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# Kontula: A Challenging Neighborhood?

Analysing the Connection between Physical and Social  
Environment in an Urban Area

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<p>Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tutkia Kontulaa asuinalueena ja kontulalaisten yhteenkuuluvuuden tunnetta Kontulaan asuinalueena. Pyrimme selvittämään myös, oliko haastateltavien sosioekonomisella taustalla vaikutusta heidän kokemuksiinsa Kontulasta sekä yhteenkuuluvuuden tunteeseen (<i>place attachment</i>) omaa asuinalueetta kohtaan. Lisäksi tutkimme, miten kaupunkiympäristö ja sen rakenteet vaikuttavat yksilöiden mahdollisuuksiin kohdata toisiaan sekä, miten Kontulan maine vaikuttaa heidän henkilökohtaisiin käsityksiinsä ja asenteisiin alueesta.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyö toteutettiin kvalitatiivisella eli laadullisella tutkimuksella ja sisälsi kaksi tutkimusaineiston keruumenetelmää, havainnoimalla Kontulan ympäristöä sekä haastatteleamalla paikallisia. Tutkimukseen käytetyt haastattelut sekä havainnointit toteutettiin kevään ja kesän 2019 välillä. Havainnointit suoritettiin eri kellonaikoina ja päivämäärinä ja sisälsi yhteensä 30 tuntia alueeseen tutustumista. Kokonaisuudessaan tutkimus sisällytti yhdeksän haastattelua, joista kaksi tapahtui pienissä 2-3 hengen ryhmissä. Jokaisen haastattelun jälkeen, pyysimme osallistujia merkkamaan Kontulan karttaan heille mieluisimmat sekä epämieluisimmat alueet Kontulasta. Tämän jälkeen pyysimme haastateltavia vielä piirtämään heidän näkemyksensä Kontulan rajoista.</p> <p>Haastateltavien diversiteetillä oli vain vähän vaikutusta heidän kokemuksiinsa omasta asuinalueesta. Lähes kaikki haastateltavat kokivat Kontulan ostoskeskuksen jokseenkin epämieluyttävänä. Nuorimmilla haastateltavilla oli vahvin kiintymyssuhde Kontulaan asuinalueena. Kontulaiset kokivat Kontulan kirjaston alueen sekä ympäröivän luonnon olevan asuinalueensa parhaita puolia. Tutkimuksen perusteella kontulalaisten väliset kohtaamiset ja yhteisöllisyys vaikuttivat jääneen suurimmiksi osin lähinaapureiden tai samanlaisten sosioekonomisten taustojen omaavien väliseksi.</p> <p>Osallistujat kokivat Kontulan maineen olevan vääristynyt ja liioiteltu mediassa. Ostoskeskuksen levottomuus sekä päihteidenkäyttäjät alueella nousivat esille Kontulasta riippuvaiseksi syyksi maineeseen. Haastatteluissa asuin ympäristön kohentamiseksi nousi esille ostoskeskuksen alueen kohentaminen. Fyysiset ja sosiaaliset muutokset Kontulassa koettiin suurimmaksi osin positiivisina asioina.</p>	
Avainsanat	Kontula, place attachment, kaupunkiympäristö, alueellinen stigma, yhteisöllisyys, lähiö, kaupungistuminen, kaupunkisosiologia, haasteellinen kaupunginosa

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<p>The objective of this Bachelor's thesis was to explore Kontula – district of Helsinki city, Finland. More specifically, how residents experience their neighbourhood and whether they have place attachment to their living area. Another verge of the question was whether their socioeconomic background had an effect on their level of place attachment. Furthermore, we researched how urban spaces and their structure affected individuals' possibilities to interact with each other and how the reputation of the area influences residents' experiences as well as attitudes towards their neighbourhood.</p> <p>The study was implemented by using qualitative research methods and contained two data collecting procedures, observing the area of Kontula and interviewing locals. Observations and interviews were carried out between spring and summer of 2019. Observations took place during different times and days and contained altogether 30 hours of exploring the area of Kontula. In total, the study contains nine interviews two of which were conducted in small groups of 2 to 3 individuals. After every interview, we applied a mapping technique, asking participants to mark their favourite and most dislikeable area of Kontula as well as how they perceive the borders of the area.</p> <p>The results showed that the diversity of the interviewees had only little impact on their experiences of Kontula as a residential area. Nearly all the participants said that they considered the local shopping centre somewhat unpleasant. The study showed that younger interviewees had the strongest place attachment to Kontula as their own neighbourhood. Participants expressed that Kontula's library and surrounding nature were the greatest qualities of the neighbourhood. Based on the study, the interaction between the residents of Kontula and sense of community seemed to remain mainly between next-door neighbours or people with similar socioeconomic status.</p> <p>Participants perceived that Kontula's reputation was distorted and exaggerated through media. The restlessness of the shopping centre area and the substance abusers were most commonly pointed out as Kontula's dependent reason for the territorial stigma. Improving the shopping centre area was brought up as a way to revitalize the neighbourhood. Physical and social changes in the area were mostly seen positively by the participants.</p>	
Keywords	Kontula, place attachment, urban environment, territorial stigma, urbanization, urban sociology, deprived area, suburb, common urban space

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## **1 Introduction**

Our world is changing rapidly. With ongoing globalisation movement, mobility around the globe has become more accessible. One of the effects caused by globalisation is a rise of migration between the countries, as well as inside them. Migration inside a country from rural to an urban area is called urbanization. It is estimated that by the end of 2050 around 70 per cent of the global population is expected to live in urban areas (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019). Urbanization causes rapid and unplanned city growth that may result in poor infrastructures such as transport, social and medical services, inadequate housing, unemployment, unsafe environment and, as an outcome, the emergence of deprived neighbourhoods. The question arises how to avoid forthcoming of disadvantaged areas in a city, how to recognize and improve one if it is already existing.

Finland, and in particular, Helsinki is also facing the aforementioned challenges. East part of Helsinki is generally considered to be less attractive, experiencing a variety of social challenges among the residents. In our study, we will focus on a particular neighbourhood of East Helsinki – Kontula. We will try to find out what are the characteristics of “bad” neighbourhood and whether Kontula holds them, and, to understand relations between city spaces and residents through the concept of place attachment and place identity. We will analyse the possible connection between the physical environment of an area and place attachment level of its residents. Possible grounds for development will be also explored and proposed.

## **2 Sociospatial shaping of city areas: place attachment in challenging neighbourhoods**

Firstly, we will explore the main concepts and phenomena that on the global level one way or another affect the socio-economical shaping of a city, district and neighbourhood. Then we will continue analysing theoretical background concentrating on a more local scale – the relationship between city spaces, places and its residents and its connection to community sense and development.

## 2.1 Globalization

Globalization as an academic concept is filled with contradictions. According to Dominelli (2010, p. 599), globalization as a process has been accompanied not only with emerging economies of different countries into one and making mobility around the globe more accessible, but also with a number of challenging outcomes, such as migration, urbanization, cultural diffusion, increasing nationalist tendencies, internationalization of social problems and rise of the indigenization. Combined with neoliberalism as a new leading philosophy, favouring free markets, privatisation, and lowering intervention of the state it has led to the separation of economics and politics as well as to changes in social policies, local governance, civil society and community work.

According to Marcuse and Kempen (2000, p. 5), globalization has led into the mobility of goods, capital and manufacturing, which in return brings spatial changes within cities. With increased migration of people due to the process of globalization values and norms that are spread around the world are also changing. In her book, Massey (2001, pp. 146-157) discusses a conception of time-space compression which is yet another outcome of the globalization process. The author argues that globalization has led us to a new phenomenon of time-space compression, where time and space are no longer understood and experienced as they used to be. Different social groups of people are experiencing time-space compression in different ways. Massey introduces a conception of power geometry in relation to globalization as a regulator of various/contrary experiencing time-space compression. Some people have more power over mobility, communication and decision-making, others have less power over mobility and, thus, are imprisoned by it. The mobility of one group can affect and weaken the power of other groups. "We need to ask, in other words, whether our relative mobility and power over mobility and communication entrenches the spatial imprisonment of other groups." (Massey, 1994, pp. 146-151.)

## 2.2 Urbanization

Yet another product of globalization is the rise of urbanization around the world. Urbanization refers to a growing number of people that are moving away from rural areas to cities and towns, which leads to an increase of the size of urban areas and population living within them. At the moment the world is undergoing the largest wave of urban growth in history. It is estimated that by the end of 2050 around 68 per cent of the global

population are estimated to live in urban areas (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2019). According to the United Nations (2019), 85,4 per cent of the Finnish population is concentrated in urban areas in 2019, and its number is estimated to rise by 90 per cent in 2050. People are moving into the cities attracted by better opportunities and advantages. However, urbanization's outcomes are mixed. Rapid and uncontrolled urbanization may result in city growth with negative economic, social, and environmental consequences.

### 2.3 How migration shapes cities. Superdiversity, multiculturalism and social challenges.

Migration is a consequence of globalization and vice versa. International migration is a multifaceted phenomenon that affects daily lives from economic, social and security aspects in a globalised world. Migration happens for different reasons and has various forms, such as labour-motivated migration, which is linked to better economic opportunities or forced migration due to wars, political prosecution, etc. Marcuse and Kempen (2000) indicate that migration increases the demand for housing, which leads to a competition between households, especially low-income households, resulting in price changes in the housing market as well as to overcrowding in receiving neighbourhood. In the issue, conflicts between newcomers and those who have been living in the neighbourhood for a longer period of time are present in all urban areas. (Marcuse and Kempen, 2000, pp. 7-8.)

Geldof (2016, pp. 17-77), on the other hand, sees the migration in a more positive way, arguing that following the process of globalization more and more European cities become ethnic-culturally diverse. In fact, in many cities, the minority has become the majority with immigrants coming from a wider range of places than before, as well as with dissemination of next generations of first-wave immigrants. The author then introduces the concept of superdiversity which is diversity within diversity. In other words, the author argues that ethnic origin should no longer be seen as the only factor that regulates differences between different social groups in society. Instead, we should recognize, embrace and accept increased diversity not only between immigrant and ethnic minority groups but also within them. Superdiversity directed into changing our society so that diversity is no longer affect only minorities in ethnically homogeneous communities. "Su-



perdiversity wishes to give new insights into and a new language for the process of diversification, which are not only the result of migration, but just as much of increasing individualization and development of lifestyles and personal identities.” (Geldof, 2016, p. 44). The author also notes a higher poverty risk for individuals with ethnic backgrounds in comparison with the native population. He argues then that we need to pay more attention to the aforementioned fact and make a bigger effort to resolve the problem. Geldof (2016) also highlights the importance of facilitating upward social mobility and sees cities as main providers of that. “The city must offer increasing space and opportunities for newcomers, both from home and abroad, even if these newcomers are not yet a part of the middle class.” (Geldof, 2016, p. 72). Geldof (2016, pp. 77-94) argues that superdiversified societies are societies with multiple and layered identities. The conception of methodological nationalism, where identity was in most of the cases bounded by national borders and where the “us-and-them” method of thinking was applied, is no longer relative in nowadays world. Instead, we should move to cosmopolitan vision, meaning that we should start to recognize and accept “otherness” of others and ignore dissensions generated by territoriality and homogenization of culture. A cosmopolitan view, the author argues, is a better tool to see and analyse true superdiversity in our cities. Moving from “all together” and focusing on the benefits that togetherness can serve us. (Geldof, 2016, pp. 77-94.)

However, the migration process and, as a result, the blending of different cultures is often accompanied by the rise of nationalism and racism, discrimination and ethnocentricity from the receiving countries. Marconi and Ostanel (2016, p. 5) point out that coexistence within new multicultural societies and among newcomers arriving with a different background might be perceived by the natives as a threat of destroying already existing local order. Fear of change and the unknown results in defence of tradition and territories, shaping and limiting immigrants’ right to live in a city and to use its public spaces. Ethnic-based spatial segregation becomes a new social challenge in most contemporary cities. (Marconi and Ostanel, 2016, pp. 5-7.)

To support the view that migration forms and changes the spatial order in cities Marcuse and Kemper (2000, p. 28) define the notion of ethnic enclaves. An ethnic enclave stands for a geographical area with a high concentration of people self-defined by ethnicity, culture or religion who assemble in order to advantage their economic, cultural and social wellbeing. A high level of mutual support, social capital and networking make it less chal-

lenging for newcomers to find employment and housing while staying in one's own culture. (Marcuse and Kemper, 2000, p. 18.) Ethnic enclaves provide immigrants with social capital and enable immigration to happen, however, they are also criticized for segregation from hosting society.

#### 2.4 Gentrification, social mixing and what can go wrong

Gentrification process contributes significantly to the urban spatial restructuring. Gentrification has been both criticized and praised, and it holds the multifaceted character. In his book, Smith (1996) defined gentrification as "the process by which poor and working-class neighbourhoods in the inner city are refurbished by an influx of private capital and middle-class home buyers and renters". Some of the researchers see gentrification as a positive neighbourhood process, arguing that it enables stabilization of declining areas, enhancing the economic opportunities for the urban poor and reduce socio-spatial segregation. Some suggest using gentrification as a positive public policy tool that leads to social mixing of low-income and middle-class urban actors and breaks down the culture of poverty. (Lees, 2008, pp. 195-205.) On the contrary, other researchers argue that gentrification has a negative effect on a neighbourhood. Gentrification process reduces affordable housing in an area, destroys community tissue that is significant for low-income, immigrant and minority communities. Some of the studies showed that there was little if not at all interaction between the middle-class gentrifiers and local low-income groups, that makes one doubt a gentrification process's impact in successful social mixing. There are claims that gentrification leads to displacement of low-income former area's residents since housing prices are rising and people are pushed to move to a more affordable place, which is usually located in a more deprived area. (Lees, 2008, pp. 205-222.)

