

# Youth in Cultural Events

## Municipalities in Southern Ostrobothnia

Marja Isotalo

Bachelor's Thesis

May 2014

Degree Programme in Music and Media Management  
School of Business and Services Management



JYVÄSKYLÄN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU  
JAMK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES



Author(s) LAST NAME, First name  Isotalo, Marja	Type of publication Bachelor's Thesis	Date 12052014
	Pages 30 (Appendices 74)	Language English
		Permission for web publication ( X )
Title YOUTH IN CULTURAL EVENTS Municipalities in Ostrobothnia		
Degree Programme Degree Programme in Music and Media Management		
Tutor(s) MIIKKULAINEN, Ilari		
Assigned by Frami Oy – Tapahtumalataamo, Mukula ry		
Abstract <p>This thesis reflects the views of the youth as event visitors in the Southern Ostrobothnia area. The study was conducted as a survey, and it was given to the local schools for youngsters to answer. The targeted age group was those between 14 and 17 years of age. The study aimed to find out how and if cultural events had an effect on the youth's opinion of their home municipality, what their dream event would be and how much they were attending events at the moment.</p> <p>The theoretical background part of the thesis discusses how culture affects people in general, concentrating on the youth after that. In addition, the basics of event organizing are addressed and how the target audience, in this case the youth, has to be considered in the planning phase of the event. Finally the thesis reflects on the Ostrobothnia area and on what kind of background information is relevant for this survey.</p> <p>The next part of the thesis introduces the study. First the three main research questions of the thesis are explained. Following that the author outlines the research, defines the concepts used in this thesis and justifies why the concepts were defined in the chosen way. Finally, the research methodology is introduced along with the grounds for its usage.</p> <p>The responses to the survey are explained first by objectively stating how the study group responded to the questionnaire. Finally, in the discussion and conclusion part, the author of the thesis reflects on the results and why the results turned out as they did. The problems of the thesis are explained and suggestions for improvements are given.</p>		
Keywords youth, event, Ostrobothnia, culture, event organizing, survey, questionnaire		
Miscellaneous		

Tekijä(t) ISOTALO, Marja	Julkaisun laji Opinnäytetyö	Päivämäärä 12.05.2014
	Sivumäärä 30 (Liitteet 74)	Julkaisun kieli englanti
		Verkkojulkaisulupa myönnetty ( X )
Työn nimi NUORET KULTTUURITAPAHTUMISSA Kunnat Etelä-Pohjanmaalla		
Koulutusohjelma Degree Programme in Music and Media Management		
Työn ohjaaja(t) Miikkulainen, Ilari		
Toimeksiantaja(t) Tapahtumalataamo, Mukula ry		
<p>Tiivistelmä</p> <p>Tämä opinnäytetyö pohtii nuorison näkemyksiä kulttuuritapahtumista Etelä-Pohjanmaalla. Työ toteutettiin kyselytutkimuksena paikallisille nuorille. Tutkimuksen kohderyhmä oli 14–17 vuotiaat nuoret. Tutkimuksen tavoite oli selvittää vaikuttavatko kulttuuritapahtumat nuorten mielipiteeseen omasta paikkakunnasta, millainen olisi unelmien tapahtuma, ja paljonko nuoret käyvät tapahtumissa tällä hetkellä.</p> <p>Teoriaosiossa kirjoittaja pohtii yleisesti miten kulttuuri vaikuttaa ihmisiin, keskittyen nuoriin tämän jälkeen. Kirjoittaja avaa tapahtumanjärjestämistä yleisesti pohtien mitä tulee ottaa huomioon järjestäessä tapahtumaa ja miten kohdeyleisö, tässä tapauksessa nuoriso tulee ottaa huomioon suunnitteluvaiheessa. Lopuksi kirjoittaja pohtii Pohjanmaata tutkimusalueena.</p> <p>Seuraavassa osiossa esitellään itse tutkimus. Ensin esitellään tutkimuskysymykset, jonka jälkeen kirjoittaja perustelee tutkimukselle olennaiset käsitteet. Kirjoittaja perustelee ikäryhmät, paikkakunnat ja kulttuuritapahtumat; miksi juuri nämä sisällytettiin tutkimukseen ja miksi muut jätettiin pois. Lopuksi tutkimusmenetelmät esitellään ja perustellaan miksi näitä menetelmiä käytettiin tässä tutkimuksessa.</p> <p>Tulososiossa vastaukset esitellään ensin objektiivisesti selittäen miten kohderyhmä vastasi kyselyyn. Viimeisessä osiossa kirjoittaja pohtii tuloksia ja millaisista syistä johtuen näihin tuloksiin päädyttiin. Tutkimuksen ongelmat ja parannusehdotukset esitellään.</p>		
Avainsanat (asiasanat) nuoret, tapahtuma, tapahtumajärjestäminen, Etelä-Pohjanmaa, kulttuuri, kyselytutkimus		
Muut tiedot		

**CONTENTS**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>THEORETICAL BACKGROUND</b> .....	<b>4</b>
2.1 Why is culture important? .....	4
2.2 The basics steps of event organizing in short .....	6
2.3 Youth as target audience .....	7
2.4 Ostrobothnia .....	9
<b>CASE AND IMPLEMENTATION</b> .....	<b>10</b>
3.1 Research objectives .....	10
3.2 Current behavior of the youth.....	10
3.3 Do cultural events have an effect on youth’s opinion on their home municipality? .....	11
3.4 What makes a good event? .....	11
3.5 Outlining the research .....	12
3.6 Questionnaire as a study method .....	14
3.7 Autoetnography as a research method.....	15
<b>RESULTS</b> .....	<b>15</b>
4.1 Responds.....	15
4.2 Differences between municipalities .....	20
4.3 Reflecting results .....	21
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>22</b>
5.1 Case Aukusti .....	22
5.2 Autoetnographic reflection .....	23
5.3 Suggestions for the future .....	24
5.4 Problematic and self-assessment .....	25
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>31</b>

**5.5 APPENDIX 1.....31**  
**5.6 APPENDIX 2.....31**

## INTRODUCTION

In the Cultural Strategy Plan for Ostrobothnia 2010-2013 it is stated that one of the cornerstones for developing the cultural offering in Ostrobothnia is to develop the cultural events in the area. The vision of the strategy plan was to improve the cultural offering for different age groups. In the plan it is stated that acknowledging the positive effects of culture for the wellbeing of the people is important (Etelä-Pohjanmaan liitto 2009, 19).

