

# WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL HELSINKI 2012

Summary of  
the final report

---

---

# SUMMARY

1

# WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL HELSINKI 2012

## SUMMARY OF THE FINAL REPORT

Helsinki was the World Design Capital of 2012 together with the cities of Espoo, Vantaa, Kauniainen and Lahti. The previous World Design Capitals were Turin (Torino), Italy (2008) and Seoul, South Korea (2010).

The World Design Capital is a title conferred to one city every two years. The goal of the World Design Capital project is to promote and support extensive utilization of design in the social, cultural and economic development of cities.

The World Design Capital title is conferred by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (Icsid). In its definition of the World Design Capital, Icsid emphasizes the project's social mission, its international approach, and the multidimensional and multidisciplinary nature of contemporary design.

Icsid's arguments for designating Helsinki as World Design Capital 2012 included the city's venerable history in design, dynamically developing urban environment, and commitment to the use of design as a source of wellbeing and competitiveness.

Helsinki's goal with the World Design Capital project was to increase the use of design in Finnish society. As a result, the project was to be supported by an exceptionally large network. In addition to the five participating cities, the network was joined by the Finnish State, corporations, universities and other educational institutions, non-profit organizations, foundations and the key actors of the Finnish design sector.

The concept of the World Design Capital complied well with the development plans of Helsinki and the entire Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The strategy of World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 (WDC Helsinki 2012) was developed to implement a significant social project, in which design would play the key role.

The activities of WDC Helsinki 2012 were divided into programme operations and communications. About half of the programme content in Helsinki consisted of development projects, and the other half consisted of public events. Communications played an important role in the achievement of the project's goals.

In its final strategy, WDC Helsinki 2012 approached the theme defined in Helsinki's application for the World Design Capital title, "Open Helsinki - Embedding Design in Life", through three subsidiary themes: Open City, Global Responsibility and The Roots for New Growth.

The Open City theme was meant to launch a process of cultural change in Finland and to put people in the core of design and services. The Global Responsibility theme focused on solutions to challenges in the urban environment that have a major impact on the quality of people's living conditions and wellbeing. The Roots for New Growth theme presented new ways to utilize design as a source of growth.

The participating cities defined three goals for their World Design Capital activities. First, they envisioned activities with long-term effects and larger programme contexts. Second, they sought

to build collaboration between private corporations and the public sector. Third, they sought to increase understanding of design and to integrate design into urban development as a permanent component.

The Finnish State envisioned WDC Helsinki 2012 as complementary to the national economic and innovation policy. The Finnish Government's decision to participate in the project underscored the project's global nature and the opportunities opened by it. The Ministries in charge of the Government's participation in the project were the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, and the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Education and research were in important roles from the beginning of the project and featured prominently in the application phase. WDC Helsinki 2012 collaborated closely with Aalto University, the Lahti Design Institute and the Haaga-Helia and Helsinki Metropolia universities of applied sciences.

Corporate participation was seen as an important contributing factor to successful achievement of the project's goals. A model for corporate participation produced by WDC Helsinki 2012 with Infront Finland met with corporate needs, and World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 was joined by 12 main corporate partners and 9 other corporate partners. The corporate partners used the World Design Capital project for business, product and brand development, and to enhance competitiveness.

Ornamo and Design Forum Finland were important design-sector support organizations for WDC Helsinki 2012 throughout project implementation.

The WDC Helsinki 2012 project was implemented and managed by International Design Foundation, which represented all the main participating and support organizations. The foundation's main task was to manage overall project implementation. The foundation's work was steered by a board and a committee.

From the beginning of the project, funding for WDC Helsinki 2012 was to come from three sources. The total funding for 2010-2013 was divided between the participating cities, the State and private-sector sources.

The project planning was based on a 15-million-euro budget. The cities were to provide 6 million, the State 5 million and private-sector sources 4 million for the budget. The cities' shares were determined by their total population.

The final budget managed by International Design Foundation was 17.8 million euro. The difference between the initial and final budget sums is mostly explained by higher than expected private-sector funding. In the end, corporations and foundations provided a total of 6.5 million euro for the project, which markedly exceeds the original goal of 4 million euro. International Design Foundation's final accounts show a small surplus.

When reviewing the project economy as a whole, it should be noted that the project's actual funding is markedly higher than the budget managed by International Design Foundation. The budgets of the programme components and other WDC Helsinki 2012 related activities by various actors are not reflected in the foundation's budget. No estimate is available of the total economic scope of WDC Helsinki 2012.

