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# Mismatched planning and place-based identity in Helsinki: The impacts of anti-segregation policy on ethnic retail, and socio-cultural inclusion

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## ABSTRACT



Declining independent retail and oligopoly of retail chains are common in Helsinki, leaving many premises at strip malls erected in the 1960s vacant. Despite this, ethnic retail has spontaneously clustered at two malls converting them into livable hubs. Both malls have been announced as destinations for tourists and food lovers on the city webpage by Marketing Helsinki. In 2019–2020, two planning competitions were held with the objective of forming urban centers through densification. Through two case studies, this paper examines the role of urban planning policy in supporting the branded destinations and their place-based identity. The findings show that innovative ethnic neighborhoods acknowledged in many European cities played no role in the process. On the contrary, both clusters face displacement in an urban renewal steered by anti-segregation policy. The city will lose authentic destinations and the immigrant community will consequently lose places of jobs and attachment. Non-decision-making ignored ethnic retailers in defining the actors and urban diversity as a value. There is limited research on contested spaces in semi-peripheral areas and their relation to urban planning. This paper contributes to the research body studying the implications of urban renewal on ethnic retail hubs and interplay of power.

## KEYWORDS

Helsinki; ethnic food; innovative neighborhoods; branding; power; homogenization

## Introduction

Cities in Europe and North America have witnessed a growth of cultural diversity; thus, urban planning policies and practices are continuously developing to successfully integrate immigrants and accommodate their spatial needs (De Graauw & Vermeulen, 2016). In many European cities, clusters of immigrant amenities are typically gathered in abandoned spaces to achieve low occupancy expenses (e.g., Hewidy, 2022b). Such abandoned retail premises are signs of the decline of independent small retail caused by retail oligopoly, neoliberal principles in retail planning, the sprouting of spectacular shopping malls (Hewidy, 2022b; Hewidy & Lilius, 2022a, 2022b) and the boutiquing of stores (Zukin et al., 2009). Subsequently, many European cities witness a loss of local resilience (Carmona, 2015). On the other hand, immigrant amenity clusters have proven their capacity to transform their vicinities into places allowing cultural visibility, place-making, and place attachment, thus creating a sense of belonging by improving place-based identity (Hewidy & Lilius, 2022a; Miraftab, 2012). Some studies have shown that ethnic retail can serve as an urban catalyst in areas suffering

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from business decline (Hewidy & Lilius, 2022b; Zhuang & Chen, 2017). Consequently, many cities acknowledge innovative ethnic neighborhoods through their authentic setting, particularly the culinary experience, and include them in the branding strategy for their contribution in enhancing the loss of local resilience and recovery of public street life (Okumus & Cetin, 2018; Vanolo, 2015). Nevertheless, ethnic neighborhoods are frequently under anti-segregation gentrification policies through urban renewal, which is typically accompanied by retail gentrification. However, the idea of considering anti-segregation policy as a support for deprived immigrant communities has proven to be false (Hewidy, 2022b; van Liempt, 2011) especially once spatial patterns are already established (Bolt et al., 2010). Conversely, retail gentrification typically generated by anti-segregation policy has been shown to cause displacement of immigrants and their retailers (van Eck et al., 2020) or losing the original attributes of immigrant amenity clusters, which color them as authentic (Sezer, 2018).

Previous research has studied the role of ethnic retail in transforming deprived areas and the touristification of multi-ethnic neighborhoods (Rath, 2007; Shaw et al., 2004), the commodification of ethnic diversity (Schmiz & Hernandez, 2019; Schmiz & Kitzmann, 2017), the evolution of immigrant business (Basu, 2011; Parzer & Czingon, 2013), and globalization and economy (Glick Schiller & Çağlar, 2013). However, there is a research gap in studies considering the negative consequences of urban policies motivated by anti-segregation, such as ignoring the role that ethnic retail clusters may play in urban growth. Accordingly, there is a need to rigorously examine how non-decision making may ignore the use value of certain groups. The limited research on contested spaces in semi-peripheral areas motivates this paper to contribute to literature studying the interplay of power between stakeholders in an urban renewal process. Urban planning serves as a device of social control regulating the (re) production of public space, thus facilitating elite domination in urban planning and their control of the societal resources, such as space, identity, power, and wealth (Yiftachel, 1998). The unbalanced interplay of power between diverging stakeholders is steered by policy instruments that act as a form of power and legitimize the policy outcomes (Amore, 2017; Le Galès, 2011; Lukes, 2005).

Ethnic communities in the Finnish capital Helsinki have spontaneously formed clusters of their amenities at two old strip malls called Puhos and Kontula, transforming them into lively hubs (Hewidy, 2022a, 2022b; Hewidy & Lilius, 2022a; Lilius & Hewidy, 2019). However, the neighborhoods hosting both malls are under urban renewal, and both clusters are faced by the consequences of such a process. In an interesting contradiction, both clusters have been announced by Marketing Helsinki (a company owned by the city) as destinations for tourists and visitors who would like to experience ethnic food (see Figure 1). Thus, the aim of this paper is to study the potential impacts of urban renewal processes, steered by anti-segregation policy, on ethnic retail and the implications of such policy on socio-cultural inclusion, place-based identity, and the praised role of ethnic retail in city branding. The research is based on two case studies undertaken between August 2019 and December 2022. The main question of the paper addresses the relation between place-based identity, city branding and urban policy.