Bringing the positive or negative impact, the gentrification process is present in all the modern cities and plays a significant role in sociospatial shaping of the city areas.

#### 2.5 Space and place: place attachment and place identity in the urban context

Sociology of space – when talking about cities and people living in them it is significant to understand how humans, spaces and places interact, to scrutinize the social and material constitution of spaces and places. Another central question is to distinguish concepts of space and place in relation to humans and to urban residents specifically.

Space can be seen as something abstract, whereas place refers to how people are aware of/relate to a certain space. For a space to become a place, meaning should be applied to it. There are many different approaches to analysing space and place relationship. Below we will introduce the most significant ones.

Tuan (1997) in his study defines that space is linked to movement, whereas place is linked to repose. The author notes that the concept of place holds feelings of stability and security, a desire to settle down and identify oneself with a place. Tuan points out that in order for a space to become a place, an individual should resonate with a certain physical space, assign meaning to it. (Tuan, 1997)

The theory of thirdspace created by Edward Soja (1999) turns away from previously used duality between practising and representing space or imagined and real space and introduces the third dimension of it – thirdspace. Soja (1999) argues that space is made out of three layers. Firstspace is the actual physical reality presented through architecture, measurable and mappable space. Secondspace – the product of a social process, a space that becomes a place through a subjective perception and defined meanings of an individual. Thirdspace is a space which is lived, a space for interaction with the physical dimension, a space of the other where all forms of culture are coming together. (Soja, 1999)

In contrast, Massey (1994) in her study re-conceptualizes the notion of place. She argues that with globalization movement which has resulted in time-space compression, the transformation of the concept of place and the manner in which one relates to it has happened. The author proposes a progressive sense of place as opposed to outdated static places. In comparison with the old notion of place, the author attributes some new characteristics to the progressive concept of place such as the absence of boundaries, the absence of one unique identity and transformation from the static form into the process. “Sense of place” is searched in order to obtain a sense of stability and a source of unproblematic identity. A place is believed to be static. Massey (1994) argues that it is not relevant anymore and submits a new concept of a progressive sense of place. She argues then that firstly, places do not have a single sense of place, but rather many different identities, since every habitant experiences place in one’s own unique way. Secondly, a place does not equal to the community. Massey notes that in order to make places more liveable we should construct communities that are not confined to the

places. Thirdly, she argues, that place does not have to require a presence of boundaries. The author sees the conception of “progressive place” as a meeting point of social relations, experiences and perceptions, that is built on a considerably larger scale than the place itself. Therefore, places are not static, places are processes. (Massey, 1994)

However, the boundaries of the place are still there – physically and mentally in the opposite of Massey’s “progressive sense of place”. In his studies, David Harvey (1973) brings together notions of space, social justice and urbanism. In contrast with Massey, Harvey states that social relations are bonded to physical spaces. “We must relate social behaviour to the way in which the city assumes a certain geography, a certain spatial form. We must recognize that once a particular spatial form is created it tends to institutionalize and, in some respect, to determine the future development of social process.” (Harvey, 1973, p. 27.) In his work he eliminates a concept of “spatial consciousness” – a realization that enables an individual to relate to the spaces he sees around him/her, to identify the role of the space and place in one’s life, to recognise how space affect the communications between people and organization (Harvey, 1973, pp. 22-25). In his studies Harvey (1973) expresses a rights-based view, noting that each citizen must have a “right to the city” – a right to all the qualities and advantages of urban life, a right that allows all city residents to decide upon conditions that have an impact on their lives.

In order to further analyse the relationship between people and social-spatial forms, notions of a sense of place or place identity and place attachment will be reviewed below.

Different people experience and perceive the same neighbourhood or city in a diverse way. While one can appreciate and utilise some aspects of a neighbourhood, another may experience the complete opposite – alienation, exclusion, injustice, etc. A sense of place guides one’s perception of places such as communities, streets, neighbourhood or cities, it affects our well-being, our ways of interacting with other residents, as well as our desire to rather stay or leave a place. Adams (2013) defined sense of place as “the lens through which people experience and make meaning of their experiences in and with place”. Once placed in contemporary city’s dimension, sense of place becomes outstandingly affected by such phenomena as multiculturalism, politics and economics, globalization, migration, gentrification, urbanization and built environments or spatial order of a city.

Place attachment can be understood as an emotional bond that binds people and their physical surroundings. Place attachment derives rather from positive experiences in contrast to the sense of place. In his study David Seamon (2014) interprets place attachment concept through six interconnected processes that each affect positively or negatively dynamics of a place and, consequently, the level of possible attachment for a place.

The first process is called “place interaction”, which stands for typical goings-on in a place, everyday life regular actions, behaviours and events. The “place interaction” process may subvert a place when some certain actions or situations generate distress, conflict or worry (newcomers vs. local relationship for example). (Seamon, 2014)

The second process is called “place identity” and it stands for the course when an individual living in a place take up that place as an integral part of one’s identity. The “place identity” process may undermine a place when an individual becomes isolated from the place of which he/she was a part – as a result, one may consider moving elsewhere safer or to shift into minimal interaction and exposure to the place in order to protect oneself (gentrification process as an example). (Seamon, 2014)

The third process is called “place release”, which means happening of enjoyable unexpected events in one’s area. For example, it can be musicians playing on a street or encountering a distribution of free ice-cream, etc. The “place release” process, on the extreme opposite, may harm a place when disruptive unexpected events take over the enjoyable ones – for example, one may be mugged on a street, etc. (Seamon, 2014)

The fourth process is called “place realization” and stands for the physical and environmental appearance of a place, as well as for the reputation attached to a place. “Place realization” as a process may subvert a place when its ambience decays through inappropriate urban design, absence of care, insensitive policies towards inhabitants, etc. (inadequate housing estates as an example). (Seamon, 2014)

The last two processes “place creation” and “place intensification” stand for inhabitants’ activity concerning a place and well-crafted policy design in relation to inhabitants respectively. The aforementioned two processes may undermine a place when the real needs of place are ignored, and poorly planned designs and policies are applied. (Seamon, 2014)

The author argues that in order for a place to be well-used and well-liked all six processes should be presented. Also, all aforementioned processes enhance emotional bonds with a place and, hence, place attachment. Moreover, place attachment can range from extensive or strong (well-integrated physical and spatial environment, committed people and overall positive atmosphere of the place) to moribund or non-existing (alienated or disinterested inhabitants, inadequate or dysfunctional physical environment and hostile place ambience).

Some studies show that attachment to place is an indicator of attachment between people, their social relationship and state that physical place has meaning only because it has been socially constructed. Others insist that physical and social dimension equally important and, in fact, interconnected.

Jan Gehl in his book (2010), points out how the physical form of the city shapes social connections between the residents, and argues that by construction good common/public city spaces we provide access and opportunities to all groups of society to meet each other on daily basis, to communicate, to see the composition of society and, thus, to improve social sustainability. The author argues, that by strengthening common city spaces, one can meet people from various groups of society, and, consequently, gain closeness, trust and respect towards the others. Gehl (2010) states that the usability of a common city space can be evaluated through the range of activities space can provide. He divides activities into three levels according to their degree of necessity – necessary, optional and social activities. Necessary activities take place under all conditions, something that people are obliged to do no matter what – for example, going to school or work, etc. Optional activities are activities that people might like – for example, sitting in the park and enjoying the weather, etc. For these activities to take place a good common space quality is required – an increase in an outdoor quality facility will lead to a boost of people participating in optional activities. The last group, social activities, stands for all kind of communication between the people and requires the presence of other people as well as social exchanges and life in a city space. (Gehl, 2010) Thus, Gehl (2010) argues that by improving the outdoor quality of a city space we bring people together, providing them with a basis to meet and communicate. Which in turn may result in a growing sense of place attachment, community sense development and revitalization of a deprived area.

## 2.6 Territorial stigmatization

While analysing the processes and phenomena influencing the formation of disadvantaged areas in contemporary cities, it is wise to mention stigmatization element, since many urban areas struggle from it.

According to Wacquant (2008, p. 115), territorial stigmatization is a negative labelling of a certain area, mainly made by the media representation, which results in “symbolic demonization” of an area. Wacquant argues, that territorial stigmatization is assimilated by residents of an area, resulting in lower levels of place attachment, denying belonging to an area, feelings of shame and guilt among the residents, as well as distancing oneself from an area and other neighbours. Territorial stigmatization aggravates the relationship between the residents of an area. Once inhabitants experience disparaging attitudes towards their neighbourhood, they start to see and blame other residents as the reason for the area’s plight. To quote from Wacquant (2008, p. 116), “In response to spatial defamation, residents engage in strategies of mutual distancing and lateral denigration; they retreat into the private sphere of the family; and they exit from the neighbourhood (whenever they have the option).”

While Wacquant’s work on the concept of territorial stigmatization is, without a doubt, a significant contribution to contemporary research on urban studies, it has been argued whether his concept is applicable ubiquitously. There are some studies conducted in deprived areas suggesting that even though a territorial stigma can be created and presented in media representation, it is not necessarily resulting in internalization of territorial stigma among the residents. On the opposite, many residents have a positive view of an area they live in. (Jensen and Christensen, 2012)

All in all, it is significant to analyse how a certain area is portrayed in a media, and what affects it has on area’s representation among both – an area’s inhabitants and the rest of society. However, territorial stigmatization should not be taken for granted – inhabitants of a stigmatized area may have a completely different view on an area where they live compared to labelled and stereotypical representation and perception made by media and population in general.

## 2.7 How are community sense and place attachment connected?

Before analysing the possible connection between the two notions, it is significant to define the concept of community.

As Oxford dictionary states, a community is “a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common” (Oxford Dictionaries | English, 2019). McMillan & Chavis (1986) introduce a notion of “Sense of Community” and define it as “Sense of Community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together.”

There have been many pieces of research made concerning the contribution of place attachment to community revitalization development projects (Brown et al., 2003; Manzo & Perkins, 2006; Strzelecka et al., 2010). Habitant attachment to place affects individual and collective behaviours and as a result, the entire community. Those places with more attached inhabitants are expected to have a higher level of contribution to renewal projects (Manzo & Perkins, 2006). Mihaylov and Perkins (2004) suggest that if a place provides possibilities for interactions and networks, it, in turn, results in “neighbouring, citizen participation and ultimately community mobilization and collective action;” as well as possibly resulting in increased “implementing development or revitalization of the community” (p. 71).

The question arises, how can we stimulate or improve place attachment? Are non-places (shopping malls, homogenized entertainment sites etc.) capable of triggering attachment?

### **3 Local context: Helsinki's suburbs**

Finland and, in particular, Helsinki is also experiencing all the aforementioned processes – globalization, urbanization, migration, superdiversity, gentrification, etc.– a range of social challenges in some areas has arisen as a result. Kontula, the neighbourhood of our interest, is considered to be one of the most depressed and deprived areas in Helsinki.

#### **3.1 Kontula. The past.**



Kontula is part of Mellunkylä district that is located in the eastern part of Helsinki. Kontula is one of the residential areas in Helsinki's suburbs or so-called lähiöt, that were built around fifty years ago in Helsinki and ever since have been rather a controversial topic. At the beginning of the 1960s, due to the decline of agriculture and growth of urbanization caused by the rapid industrialization process, Helsinki and other Finnish cities were faced with a large number of people moving into the growing municipalities. This process, also known as The Great Migration (Suuri Muutto), came off in between the 1960s and 1970s and posed a problem on Helsinki of housing provision for all the newcomers. (Kortteinen, 1982.) Since Helsinki municipality did not have enough resources to plan and construct rather a large number of apartments in need fast enough, so-called development contracts (aluerakennussopimus) between construction companies and the municipality took place (Hankonen, 1994, p. 19).

According to those contracts, Helsinki city transferred a piece of land into a construction companies' possession, whereas construction companies in return were responsible for planning, building and managing the marketing of apartments (Hankonen, 1994, p.19). As it happened, private construction companies were aiming at maximizing the profits, thus, new suburban sites located rather far away from the city centre and detached from the Helsinki city urban fabric were chosen as future residential areas (Kortteinen, 1982, p. 33). Since the new suburbs were built purely on an economic basis and the building process was based on efficiency and low-cost results, the architectural aesthetics were not prioritized. As a result, the whole neighbourhoods with apartment blocks were built at once using the standardized constructions made out of prefabricated concrete materials (Bengs et.al., 1989). Kontula is one of the neighbourhoods that was built during those times.

Kontula itself is one of Finland's biggest suburbs and became rapidly constructed at the beginning of the 1960s (Lindroos, n/a). Most of the early migrants moved to Kontula from small city centre apartments or from subtenant residents from Helsinki's close-by municipalities. Kontula was seen as an opportunity to move into a bigger apartment within the same price than small apartments in the city centre of Helsinki. Besides family-size apartments, studio apartments were also constructed in Kontula. Most of the new buildings in Kontula were precast concrete buildings. However, some issues have arisen from the element houses, most of the buildings had poor soundproof as well as caulking that did not keep the cold from the apartments during the winter. (Kokkonen, 2002, pp. 36-50.)

