to answer. Then again 40% of the respondents who had children considered the amount of these events appropriate, 10% too little, 6% too much and the remaining 44% chose of option "can't say". The perceived amount of the events with admission fee in the two groups' perspective is presented in the Figures 30.

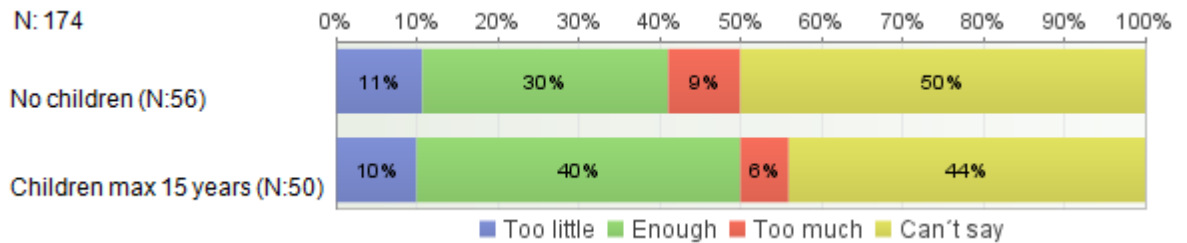


Figure 30. Amount of events with admission in Helsinki according to focus groups

The respondents had also a chance to list any other events. In the "other" option five out of the 174 respondents included their opinions about events that there were too few and these events were: pet friendly events, unique events, Christmas markets, events especially for children and events within good transportation connections each answered by one respondent. Out of these the events with good transportation connection were requested by one respondent who did not have children. The respondents with children had on the other hand reported the events especially for children, the pet friendly events and the unique events as too few.

4.4. Needs and wishes for future Christmases

The last theme, needs and wishes for future Christmases, consists of two questions yielding the answers for future development needs for the Christmas season in Helsinki. The first question asking how the respondents would like to describe the Christmas in Helsinki in future received in total 174 responses, with 56 responses from respondents without children and 50 from respondents who had children aged 15 years or younger. The second open-ended question then again received a total of 57 responses, out of which 17 are from respondents who did not have children and 19 from respondents with children 15 years of age or younger.

The respondents were asked to choose the three words they want to be describing the Christmas and its atmosphere in Helsinki in the future which can be seen in the Figure 31. The three most popular words were welcoming with 58%, joyful with 45% and versatile with 40%. The rest of the words not far behind were communal with 37%, interesting by 34%, traditional by 26%, unique by 25%, high-quality with 18% and modern with 12%. 3% of the respondents chose the option "other" with answers such as bright by two respondents, based on Finnish features by two respondents and different, surprising, private, beautiful and non-crowded mentioned each once.

N: 174

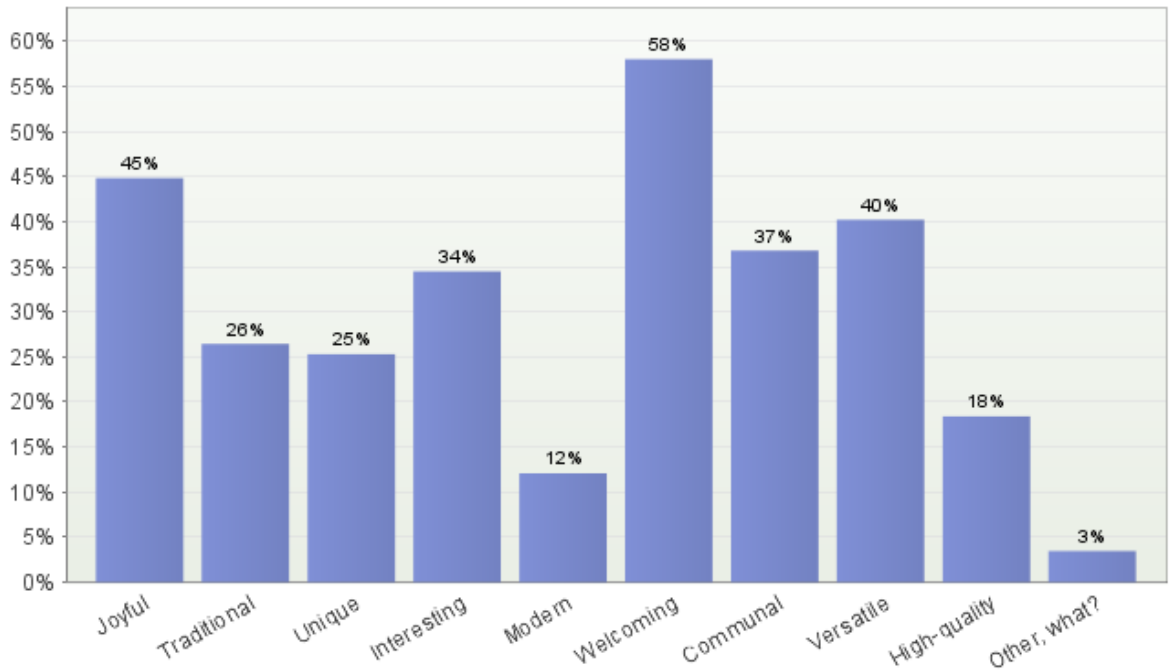


Figure 31. Adjectives describing future Christmas in Helsinki

The most popular words describing the future Christmas and its atmosphere in Helsinki among the respondents with no children were versatile by 50%, interesting by 48% and welcoming by 45% of the respondents. Next came joyful and communal supported by 32% of the respondents, unique by 27%, traditional and modern by 23% each, high-quality by 13% and 7% chose the option other, one respondent each stating that the Christmas be based on Finnish features, it should be surprising, bright and private. On the other hand 66% of the respondents with children wished the Christmas would be welcoming and 42% each wished for joyful and communal. Next popular options among respondents with children were interesting by 38%, versatile by 34%, unique by 26%, high-quality by 24%, traditional by 20% and modern by 6%. Other options were reported to be a non-crowded Christmas by 2% of the respondents. These results are presented in the Figure 32 below.