This thesis keeps the plan in sight and focuses on the youth. The youth is often seen as a difficult target group. The cultural actors in Finland are worried about the current state of the youths' attendance to events, or rather the lack of it. Eeka Mäkynen, the chief of Program in Elmu states that five year ago one third of event visitors were minors, but now it is only one fifth of the audience. This problem has been acknowledged in rock club associations everywhere in the country (Vedenpää, Yle uutiset, 28.4.2014).

Naturally the question arises, what is the reason for this; why are the young people no longer interested in going to concerts? In general, how do the young people spend their free time, and more importantly, how can the event organizers develop the events to be more attractive to the youth.

This thesis involves all cultural events, not only concerts and rock clubs. This research was executed in five small municipalities in Southern Ostrobothnia, targeting the local youth. The aim was to gather information about the behavior of the youth, and to find out, what kind of the wishes of the youth has concerning culture in their hometown, in order for the event organizers to be able to meet the demands more accurately.

One reason for selecting this topic for this thesis was the general problem of youth not participating in events anymore. The other reason was that the writer of the thesis is an event organizer in Southern Ostrobothnia and therefore has a professional interest for this topic. Due to this reason the research was outlined to cover only the Ostrobothnia area.

The writer of the thesis organizes an Aukusti event in Jalasjärvi. Aukusti is an event that is targeted first and foremost for the youth. Therefore it is used as a

case to reflect and compare the results through the process, and the writer shares also own experiences of the topic.

This thesis was implemented with the help of a project called Tapahtumalataamo. The project has mutual interest with the writer, since its goal is to provide assistance for regional event organizers in Ostrobothnia and to improve already existing events. Due to this reason the research was implemented in many municipalities, not only in Jalasjärvi.

The goals and objectives of the study were planned in cooperation with a project member of Tapahtumalataamo. The questions can be divided in to three sections.

1. Youth's usage of free time and customer behavior as event visitors
2. Do cultural events affect the view on one's own municipality?
3. Views on what makes a good event

The aim was to answer these questions by using a survey. Since the writer of the thesis is a cultural actor in the area, autoethnography is used as a method to expand and to reflect the results. The target group for the survey was young people between the ages of 14 and 17.

In this thesis, the writer first discusses the theoretical background information on the subject and the reasons why this theme was chosen. Following that, the research objectives are explained and how the research methodology was chosen and executed. Finally the results and discussion on the subject conclude the report.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Why is culture important?**

*"The amount of cultural events in Finland has increased remarkably during the past 20 years. Cultural events play a critical role when*

*developing the essence of Finnish arts and culture. The cultural events also function as a tool for observing the dynamics of both the cities and social life in them. Moreover, they also aim to discover the local mind set and thus they have the power to shape the city.” (Halonen, 2011, 18)*

The importance of wellbeing is becoming more important for today's people. People want to live happy, healthy and fulfilling lives. It is considered that a person has to be healthy both in mental and physical side to be a completely healthy individual. The positive effects of culture have been studied and acknowledged only in the near past years, although culture and health have been seen being very close together from early on (Hyypä & Liikanen, 2005, 6-8).

Patricia Martin researched the cultural scene of the United States of America in the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century. In her book RenGen she talks about the rising generation of cultural consumers in the USA. This phenomena can be seen in many Western countries. After researching the new generation of cultural consumers and youth culture, Martin describes the research group in a following way.

*“Despite their pragmatism, they will not give up happiness and personal freedoms.” (Martin, P, 2007, 106)*

She agrees with the view that happiness and wellbeing are becoming more and more important for the youth.

Research shows, that people who are culturally active and involved in cultural hobbies seem to even live longer. The emotional experience of satisfaction coming from culture can be caused by many factors. When for example succeeding in a hobby and the feeling of being good at one's hobby, it raises the self-esteem of an individual and increases the wellbeing. Still the positive effects of culture are less researched than for example the positive effects of sports (Hyypä, 2005, 86-87).



One of important aspects of cultural hobbies and their positive effects is the social aspect. Choir singing as a hobby has been found to be very good for the wellbeing of the individuals. It was however found that it was not the singing that gave the positive emotions, but doing it together with others and the feeling of belonging that was the most important thing according to the research group (Hyypä, 2005, 92).

*“Since also acting together affected positively, the positive effects of culture and art hobbies might be a consequence of communal acting – meaning social assets.” (Hyypä, 2005, 93, translation Isotalo)*

Hobbies are considered to be important to learn skills, such as interaction with other people, independence, acting in groups and self-control. The youth has mentioned free time activities also important in developing one’s values and some consider hobbies to be additional educators for the youth (Aaltonen Ojanen, Vihunen, Vilén, 2003, 205-206).

Extensive research is made regularly to gain information about the wellbeing of people in Ostrobothnia area. The latest study was made in 2012 and it shows that the respondents of the study think, the wellbeing has decreased slowly but yet continuously since the year 2005. It must be mentioned however that the health surveys concentrate still more on the basic social and health services and the reachability of it, not so much on the cultural aspects. (Etelä-Pohjanmaan, Keski-Pohjanmaan ja Pohjois-Pohjanmaan hyvinvointibarometri, 2012, 49).

## **2.2 The basics steps of event organizing in short**

The six foundational questions for an event organizer are: why, what, where, when, for whom and how. For an event to be successful these elements have to be in balance (Kauhanen, 2002, 35). Before starting the actual process of organizing an event, the organizer should return to these questions and see if all the answers are clear and justified.

When these questions are clear and the organizer is convinced of the content of the event, the next important thing is the marketing of the event.

The foundation of marketing is knowing the target audience. This includes the information about who the audience is and where it can be found. "This seems logical, clear and easy, but in practice it is that nearly never" (Kauhanen, 2002, 113). Making it easy for the customer to purchase the ticket and to participate to the event are key questions in event marketing and sales.

Cultural Manager 2020 is a research made about the future of cultural management field. The research reflect also on the future megatrend of event production, one of which is the 360° event; an event that nourishes all senses. The customer wants to feel the event and culture as much as he wants to hear and see the event (Halonen, 2011, 21).