Kontula started to face social issues only a couple of years after it was built. Services were not built within the same phase that the residential buildings (Kodit.io, 2018). According to Kokkonen (2002), some people experienced the suburb as a “deposit place” for people. Opportunity for a wider living space made people move fast to Kontula and the lack of services did not meet with people’s need for activities and services (Kokkonen, 2002, p. 53). In other words, there were no incentives for the residents of the area and concurrently the suburb became quickly populated. The first public building was opened in Kontula was Kontula’s shopping centre in 1967 which was Finland’s biggest at that time (Kodit.io, 2018). Kontula’s number of residents doubled between the years 1966 and 1967. During the 1970’s Kontula had over 21 000 residents (Kokkonen, 2002, p. 68).

During the 1970s a variety of organizations were founded in Kontula as well as the library and the youth house (Kokkonen, 2014). Kontula got its own metro station in 1986 (Karumo, 2002) and a year later Kontula’s church was opened. Kontula became peaceful suburb for a while till the economic recession hit Finland in the 1990s. The unemployment rate jumped from two per cent to over twenty-four per cent which was over five per cent higher than Helsinki’s average unemployment rate at that time (Kokkonen, 2002 p. 165).

### 3.2 The stigma of the East-Helsinki and Suburbs

Overall East-Helsinki is perceived as more restless in comparison to West-Helsinki. Eastern Helsinki is widely associated with a high level of unemployment, less educated residents, a high number of immigrants and ethnic minorities, large amount of social housing, poorer households and infrastructures and social and economic challenges (Galanakis, 2008, p. 185) (Hyötyläinen, 2013, p. 82). Moreover, suburbs generally have a significant number of residents that could be considered socioeconomically working-class with lower wages and educational level. Hence, they are most likely to be in a vulnerable situation during economic instabilities. This affects the whole neighbourhood negatively creating social issues as well as the perception of outsiders. When a neighbourhood has low desirability, it affects the prices of the apartments. If the prices are low, it is difficult to get investments to the neighbourhood which leads to the physical appearance of the area to crumble (Kuukasjärvi, 2013). Furthermore, the suburbs’ nation-wide have been suffering from stigmatization. Suburbs that are built between 1960-1970 are more likely to be associated with restlessness than other parts of the city (Eloranta, 2016).

The stigma of Eastern Helsinki is a well-known notion among Helsinki's denizens that is greatly represented in social media. However, it has not been a sought-after topic for research and there is only a couple of studies available about this matter. Problems with the neighbourhood reputation occur especially when the residents are seen as "trapped" in their living area (Kuukasjärvi, 2013). Malmberg (2019), argued that every third Finn experiences being trapped in one's own suburb.

Socioeconomic characteristics, physical environment and history are main factors that affect the reputation a neighbourhood has. The prevalent form of accommodation in a neighbourhood affects its reputation (social housing vs. owned apartments, large family apartments vs. studios, etc.). Also, physical appearance in a form of trashes, graffiti and broken windows and tightly constructed neighbourhood with tall blocks of flats are often considered to be more unattractive. These above-mentioned characteristics give easily signals for outsiders that inhabitants of the neighbourhood do not care about the area and can be associated with a certain kind of lifestyle. Areas that have a high immigrant population are commonly associated with poverty and poor quality of schools. However, these associations have often greater impact to the reputation than immigrants themselves. People between ages 30 to 65 are more aware of the reputation their neighbourhood has (Kuukasjärvi, 2013). Hence, areas with stigma may, in general, have less working-age population compared to other areas.

### 3.3 Kontula's reputation

Kontula's reputation has been controversial since the first time it has faced social issues. It became a critical example of suburbs and what has gone wrong in them. Especially the shopping centre area has been heavily criticized in the media. During the 1970's Helsingin Sanomat reported that Kontula was "unnatural, unperfect and risk community". Due to the social issues and stigmatization, Kontula's number of residents dropped after it had reached its peak. During the 1970s mainly all news from Kontula covered in media were negative. During the 1990s, more tension was forming into Kontula due to the high number of immigrants moving in. Attitudes towards immigrants were divided between native Finnish who lived inside the area and furthermore, the immigration wave was experienced as a surprise. In 1997, Kontula became labelled as racist neighbourhood area when members of radical subculture or so-called skinheads attacked Somalis on a football field in Kontula. (Kokkonen, 2002, pp. 115-124 & pp. 167-170.)

### 3.3.1 Kontula's shopping centre

Kontula's shopping centre is often viewed as the greatest challenge of the area. Many citizens of Kontula experienced that opening of Alko (Finnish liquor store) in 1971 launched the issue in the neighbourhood. Some residents tried to oppose the opening of Alko or at least that it would be located somewhere else than inside the shopping centre. However, Alko was opened and customer numbers were high. Many perceived that it brought problems along to the area and the shopping centre was perceived as unpleasant due to the presence of drunk people. Residents started to experience that their neighbourhood had become restless, and especially the shopping centre area. Some citizens had been robbed around the shopping centre area which created common fear of the site in general. (Kokkonen, 2002 pp. 125-127.)

According to Kokkonen (2002, p. 172), the shopping centre's number of bars worrisome many residents of Kontula. Some of them believed that Kontula would have fewer problems if the bars would be shut down. In the 1990s, substance abusers created fear among the residents as well, since they are perceived as unpredictable. Nevertheless, in 1995 problems around the shopping centre were attempted to be decreased with constructional solutions such as security cameras, renovation of the playground and opening one bar behind the shopping centre. Today besides bars, Kontula's shopping centre has many immigrant-owned restaurants and shops (Lindroos, n/a).

### 3.4 Kontula today

After the year 2010 population in Kontula started to increase after years of decreasing. Today Kontula has 14 000 residents and it is one of the most diverse residential areas in Finland. 25 per cent of the population speaks another language than Finnish or Swedish as their native tongue and nearly 25 per cent of its population are elderly (Kokkonen, 2014). Also, according to Aluesarjat.fi (2019) over 1000 families with children are living in Kontula and over 3000 residents who are under 19 years old.

Rasikangas (2018) stated that Kontula is one of four underprivileged neighbourhoods in the Helsinki area. Aluesarjat.fi statistics support this claim by showing that 21,4 per cent of the working-age population is currently unemployed in Kontula. Also, from Kontula's

residents, 20 per cent live in rental apartments and over 35 per cent are living in form of social housing (2019) and the average wage of Kontula's residents is 22 954 euros which is over 12 000 less than the average wage in Helsinki (alueasarjat.fi, 2018).

### 3.5 Target group and working life partner

The research's target group are the inhabitants of Kontula with various socio-economic background: unemployed, employed, student, immigrant, refugee, families with kids, etc. The goal is to understand how differently they are experiencing a place, if they have place attachment, how they interact with each other, and how to develop interaction through the urban spaces.

The working life partner of our study is the Kontula's library. Founded in 1975, the Kontula library, besides providing basic library services, organizes a wide range of activities for different social groups. Weekly meeting for elderly, group for parents with infants and small children, homework club for the pupils, Finnish language club for the immigrants, etc. The Kontula library is actively participating in the area's everyday life by planning, organizing and implementing different projects in order to improve the public environment and wellbeing in Kontula. Hence, our study may help the library to get a wider picture of Kontula's residents with different backgrounds and their relationship with the area and facilities in general.

## 4 Aims of the Thesis

The goal is to understand how differently Kontula's residents are experiencing a place, if they have place attachment, how they interact with each other, and how to develop interaction through the urban spaces.

The place attachment, also known as an emotional bond between people and places, has become weaker and flimsier due to the growth of the processes such as globalization, migration and mobility, and urbanization around the globe.

The first aim of our study is to find out whether Kontula's residents have place attachment to their area of residence. The low level or the absence of place attachment affects negatively the overall concernment of and commitment to one's neighbourhood, as well as the area's atmosphere in general. Kontula has quite a negative identity as a residential area, which can be interpreted as a potential attribute of a low level of place attachment among the inhabitants. Another verge of this question is to find out how level of the place attachment differs among the residents with various socioeconomic background – the length of residing in Kontula, the age and sex of a resident, the economic situation, the type of dwelling, the ethnical background, etc. – all of these factors can contribute to a differentiations in place attachment levels. Place attachment is based on social features, physical features or a mix of both. For some people, social relationships within the residential area might be the crucial contributor to the place attachment level, whereas for some physical environments are more important.

The second question of our study is to find out how differently Kontula's residents experiencing places. As it was mentioned before, Kontula is an area with a large amount of social housing, as well as a high number of immigrants among the residents. Social mixing may result in some complications, which can be seen in the spatial level of the city as well. When some of the residents can appreciate and utilise the common urban spaces of the area, others may be constrained by the public spaces due to experiencing injustice, discrimination, alienation, etc. Another clause of this question is to explore how one defines a place. An individual interpretation and understanding of place in "place attachment" concept can differ enormously. For some, it may be one's own house or a home street, for other a certain part of Kontula or the whole area of Kontula. Defining borders of places among different people helps to recognize different patterns of urban spaces use, as well as physical spaces that are avoided or feared, and, therefore, potentially may be improved. On the other hand, places defined by different inhabitants of Kontula may intersect with each other – those common spots can be used to improve the physical environment so that urban common space will be more inviting for bringing people together.

The last question of our study is to find out what role the built environment plays in place attachment level in Kontula, and how it affects interaction among the residents. Kontula is known for a low-quality housing and overall physical environment of the area, that can potentially diminish place attachment level among Kontula's citizens. Do urban spaces in Kontula provide an opportunity for socialisation among habitants or, on the contrary,

create constraints? The answer to this question can be acquired by exploring how much time one spends outside, where communication and socialization take place, as well as by observing how urban common space is used among the resident of Kontula.

## **5 Methodology applied in the research**

### **5.1 Study design and data collection methods**

We have chosen the qualitative research design as the most suitable for our purposes. Qualitative research allows to understand and interpret social interactions and phenomena. By applying qualitative research, it is possible to “give the voice” for those who are involved, to describe situations from the perspective of people.

The process of the research will be divided into two methods. Firstly, we will apply an observational method, in particular, environmental psychology method – behaviour mapping analysis. The analysis is made in order to understand relations between residents and the urban spaces, and it is built on observing the behaviour of individuals in a certain space, during a certain time. While observing it is important to pay attention to space, time, actors and events. Observation will allow to directly see what people do, rather than relying on what they say. Furthermore, the observation method will allow evaluating place usability, by witnessing how many people and for what amount of time are utilizing a place.

Secondly, we will apply the interview method. We plan to interview around ten residents of Kontula with different socio-economic backgrounds, to find out if there any differences in levels of place attachments, as well as in patterns of place usability. We will use open-ended questions, allowing the participants to take a lead and elaborate as much as they find it necessary. After an interview we would apply also mapping technique, asking a participant to mark on the map of Kontula his/her favourite place(s), place(s) he/she uses the most, and place(s) where he/she finds the most undesirable, unattractive and unsafe. Then, we would compare all the answers for possible differences and similarities.

### **5.2 Data analysis method**

For the analysis of the qualitative data gathered through both observations and interviews, the method of thematic coding analysis was chosen. Thematic coding analysis can be understood as a process of breaking up the data into smaller parts, labelling the chunks of the data with the codes that represent some same theoretical or descriptive ideas, and, finally reorganize and assemble codes into themes (Robson and McCartan, 2016). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), there are six steps of the thematic coding analysis, which are: familiarizing oneself with the data, assigning preliminary codes to the data in order to describe the content, searching for patterns or themes in the codes across the different interviews or observations' data, reviewing possible themes, identifying and giving names to themes and producing a final report. Thematic coding analysis implies a constant comparison of the data, thus, repeated reading of the transcribed interviews and fieldnotes took part.

Below, an example of thematic code analysis applied during our study data analysing process (Table 1) is presented. During the coding process, firstly labelling the relevant words, sentences and phrases took part – in other words, assigning the initial codes. The relevancy was manifested by the repetition of the same word/phrase in several places, by the statement of an interviewee as a very important matter, by reminding of a theoretical concept, etc. After the codes were assigned, the most relevant ones were chosen and put together and grouped into several categories. The next step was to understand how categories are linked to each other and label them respectively. The labels of the categories represent the themes of the data analysis.



Table 1. An example of thematic coding analysis

Theme	Category	Initial codes
Social environment	Foreigners, immigrants	<p>“It does not bother me at all, but I just read that in Kontula there are 36% of the population of <b>foreign decent</b> and they speak <b>different language</b> than Finnish, and it is quite a lot – it is one third of Kontula’s population. I am not a racist. Sometimes I am a bit confused, when I hear <b>Russian</b> all the time or something else.”</p> <p>“They see <b>immigrants</b> as a problem, but it is actually Finnish people who are rude and cause troubles”</p>
	Substance abusers	<p>“When I need to use the shops, me and my husband we always go by car, so that we can go to underground parking – we can avoid walking through the shopping mall path filled with <b>drunks and addicts</b>, it’s unsafe”.</p> <p>“I have seen quarrel, shouting, people on the floor, <b>people out of order, too much drunk</b>...You see people on the ground, people quarrelling with each other, shouting, sitting on the floor, and then <b>drinking like stationed there</b>. So, when you go by <b>these people</b>, they always come with something to you.”</p>

## 6 Results

### 6.1 Gathering the data

Concerning the observation method, all in all, we spent around 30 hours observing Kontula's everyday life. Observations were unstructured and non-participant, meaning that limited interaction with the people we observed took place. The non-participant observation allowed to access tacit knowledge of subjects without possibly affecting the models of behaviour by the researcher's presence. By changing the locations (different parts of Kontula), time of the day (morning, day or evening), day of the week (working day or weekend) and seasons (from early spring to the middle of summer), we were aiming at getting the whole picture with potential differences and similarities in peoples' behaviour and patterns of places usability. Each observation was recorded by taking field notes and photos. All the results of the analysis will be introduced below.