- (1) What kind of a mismatch can be found between Helsinki city urban planning and its city branding in regard to place-based identity?

The secondary question further addresses the consequences of urban planning on ethnic urban hubs.

- (2) What are the potential impacts of urban renewal policies on ethnic retail in Helsinki?



Figure 1. Puhos strip mall, a destination on the City of Helsinki Website.

## State-of-the-art

### *Place-based identity and innovative neighborhoods*

Immigrant neighborhoods are frequently problematized in literature due to issues such as disadvantages associated with segregation, marginalization, and structural inequalities (Tesfai et al., 2020). However, a few studies have demonstrated the significance of immigrant contribution to the regenerations of neighborhoods (Hewidy, 2022b; Hewidy & Lilius, 2022b; Sandoval-Strausz, 2017). Moulaert et al. (2010) highlighted the possible role of a neighborhood in founding initiatives as a reaction to conditions of social exclusion and urge the enhancing of trust between local governing and the community in urban regeneration process. Neighborhoods as destinations are not only substantial for those who are locally present and feel the attachment toward the place only, but also for those linked to them through other means (Amin, 2004; González et al., 2010). Ethnic neighborhoods and clusters of immigrant amenities are spaces permitting the formation of place-based identity that support place attachment (Sezer, 2018; Zhuang, 2021). Place attachment combines culture, everyday communication, and social interaction (Low & Altman, 1992). In studying the Chinese and South Asian communities in Toronto strip malls, Zhuang (2021) showed that they have converted their retail clusters into spaces empowering place-based identity. Social innovation of neighborhoods is initiated to improve inclusionary dynamics and as a reaction to social exclusion (González et al., 2010). In the Finnish context, ethnic retail clusters are creative alternatives invented by immigrants (Hewidy, 2022b; Lilius & Hewidy, 2019, 2021) in their struggle against their discrimination in the labor market with its rigid and ethnically hierarchical standards (Ahmad, 2020). Thus, such clusters at neighborhoods do not only fulfil the socioeconomic need of immigrants, creating new urban identities, but also invent community-based initiatives using immigrants' social capital and networks (Hewidy, 2022b; Rath et al., 2018). Interestingly, Moulaert (2010, p. 11) stated that despite the potentially small impact of initiatives by neighborhoods in a regeneration process, it spatially showcases the "cracks of hope" in the system. Innovative neighborhoods are frequently acknowledged by local governing bodies, especially ethnic eateries, and thus ethnic culinary practices become essential components in city branding.

### *Branding gastronomy destinations*

Research shows that food has the capacity to reinforce the authenticity of destinations, thus establishing their hospitality and accordingly uplifting the economy of the place of production (du Rand et al., 2003).

Amore and Roy (2020) argued that the richness and variety of food destinations in cities can enhance the experience of their urban visitors and equally contribute to both economic and socio-cultural benefits for the neighborhoods and their residents. Similarly, other studies have shown that many tourists are attracted to ethnic food seeking a unique experience (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Hall et al., 2003). Thus, eateries and dining have become immaterial heritage and cultural attraction representing an important factor for travel (Kim & Eves, 2012). However, it is not only the tourists who are attracted to food destinations but ethnic foodies, through their gastronomic experience, are also pursuing the diversity of ethnic-cultural and class-based culinary practices (Lilius & Hewidy, 2021; Oleschuk, 2017). In such a process, the clusters of immigrant amenities evidently present the embedded cosmopolitanism of culinary consumption (Farrer, 2017). Therefore, cities recognize such a potential of food experiences for initiating new urban destinations, including supporting mega-events and advertising regional culinary traditions (Vanolo, 2015). Many European cities encourage and brand such clusters at ethnic neighborhoods where the immigrant amenities have transformed their deprived vicinities through enticing visitors; examples include among others, Brunnenmarkt in Vienna, Brick Lane in London, Oranienstraße in Berlin, Rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis in Paris, and Bennets Bazaar in Malmö. Thus, cities show their intentions to involve the innovative ethnic neighborhoods in urban regeneration by branding them.

In the above examples in European cities, branding serves as an identifier of these destinations and contributes to raising the awareness of certain destinations (Gertner et al., 2007). The relationship between place and branding attracts both researchers studying urban tourism and politicians (e.g., Amore, 2019; Amore & Roy, 2020; Page et al., 2015). Furthermore, food studies, as a marker of such cultural diversity, can exceptionally contribute to urban studies (Farrer, 2017). The so-called niche marketing proposes the development of new forms of specialization, structured by cultural fragmentation and differentiation that split the clientele into smaller segments, thus resulting in more heterogeneous development that resists homogenization (Hoffman, 2003). Ethnic eateries can be situated in such a niche; thus, the role of food in tourism and regional development has been in the interest of research and policy for over three decades (Hall & Gössling, 2016), especially the marketing of urban neighborhoods that specialize in ethnic foods (Lin, 1998).