### **2.3 Youth as target audience**

When doing a survey on youth as event visitors, it is relevant to observe them as customers, and their customer behavior. In the essay "Researching young people as customers" Miles talks about the youth as consumers (Bennett, Cieslik & Miles, 2005, 170-186). Although the subject concentrates more on consumerism, Miles has good points about the customer behavior of the youth.

One of the most important points he makes is that the youth is not in any sense predictable (Miles, 2005, 185). This is an important point also for the event organizer; the matters of interest for the youth can change very quickly. Another important point is that young people do not have real economic power; the consuming behavior of the youth is always somehow connected to the parents, either in positive or in negative sense for the service provider (Miles, 2005, 178-179).

*"Also in the center of event production is the youth and their lives. Acting with and for the youth. Organizing events themselves, the youth*

*is able to connect with the event, they are organizing (Karppanen, 2010, 44)”.*

Karppanen studied this same subject in her thesis and tried to set guidelines to event organizers working with youth. As Karppanen states, event organizer has to remember to include the youth to the process when organizing events for them; that way the demand can truly be met.

Annakaisa Lahti did her thesis on organizing sporting events for the youth (Lahti, 2009). She studied what kind of things the youth awaits from sporting events and what would make a good sporting event. The responses to Lahti's research was that the youth considered the social relations to be extremely important. The respondents would rather try out new sports in good company, than they would alone. They also stated that participation in the events should be obligatory; if the event is made mandatory for everyone, it makes the event less interesting (Lahti, 2009, 32-33).

Kojo studied four different types of events organized for the youth in Helsinki; Ääni ja Wimma, Loistefestari, Tuottajakurssi and Teatris. He stated that attending the events affected the youth in many ways. The events helped them to develop themselves in their hobbies and gave them valuable performing experience. They also got to meet other young people with mutual interests and built new social relationships. Overall the events turned out to be a very positive experience for the youth (Kojo, 2013, 31).

Sami Myllyniemi did an extensive survey in 2009 for Finnish people in ages between 10 and 29. In the survey Myllyniemi concentrate a lot on what free time and different activities meant for the youth. When asked about people's own personal time, the youth considered own personal time to be very important. However the time spent with friends was also considered as own personal time, which showed that the youth finds social relations more important than the time spent alone. Social relations were the most important aspect affecting the general satisfaction in their lives (Myllyniemi, 2009, 24, 113).

## 2.4 Ostrobothnia

Ostrobothnia has a very strong regional sense of self-esteem and unity. University of Helsinki made a research about the image of Southern Ostrobothnia from an inner and outer point of view. In this survey it was shown that the Ostrobothnian people are very proud of their region and think they are a little bit better in everything than other regions (Zimmerbauer, 2002).

Taina Välipakka-Toivonen studied the event organizing field in Ostrobothnia in her thesis; she describes Ostrobothnia to be an experience province (Välipakka-Toivonen, 2011, 12). There are a lot of nationally important events organized in Ostrobothnia, for example Provinssirock and Tangomarkkinat. There are many other events organized in different fields of culture which validate this statement (E-P:n liitto, 2009).

According to Välipakka-Toivonen, there should be more cooperation between cultural actors in Ostrobothnia. She states the encouragement to entrepreneurship to be important for the cultural field in the area, and points out the importance of cultural locus like Rytmikorjaamo in Seinäjoki (Välipakka-Toivonen, 2011, 13).

At the moment there are many changes going through the municipalities of Southern Ostrobothnia as well as the whole of Finland. Ylistaro and Peräseinäjoki are already a part of Seinäjoki, although in this thesis they are considered as individual municipalities, which will be explained later on. At the moment the discussion is ongoing whether Jalasjärvi is going to merger with Kurikka or with Seinäjoki. In either case, there are going to be changes in the municipality structures in Southern Ostrobothnia which is going to affect the cultural field of those municipalities inevitably. The co-operation between different events and cultural actors are going to be mandatory in the future.

## **CASE AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **3.1 Research objectives**

When starting a research, the researcher has to consider what the personal researcher profile is; why choose this topic and this research question (Varto, 1992, 27-28). For this thesis the profile is simple, since the writer has a personal interest for this topic as an event organizer in the Ostrobothnia.

The professional interest is not the only factor in the researcher profile. The writer of the thesis thinks that general wellbeing can be improved through culture. As Hyypä speaks eagerly for the positive effects of culture in his research, but mainly through hobbies and other types of cultural activeness, the writer of this thesis wants to find out, if similar effects can be reached through events (Hyypä, 2005).

In the next three paragraphs the three main research questions are introduced.

### **3.2 Current behavior of the youth**

The first research question aims to gather practical information for event organizers about how the youth chooses the events they attend to, and what their current customer behavior concerning events is. It is beneficial for both sides, if the organizer can understand the customer better, and is aware of important factors for the customer.

Based on previous studies on youth, the presumption is that friends have a lot of influence on the matter. As Miles reminded in his article about the youth as customers, the youth is never acting as an individual consumer. The freedom for youth to consume is not a freedom in any sense. It is rather the freedom to consume as their peers (Miles, 2005, 184). This same conclusion has been seen in other studies also in Myllyniemi's study as already mentioned.

In this question the financial aspect is included. Since in this survey the youth is considered to be less than 18 years old, the target group is mostly financially depended on their parents. The aim is also to find out, if financial costs affect the decision to attend an event.

### **3.3 Do cultural events have an effect on youth's opinion on their home municipality?**

The second research question concerns the image aspects of events on youth. Is it possible to increase the wellbeing of the youth by cultural events? The hypothesis is that sense of being proud of where you come from gives a sense of belonging and is therefore important.

This question was also raised because it is common knowledge that people are moving from small municipalities increasingly to bigger cities. If the municipalities would be able to create a positive image of the hometown to people from early age on, the probability is bigger that the people stay in their hometown.

Included in this research question is also whether the youth wants more events in their hometowns or are they satisfied with the existing number of events. If the wish would be more event offering, also the type of the events they want; what kind of events and what the events should include. These things are connected with the third research question.

### **3.4 What makes a good event?**

The third purpose of this study is to improve the existing events; therefore it is important to gather information about what the target group wants from an event. What kind of adjectives determine a good event and what should the dream event contain.

