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Customer Satisfaction as a Base for Tourism Development Case: Helsinki Region Transport

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Customer Satisfaction as a Base for Tourism Development: Case Helsinki Region Transport

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This bachelor thesis concentrates on Helsinki Region Transport's customer segments and their satisfaction with the provided services. The focus of the thesis lies in the development of tourism in the Helsinki region in terms of Helsinki Region Transport. The near future of Helsinki Region Transport will be discussed, and the influence of modifications will be examined. The aims of the thesis are to find out how tourists could be served better and how citizens in the metropolitan area are encouraged on the usage of public transport.

The theoretical framework consists of presenting customer segments and services, which Helsinki Region Transport provides. The constructions, which are ahead in the near future, are introduced and the impact on tourism in the region is discussed. New fare and ticket system will be introduced, as well as new information system. The Influences of these will be argued.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were adopted for the thesis. In the quantitative research part, traffic statistics and customer satisfaction are analysed and examined. Helsinki Region Transport conducts customer satisfaction surveys throughout the year, and these surveys have been analysed in the thesis. As a qualitative research part, the author has conducted an expert theme interview on services with a communications specialist of Helsinki Region Transport. In the interview matters such as the number of day tickets and the impact of Ring Rail Line were discussed.

The results show that the satisfaction of Helsinki Region Transport's customers is very high and it is increasing yearly. Compared to five cities in Europe, Helsinki Region Transport has the highest number of satisfied customers. The satisfaction level depends on the mode of transport but all in all, the average mark for satisfaction in spring 2013 was 3,98 on a scale from one to five. According to the results it can be stated that it is predicted that the number of people using public transport will increase, due to the new tracks. Helsinki Region Transport provides services quite well for customers with various demands, and it encourages people to use public transport by improving the traffic network system, as well as improving the pedestrian and cycling routes. The results show that sustainability is an important matter for Helsinki Region Transport.

The development of Helsinki Region Transport has a positive impact on tourism in the region. Since rail traffic is easier to outline, the Ring Rail Line will be a big improvement when the tourism is considered. Information system renewal will help tourists as well, since currently availability of information is experienced difficult.

Customer satisfaction, public transport, tourism, attractions

Kaaren Kytömaa

Customer Satisfaction as a Base for Tourism Development: Case Helsinki Region Transport

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Opinnäytetyö käsittelee Helsingin Seudun Liikenteen (HSL) asiakasryhmien tyytyväisyyttä julkisen liikenteen palveluihin ja alueen matkapalvelujen kehittämistä niiden perusteella. Taavoitteena oli selvittää, kuinka matkailijoita voitaisiin palvella paremmin ja kuinka pääkaupunkiseudulla asuvia kannustettaisiin julkisen liikenteen käyttöön. Opinnäytetyössä selvitetään myös HSL:n matkailupalvelujen, matkavälineiden ja -reittien kehittämistä lähitulevaisuudessa ja niiden vaikutusta seudun matkailuelinkeinon kehittämiseen.

Teoreettinen viitekehys muodostuu HSL:n nykyisten asiakasryhmien ja palveluiden esittelystä sekä tilastotiedoista. Myös lähivuosina tapahtuvaa liikenneverkoston rakentamista, uudistettua lippu- ja informaatiojärjestelmää ja niiden vaikutusta matkailuun arvioidaan.

Opinnäytetyössä täytettiin ensisijaisesti kvantitatiivisia tutkimusmenetelmiä, ja niitä täydentämään käytettiin kvalitatiivisia menetelmiä. Kvantitatiivisen tutkimuksen osassa analysoidaan ja tutkitaan HSL:n tekemiä liikenne- ja asiakastyytyväisyystilastoja. HSL toteuttaa asiakastyytyväisyyskyselyitä vuoden ympäri ja näitä kyselyitä on analysoitu opinnäytetyössä. Kvalitatiivisena tutkimuksena tekijä on haastatellut HSL:n tiedottajaa asiakastyytyväisyydestä ja palvelujärjestelmistä. Haastattelussa selvitettiin myös vuorokausilippujen myyntimääriä, uusien rata- ja kalustoinvestointien ja Kehäradan vaikutusta liikennejärjestelyihin.

Tulokset osoittavat, että HSL:n matkustajien asiakastyytyväisyys on korkea ja se näyttää lisääntyvän vuosittain. Asiakastyytyväisyyttä on aiemmin tutkittu viidessä Euroopan pääkaupungissa (Geneve, Kööpenhamina, Oslo, Tukholma ja Wien), ja tulokset osoittavat, että HSL:n asiakastyytyväisyys on vertailukaupunkien paras. Asiakastyytyväisyyden taso riippuu kulkuneuvomuodosta, mutta kaiken kaikkiaan keskiverto arvosana vuonna 2013 oli 3,98 asteikolla yhdestä viiteen. Tuloksiin perustuen voidaan myös todeta, että on ennustettavaa, että julkisen liikenteen käyttäjämäärät kasvavat uusien ratojen ja uuden kaluston myötä. HSL tarjoaa melko hyvin palveluita asiakkaille, joilla on erilaiset tarpeet ja kannustaa myös ihmisiä käyttämään julkista liikennettä parantamalla liikenneverkostoaan. Tulokset näyttävät, että ympäristöystävällisyys on tärkeä asia HSL:lle, ja sen vuoksi myös kävely- ja kevyenliikenteen reittejä parannetaan.

HSL:n kehityksellä on myönteinen vaikutus seudun matkailuun, sillä useat merkittävät veto-voimaiset vierailukohteet sijaitsevat julkisen liikenteen saavutettavissa. Helsinki-Vantaan lentokentältä on yhteys Kehärataa pitkin Helsingin keskustaan ja Tikkurilan asema on monipuolinen palvelukeskus myös Venäjän matkailijoille. Informaatiojärjestelmän uusiminen helpottaa myös matkailijoita, sillä tällä hetkellä informaation saatavuus on koettu tyytyväisyyttä vähentäväksi tekijäksi.

Asiakastyytyväisyys, julkinen liikenne, matkailu, nähtävyydet

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1 Introduction

This thesis is about Helsinki Region Transport's (HRT) customer satisfaction, and its future from the perspective of tourism industry in the Helsinki capital region. HRT offers all public transport services in its seven member municipalities. The main research question of the thesis is how HRT could improve its services to tourists, what they are offering already and what could be offered. The primary objective is to find out the level of customer satisfaction in HRT's services and the issues affecting it. Secondary objective is to find out how the future of HRT will affect the customers and, especially how it will affect the tourism within HRT area.

For the research the author has used customer satisfaction surveys from Helsinki Region Transport, an interview with the representative of Helsinki Region Transport and various online sources and publications. The Review of customer satisfaction over nine years will be taken into a deeper analysis, and the customer satisfaction between different modes of public transport will be examined and analysed. The thesis consists of presenting customer segments. What does Helsinki Region Transport have to offer for customer segments with various demands? How does it serve differently for example students and retirees? How does HRT encourage people to use public transport?

The study looks into the near future of HRT as well. Big changes are ahead in all departments. Fare and Ticket system is going to face a modification, Tikkurila and Pasila stations will be transformed entirely within the next years. After the makeover both of the stations are more convenient for all passengers, including commuters as well as tourists coming from abroad. New railway tracks will be opened as well as a new subway line. These modifications will make travelling easier, faster and more comfortable. Tikkurila station will be the crossroad for long-haul trains and to the airport. For that, it is renovated to meet the passengers' demands. The new Fare and Ticket system of HRT will be defined, as well as the new ticket prices and the boundaries of zones are discussed. A part of new fare and ticket system is information system renewal. In the study can be seen how this influences the use of public transport.

Transportation can be seen as an integral part of tourism industry because it provides the link between the origin and the destination. Therefore HRT plays an important role in the Helsinki region by providing the possibility for public transport and contribute towards tourism in the region. (Page 2009, 7.)

2 Company Description and Services

Helsinki Region Transport (HRT, in Finnish HSL and the company uses both of the abbreviations on its marketing material) is a joint local authority whose member municipalities are Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Kauniainen, Kerava, Kirkkonummi and Sipoo. The company started operating in 2010. Before 2010 trams and subway were operated by Helsinki City Transport (HCT). HRT plans and organizes public transport in its member municipalities and improves its operating conditions. The company procures bus, tram, metro, Suomenlinna Sea Fortress ferry and commuter train services. It approves and is responsible for public transport fare and ticketing system as well as for the ticket prices. HRT is also responsible for producing public transport marketing and providing passenger information.



Caption 1: HSL member municipalities (HRT 2014)

HRT comprises six different departments, each with different areas of responsibility. The departments are Transport System, Public Transport Planning, Transport Services, Passenger Services, Marketing & Communications and Finance & Administration. As the main focus of the thesis is connected to tourism and customer service, the concentration is in passenger services, since this department includes customer service in HRT offices, as well as information systems, ticket inspection and travel ticket system. Public transport planning is taken into consideration as well, since that department is responsible for the timetables and routes. (HSL 2014.) HRT is a major company in Finland and in 2014 it employed 405 employees (Engström 2014).

HRT journey planner is perhaps the most well known service outside the functional public transport. The journey planner takes place in Public Transport Planning, but on the other hand it might be the most useful service for a customer. (Ekström 2013, 13.) Journey planner, is an internet service for a consumer to search routes. A customer can type down the origin of the journey and the end of the journey, day and time for the trip, and journey planner shows the route. Which mode of public transport is used, how much time the journey will take, it shows all the bus / tram / metro / train stops, and tells the customer where to get off the vehicle. The customer is able to see a map as well. Journey planner has also pedestrian and cycle routes. (Reittipas.fi 2015.)

HRT offers customer service through telephone every day of the week. From the telephone service a customer is able to ask about public transport routes, timetables and prices. HRT provides Travel Card counseling through telephone as well, and they give guidance if the Travel Card has been lost. If a consumer has questions about public transport planning, he / she is able to call to telephone service. For tourists and immigrants an important matter is multilingual communication. HRT provides information in Finnish, Swedish and English, and in addition customer service advisor may speak other languages. HRT has three service points in Helsinki region. All of them are located in Helsinki; in Helsinki central railway station, in Itäkeskus and in Pasila. At service point the customer is able to load the Travel Card, or if a customer is entitled to receive any discounts the loading will take place at service point. The Inspection fee office is located in Helsinki central railway station and serves customers with questions about inspection fees. (Helsingin Seudun Liikenne 2015.)

