Report of Study Visit to Finland

Community Creation Section,
Planning Department,
INA City Hall

1 Period

17th to 24th May 2025, 5 nights and 8 days

2 Purpose

・To accelerate cooperation based on forests and learning, promote cooperation projects that make use of the Memorandum of Understanding with North Karelia, Finland.
・Focus on practical learning connected to daily life, learning in nature and how people grow up.
・Exchange views with organisations already in contact with each other.
・Talk with people involved in business and education and seek opportunities for future cooperation with Ina City.

Education Group:
・Observe classes in nature and interaction of teachers and children.
・Learn about the current situations of Finnish schools including how they use digital devices in class, through talking with the teachers after school.
Business Group:
・To discuss with companies, universities and other relevant organizations, focusing on areas of potential cooperation with Ina City.
・Tour business bases from the participants' specialised perspectives, such as forestry, food and construction.
・Learn from Finnish people's approach to resource and energy recycling, from sustainable industries that utilise sidestreams to create new products.

3 Background

Based on previous visits and exchanges, there are many things we can learn from Finnish societal standards.
These include various learning methods, a flexible working style, generous childcare support, mutual assistance, equal human relationships, environmental awareness, a spirit of challenge, mutual recognition of diversity and freedom, and problem-solving learning. We assume that Finnish values stem from childhood education and the support of adults. The aim of this visit is to explore how these diverse values and situations are nurtured and to find ways to incorporate them into our own society.

4 Member of the delegation: 18 people

Including the Mayor, civil workers of Nagano Prefecture and Ina City, city council members, Professor of university, students and citizens involved in local education and industry.

5 Places visited

The delagation stayed in Joensuu and Helsinki and visited the following places.

All members: Koli National Park, Savukka smoke sauna, Regional Council of North Karelia, Tuusulan Lukio

Education Group: Heinavaara school, Marjala school, Eno school

Business Group: Business Joensuu, VTT Technical research Centre, Business Finland, Natural Resources Institute Finland (LUKE), University of Eastern Finland, University of Helsinki, Espoo City, Tampere City, offices of some start-up businesses, characteristic wooden buildings, etc.

6 Itinerary

<table>
<tr><th>Date</th><th>Business Group</th><th>Education Group</th></tr>
<tr><td>Day 1
17 May</td><td colspan="2">●13:00　Leave Ina City Hall
●17:30　Arrive at Haneda Airport
●21:50　 Depart to Helsinki（AY　062）</td></tr>
<tr><td>Day 2
18 May

Joensuu</td><td colspan="2">●7:00　Arrive at Helsinki Airport
●10:11　Tikkurila Station　　●14:51　Joensuu Station
●16:00~16:45 Guided tour at Koli National Park
●17:00~18:30　Savukka smoke sauna
●18:30~20:00 Dinner at　Ravintola Ryynänen
Experienced a sauna that made the most of the local area's best features.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Day 3
19 May

Joensuu</td><td colspan="2">●9:00~12:45 Heinavaara School Visit
Observed the classes in the nature, had discussion with the teachers.</td></tr>
<tr><td>●13:00~15:00 METLA TALO
Visited Forest Joensuu and forest-related businesses of LUKE
●15:30~16:45 UEF
・Meeting with professors
・Introduction of Ina City
●15:30~16:30LIGHTHOUSE Joensuu
Wooden building of CLT method</td><td>●ENO School visit
Observed the classes in the nature, had discussion with the teachers.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">●17:30~20:00　Vainoniemen Huvila (Sauna in Joensuu)
・Experienced electric sauna
・Learned about sauna effects from the wood workers</td></tr>
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Day 4 20 May Joensuu	Visited several offices in Joensuu. ●9:00~9:45 Karelian Paju Biochar producing company ●10:00~11:00 Kupilka Company of tableware made from wood-based materials ●11:30~12:30 Sitowise Smart forestry company ●14:00~14:45Karelia Puutec Sauna hut company	●Marjala School visit Observed the classes in the nature, had discussion with the teachers. (Another group) ●Heinavaara School visit ・Accompanied a field trip to forest. ・Talked with teachers about future exchange.
	●16:00~17:15 Meeting at Regional Council of North Karelia ・Visit Mayor Markus Hirvonen, greeting from Ina Mayor ・Presentation from the professionals of bioeconomy, forestry and education ●18:00~20:00 Dinnar @Filipof	
Date	Business Group	Education Group
Day 5 21 May Helsinki and Joensuu	●8:00 Leave Joensuu（AY 342） ●9:05 Arrive at Helsinki ●11:00 Lunch meeting with VTT members ●12:00~14:30 VTT headquarter ①VTT②Espoo City③Business Finland ●14:45～15:30 Aalto University ●16:00～17:00 University of Helsinki ・Introduction of UoH ・Talk about future collaboration with Shinshu University in Ina	●Marjala School Visit ・Observe classes in nature ・Introductorial presentation from Ina City (Another group) ●ENO School visit ・Observe pre-school classes ●14:00 ~15:00 ・Visit youth center
Day 6 22 May Tampere and Helsinki	① Tampere City Visit ●10-11 Visit VTT research centre ●12-13 Lunch meeting with Tampere City officials ●13:20-14:20 Visit Hiedanranta (smart city) ○14:40-15:40 Visit Pirkanmaan Jätehuolto Oy (waste treatment facility)	●8:00 Leave Joensuu（AY 342） ●9:05 Arrive at Helsinki ●10:00~14:00 Visit Kesakumpu (Daycare of Pilke Group) ・Observe activities in nature and talked with the teacher
	(Another group) ②Helsinki University Vikki Campus ●Presentation from professors and representatives of start-up businesses	