Branding introduces city image as destination for leisure, tourism, and recreation (Getz et al., 2014; Vanolo, 2015). Such images describe activities, ideas, impressions, and attitudes that can be experienced at a destination (Nelson, 2016). Gastronomy has become an influential component in destination branding and marketing (Amore & Roy, 2020) and an important motivator in tourists' decision-making (Naruetharadhol & Gebombut, 2020). In destination branding, there are two types of images: *organic* and *induced* (Nelson, 2016). The former is formed by and communicated through different popular media articles (e.g., magazines and newspapers, and other public media), and the latter is created as the marketing efforts to promote them as distinctive destinations by the stakeholders (Nelson, 2016). Recently, organic images have become increasingly pervasive and influential (Tussyadiah, 2010). This is also the case in this paper: *Helsinki Marketing* advertised ethnic culinary clusters under the title "Journey to East Helsinki to discover Middle Eastern and Caucasian Food" on its website (see Figure 1). However, in anticipating the futures of the neighborhoods, the interplay of power between stakeholders is not typically in balance; priorities of urban policy are shaped in a rather different setting than in city branding as discussed below.

### **Policy, (non)-decision making and rationalization**

With its variations between scholars, the definitions of power have a common understanding: one actor can affect another in a significant manner (Lorenzi, 2006). Interestingly, power is not always obvious, but "at its most effective when least observable" (Lukes, 2005, p. 1). Lukes (2005) suggested three dimensions of power: *power through decision making*, *power through agenda setting* and *power through domination*.

The dimension of *power through decision-making*, focuses on the observable behavior of actors; thus, it concerns (a) decision-making taking place, and (b) actors that take part in it. Simply, the subjective interests of each actor are exposed through their policy preferences when taking part in the political decision-making (Lorenzi, 2006). In the dimension of *power through agenda setting*, on the other hand, the power is exercised by influencing, or restricting, the topic permits to be discussed in the political debates, thus limiting what could be considered important for political considerations, shaping political and social values, and defining the operational actions by institutional practices (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962). In doing so, it creates the foundations of devices for powerful stakeholders to threaten some topics by practicing the power through *non-decision making*. Operationalizing the non-decision making is described by Schattschneider (1975) as the “mobilization of bias” (p. 71). Finally, the dimension of *power through domination*, is “Shaping their [actors] perceptions, conceptions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things” (Lukes, 2005, p. 24). Lukes called this dimension a radical view; in fact, this dimension influences the other two dimensions, making it the most essential (Lukes, 2005). Simply, this dimension of power allows both the political system and its produced policy to preserve the power of the ruling class (Parsons, 1995).

When studying the post-earthquake development of the central business district (CBD) in Christchurch in New Zealand, Amore (2017) empirically showed that both *overt* and *covert* forms of power “shed light on the rise of authoritative modes of metagovernance in established democratic societies” (p. 273). Such power relation can be structured by the rationalization of planning decisions (e.g., Flyvbjerg, 1998). Amore (2017) further demonstrated that, under the crisis climate caused by the earthquake, the recovery authorities rationalized the market-directed strategies proposed to swiftly fix the dysfunctional climate of uncertainty, putting conventional decision-making practices and normal planning on hold.

Le Galès (2011) argued that exercising the power is not merely about who governs but also how the governance process is operationalized and whether it can involve various stakeholders in the process of decision-making. Le Galès (2011) further stated that policy instruments exemplify specific policy frames signifying matters in certain ways and acting as forms of power in order to produce specific effects through rarely neutral devices; thus, such policy instrumentation legitimizes the policy outcomes. The instruments regulate which resources can be used and by whom, make the behavior of the actors more predictable, and allow forms of collective action to stabilize, thus acting as essential factors in forming what can be called “audience democracy” or “democracy of opinion” (Le Galès, 2011). If the public policy instruments serve as a form of power, then the question to be raised is how can such a power be brought to urban planning? The notion of non-decision making may provide a logical answer to such a question.

In their studies of Christchurch earthquake, Amore et al. (2017) stated that in urban regeneration development, spatial controversies between the diverse interests of stakeholders are typically suspended by “top-down decision-making through consensus building and manipulation” (p. 617). They further demonstrated the exclusion of certain groups from the making of main decisions and thus episodes of non-decision-making steering the urban regeneration process through top-down governance, regardless of any criticisms raised by the excluded groups. Bachrach and Baratz (1970) defined non-decision making as “a decision that results in suppression or thwarting of latent or manifest challenges to the values or interests of the decision maker” (pp. 39, 44). Non-decision making occurs when an issue that might confront the status quo is ignored before reaching the phase of formal decision-making, typically by labeling such an issue and its impacts as incompatible with communal norms or by raising bureaucratic rubrics permitting to conquer the issue in concern (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970). Thus, non-decision making, which is acting as a decision itself, can purposefully limit the scope of decision-making by operating the power relations and instruments of force during the power interplay (Robertson & Beresford, 1996). Such manipulation of ideas is practised by the

“exclusion of some alternatives from the agenda of collective choices because dominant values make them politically impossible for the moment” (Rose & Davies, 1994, p. 57). In such a context, it becomes easier to understand the dysfunctional climate of uncertainty raised in the Christchurch case (Amore, 2017; Amore et al., 2017) as an example of unbalanced interplay of power. Interestingly, housing is an essential site of power (Michener, 2022) and typically the immigrant spatial patterns are formed by its affordability, but the dispersal anti-segregation policy aims to control the demographic profile of such patterns. Therefore, anti-segregation policy is not power neutral by nature. Since the city of Helsinki adopts an anti-segregation policy, the following subsection discusses its consequences.