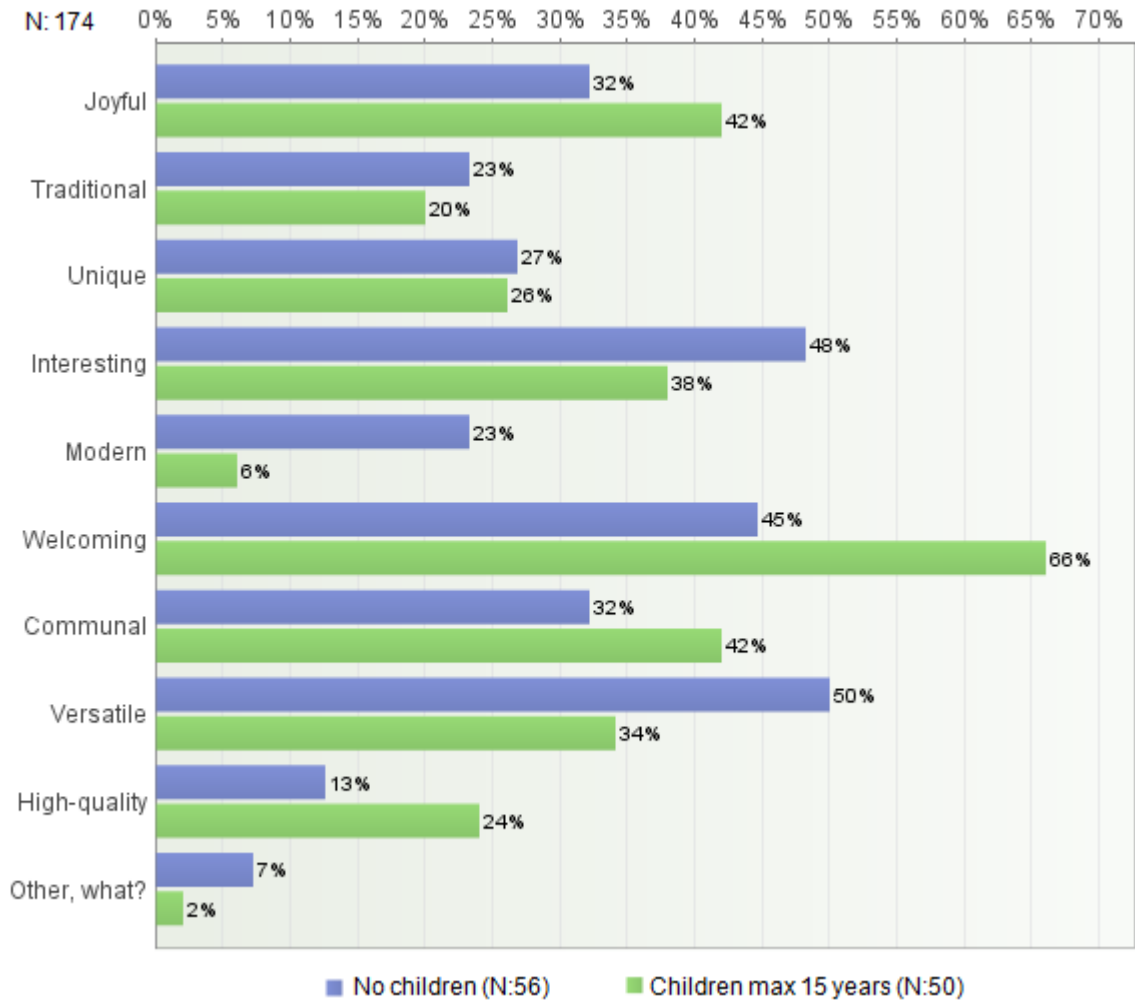


Figure 32. Adjectives describing future Christmas in Helsinki according to focus groups

The last question analysed dealt with the events and services that the respondents felt are missing from the Christmas season in Helsinki. Six themes emerged; decorations, Christmas markets, food, events, communal events and the last one being a category of "other" with singular ideas and responses to the question.

The first theme, decorations, was mentioned 17 times within all the answers. The responses related to this theme mainly consisted of the respondents wishing for more Christmas lights throughout the city. The Christmas lights were also wanted to other locations than just Esplanadi and Aleksanterinkatu, one respondent even stated the Christmas Street having too few lights. Regarding the Christmas lights, it was also mentioned that the buildings in Helsinki could be decorated with lights and light festivals should be arranged throughout the Christmas season from Advent till the end of January in various locations, for example Esplanadi and Kaivopuisto. Regarding the overall decorations, it was mentioned that the Christmas Streets should be more lively and Christmassy as well as being more glamorous. Helsinki itself should also be decorated more glamorously and

the atmosphere during Christmas season should be more warm and welcoming according to the respondents. A Christmasland or a Christmas town was also wanted as well as more Christmas decorated shop windows for overall ambiance. Regarding this theme there were no significant differences between the responses of the two groups with and without children.

The Christmas market category gathered in total 17 references, most of them regarding the offerings of the markets. Some respondents wanted the Christmas markets moved back to Esplanadi and as more Christmas markets were hoped for, some mentioned other location besides the city centre. The timing of the markets was also mentioned, respondents wanting the markets to be present longer than just few weeks. Wider variety within the Christmas market selection and the offerings as well as higher quality in the products sold was hoped for, for example taking example from the Central European Christmas markets. It was also mentioned that the Christmas markets should represent Helsinki and its residents. The respondents also wanted the atmosphere in the markets to be lively and classy. The respondents also mentioned the possibility of having participatory activities such as group exercise instructed by elves. Lastly an idea of having entrance fees at some of the tents at the markets where the profit would go to charity was mentioned. Neither this theme had any major differences between the groups of respondents who had or did not have children.

Food as a category came up 15 times and the most mentioned item was mulled wine. Mulled wine was wanted in the forms of for example mulled wine bars in front of restaurants in the city centre, heated mulled wine terraces and more spots selling mulled wine at the Christmas markets with both alcoholic and alcohol free options. Regarding the food itself it was mentioned that the quality should be high and more traditional Christmas delicacies should be offered and that special diets such as gluten-free options should be taken into consideration. There should also be more places to eat during Christmas season events such as pop-up restaurants and the amount of food trucks could be higher. Christmas food related events such as cooking classes were also suggested as well as wintery Christmasland in the city centre with northern lights on the ceiling and an ice bar with snacks and mulled wine to treat oneself with. In this theme responses regarding food came mainly from respondents with children (and the ones with older children not included into this comparison) whereas the respondents without children just mentioned mulled wine.

The events category was mentioned 28 times making it the most mentioned category out of the six themes. The respondents wanted more Christmas concerts and music events

including music events for kids and non-religious music events. The music event wishes also consisted of outdoor concerts, concerts for adults, free or affordably priced concerts, world-star concerts and live Christmas carols on the streets of Helsinki as well as Esplanadi stage during the whole Christmas season. Santa Claus was also wanted to be present and able to meet outside the Christmas streets and an elf parade to be organized in Helsinki. Easily approachable open and free events including cultural and children's events such as Christmas celebrations at Kamppi were also mentioned. Light outdoor recreations were the visitors could combine being together and light exercise with fun and beautiful atmosphere including lights and music was also requested as well as sports events such as ice skating and sledging in the Helsinki area. Sleigh rides in Kaivopuisto and Esplanadi were also asked for. The respondents also mentioned outdoor movies, non-commercial events in parks, animals' Christmas, a photo booth at the centre where one could send Christmas greetings via social media, cemetery events, Christmas dinners, electronic Christmas calendars, mansions and such cultural environments for children's events. Admission fees for some Christmas events were also suggested for better ambiance without large crowds. In this theme the only thing differing between the two compared groups was that only respondents with no children requested events specifically targeted to adults.

Communal events were suggested in total of six times in general including the focus of events for lonely people. Helping others was wished to be easier and adaptable to busy schedules of the Christmas season. Sing-alongs were suggested as well as overall more networking opportunities, solidarity and communal spirit events with opportunities to meet new people in the spirit of Christmas. The respondents also raised concern over the lonely elderly and events designed and targeted for their joy and enjoyment. Events for single people as well as lonely people including youth were wanted with the focus on meeting new people and being together. No major differences between the groups with and without children were discovered in this theme either.

In the last category, "other", two main themes emerged. First was the timing of the Christmas events in Helsinki as the opening hours were wished to be longer and the events and services staying in the cityscape till the end of the Christmas season (longer than 26th of December) instead of withdrawing right before Christmas Eve. The second main theme was Helsinki as the capital of Christmas and the country of Santa Claus, hence Helsinki being the capital of Christmas. The respondents also wanted to have a piece of Lapland in Helsinki, in forms of reindeers, huskies, Christmas magic and mystique as well as the Christmas experiences for all senses with wow-elements that can be felt when visiting Korvatunturi in Lapland. Christmas adventures and events throughout

the city with reindeer rides and opportunities to meet Santa as mentioned earlier in the chapter were also wished for. Besides these two themes, the respondents also hoped for more Christmas saunas, better information and advertising of the Christmas events and happenings as well as the events spread to all parts of Helsinki instead of just the city centre. It was also suggested that the city of Helsinki could hold competitions or offer certain amount of funds for youth, artists and musicians to execute and implement fresh Christmas related concepts annually and the residents could choose the ones their favourites by voting. In this category respondents without children were mainly the ones wishing for Christmas sauna, Christmasland and Helsinki to be the capital of Christmas.

5. Discussion

In this last chapter of the thesis conclusions over the research and the entire thesis process will be given. First the key findings of the research and then recommendations based on the findings will be presented. Then suggestions for future research will be given and the reliability and validity along with the limitations of the research will be analysed and last the own learning of the authors will be discussed.

5.1. Key findings

In this chapter a summary over the most important findings of the survey results are given. The key findings will be introduced according to the same four themes as the results above: background information, timing of Christmas, perceptions of prior Christmas seasons and needs and wishes for future Christmases. The key findings of each theme have been chosen based on their relevancy to the recommendations given in the next chapter.