The task of the WDC Helsinki 2012 office was to manage the project as a whole and to maintain collaboration between the various participating actors. The office also managed the planning and implementation of communications and marketing in Finland and abroad.

The communication and marketing activities stemmed from two premises: the WDC Helsinki 2012 strategy and the general definition of the World Design Capital. The guiding principles in all communications were openness and interaction. The main languages used were Finnish, Swedish and English.

The goal of communications was to open up the possibilities of design and to present the multidimensional nature of design. Marketing communication sought to reach out to new publics. The activities also strove to increase the general awareness of the World Design Capital, because Helsinki was only the third World Design Capital city.

The WDC Helsinki 2012 office managed general communications and the coordination of various communication activities. The sub-projects handled detailed, project-specific communications. The office encouraged the many WDC Helsinki 2012 stakeholder groups to carry out their own communication activities and supported these activities with materials.

The main communication channel was the Internet. In addition to maintaining its website, WDC Helsinki 2012 was active in social media and distributed materials online.

The media work culminated in media trips, media events and thematic media meetings. The communication work of WDC Helsinki 2012 was supported by one Finnish and five international communication agencies.

The media attention attracted by WDC Helsinki 2012 exceeded expectations. Hits in the Finnish media numbered 7,000 and those in the international media 8,000. The international media hits were distributed throughout the world.

The most popular marketing communication project was the Kauko Café, which was based on interaction and feedback on design. Kauko was recognized by many international and national marketing communication awards and listings.

The visual identity of WDC Helsinki 2012 was seen on flags in the city centre and, among others sites, in the concourses of Helsinki's international airport.

The WDC Helsinki 2012 programme was divided into two main categories: development projects and events.

The World Design Capital contract committed WDC Helsinki 2012 to organize a globally significant, year-long programme. The programme strategy of WDC Helsinki 2012 centered around the project's main themes: Open City, Global Responsibility and The Roots for New Growth.

The production and financing of programme components was primarily not the responsibility of the WDC Helsinki 2012 office; that responsibility lied with the organizers of the programme components. Mutual responsibilities were defined in agreements made between WDC Helsinki 2012 and the organizers.

The programme of WDC Helsinki 2012 was mainly compiled through an open application process. WDC Helsinki received 1,400 proposals, and about one-fifth of them were selected for the official WDC Helsinki 2012 programme. WDC Helsinki 2012 also implemented the Signature Events included in the programmes of all World Design Capital cities, as well as an extensive international programme. The total number of projects was 551, which exceeded the plan.

Support organizations were in important roles in the compilation of the programme. The cities, the State, corporations, universities and other organizers developed content and also implemented projects outside the official programme.

The programme was divided into six categories: Transforming the City, Rethinking Design, Year of Events, Exhibitions, Encounters, and Communications.

The Transforming the City category included development projects stemming from the transformation of the urban environment. Rethinking Design introduced areas of application, such as service design, strategic design and information design.

The Year of Events category included various public events. Exhibitions numbered over 100. The WDC Helsinki 2012 year saw expert forums and seminars, as well as new books, magazines, online publications and electronic applications.

The total audience of WDC Helsinki 2012 was about 2.5 million. Many of the development projects were launched only in the end of 2012, and they will continue far into the future.

The first results of WDC Helsinki 2012 emerged during 2012. The conclusions of the year's impact were drawn from studies, surveys and observations.

By the end of 2012, design had become an increasingly important social issue and topic of public discussion in Finland. The available materials suggest that citizen understanding of design had increased, and the user perspective had become more prominent in design.

Design was used to solve problems in diverse contexts. Design education for children and young people was strengthened, new forms of collaboration emerged, and new places and channels for activities were created. Helsinki emerged as an internationally appealing design city and served as a meeting place for the global design community.

The total impact of the WDC Helsinki 2012 project can be assessed and reviewed from many angles, and assessments will change with time. For example, the results of development projects will only be seen in the course of time.

The impact of WDC Helsinki 2012 was studied by Deloitte. Deloitte's impact assessment was published together with the project's final report.