### ***Anti-segregation policy and urban homogenization***

Soja (2010) stated that cultural imperialism is a form of dominance through which one culture can be made nearly invisible by another group and lose its distinctive differences. There are two strands of theories on multicultural planning (Van der Horst & Ouwehand, 2012). The first strand started with Chicago School writings, in which the city acts as a homogenizer and different culture groups are swallowed up by a dominant culture. The second strand considers ethnic diversity a valuable characteristic in the cultural cityscape. The latter strand is politically structured by the scholarship of Jacobs (1961) and later the creative climates in cities suggested by Florida (2002). The ethnic innovative neighborhood can be obviously situated in such a niche of creative climates.

In Helsinki, residential ethnic segregation is identified as a major social challenge (cf., Andersson et al., 2017). Correspondingly, the social-mixing housing policies in Helsinki are of a preventive nature (cf., Dhalmann & Vilkkama, 2009), thus adopting the model of city as a homogenizer (Hewidy, 2022b). Simply, this considers the overrepresentation of ethnic groups/immigrants at a neighborhood as a negative signal (Hewidy, 2022b; Hewidy & Lilius, 2022b).

The inadequacy of the social-mix policies in dealing with the problems related to segregation is rooted in the assumption that the segregation of ethnic minorities from the mainstream per se has a harmful impact (Fincher et al., 2014). However, it is argued that not all ethnic segregation correlates to the negative effects for the hosting society (Peach, 1996, 2009). On the other hand, immigrant groups find protective atmosphere in neighborhoods where they do not fear for the religious upbringing of their children or their cultural visibility (van Liempt, 2011). Therefore, there is a burden of the dispersal policies on immigrants to conform to the mainstream cultural norms. Thus, such policies negatively affect their integration (van Liempt, 2011). Furthermore, the social-mix planning, adopted in the Netherlands for example, is not a poverty alleviation but a part of a broader strategy of neoliberal urban growth (Uitermark, 2003). Such social-mix planning is a gentrification covering “a hidden social cleansing agenda” by issuing a moralized discourse justifying it as a support of the deprived groups (Lees, 2008, p. 2451). Consequently, there is hardly any space to criticize the gentrification accompanying anti segregation; who would oppose “social mixing” assisting poor communities (Lees, 2008, p. 2452). Correspondingly, such policies are praised by politicians and planners and introduced as reinforcement of “the social tissue of a disadvantaged neighborhood” (Uitermark, 2003, p. 531). However, immigrants may lose social networks in the gentrified areas, and entrepreneurs can lose their affordable retail premises, particularly when such an outcome is embedded in public policies (Newman & Wyly, 2006; Zukin et al., 2009). Consequently, social equity is not given any priority in this type of urban renewal. Therefore, expertise in social matters is not consulted; instead, the design-driven place making is mostly “masking the place of the lowest income existing residents” (Fincher et al., 2016, p. 529). It is difficult, or maybe even impossible, to achieve the objective of reducing segregation once the residential pattern of the socioeconomic groups is formed (Bolt et al., 2010). Parzer and Huber (2015) summarized the negative consequences of such an urban renewal on ethnic retail in (1) displacing the business or making its operation expensive, (2) some entrepreneurs losing their clientele due to the changing neighborhood profile, and (3) entrepreneurs themselves facing residential displacement if they live close by their premises. Consequently, Zukin et al. (2009) urged protecting the local retail and residents in areas under gentrification from the impacts of such an urban policy.