5.1.1. Background information

Most relevant information in relation to the upcoming recommendations within the collected background data was how well known the different type of Christmas events were among the respondents. All in all the results show that the respondents knew Christmas markets very well whereas cultural events during the Christmas season were known only moderately. Family events during Christmas time were known in total poorly and even the respondents with children knew them only moderately whereas these events were very poorly known by respondents without children. Also religious Christmas events were only known moderately and sport events were weakly known. New Year's events were on the other hand known either moderately or well by majority of the respondents and other events like Christmas Street and saunas were well known. –These results clearly indicate that the marketing of Christmas events in Helsinki should be improved in order to make public aware of what kind of services is being offered.

5.1.2. Timing of Christmas

When asking when it would be appropriate for Christmas to become visible in the form of Christmas lights and such it came out that most of the respondents thought the best time would be between 15th of November and 30th of November, which is very close to the beginning of the Advent and therefore the official beginning of the Christmas time as stated in chapter 2.3.2. However also time period between 1st of November and 7th of November was almost just as popular which then again supports the idea of advancement of Christ-

mas preparation also presented in chapter 2.3.2. Then again there was very large amount of variance within the responses provided to the question when offering of Christmas themed services, events and products should be started. The options between 1st of November and 30th of November collected nearly same amount of answers each. There was a clear favorite only within the respondents with children as their most preferred time was 22nd of November to 30th of November. These findings show again that the results seem to be in accordance with the above mentioned theoretical background in chapter 2.3.2.

The suggested time for removal of Christmas decorations and such was by majority of the respondents 1st of January to 6th of January which shows that the 6th of January has held its meaning as the day of clearing Christmas away as presented in chapter 2.3.2. Another popular time recommended was also the time after the 6th of January. However especially for the respondents without children the fore-mentioned traditional period of ending Christmas was clearly more preferred. Then again the most suitable time for withdrawing the offering Christmas related events, services and products was clearly the already above mentioned traditional time for ending Christmas, from 1st of January until 6th of January, within all respondent groups.

Then the results related to the most suitable time for arranging Christmas events excluding the time from 24th December to 26th of December showed that two different times were most popular and suitable for the respondents: weekend afternoons and weekday evenings. Rather popular were also weekend evenings and weekends before noon. The results between the respondent without and with children did not really vary expect for that respondents with children did prefer weekends before noon more than the respondents who did not have children, which could be taken into consideration when designing events especially for families.

When asking when the respondent would prefer to participate, if at all, events on Christmas Eve, the most popular answer was that they did not want any events for that day, which is being supported by the small amount of events being arranged for that day as displayed in chapter 2.4.1. However about third of the respondents did say they would like to participate events before noon. On the other hand on Christmas Day about third of the respondents each responded they would like to participate events in the afternoon, in the evening and that they would not like to participate any events during the day, which shows that more people would like to participate events on Christmas Day than Christmas Eve, which is in contradiction with the event offering showed in chapter 2.4.1. as well as with the theoretical framework in chapter 2.3.2. stating that Christmas Day has been traditionally spent home. On the Boxing Day most respondents then again would be willing to par-

ticipate events either during afternoon or evening and this was clearly the most popular day for attending events out of the three as supported by the theoretical framework in chapter 2.3.2 and the event selection in chapter 2.4.1. No significant differences between the two groups of respondents with and without children came out.

Considering the events and services wished for the days from Christmas Eve to Boxing Day mainly same themes surfaced for each day. There was a clear need for delightful, fun and joyful activities. Christmas markets, cultural events, communal events, family events and Christmas sauna were wanted throughout the time period. Religious events were wished for both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day along with meeting Santa and seeing a Christmas parade in the city. For both Christmas Day and Boxing Day outdoor events such as Christmas trails and sport events were wished for as well as light carnivals and food related events such as brunches. The possibility of dancing was also mentioned multiple times, especially Boxing Day dances. These findings clearly show in comparison with the existing event offering presented in chapter 2.4.1. that the event selection during 24th, 25th and 26th of December should be re-planned and extended in order to satisfy residents' and customers' needs and wishes.

Unique and single wishes that are useful and valuable for the topic of this thesis included for Christmas Eve a wish for a Christmas peace proclamation that would be held in Helsinki whereas for Christmas Day the single wishes included Christmas themed events such as circus, drive-in movies, parties, charity and crafting events, which all could be developed further to complement the existing Christmas events selection. On the other hand for Boxing Day Christmas related events in Suomenlinna and sleigh rides with horses were wanted, which actually do already exist as shown in Appendix 2 and chapter 2.4.1. and also match the traditional Boxing Day activities as presented in chapter 2.3.2.

5.1.3. Perceptions of prior Christmas seasons

To be able to evaluate what the respondents think of the previous Christmas seasons in Helsinki they were first asked to list three things most typical for the Christmas in Helsinki. The three most typical aspects according to the respondents were clearly, in the order of preference, Christmas Street, Christmas markets and Christmas lights, decorations and tree. Same answers were given by the two groups of respondents who had and did not have children, thus those clearly form the base of the residents' image of the Christmas in Helsinki and should be considered in future branding efforts as stated in 2.2.1.

Next respondents were asked to choose three words that they feel describe best the Christmas in Helsinki and its atmosphere. A clear majority of all the respondents told that they consider the Christmas and its atmosphere traditional. Second came the word welcoming by half of the respondents and the third most popular word was plain by about third of the respondents out of which the latter indicates a need for improvement. However, not far behind came the word communal by fifth of the respondents making those the four most describing words of the Christmas in Helsinki. The top four words were all the same for respondents with and without children. These words are part of the current image of the Christmas in Helsinki and should be used as a base when developing the desired identity for the city and the new brand for the Christmas season as explained in chapter 2.2.2.

5.1.4. Needs and wishes for future Christmases

To find out what the respondents would like the Christmas in Helsinki and its atmosphere to be in the future they were again asked to choose three words that would best describe their vision. The most popular word mentioned was welcoming by over half of the respondents. Next came words joyful and versatile reported by around two fifths of the respondents each. Although the above mentioned words form the top three, communal and interesting came very close with not much less support. In order to consider the residents' perceptions, these words should be also the target of the people actually developing and implementing the Christmas in Helsinki in order to avoid any contradictions between the residents' and decision makers' views, which is very crucial as pointed out in the chapter 2.2.4. However it is noted that the top three words were not the same with respondents with and without children. The respondents without children thought of the words versatile, interesting and welcoming most significant each of them being equally important. The respondents with children on the other hand clearly valued welcoming the most over the other options, when on shared second place came joyful and communal. These differences could be taken into consideration when planning events to different target groups.

Then the respondents were asked to evaluate the amount of different type of Christmas events in Helsinki. First the amount of Christmas markets was considered enough by a very clear majority of the respondents, which was also the most plentiful event category presented in the chapter 2.4.1. and in Appendix 1. Cultural events were also thought of being enough by most respondents however about third considered there were too many of them. When asking about the amount of family events, it was clear that majority could not tell whether the amount was appropriate or not, which goes hand in hand with the fact that that type of events were poorly known as stated in the chapter 4.1. It is noted that

even within the respondents with children the amount of people choosing the option “can’t say” was as large as the amount of saying that the amount of family events is too little. Next came religious events which by majority of respondents were considered to be sufficient, which is probably due to the fact that most churches organize such events during Christmas as described in the chapter 2.4.1.

When asking about sport events during Christmas season, most then again answered they did not know if the amount was appropriate, which is understandable as the events were not very well known as stated in the chapter 4.1. However one fifth each though there could either be more of sport events or that the amount was good as it is. Also New Year’s events were considered mainly sufficient in amount by majority of all the respondents although one third thought there could be more of them. In general about the same amount of respondents thought that the amount of events for adults was either appropriate or too little, however there was a clear difference between the two groups compared. The respondents without children considered the amount to be mainly too little and then appropriate by one third whereas the majority of the respondents with children thought the amount was sufficient or that they could not say.