---

# FACTS & FIGURES

2

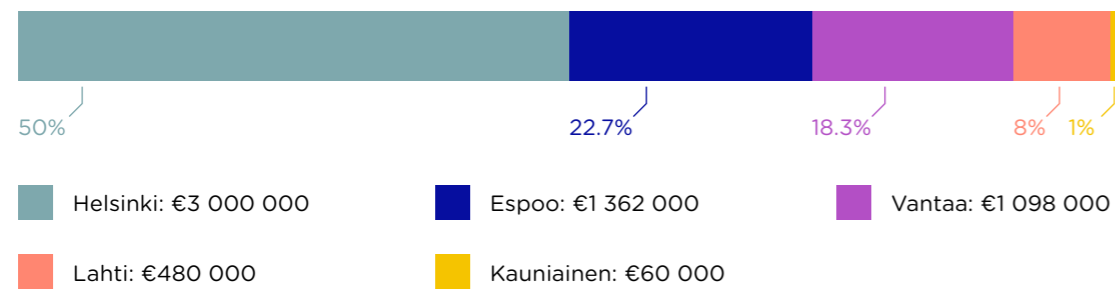
## BUDGET

€17.8 million for 2010–2013

## FUNDING

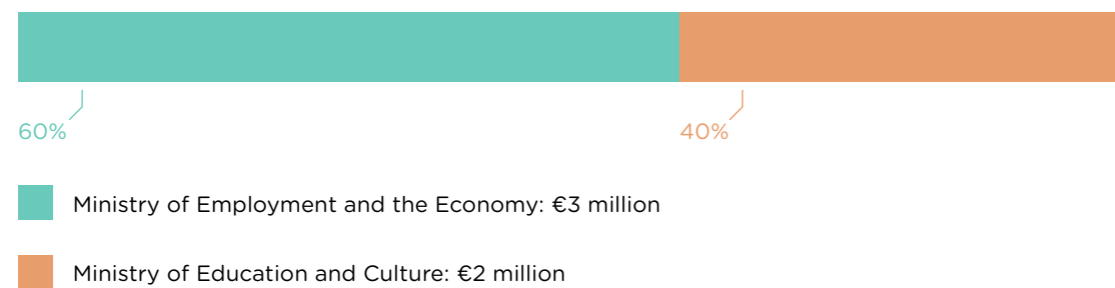
### CITIES

€6 million



### FINNISH STATE

€5 million



### CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS

€6.8 million



The total budgets of individual projects and other WDC Helsinki 2012 related activities by various actors are not reflected in the WDC Helsinki 2012 budget.

### EXPENDITURE

Programme: €7.2 million

Communications and marketing: €6.0 million

Personnel, licence fees and administration: €4.5 million

### PROGRAMME

Projects: 551

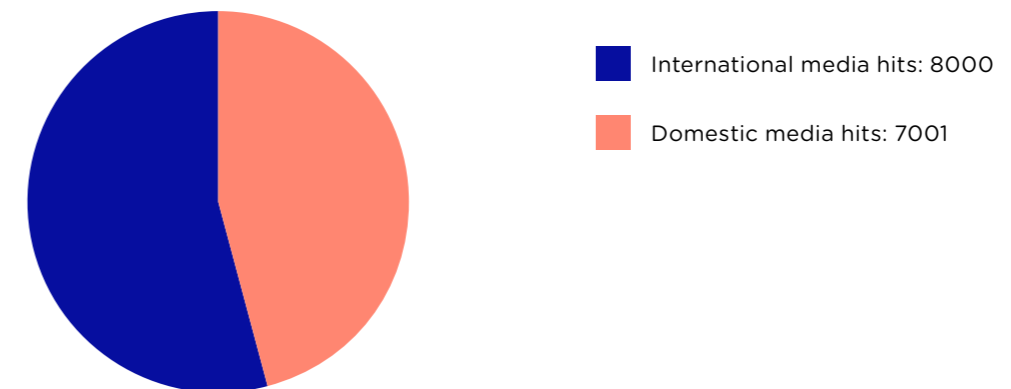
Events: 2.800

Implementing organizations: 290

People involved in implementation: 14.500

Total audience: over 2.5 million

### MEDIA



Media hits were registered from about 100 countries.

In 2012 Helsinki, together with Espoo, Vantaa, Kauniainen and Lahti is the World Design Capital.  
The theme for World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 is Open Helsinki - Embedding Design in Life.

MAIN PARTNERS



## FINAL REPORT SUMMARY

### EDITORS

World Design Capital Helsinki 2012  
Summary of the final report

EDITOR

*Emmi Jäkkö*

AND

*Laura Aalto,  
Kaarina Gould,  
Sanna-Mari Jäntti,  
Maarit Kivistö,  
Tiina-Kaisa Laakso-Liukkonen  
ja Pekka Timonen.*

DESIGN

*Kokoro & Moi*

Published by Kansainvälinen designsäätiö