	(food, fermentation, forestry, architecture, etc.)	
Day 7 23 May Helsinki	●AM: Free time ●12:20 Leave the hotel ●13:00~14:30 Tuusukan Lukio（multi-purpose public facility including high school, art school, music school, etc.） ・School tour from the high school students ●18:30 Depart to Haneda（AY 061）	
Day 8 24 May	●13:50 Arrive at Haneda Airport ●18:30 Arrive at Ina	

7 Details of the visit

Place	**VTT Technical research Centre** **・TT Future Centre Hub (development centre for future technologies)** **・ Micronova (advanced semiconductor research & development facility).**

・Presentation by Mr Edgar Bohner, Vice President (Doctor of Engineering, Built Environment & Mobility).

・An introductory presentation was given by Ina City on the following topics

-Steady primary industry and lifestyle with the forest

-Using new industrial technologies to solve problems

-Initiatives for decarbonisation, 50-year forestry vision, etc.

・The focus is not only on the growth of VTT alone, but also on the growth of the partner company. In addition to having its own patents, the company has a system for using its patents to create new start-ups.

・The company has a flexible response to various cases by forming an ecosystem that looks ahead and promotes the involvement of diverse companies and stakeholders, with VTT co-ordinating this.

・While some systems are holistic, others are specialised technologies (e.g. quantum computer nuclear energy).

[History of exchange with VTT]

- The Mayor visited Ambassador Tanja at the Embassy of Finland in February 2024
- VTT researchers visited Ina City in May. They visited a wood pellet factory, historical buildings and the streets of Takato, and exchanged opinions with city officials.

In October, Mayor Shiratori was invited to an exchange meeting organised by the VTT at the Embassy of Finland, where Ina City was introduced through Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting. Since then, exchanges have continued with Finnish officials.

Place	Business Finland, Business Tampere, Business Helsinki

Presentations from representatives of the three organisations, introduction of initiatives in Ina City, and exchange of views on issues and initiatives were made.

■ **Business Finland**

- From Reijo Smolander, International Business Manager

He introduced the joint project by Finland and Japan on decarbonisation and de-plastics. They support the development of sustainable materials in Finland and promote cooperation with Japanese urban strategies. (e.g. Tokyo's Zero Emissions Strategy, development of bio-based alternative materials for plastics and realising a circular economy)

In Japan, 80% of waste is currently recyclable, but 60% of this is incinerated. In contrast, Business Finland is focusing on technologies that return waste to new raw materials rather than incinerating it, and is acting as a link between Finnish companies and Japanese municipalities and companies.

For example, the use of wood-based biomass and technology to break down plastic waste and convert it into renewable materials could contribute to waste management in urban areas, which has a high affinity with Ina City. We can expect to build a sustainable model that makes use of local resources by deepening our cooperation with Finnish technical and research institutions.

■ **Business Tampere**

- From Oliver Hussey, ICT Representative.

We learn about the birth of Business Tampere, the role it played and the initiatives it undertook. Tampere used to support the development of telecommunications technology as one of Nokia's main locations, but when Nokia downsized, the City of Tampere established Business Tampere to diversify the industry and promote innovation.

Currently, the city is building a sustainable local economy by converting the city into a smart city, focusing on four sectors: semiconductors, renewable energy and recycling, artificial intelligence and defence. To this end, industrial transformation is being promoted with an emphasis on creating jobs for local residents, and Business Tampere is not merely a technological innovation, but also plays a role in stimulating the local labour market.

Basically, they provide services free of charge and some institutions promote investment, making them excellent mechanisms for connecting Tampere to the rest of the world and investing in the region. It also focuses on co-ordination to formulate business ecosystems.

The Triple Helex model (industry-government-academia collaboration + citizen collaboration) is used to create efficient innovation, and the one-stop free coordination service for businesses is also a distinctive feature. Business owners are connected to Business Tampere, which gives them access to the specific parties they wish to collaborate with.

■ **Business Helsinki**

From Jochen Faugel, Business Representative of SISU FACTORY and
Sakino Yamate, Project Coordinator of Business Helsinki.

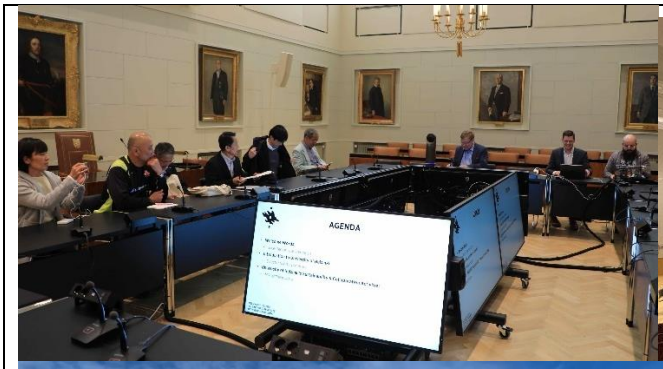
They take advantage of the start-up environment in Helsinki and develop their business by building an international network through participation in large matchmaking events. In particular, through events such as SLUSH, the project promotes cooperation with investors and companies and contributes to the acceleration of sustainable innovation.