In this study a lot of adjectives are being used to describe the feelings that one wants to get from an event. This is connected with the 360 idea of events; the feel of the event is as important that what the content of the event is.

### 3.5 Outlining the research

Doing research involves constant decision making during the process. Hirsijärvi talks about the outlining process of a research in her book. The process of decision making is almost always problematic. Before starting a research, one has to consider what is being researched, what kind of material should be used and what kind of approach is taken towards the subject? These decisions define the outcome of the research. (Hirsijärvi, Remes & Sajavaara, 2007, 119).

For this thesis the decisions concerning the age groups that are involved in the survey as well as involved municipalities, were the most important choices. Since this thesis deals with cultural events, it had to be considered how extensive the span of included events is going to be. In the following paragraphs these choices are introduced.

When choosing the age range for this survey, it was clear that the people involved in the study had to be less than 18 years old, since the possibilities and rights of the individuals change drastically after that age. The bottom age was more difficult to define since the groups involved in the study had to be old enough to be let out on their own without parents. Since many musical festivals recommend that people under 14 years old should have a guardian with them in the events (for example Provinssirock), the bottom age for the survey was set at 14 years. Due to these reasons the age range included in this survey was people from 14 to 17 years old.

There were only five municipalities involved in this study. There are many municipalities in the Ostrobothnia area, but in this research the choice was made to include Kurikka, Jalasjärvi, Ilmajoki, Ylistaro and Peräseinäjoki. These were chosen because of their cultural offerings and their size according to population. Smaller municipalities than these do not have relevant cultural offering so they were left out.

The research area of this thesis is Southern Ostrobothnia. The whole region has 19 municipalities but in this survey only five are included. The choice had to be made which ones of these municipalities are going to be included in the survey. Since Tapahtumalataamo works closely with Liiveri, the Development

Association of Seinäjoki Region, the following municipalities were selected out; Jalasjärvi, Kurikka, Ilmajoki, Ylistaro and Peräseinäjoki.

Seinäjoki is very important cultural city in the Ostrobothnia area, but it was intentionally left out. This is because of the size of the city, and the fact that it has many nationally significant cultural events and a lot of smaller scale cultural offering during the year. The aim of the research is to study small events in small municipalities, and how those events affect youth's opinions. In this sense, Seinäjoki does not fit the profile.

Peräseinäjoki and Ylistaro are included in the study although they are not independent municipalities anymore; today they are a part of Seinäjoki after municipal merger. It was nevertheless important to include these in the study in order to receive some information about the cultural activities in those areas. The geographical location is so far away from the center of Seinäjoki, that practically the youth in those areas do not have the same opportunities as their age peers closer to the center of Seinäjoki.

Lastly the cultural events for this research had to be chosen. Since the study is about improving and developing small municipalities, the focus was on the events organized in those municipalities. Including only the events organized in the chosen areas is however not sufficient, since the practical experience of the author tells that the youth goes to many events outside the chosen areas. In this sense, to make an accurate customer profile, there had to be also other events included. The outlining of these was made together with local cultural secretaries to include all the relevant events.

Considering the content of all the events, the span of events is very wide in this survey. In addition to musical events, also sporting events, theater, markets and hobby oriented events are included. The reason for this is to provide information for all the cultural actors in the area, to make the overall cultural offering better.



### 3.6 Questionnaire as a study method

Quantitative and qualitative research methods are often considered separate methods. However this perception is being questioned by Hirsijärvi; she sees the two methods as completing one another rather than being opposite to one another. More important than to separate these methods, is to look at to what kind of questions each method answers. Quantitative method answers questions as numbers and amounts, where qualitative answers more to the quality and the question how (Hirsijärvi, 2007, p.119-162).

When doing a quantitative research, it is common to form a hypothesis before starting the research (Hirsijärvi, 2007, 154). In this work, the presumption, or rather the wishful result was that cultural events make small municipalities seem more attractive to the youth.

The choice how to implement this research was clear from the beginning on; quantitative method would give the best answers to the research questions and a survey for the youth would give an amount of responses that would be satisfying. There are however dangers when executing a research in this way; since the questions and the answers are made by the researcher, there is always the risk of the respondent to understand the questions or the answer alternatives differently. As the researcher may see things differently than the respondent, and nevertheless gives the answering alternatives in advance, the alternatives may not be in the liking of the respondent (Järvinen, 2004, 56-57).

Generally the survey study has often also the problem that the group answering the survey is very different from the group that does not answer it. In this research this problem has been however minimized by the fact that all the students are obligated to answer the survey at school, so there should not be many individuals left out (Järvinen, 2004, 56). With this age group the greater problem can however be the fact, that many of the respondents does not take the questionnaire seriously.

The most effective way to realize the survey was to make it in collaboration with schools. Since the research provides useable information for the schools,

all the contacted schools were willing to cooperate and find time to answer the survey during a school lesson.

The goal for the amount of responses was 200 students but it was positively exceeded and the final amount of the respondents was 280. The actual questionnaire was made with the online survey and analysis software Webropol: the link to the questionnaire was sent to the teachers who passed the link on to the students.

### **3.7 Autoethnography as a research method**

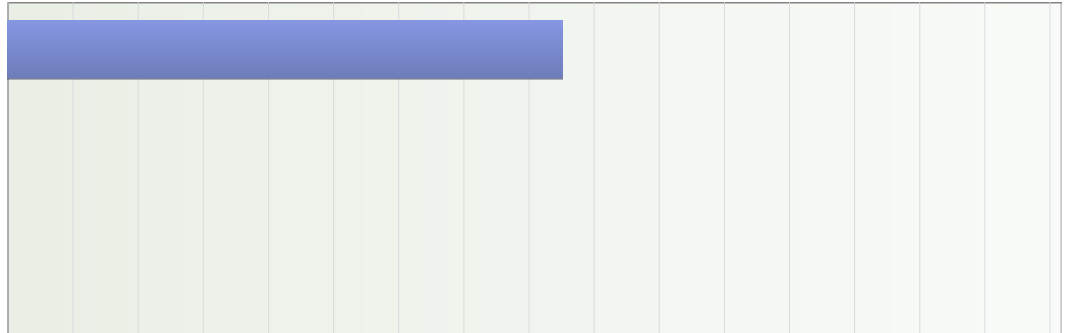
The reasons for this topic for thesis came from the writers personal work field and professional interests. Since the writer has been a part and in the middle of the research field the past years, the autoethnography of the writer cannot be ignored as a research method in this case.