3 Customer Segments and Tickets

HRT customers are most of the people visiting Helsinki and its neighbour cities. These includes tourists from abroad, tourists from elsewhere in Finland, commuters, students and elderly people. No matter what kind of public transport is used within metropolitan area, the users are customers for Helsinki Region Transport. In 2013, close to 355,5 million journeys were made and the amount of passengers rose 3,1 % compared to the previous year. (HSL.fi 2014).

A worthwhile basis of customer segmentation can be customer capabilities, especially when customers vary significantly in what competencies they possess (Anderson, Narus & Narayandas 2009, 49). In the authors' words to say it means that customers are divided into different segments according on their demands of the service. Students, pensioners and commuters should not be served similarly since they have diverse demands for the service. The company

should take into consideration the services for different customer segments one by one and not as a one segment. Currently Helsinki Region Transport provides services and tickets for customers with various needs, but anyhow services for tourists could be improved, as well as services for retirees. On the other hand, the modifications in the near future will include many improvements and this way customer segments are taken into consideration. Commuters and students are quite well noticed, since can be assumed that HRT is eager to invest in their satisfaction because they are the biggest customer segments.

In order to serve all HRT's customers properly, transport system planning has an important role to provide services that are accessible for all. At the same time, HRT encourages people to use public transport; therefore they are developing their services continuously. Accessibility and fluency are important matters, and therefore HRT has developed objectives to fulfill. Travel- and transportation chains should be fluent and trustworthy near and far. Especially for commuters this is an important matter since they are travelling daily. Competitiveness of public transport should be improved to gain more people to use public transport instead of a private car. HRT tries to make cycling tempting and fluent to encourage people to use sustainable methods of moving, as well as they have set as an objective that pedestrian connections and environments acts under pedestrians' conditions. A big matter is that travel times of vehicle traffic are predictable and congestion is in control, and that is taken into consideration as well when setting the objectives.

In addition to the importance of accessibility and fluency also social, economic and ecological sustainability is an important matter, especially in fast growing urban areas. When sustainability is taken into consideration the aims of HRT are that movement is safe with all modes of travelling, in public transport as well as walking or cycling. Alternatives for different user needs for everyday journeys are available as well as choosing healthy and a sustainable mode of travelling is easy. It is important as well to reduce the environmental damage of traffic and develop the traffic system cost-effectively. (HLJ 2015 project 2015, 32.)

	Discount	Cards	Percentage
Adult	0 %	805 034	63,9 %

Child	50 %	135 357	10,8 %
Student	50 %	233 356	18,5 %
Veteran	100 %	3 738	0,3 %
Retire/Group 2	50 %	8 883	0,7 %
Retire/Group 1	25 %	23 754	1,9 %
Invalid	25 %	5 358	0,4 %
Blind	100 %	1 124	0,1 %
War invalid	100 %	318	0,0 %
Personnel	100 %	2 887	0,2 %
Schoolgoer adult	50 %	670	0,1 %
Schoolgoer child 7-16yrs	50 %	20 628	1,6 %
Major customer	0 %	1 882	0,1 %
Other adult	0 %	15 195	1,2 %
Other child 7-16yrs	50 %	673	0,1 %
TOGETHER		1 258 857	100 %

Table 1: Travel Card customers 2014 (Saarinen & Rinta-Piirto 2015)

As can be seen from the table 1: Travel Card customers 2014 above, in 2014 the biggest Travel Card customer segment for HRT are adults. The second biggest are students and the third are children. (Saarinen & Rinta-Piirto 2015, 52.) From the table 1 can be seen the discount percentage, amount of Travel Cards in each customer group and the percentage of the total amount.

3.1 Tourists and Attractions by Public Transportation

As a big part of Finland's inbound tourism takes place during summer months, Suomenlinna sea fortress is one of the most visited attractions in Helsinki. Suomenlinna was founded in 1748 and it is one of the biggest sea fortresses in the world. As a unique monument to European military architecture Suomenlinna was included in UNESCO World Heritage list in 1991. Suomenlinna is explored on foot and in summer there are guided tours daily in English, Finnish, Russian and Swedish. In winter the tours are held on weekends in English and Russian. The Visitor Centre and Suomenlinna Museum, which are located in the middle of the fortress are information points for visitors, as well as the starting point for the walking tours. Various events are held also in Suomenlinna, especially during summer but in winter as well. Suomenlinna is open for visitors every day of the year, although all of the services may not be available in winter season, which is from October to May. (Visit Helsinki 2015.)

HRT provides ferry service to Suomenlinna throughout the year. Depending on the season and the time of day, ferries run one to four times per hour. The ferry departs from the east side of the Market Square, which is a very popular destination for tourists as well. As mentioned earlier, a customer may use the normal HRT ticket for entering the Suomenlinna ferry, as well as Helsinki Card. (Suomenlinna.fi 2014)

Most likely, tourists will use a day ticket, Helsinki Card or a single ticket when using public transport. In this case, if the customer is under 17 years a child ticket can be purchased, which is 50 % of the adults price. Customers older than 17, must purchase the adult ticket. HRT does not provide other discounts, unless when the Travel Card is used. Anyhow, the requirements to receive a discount, such as student or retire discount, would not meet when the customer is only visiting the city. From the experience of the author tourists are eager to use public transport in order to empathize and learn from the local people using the public transport. Public transport is part of the destination itself, and cannot be experienced from tourist buses or from a taxi. Last year, the number of overnight stays in Helsinki was 3 250 000 and 49,6 % of the overnight stays were leisure trips. The number is growing every year and therefore it is important to notice that all of them are potential customers for HRT. (Visit Helsinki 2014.)

3.2 Finnish and Foreign Students

When only Travel Card customers of HRT are taken into consideration, students are the second biggest group. 233 356 of HRT's Travel Card customers are students, which is 18,5 % of the total amount of Travel Cards. (Saarinen & Rinta-Piirto 2015, 52.)

Students, who are studying full-time and living in HRT member municipalities, are able to purchase tickets with 50 % discount on their Travel Card, when certain terms are met. The terms can be read from appendix 3. (Helsingin seudun liikenne 2014, B.) Since the beginning of 2015 exchange students in Finland have been able to get the student discount with the same criteria as a Finnish student. From the author's experience as a tourism student with many exchange students, it is useful for exchange students to have the discount as well, since they benefit from it a lot when they are travelling in Helsinki region and seeing various attractions. One development idea is that tourists who are students in their home country could have a discount as well, since students are the ones travelling during summer time a lot and with low budget; therefore they are using public transport more likely than other tourists.

3.3 Retirees and Accessibility

When considering, if HRT encourages people to use public transport with the retirees it is not so visible. As any customer with a discount on a travel card, also a retiree must live in some of HRT's member municipalities. In addition to that, a retiree who gets a retirement pension from the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA) is legitimate to get 25 % discount on the normal price of the ticket. Other possible discount for retirees is 50 % on the ticket price, and it is only for persons who receives full- or partial guarantee pension from Kela.

A consumer is able to have the discount on season and value tickets, on his / her personal travel card. Discount entitlement will be loaded on the travel card at the service point. (Helsingin seudun liikenne 2014, A.)

Table 1 show that 0,7 % of HRT's travel card customers are retirees, who belongs to discount group two, in other words them, who receives 50 % discount on the prices. The retirees who belongs to discount group one (25 % discount), are 1,9 % of travel card customers. Precisely, the amount of travel cards in group one is 23 754 and in group two it is 8 883.

The criteria for admitting the discounts, is bound on pension legislation and decisions made by Kela. In other words, to receive the discount it obligates the retiree to visit Kela office. A retiree must update the entitlement every three years, when a new certificate from Kela is needed. (Saarinen & Rinta-Piirto 2015, 17.)

In the future, when the fare and ticket system changes and the new zone model comes into force, the retirees older than 70 years are entitled to have 50 % discount on the adult price value ticket. HRT is sorting out if they could lower the age from 70 years to 68 years to receive the discount. The new discount is valid between 9 and 2 am. (Saarinen & Rinta-Piirto 2015, 29.) Other fact is, that for an elderly person electronic services may not be familiar. HRT has only three service points in Helsinki, one in central railway station, one in Pasila and one in Itäkeskus. From the other point of view, all of the three service points are quite easy to reach. On the other hand, lines may be long and for an elder person it might not be so easy to travel around. HRT offers customer service via telephone as well, and in this case it is very convenient for example, for an elder person to call and ask about public transport routes, timetables and prices. (Helsingin seudun liikenne 2015.)

From the experience of the author, the public transport might be difficult to use for elderly people who do not move well. Although currently the majority of the vehicles are low-floored, there might be vehicles with steps and it is impossible to get in with a walker. HRT has developed the accessibility and the new vehicles are quite accessible. Floors are non-slippery, no steps, in the vehicles are railings, the name of the next stop is visible in buses, trains and trams and in addition to that trains has audio as well, which will be in trams also in the near future, doors are automatic and the vehicles are spacious. On the other hand, in the

old vehicles there are two or three big steps in the entrance and not much space. In trains there is audio but the name of the next stop is not visible. In trams the next stop is visible, but no audio. In buses there are not either of these.

3.4 Commuters

The biggest travel card customer group for HRT are adults and can be assumed that big part of them are commuters. As commuters' use the public transport every day their satisfaction is highly important. The importance of punctuality, fluency and accessibility become vital. In the near future when HRT improves its public transport network it will serve commuters very well, since their travelling times may be shortened a lot. The travelling times are most likely the biggest matter for a commuter and at least at the moment a private car is much faster transport mode in many areas compared to public transport modes. Although, HRT encourages commuters to use public transport by shortening the time frame with the public transport during rush hours. During rush hours some of the trains, buses and trams are operated more often than every 10 minutes.