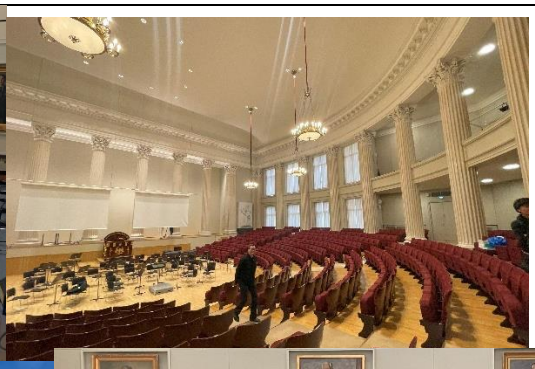
-In the future, if a business is found in Finland that would like to develop Ina's distinctive approach in their own region, Business Helsinki could support them. Japanese staff are also available and the interaction is likely to be smooth.
Examples of themes
- New industries such as telemedicine and VTOL.
-Product development using natural materials such as wooden threads and paper.
-Mobility, smart cities, energy, forestry, etc.

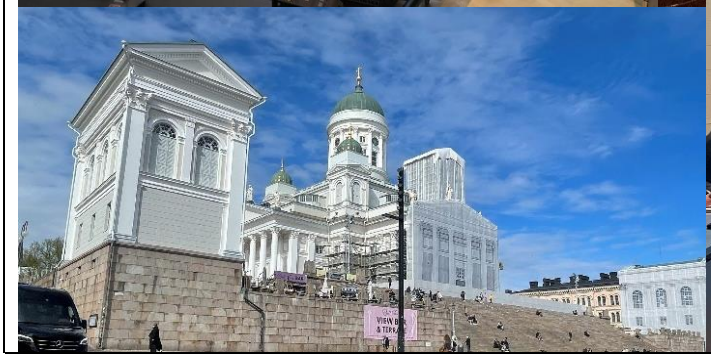


Place	University of Helsinki City centre campus

We exchanged views with Vice-Principal Jouni Hirvonen and Mikael Malmivaara, International Relations Officer, on further collaboration.
The University of Helsinki has three basic policies on sustainability: sustainable wellbeing, achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 and responsible planning, which are close to Ina City's approach.
They also work with universities and companies such as Aalto University.
The University of Helsinki has had previous exchanges with Ina City and Shinshu University, and we visited them to promote specific cooperation.
[History of exchange with the University of Helsinki]
-After a visit to the Finnish Embassy in February 2024, the VTT introduced us to the University of Helsinki.
-After a series of online meetings for inter-university and inter-regional cooperation, Mari Sandel, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, and Mikael visited Ina City in November. They visited a woody pellet factory, a sake brewery and a soba restaurant, forestry and food-related facilities. They also exchanged views with Shinshu University professors and city officials.







Place	University of Helsinki Vikki campus

・Prof. Kirsi Mikkonen

(Researcher of mushroom fiber and food development)

She gave a presentation on the commercialisation of mushroom butter.(1/3 mushroom, 1/3 onion, 1/3 vegetable oil)
She is preparing to start her own business with the support of Business Finland.
She grows edible mushrooms hydroponically, whereas mushroom mycelium is usually grown in soil. The cultivated mycelium can be used not only for food, but also for packaging and construction materials.
She develops food products that are recommended by the government for the health of the population. (Reduced meat consumption, use of naturally occurring food lignocellulose)
Mushrooms contain a diverse range of nutrients, including protein, amino acids, trehalose, good oil, and fibre is good for the gut.
The mycelial part of the mushroom is easier to grow than the part we normally eat, and the use of the mycelium is more effective, so a culture plant is currently under construction.

・Prof. Kati Katina

(Development of fermented foods, previously worked as a VTT researcher)

She mainly studies the taste of food products made from cereals and pulses.
She develops foods recommended by the government for people's health (plant-based dairy products).
Research on fermentation techniques using fava beans to solve the following problems specific to plant protein foods.

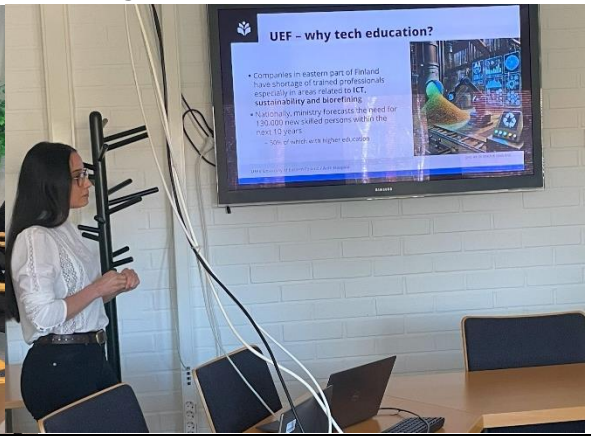
-Low iron and vitamin B12 content.
-Taste, texture and digestion are poor.
-Bitter taste, which humans instinctively perceive as dangerous.
The food produced by her research has reduced bitterness and reproduced the texture of meat.