According to Leon Andersson, analytical autoethnography should have five features fulfilled; complete member research status, analytical reflexivity, narrative visibility of the researcher, and dialogue with informants and commitment to theoretical analysis (Andersson, 2006, 378). Based on these features, autoethnography is a relevant research method in this case connected with Aukusti.

## **RESULTS**

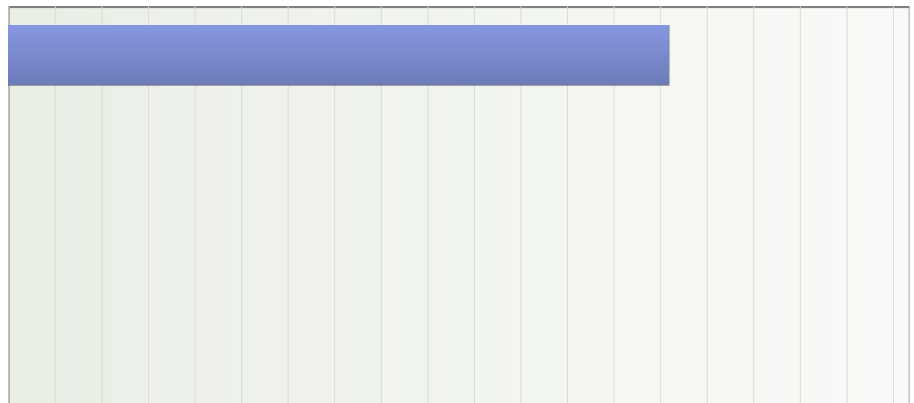
### **4.1 Responds**

The whole questionnaire presented for the youth can be found in the first appendix and the responds can be found in the second appendix. The questions 2-9 aimed to clarify the current behavior of the youth. The age division of the respondents is shown in Graphic 1. Over a half of the respondents were 15 years old, which could be expected since the survey was obligatory for ninth graders and the first year students in the upper secondary school. The most students in those grades are fifteen years old.



Graphic 1. Respondents division between ages

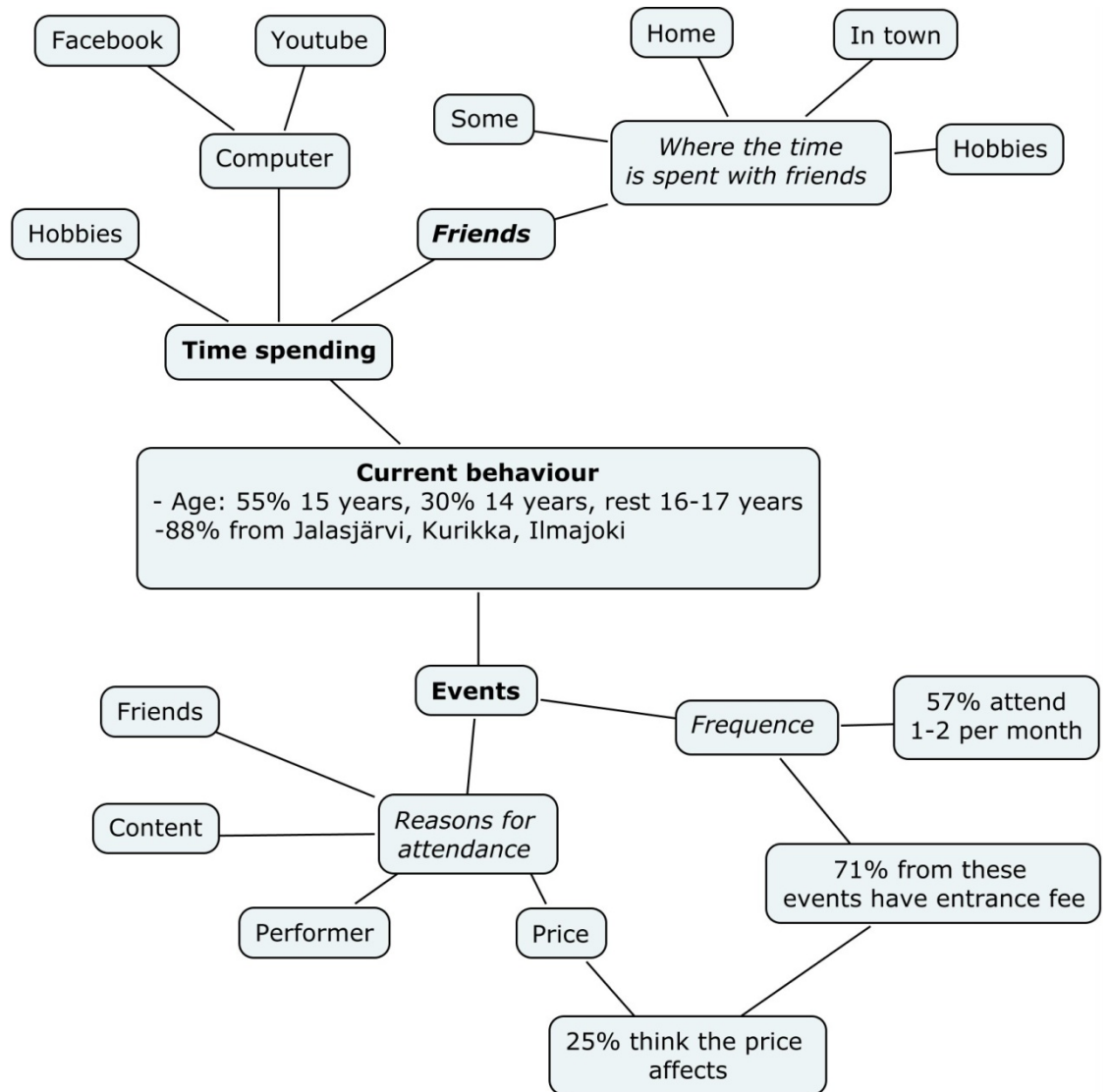
As already mentioned, the target number of responds was positively excelled but for some reason participation of Ylistaro and Peräseinäjoki was not as high as the other municipalities. The smaller population of those towns can be partly the explanation but it would seem that the survey was not considered important by the teachers in those schools after all. For whatever reason it might be, this research indicates mainly the youth located in Jalasjärvi, Kurikka and Ilmajoki. The hometowns of the respondents is presented in Graphic 2.