Regarding the interview method, we have conducted altogether 10 interviews using the semi-structured interview technique with both close-ended and open-ended questions. Among them, there were two group interviews with three and two participants respectively. Interviewees represented a wide range of different socio-economic backgrounds – teenagers, families with kids, students, employed and unemployed people, elderly, foreigners and people with substance abuse challenge(s). Many interviewees had several overlapping background's characteristics – e.g. employed foreigner family man or elderly man with a drug habit. Interviewees were approached on the streets, all the partakers were chosen randomly, and their participation was voluntary. At the beginning of each interview, the purpose of the research was introduced to a participant. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The interviews were conducted in both Finnish and English and later on translated into English.

When it comes to the mapping technique, each of the interviewees was asked to mark down on a map of Kontula his/her favourite, the least favourite places and one's own subjectively perceived area of Kontula ("own Kontula"). All the participants agreed to do it, thus, the quantity of maps is equal to the numbers of conducted interviews. Each map was signed with the information about a participant's sex and age, to keep order and analyse the results of the maps later on.

## 6.2 Analysis

Below the analysis of qualitative data gathered through both observations and conducted interviews is introduced. Regarding the observations' data - notes and pictures were analysed, whereas data gathered through interviews was analysed using the transcriptions of each interview. As it was stated in the previous chapter, the thematic coding analysis was applied, thus, themes or patterns of meaning within the data were assembled and constructed. To make the analysis more comprehensible and consistent, the observations and the interviews will be analysed separately.

### 6.2.1 Observations' results

After applying thematic coding analysis to qualitative data gathered through the observations, two main themes were generated – physical environment and social environment. The results of the analysis of each theme will be represented in detail below. The written part of the analysis will be accompanied by photos taken during the observations in order to better demonstrate the findings.

- Physical environment

The theme of physical environment concerns the observations of the built environment and common physical spaces in Kontula. The main focus was on the general condition of the physical environment and its' maintenance, as well as its' abundance and variety.

The shopping mall area. The two-floor construction of the shopping mall is maze-like or cage-like (Figure 1). The physical structure of it gives the experience of being trapped. The upper floor of the shopping mall is mostly unused. The lack of benches is clearly visible. In the absence of places to sit, the flower beds were used by people (Figure 2). The shopping mall consists of many international shops and other small enterprises, as well as grocery stores from every major chain (K-market, Lidl, S-market). The metro station is situated right next to the shopping mall with one of the metro exits coming straight to the shopping mall itself. There was no significant difference between the number of people using the metro during the morning, day or evening time, which can indicate the low number of employed people or people who have work outside of Kontula. There is a large number of bars and night clubs situated in the shopping mall area. Most of them open their doors at 9 a.m. and have customers at that time as well as during the whole

day and evening. Apart from the shops and bars, the shopping mall area has some social services organizations for different target groups as well as children playground situated on its territory (Figure 3). All in all, the shopping mall area's general condition leaves more to be desired – untidy, rusty, unmaintained and in need of renovation and modernization.



Figure 2. Flower beds are used to seat on

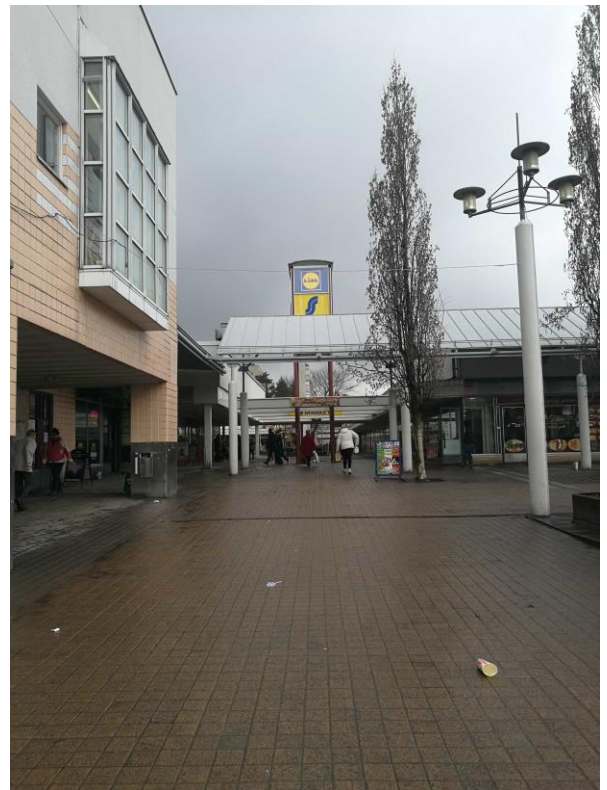


Figure 1. The shopping mall area



Figure 3. The children playground

Public library. Well maintained, inside and outside. There are quite many foreigners, families with kids and elderly among the customers. During the summertime, the terrace is organized outside with a couple of tables, which is used widely by the people. The area around the library is covered with large murals and graffiti, which makes it more attractive visually (Figure 4, Figure 5).



Figure 4. The Kontula's library

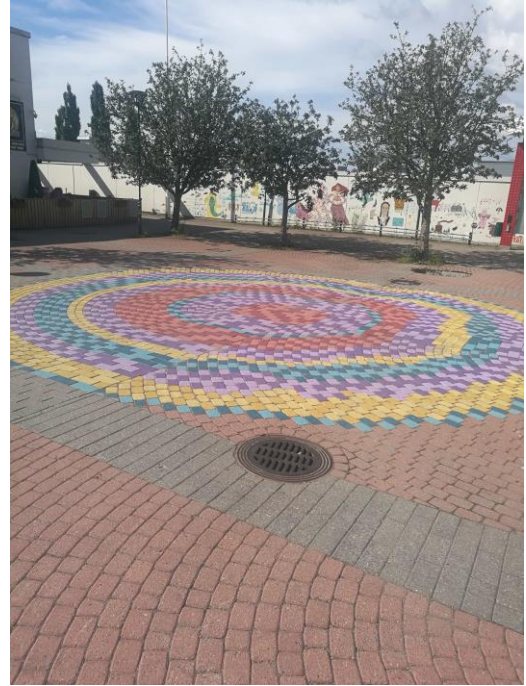


Figure 5. Area around the library

Residential area. There is a large number of old houses built of concrete in Kontula, with the majority of them looking depressing and unattractive (Figure 6). However, many of the buildings are tidy and taken care of. Fairly many inner yards were in a good condition due to residents' interest of upkeeping the common yards. This sort of behaviour might indicate to a high level of place attachment and presence of community feeling. During the observations, it has been noticed that some buildings had signboards for achievements, such as "the best yard" or "best plumbing renovation" (Figure 7).



Figure 6. A concrete building in Kontula



Figure 7. Diploma for the best plumbing renovation



Rental apartment area (SATO) had the most unclean area with the visible problem of trash disposal presented – bags full of trash are thrown straight to the backyard of the buildings (Figure 8). Some of the new houses that are built next to the old ones (SATO housing) had their inner yards fenced by both a physical fence and a plant fence – can be an indicator of protecting/isolating oneself from other neighbours (Figure 9).



Figure 8. Trash disposal at a SATO's building



Figure 9. Double fence next to a SATO's building

All over the Kontula district both Nazi and anti-Nazi signs occur, often applied next to each other (Figure 10, Figure 11). This might indicate the presence of different opposed subcultures in Kontula.



Figure 20. Signs around Kontula



Figure 11. Signs around Kontula

With the presence of upcoming or ongoing renovations in Kontula, numerous signs with detailed schemes of plans are spread around Kontula. However, often the schemes are too comprehensive for an ordinary resident to understand. On top of one sign, someone left a graffiti, which can be interpreted as a protest. (Figure 12)



Figure 12. Renovation plan scheme with graffiti on it

Kontula has many parks and green areas around the district. However, the absence of benches is noticeable, which might be an obstacle for a person to fully enjoy one's time in a park or to socialize with other people. In the places where benches are present, they are either one-seated or situated far away from each other (Figure 13, Figure 14). One-seated benches is an example of hostile architecture that might be done on purpose to make it impossible to sleep on the bench. Thus, it can be comprehended as a way to drive away the drug abusers or homeless people. The benches that are situated far away from each other and not facing one another, give away the possibility for people to engage with each other, to socialize and interact.





Figure 13. One-seated bench



Figure 14. Benches situated far away from each other

- Social environment

The theme of social environment concerns the observation of people, their behaviour and interaction, as well as how they use urban common spaces. During the observation, the diversity of residents of Kontula stood out. Different people with various ethnic backgrounds were spotted on the streets of Kontula. The presence of foreigners might be also linked to the shops' signboards with announcements or ads in several languages (Figure 15). In addition, many different languages were spoken between people in common spaces apart from Finnish. The high percentage of elderly and families with kids among the residents was evident. The very little number of young adults present in Kontula was observed. Can be a sign of unpopularity of the Kontula district among young adults.





Figure 15. A shop's signboard with several different languages

The cafeteria situated in the middle of the shopping mall, next to K-market is full of people every morning at 8:30 a.m. (Figure 16). Mainly middle-aged and elderly men, talking Finnish. Using this public space to socialize, some of them were waiting for others to join and kept some seats for them. Many were filling Lotto cards (Figure 17). Slot machines were also in active use, mainly by elderly women. After a couple of hours, the cafeteria is empty. There is a chance that they were waiting for bars to open.



Figure 17. Lotto cards desk at the cafeteria



Figure 16. Cafeteria in the morning

Bars were usually half full already in the morning. Some of the people were there alone, just reading newspapers or watching TV, which can possibly indicate a desire to be in a company of people, to use a bar as a common space to socialize. The majority of the clients in the bars were either elderly or people with substance abuse problems.

The shopping mall area seemed busy with people always passing by but not stopping there to spend their time. The only social group that was always present regardless of the time of the day was people with substance abuse issues. They were also using the children playground for drinking and socializing (Figure 18). The rules that were required in the shopping centre area such as no drinking, no dogs allowed or no cycling, were ignored by the people as well as by the guards.



Figure 18. Children playground is used by substance abusers

Apart from two guards that are constantly present at the shopping mall area, police cars were passing and checking the situation a couple of times during the day (Figure 19, Figure 20). This can indicate the unsafeness or unrestlessness of the area.



Figure 19. Police guarding the shopping mall area



Figure 20. Police car at the shopping mall area

The metro entrance is widely used by drug sellers. Also, young women who were offering sex were spotted during the observations. This directly shows that the area is experiencing the range of social challenges and might be seen as unsafe or unattractive by other residents of Kontula.

Moving further away from the shopping mall centre, many teenagers spend their time at the youth club and library, that have an inner yard with a basketball ring in it (Figure 21). The library is also used by the elderly and families with kids, providing some events and a wide range of equipment.





Figure 21. Teenagers' favourite spot to spend time - library's and youth house's yard

At residential areas people were spending time by taking care of the inner yards of the buildings, spending time with kids at children playgrounds and numerous parks. People seem to enjoy the plenty of green areas that Kontula possesses.

All in all, the shopping mall area seems restless and avoided by the majority of the social groups. The lack of available common urban spaces is visible, especially outdoors, where people can engage with each other and socialize. There are evident social challenges in the area, such as substance abuse, high rent of unemployment, as well as assimilation of immigrants. Residential areas seem peaceful, quiet and clean. However, some of the social housings experience problems with trash disposal. Even though Kontula has many old concrete buildings, only some of them are in a bad shape and unmaintained by the residents. The area has a rather large number of bars, where many people spend their time. The reason for that might be the absence of other available options in Kontula's built environment, that could provide the basis for meeting and socialization.

## 6.2.2 Interviews' results

After applying thematic coding analysis to qualitative data gathered through the conducted interviews, three main themes were generated – physical environment, social environment and place attachment. The results of the analysis of each theme will be represented in detail below. The written part of the analysis will be accompanied by direct quotations from the interviews in order to better demonstrate the findings.

### 1. Physical environment:

- The shopping mall area

The shopping mall area came up in every interview. Almost all the interviewees had a negative opinion about the area. Some of the negative sides that were mentioned were the enormous number of bars and the contingent that is attracted by the abundance of bars. Several of the interviewees were concerned about the safety in the shopping mall area. The location of the needle exchange point in the middle of the shopping centre was also criticized. Some participants pointed out the outdated condition of the shopping mall building and the need for some renovations. The concerns about shops disappearing and taken over by the bars were also mentioned. Many of the interviewees stated that they visit shopping mall centre only to do the necessary shopping and never hang out there otherwise.

It just looks old, depressing, unpleasant. It should be made more beautiful (Woman, 23 years old student applicant, 2019).

When you arrive at Kontula and come out of the metro to the shopping mall it feels like you came to the ghetto (Woman, 27 years old student, 2019).

Oh, it was so nice in the past to have all the shop you needed here, butcher, fabrics (Woman, 72 years old pensioner, 2019).

It used to have also "Class Ohlson" and "Optics" or don't you remember? (Woman, 22 years old student applicant, interview 2019).

- Available services

A wide range of available services in Kontula was mentioned many times during the interviews. The participants were pleased with the abundance of facilities, such as

schools, hospital, daycare, swimming hall, library, youth house, pharmacies, shops and cafes, etc. All the services are located close to each other, which was also valued by the interviewees. Another important factor that was stated many times was the good public transportation connections – metro and busses.

Anything you need – you find it here (Man, 52 years old employed, interview 2019).

Here is pharmacy, here are two shops, metro is very close, you can get here by bus...there is bus station (Boy, 15 years old pupil, interview 2019).

Everything is close here, friends and shops are close, metro connection and so on (Man 34 years old, unemployed, interview 2019).