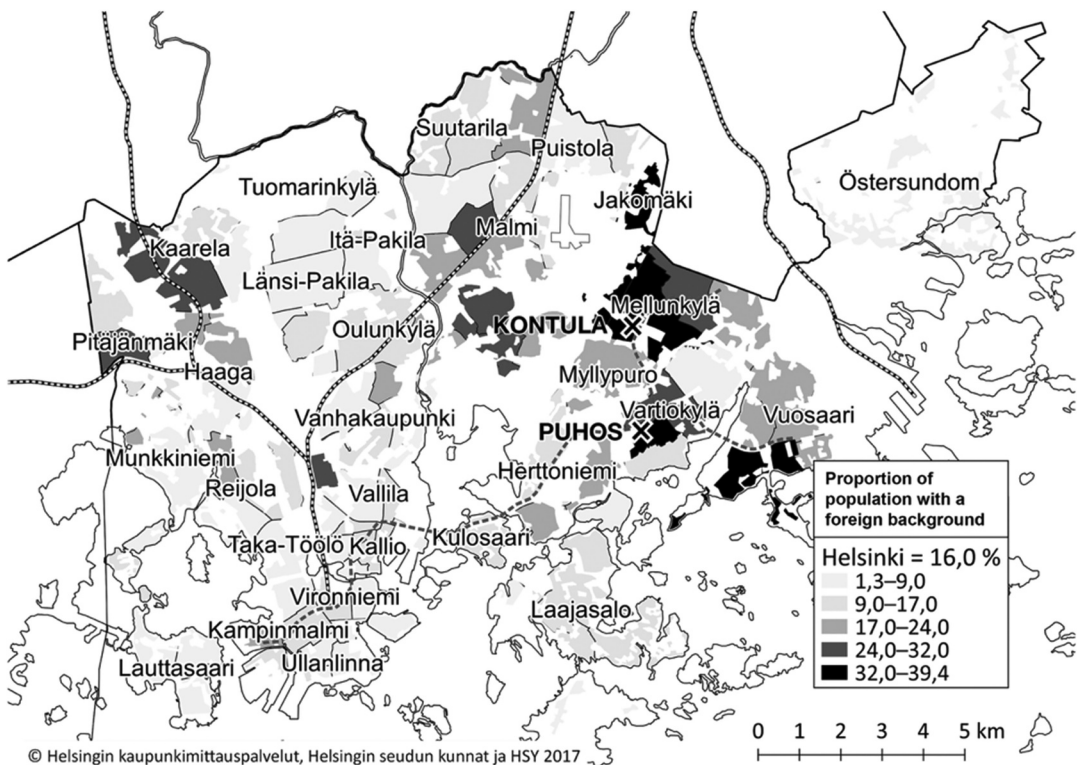
## Context and methods

### Immigrant landscape

Four hundred thousand people with a foreign background live permanently in Finland and speak a foreign language as their mother tongue (see [Figure 2](#) for spatial distribution and locations of the cases). By the end of 2019, there were 108,000 residents with foreign background in Helsinki (City of Helsinki, 2021). In 2014, the unemployment rate of native Finns was 10%, and the Iraqis, Somalis and Afghans had an unemployment rate exceeding 65% (Aaltonen et al., 2015). The Finnish labor market is described as an ethnically hierarchical market and discrimination against second-generation immigrants is evident (Ahmad, 2020); therefore, many immigrants are self-employed. Although mainstream-independent retail in Finland has declined due to retail oligopoly (Hewidy, 2022b), ethnic retail has impacted the urban landscape of the city of Helsinki and converted the two cases at hand into livable places (Hewidy & Lilius, 2022a).

### The story of Puhos and Kontula

By the end of the 1960s, 38 strip malls were found in the Helsinki region (Lahti, 2017). In the middle of the 1980s, chain stores started to dominate the Finnish grocery market (Home, 2011) and in the 1990s, Finland underwent a deep depression. Consequently, many independent small retailers closed their business. As the economy recovered from the recession, spectacular shopping malls sprouted in Finland despite the rapid growth of online shopping (MTV News, 2019). Puhos strip mall is located in Itäkeskus and opened in 1965 (extended in 1987 and 1990) to offer 21,000 square meters of retail space. During the last two decades, ethnic retail has transformed Puhos from being abandoned to the



**Figure 2.** Immigrants' spatial distribution and the locations of both cases.

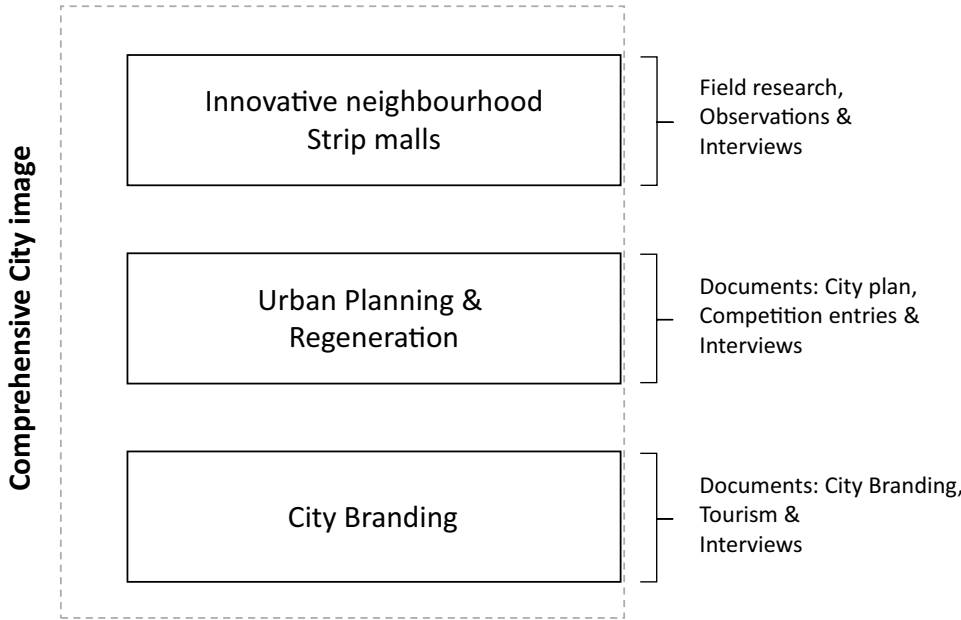
**Table 1.** The services and ethnicity representation of ethnic retailers at each strip mall.