Graphic 2. Respondents division between municipalities

The current behavior of the youth is presented visually in Graphic 3. In this result report, the current behavior of the youth will be divided in three categories:

1. How time is spent
2. Where time is spent
3. Customer behavior in event attendance



Graphic 3. Current behavior of the respondents

The youth was presented with multiple options to describe how they spend their time; additionally they were given the opportunity to add their own alternative. The four activities chosen the most by the respondents were

- Friends
- Computer
- Sports
- Hobbies,

Friends was the most popular option. It would seem the alternative to freely add own option was poorly understood, since the added alternatives by the youth were mostly hobbies or sports.

Question 5 in the survey asked where the time spent with friends took place, since the hypothesis was that a large amount of time is spent with friends. The four by far most popular answers were

- at home
- in town
- at hobbies
- in the social media

This indicates that not only is the social media already considered as a social meeting place amongst the youth, but that it is a very popular one. Also the question about the five most visited internet pages showed that the social media websites were the most popular ones.

The questions 6-9 concerned how the youth attends different events. 57% of the youth attend one or two events per month. Again, friends were the biggest influencer to the decision whether or not to attend. The content and the performer of the event were also considered very important. Surprisingly for the researcher, only by 25% of the respondents, the price influenced the decision to attend.

This was shown also in the questions 7-8 which concerned money consumption in events. 71% of the events the youth attends have an entrance fee. In the open question, where the respondent could write how much money they spend in an event, the result was that a lot of the money was spent on

entrance fee, snacks and movie tickets. An explanation for this might be in autumn 2013 restored movie theatre in Jalasjärvi (Seinäjoen sanomat 4.9.2013) and the movie theatre in Kurikka. These movie theatres seem to be important free time activities for the youth.

The survey asked if the youth felt that cultural events had an effect on their opinion of their home town. The answers were somewhat conflicting. A majority of the respondents felt that events have a positive effect on their opinion. At the same time almost the same amount of the youth felt the events did not influence on their opinion on their home town. The majority of the youth felt however that events have a positive effect on the opinion of out-of-town people's perspective on the municipality.

57% of the respondents think there should be more events organized in their home town, showing that almost a half of the respondents are satisfied with the number of events at the moment. In the section where the respondent could write what kind of events should be organized more, the answers varied fairly much. The most demand was still for musical and sporty events. Also electronic gaming and motor sports were mentioned several times.

The last research question was to find out what makes the dream event in the youth's perspective. In the survey question 10, the respondents were given a list of adjectives from which they could choose as many as they wanted to describe a good event. In the next question the same adjectives were given but the respondent could choose only three alternatives to describe the dream event.

In the responds between these two questions the results varied only a little, in both question the three most important adjectives for a good event were versatile, relaxed and safe. Versatile and relaxed were unquestionably the most popular ones. Otherwise the opinions were divided fairly evenly between the alternatives. Adjectives that were important for at least one hundred of the respondents were: age limitless, trustworthy, wild, accurate, modern and exciting.

In the next question the survey asked to choose substantives that describe a good event. The amount of substantives was not limited. The three most

important substantives were friends, music and good weather. The responses were again very divided, but over a half of the respondents considered the following things to be important: high quality and versatile content, enough activities, food services and people.

In the last question about the dream event the youth was asked to rate the importance of different aspects of events. The most important aspect according to the youth was the atmosphere of the event. Other things rated the important were content, performer, price and security.

## **4.2 Differences between municipalities**

The last part of the survey was separated between municipalities; each municipality had their own question with individual alternatives. This was to gather information to each municipality and their cultural actors separately. The respondents were asked to choose which of the events, given as answer alternatives, they had visited during the past year. The alternatives were formed from regionally relevant events, everybody answered, and additionally each town's own events.

The results showed that the events that were most visited were the ones organized in the respondents own municipality. Also a mutual factor was that musical events and festivals were more visited than other cultural events.

The biggest difference between the municipalities was that it would seem the youth of Jalasjärvi and Kurikka are less eager to visit events outside their own town. The youth of Peräseinäjoki, Ilmajoki and Ylistaro seem to visit the bigger events outside their own town more. However the research group of these last mentioned towns was so small, that it is inaccurate to make such generalization, since for example in Ylistaro there are more than six people between 14 and 17 years old.

### 4.3 Reflecting results

The survey answered all the research questions to some extent. Although the beginning hypothesis was fairly vague, the survey brought up surprises as well.

The amount of event visiting in the moment turned out to be as expected, also the type of visited events came as no surprise. It is clear that it is easier to visit events organized in the home town, than it is to go somewhere else, especially in Ostrobothnia where the geographical distances are long and people under 18 years old cannot have a drivers licence for a car. Furthermore it could be expected that the youth finds musical events and festivals more interesting than museums for instance.

Based on previous studies it was expected that friends are the biggest influencer when it comes to making the decision to attend or not attend an event. What came as a surprise to the writer however, was how little effect the financial costs have on the decision. In this age group, the presumption is, that they do not have huge income sources of their own and that they would be dependant on their parents.

Considering that 75% of the events the youth attended to had an entrance fee, the assumption could be made that parents provide the needed financial aid to attend an event. If parents are the main source of income for the youth, should the event organizers also consider marketing targeting parents? The youth can also have weekly allowance or they work to get the money somewhere else, in which case the decision how to spend their money is their own.

The research question concerning the opinion and wellbeing of the youth remains contradictive. At the same time the youth thinks that the events have and do not have a positive effect. The majority of the youth felt however that events have a positive effect on out-of-town people's perspective viewing on their home town. This brings up the question, if the youth thinks that events have a positive effect on the town's image from an outsider point of view, does it make them feel more proud about their hometown?



The biggest surprises for the author came in the answers concerning the dream event. As mentioned before, it could be foreseen that friends, performer and content have a significant influence on decision to attend, but as describing a dream event, the writer did not expect safety to be as important as it ended up being. The fact that the majority of the respondents thought safety of the event was one of the three most important adjectives describing an event is something that event organizers should take under consideration. There should also be discussion about why this is the result. Have the respondents attended events where they felt unsafe, is there currently a general feeling of unsafety or was the question formatted in a way that encouraged the respondents to answer in this way.