- Nature

Kontula has a lot of nature sides, green areas and parks, which is perceived positively by the residents. Almost all the interviewees spend their spare time at the aforementioned areas. Especially the park in Kivikko district was mentioned many times. Some of the participants raised concerns about green areas being demolished in order to build more apartments.

It is wonderful when you wake up and hear how birds are singing (Woman, 72 years old, pensioner, interview 2019).

My favourite places in Kontula are probably those forest trails, where I can be at peace, I also have pets, so they are quite nice (Woman, 52 years old, employed, interview 2019).

I think there is a lot of nature here, it is beautiful.... I like this neighbourhood, actually, the nature is quite beautiful (Man 34 years old, unemployed, interview 2019).

- East-Centre (Itä-Keskus)

East-Centre (Itä-Keskus) area is used widely by almost all of the interviewees. The reason for that is the shortage of services in Kontula and a better place to spend time with friends.

You know, it's just nicer to go to Itä-Keskus than to ask them to come here, to Kontula (Woman, 27 years old student, interview 2019).

I spend time every now and then at Itä-Keskus, but only when I need to go buy something, I do not go there otherwise (Boy, 15 years old pupil, interview 2019).

- Unawareness of upcoming changes

Almost all of the interviewees were not aware of upcoming changes in the physical surroundings of Kontula. Neither they had any opinion about them or seemed to be interested. However, all of them saw the upcoming changes positively, and only one showed some scepticism.

They are trying to improve this area all the time but looks like it does not bring any results (Woman, 72 years old pensioner, interview 2019).

- *Do you have any opinion about upcoming changes in Kontula?*
- It does not bother me that way... (Man, 69 years old pensioner, interview 2019).
- *Do you have any opinion about upcoming changes in Kontula?*
- Well not really, but they are probably quite functional changes (Woman, 52 years old employed, interview 2019).

- Wishes for the future

On the question about how they would improve Kontula, almost everyone answered about the closing bars down. Some wished for more beautiful and modern houses around, as well as the surrounding physical environment. A participant with family noted that there is a need for an update of children playgrounds, as well as for creating new common spaces for kids around the area.

Well probably should be a little fewer of those bars, so that elderly, youngsters and family with kids could feel more safer here (Woman, 52 years old employed, interview 2019).

There could be less bars at the shopping mall area, they have an impact on people, people become alcoholics. If there was smaller number of bars, it would be better (Man, 34 years old unemployed, interview 2019).

Well if they could close couple of those bars, there are too many bars for this small resident area (Boy, 15 years old pupil, interview 2019).

The thing that is much more important to be updated. Those parks for children, so they are quite old. ...So, a little more program for the children and stuff where children might probably spend more time there than spending time at home (Man, 52 years old employed, interview 2019)

## 2. Social environment

- Foreigners as a problem?

The topic of a large and growing number of immigrants was raised during the interviews. Most of the participants saw it in a positive way, commenting that growing diversity among the residents is beneficial for all. However, some interviewees demonstrated concerns and mixed feeling about immigrants moving into Kontula. Points that came up multiple times, were ignorance of trash recycling rules by the immigrants, as well as their short stay in Kontula before moving somewhere else, and as a result disinterest and unconcern towards the Kontula area. Some of the interviewees mentioned the racism and bad attitude towards the immigrants among the general ethnic Finnish population of Kontula. It is worth noting that interviewed foreigners have never experienced discrimination towards them in Kontula.

It does not bother me at all, but I just read that in Kontula there are 36% of the population of foreign origin and they speak different language than Finnish, and it is quite a lot – it is one third of Kontula's population. I am not a racist. Sometimes I am a bit confused, when I hear Russian all the time or something else (Man, 69 years old pensioner, interview 2019).

They see immigrants as a problem, but it is actually Finnish people who are rude and cause troubles (Woman, 27 years old student, interview 2019).

Even though many say that it is terrible... Only yesterday I was having a chat with some ladies that said how awful it is...when before they have had nothing but peace and Finnish people living at the building, now there is a foreigner living at each floor (Man, 69 years old pensioner, interview 2019).

- Sense of community or outcasted by the territorial stigmatization



To the question about what makes one feel like home in one's neighbourhood, many answered that it is social connections they have with other residents of Kontula. Some noted, that it is easier to make friends here since people come and talk to you. Especially the elderly stated that they always spend time together with other seniors, both outdoors and indoor (library, bars). Some were nostalgic about the past, stating that back then they had had tight community, which is disappearing today. Other suggested that there is some sense of community, but it rather attributed to general bad reputation and stigmatization of Kontula. It is worth noting that almost each of the participant, that mentioned community sense, was defining community within the confines of one's living building or block.

Me and my friends we often spend some time at the park over there (Woman, 72 years old pensioner, interview 2019).

It is more like we are all living in this same shit together (Woman, 27 years old student, interview 2019).

- Well, let's say that people who live at the same building they know each other, and at our floor there is many families with kids and elderly people. In my opinion it is nice to know people from here. Not all the names I know, but from the appearance, yes.

- *Here is some kind of community sense?*

- Yes, kind of (Man, 69 years old pensioner, interview 2019).

Well, it is social connections. The best which I live there is the Swedish speaking people, so...We are in a very good contact with people – our neighbours, and I feel quite, quite, pretty much at home there. So, I don't feel that I am a stranger (Man, 52 years old employed, interview 2019).

- Substance abusers

A large number of substance abusers was mentioned by the majority of the interviewees. The substance abusers were seen as the possible reason for Kontula's bad reputation, as well as the cause of unsafety and restlessness in the area. The substance abusers were mostly linked with shopping mall area, where they gather and spend their time. Majority of the participants stated that they do not feel safe using the shopping mall premises because of this. Some stated that more security is required, especially during the evenings. Other told that they have experienced aggressive behaviour towards them from some drunk around the metro station area, as well as heart about cases when physical violence was used. Many saw a large number of drug addicts and drunks and their occupation of shopping mall area by as the biggest problem Kontula faces.

When I need to use the shops, me and my husband we always go by car, so that we can go to underground parking – we can avoid walking through the shopping mall path filled with drunks and addicts, it's unsafe (Woman, 72 years old pensioner, interview 2019).

Sometimes I try to avoid walking on that area. Even when you need to buy something, you can fast buy your stuff and be out (Woman, 52 years old employed, interview 2019).

In case you want to buy stuff and shop, you can go for example, in a day-time. Before noon, a little bit afternoon you can buy your stuff...Trying to avoid that area in the evening. It is not in a sense quite dangerous, but it's better to avoid it, because you never know what happens (Man, 52 years old employed, interview 2019).

I have seen quarrel, shouting, people on the floor, people out of order, too much drunk...You see people on the ground, people quarrelling with each other, shouting, sitting on the floor, and then drinking like stationed there. So, when you go by these people, they always come with something to you (Man, 52 years old employed, interview 2019).

I do not like drunks. This I can say, I do not like drunks (Man, 34 years old unemployed, interview 2019).

- Bad reputation and territorial stigmatization

All of the interviewees were aware of the bad reputation that Kontula holds and saw it as a challenge influencing the whole area. Opinions were divided into two over the Kontula's reputation accuracy. First half stated that bad reputation has no ground and exaggerated by the press. The second half, however, noted that the drug addicts might be the reason for the bad reputation of the area. One of the interviewees expressed the link between the general bad reputation of suburbs (lähiöt) and the negative results it has on Kontula.

It is like a broken phone, someone hear something, assumed that it is true, exaggerated...and then it just goes around (Woman, 23 years old student applicant, interview 2019).

When someone asks me where I am from and I say that I am from Kontula. Then we both have this "eeeeehhh" face expression/feeling (Woman, 27 years old student, interview 2019).

That is true that when I was young, I had this feeling that who even dares to move to Kontula, but it is a bit exaggerated. Well, just like people say about Malmi and other places that awful place, but here we are (Man, 69 years old pensioner, interview 2019).

Well, if you walk here, many will probably think that this is a dangerous place. I have been living here for 13 years and nothing has ever happened to me (Boy, 15 years old pupil, interview 2019).

People have a wrong picture about this place, the reputation is ruined, you know. I have been working all around Helsinki, and when I say Kontula, people get the wrong picture, hear some rumours and get the wrong picture, you know (Man, 34 years old unemployed, interview, 2019).

Well, it might be that it is both. It is true that there are some problems, like at the shopping mall area and we do have those substance abusers (Man 69 years old pensioner, interview 2019).

### 3. Place attachment

The younger the people the bigger place attachment they have towards Kontula. Sense of pride and even protection was present during the interviews with teenagers and young adults. Secondly, there seems to be the connection between the reason of living in Kontula and level of place attachment. Those who have been born in Kontula were more satisfied with the area, than those who moved in Kontula for some reason. The idea of possibly moving away from Kontula was also met differently – first wanted to stay in Kontula in the future, the second did not mind moving somewhere else. Most of the people linked “feeling at home in Kontula” with the social connections they have. About third of the interviewees stated that they would like to move somewhere else.

- *If you needed to move out of Kontula what feelings it would have brought up?*
- I do not know, but probably I would not become sad (Woman, 52 years old employed, interview 2019).
- *If you needed to move out of Kontula what feelings it would have brought up?*
- Definitely not! I want to get out from here. I want to move abroad somewhere where the weather is warm. (Man, 34 years old unemployed, interview 2019).
- *Have you ever considered moving out of Kontula?*
- No, I think this is a good place to live. This place is cheap, and everything is close. This is just a good place to be in. (Boys, 15 years old pupils, interview 2019).

However, place attachment could be seen through the identification of oneself as a *kontulalainen* (a person of Kontula). Two-thirds of interviewees stated that they identify themselves as *kontulalainen*, meaning that Kontula area can be seen as an integral part

of their identity. The rest of interviewees identified themselves as either *helsinkiiläinen* (a person of Helsinki) or a mix of both – *helsinkiiläinen* and *kontulalainen*.

- *Would you identify yourself as a kontulalainen?*
- Yes, absolutely. That is where it all started. 00940! (Women, 23- & 22-years old student applicants, interview 2019)
  
- *Would you identify yourself as a kontulalainen?*
- Yes. Because this is my hoods (Man, 34 years old unemployed, interview 2019).
  
- *Would you identify yourself as a kontulalainen?*
- I was born in Helsinki. Kontula has formed to be home for me during all these years. I do feel as *helsinkiiläinen* as well. But yes, I am *kontulalainen*. A little bit of both I could say. (Man, 69 years old pensioner, interview 2019).

### 6.2.3 Maps analysis

For the map analysis each interviewee was asked to mark down on the map of Kontula one's most favourite and usable places, least favourite and unattractive places and, finally, to draw the borders of one's own subjectively perceived Kontula. All in all, nine maps were created, each of them marked with participant's age and sex. Each map can be found in the Appendix for further studying (Appendix 2.2-10). To make the analysis more consistent and vivid, all the answers from each participant were combined and assembled into three final maps. The first map displays the sum of all marked favourite and most usable places in Kontula. The second map, respectively, demonstrates the output of all unfavourite places in Kontula. Lastly, the third map consists of all the answers about one's own perception of Kontula's borders put together. The bolder lines represent two or more similar answers from different participants concerning the same space. Each map will be presented and analysed below.

Concerning the first map (Figure 22), next favourite places occurred – library, swimming hall and several parks. Most of the participants marked down the green areas of Kontula, such as Kivikko Park, Sledge Park (Kelkkapuisto), Residents' Park (Asukaspuisto), etc. Thought-provoking fact is that Kivikko park is perceived as a part of Kontula's area, even though in reality it is a part of distinct city area. Other favourite places in Kontula according to the participants' answers are the library and the youth house areas. It is the only built common spaces that have been put into favourite places category. It worth noting

that shopping mall area also was marked many times, however, the participants justified their choice by the necessity of using the shopping mall area. Simply going for grocery shopping or using the metro or bus stations, performing the activities that occur every day – as the result shopping mall area is one of the most used common spaces.

In reference to the second map (Figure 23), three out of nine participants stated that there are no dislikeable places in Kontula in their opinion. All the rest of the participants who had dislikeable areas in Kontula marked the same area on the maps – shopping mall area. Noteworthy is the absence of other unlikeable places in Kontula. It can indicate the high level of dissatisfaction and avoidance of the shopping mall area among the residents. The similarity of the answers may signal that unattractiveness level of the shopping mall area is bigger than any other possible places in Kontula. The paradox of the area is that it represents the symbiosis of the most used and the most unlikeable area at once.

When it comes to the third map “My Kontula” (Figure 24), participants marked the borders mostly around one’s building or area one’s using. The joint concentration of different borders is visible at the central part of Kontula. A couple of participants marked the whole map available as one’s subjectively perceived Kontula. Moreover, almost all the interviewees marked shopping mall area to be a part of their own Kontula despite their negative associations with the area. Hence, the most dislikeable area of Kontula is simultaneously part of the common space that has the most potential of being a meeting point for the residents from different socioeconomic backgrounds.