Next came communal events which a slight majority thought were too little of when about one third each though the amount was appropriate or they chose the option “can’t say”. Similar answers were also provided by the two comparing groups. The same type of responses were accumulated for outdoor events as again a slight majority answered the amount to be too little and by one third enough and the responses between the two groups with and without children gave similar opinions. Also free events were considered to be too little of but this time by over half of the respondents when one third thought of the amount sufficient. –Again no significant differences between the comparison groups were detected. Then again about half of all respondents each thought that there are enough events with admission fee or that they did not know if the amount was sufficient or not. The last option “other” received some individual responses stating that there were too little of events that are pet friendly, unique and within good transportation connections.

The respondents clearly wanted Helsinki to look like a Christmas city as they hoped for more Christmas lights and impressive decorations in the city as well as more Christmas themed shop windows to be present in Helsinki. There was also a need for more Christmas markets throughout the season with diverse offerings, internationality and quality in products. Food wise there was a surprisingly great need for mulled wine to be served all over Helsinki as well as more of tasty and quality food offered especially during events and weekends. Cultural events were also high in demand with wishes for Christmas con-

certs and music events in general throughout Helsinki, which is not that surprising as the respondents hoped for more Christmas ambiance and Christmas to be more visible all over Helsinki. The respondents wanted to feel the Christmas when walking and being in Helsinki which comprises of many different elements and details.

Outdoor and sports related events were wished for by many respondents which is not that surprising as such offerings were not plentiful during the previous Christmas season as became evident in the chapter 2.4.1. Communal events and community spirit were also important for the respondents during the Christmas season with especial concern over the lonely ones and the elderly. Christmas is the time of love and coming together yet many feel sad or depressed during this time of the year and not having anything to do or participate in can add to these feelings.

Regarding the timing of the events and services during Christmas season it was wished to have more events and services especially during the end of the Christmas season from Christmas Eve until Epiphany, which only has few events at the moment as presented in the chapter 2.4.1. and in the Appendix 1. It was also wished to have more places to be open late in the evenings. The respondents stated being busy and not having time to attend to the events until evenings and wanting to attend events also after Christmas Eve when the rush and hassle is over.

One of the most important finding in this study was that the residents don't really consider Helsinki as the capital of Christmas. The respondents wished for Helsinki to be better branded as a Christmas city, bringing the typical Christmas in Lapland and its features into Helsinki and its Christmas. All senses captivating, magical and mystical Christmas atmosphere and events embodying those elements were wanted without forgetting the possibility to meet Santa Claus in Helsinki.

Also unique, less popular ideas that are valuable to this thesis topic surfaced from the survey, for example a suggestion of small entrance fees for some events as means of doing charity and lessening the crowds and rush at the events for an improved customer experience. Other ideas were Christmas themed cooking classes and food related events, online Christmas calendar, Christmas themed parties, and Christmas adventures in the city and photo booths with the ability to send Christmas greetings thru social media. An important remark was also made regarding the information and marketing of the events and services during the Christmas season. A respondent hoped for better informing of the Christmas season's offerings and this need also became evident in the chapter 4.1. as the

respondents were not that aware of all the various Christmas services and events Helsinki has to offer.

5.2. Recommendations

The recommendations in this chapter are based on the theory and the results of the survey presented earlier in this thesis. Indeed according to the theory of thematic branding in the chapter 2.2.3. it is justified that the city of Helsinki could create a separate sub brand for the Christmas time in Helsinki. Then again Helsinki Marketing would be responsible of marketing the suggested Christmas events and they could collaborate with various companies in Helsinki for arranging the events. With each recommendation a suggestion is given toward possible parties that could organize and fund the event.

As became evident in the chapter 4.1., there is a huge need for compiled information and more efficient marketing of the events and services available during the Christmas season in Helsinki. A website could be created which would allow an easy access to all of the events and happenings in Helsinki during Christmas season gathering everything in one place. An online Christmas calendar could be a tool for this as well. The calendar could start from the beginning of the Christmas season, mid-November, and continue till the end of the season, Epiphany. The Christmas calendar could be accessed via an app, website or an e-mail subscription. The Christmas calendar could offer reminders and suggestions of what events are happening in Helsinki during that day or the whole week. Helsinki Marketing and Visit Helsinki could be responsible for creating the webpage and the Christmas calendar as they already coordinate the Christmas season events and services in Helsinki.

The Christmas season should begin in mid-November and end on Epiphany. New events created for the Christmas season should be more focused on the beginning and the ending of the season as there is lack of events during those periods. Most wanted times for events were weekend afternoons and weekday evenings as stated in the chapter 4.2., hence the events and services should be focused on these times of the day. Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day should not be forgotten either. The events could be organized by Helsinki Marketing's various partner companies in different fields throughout Helsinki.

The respondents stated the three words describing the future Christmas in Helsinki in the chapter 4.4. with words such as welcoming, joyful, versatile and communal. The residents and the brand's perceptions should be aligned in order to gain brand success as stated in

the chapter 2.2.4. and for this reason the Christmas events in Helsinki should comply with the opinions of the respondents. Outdoor and sport events surfaced in the chapter 4.4. thus events such as self-directed Christmas trails in the central park of Helsinki with lights, decorations and signs guiding the walk could be created. Other outdoor events could be Christmas themed instructed group exercise, post-Christmas boot camps and winter sports day offered for the residents and visitors of Helsinki during the Christmas season. The Christmas trail could be organized and funded by the city of Helsinki whereas the sports activities could be organized by local sports companies or nation-wide sports chains such as Elixia or EasyFit. The companies organizing the events would also benefit from the partnership with Helsinki Marketing by gaining visibility among the residents of Helsinki.

Communal events as well as the clear need for more decorations throughout the city were introduced in the chapter 4.4. thus these two wishes could be combined into one communal event. Engaging the residents into a Christmas decoration competition between the districts in Helsinki might lead into increasing community spirit and pride in the residents' own districts. The residents could also participate in decoration crafting workshops and even bring their own decorations as donations to the district decoration. This event could be funded and organized by collaboration with neighbourhood associations in Helsinki, the city of Helsinki and the Adult Education Institute of the capital region. The neighbourhood associations could recruit local companies to help and sponsor the event if needed.

The same practice from above could be implemented with the need for Christmas parties and events for adults and single people showcased in the chapter 4.4. An exclusive, lavish, elegant and mystical Christmas party could be arranged on Christmas Eve or on Christmas Day as the Christmas celebrations have deep roots in the history in forms of festivals as explained in the chapter 2.3.1. The party could have limited amount of tickets, certain theme and dress code, age limit and it could offer little snacks, Christmas presents, surprising entertainment and of course cocktails and drinks for the guests to indulge in. The Christmas party could be arranged by the various nightclubs or event management companies in Helsinki.

Helsinki was wished to be seen as a Christmas city by the commissioner which became evident in the chapter 1.2. and the respondents also wished this to become true in the chapter 4.4. Helsinki as the capital of Christmas should to accommodate some aspects of the Christmas in Lapland as that is what the "typical" dreamy Finnish Christmas is considered to be. To get a piece of that Northern Christmas into Helsinki, mixed reality and virtual reality technology could be used. For example the Box from Haaga-Helia, which util-

izes the virtual reality and mixed reality, could be used for meeting the real Santa Claus from Korvatunturi anywhere in Helsinki where the Box is located at. The Box is a large “box” reminding of a room with walls, ceiling and a door. In the Box “the pre-programmable and scripted chromatic atmospheres will exploit the existing knowledge of Soundscape, Psychoacoustic, Sensory Stimulation, Haptic Feedback and Augmented Reality” (The Box 2016). The bringing Christmas in Lapland to Helsinki could be organized in co-operation with Haaga-Helia University, the city of Helsinki and Santa Claus Foundation and Santa Claus Licencing Ltd.

