

National report for Finland – September 2013

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Country Finland
Organisation Suomen Rautatiematkustajat ry, <http://www.rautatiematkustajat.fi/>
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Positive points for public transport in our country:

1. A common travel card for 22 major cities¹ is to be gradually introduced (Helsinki region will also join later²).
2. According to newspaper reports, the enfant terrible in the bus industry, Onnibus Oy³ (pun of omnibus), has managed to woo passengers from private cars.⁴
3. Finnish Pendolinos are going through a mid-life overhaul. It aims to fix reliability problems. This includes changing automatic couplers to a new type and improving tilt features. Because of the programme, quite a few trains have been withdrawn, i.e. all those between Helsinki and Turku.

Negative points for public transport in our country:

1. The Finnish Government decided to grant a five-year extension to VR Group's long-distance passenger service monopoly in the heat of the summer.⁵ This is actually a good bad example of what EU legislation can cause in spite of good intentions. Before Regulation (EC) No 1370 / 2007⁶ came into force, VR monopoly was based on parliamentary law. But as it came into force, the Cabinet could decide on the matter (and also did so). And consequently, the extension was also granted without whatsoever consultation with the Parliament. There was also messing with the secrecy of the deal. Even if VR was in favour of a prompt publishing of the the whole document, the Ministry decided to withhold everything at first and after a public outcry kept two articles in the dark until early September. All in all, we think that the whole VR passenger monopoly business contravenes procedural and material EU regulations and a complaint to the Commission is in the making.
2. Helsinki Region Transport (HSL)⁷ won't follow Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority's⁸ recommendation to give partial refund to a passenger because of trains running late (every day for seven months with an average late-running time of 15 minutes)⁹¹⁰. The passenger could have used other modes, HSL rationalizes (unfortunately there is no link to this flash of wit made publicly).
3. Money shortage might postpone Helsinki underground night traffic trial at

¹ http://yle.fi/uutiset/yhteinen_matkakortti_22_suomen_kaupunkiin/6832982

² <http://www.finlandtimes.fi/travel/2013/09/17/2471/Introducing-common-travel-card-among-main-cities-likely#sthash.3hf4wIkD.dpuf>

³ <http://www.onnibus.fi/en/>

⁴ <http://raumalainen.fi/jutut/rauma-ja-alue/juttu-onnibus-syo-pikkuautoilijoita>

⁵ <http://www.railwaygazette.com/news/policy/single-view/view/vr-retains-long-distance-passenger-train-monopoly.html>

⁶ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:315:0001:0013:EN:PDF>

⁷ <http://www.hsl.fi/en>

⁸ <http://www.kkv.fi/en-GB/>

⁹ <http://www.uusisuomi.fi/kotimaa/59546-juna-oli-myohassa-joka-paiva-7-kuukauden-ajan-matkustajalle-korvaus>

¹⁰

<http://www.hs.fi/mielipide/a1377064529336?jako=f403c86024cd49c4e3d2d0a2a437e460&ref=fb-share>



weekends.¹¹

NOTE: If the provided links are in Finnish, google translator might provide you understandable text. And if something is still left open, you can ask details from us.

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<http://www.hs.fi/kaupunki/HSL+Rahapula+saattaa+est%C3%A4%C3%A4+y%C3%B6metrokokein/a1380081084155>