・Prof. Mario Palviainen (Afforestation research)

75% of Finland's land area is forested, of which 11% is protected state forest and 60% is privately owned forest. The forestry industry accounts for 18% of total exports.
1/3 of the forests are peat soils, which are drained and then forested, but there are also problems with nutrients leaching out of the removed water.
The tree species in Finland are mainly western pine, spruce and birch.
For more than 100 years, data on forest drainage, nutrient supplementation and seedling improvement methods have been available and people have been improving them. As a result, the rate of forest growth has increased in Finland over the past 50 years.They manage forests in cycles of 50-100 years.
From the time the trees are planted until they grow to a size of 1 m to 7 m, they are managed by clear-underbrushing. The trees are then thinned when they reach a height of 10-16 m.
Just before felling, fertilisers such as nitrogen, minerals and urea are applied. In peat areas, wood ash, potassium, etc. are also given.

Place	**University of Helsinki**

Mayor Shiratori, Prof Katayama and others visited UEF in preparation for the collaboration between Shinshu University and UEF.
Presentation by Prof Jouni Hirvonen.
-Applied educational science and teacher education and teacher training schools.
-Wood and timber procurement
There are few universities in Finland where students can study Japanese culture and language, but UEF has it and has about 30 students.
In Finland, each university has its own teacher training programme; at UEF, students who have completed a master's degree can become teachers.
The UEF suggested that it would be possible to exchange students in the future.

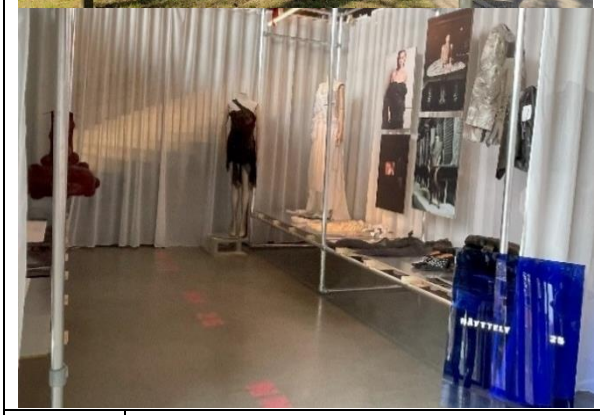


Place	Aalto University

Visit coordinated by VTT.

Aalto University is one of the most popular universities in Finland over the past few years, with an international reputation for interdisciplinary education and research in technology, business and design, particularly in the field of art and design. It is one of the most popular universities in Finland in recent years.

The Espoo City Hall is located on the same site, and industry-academia collaboration is very active, creating an environment conducive to accelerated innovation. University research and start-ups are closely connected to the city's technology and enterprises, which can also be a place for sustainable urban development and circular economy practices. In addition, the environment facilitated the involvement of students and administrative staff, which could easily generate new perspectives and practical learning. The government is responsible for solving local problems, while the young people can make use of their flexible ideas and digital device skills. This is how both sides cooperate and may lead to participation in experimental smart city and environmental policy projects.



Place	Aalto design factory (in Aalto University)

The “Aalto Design Factory” has been established within Aalto University as an interdisciplinary innovation centre, where students and researchers from different disciplines work together on practical projects. Originally launched in 2008 as the Future Lab of Product Design, it has functioned as a prototype for cross-disciplinary learning even before the establishment of Aalto University.

Currently, it has strengthened its ties with business and industry and serves as a place for co-creation of product development between companies, students and researchers, facilitating the fusion of design, engineering and business. It is a place where students and companies can work on creative problem-solving through practical projects.

The philosophy is Passion-Based Learning. The school's policy is that students are not forced to learn by someone else, but can truly learn from their own inner curiosity and passion, which is the spirit of entrepreneurship.

The aim is ‘an environment where teachers can offer attractive courses and projects’. The aim is ‘an environment where teachers can offer attractive courses and projects’, and there are various mechanisms to create a ‘sandbox-like place where students can freely try things out’.

For example:

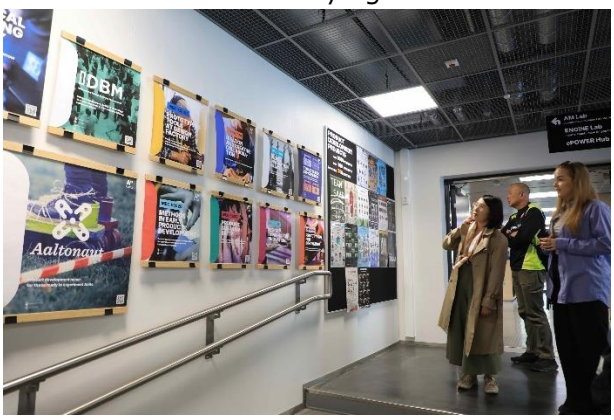
・Open space available 24 hours a day where students and companies can freely exchange ideas.

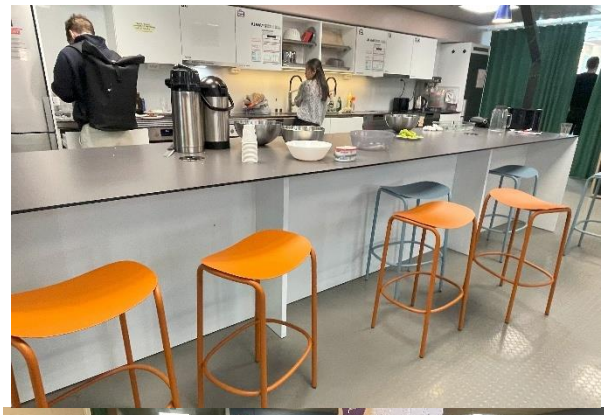
In addition to a kitchen space for cooking, eating and drinking and socialising, there was a world map and a webcam next to the kitchen space that connected to other locations in real time, with an eye to international collaboration.