Events for lonely people and the elderly were also a concern of the respondents as the chapter 4.4. indicates. A social Christmas event or a party could be arranged for the less-fortunate individuals, lonely people and the elderly, where anyone could come and enjoy Christmas in the company of others with food, beverages, decorations and maybe even small Christmas presents. This event could be funded via (voluntary) admission fees gathered from various Christmas events and markets in Helsinki and by voluntary donations of food, presents and decorations. The participants could also decorate a Christmas tree with their self-made decorations during the party. This type of events could be organized by different charity organizations in Helsinki such as HelsinkiMissio.

Another charity and Christmas related suggestion is to give some part of the admission fees of the Christmas events to Brother Christmas and collaborate with him during the Christmas season, and why not all year round. Brother Christmas is from Uusimaa and he helps the less-fortunate, sick and lonely people with sharing joy and granting their wishes (Brother Christmas 2017). Collaboration with Brother Christmas together with the Christmas events held in Helsinki can be used to create a stronger Christmas time brand for the city of Helsinki as stated in the theory in the chapter 2.2.1. This association would also be in line with the new branding aims of the city of Helsinki as they want to be known for impressive and influential individuals, actions and encounters as stated in the chapter 1.1.

5.3. Suggestions for future research

This research could be continued by implementing a qualitative research to gain a deeper understanding of the topics presented in this thesis as well as to further develop the themes risen from the survey implemented for this thesis. Interviewing for example focus groups representing the various resident groups of Helsinki about the Christmas in Helsinki, the researcher could gain knowledge of why the interviewees answered the way they did to the questions.

The research implemented for this thesis could also be carried out again, but with language options of Swedish and English in order to reach those resident groups that don't speak Finnish. Helsinki is becoming more and more international and in order to Christmas season in Helsinki to represent its residents, all resident groups should be asked their opinions and ideas regarding it. The Finnish survey could also be implemented again in order to reach wider population and gaining more accurate results, which would represent the residents of Helsinki as a whole.

In the upcoming years a customer satisfaction survey could be also carried out after each Christmas season to further examine how the residents feel about the Christmas in Helsinki as well as to find out whether the residents are still missing some events and services they feel are crucial for the Christmas in Helsinki. Engaging the residents and letting them have a say in the matter is important and holds great value as stated in the chapter 2.2.4.

A research focusing on the tourists visiting Helsinki could also be implemented as they represent another important customer segment of the city of Helsinki as they could increase the competitive advantage of the place as described in the chapter 2.2.2. The tourists' opinions about the Christmas in Helsinki can offer valuable information on how the tourists perceive the new Christmas brand of Helsinki and if the services and events offered are satisfying or better yet exceeding the expectations positively, wowing the tourists staying in Helsinki during the Christmas season.

5.4. Reliability and validity

Reliability of a research refers to “the extent to which a measure provides consistent results across repeated testing” (Ritter & Sue 2012, 227.) which basically means that a reliable research could be implemented multiple times with the same results even though the researcher would not be the same (Davies & Hughes 2014, 158).

In the case of this research it is first of all noted, that the results of the survey might vary depending on when the research would be re-implemented as the respondents perceptions of previous Christmases would be likely to change based on the latest experience. Thus it would be probable to get different findings if the same questionnaire would be used for instance next year.

In addition as the sample size of this research was relatively small considering the amount of residents in the city of Helsinki, thus if the research would be repeated it would be quite

unlikely to generate exactly the same results. So, for the aforementioned reason the reliability of the research cannot be considered very high.

Then again, validity of a research “refers to whether the measurement tool (i.e., the survey question) accurately and appropriately measures the concept under consideration” (Ritter & Sue 2012, 228.), in other words does the tool measure what it is supposed to measure (Davies & Hughes 2014, 160). As it can be seen in the results of the research, the survey does provide answers to all of the three sub-research questions and therefore to the main research question, so it can be said that the research has got validity in this sense.

However part of validity is also whether the results of a research can be generalized (David & Hughes 2014, 161). And as stated above, the sample size in this survey was rather small hence any proper correlations between the findings and the whole population of the Helsinki city cannot really be made which decreases the validity of the research from this point of view.

5.5. Limitations

As it became already evident in the previous chapter, while analysing the reliability and validity of the research, one of the main limitations of the research is the relatively small sample size when considering the actual amount of residents in Helsinki. Due to this limited sample size making reliable comparisons, conclusions and generalizations toward the target population is not possible. Reasons leading to the small amount of respondents was of several reasons. First of all the questionnaire post on the Helsinki city’s Facebook account was not in its own post but joined with two unrelated questionnaires, limiting chances of the post starting to spread naturally. Other significant reason was that, despite requests, reminders of the questionnaire were never published on any of the channels used.

Another reason resulting not only to the limited sample size but also to biased sample, which is another of the main limitations of the study, was the use of online channels only. Using just online channels meant that people without access to Internet, such as many elderly people, were not able to participate. Also the fact that the online channels used were mainly of the city of Helsinki meant that large amount of people not following these channels were left out, which might also be one of the reasons no respondents under the age of 20 were reached.

The sample was also biased as there was no control over who would respond to the questionnaire distributed online. This led for instance to the fact that most respondents were women although men's opinions would have been just as important. Also there was no way of insuring that people from different backgrounds such as from differing socioeconomic groups would answer the questionnaire which potentially caused the results to be of very narrow perspective.

Furthermore there are also limitations caused by the mainly quantitative nature of the research and the fact that respondents filled the survey by themselves. These factors caused that the answers given by the respondents might have included inaccurate information and potentially even wrong answers in case respondents were not sure what they were asked as there was no one to clarify the questions or to ask elaborating questions from the respondents. For these above reasons gaining fuller understanding of the topic was also not possible as there was no way of knowing why people had answered the way they did.

5.6. Own learning

Regarding the professional development and academic learning we got to learn something totally new as branding has not been part of our studies and marketing has only been a minor part in the curriculum. Exploring a field we knew next to nothing was challenging yet extremely rewarding as we started from the basics and build our knowledge base from scratch one theme at a time. Considering the research part of this thesis it was intriguing to conduct one on our own from start to finish.

For our first large scale survey the questionnaire design was successful except for the open-ended questions which were given a bit too much space for answering. The data from the open-ended questions was rather broad and time to time even overwhelming to analyse as the maximum length of the answers were set to be 500 marks. If we were to implement a similar type of survey again, we'd restrict the length of the answering space for the open-ended questions to ease the data analysis process. We would also clear enough space from the calendars to solely focus on the research project without distractions and hindrances such as work and courses from school.

The schedule was set to be quite fast-paced and ambitious from the beginning as one of us had planned to graduate right after this thesis during this spring. We had worked together previously on projects and had noticed how our different ways of working complemented each other well. We knew that even though the thesis process would have its ups

and downs we'd survive without any major disagreements or difficulties as both of us are rather ambitious and highly goal-oriented. We quickly noticed that the saying "well planned is half done" is indeed true, because when the setbacks happened it was easy to fall back on a plan b or even plan c if needed. Unfortunately we faced multiple setbacks such as health problems, decrease in time available for this thesis in form of a full-time job and deadlines for other school courses, but nevertheless we never gave up and succeeded to finish this thesis on time according to the initial plan.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Example Christmas season 2016 events in Helsinki