Businesses can encourage their employees on the use of public transport by providing an employer-subsidized commuter ticket. The employers can pay the whole ticket or part of it. HRT's commuter vouchers worth of 10 € can be purchased by the employer and the employee may use it for loading season tickets or value on their Travel Cards. Mainly the ticket is intended for journeys between home and work, but it can be used for leisure journeys as well. For employers the employer-subsidized commuter tickets are a tax-free benefit up to 300 €, as well as from 600 € to 3 400 €. The acquisition costs can be deducted from the employer's taxable income. (Helsingin Seudun Liikenne 2015, D.)

3.5 Tickets for Different Purposes

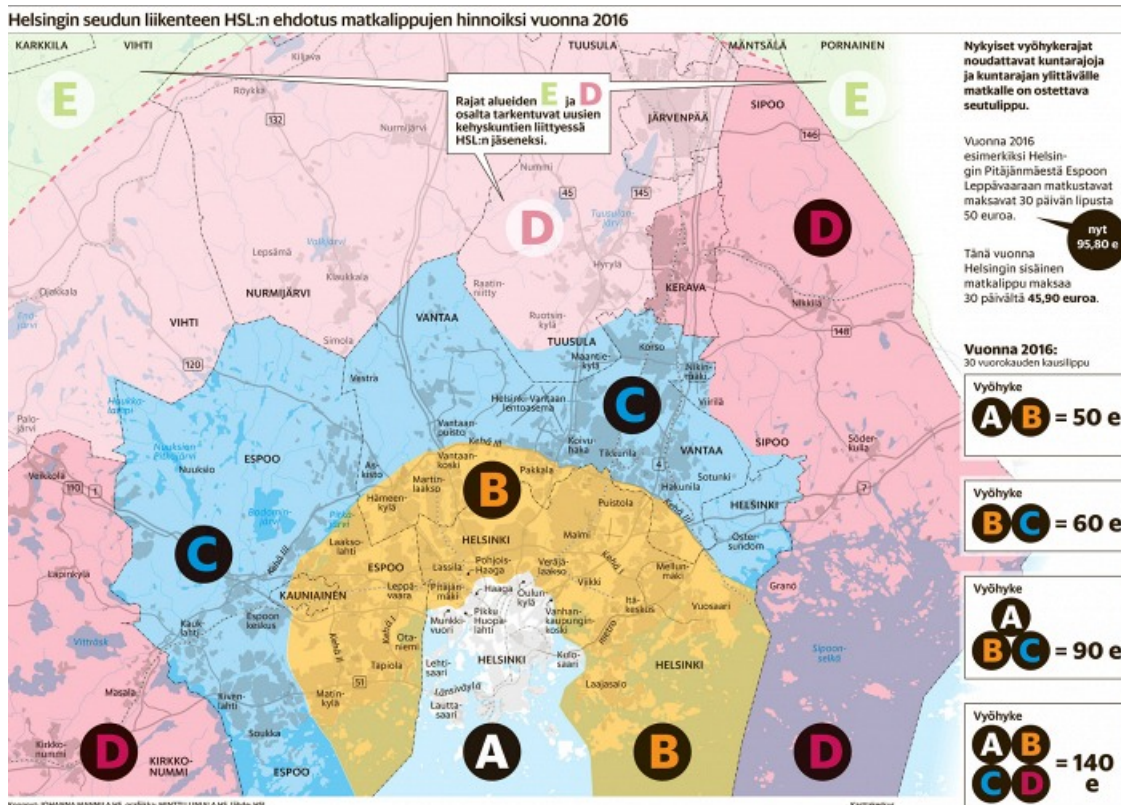
Helsinki Region Transport has different ticket types to offer for various demands. HRT offers single tickets, day tickets and Travel Cards. A consumer is able to buy a single ticket from a ticket machine, from a bus, train or tram and with mobile phone. Two-hour ticket is a possibility also, as well as Suomenlinna ticket which is valid for 12 hours. When using a single ticket the important fact is, that it is more expensive during night time, which is from 2 am to 4.30 am. The other possibility is a day ticket, which can be bought from a ticket machine, HRT service points and for example R-kiosk. 1 day ticket, which is valid for 24 hours can be bought from bus, tram or train. With the day ticket a customer does not need to pay anything extra when travelling during night time. The third is Travel Card. A customer is able to decide if season ticket or value ticket is more appropriate for their own needs. For a seasonal ticket the minimum amount of days is 14 and the maximum 366. The seasonal ticket is the most rea-

sonable one when travelling regularly. The value ticket works in the same way as a single ticket, except a customer must validate the ticket in a machine every time when entering the vehicle. In addition, value ticket is cheaper than a normal single ticket. Value ticket is also more expensive during night time. Ticket prices are obviously dependent on the visited cities. As an example, value ticket from Helsinki to Kerava costs 5,96 € but a single ticket on the same trip costs 7,50 €. (HSL 2015. A.) HRT member municipalities are shown in caption 1 (page 7). The caption shows also the price zones. A consumer is able to buy a ticket for each city's interior public transport. When travelling within Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen and Vantaa the ticket must be regional ticket. When travelling in all the other member municipalities, except Helsinki the correct ticket is region two-zone. When travelling within whole metropolitan area the correct ticket is region three-zone.

At the moment, the most convenient type of a ticket for a tourist visiting the metropolitan area is a Day ticket. A tourist is able to decide for how many days the ticket is valid, as well as where it is valid. Is the tourist travelling only in Helsinki, or going to Espoo, Kauniainen or Vantaa as well, or perhaps to Kerava, Kirkkonummi or Sipoo? The price of the ticket depends on the amount of days and the ticket type, in other words which municipalities are visited. (HSL 2015. B.)

Tourists are also able to purchase a Helsinki Card, which gives free entries to museums and other attractions, along with variety of discounts and bonuses. With the card a tourist is able to use public transport in Helsinki region. If wanted to travel to Espoo, Kauniainen and Vantaa there is a possibility to have Helsinki Card Region. (HSL 2015. C.)

Under present conditions the ticketing prices and zones will be changed at the earliest in 2016. The aim is to reform ticket system in 2015-2016. The improvement work started in 2006, and in March 2011 was decided to choose the zone model as the basis of the future fare and ticketing system. The borders of zones are primarily based from the distance from Helsinki city centre. In metropolitan area, which includes cities of Helsinki, Vantaa, Espoo and Kauniainen, the minimum amount of zones is two, at least in the season tickets. The aim of the reform is to create a clear and fair ticket system for the customers. The current ticket system is based on borders of municipalities, which affects grievances especially when exceeding the border. The aim has been that pricing of the trips would be more based on the length of the trip. (Rinta-Piirto & Saarinen 2012, 5.)



Caption 2: Tickets in 2016 (Helsingin Sanomat 2013, A)

From the caption 3: Tickets in 2016, can be seen to see borders of the zones, as well as the new prices. As mentioned earlier, in the metropolitan area the minimum amount of a purchase is two zones. In this case, a season ticket for A and B zones will cost 50 € and it is valid for 30 days. A season ticket for B and C zones will cost 60 € and it is valid for 30 days. To cover the whole Helsinki region transport area, as it is at the moment, a season ticket for 30 days will cost 140 €.

The borders of D and E zones will be more accurate when new frame municipalities will become part of HRT. In proposition zone A includes southern parts of Helsinki. On zone B is Itäkeskus, Malmi, Myyrmäki, Leppävaara and Tapiola, as its furthest points. On zone C, is centre of Espoo, Helsinki-Vantaa international Airport and Tikkurila, among others. (Helsingin Sanomat 2013, A.)

4 Near Future of Helsinki Region Transport Development

Within the next six years Helsinki Region Transport will change in many ways. As discussed before, the fare and ticket system will be modified. In addition to that, Tikkurila and Pasila stations will be transformed to meet the passengers' demands. Construction of Tikkurila is

partly finished already, and the development work of the station will continue. In six years, Pasila station will look totally different than currently. Through Pasila travels 100 000 people every day, therefore it must be updated to serve these people. (Helsingin Sanomat 2013, B.) New tracks will be opened, such as the Ring Rail Track in July 2015. The City Rail Loop is considered, but any definite decisions are not made yet. To serve people living in Espoo, West Metro will be constructed on the side of metro line to eastern Helsinki. The first period of construction will be finished in the end of 2015, and traffic will start operating in autumn of 2016. (Länsimetro 2015.)

Helsinki Region Transport System Plan (HLJ 2015) is a long-term strategic plan, which indicates the common will for transport policy and the development of the transport system in the region. The contents of HLJ 2015 is summarized in the following five policy statements:

- The funding of the transport system is strengthened.
- Improvement of service level of sustainable modes of transport.
- Effectively utilized information and steering tools.
- Functionality of road traffic and the needs of logistics are taken into consideration.
- Effective methods are used to achieve the results.

It can be expected, that Helsinki region grows strongly, it is estimated that in 2050 the amount of residents is two million. Therefore it is important to update the public transport services to meet the demands of customers. The metropolitan area is a national and an international node, and for that is important to have a working traffic system also internationally. Varied commercial and cultural services in Helsinki, and the nature attracts visitors from Finland and abroad. The aim of Helsinki Region Transport System Plan is to increase functionality of the traffic system, as well as to increase the accessibility of the areas, and thereby improve companies' action possibilities and competitiveness of the region. (HLJ 2015 project 2015, 15.) Accessibility to the locations is a basic element for living and for business premises. Good links in passenger- and cargo transport enables the growth of urban area. Air service is applicable part of functional and effective transport system, and one of the most important factors in Finland to ensure the competitiveness since flying is the only fast way to get to the country. Helsinki-Vantaa international airport functions also as a gate from Europe to Asia. Good traffic communications to the airport must be ensured. (HLJ 2015 project 2015, 16.) Functional and user-friendly traffic system enables successful visits for both, regular and occasional visitors. The amount of cruise- and air passengers justifies improvements on information and services. The visitors' first image of the region forms often through the traffic system. (HLJ 2015 project 2015, 18.)

The importance of air passengers' should be taken into consideration, since the number is growing year by year. In 2014 the amount of passengers in Helsinki-Vantaa was 15,9 million.

