

National report for Finland – October 2016: 100 % public

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

Positive points for public transport in our country:

1. For the first time in living memory the Ministry asked (and received plenty of) comments on how the non-commercially oriented train services should be run by VR.¹ VR still tried to dictate the process by offering a three-year arrangement², but for the first time also in living memory it seems that the Minister had read the provisions of VR's monopoly agreement and struck only a one-year term.
2. The revised timetable starting December [returns many services](#) that were cut recently and those municipalities that started paying for them need not do that any more.
3. [Preparations](#) for the second phase of the Transport Code have started. It will contain provisions on air, sea and rail transport markets as well as on transportation services. As we can see, details are still pending, but the current Minister of Transport and Communications forecasts that there will be another passenger train operator already next year.³
4. Even if there is nothing concrete still, how the passenger rail monopoly will be torn up, signs of new life are emerging. For example, there is an alternative train operator Reissujuna⁴ and a new rolling stock manufacturer⁵ which aims to construct a hybrid engine to smoothen services on routes that are only partially electrified⁶. Even the "rural" city of [Kuopio](#) plans regional train traffic and explicitly mentions private options (and good Central European examples) instead of VR⁷.
5. Even 105 MP's out of 200 are fed up with secrecy of publicly owned limited companies ([Western Metro extension](#) specially mentioned) and have signed a bill⁸ that would make [Act on the Openness of Government Activities](#) applicable to them.
6. Bus operators' umbrella company [Matkahuolto](#) has started selling train tickets⁹.

Negative points for public transport in our country:

1. Although VR could not dictate any more, how the non-commercially oriented train services should run, all hopes and desires of the regions were not met. This is partly because the Ministry "woke up" pretty late, so the regions and the Ministry itself had pretty little leeway to form opinion of their own (there is a deadline in the VR monopoly agreement regarding service alterations) and partly because the train running expertise is still heavily in the hands of VR.
2. Opening of the Western Metro extension in Helsinki [has been postponed](#) until further notice. It was supposed to start running in August, but shortly put, everything has gone wrong with the project¹⁰.

NOTE: If this report and links are not informative enough, ask further details from us.

¹ <https://www.lvm.fi/asiat-aikajarjestyksessa/-/mahti/asianasiakirjat/71644>

² <http://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/a1474606071112?jako=59885cbf16cbc5b0136427a58d4c82e1&ref=og-url>

³ <http://www.kaleva.fi/uutiset/kotimaa/vr-saa-kilpailijan-raiteille-ensi-vuonna-uskoo-liikenneministeri/736749/>

⁴ <http://reissujuna.fi/>

⁵ <http://www.suomenkiskokalustotehdas.fi/>

⁶ <http://www.ilkka.fi/uutiset/maakunta/hybridiveturi-toisi-nopean-poikittaisyhteyden-1.2140180>

⁷ <http://www.savonsanomat.fi/kotimaa/Kuopioon-visioidaan-l%C3%A4hijunia-Ei-unelias->

[maaseutukaupunki/850473](http://www.savonsanomat.fi/kotimaa/Kuopioon-visioidaan-l%C3%A4hijunia-Ei-unelias-maaseutukaupunki/850473)

⁸ <https://www.uusisuomi.fi/raha/205628-lansimetro-salailulle-loppu-105-kansanedustajaa-allekirjoitti-lakialoitteen>

⁹ <https://www.matkahuolto.fi/fi/uutiset/94/vrn-junaliput-matkahuollosta/>

¹⁰ <http://yle.fi/uutiset/3-9022192>, <https://helsinginmetro.wordpress.com/2016/10/10/lansirintamalta-ei-utisia/>