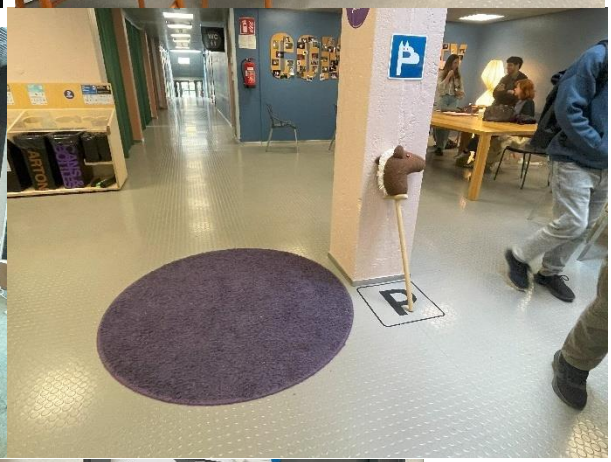
There was also an inclusive perspective to ensure that no one was left behind. If someone was in the purple circle, we would always talk to them or touch them.

The contact and attendance lists are publicly available for students to contact whenever they need to know or want to gain skills.

We were impressed that the students who showed us around the school were able to answer all our questions and share their own stories. We are convinced that this is made possible by education from an early age.







Place	Espoo City

Espoo shares many similarities with Ina City in the following respects.

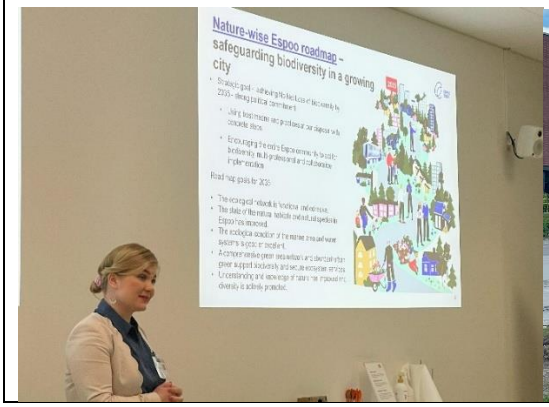
-Promotion of sustainable urban development and smart cities.

-Circular economy and the use of digital technology.

-A lot of nature and popularity from migrants.

- It has a regional branding perspective.

Espoo's CO2 emissions are mostly related to district heating and mobility. In the future, efforts will be made to reduce CO2 emissions from personal mobility.



Place	Tampere City

・Tampere has developed as an industrial and innovation centre. The city once prospered from spinning and hydroelectric power generation, and now has a thriving IT and machinery industry. The city is also rich in cultural attractions, such as the Moomin Museum and Tampere Cathedral, and is committed to sustainable urban development. In the Hiedanranta area, they are building a new city as a smart city.

・They are working on CityVerse, a virtual vision of the city, with the aim of making it attractive.

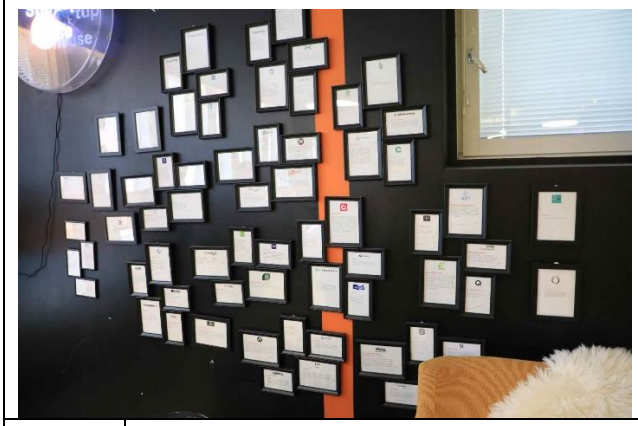
・They place importance on manufacturing, the formation of eco-systems and a recycling-oriented society (recently, the use of hydrogen). They are working on energy self-sufficiency, for example by converting renewable energy into various forms.

Place	Platform6 （The heart of Tampere's startup ecosystem）

It offers a range of start-up support activities, programmes and numerous matchmaking and networking events with investors, companies, business service providers and technology companies. It is managed by the Tampere Startup Hub (TSH).

It is a non-profit organisation founded by local entrepreneurs and start-up community builders who are pioneers in the start-up ecosystem.

It has a diverse range of facilities, including co-working spaces (including private rooms), kitchens, saunas, verandas, multipurpose squares and spaces for making things, all of which are open to the public. Compared to other start-ups in the Tampere region,
they have been able to grow faster. The space is designed in various ways to provide a place where people can gather in a relaxed atmosphere.