Compared to 2013, the amount was 670 000 passengers higher. (Tamperelainen 2015.) When comparing the amount of international arrivals in January and February 2013 and 2014 it has risen 1,6%, which is 14 773 passengers (Finavia 2015.) From the last year, the number of arrivals has risen 1,5 %. Business travelling has risen from the previous year. (Visit Helsinki 2014, 1).

The aim is to decrease greenhouse gas emissions 80-95 % until the year 2050. Strong growth of the region raises the responsibility of controlling the injurious environmental impact, as well as in improvement of road safety. The central mission of the Transport System Plan is to encourage on use of public transport, walking or cycling. (HLJ 2015 project 2015, 15.)



Caption 3: Old train colour (Tekniikkatalous 2011)

Within the next three years, colour of the commuter traffic trains will be changed from combination of green and blue, to purple. The change of colour is made to identify commuter trains from long-hall train traffic. HRT wants to separate these more clearly. The purple colour became to complement the HRT's image of blue buses, green trams and orange metro. Purple colour was chosen as well, to be used in passenger informations, for example in line maps. From the caption 3 and caption 4 the difference of the old and new colour are represented. Colour changes will be carried out gradually, by the end of 2017. (Länsiväylä 2015.)



Caption 4: New train colour (Helsingin Sanomat 2015,A)

HRT will renew its route maps to clarify the signs for customers. At the moment, the commuter train stations have information from several operators. The biggest novelty is a frame line map, which connects all central frame lines in Helsinki region. The new look will be visible during summer in HRT stations.

At the moment, customers are able to express their opinions about the new maps. HRT has a few different examples of the possibilities. One of the examples can be seen in appendix 5. Caption 5: Frame route network, is a proposal for the frame line map. The frame line map will be necessary, because the Ring Rail Line and West Metro will increase the transverse frame traffic within the next two years. (Helsingin Sanomat 2015.)

For the tourism of Helsinki region, the amendments which are made are highly important. The fact, that ticket prices are reasonable is important. Even more important for a tourist is to find the necessary information easily and services what a tourist may need should be approachable. In the future, for example approachability of various services will be easier, since the main railway stations will be constructed to serve people better, and in this case especially tourists. The tourists will see the modern sight of Helsinki region as well, such as nine floor tower buildings in Tikkurila and the new route maps. It will also be easier and faster to travel around by train and metro than by bus. As a part of fare and ticket system renewal, the information system will be modified. For the tourists the positive influence is real-time travel information and predicted departure time. In buses and trams will also be announcement in addition to screens that shows the next stop. (Saarinen & Rinta-Piirto 2015, 27.)



Caption 5: Frame route network (City of Helsinki 2015)

4.1 Tikkurila Cross-station

The Ring Rail Line will be opened in July 2015 and therefore Tikkurila station will become the second busiest railway station, only eight minutes from Helsinki-Vantaa international airport. For the growing volume of traffic, the whole station and its region will be updated to meet the passengers' demands. A modern, decked station bridge to facilitate passage of the station. (Finnish Transport Agency 2014, A.) Tikkurila railway station will be also an important cross-station for Russian tourists changing from the airplane to train, since a train to Moscow and Saint Petersburg stops in Tikkurila. Russians are the biggest tourist segment for Finland's inbound tourism, and can be assumed that the amount will increase when they are able to change the mode of transport easily even though they have arrived by airplane. Last year, the amount of overnights of Russian tourists was 242 532. The unfortunate fact is, that the amount of overnight stays by Russians has decreased 21,8 % from year 2013 because of the exchange rate of the ruble. (Visit Helsinki 2015.)

The office- and business center Dixi, which will be built in the Tikkurila railway station is partly finished and opened in January 2015. After its first phase of construction, the building

consists of 7000 square meters of office- and business premises, restaurants and grocery store, among other services. In Dixi center there is a decked bus terminal and lots of parking space as well.

The second construction phase is potentially finished in December 2016. To replace the current station building there will be new office- and business premises in nine floors. The decisions are not settled yet, but it is possible that a hotel is build to Dixi as well. The whole center is possibly finished in 2019. At the moment, the center is 250 meters long, and 100 meters more will be built towards south. (Yle 2014.)

4.2 Ring Rail Line

Ring Rail Line is a railway connecting Helsinki-Vantaa international airport with Tikkurila, and more importantly with Helsinki city centre. The track will be opened in July 2015. The new railway line will open five new railway stations, which obviously increases the number of passengers using public transport. It is especially important for tourists to have fast and convenient connection from the airport to the city centre. It also enables totally new neighbourhoods and great possibilities to have business premises close to the airport. Trains will be operated every ten minutes during rush hours and the identification letters will be I and P. Test drives will start in March to ensure the functionality. (Finnish Transport Agency 2014, B.)

It is argued, that the main determinants for rail travel are speed, costs, comfort, convenience, access to stations and the image of the service (Page 2009, 122). In this case, speed is not the determinant, since the journey to Helsinki centre would take the same time by bus. Nevertheless, travelling by train can be experienced more comfortable and convenient. When considering the main research question of the thesis, the railway station at the airport could be the answer. For sure only of the answers, but the fact that a tourist is able to travel by train instead of a taxi or a bus is a big matter. A fast connection to the Helsinki city centre is an important matter for tourists visiting the city, as well as fast and straight connection from the airport to southern and western Vantaa. Entrances of the train will be between the terminals one and two, and one at Tietotie (Finnish Transport Agency 2014).



Caption 6: Ring Rail Line stations (Finnish Transport Agency 2014,B)

From the caption 6: Ring Rail Line stations, can be seen the stations and the location of the Ring Rail Line. New stations are Vehkala, Kivistö, Aviapolis, Airport (Lentoasema) and Leinelä. The new rail is important transverse rail connection in metropolitan area. (Finnish Transport Agency 2014.)

4.3 West Metro

The metropolitan area's underground network will expand in two phases. In the first phase eight new stations will be constructed and in the second phase five new stations will be built. The west metro will run on a rail line of 21 kilometres underground in two parallel tunnels. Along the 14-kilometre Ruoholahti-Matinkylä section the new stations will be located in Lauttasaari and Koivusaari in Helsinki, and in Keilaniemi, Aalto University, Tapiola, Urheilupuisto, Niittykumpu and Matinkylä in Espoo. The second phase, which is the seven-kilometre Matinkylä-Kivenlahti section will include five new stations which are Finnoo, Kaitaa, Soukka, Espoonlahti and Kivenlahti. The first phase of the construction will be completed at the end of 2015 and the metro will start operating in the beginning of 2016. The whole west metro all the way to Kivenlahti will be finished in 2020 at the earliest. From the caption

7 can be seen the location of the west metro and its eight new stations, in other words the rail line after the first construction phase. (Länsimetro 2015.)



Caption 7: West metro stations (HRT 2015)

For business tourism in the metropolitan area west metro is a notable improvement. Large companies in Finland, such as headquarters of Microsoft Mobile, are located in Keilaniemi. The building used to be in use for headquarters of Nokia but it was transmitted to Microsoft in 2013. (Kervinen 2013.) Tapiola and Matinkylä are bigger business centers as well.

4.4 Pasila Tripla Center

Pasila is at the moment the most important crossing station for national railway system, and the second busiest railway station in Finland. Year by year, the number of passengers is rising and therefore services must be updated to serve them. In 2015 the construction of Tripla-center will start. It will be constructed on the western side of Pasila railway station, around the station and on it. The centre is a set of three blocks, which includes office spaces, shopping- and congress center, apartments, a hotel, a multi-purpose arena and a public transport terminal. Pasila railway station will be wholly rebuilt, and on side of the station building, on Pasila bridge, a public transport terminal with tram and bus stops will be constructed. In the future Pasila will consist of railway yard block, tower area and Pasila (Tripla) center. The railway yard block will be located on the northern side of Pasila center, and apartments for 3000 residents and office spaces for 1000 employees is planned to be build. On the southern side of Pasila center will be the tower area, where there will be around ten 20-40 floor tower

houses. The center of Pasila will be finished in 2021, but the construction will continue with the fair- and convention center until 2025. (Uuttahelsinki 2015.)

Fair and convention center of Helsinki is located in Pasila and therefore Pasila has an important role especially in business tourism of Helsinki. Last year 1 146 090 visitors visited the fair- and convention center and took part in various fairs, meetings, congresses, company celebrations and other events. The amount of visitors increased by 40 000 compared to the previous year. Nordic Business Forum, which is one of the most successful business life seminars in Europe, was held in Helsinki fair- and convention center in October 2014. In August 2014 the World Dog Show was held in Helsinki, which brought 50 000 dog enthusiasts to the fair- and convention center from all over the world. The event was considered as one of the highlights of the year. (Messukeskus 2015.)

4.5 City Rail Loop

The City Rail Loop is a planned railway line for commuter trains under the Helsinki city centre. The railway starts in Pasila, and through a tunnel it runs via Töölö, Helsinki city centre, Hakaniemi and heads back to Pasila. The final decision of implementing the project is not made yet, and in February 2014 the Finnish board did not grant the start-up money for the project. According to Prime Minister Stubb, the track is still coming up and construction work can be started at the earliest in 2016. (Rakennuslehti 2015.)



Caption 8: City Rail Loop in Helsinki (Finnish Transport Agency 2015)

From the caption 8: City rail loop, can be seen the shape and location of the track. Name of the track comes from the shape of it. Commuter trains, which operate from Helsinki centre to north and west of Finland would be the trains using the city rail loop. Three stations are planned and one of them is at Opera hall (Töölö). The stations in Helsinki centre and in Hakaniemi will be connected into current metro stations. The aim of the project is to control the amount of arriving trains to Pasila, since Pasila station is the one which limits the arrivals to the centre of Helsinki. Finnish transport agency has proposed that construction of the City Rail Loop will be considered in the future according on the population of the region as well as the development of growth. (Kaupunkiliikenne 2014.)

From the authors' perspective the most important political and cultural attractions are located along the track, such as Finland's National Opera, house of Parliament, a museum of contemporary art as well as the national museum of Finland. Parks around Töölö bay are popular during the summer time as well as parks in Alppila. Hakaniemi is famous for its market hall and the market square, which is popular market place during summer.