Christmas markets

- 19.11. Taidekuja, Kulttuuriareena Gloria
- 19.11.-20.11. Ateneumin Joulu, Ateneum
- 19.11.-23.12. Xmas Garage, Aleksanterinkatu 11
- 24.11.-24.12. TRE Christmas Market, WTC
- 26.11. Rastila Christmas Market, Rastila
- 26.11.-27.11. & 10.12.-11.12. Korjaamon joulumarkkinat, Korjaamo
- 26.11.-8.1. Mantan joulumarkkinat, Kauppatori
- 27.11. Kaurila's Christmas Market, Kaurila
- 2.-4.12. Ornamo Design Christmas Market, Cable Factory
- 2.-4.12. Tokyo Christmas Sales, Media Center Lume
- 2.-6.12. Naisten joulumessut, Wanh Satama
- 3.12. Hotel F6 Christmas Market, Fabianinkatu 6
- 3.-4.12. Kiasma's Christmas, Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma
- 3.-4.12., 10.-11.12., & 17.-18.12. Karhutori Christmas Market, Karhutori
- 3.-22.12. Tuomaan Markkinat, Senaatintori
- 3.-23.12. & 27.12.-7.1. Helsingin Joulumaailma, Kolmen sepän aukio – Kaivopiha
- 4.12. Puotila Manor Christmas Market, Puotila
- 9.-11.12. Christmas Sale of the students of the Academy of Fine Arts
- 9.-11.12. & 16.-18.12. Kaapelin Joulu, Kaapelitehdas
- 11.12. Agrokseenmäki Christmas Market, Vanha Talvitie 14
- 11.12. Xmas Bazaar at Siltanen, Hämeentie 13
- 16.-18.12. We got Beef Christmas Market, We got Beef
- 17.-18.12. Teurastamon joulumyyjäiset, Teurastamo
- 17.-18.12. Abattoir Christmas Market, Työpajankatu 2
- 17.-23.12. Vanhan joulutori, Vanha ylioppilastalo
- 17.-23.12. Old Student House Christmas Market, Mannerheimintie 3

Cultural events

- 3.11.-8.1. Talvisirkus Muisti, Tanssiteatteri Hurjaruuth
- 12.-15.12. Christmas på Lillan, Lilla Teatern
- 14.-16.12. Dizzy Queens – Jazz Up Your Christmas, Teatteri Forum
- 16.12. Metropolia Big Band: Joulusvengit, Metropolia
- 28.12. Valossa kuun ja auringon, Hakasalmen huvila
- 6.1. Mariinski-teatterin kuoron loppiaiskonsertti, Aleksanterin teatteri

Family events

- 10.-17.12. Tontun salaisuus, Kanneltalo
12.11.-17.12. Tontut suutareina, Helsingin kaupunginteatteri
22.11.-18.12. Joulu tulla jollottaa, Nukketeatteri Sampo
26.11.-17.12. Linnoitustonttu Kaarlen tonttupolku Viaporissa, Suomenlinna
26.11.-6.1. Linnoitustontun reitti, Suomenlinna
26.11.-8.1. Piparikaupunki – Helsinki 60-luvulla, Arkkitehtuurimuseo
2.12.-7.1. Pähkinäsärkijä ja Hiirikuningas, Suomen Kansallisooppera
8.-21.12. Ihana joulu, Nukketeatteri Sampo
11.12. Seurasaaren joulupolku, Seurasaaren ulkomuseo

Religious Christmas events

- 20.11.-6.1. Helsingin jouluseimet, Helsingin keskusta
26.11.-6.1. Joulukonsertteja, Helsingin kirkoissa

New Years events

- 31.12. Suomi 100 -avajaiset, uuden vuosisadan bileet, Kansalaistori
31.12. Ugn Uunisaari New Year's Eve, Uunisaari
31.12. Nyårskabaré, Lilla Teatern
31.12. Vuodenvaihteen samppanja-ajelut, SkyWheel Helsinki

Other Christmas time events and activities

- 20.11. Joulukadun avajaiset, Aleksanterinkatu, Senaatintori
3.12. Christmas Path, Herttoniemi Manor
9.-22.12. Torikortteleiden Joulusauna ja Talviterassi, Bockin piha
10.12. Krunika Christmas Street, Kruununhaka
13.12. Lucia-juhla ja –kulkue, Tuomiokirkko – Helsingin keskusta
17.12. Books & Porridge, The Cock

(Lassila 28 February 2017.)

Appendix 2. Example Christmas events in Helsinki 24th – 26th December 2016

Christmas Eve (24.12.)
Christmas markets Mantan joulumarkkinat, Kauppatori, klo 10–14 TRE Christmas Market, WTC, klo 9–12
Religious events Jouluyön musiikki, Roihuvuoren kirkko, klo 23 Jouluyön musiikki, Kallion kirkko, klo 23 Oi, jouluyö –musiikkihartaus, Tuomiokirkko, klo 23
Family events Koko perheen jouluaaton luistelu, Malmin jäähalli, klo 9–13
Others Jouluaaton jumppa. Ruoholahden palloiluhalli, klo 10.30–11.30 Päihteetön kokoontumispaikka, Elokolo, klo 9–15 Jouludisko. Bar Loose, klo 23–4 Mäkki (live). E93 Lounge & Night Club, klo 22–3.30 Traditional Funky Christmas, We Got Beef, klo 22–4

Christmas Day (25.12.)
Cultural events Elokuva-arkisto Orionissa, Orion, klo 16-
Family events Korkeasaaren joulu, Korkeasaari, klo 10–16
Others Joulupäivän kahvila Patolassa, SPR:n Pohjois-Helsingin osasto, klo 13–17 Joulupäivän kahvila Vallilassa, SPR:n Kallio-Käpylän-osasto, klo 13–17 Bingo. Bar Loose, klo 21–23 Päihteetön kokoontumispaikka, Elokolo, klo 9–15 Jouludisko, Bar Loose, klo 23–4

(Helsingin Sanomat 2016.)

Boxing Day (26.12.)
Christmas markets Mantan markkinat, Kauppatori, klo 10–18 97 Things Christmas Market, 97 Things –kauppa, klo 11–19
Cultural events Skattkamarön, Svenska Teatern, klo 13 Talvisirkus Muisti, Tanssiteatteri Hurjaruuth, Kaapelitehdas, klo 13 ja 17 Elokuva-arkisto Orionissa, Orion, klo 16- Yleisöopastus Alvar Aallon kotitalossa, Alvar Aallon asuin- ja toimistotalo, klo 13 Yleisöopastus Alvar Aallon ateljeessa, Alvar Aallon ateljee, klo 11.30
Religious events Joululauluja seimen äärellä, Yhteislaulutilaisuus, Pyhän Henrikin katedraali, klo 18 Tuikkii taivaan tähtivyö, Kannelmäen kirkko, klo 16
Family events Neznaikan seikkailut, Aleksanterin teatteri, klo 14 Sampo Lappalaisen joulu, Nukke-teatteri Sytkyt, klo 13 ja 15. Linnoitustontun reitti, Omatoiminen tehtäväpolku, Suomalinn Jääpuisto, Rautatientori, klo 14-21, (Paula-lehmän luistelukoulu, klo 17–18)
Others Rekiäjelua Seurasaarella, Seurasaari, klo 11–16 Pertti Kurikan Nimipäivät, Problems, Seksihullut, On the Rocks, klo 21 Shöcking Blü, Semifinal, klo 21.30 Mendo Monday –jämät, Bar Mendocino, klo 19–24 Hilland Mondays, Juttutupa, klo 20 Vini Vici, Bass Game –klubi, Nosturi, klo 21–4 Lauantaidiskon tapaninpäivä, Tavastia, klo 23.30–4 Lazercat (live), Kaiku, klo 22–4 MC Taakibörsta (live), Tavastia, klo 20 MC Taakibörsta -jatkot ystävien seurassa, G Livelab, klo 18 Tapsantanssit, Bar Loose, klo 23–4

(Helsingin Sanomat 2016.)

Appendix 3. Original questionnaire in Finnish

1. Sukupuoli: *

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto.)

- Nainen
- Mies
- Muu
- En halua vastata

2. Ikä: *

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto.)

- Alle 20 vuotta
- 20 - 29 vuotta
- 30 - 39 vuotta
- 40 - 49 vuotta
- 50 - 59 vuotta
- 60 - 69 vuotta
- Yli 70 vuotta
- En halua vastata

3. Sivillisääty: *

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto.)

- Naimaton
- Naimisissa
- Rekisteröidyssä parisuhteessa
- Eronnut
- Leski
- En halua vastata

4. Lapset: *

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto.)

- Ei ole
- On, asuu samassa taloudessa
- On, asuu eri taloudessa
- En halua vastata

5. Lapsen / lapsien iät: *

(Voitte valita useamman vaihtoehdon.)

