

National report for Finland – January 2017: 100 % public

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Organisation	Suomen Rautatiematkustajat ry, http://www.rautatiematkustajat.fi/
Name	Kalevi Kämäräinen

Positive points for public transport in our country:

1. [The city of Tampere](#) decided to construct a [tram system](#) in November and preparatory works have already started (there [have not been passenger carrying trams](#) in Tampere before). [The city of Turku](#) still only [dreams](#) of reintroducing them.
2. The city of Helsinki ordered another [20 new Artic trams](#) from Transtech which is nowadays a [Skoda subsidiary](#).
3. [New rail transport agreement](#) between Finland and Russia was put into operation in December. It opens cross-border freight and passenger services to competition. There was an immediate positive reaction on the freight side: Fenniarail orders [two more diesel engines](#) from Czech CZ Loko (because VR once refused to sell its own used locomotives and our Competition Authority okayed that attitude). On the imaginative side one could now dream about a train service St. Petersburg – Joensuu – Kontiomäki – Oulu – Haaparanta (Sweden).
4. Finnish Transport Safety Agency has opened also railway related data for public use (railway rolling stock register¹). For some reason, this fact has not been made public [in English](#).
5. Old German model so called [blue carriages](#)² are now out of service. This is good news for main line passengers who will have more modern carriages but bad for others. Even Finnish Broadcasting Corporation [YLE](#) buys VR's argument without critic that the carriages are no good for any further use (like neglected cross country services with speeds like 200 kilometres only a dream) unlike their [role model state](#).
6. Helsinki Regional Transport Authority agreed to introduce MaaS (Mobility as a service) in November³. It is surprising that this novelty is not publicized in English by the Authority itself but [enlightened individuals](#).
7. The new timetable by VR weakens services in [Toijala](#) and [Hämeenlinna](#). At the same time stopping patterns have been harmonised so that a train calls at [Lempäälä](#) once in an hour (midday excluded) and twice an hour at rush hours. This provides a sort of precursor to future suburban rail service around Tampere.

Negative points for public transport in our country:

1. A fresh EU report tells the rude fact: Finland was the only state with just one railway undertaking in 2014 ([page nine](#)). The price evolution between Finland and progressive Sweden makes also miserable reading ([page 55](#)). One could think that these facts, among other things, would fast track current minister's aims to open passenger rail traffic to competition. But the latest announced deadline (New Year) came and went with no forthcoming. So it seems that this [saga](#) of market opening with as well hush-hush as undisguised intrigues à la The Bold and the Beautiful still goes on (see our [previous National report](#)).

NOTE: If this report and links are not informative enough, we'll be happy to provide further details.

¹ http://www.trafi.fi/tietopalvelut/avoin_data

² https://fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siniset_vaunut

³ <https://www.hsl.fi/uutiset/2016/hsln-hallitus-hyvaksyi-sopimusmallin-matkaketjuysteistyosta-9317>