5 Research plan and Conduction

The main research question of the thesis is how Helsinki Region Transport could improve its services to tourists and what they are offering already and what could be offered. The primary objective is to find out what is the customer satisfaction on HRT's services and what are the matters increasing or decreasing the satisfaction of customers. Secondary objective is to find out how the near future of HRT will have on the affect of the customer service and, especially how it will affect tourism within HRT area.

The thesis consists of presenting customer segments. What does Helsinki Region Transport have to offer for customer segments with various demands? How does it serve differently for example students and retirees? How does HRT encourage people to use public transport? The influence of the fare- and ticket system renewal in public transport will be reviewed, as well as the influence of the information system renewal. How does the modifications will affect on public transport?

5.1 Quantitative Research Methods

Quantitative research methods are proper for the thesis because HRT's existing customer satisfaction and traffic statistics are analysed. The author of the thesis has used surveys on customer satisfaction conducted by Helsinki Region Transport as a quantitative research method, as well as traffic statistics. Customer satisfaction is taken into consideration in different modes of public transport services. The author has collected the most important facts about the customer satisfaction from the raw data, and the key figures will be analysed. According to Jensen (2002, 210), quantitative research methodologies concern relevant modes of measurement and procedures to analyse the relationships between such measurements. That is the basic concept that characterise quantitative research. As Jensen (2002, 210) states, "In quantitative research, measurement is conducted through numbers". A major form of quantitative research that does not involve any manipulation of participants or their circumstances in advance, are surveys. Surveys cannot test cause-effect relationships directly because they obtain information from respondents' knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviours. Instead, surveys explore relationships or degrees of association between variables. (Jensen 2002, 214.) The survey may be implemented through questionnaires or interview schedules, and the questionnaires may be completed by the respondents themselves or answer the questions that are put to them by an interviewer. (Jensen 2002, 215.) Helsinki Region Transport performs customer satisfaction surveys throughout the year, with the exception of couple weeks during spring and early winter when the responses are congregated. As the surveys are conducted through longitudinal research, they are an efficient procedure for examining long-term relationships between selected variables. (Jensen 2002, 218.)

5.2 Qualitative Research Methods

Qualitative research is suitable for the thesis because interviews will support and supplement the theory part of the thesis. According to Jensen (2002, 240), one of the most widely used data collection method is interviewing. As a qualitative research method the author has carried out an expert theme interview with communications specialist of Helsinki Region Transport by e-mail. Face to face interview was held with the manager of operational research team. Theme interview was based on questions about the amount of sold day ticket during summer months, what kind of feedback HRT gets from tourists, how the Ring Rail Line will affect on the tourism in Helsinki region and is it going to increase the amount of people using public transport, how much HRT plans services for tourists and how the services could be developed. It can be stated that asking is the best way to find out what people think. In a strong sense of the word, interview statements are 'data' and they become sources of information through interpretation and analysis. (Jensen 2002, 240.) According to Jensen (2002,236) qualitative research is the connection between meaning and action.

5.3 Content Analysis

Content analysis can be defined as "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication". Content analysis can be also a method analysing and studying communication in a systematic, objective and quantifiable manner in order to measure variables. (Jensen 2002, 220.) Customer satisfaction of Helsinki Region Transports' customers has been the primary objective of the thesis. The satisfaction of Helsinki Region Transports' customers is very high and it is increasing yearly. Compared to five cities in Europe, HRT has the highest amount of satisfied customers. The highest amount of satisfied customers are in metro, which is also the most used transport mode beside buses. When the near future of HRT is considered as a secondary object of the thesis, can be stated that it will improve HRT's services a lot in many ways. Especially it will affect on tourism positively. Travelling will be easier since rail networks is easier to outline, as well as the information system and information availability will be improved. Cross-stations, such as Tikkurila and Pasila are renovated in order to serve the customers travelling through them.

Customers for Helsinki Region Transport are all public transport users in the metropolitan area. Therefore HRT has to take different customer segments and their demands in to consideration. In this case, HRT has managed quite well. Future will bring more improvements when the modifications are finished in all departments. Can be stated that Helsinki Region Transport encourages people to abandon private cars and use public transport. Sustainability is important for HRT, and they are improving cycling routes all the time, as well as pedestrian routes. By improving the network system it is expected that more people will use public transport. Unfortunately, currently in some areas it is much faster to use private car. On the other hand, new rail lines will open and these will access areas, which are not accessed before.

5.4 Reliability and Validity

According to Krippendorff (2004, 211) "a research procedure is reliable when it responds to the same phenomena in the same way regardless of the circumstances of its implementation". Stability, reproducibility and accuracy are the three types of reliability. Accuracy is considered to be the strongest type, since the data must be obtained under test-standard conditions, which means that the performance must be compared with one or more data-making procedures. It can be stated that the data is considered reliable when it remains constant throughout variations in the measuring process. Validity on the other hand, is in contrast to reliability and concerns truths. "Validity is that quality of research results that leads us to accept them as true". In other words validity is considered as 'obvious' or 'common truth. (Krippendorff 2004, 211-15, 313.)

6 Results

To gain the results of the quantitative research the author has analysed Helsinki Region Transports' traffic statistics and customer satisfaction in different public transport modes during past nine years. Results of the theme interview as a qualitative research method are introduced. The research has been executed in Finnish and the author has translated the study into English. A few of the electronic sources are in English, as well as a couple of the books that are used on the research.

6.1 Traffic Statistics

From the table 2: Boardings to vehicles underneath, the amount of boardings (millions) can be analyzed in different transport modes as well as the percentage of satisfied customers' of the transport mode in 2013. On 'bus tendered' row, U-traffic buses are excluded and on 'bus total' row U-traffic is included as well. (Berezina & Nikula 2015.)

Millions	Boardings	Satisfied customers %
Tram	56,6	89,1 %
Metro	63,42	90,3 %
Bus total	179,3	-
Bus tendered	176,9	86,5 %
Helsinki	86,9	87,1 %
Espoo & Kauniainen	14,4	84,7 %
Vantaa	12,8	84,4 %
Kerava	0,2	91,2 %
Region bus lines	62,5	86,6 %
U-traffic total	2,4	-
HSL commuter trains	42,7	87,2 %
Commuter trains total	50,3	85,5 %
Suomenlinna ferry	1,8	87,9 %
Yhteensä	351,4	-

Table 2: Boardings to vehicles (Berezina & Nikula 2015)

The amount of passengers to Suomenlinna Sea Fortress is huge. Last year in July it was 193 847 persons. Of course, the amount of visitors is dependant on the weather. The difference between colder and rainier July and warm and sunny July, can be seen when comparing July 2014 and July 2012. The amount of passengers was 161 028 in July 2012, which is over 32 000 lower than during the warm and sunny July in 2014. In addition to the weather surely the

amount of tourists has risen in two years. (HSL Louhin 2015.) The raw data of the boardings and satisfaction percentages are provided by the manager of operational team from the interview.

6.2 Customer Satisfaction

According to the customer satisfaction questionnaire in 2008 an overall mark of respondents was 4,03 on a scale from one to five. From 2004 to 2007 the overall mark has been improved every year. Between 2007 and 2008 customer satisfaction dropped from 4,13 to 4,03. Decrease with satisfaction occurred with every mode of transport, except commuter traffic services. (Vihervuori 2009. 13. A.) In spring 2013 the overall mark of public transport was 3,98. The mark was lower than in 2008 but higher than in spring 2012, when the overall mark was 3,93 which is the lowest mark in nine years. (Taloustutkimus Oy 2013, 14, A.) From spring 2011 to spring 2013, VR with its commuter train services has shown lots of improvement. In 2011 the overall mark was 3,57 and by 2013 it had increased to 3,89. (Taloustutkimus Oy 2013, 30, A.)

From the table 2: Boardings to vehicles can be seen the percentage of satisfied customers in addition to the amount of boardings on different transport modes. As can be noticed the satisfied customer percentage is quite high, however the percentage could be higher especially in Espoo & Kauniainen and Vantaa. The highest percentage of satisfied customers' are people using buses in Kerava. On the other hand, the amount of boardings is about 10 million lower than in other cities. Customers are quite pleased with metro, and it is the most used mode of transport beside buses.

Helsinki Region Transport has implemented a customer satisfaction survey in 2013 on Suomenlinna ferry. 16 % of 1 188 respondents have declared themselves to be resident abroad. (Taloustutkimus Oy, 2013, 22, B.) In 2009, 7 % of 642 respondents declared themselves to be resident abroad. In 2009 the total mark was 4,26, when in 2013 it was 4,15. (Vihervuori 2009, 11. B.) According to the survey it can be stated that all customers are quite pleased with the ferry. Especially the timetable is considered reliable, and the customers did not face many disruptions. In the survey, residents of Suomenlinna Sea Fortress and other passengers have been divided into two groups. These levels of satisfaction are from the 'other passenger' perspective. The satisfaction level with order on the ferry is 4,71 on a scale from one to five. The level to rely on the timetables is 4,65 on average, and the level of satisfaction with how well the timetables meets the travelling demands is 4,31. The biggest difference between 'other passenger' and resident of Suomenlinna, is the satisfaction with waiting circumstances on the departure wharf. While 'other passenger' satisfaction level is 3,91, Suomenlinna resident satisfaction level is only 3,07. (Taloustutkimus Oy 2013, 18. B.)

Since year 2000 Helsinki Region Transport has been a part of international BEST-survey. ” The annual process includes a commensurate survey conducted to measure resident’s satisfaction with public transport and to identify the needs be improved in order to increase the use of public transport. The aim is to get new ideas from the other cities and learn new ways of working.” Geneva, Helsinki, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm and Vienna were the six participating cities in 2013. 1 699 residents of HRT’s member municipalities were interviewed for the survey in 2013. When taking into account the residents’ overall satisfaction, Helsinki is the best public transport city for fourth year in a row. 77 percent of the respondents are satisfied with public transport, and the percentage of satisfied residents has remained stable at around 80 % for several years. (Nikula 2013, 10.) Residents’ are satisfied with reliability and supply of HRT and they also consider it to be value for money. On the other hand, Helsinki is below the average of the BEST cities in staff performance and availability of information. (Nikula 2013, 11.)