- Alle 3 vuotta
- 4 - 7 vuotta
- 8 - 11 vuotta
- 12 - 15 vuotta
- 16 vuotta tai yli
- En halua vastata

6. Helsinki tarjoaa runsaasti erilaisia joulutapahtumia ja -palveluita.

Kuinka hyvin tunnette alla olevia joulunajan tapahtumia? *

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto kultakin riviltä.)

	Erittäin hyvin	Hyvin	Kohtalaisesti	Heikosti	Erittäin huonosti	En osaa sanoa
Joulumarkkinat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kulttuuritapahtumat (esim. teatteri ja konsertit)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Koko perheen tapahtumat (esim. nukketeatteri)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uskonnolliset tapahtumat (esim. joulukirkko)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Liikuntatapahtumat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uudenvuoden tapahtumat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Muut tapahtumat (esim. jou- luku ja joulusaunat)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Kuinka usein osallistuitte alla oleviin Helsingin joulutapahtumiin viime jouluna? *

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto kullakin riviltä.)

	4 kertaa tai useammin	3 ker- taa	2 ker- taa	1 ker- ran	En ole osal- listunut	En osaa sanoa
Joulumarkkinat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kulttuuritapahtumat (esim. teatteri ja konsertit)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Koko perheen tapahtumat (esim. nukketatteri)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uskonnolliset tapahtumat (esim. joulukirkko)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Liikuntatapahtumat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uudenvuoden tapahtumat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Muut tapahtumat (esim. joulukatu ja joulusaunat)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**8. Milloin mielestänne joulu voi alkaa näkyä Helsingin katukuvassa
(esim. jouluvalot, -koristeet ja -laulut)? ***

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto.)

- Aiemmin kuin 1.11.
- 1.11. - 7.11.
- 8.11. - 14.11.
- 15.11. - 21.11.
- 22.11. - 30.11.
- 1.12. - 7.12.
- Myöhemmin kuin 7.12.

Muu, mikä?

9. Milloin joulun olisi mielestänne sopivaa poistua Helsingin katukuvasta (esim. jouluvalot, -koristeet ja -laulut)? *

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto.)

- Aiemmin kuin 1.1.
- 1.1. - 6.1.
- Myöhemmin kuin 6.1.

Muu, mikä?

10. Mikä mielestänne olisi sopiva aika aloittaa jouluun liittyvien tapahtumien, tuotteiden ja palveluiden tarjoaminen Helsingissä? *

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto.)

- Aiemmin kuin 1.11.
- 1.11. - 7.11.
- 8.11. - 14.11.
- 15.11. - 21.11.
- 22.11. - 30.11.
- 1.12. - 7.12.
- Myöhemmin kuin 7.12.

Muu, mikä?

11. Mikä mielestänne olisi sopiva aika päättää jouluun liittyvien tapahtumien, tuotteiden ja palveluiden tarjoaminen Helsingissä? *

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto.)

- Aiemmin kuin 1.11.
- 1.1. - 6.1.
- Myöhemmin kuin 6.1.

Muu, mikä?

12. Mihin aikaan toivoisitte joulutapahtumia järjestettävän (joulunpyhiä lukuun ottamatta)?

*

(Voitte valita useamman vastausvaihtoehdon.)

- Arkisin, aamupäivällä
- Arkisin, iltapäivällä
- Arkisin, illalla
- Viikonloppuisin, aamupäivällä
- Viikonloppuisin, iltapäivällä
- Viikonloppuisin, illalla
- En halua osallistua joulutapahtumiin

13. Mihin aikaan päivästä toivoisitte tapahtumia joulunpyhinä? *

(Valitkaa vähintään yksi vastausvaihtoehto kullakin riviltä.)

	Aamupäivällä	Iltapäivällä	Illalla	En toivo tapahtumia tälle päivälle
Jouluaattona (24.12.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joulupäivänä (25.12.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tapaninpäivänä (26.12.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Mikäli haluaisitte osallistua tapahtumiin joulunpyhinä, minkälaisia tapahtumia toivoisitte?

(Mikäli ette halua osallistua tapahtumiin kyseisenä päivänä, jättäkää kohta tyhjäksi.)

Jouluaatto (24.12.)

Joulupäivä (25.12.)

Tapaninpäivä (26.12.)

15. Valitkaa alla olevasta listasta, mitkä 3 asiaa ovat mielestänne tyypillisimpiä
Helsinkiäiselle joululle. *

- Joulumarkkinat
- Joulukatu
- Joulupukki
- Joulupalot, -koristeet ja -kuusi
- Joulusauna
- Joulukonsertit
- Jouluaiheiset teatteri-, sirkus- ja balettiesitykset
- Joululaulut
- Joulukirkko
- Lucia -juhla ja -kulkue

Muu, mikä?

16. Valitkaa alla olevasta listasta 3 sanaa, jotka mielestänne parhaiten kuvaavat helsinkiläistä joulua ja sen tunnelmaa. *

- Yhteisöllinen
- Ainutlaatuinen
- Tylsä
- Mielenkiintoinen
- Perinteinen
- Yksinäinen
- Moderni
- Vaatimaton
- Monipuolinen
- Tyydyttävä
- Laadukas
- Ärsyttävä
- Lämminhenkinen
- Yksipuolinen
- Iloinen

Muu, mikä?

17. Valitkaa alla olevasta listasta 3 sanaa, joiden toivoisitte kuvaavan helsinkiläistä joulua ja sen tunnelmaa tulevaisuudessa. *

- Iloinen
- Perinteinen
- Ainutlaatuinen
- Mielenkiintoinen
- Moderni
- Lämminhenkinen
- Yhteisöllinen
- Monipuolinen
- Laadukas

Muu, mikä?

18. Valitkaa alla olevasta listasta minkälaisia joulutapahtumia Helsingissä on mielestänne liian vähän, sopivasti tai liikaa.

(Valitkaa yksi vastausvaihtoehto kultakin riviltä.)

	Liian vähän	Sopivasti	Liikaa	En osaa sanoa
Joulumarkkinat *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kulttuuritapahtumat (esim. teatteri ja konsertit) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Koko perheen tapahtumat (esim. nukketeatteri) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uskonnolliset tapahtumat (esim. joulukirkko) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Liikuntatapahtumat *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uuden vuoden tapahtumat *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aikuisille suunnatut tapahtumat *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yhteisölliset tapahtumat *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ulkoilmatapahtumat *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ilmaistapahtumat *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pääsymaksulliset tapahtumat *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Muu, mikä? _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Kaipaatteko tiettyjä tapahtumia / palveluja, joita ei ole vielä toistaiseksi ollut tarjolla joulunaikaan Helsingissä? Kuvailkaa lyhyesti:

500 merkkiä jäljellä

20. Kuvailkaa lyhyesti mieluisinta helsinkiläistä joulukokemustanne:

500 merkkiä jäljellä

Appendix 4. Translated questionnaire in English

1. Gender: *

(Choose one alternative.)

- Woman
- Man
- Other
- Don't want to answer

2. Age: *

(Choose one alternative.)

- Under 20 years
- 20 - 29 years
- 30 - 39 years
- 40 - 49 years
- 50 - 59 years
- 60 - 69 years
- Over 70 years
- Don't want to answer

3. Marital status: *

(Choose one alternative.)

- Single
- Married
- In
registered relationship
- Divorced
- Widow
- Don't want to answer

4. Children: *

(Choose one option.)

- Don't have
- Children, living in the same household
- Children, living in different household
- Don't want to answer

5. Child's / children's ages: *

(You can choose multiple options.)

- Under 3 years
- 4 - 7 years
- 8 - 11 years
- 12 - 15 years
- 16 years or over
- Don't want to answer

6. Helsinki offers plenty of different Christmas events and services.

How well do you know below Christmas time events? *

(Choose one option from each row.)

	Very well	Well	Moderately	Weakly	Very weakly	Can't say
Christmas markets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural events (e.g. theater and concerts)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family events (e.g. puppet theater)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religious events (e.g. Christmas church)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sport events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Year's events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other events (e.g. Christmas Street and Christmas sauna)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. How often did you participate on below Christmas events in Helsinki during last Christmas? *

(Choose one option from each row.)