Shops/function	Puhos	Ethnicities	Kontula	Ethnicities
Daily food	8	Arabs, Iraqi Turkman, Turkish Kurdi, Iraqi Kurdi, Bangladeshi,	7 (+ 3 mainstream)	Arabs, Turkish, Bangladeshi, Finnish
Eatery	10		12 (+ 4 mainstream)	
Drinking	3		3 (+ 9 bars)	
Services & others	20		5 (+ 7 mainstream)	
Prayer room	2		1	

most livable hub in Helsinki (Hewidy & Lilius, 2022a). Kontula strip mall opened in 1967 and offers 22,000 square meters of retail space. However, the Kontula mall also hosts mainstream services, which is not the case with Puhos (see Table 1). Due to the decline of small independent retail, many premises at old strip malls have been left vacant. As a result, many strip malls have been exposed to demolition for being abundant and lacking the resources for renovation. Newspapers have reported their demolition as a sign of stigma recovery (Färding, 2021). In 2019–2020, a two-phase idea competition was held to develop the Itäkeskus suburb and the Puhos strip mall as a part of it. In 2020, another architectural competition was arranged to propose ideas for the development of the Kontula strip mall.

**Methods**

As shown in Figure 3, the data were collected from three main resources. First, the main characteristics of both malls, their urban identity, and their operational and functional attributes can reflect the capacity of ethnic clusters to be an output of a potential innovative neighborhood. Thus, observation and field research were conducted during multiple visits to both locations and their surroundings. The site visits lasted 2–5 hours and were conducted on both working days and weekends at different times of the day. The documentation of the field research included taking photos, note-taking, and a survey of the running activities at the premises. In addition, semi-structured interviews were held with ethnic



**Figure 3.** Simplification of the data collection process.

retailers and their staff during and after the announcement of the architectural competitions' results. Interviews were held at the premises, in Arabic, English and Finnish and lasted for 60–90 minutes with  $N = 8$  in the Puhos case and  $N = 5$  in the Kontula case. These interviewees will be referred to by ethnicity, age, and gender. In addition, a few casual interviews were held with some clientele at both malls. These data are presented in the subsection *Strip malls and place-based identity*.

Second, to understand the foundation of including both malls in the branded city image by Marketing Helsinki, the researcher used document analysis and interviews. The documents included the material published on the City of Helsinki website and Finland's Tourism Strategy 2020. The City of Helsinki Marketing Strategy 2016–2020 was also analyzed to examine city branding by Marketing Helsinki. In addition, two semi-structured interviews were held with representatives of Helsinki Marketing ( $N = 2$ ) and lasted for 45 minutes each. The interviewees will be referred to as X and Y. These data are presented in the subsection *MyHelsinki and the Branded destinations*.

Finally, to understand the planning decisions in the urban regeneration of both cases, the researcher used document analysis and semi-structured interviews. In 2019–2020, two idea competitions were held to propose urban concepts for the renewal of two areas: Itäkeskus and Kontula. The analyzed documents consisted of Helsinki City Plan (Yleiskaava, 2016), both competition programs as well as the winning entries. The documents included the online feedback, as both public participation and community-led approaches are signs of supporting, or ignoring, the urban identities. Semi-structured interviews were held with those jury committee members who represented the City of Helsinki in both competitions,  $N = 3$  in the Puhos case and  $N = 2$  in the Kontula case. The interviewed jury committee members will be referred to as A, B and C in the Puhos case and D and E in the Kontula case. All interviews were held online, except for one with Planner C by e-mail. The online interviews lasted for 60–80 minutes. These data are presented in the subsection *Place-based identity and urban planning in Helsinki*.

## Findings

### *Strip malls and place-based identity*

The clusters of immigrant amenities have not only fulfilled the socioeconomic needs of immigrants, created a locus full of meanings and made two less favored strip malls flourish but also attracted mainstream clientele who would like to be a part of such a cosmopolitan setting as the quote below shows.

What a colorful scenery. I smell tasty food and observe people socializing in their traditional costumes. This place is unique in the city, full of life at every corner and in different flavors. I used to travel, but with the restrictions of the COVID-19, I am more than happy to take a weekly visit here [Puhos] to taste my favorite Baklava and Arabic coffee. (Native Finn, 65 years old, female)

The customer above described the experience of the place calling it a colorful scenery and explaining what it means that a place can be authentic. Some business owners were also thinking about expanding their clientele to reach mainstream through the ambiance of their premises.

Oriental sweets market is very promising for both mainstream and immigrant clientele. In the future growth of our business, we intend to make a decoration that reflects the oriental atmosphere and to design a staff uniform matching it. I would like to give the same atmosphere of a space from the Middle East. We will try to give an experience, not only sell our delights. We want the clientele to visit us to make memories, take selfies and enjoy. (Syrian, 39 years old, male)

The diversity was reflected in the labor observed at the premise, an Algerian, an Iraqi, and a Syrian, in addition to a manager of a Palestinian background. The researcher also heard five different languages at the store. Authenticity was also experienced at another premise, a restaurant. The decoration and the shopfront of the restaurant communicated in different languages as shown in Figures 4 and 5.