From the author’s point of view, the important fact is that public transport might be the first experience for a tourist visiting the city. In Helsinki the first impression is that the timetable is punctual, seats are available, vehicles are clean and personnel is multilingual. For the tourism development in Helsinki the satisfaction should not be concerned, since it is on a very good level. On the other hand, the information availability could be improved especially in the airport and harbours, since it might be difficult to find. HRT provides comprehensive websites with lots of information in English as well but the tourists may not have the access to internet right away when arriving.

6.3 Theme Interview on Services

The author of the thesis has conducted an expert theme interview with communications specialist of Helsinki Region Transport. The author asked questions about the amount of sold day ticket during summer months, what kind of feedback HRT gets from tourists, how the Ring Rail Line will affect on the tourism in Helsinki region and is it going to increase the amount of people using public transport, how much HRT plans services for tourists and how the services could be developed.

First of all, the amount of sold day tickets during the tourism season in Helsinki region is high. During summer months the amount of sold day tickets is two or three times higher than during winter. The busiest time for selling day tickets are July and August. Last year, the highest amount of day tickets was sold in August and the amount was a bit higher than 78 600 tickets. There is a huge difference compared to January 2014, when the amount of sold day tickets was about 23 900. According to these numbers can be stated that day ticket is highly used

among tourists visiting Helsinki region. Unfortunately tourists do not give much feedback about HRT's services, although yearly some tourists do give feedback about HRT's ticket machines, when the use of them is considered difficult or the instructions are experiences insufficient. Tourists contact mainly when they have questions about routes, timetables or tickets, and in this case they mostly have questions about the day tickets.

It is expected that the Ring Rail Line will increase the number of passengers using public transport. Rail transport is considered more easily perceived than bus transport, and therefore it is easier for tourists to use as well. Also the Ring Rail Line reaches regions which are not reached earlier with a straight public transport line. Now a customer does not need to change the vehicle during the journey and therefore it increases the amount of passengers using public transport. The modifications of Tikkurila cross-station and Pasila station will serve better tourists as well as the local people when additional services are reachable. New information system will make travelling easier also for tourists when real-time passenger information is available in all modes of HRT's public transport. Tourists are taken into consideration also when there are changes in traffic or abnormality arrangements by reporting about these on HRT's websites in English, in addition to Finnish. HRT has collected the information what tourists often needs on their websites as well. In printed materials the user's guide on public transport and brochure about day tickets is also produced in Russian. During summer months HRT employs ticket sellers to Suomenlinna ferry pavilion to Market Square and they are able to serve tourists with various languages. In development plans is a mobile ticket, which serves also tourists coming abroad. Moreover in the end of the year HRT's online shop will open, and from there customers are able to buy i.e, day tickets, which will be delivered abroad as well.

7 Conclusion and Development Ideas

The study was made to deepen understanding of Helsinki Region Transport and its customer segments. The aim of the research was to find out Helsinki Region Transport customers' level of satisfaction and how tourism will develop in the near future in the Helsinki region. The results have been satisfying and the modifications in the near future will develop tourism, as well as make travelling easier for daily travelling people. The major development point in terms of tourism in Helsinki region is the ring rail line, which connects Helsinki-Vantaa international airport and the city centre of Helsinki. According on the results can be stated that Helsinki Region Transport provides services quite well for customers with various demands. A weak point has been found in information availability especially for tourists visiting the metropolitan area, as well as the old vehicles for people with reduced mobility. On the other

hand in the near future information system will be modified and therefore the information availability will be improved. Helsinki Region Transport orders new vehicles quite often, to improve the accessibility. New information system will bring on as well the audio into trams, which will facilitate travelling. It can be stated that Helsinki Region Transport encourages people to abandon private cars and use public transport. Sustainability is important for HRT, and they are improving cycling routes all the time, as well as routes for pedestrians. On the other hand, cycling and pedestrian routes are not marketed to tourists in any ways. HRT with co-operation the City of Helsinki could provide a bicycle service where a customer is able to take a bike from a bike rack for a small price and then leave it on the other rack when it is not needed anymore. This kind of service is available in London, for example. By improving the network system it is expected that more people will use public transport. Unfortunately, currently in some areas it is much faster to use private car. On the other hand, new rail lines will open and these will access areas, which are not accessed before, for example Kivistö. As a representative of HRT noted; "When I go on a next vacation, I do not need to use a taxi anymore because I can go by train to the airport."

Fare- and ticket system will influence ticket prices as well as in zone boundaries. A negative aspect in this case is that the customer cannot load only one zone on the season ticket. For some customers the new ticket system and the zone boundaries is practical, since with one zone a customer is able to travel from Espoo to Helsinki. On the other hand, the customers travelling only in Helsinki will not benefit from it, since they are not able to load only zone A on a season ticket.

The satisfaction of Helsinki Region Transports' customers is very high and it is increasing yearly. Compared to five cities in Europe, which are Geneva, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm and Vienna, HRT has the highest amount of satisfied customers. The lowest satisfaction rates are in buses and commuter trains. A probable reason is that in buses the time predictability is hard, since they are driving along with other traffic. Every year customers' have been more satisfied also with commuter train services. The highest amount of satisfied customers are metro commuters, which is also the most used transport mode in addition to buses.

In the beginning of the thesis project it was hard to understand how much work and time the process will take. During the research it was also hard to decide which parts must be left out to make sure the study is not too extensive. In the end the author managed to combine facts about HRT's customers, their satisfaction, how HRT is involved in tourism and how the near future will affect on tourism in Helsinki region. The author has shown major development of professional competence during the process, in planning as well as in conducting a thesis research. For the authors own learning the entire thesis process has been highly successful. The author has been an employee at VR, which provides the national train services in Finland, as

well as trains to Russia. From there comes the interest towards public transport and the interest has kept the author motivated through the whole process. Experiences, which the author has faced at work has helped also in the thesis process. The author is very pleased with the generosity and help from Helsinki Region Transport.

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Alennuslippuhakemus, opiskelija Discount ticket application, student

Opiskelijoiden alennuslippuhakemukset käsitellään matkakortin palvelupisteissä.
Student discount ticket applications are processed at Travel Card service points.

Hakija täyttää – Applicant fills

Suku- ja etunimet – Family name and given names	Henkilötunnus – Identity number
Osoite – Address	Kotikunta – Home municipality <input type="checkbox"/> Helsinki <input type="checkbox"/> Espoo
Postinumero ja postitoimipaikka – Postcode and post office	<input type="checkbox"/> Kauniainen <input type="checkbox"/> Vantaa <input type="checkbox"/> Kirkkonummi <input type="checkbox"/> Kerava <input type="checkbox"/> Sipoo
Olen tutustunut opiskelijalipun myöntämisperusteisiin (ks. kääntöpuoli). / I have acquainted myself with the eligibility criteria for receiving a student ticket (please see reverse side).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Vakuutan, että opiskelen päätoimisesti. / I assure that I am a full-time student. <input type="checkbox"/> 30 vuotta täyttäneenä opiskelijana esitän hakemuksen yhteydessä KELA:n tai Ahvenanmaan maakuntahallituksen myönteisen opintotuki- tai kuntoutusrahapäätöksen. / As a student over 30 years of age I enclose a positive decision on study grant or rehabilitation allowance from KELA or provincial government of Åland. <input type="checkbox"/> Kansanopiston vapaan sivistystyön linjalla opiskelevana esitän hakemuksen yhteydessä KELA:n tai Ahvenanmaan maakuntahallituksen myönteisen opintotuki- tai kuntoutusrahapäätöksen. / As a folk high school student taking liberal adult education general courses I enclose a positive decision on study grant or rehabilitation allowance from KELA or provincial government of Åland.	
____/____ 20 Päiväys – Date	_____ Allekirjoitus – Signature

Oppilaitos täyttää - Institution fills

Oppilaitoksen täydellinen nimi - Full name of educational institution	
Toimipiste/Paikkakunta - Unit/Locality	Opintolinja, mikäli kansanopisto / Line of study if a folk high school
Hakija opiskelee / The applicant studies Lukukausi/Lukuvuosi - Term/School year ____/____ 20 - ____/____ 20	Opintojen kokonaiskesto / Total duration of studies ____ v/y ____ kk/mos
Vahvistan, että hakijan opiskelu täyttää lomakkeen kääntöpuolella olevat opiskelua koskevat ehdot. / I confirm that the applicant's studies meet the conditions stated overleaf.	
____/____ 20 Päiväys - Date	_____ Allekirjoitus ja oppilaitoksen leima - Signature and stamp of the educational institution

Oppilaitoksen allekirjoituksella ja leimalla varmennettu todistus on voimassa kolme kuukautta allekirjoituspäiväyksestä.

Ei kelpaa skannattuna tai kopiona. /

The certificate bearing the stamp and signature of the educational institution is valid for three months from the date of signature. Scanned documents and copies not accepted.

Käännä – Please turn

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HSL:n opiskelijalipun myöntämisperusteet

1.1.2015 alkaen

HSL myöntää opiskelija-alennuksen seuraavat ehdot täyttävälle opiskelijalle:

- opiskelija asuu vakituisesti HSL:n seutulippualueella (Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen, Vantaa, Kerava, Kirkkonummi, Sipoo)
- opiskelija opiskelee Suomessa sijaitsevassa peruskoulussa, lukiossa, kansanopistossa, ammatillisessa oppilaitoksessa, ammattikorkeakoulussa, yliopistossa tai korkeakoulussa. HSL ylläpitää luetteloa niistä oppilaitoksista, joissa opiskelevilla ja myöntämisperusteet täyttävillä on oikeus hakea Helsingin seudun opiskelijan alennuslippu-oikeutta.
- opiskelu on päätoimista, jos hakijalla on keskimäärin vähintään 25 opetustuntia viikossa tai jos monimuoto-opiskelussa lähiopetusta on vähintään 60 % kokonaisuopiskeluajasta tai jos hakija suorittaa lukion päättötodistusta ja ylioppilastutkintoa.
- opiskelu johtaa normaalisti jatkuessaan ammattiin tai tutkintoon (poikkeus kansanopistojen vapaan sivistystyön linjoilla opiskelevat)
- opintojen arvioitu kokonaiskesto on vähintään yksi lukuvuosi. Lukuvuoden pituuden tulee olla vähintään 9 kuukautta, esim. syyskuu-toukokuu.
- opiskelija on 17 vuotta täyttänyt
- 30 vuotta täyttäneiltä sekä kaikilta kansanopiston vapaan sivistystyön linjoilla opiskelevilta edellytetään lisäksi Kelan tai Ahvenanmaan maakuntahallituksen myöntämän päätös opintotuen tai kuntoutusrahan saamisesta. Opintotueksi hyväksytään opintoraha ja/tai valtion takaama opintolaina. Opintorahakuukausien määrä on aika, jossa opinnot tulisi lainsäätäjän mielestä suorittaa.