	4 times or more	3 ti- mes	2 ti- mes	1 time	Didn't parti- cipate	Can't say
Christmas markets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural events (e.g. theater and concerts)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family events (e.g. puppet theater)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religious events (e.g. Christmas church)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sport events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Year's events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other events (e.g. Christmas Street and Christmas Street)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. When do you think that Christmas can start to be visible in the street scene of Helsinki (e.g. Christmas lights, decorations and songs)? *

(Choose one option.)

- Earlier than 1.11.
- 1.11. - 7.11.
- 8.11. - 14.11.
- 15.11. - 21.11.
- 22.11. - 30.11.
- 1.12. - 7.12.
- Later than 7.12.

Other, what?

9. When do you think Christmas should be removed from the street scene of Helsinki (e.g. Christmas lights, decorations and songs)? *

(Choose one option.)

- Earlier than 1.1.
- 1.1. - 6.1.
- Later than 6.1.

Other, what?

10. When do you think would be good to start offering Christmas related events, products and services in Helsinki? *

(Choose one option.)

- Earlier than 1.11.
- 1.11. - 7.11.
- 8.11. - 14.11.
- 15.11. - 21.11.
- 22.11. - 30.11.
- 1.12. - 7.12.
- Later than 7.12.

Other, what?

11. When do you think would be good time to end the offering of Christmas related events, products and services in Helsinki? *

(Choose one option.)

- Earlier than 1.11.
- 1.1. - 6.1.
- Later than 6.1.

Other, what?

12. What time do you wish Christmas events would be organized (despite 24th – 26th of December)? *

(You can choose multiple options.)

- Weekdays, before noon
- Weekdays, afternoon
- Weekdays, evening
- Weekends, before noon
- Weekends, afternoon
- Weekends, evening
- Don't want to participate Christmas events

13. On what time of day you wished to have events on 24th – 26th of December? *

(Choose at least one option from each row.)

	Before noon	Afternoon	Evening	Don't wish events for this day
Christmas Eve (24.12.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Christmas Day (25.12.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boxing Day (26.12.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. If you wanted to participate events during 24th – 26th of December, what kind of events would you wish for?

(If you don't want to participate events on certain day, please leave the space empty.)

Christmas Eve (24.12.)

Christmas Day (25.12.)

Boxing Day (26.12.)

15. Choose from the below list, which 3 things you think are most typical for Christmas in Helsinki. *

- Christmas markets
- Christmas Street
- Santa Claus
- Christmas lights, decorations and tree
- Christmas sauna
- Christmas concerts
- Christmas themed theater, circus and ballet
- Christmas songs
- Christmas church
- Lucia festival and parade

Other, what?

16. Choose from the below list, which 3 things you think describe best Christmas in Helsinki and its atmosphere. *

- Communal
 - Unique
 - Boring
 - Interesting
 - Traditional
 - Lonely
 - Modern
 - Plain
 - Versatile
 - Satisfactory
 - High-quality
 - Annoying
 - Welcoming
 - Monotonous
 - Joyful
 - Other, what?
-

17. Choose from the below list, which 3 things you would like to describe Christmas in Helsinki and its atmosphere in the future. *

- Joyful
- Traditional
- Unique
- Interesting
- Modern
- Welcoming
- Communal
- Versatile
- High-quality
- Other, what?

18. Choose from the below list, what kind of Christmas events in Helsinki you think there are too little, enough or too much.

(Choose one option from each row.)

	Too little	Enough	Too much	Can't say
Christmas markets *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural events (e.g. theater and concerts) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family events (e.g. puppet theater) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religious events (e.g. Christmas church) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sport events *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Year's events *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Event for adults *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communal events *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor events *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Free events *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Events with admission fee *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, _____ what?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Do you miss any specific events / services which haven't been offered so far during Christmas time in Helsinki? Describe briefly:

500 marks remaining

20. Describe briefly your favourite Christmas experience in Helsinki:

500 marks remaining

Appendix 5. Questionnaire´s cover letter

Arvoisa helsinkiläinen

Helsingin kaupungin markkinointiyhtiö Helsinki Marketing on kartoittamassa paikallisten mielipiteitä Helsinkiläisestä joulusta ja sen tarjonnasta yhteistyössä Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijoiden kanssa. Kyselytutkimuksen tarkoituksena on auttaa Helsingin matkailu- ja tapahtumaelinkeinoa kehittämään joulunajan elämys- ja palvelutarjontaa vastaamaan paremmin paikallisten toiveita. Tutkimuksen toteuttavat opinnäytetyönä Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijat Noora Hentilä ja Iiris Koivunen. Helsinkiläisenä mielipiteesi on meille erittäin arvokas.

Kyselyyn on mahdollista osallistua 21.4.2017 mennessä ja vastaaminen kestää noin 5-10 minuuttia. Kyselyyn vastataan täysin anonymisti, eikä tuloksia voida yhdistää yksittäisiin vastaajiin.

Tutkimuksen tulokset julkaistaan myöhemmin tänä keväänä englanninkielisessä opinnäytetyössä *Local Residents´ Perceptions of Christmas in Helsinki for City Brand Development*, joka julkaistaan osoitteessa theseus.fi.

Kiitos, että olette kiinnostuneet helsinkiläisen joulun kehittämisestä!

Aurinkoista kevättä toivottaen,

Noora Hentilä & Iiris Koivunen

restonomiopiskelijat

Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulu

Appendix 6. Social media posts

Facebook:

Hei sinä helsinkiläinen!

Haluaisitko vaikuttaa siihen millainen seuraavasta helsinkiläisestä joulusta tulee?

Tarvitsemme mielipidettäsi kehittääksemme helsinkiläisen joulun elämys- ja palvelutarjontaa vastaaman paremmin juuri sinun toiveitasi!

Vaikuta vastaamalla jouluhenkiseen noin 5-10 minuutin pituiseen kyselyyn 21.4.2017 mennessä.

Kyselyyn pääset seuraavasta linkistä:

<https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/F7B84C6C04F385A3.par>

Tehdään yhdessä joulusta helsinkiläinen!

Twitter:

Helsinkiläinen! Haluaisitko vaikuttaa siihen millainen seuraavasta helsinkiläisestä joulusta tulee? Vastaa kyselyyn ja vaikuta:

<https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/F7B84C6C04F385A3.par>

Appendix 7. News article published in the website of the city of Helsinki

Kysely Helsingin joulunajan elämys- ja palvelutarjonnan kehittämiseksi

Helsingin kaupungin markkinointiyhtiö Helsinki Marketing kartoittaa kaupungin asukkaiden mielipiteitä helsinkiläisestä joulusta ja sen tarjonnasta yhteistyössä Haaga-Helia ammatti- korkeakoulun opiskelijoiden kanssa. Tutkimuksen toteuttavat opinnäytetyönä res- tonomiopiskelijat Noora Hentilä ja Iiris Koivunen.

Kyselytutkimuksen tarkoitus on toimia selvitystyönä joulunajan elämys- ja palvelutarjon- nan lisäämiseksi ja markkinoinnin kehittämiseksi. Kehittämistyötä toteutetaan yhteistyössä Helsingin matkailu- ja tapahtumaelinkeinon kanssa. Projektin tarkoitus on joulunajan elä- mys- ja palvelutarjonnan lisääminen ja markkinoinnin kehittäminen.

Vastaa kyselyyn ja vaikuta siihen millainen seuraavasta helsinkiläisestä joulusta tulee.

Vastausaikaa on 21.4.2017 saakka ja kyselyn täyttäminen kestää noin 5-10 minuuttia. Kyselyyn on mahdollista osallistua alla olevasta linkistä.

<https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/F7B84C6C04F385A3.par>

Lisätietoja

Tutkimuksen tulokset julkaistaan englanninkielisessä opinnäytetyössä Local Residents' Perceptions of Christmas in Helsinki for City Brand Development, joka on mahdollista lu- kea myöhemmin tänä keväänä osoitteessa theseus.fi.