Figure 22. Favourite places in Kontula





Figure 23. Dislikeable areas of Kontula

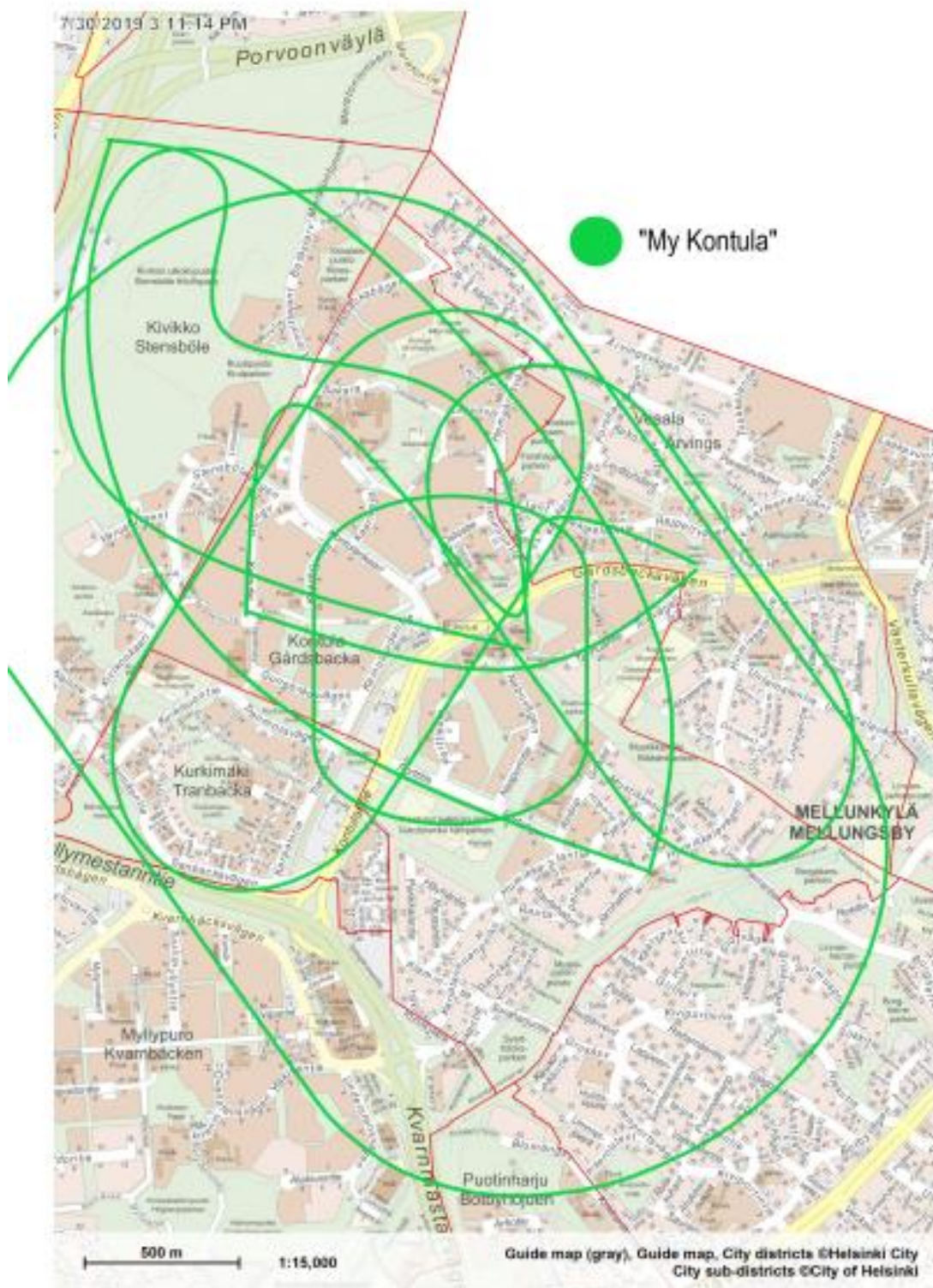


Figure 24. My Kontula



## 7 Conclusions

The goals of the research were to understand what residents of Kontula feel about own neighbourhood, whether they have place attachment and how the level of the place attachment differs depending on socio-economic background. It was significant to find out what role the built environment plays in the everyday life of the residents, how it is used and experienced by the people.

The place attachment seemed to be a complex concept for most of the interviewed. The participants expressed the need to protect and stand against negative claims of one's neighbourhood, however, most were ready to move out from Kontula if there would be a possibility to do so. None of the interviewed abhorred their living area and was concerned more or less about the area in general. This could indicate that all the interviewed did have some level of place attachment since having some concerns of their own neighbourhood. There seems to be a direct relationship between the age of a participant and the level of place attachment. Thus, the younger the person the more satisfied he/she was with the area. Another quality that appears to affect the level of place attachment was the type of residence. Thus, those who own an apartment were more attached to the area than those who are renting one.

The topic of Kontula's negative reputation came up during the research. Most of the participants agreed that it affects negatively the whole area whether it has a basis or not. Youth tends to be more accepting Kontula's controversial reputation, moreover, the sense of pride was present. Kontula's negative reputation is seen as part of the area's identity and cherished by teenagers. The rest of the participants noted that substance abusers might be the reason for this reputation, however, it is exaggerated.

One of the main findings of the research was how the physical environment affects an individual's perception of the social environment and may limit the use of certain spaces in the neighbourhood. Shopping centre manifests how the physical environment of the area affects the social atmosphere and use of common spaces. Dull and poorly maintained shopping centre was seen as the most dislikeable area of the district and perceived as Kontula's dependent reason for the poor reputation of the area besides substance abusers who spent time there in a daily basis. The shopping centre has a relatively high number of social services located in there besides the excessive number of bars. This may be correlating with the social issues the area has as well as the general

negative attitude towards the shopping centre. Moreover, the physical environment of the area was uninviting, and combination of the restlessness and physical look of the area may create schemes that affect the perception of the whole Kontula and enhance the territorial stigma of the district. Additionally, as it was discovered during the interviews and maps' analysis, the shopping mall area is one of the most used places among the residents, however, it is also the most avoided and feared one. Thus, this place has great potential to become a common city space, where residents can socialize and spend time together. Nevertheless, now it is used widely only by one group – substance abusers and shunned by the others.

As it follows from the data analysis the lack of built common city places is visible in Kontula. The library, youth house and swimming hall were the only places stated by the participants. The number of green natural areas in Kontula impresses, however, the ability to spend one's spare time when the weather is bad is limited. It might be the reason why there are so many bars with a large number of clients regardless of the daytime in Kontula. The opening of the new common city spaces could ease this problem, as well as to provide access and opportunities to all groups of society to meet each other on daily basis, to communicate, to see the composition of society and, thus, to improve social sustainability.

The community sense – is there any? Sense of community was presented inside own homogeneous community (block of flats, youth, elderly groups etc.) or sense of being a part of outcasted by territorial stigmatization. The presence of rather suspicious attitudes towards other subcommunities/socioeconomic backgrounds inside the wider community (Kontula) was spotted, such as towards substance abusers and immigrants (throwing trash everywhere or ruining the reputation of the whole area with their behaviour in shopping mall area)

In the pattern of how differently Kontula's residents experiencing and using places, socio-economic differences between the residents do not play a big role. Almost all the residents have similar opinions on what could be improved and that the reputation is worse than the place itself. Elderly in general more aware and concerned about physical attributes of the streets such as trash, etc. Green areas were more popular between middle-aged and elderly residents, with half of the interviewed considering Kivikko's park being a part of Kontula. Youth preferred library and youth house. Elderly were more aware of upcoming changes in the area such as skate park and new buildings (also noticed more

changes in the social environment). Moreover, seniors were more alarmed about the shopping centre area (going there by car or not entering certain bars). Also, the elderly were the only ones who talked about their housing areas more in details and in sense of proudness. However, teenagers spend the least time outside of Kontula.

Concerning the question of how the built environment affects the interaction between the residents, it may be concluded that in this case the built environment seems to divide the residents. Shopping mall that was used by all the interviewed creates a sense of restlessness with its maze-like structure and lack of enhancement/maintaining and places to sit down. At the same time, bars seemed to be a common meeting point for people. The playground was in other use than for families and was poorly maintained. Community services create meeting points for people (youth house, library's elderly meeting, Symppis, Lähiöasema etc.) but at the same time, groups are homogenous and may create more division between the residents.

Our working life partner, Kontula's library, has been actively participating in a revitalization of the neighbourhood. Moreover, the local library gaining knowledge about residents and their perspectives of the area is valuable. Information could be used for instance upcoming projects for the area or further local studies of the topic. During the interviews, the library was only spoked in a positive light and many interviewees mentioned it as their favourite place in Kontula. Clearly, Kontula's library is a meaningful space for the locals and brings possibilities to meet others and spend time socializing. Residents of Kontula seemed to be aware of how others perceive their neighbourhood and about its reputation as well as physical and social issues of the area. Kontula's library could advocate against the territorial stigma of the area and bring more awareness of the better qualities of the district. Hopefully, this thesis will bring forward discussions about how to revitalize some areas of the neighbourhood as well as focus on the more positive sides of the area. The library could organize an event where locals' ideas would be heard concerning the physical environment of the shopping centre area and how it could be improved aesthetically and service-wise to the needs of all residents. Ideas could be brought forward to Helsinki city and some ideas could be implemented by locals and in collaboration with different services of the area similarly to the murals were made in a past as a collaboration between the locals and the services of the area.

## 8 Discussion

### 8.1 Ethical considerations

While conducting qualitative research on a social topic, ethical guidelines must be followed. Some of the major ethical consideration one should bear in mind during the entire research process are voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity as well as data protection.

During our research, we attempted and succeeded in following the aforementioned ethical guidelines. All the interviewees participated on voluntary basis with granting the informed consent. In other words, all the participants understood what was being asked of them, were adequately informed about the research's purposes and process and decided to take part in it.

The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were kept by not revealing their identities during the data collection, data analysis and research publication processes. The only pieces of information that were asked during the interviews and used during the reporting of data was the age and sex of the participants. However, all the participants were notified about the usage of some personal information and allowed to do it. Doing so enabled the data analysis to be more consistent and clearer.

The data collection process was conducted by taking notes and photos during the observation and recording the conversations during the interviews. The data was transcribed using computer software. All the data during the analysis process was kept in encrypted devices and protected with the password.

### 8.2 Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability

In order to evaluate the quality of quantitative research, validity and reliability should be assessed. However, there is a great difference between quantitative and qualitative research. While quantitative research is used to measure the problem by generating numerical data, qualitative research seeks to understand the social phenomena in the real-world setting. While in quantitative research the tools are used to collect data, in qualitative research the researcher is the data gathering instrument. Qualitative research is

based on subjective and contextual data interpreted by the researcher. Therefore, a quality of a qualitative research is assessed by slightly different terms. Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, these four aspects should be considered and applied during the research's process.

In order to provide data validity, the method of triangulation was applied. Triangulation means applying several different research methods while studying the same phenomenon. Thus, by using the observational method and conducting interviews, the data validity was enhanced.

### 8.3 Limitations of the study

It is important to acknowledge a study's limitations since they might have affected the gathered data as well as the acquired results of the research.

The number of interviewees was quite moderate. While we have got rich results and meaningful discussion, it still can display only a small part of the Kontula's residents. The method of picking the interviewees randomly from the street might have had an effect on the gathered data. Since subconsciously we were choosing people, sometimes assuming that certain individuals belong in certain socio-economic groups, or more willing to take a part in the research.

The probability of an interviewee not understanding the question correctly or at all is also a possible limitation of the study. Moreover, the task with the mapping down favourite and unfavourite part of the Kontula and one's Kontula's borders seemed quite challenging for some participants.

Another limitation that could have affected the results is the time of the year. The research was conducted during the spring and summer, that created different characteristics of the outdoors, as well as may affect the behaviour of the people.

Like in every qualitative research the self-reported data was gathered and used. In other words, the data that was gathered is limited by the fact that it rarely can be independently verified. The participants' answers might have been biased, for example, exaggeration, lying, selective memory, telescoping, attribution could have taken place.

#### 8.4 Further research

Taking into consideration the aforementioned limitations of the study, as well as a qualitative type of conducted research the suggestions for further research should be drawn. It is wise to apply quantitative research in combination with already conducted qualitative one. This will allow gathering data from larger-scale sample sets, which will display a bigger part of Kontula's residents. Quantitative research will bring a more comprehensive understanding of the problem. In addition, is it probable that the result of the quantitative research might produce laws of a phenomenon that can be generalized into similar settings. Therefore, the relation and link between physical and social environment could be studied and applied ubiquitously.

Another suggestion for future research is the topic of territorial stigmatization of Kontula district. There is a noticeable lack of previous studies done on this subject. However, during our research territorial stigmatization was brought up almost in each interview. The matter has a great effect on Kontula's reputation, as well as on its residents. Therefore, further research on this topic is needed.

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## Interview questions

1. Why do you live in Kontula? (own flat, renting, social housing, like lähiö, etc.)
2. How long have you been living in Kontula?

### Habits in using the urban space

3. How do you like it here?
4. Do you spend a lot of time outside in Kontula?
5. Do you spend a lot of time outside somewhere else than Kontula?

### Place attachment

6. Do you feel that you belong here?
7. Can you call Kontula your home? - If yes, why? If not, why?
8. What are your favourite places in Kontula?
9. What are the places you use the most in Kontula?
10. If you had to leave/move out of Kontula, would you be unhappy/feel sorry?
11. What things make you feel like home in your neighbourhood? And is there something that makes you feel alienated from your own neighbourhood, why?
12. Would you identify yourself as a Kontulalainen?

### Physical environment

13. What are the places that you feel most unattractive, unsafe, etc.?
14. What you do not like about Kontula? What do you like about Kontula?
15. Would you like to improve Kontula somehow? (physical environments, etc.)