Alennuslippujen osto-oikeutta ei myönnetä: yliopistojen ja korkeakoulujen jatko-opiskelijoille (lisensiaateiksi ja tohtoreiksi opiskeleville; lääketieteen lisensiaatiksi opiskelevat suorittavat perustutkintoa ja kuuluvat opiskelija-alennuksen piiriin), 30 vuotta täyttäneille, joiden opintotuki koostuu vain asumislisästä tai saavat muuta tukea kuin opintotukea (esim. vuorottelukorvausta, koulutustukea, koulutuspäivärahaa, työvoimakoulutukseen liittyvää tukea tai Koulutusrahaston myöntämää aikuiskoulutustukea) tai oppisopimuskoulutuksessa oleville.

Tarvittavat todistukset matkakorttia **hankittaessa**:

- Kortin käyttäjän valokuvallinen henkilöllisyyden osoittava virallinen todistus (virallinen henkilökortti, passi, ajokortti tai kuvallinen Kela-kortti)
- Opiskelijalippuhakemus (kääntöpuolella oleva lomake oppilaitoksen leimalla ja allekirjoituksella varustettuna). Jos opiskelijalla on voimassa oleva lukusaileimalla/tarralla varustettu SYL:n tai SAMOK:n sininen opiskelija-kortti tai SAKKI ry:n valkoinen opiskelijakortti, Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulun Lyyra-kortti tai Suomen Lukiolaisten Liiton opiskelijakortti, riittää tämä kortti todistukseksi opiskelusta.
- 30 vuotta täyttäneiltä ja kansanopiston vapaan sivistystyön linjoilla opiskelevilta edellytetään myönteinen Kelan tai Ahvenanmaan maakuntahallituksen päätös opintotuen tai kuntoutusrahan saamisesta. Opintotueksi hyväksytään opintoraha ja/tai valtion takaama opintolaina. Päätöksestä pitää selvästi ilmetä jäljellä olevien tukikuukausien määrä. Alennusoikeuden pituus määräytyy tukikuukausien mukaan.

Matkakorttia **päivitetäessä** tarvitaan opiskelijan matkakortti sekä yllämainitut todistukset. Päivityksen voi hakea opiskelijan puolesta myös toinen henkilö. Henkilöllisyyttä ei tarvitse osoittaa matkakorttia päivitetäessä.

Opiskelija-alennukseen oikeutetut voivat ostaa matkakorttiin ladattavia alennettuja kausi- ja arvolippuja. Alennusoikeus on päivitettävä vuosittain palvelupisteessä ja se on voimassa opiskelijakortin mukaisesti joko tammikuun tai elokuun loppuun asti. Jos opiskelijalla on opiskelijalippuhakemus, on alennusoikeus voimassa lomakkeeseen merkityn ajan mukaisesti. Jos opiskelija ei uusi alennusoikeuttaan voi matkakorttiin ladata vain normaalihintaisia aikuisten kausi- ja arvolippuja.

HSL's eligibility criteria for receiving a student ticket

1 January 2015

Persons who meet the following criteria are entitled to the student discount.

- The student lives permanently in the validity area of HSL's regional tickets (Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen, Vantaa, Kerava, Kirkkonummi, Sipoo)
- The student is studying in a Finnish comprehensive school, upper secondary/ high school, folk high school, vocational school, polytechnic or university. HSL maintains a list of educational institutions whose students have the right to apply for a student discount in the Helsinki metropolitan area.
- The student is considered a full-time if they study for at least 25 hours per week, or in multimodal learning at least 60% of the total study time is contact teaching, or if the applicant is taking a general upper secondary school diploma and a matriculation examination.
- Under normal circumstances the studies lead to a qualification or degree (exception: students studying in liberal adult education programs in folk high schools).
- The estimated total duration of the studies is at least one school/academic year. The school year must last at least 9 months, for example from September to May.
- The student is over 17 years of age.
- All students aged 30 years or over and those studying in liberal adult education programs in folk high schools must prove that either Kela or the provincial government of Åland has granted them student allowance or rehabilitation subsidy.

Right to discount is not granted to postgraduate students at universities and higher education institutions (studying for a licentiate's or doctor's degree; the degree of Licentiate in Medicine is a basic university degree, and medical students are thus entitled to discount tickets), students over 30 years of age whose financial aid consists only of housing supplement or who receive other financial aid than student allowances from KELA (e.g. job alternation compensation, training subsidy, training allowance, allowance related to labour market training, or adult education allowance granted by the Education Fund), or to apprenticeship students.

Documents needed when **purchasing a Travel Card**:

- Card user's official identification document (an official identity card, passport, driver's license, Kela card with a photograph).
- Discount ticket application bearing the stamp and signature of the educational institution. If you have a valid blue SYL student card, a blue SAMOK student card, a white SAKKI ry student card, Lyyra Card of the National Defence University, or a student card of the Union of Finnish Upper Secondary School Students with a current term sticker on it, the student card is a sufficient proof of studies.
- Students over 30 years of age as well as students taking liberal adult education general courses in folk high schools have to present a positive decision on study grant, student loan or rehabilitation subsidy from KELA or the provincial government of Åland. The decision must show the number of months remaining on the grant. The duration of the discount entitlement depends on the number of grant months.

When **updating a Travel Card**, the student's Travel Card and the above mentioned certificates must be presented. The student can authorize another person to update the Travel Card. No proof of identity is needed when updating a Travel Card.

Those entitled to a student discount may purchase season and value tickets for a reduced price. The discount entitlement has to be updated annually at a service point and it is valid until the end of January or August, according to the student card. If the student has a student discount ticket application form, the discount entitlement will be valid until the date provided on the application form. If the student does not renew their discount entitlement, they can load their Travel Cards with normal priced season and value tickets.

Appendix 2: HSL's eligibility for receiving a student ticket

**Travel Card application for foreign exchange students**

Ulkomaisten vaihto-opiskelijan matkakorttihakemus

- Student (17–29 years)** / Opiskelija (17–29 v)
- Student (over 30 years)** / Opiskelija (yli 30 v)
- Child 7–16 years** / Lapsi 7–16 v

Exchange students' Travel Card applications are processed at Travel Card service points.

Vaihto-opiskelijoiden matkakorttihakemukset käsitellään matkakortin palvelupisteissä.

Applicant fills – Hakija täyttää

Family name and given names – Suku- ja etunimet	Date of birth (ddmmyyyy) – Syntymäaika (ppkkvvvv)
Address – Osoite	Municipality of residence in Finland – Asuinkunta <input type="checkbox"/> Helsinki <input type="checkbox"/> Espoo <input type="checkbox"/> Vantaa <input type="checkbox"/> Kauniainen <input type="checkbox"/> Kerava <input type="checkbox"/> Kirkkonummi <input type="checkbox"/> Sipoo
Postcode and post office – Postinumero ja -toimipaikka	
I have read the eligibility criteria for receiving a personal Travel Card (please see reverse side). / Olen tutustunut henkilökohtaisen matkakortin myöntämisperusteisiin (kts. kääntöpuoli).	
____ / ____ 20____ Date – Päiväys	_____ Signature - Allekirjoitus

Institution fills – Oppilaitos täyttää

Full name of educational institution – Oppilaitoksen täydellinen nimi	
Unit/Locality – Toimipiste/Paikkakunta	
Study period – Opiskelun kesto ____ / ____ 20____ – ____ / ____ 20____	
The applicant's studies meet the conditions stated overleaf. / Hakijan opiskelu täyttää lomakkeen kääntöpuolella olevat opiskelua koskevat ehdot.	
____ / ____ 20____ Date – Päiväys	_____ Signature and stamp of the educational institution – Allekirjoitus ja oppilaitoksen leima

The certificate bearing the stamp and signature of the educational institution is valid for three months from the date of signature.**Scanned documents and copies not accepted. /**

Oppilaitoksen allekirjoituksella ja leimalla varmennettu todistus on voimassa kolme kuukautta allekirjoituspäiväyksestä.

Ei kelpaa skannattuna tai kopiona.

Please turn – Käännä

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Appendix 3: Travel Card application for foreign students



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING A PERSONAL TRAVEL CARD IN THE HELSINKI METROPOLITAN AREA AS OF 1 JAN.2015

Foreign exchange students who are 17–29 years of age and meet the following criteria are entitled to a personal Travel Card with a student discount:

- The student lives temporarily (under two years) in the area of validity of HSL's regional tickets (Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen, Vantaa, Kerava, Kirkkonummi or Sipoo). There is no minimum time limit for the temporary residence. No certificate of domicile from the local register office is needed.
- The student is studying in a comprehensive school, high school, folk high school, vocational education institution, polytechnic, university or other institution of higher education located in Finland
- The student is studying on a full-time basis (at least 25 hours/week) and the studies lead to a qualification or degree in the student's home country.

Foreign exchange students who are over 30 years of age and meet the following criteria are entitled to a personal Travel Card for adults:

- The student lives temporarily (under two years) in the area of validity of HSL's regional tickets (Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen, Vantaa, Kerava, Kirkkonummi or Sipoo). There is no minimum time limit for the temporary residence. No certificate of domicile from the local register office is needed.
- The student is studying in a comprehensive school, high school, folk high school, vocational education institution, polytechnic, university or other institution of higher education located in Finland
- The student is studying on a full-time basis (at least 25 hours /week) and the studies lead to a qualification or degree in the student's home country.