Also in the question, where the respondents were asked to rate the importance of different aspects of events, security control was rated the fourth important thing. Considering this, the results indicate that security and the feeling of safety are very important for the youth and they have to be thought of more when organizing events for this target group.

Generally speaking, the fact remains that the youth consider friends and people to be the most important issues in events. The performer is also very important and the fact that there is a performer in an event.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Case Aukusti**

As mentioned, I will reflect and discuss the results through Aukusti event, since I have the most knowledge through that event. I have worked in event organizing and with the youth in Ostrobothnia, but also in Jyväskylä the past three years and I have made some important experiences in that time.

Every year there are also other activities included in Aukusti aside the musical performances. In the part where the respondents could fill out what kind of events they want more, there were answers like: events including sporty activities and motorsports. This gives some guidelines for me for the

upcoming events about what kind of activities would be interesting for the youth to add as a sideshow.

The year 2014 the Aukusti team organizes a movie project for the youth, in which the youth can participate in the movie making process from beginning until the end. There is going to be a project in form of a camp, where the youth are going to write, film, act, edit and produce a short film with the help of professional movie makers. The premier of the completed movies is going to be in the event weekend in different movie theaters of the region.

In the project all the municipalities of this thesis are going to be included, and the movie productions are going to be shown in all the movie theaters of the region. This increases the motivation for the youth to show what they are able to do. A professional movie maker is going to guide the project to provide important information of the subject and give valuable experience to the youth.

In the questionnaire, the question asking about the money expenditure in events, an extensive amount of the answers involved movie tickets and movie snacks. These results would indicate to the direction that the youth is interested in movies, which supports the movie project. As the idea was presented to the youth council, the interest was immediately enorm.

Jannu, the youth council of Jalasjärvi, has been a part of the event organizing process of Aukusti from the beginning on. It has been the mission of Aukusti that the youth organizes program for the youth. Although the organizing process of the event has changed from the early days, the basic mission remains the same and the youth is included in the planning and execution process of the event. That is the reason why every year the youth council is consulted about their wishes for performers for Aukusti.

## **5.2 Autoetnographic reflection**

One of the most important experiences to remember when working with youth is that it is a very difficult target audience since the opinions may change rapidly and the interest vary a lot.

As said before, the youth expects there to be a performer in an event. The events I have worked in with the youth, the wish of the youth is in most cases to have some kind of band competitions or other similar events, focusing on having a performer in the event. It seems that youth considers a performer in an event to be very important, events without performers do not seem to be as interesting.

The fact that the youth thinks the events have a positive effect on the image of their home municipality would point to the direction, that they are more proud of their home town because of the events. However it would require additional research to be able to make such statement. My own experiences being a young person in the region, I can say, that I was always proud of my hometown, when there was something special organized in my hometown.

When working in Jalasjärvi and with the youth and talking with them, many of the youngsters said that for them, Aukusti is the most important event during the year, some say the only important event. This is one of the reasons why I think it is fair to say that the event has a positive effect on the youth and events like Aukusti have a positive affect on the opinions of the youth.

### **5.3 Suggestions for the future**

It was a surprise for me that the youth considered safety to be one of the three most important things in an event. I think there should be some additional information gathered about why this is. As I am also from Ostrobothnia and I have always considered the area to be so safe, I have not spared a thought to the matter. It would be interesting to find out why the youth today thinks differently, or if the question formation only gave these type of responses.

It was important to see that young people do go to events also outside their own town, which was one of the important questions for me as an event organizer. The amount of people was nevertheless not as big as I would have hoped for. For this reason the regional event organizers should cooperate more. It is beneficial for all the event organizers in the region, if the youth goes to events outside their own hometown. Collaboration opens many doors for new ideas and probably for saving costs.

In the future the municipal mergers are going to affect the cultural offering of all the mentioned municipalities. Due to the poor financial situation in general, the resources available for the cultural field are going to decrease as well. In the future the event organizers in the area are going to have to work together more closely.

Although safety was one of the most important adjectives the youth chose to describe a good event, it is fair to say that the security personnel is not the reason why anyone would attend an event. The feeling of safety merely increases the positive event visiting experience but probably does not affect the decision to attend. According to the respondents and the personal experience, performer is still the most important aspect in making the decision to attend or not.

It was shown in every municipality in this survey that the youth does attend the events of that town. Is this because the events organized are good or because they are the only available once, is a question that could be asked from the youth in the next survey.

#### **5.4 Problematic and self-assessment**

As explained in the beginning of this thesis concerning my personal researcher profile, this process had a positive outcome for me. Since I organize the Aukusti event in Jalasjärvi, the municipality and the event was included in the questionnaire and the survey gave some guidelines for me. One of these is, that in the open questions where the respondents could mention what kind of events they would wish for more, a number of the respondents wished for more events like Aukusti, which is naturally a positive response for me.

When considering the improvements to the already existing events, the customer participation is taken under consideration in Aukusti already, as well as the regional co-operation aspect of the cultural field. The movie project for the youth is executed together with the youth council, the youth being an active part of the organizing project. This aim in this is to encourage the new generation to become active in the cultural field.

The survey gave answers to the research questions but there were many problems with this thesis. Biggest issue was time. I wrote the thesis while working and doing my practical training at the same time. Because of these reasons there was not enough time to concentrate on the thesis at the early phase of the process when making the questionnaire. Since the questionnaire was the bases for this thesis, this caused many problems. However I noticed the problems only at the writing phase of the thesis which was unfortunately too late.

Now looking back at the process, I would first do the theoretical research part for the thesis before forming the questionnaire. At this thesis I made the questionnaire first and the theoretical background research after that. Had I done it in reverse order, I would have noticed that there are already many theses made on this subject, from which I could have received a lot of valuable information and I could have concentrate on another set of research questions in my research. Now I can see that a lot of the research results received from this survey already exist. This could have been avoided if the theoretical research had been made first.

The question forming for the questionnaire was also problematic. Looking back I can see, they should have been thought through more thoroughly. In the questionnaire many of the questions were somewhat asking the same things. For example the questions, in which the respondents were asked to choose adjectives describing a good event, did not complete each other as it was considered at the beginning. This is also a fact that would have to be reconsidered.