### Territorial stigmatization and changes of the neighbourhood

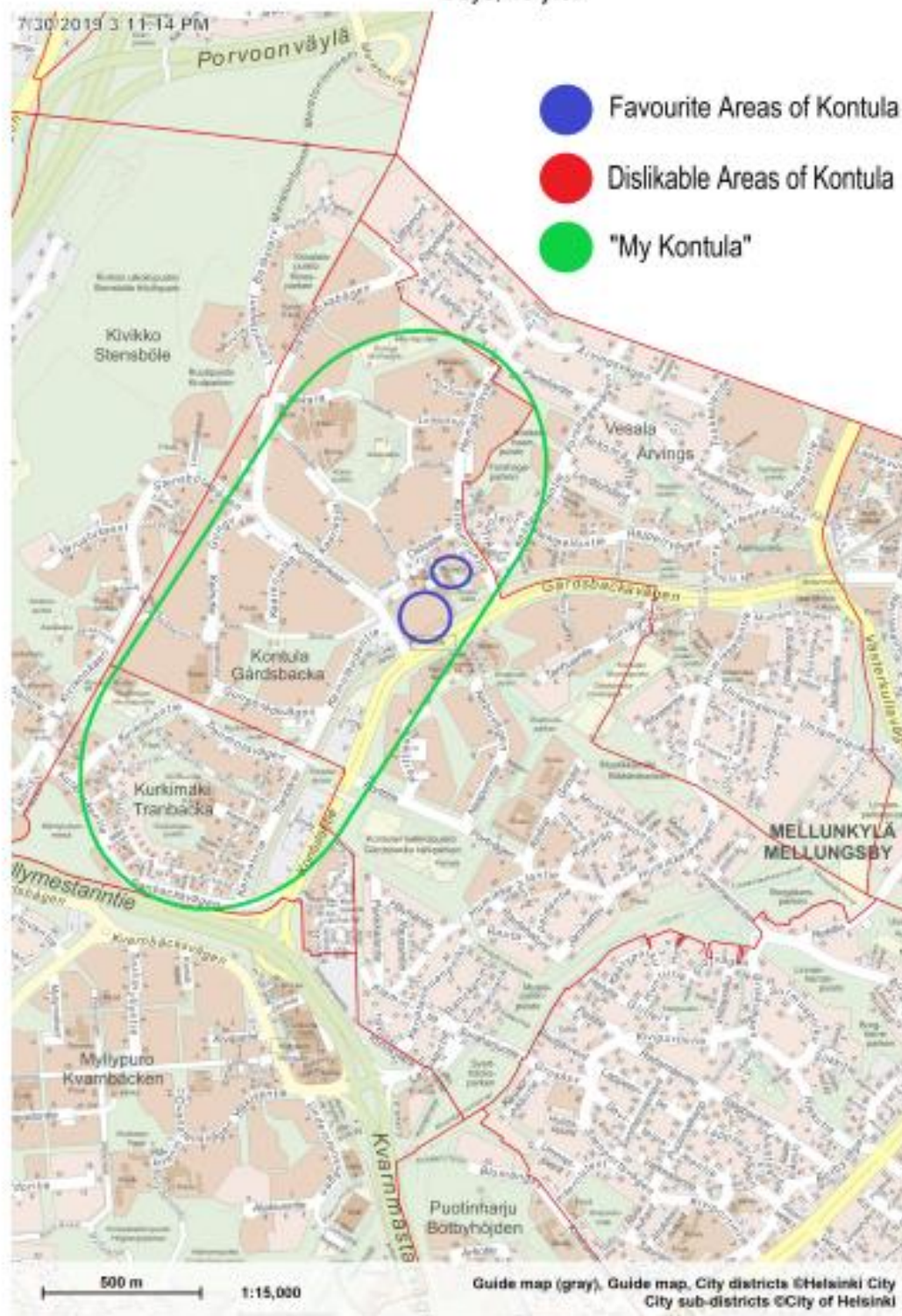
16. Are you aware of the general reputation of Kontula? Do you think it is accurate or inaccurate and why?
17. Has something changed in the environment of Kontula during the time you have lived there? Do you consider it has changed the way you perceive Kontula as a neighbourhood (for better or worse)? Do you experience that the change has influenced the general atmosphere in the neighbourhood? How?
18. Are you aware of the current plans and changes that are planned to be done in Kontula? Do you have an opinion about them, how do you think they will affect your daily life after implementation?
19. Have you considered moving out from Kontula? Why or why not?

## Maps of Kontula, results of mapping technique





Boys, 15 y.o.

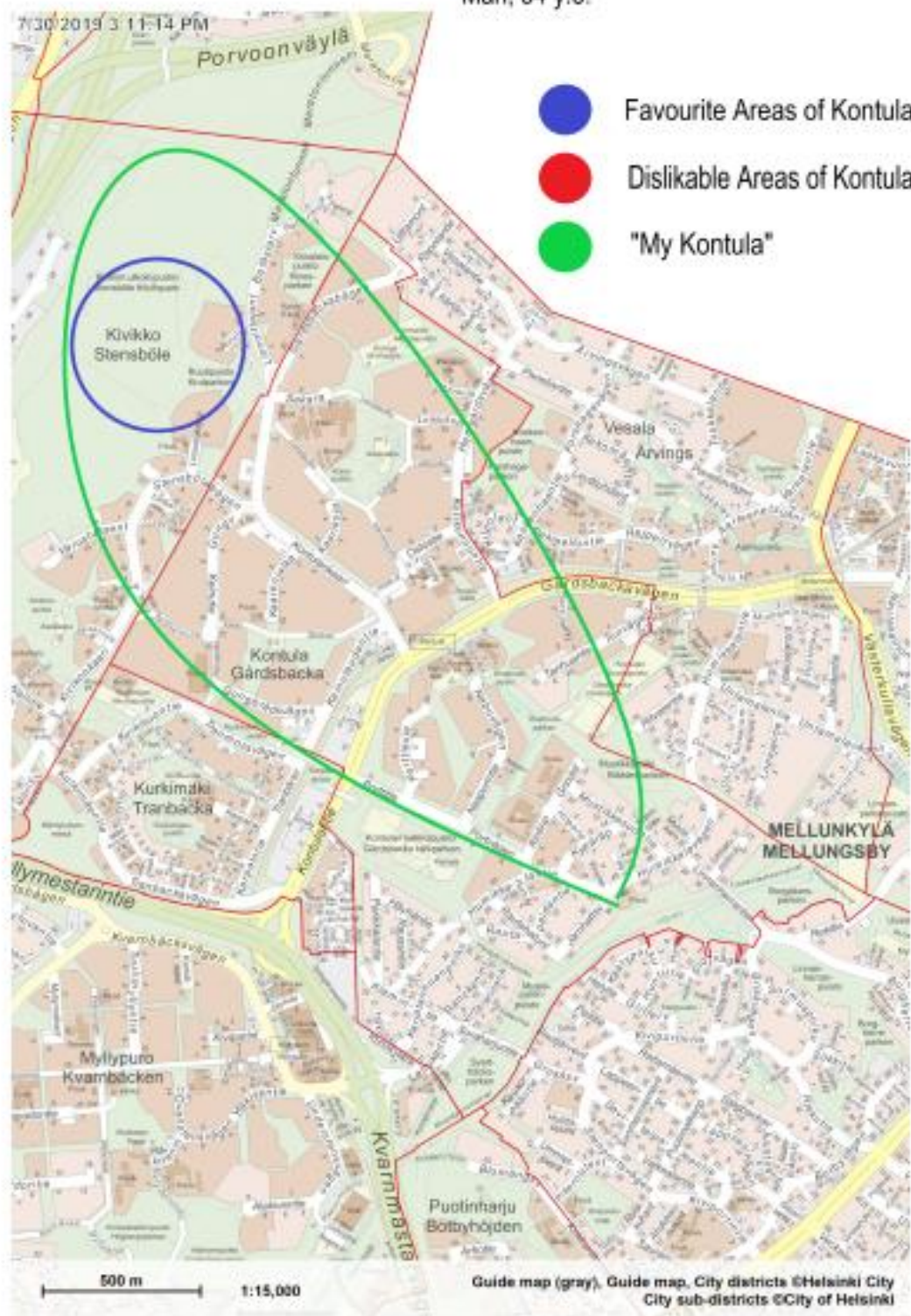


Man, 69 y.o.

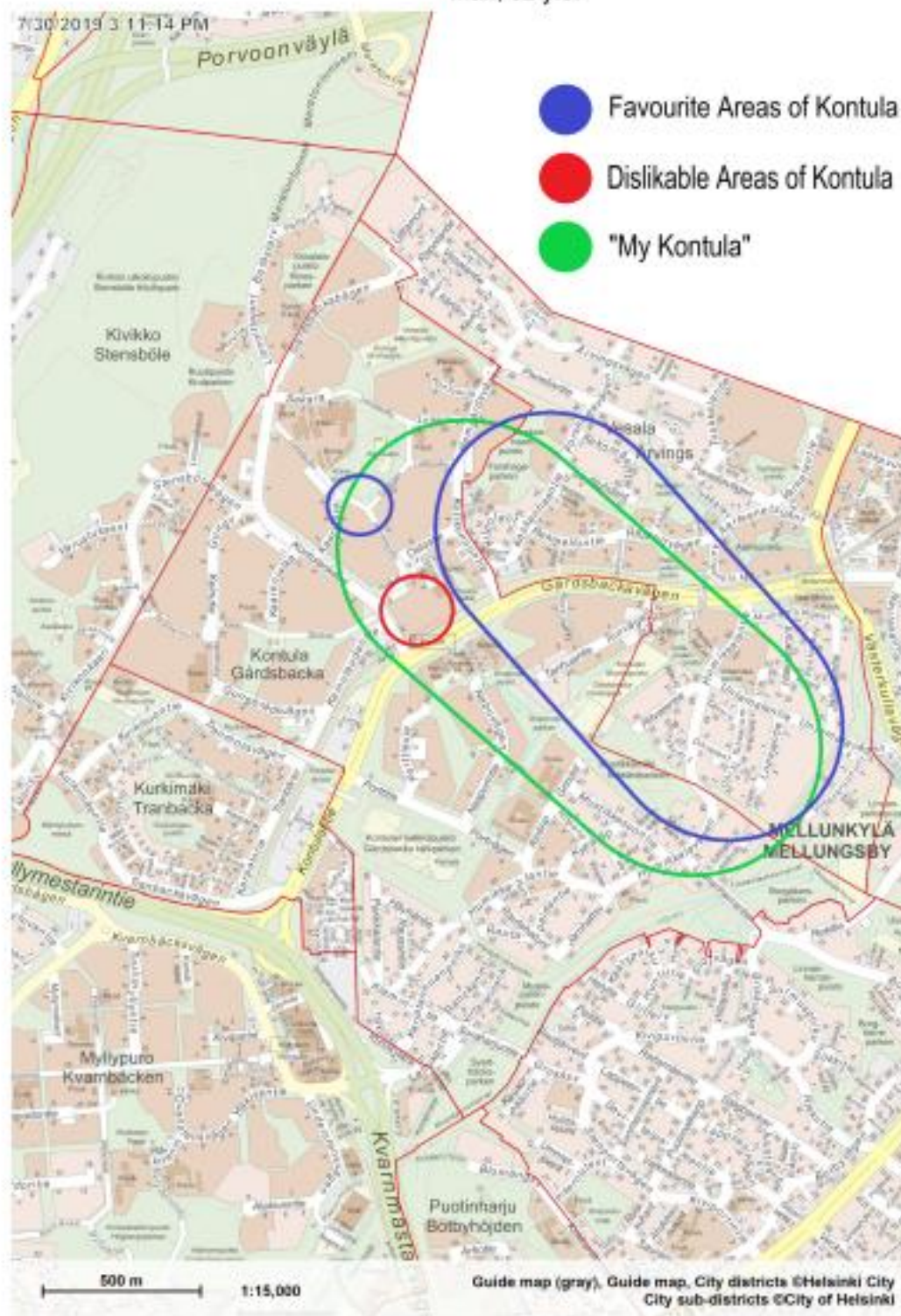




Man, 34 y.o.