Postgraduate students at universities and higher education institutions (studying for a licentiate's or doctor's degree) are not entitled to student discount. The degree of Licentiate in Medicine is a basic university degree, and medical students are thus entitled to the student discount. Other postgraduate students are entitled to a personal Travel Card for adults and can load general season tickets on their Travel Cards.

Foreign exchange students who are under 17 years of age and meet the following criteria are entitled to a personal Travel Card for children:

- The student lives temporarily (under two years) in the area of validity of HSL's regional tickets (Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen, Vantaa, Kerava or Kirkkonummi). There is no minimum time limit for the temporary residence. No certificate of domicile from the local register office is needed.
- The student is studying in a comprehensive school, high school, folk high school, vocational education institution, polytechnic, university or other institution of higher education located in Finland.
- The student is studying on a full-time basis.

Exchange students may purchase season and value tickets for a reduced price. The discount entitlement is valid for the duration of the studies stated overleaf, however, for a maximum period of one year. If the studies continue, the discount entitlement has to be renewed at a service point. If the student does not renew the discount entitlement, they can load their Travel Cards with adult tickets / general season tickets.

Documents needed when applying for a Travel Card:

- An official ID with a photograph (an official identity card, passport or European driving licence).
- Travel Card application bearing the stamp and signature of the educational institution (see the reverse side).

ULKOMAISEN VAIHTO-OPISKELIJAN HENKILÖKOHTAISEN MATKAKORTIN MYÖNTÄMISPERUSTEET 1.1.2015 alkaen

HSL myöntää opiskelija-alennuksen seuraavat ehdot täyttävälle ulkomaiselle 17–29-vuotiaalle vaihto-opiskelijalle:

- opiskelija asuu tilapäisesti (alle kaksi vuotta) HSL:n seutulippualueella (Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen, Vantaa, Kerava, Kirkkonummi, Sipoo). Tilapäiselle asumiselle ei ole asetettu alarajaa. Matkakorttiin tallennetaan kotikunnaksi ko. kunta. Maistraatin kotipaikkatodistusta ei tarvita.
- opiskelija opiskelee Suomessa sijaitsevassa peruskoulussa, lukiossa, kansanopistossa, ammatillisessa oppilaitoksessa, ammattikorkeakoulussa, yliopistossa tai korkeakoulussa
- opiskelu on päätoimista (vähintään 25 tuntia viikossa) ja johtaa opiskelijan kotimaassa ammattiin tai tutkintoon.

HSL myöntää aikuisten henkilökohtaisen matkakortin seuraavat ehdot täyttävälle ulkomaiselle 30 vuotta täyttäneelle vaihto-opiskelijalle:

- opiskelija asuu tilapäisesti (alle kaksi vuotta) HSL:n seutulippualueella (Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen, Vantaa, Kerava, Kirkkonummi, Sipoo). Tilapäiselle asumiselle ei ole asetettu alarajaa. Matkakorttiin tallennetaan asiakasryhmäksi 'Muu aikuinen'. Kotikunnaksi tallennetaan tilapäinen asuinkunta. Maistraatin kotipaikkatodistusta ei tarvita.
- opiskelija opiskelee Suomessa sijaitsevassa peruskoulussa, lukiossa, kansanopistossa, ammatillisessa oppilaitoksessa, ammattikorkeakoulussa, yliopistossa tai korkeakoulussa
- opiskelu on päätoimista (vähintään 25 tuntia viikossa) ja johtaa opiskelijan kotimaassa ammattiin tai tutkintoon.

Yliopiston tai korkeakoulun jatko-opiskelijalle (lisensiaatiksi tai tohtoriksi opiskeleva) ei myönnetä opiskelija-alennusta. Poikkeuksena on lääketieteeseen lisensiaatiksi opiskeleva, joka suorittaa perustutkintoa ja on oikeutettu opiskelija-alennukseen. Muille jatko-opiskelijalle voidaan myydä yleiskausilippuun oikeuttava matkakortti.

HSL myöntää lasten henkilökohtaisen matkakortin seuraavat ehdot täyttävälle ulkomaiselle alle 17-vuotiaalle vaihto-opiskelijalle:

- opiskelija asuu tilapäisesti (alle kaksi vuotta) HSL:n seutulippualueella (Helsinki, Espoo, Kauniainen, Vantaa, Kerava, Kirkkonummi, Sipoo). Tilapäiselle asumiselle ei ole asetettu alarajaa. Matkakorttiin tallennetaan asiakasryhmäksi 'Muu lapsi'. Kotikunnaksi tallennetaan tilapäinen asuinkunta. Maistraatin kotipaikkatodistusta ei tarvita.
- opiskelija opiskelee Suomessa sijaitsevassa peruskoulussa, lukiossa, kansanopistossa, ammatillisessa oppilaitoksessa, ammattikorkeakoulussa, yliopistossa tai korkeakoulussa
- opiskelu on päätoimista

Vaihto-opiskelija voi ostaa matkakorttiin ladattavia alennusryhmä 2 / aikuisten / lasten lipun hintaisia kausi- ja arvolippuja. Asiakasryhmä on voimassa kääntöpuolella ilmoitetun opiskelun ajan, kuitenkin enintään 1 vuoden. Mikäli opiskelu jatkuu, on asiakasryhmän voimassaolo uusittava palvelupisteessä. Jos opiskelija ei uusi voimassaoloa, voi matkakortille ladata vain aikuisten normaalihintaisia kausilippuja / aikuisten yleiskausilippuja / lasten yleiskausilippuja.

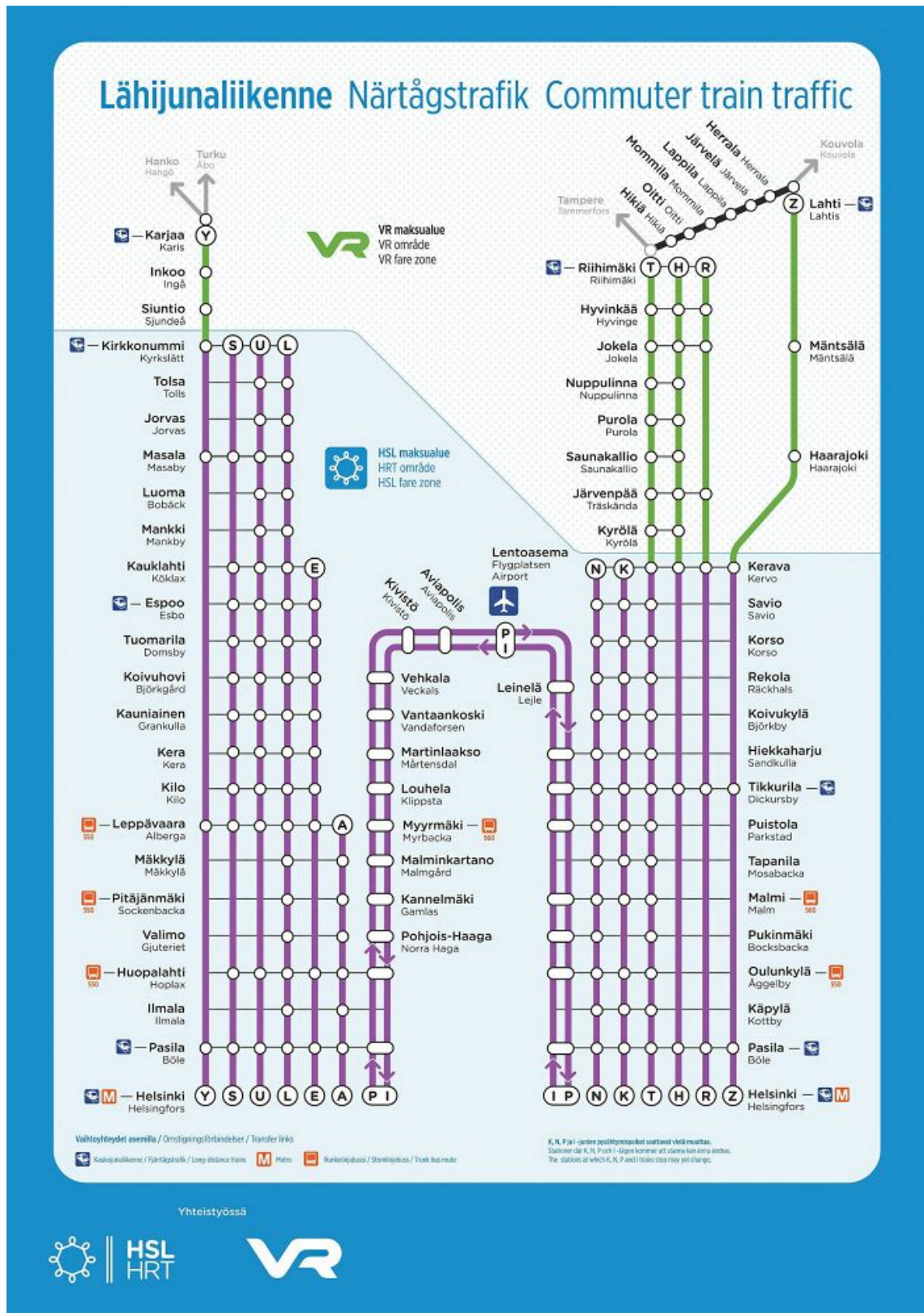
Tarvittavat todistukset matkakorttia hankittaessa ja päivitettyäessä:

- Kortin käyttäjän valokuvallinen henkilöllisyyden osoittava virallinen todistus (virallinen henkilökortti, passi tai eurooppalainen ajokortti).
- Vaihto-opiskelijan matkakorttitakemus (kääntöpuolella oleva lomake oppilaitoksen leimalla ja allekirjoituksella varustettuna).

(Application form updated / Lomake päivitetty 7.1.2015)

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Appendix 4: Eligibility criteria for foreign students



Appendix 5: Commuter train traffic map