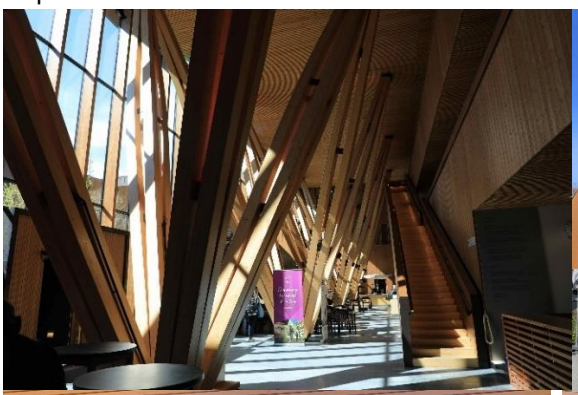


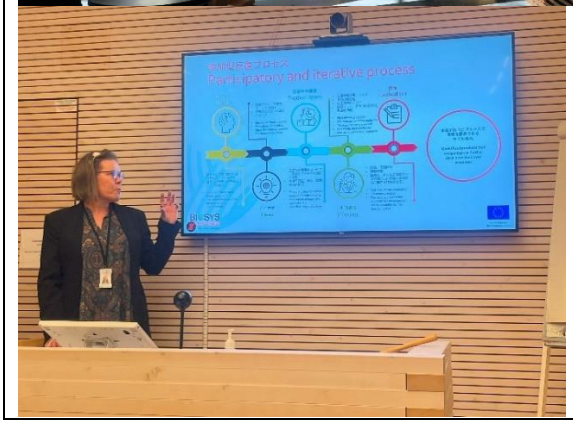
Place	**Regional Council of North Karelia**

During the meeting, greetings and presentations were made by the following representatives.
Mr. Markus Hirvonen, Region Governor
Mr. Timo Leinonen, Manager, Cross-border Cooperation & Project Manager
Ms. Naomi Moriyama, BIOSYS North Karelia International Growth Ecosystem
Dr. Sari Koivula, Forest and Climate Expert: Presentation on Forest Bio Economy
Ms. Mari Nupponen, Welfare and Education Expert: Presentation on Youth and Education
Mr. Timo Tahvanainen, Project Manager, EXPRESS – European regions promoting renewable energy self-sufficiency: Presentation on local energy distribution
・After the meeting, we had a dinner reception.


Place	Natural Resources Institute Finland (LUKE) in METLA TALO

LUKE has 2,700 researchers working in the fields of biology and agriculture.
They owns 300 cows, 6,000 ha of farmland and 20,000 ha of forest.
They promote four strategies (profit, circulation, environment and bioeconomy) and generates annual profits of EUR 150 million. The company values not only the trees themselves, but also other things provided by the forest, and was engaged in diverse initiatives with an emphasis on creating new products and how to transform natural materials into even more valuable ones.
Presentation
1. Commercialisation of birch sap (Nordic Koive Oy)
25,000 litres of sap are collected daily from 1,000 ha of birch forest at a factory on the Russian border. The sap is concentrated and powdered to produce beverages and cosmetics.
2. Introduction of METOLA TALO (from Prof Timo, University of Karelia).
The structure is made of 2,000 m3 of timber for the concrete construction and 150-year-old log house wood for the external walls.
3. introduction of Ina City.
We explained the projects that Ina City is working on to solve various problems and what is important to them.





Place	Lighthouse Joensuu (Student domitory of the UEF)

・The building is a wooden student dormitory built using the CLT construction method.
・Its exterior walls and interior are covered with panels, which do not look like wooden construction.
・Wood species: pine
・14 storeys, 117 rooms
・The ground floor is a concrete structure that also serves as a shelter and has a sauna
・The foundation structure has more than 10 metres of embedded piles
・An assembly plant was set up next to the construction site and the building was built quickly at a rate of one floor every two weeks.



Place	Sitwise Oy (at Science Park Joensuu)

・The company is headquartered in Espoo and has a total of 2,000 employees. The Joensuu branch has 20 employees who are engaged in the forest industry and digital smart cities.
・It operates internationally, with offices in Sweden and Portugal.
・Its work covers five sectors. (urban development, forestry, energy, consulting and product technology provision)
[Forestry-related business]
-They provide satellite service forestry information.
They have digital data on 90% of private forests and 100 000 users.
-60 forest specialists provide management guidance on forests and roads.
-Using the company's data, 100 companies have projects on logging maps, climate control and against pests.
[Infrastructure of urban development business]
-Various elements (roads, cultural heritage, advertising signs, street lighting, climate)
-Urban planning (considering building regulations, etc., cultural environmental studies, local branding, sign design)


Place	Karelia Puutec Oy (Sauna building company)

This company specialises in timber construction, combining traditional skills with the latest technology, and offers the following products:
- Construction of custom-made saunas, CLT homes, etc.
-The company's business activities include the construction of custom-made saunas, CLT houses, etc.
-Sauna kits made from glue-free laminated timber. (Can also be exported to Japan.)
- Assembling using oak screws instead of iron nails and screws.
-Sustainably sourced and processed timber in the region.