**Figure 4.** The interior of a restaurant at Puhos strip mall.



**Figure 5.** The exterior of the restaurant shown in Figures 4.

The owner of a restaurant stated:

“White” clientele prefer to be served food on the traditional ground seaters . . . . If you visit an Iraqi restaurant, you need to eat as Iraqis do. We aim . . . to raise the curiosity of the clientele. We also try to satisfy the vegetarian guests; we know it is a widespread trend. (Iraqi of a Kurdish descent, 50 years old, male)

The owner seems to be fully aware of the restaurant scene and the trends of foodies. However, it is not only the eateries that increase the attraction: the grocery shops and even the home accessory stores attract mainstream clientele.

[Our] clientele are Arabs, Kurds, Turks, Iranians, Somalis, and Finns. Finns mostly buy dates, nuts, rice and even chicken for their lower price. We also sell a diverse range of cheese choices, different from what is sold at mainstream grocery markets, and many Finns are curious to taste them. (Iraqi of a Kurdish descent, 62 years old, male)

Another interesting interview was held with an owner of a travel agency at Puhos, who also owns a popular restaurant in the inner city.

My customers at the restaurant are Finns during lunch on working days, and at night we have tourists and during summer we have mostly Indian groups. We coordinate with travel agencies providing tours and they take from us the restaurant services. (Bangladeshi, 50 years old, male)

The above interviewee indicated how the entrepreneurs profoundly understand the dynamics inter-linking tourism to gastro-attraction. Moreover, the researcher observed that there was mainstream interest in a bakery found on the first floor at Puhos.

The owner intends to found a close-by café and sandwiches corner. We have noticed that Finns are curious to taste our bread, so the corner will be the place to display the bread and serve it stuffed with different fillings and Arabic coffee. (Iraqi of an Arabic descent, 28 years old, male)

There is an obvious integration between the diverse trades at Puhos observed, for example, in the bakery providing bread to the restaurants at the mall and the dependence of eateries on the grocery stores. The transformation took place through the footfall activated by the congregation of two Muslim prayer rooms at Puhos. The conversion of Puhos into a livable hub started with the operation of the first prayer room by the Somali community in 2000. The operators of the prayer room used the adjacent premises as a café, a barber, a services office and later a money transfer service, laying the seeds for the current clustering. The mall is not only a place for shopping, but it also acts more as a place of cultural visibility for those who can be hardly seen lingering elsewhere in the city. With its diversity and spontaneity, Puhos enables longer visits for its users and has become a leisure destination. Languages used at the mall, be it in communication or on the shopfronts, reflect diverse translocal geographies. Restaurants carry city names such as Kirkuk and Arbailo or the Persian/Kurdish year Newroz confirming a cosmopolitan setting as shown in [Figures 6 and 7](#).

Similar to Puhos, the spontaneous ethnic retail clustering at Kontula has raised attention as shown by the Finnish national broadcasting company's (Yle) headline: “The strip mall in Kontula is experiencing a multicultural boom” (Nelskylä, 2016).

This online article published by Yle extended an image of the Kontula strip mall that was entirely the opposite to the previous negative image of the mall deeming it as a place for seedy bars a decade ago. The article introduced a new Syrian restaurant operated by a Syrian family serving Mediterranean food. Kontula is among the East-Helsinki suburbia that are normally perceived as more restless compared to the rest of the city areas. In general, Eastern Helsinki is associated with relatively high unemployment rate, concentration of social housing estates, socioeconomic challenges, and a high number of immigrants. The stigma of the area started with the economic recession in the 1990s when the unemployment rate in Kontula raised dramatically from 2% to over 24% (Kokkonen, 2002, p. 165). However, the area has been gradually recovering from such a negative image through ethnic retail clustering at the strip mall.



Figure 6. Shopfronts communicating the translocal geography setting at Puhos strip mall.



Figure 7. Shopfronts communicating the translocal geography setting at Puhos strip mall.

Immigrants visit my restaurant seeking the halal meals, but I have also many Finns who like the Turkish cuisine and consider the menu of a good money value. (Iraqi of a Turkman descent, 42 years old, male)

My shop seeks the satisfaction of both co-ethnic groups and Finnish customers. The Finnish customers are interested in our products as a new experience for them. (Iraqi of an Arabic descent, 33 years old, male)

The researcher observed white clientele at an oriental delight sweet shop watching the baking process with full interest; thus, staged authenticity was performed. As the metro station arrives at the heart of Kontula mall maintaining high footfall, there are many mainstream services. Therefore, the footfall is a mix of both mainstream and immigrants, which makes Kontula more diverse than Puhos (see Table 1). However, the property rights at the Kontula mall are no less diverse than at Puhos. A few premises host tenant operators renting from leasing firms, and others are operated by their own owners. The researcher also found some premises that were subleased from another tenant.