Overall the survey did not give as much new information as the aim was at the planning part of the thesis. There was only a few surprises risen in the answers.

Looking pass the problematics, I do think the survey is the best research method for this kind of research. The collaboration with schools was also a good choice, because it was to best way the get the maximum amount of answers. If the survey had been done by trying the reach the youth only through other channels, for example social media, I do not think the amount of

responds would have been so great. For the future I would suggest to make further survey based on these results to get information that is more in depth and gives more new information and not only verifying old results.

In general, I learned from this process to invest more time in the planning phase of the research in the future. In this case there was a deadline for the thesis because of the Tapahtumalataamo project but in my upcoming studies, I will consider all the factors, including my personal life, better before planning the timetable for a research. However this survey was beneficial for my upcoming work, so although I could not give a lot of new information for all the event organizers, as a thesis process this was satisfactory.

## REFERENCES

Aaltonen, Ojanen, Vihunen & Vilén, 2003. Nuoren aika. 2. uudistettu painos. Porvoo. WSOY

Andersson, L. 2006. Analytical Autoethnography: Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Ohio University.

<http://jce.sagepub.com/content/35/4/373.full.pdf+html>

Bennett, Cieslik & Miles, 2005. Researchin Youth. Palgrave

Etelä-Pohjanmaa, Keski-Pohjanmaan ja Pohjois-Pohjanmaan hyvinvointibarometri 2012, Kuronen-Ojala, M & Lehtonen, M & Rautajoki, A. Seinäjoen ammattikorkeakoulu.

<http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/69067/B75.pdf?sequence=3>

Etelä-Pohjanmaan kulttuuristrategia vuosille 2010-2013,

[http://www.epliitto.fi/upload/files/Kulttuuristrategia\\_vuosille\\_2010\\_2013](http://www.epliitto.fi/upload/files/Kulttuuristrategia_vuosille_2010_2013)

Etelä-Pohjanmaan liitto: <http://www.epliitto.fi/?page=index&lang=en>

Halonen & Hero, 2011, Cultural manager 2020, Partial report 11, Metropolia Helsinki

Helsingin sanomat: <http://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/a1392867062229>

Hirsijärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007. Tutki ja kirjoita, 13.painos. Helsinki.

Tammi

<http://tapahtumainfo.fi/tapahtuma/2013/06/provinssirock-2013/65914>

Hyypä & Liikanen, 2005. Kulttuuri ja terveys. 1.painos. Helsinki. Edita Prima Oy.

Ilkka-lehti: <http://www.ilkka.fi/uutiset/maakunta/elokuvateatteri-aukeaa-digiaikaan-1.1491457>

Karppanen, 2010, Hyväksi havaitut käytännöt, eli näin kirjoitin oppaan Nuori kulttuuri-toimijoille, Opinnäytetyö, Humak

<http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/14953/karppanen.mirja.pdf?sequence=1>

Kauhanen, Juurakko & Kauhanen, 2002. Yleisötapahtuman suunnittelu ja toteutus. 1. Painos. Vantaa. WSOY.

Kojo, 2013, Helsingin kaupungin nuorisoasiankeskuksen tapahtumat nuorten silmin, Opinnäytetyö, Humak,

[http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/59033/Antti\\_Kojo.pdf?sequence=1](http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/59033/Antti_Kojo.pdf?sequence=1)

Lahti, Annakaisa, 2009. Tämä olisi paras liikuntatapahtuma! Opinnäytetyö Metropolia, Helsinki.

[http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/3579/Lahti\\_Annakaisa.pdf?sequence=1](http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/3579/Lahti_Annakaisa.pdf?sequence=1)

Liiveri: [http://www.liiveri.fi/etusivu\\_en](http://www.liiveri.fi/etusivu_en)

Martin, Patricia, 2007. RenGen. Cincinnati. F+W Media, Inc.

Myllyniemi, 2009. Aika vapaalla, nuorten vapaa-aikatutkimus 2009. Helsinki. Yliopistopaino Oy.

Rahkonen, Aki, 2013. Missä nuoriso luuraa? Opinnäytetyö Metropolia.

<http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/61391/AkiRahkonen.pdf?sequence=2>

Seinäjoen sanomat, Tähti-Kino elvytetään henkiin

<http://www.seinajoensanomat.fi/artikkeli/253121-tahti-kino-elvytetaan-henkiin>

Varto 1992. Laadullisen tutkimuksen metodologia. Tampere. Kirjayhtymä

Välipakka-Toivonen Tanja, 2011. Tuoreita tarinoita Lapualta. Opinnäytetyö,

SEAMK. [http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/31022/Valipakka-Toivonen\\_Tanja.pdf?sequence=2](http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/31022/Valipakka-Toivonen_Tanja.pdf?sequence=2)

[www.kurikankino.com/](http://www.kurikankino.com/)

[www.rytmikorjaamo.com/](http://www.rytmikorjaamo.com/)

Yleistietoja kunnittain

[http://www.kunnat.net/fi/tietopankit/tilastot/yleistilastoja\\_kunnittain/Sivut/default.aspx](http://www.kunnat.net/fi/tietopankit/tilastot/yleistilastoja_kunnittain/Sivut/default.aspx)



Yleuutiset: [http://yle.fi/uutiset/keikoilla\\_kaynnit\\_vahentyneet -  
\\_alypuhelin\\_kiinnostaa\\_nuria\\_enemman\\_kuin\\_rock-klubit/7203625](http://yle.fi/uutiset/keikoilla_kaynnit_vahentyneet_-_alypuhelin_kiinnostaa_nuria_enemman_kuin_rock-klubit/7203625)

Zimmerbauer, Kaj. Etelä-Pohjanmaan imagon jäljillä, Helsingin yliopiston  
Maaseudun tutkimus- ja koulutuskeskus, Seinäjoki, 2002,

[http://www.mua.profiili.fi/SIRA\\_Files/downloads/Arkisto/MUA\\_lehti/2002/2\\_02\\_  
zimmerbauer.pdf](http://www.mua.profiili.fi/SIRA_Files/downloads/Arkisto/MUA_lehti/2002/2_02_zimmerbauer.pdf)

## **APPENDICES**

### **5.5 APPENDIX 1**

Questionnaire

### **5.6 APPENDIX 2**

Questionnaire responds