Place	Karelian Paju Oy (Biochar company)

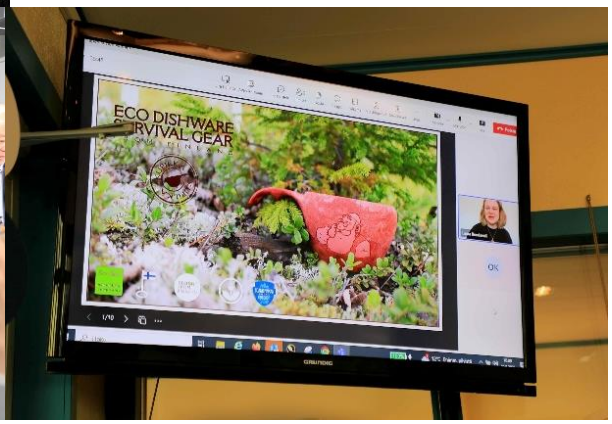
This company produces “biochars” from construction waste, willow wood residues, etc. Bio char has a porous surface structure and absorbs water and nutrients from the soil, thereby nurturing micro-organisms and improving the soil. It is used in agriculture as a soil conditioner and filtering material.
They produce 4,600 tonnes of bio-char from 20,000 tonnes of wood per year. The shape of the incineration kiln was produced based on a Japanese one.
The founders are two forestry students who, with the support of a company, created the plant themselves, using waste wood and other materials.
The metal such as nails contained in the waste material is removed after shredding. The crusher is rotated slowly to minimise spills.
The combustion gas is intended to be used for power generation in the future. Demand will increase in the future due to interest in environmental issues.

Place	Kupilka Oy

The company produces outdoor cups, plates and other tableware using traditional designs and bioplastics.
Annual turnover EUR 1.5 million. The company was founded in 1775, starting with the production of cups made from hollowed-out birch humps. New products are launched every year and the company is represented in 40 countries, mainly in Scandinavia. The production uses eco-energy and is carbon neutral. The workers at the factory seemed to enjoy working there.





Place	Vainoniemen Huvila (Sauna facility)

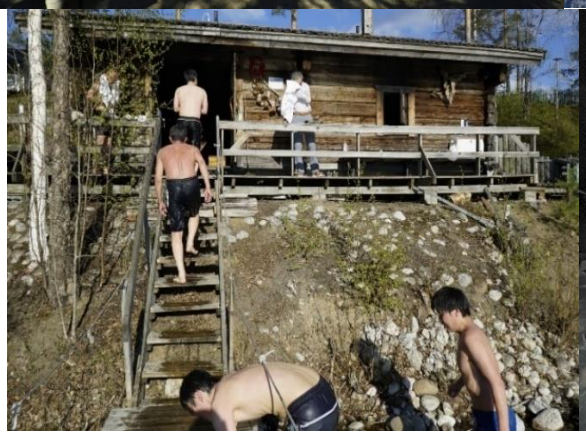
・Mr Jouni, who sells assembled sauna huts and other equipment at Karelia Puutec, and two members of the sauna team explained the history, benefits and types of Finnish saunas.
We experienced a sauna heated by an electric sauna stove.


Place	Koli National Park, Savukka Smoke Sauna

Through the guided tour we learned about the natural environment and tectonic history. The guides introduced us to the right to enjoy nature and the management system for environmental protection.
At Savukka Smoke Sauna we experienced a traditional Finnish smoke sauna with local charm. This sauna hut was once built 200 years ago in Russia, disassembled and moved here, and is one of the oldest saunas in Finland.

Unlike electric saunas, it was a space where the heat from the wood stove warmed you up and the smell of smoke made us feel calm and relaxed.






Place	Tuusulan lukio

This is a wooden multi-purpose facility built on a former military base. It has multiple roles as a high school, music school, art school and a lifelong learning centre for adults. The design has a variety of uses in anticipation of the possibility that the space created for high school classrooms will later be no longer needed, given Finland's declining birth rate.

The building has classrooms, a cafeteria, a gymnasium, a hall, a laboratory, a space for games, lockers for borrowing necessary items (headphones, PCs, blankets, etc.) and is designed to be used not only by high school students but also by various people in the community.

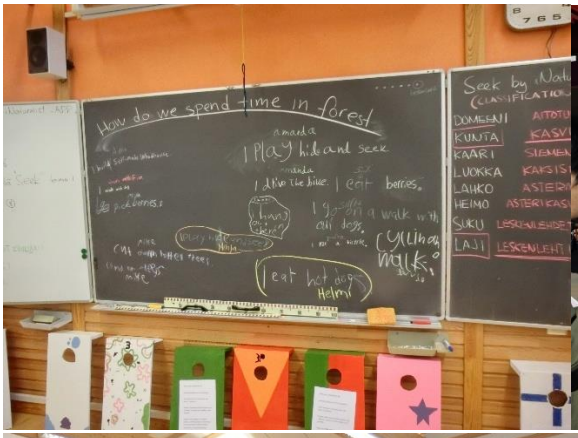
The building is made of concrete and wood and cost 34 million euros. Instead of using more than 4000 trees for construction, high school students planted 1000 trees, based on the idea of green footprint.



Place	Heinavaara School

This is a school that had an online exchange with Ina Elementary School 6th grade students in 2024, and we have visited here in 2023.

We observed a class of sixth-graders using digital devices and apps to investigate plants. During the Q&A session with the teachers, they talked about their relationship with nature, the reality of digital education and wellbeing. Teachers at the school believe that it is important to find a balance in integrating digital devices into education.
The next day, members of the education team met with three teachers from the school and asked them about their experiences with digital devices.
The next day, members of the education team took part in a field trip. They hiked around the lake, roasted salmon on a bonfire and spent time in nature with the children and teachers. We would like to introduce nature classes like those in Finnish schools in Ina City in the future.