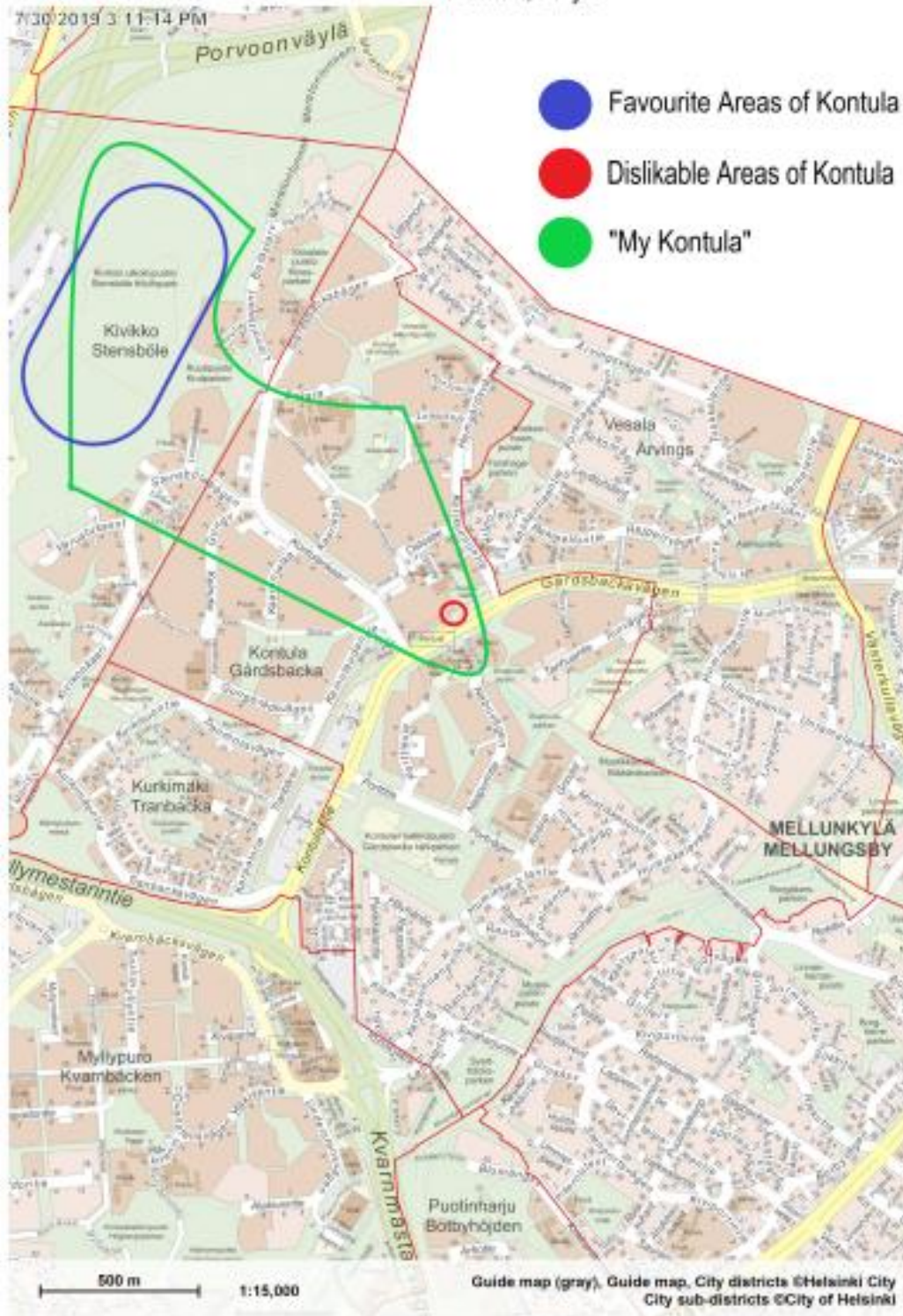


Man, 52 y.o.

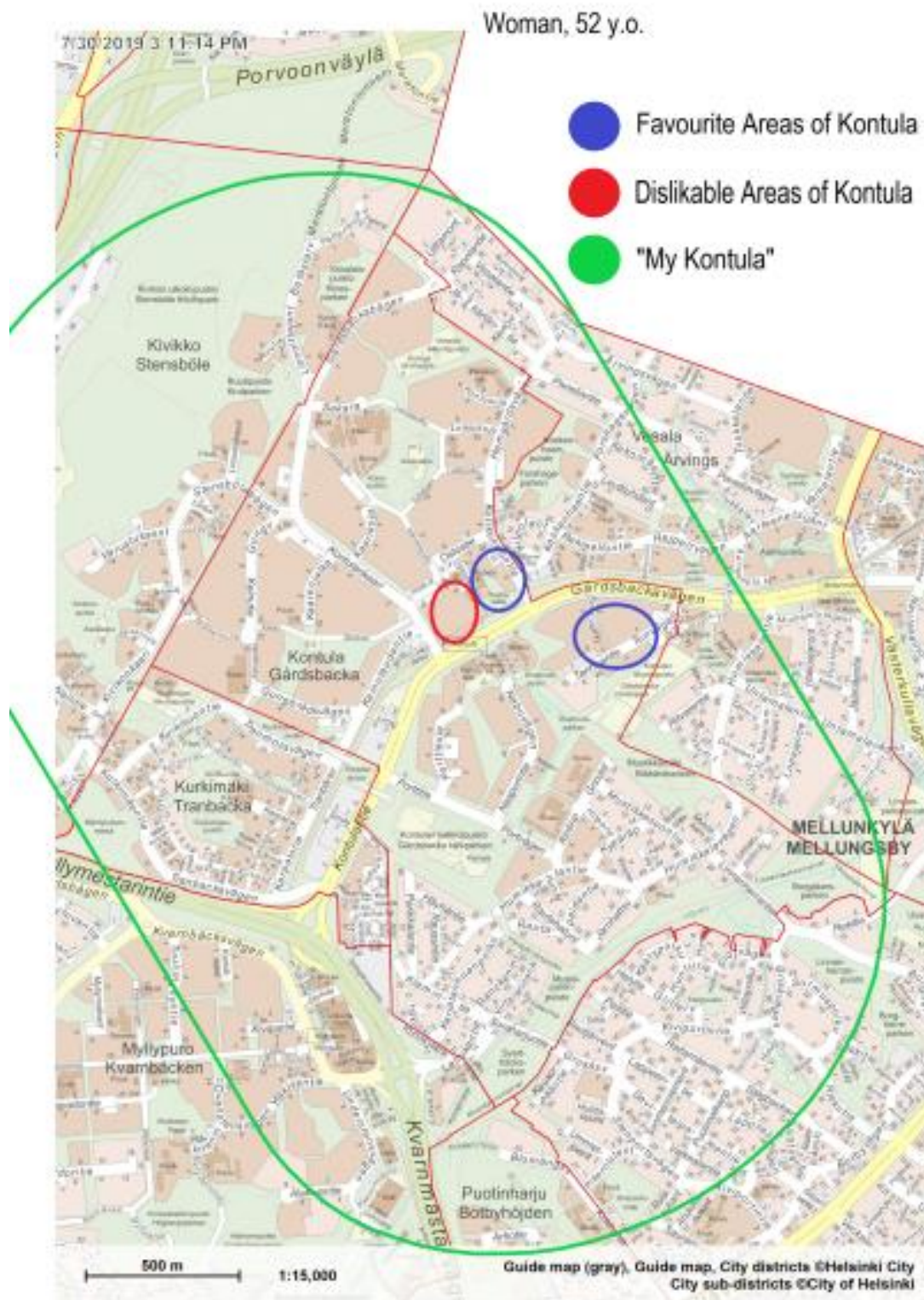




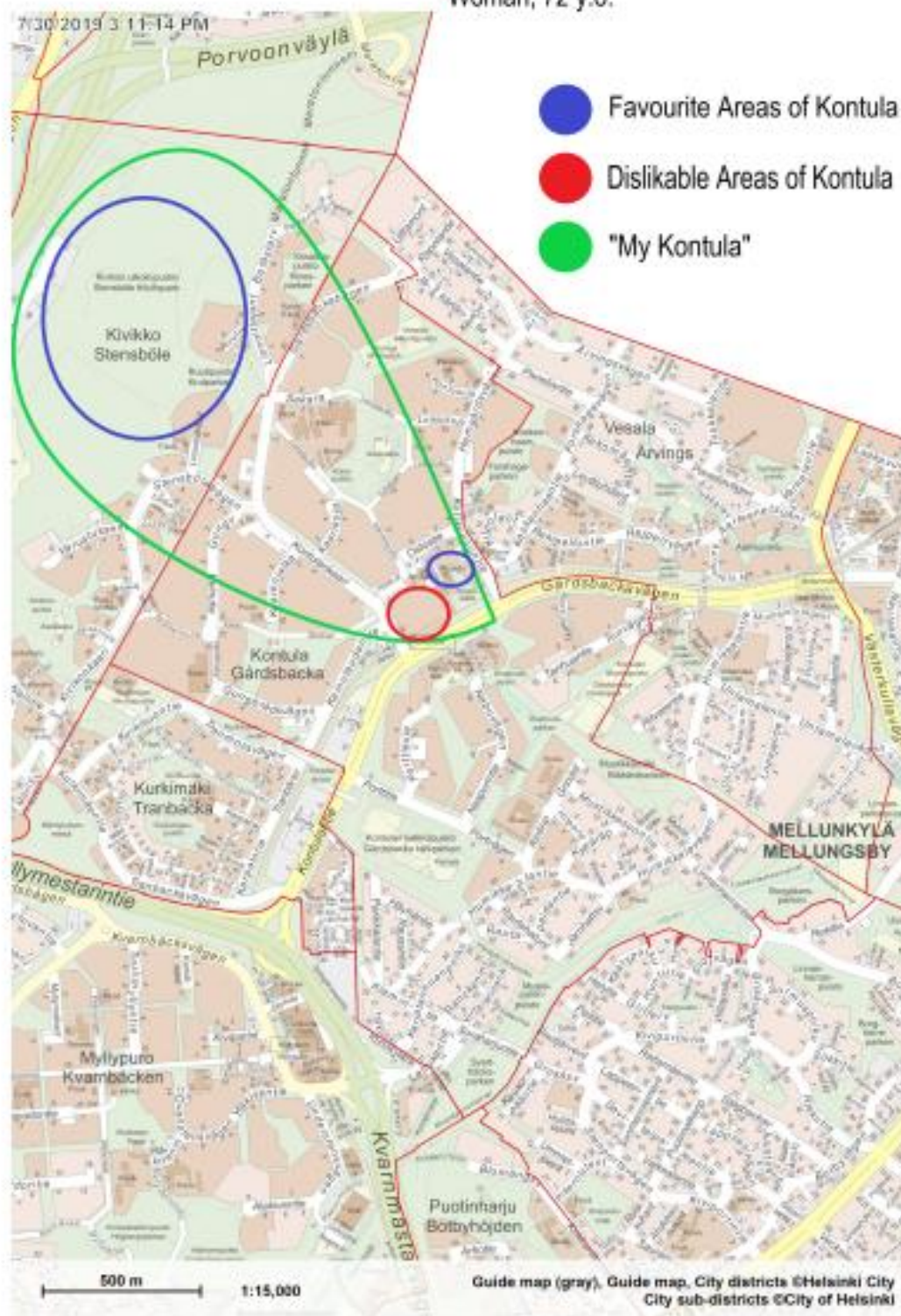
Woman, 27 y.o.





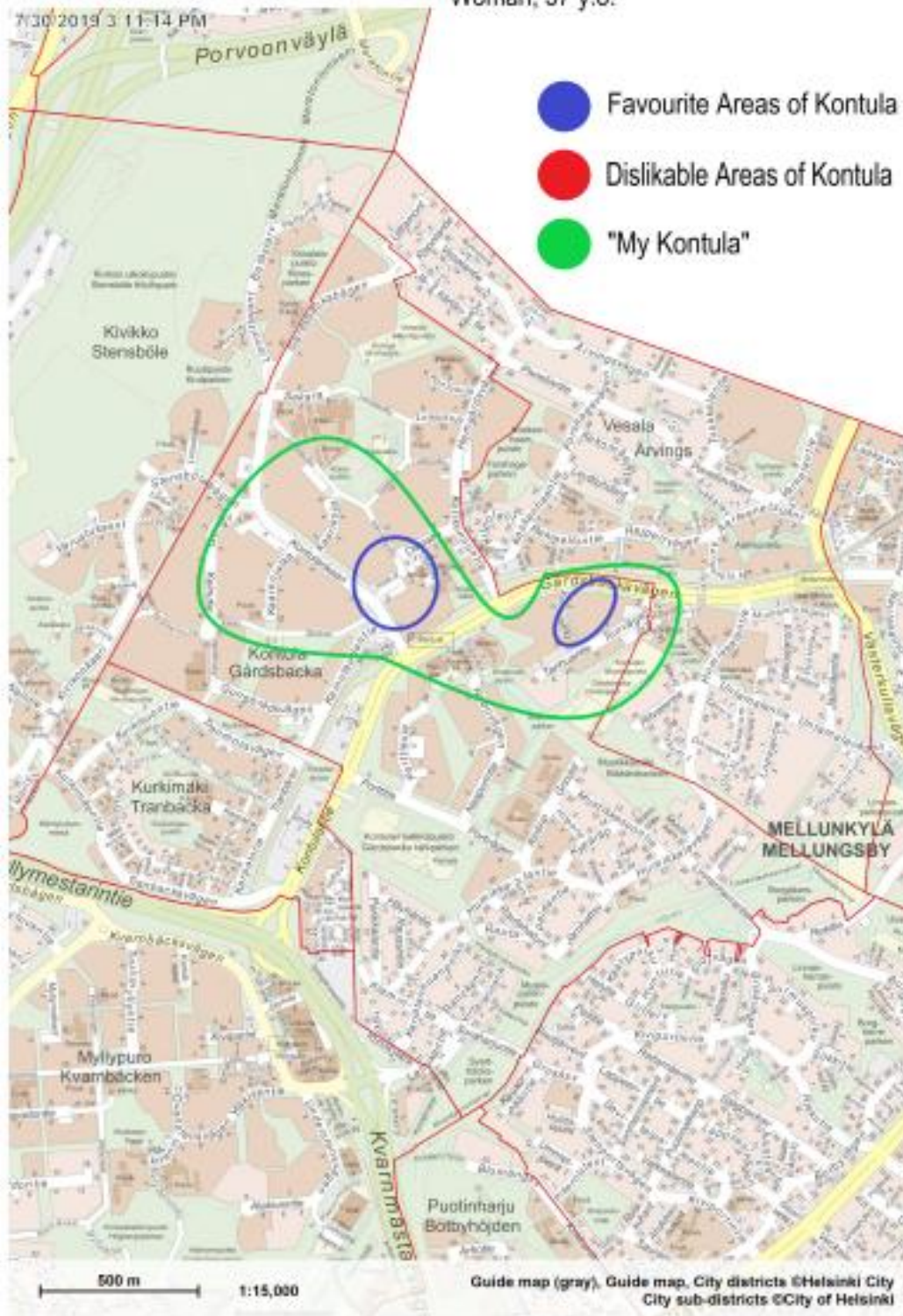


Woman, 72 y.o.





Woman, 57 y.o.



Women, Student Applicants, 22 & 23