Place	**Marjala School**

Founded in 2000, the school has two classes in each year group and is located close to residential areas. The school conducts several projects to learn about the environment and activities related to nature experiences, with the aim of realising a sustainable society.
There are several forests (at least three) within walking distance of the school, and the school regularly holds classes outside, such as physical education here, watching birds near the water, and installing birdhouses made in arts and crafts.
Some of the children said they preferred PE in the forest to regular ground or indoor PE. The children seemed to enjoy the fun enabled by the forest, such as taking a short rest behind a tree, or devising a place to hide the flag where it is difficult to be found.
The headmaster has been here for 25 years, since he was 28 years old. In Finland, there are no teacher transfers, and the headmaster directly recruits and hires teachers who are good at what they do. The school is not made good to attract students, but to recruit teachers. The school headmaster should show the type of school he or she wants to achieve, so that the right teachers can be recruited.

In the case of the school, the school headmaster is usually in charge of the classes, depending on the number of students and teachers in the school. This allows him to get to know the children better.

Last year, when a long-serving teacher retired, he held a surprise event where all the students lined up in a heart shape on the playground and, with the help of a pilot he knew, the teacher could see them from an aeroplane. The headmaster was like the father of the school as he said sincerely that it was a great experience.

Place	**Eno School (including the youth centre)**

We visited a pre-school class They were divided into the following five groups and engaged in a variety of activities to develop the five senses.

-Using picture books to listen to different bird sounds.

-putting their hands inside a bag and guessing the contents (moss, nuts, etc.) by feel

-Smell the inside of a capsule blindfolded and guess the contents (berry jam, pine bogs, sprouts, etc.) by smelling the inside of the capsule.

-Gathering their own materials (branches, plant fibres, etc.) that birds use to build their nests.

-experience the length of a 1m piece of string by wrapping it around a tree and comparing the heights

The teacher was assigned to each group, changing places every few minutes to allow the children to do different activities.

We also visited a youth centre (a place for young people) in the same building as the primary school. It is open from 15:00-21:00, where users, mainly aged 13-18, can spend time playing games, sports, cooking and studying. 15-50 users per day.

According to Jenny, the centre's director, who is a multi-qualified professional in social work relations, "This is the happiest job in the world. Because people who want to come here can

come and spend time with us. I often ask the people who come, 'How was your day? ' I try to open their hearts and minds through conversation. I'm always happy to talk to them."
Even the children who don't go to school feel better when they come here. They can talk to adults who are not teachers or parents, and also meet friends.


Place	**Kesakumpu(Daycare of Pilke Group)**

The day care provides outdoor childcare three days a week, with about 15 children per class and 3-4 staff.
The children sang songs as they moved from one activity to the next. The children were able to move naturally from one activity to the next by singing quietly, such as when preparing meals or crossing the street, and there was no strong tone of voice from the teacher telling them to hurry up or get ready.
One of the most characteristic comments from the primary school teachers in charge of the children who graduated from this nursery school was that they were very aware of their surroundings, good at managing their own things and had a rich imagination. In the forest, forgetting or losing things is a big deal, and the children themselves are very troubled by it. Because they go out in the forest on a regular basis, they are in the habit of preparing and managing their own belongings, and children aged 5 and 6 are able to do this on their own when they go to primary school.
Spending time in the forest gives them the experience of creating their own characters and stories, and helps them to develop their imagination.

Place	Embassy of Japan

We had a meeting between Ambassador Okada, supported by Mr.Nagano, Specialist Investigator.

Ina City introduced the connection with Finland, the purpose and content of the visit, impressions of the visit and the city's initiatives.

Ambassador Okada also explained the connection between Finland and Japan and the state of national defence and well-being in the historical background. He said: 'People-to-people exchanges like the ones in Ina City are very much appreciated, and as a bearer of bilateral relations I am also very happy. I am also hopeful that the cooperation between Ina City and the North Karelia region is going to take a concrete form and that they are interested in expanding exchanges. Cooperation can only continue if it is mutually beneficial. I think Japan has various technologies and initiatives to offer Finland".

The discussion with the Ambassador expanded into a variety of topics, with Mayor Shiratori introducing the following initiatives:

- Steadily promoting the primary industry.

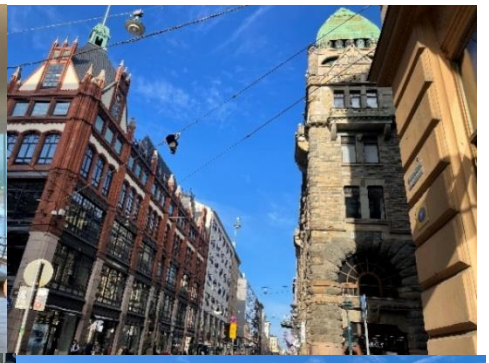
-The city is steadily developing primary industries and values a life with forests.

-The starting point of the city's education is the Shintokukan school in Takato, which has something in common with Finnish education.

-Ina City's approach to childcare, education, history, pellets, VTOL, heat supply, mobile clinics, immigration and settlement, etc.

-We work with the attitude of changing Japan from the countryside, and for this purpose we want to learn from Finland and have exchanges that are beneficial for both sides, which is why we visited this time.











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