### ***MyHelsinki and the branded destinations***

The gastronomy tourism is given special attention in Finland's Tourism Strategy (2020, p. 43). The Strategy encourages turning sustainability into a competitive asset for Finnish tourism focusing on social, economic, and environmental aspects.

East Helsinki offers much to discover for culinary explorers, making it easy to become acquainted with the fascinating food cultures of the Middle East, Turkey, and Caucasus. The Puhos and Kontula shopping centers attract food lovers from near and far. (The City of Helsinki Website [Figure 1])

According to The City of Helsinki Marketing Strategy 2016–2020, Helsinki can play an important role through telling their stories of the people, encounters, and actions in Helsinki. Marketing Helsinki has founded an initiative called MyHelsinki with the help of local guides who are capable of telling success stories of several trades. The target audience is international, although many local people use its services.

... we got a content team, a lot of Helsinki residents tell about Helsinki as a bottom-up approach through their daily life in the city. They suggest certain themes. [They] are good writers telling genuine contents. By introducing Puhos and Kontula, we aimed to show the varieties, the variety is what makes Helsinki a place to live and visit. (Interviewee X)

MyHelsinki reflects the importance of culinary tourism and ethnic cuisine in creating urban attractions. Interviewee X further clarified the story of introducing Puhos and Kontula:

Our local guides recommended Puhos and Kontula. Therefore, we praised the idea and published them as interesting destinations. (Interviewee X)

Interviewee Y indicated that the locations of both malls met the objectives of Marketing Helsinki to spread out the tourists to visit other places not only the inner city. The importance of restaurants as attractions was explained in the following way:

We work with knowledgeable guides one of whom is fully aware of the interesting gastro attraction destinations in Helsinki. We believe that what is interesting to the locals is also interesting to the city visitors. (Interviewee Y)

Interviewee Y further reported that in tourism there is no more separation between the types of visitors as talent professionals, investors, businessmen or cultural tourists. MyHelsinki aims to serve all visitors.

The paradigms in tourism have changed; we don't visit places to see things, but we visit them to do things and to have a deeper connection with what we are visiting. Our 100 local guides, with their diverse knowledge, communicate with the visitors through their stories about the different destinations. (Interviewee Y)

The quote above reflected the awareness of diverse destinations branding. The localhood of destinations enables original experience that is embedded in the place-based identity. Moreover, the interviewee explained the importance of authenticity stating:

Globalization has an impact on how cities are branding themselves. Places became more or less the same. When visiting cities, the centers are all the same, the same chains everywhere ... we don't visit cities anymore to see places ... we don't visit Paris to see the Eiffel Tower, but to be part of a real local experience. Having same chains

everywhere is very stupid, you don't get a local experience, the originality of spaces is drawn by meanings in them; authenticity makes them differ. (Interviewee Y)

The interviewee clarified the role of subcommunities in the making of meanings, stating:

What creates authenticity in cities is how the different subcommunities are developed within them. . . . If the cities want to stand strong in the global competition . . . they should acknowledge and praise the meeting of two cultures . . . Russians in Helsinki introduce a unique mix of Finnish culture and their own . . . all subcommunities alike bring authenticity to places. (Interviewee Y)

The above quotations correspond to many typical values discussed in literature on authentic place as destinations. Similarly, the richness of the meeting of several cultures in many European cities motivates the branding of spaces where cultures meet without domination in a typical cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Urban Environment Division (UED) in Helsinki . . . are very influential within the city organization. This is because the profession of architecture is highly respected as part of the national identity. (Interviewee Y)

When the researcher further asked about the lack of coordination, the answer was:

Traditionally, the public sector is operated in a top-down setting . . . we need more horizontal work between the departments . . . initiatives of using design as a tool to understand the preferences of the customers started in 2012 when Helsinki was the World Design Capital. The concept has been appreciated by many departments, but not the planners [who acted like] "we are the designers", they strongly believe in their own visions about what city we need. For them, participation comes last, when the design is decided. (Interviewee Y)

It was really hard to have a conversation with planners. It might be embedded in how architects are trained. There is a kind of superiority, they rarely refer to the end users. Many other professions are changing to involve end users in a human-centered approach, but not planners. (Interviewee Y)

Finally, interviewee Y raised a significant obstacle in the specific case of Helsinki. The city owns a lot of land, creating a condition of authority in deciding the long-term visions drawn for the city. Such a situation does not normally create an equal setting for end user involvement; it is simply a top-down setting.

### ***Place-based identity and urban planning in Helsinki***

This subsection introduces the reflectivity of urban planning, specifically urban renewal of areas hosting both strip malls with their place-based identity. The city plan (Yleiskaava, 2016) proposes densification targets, in particular neighborhoods, to prevent segregation and to form urban nodes (p. 120). The Itäkeskus area, where the Puhos mall is located, is among those nodes (pp. 16–17). Kontula is also mentioned among the suburbs to be densified (p. 34). Among other ideas, the plan aims to create new urban centers along trunk lines outside the inner city and create a pedestrian-friendly environment (Yleiskaava, 2016). Strengthening the identity of neighborhoods and their characteristics are important factors in preventing regional segregation as stated by the plan (Yleiskaava, 2016, p. 71). Moreover, the clarifying text of the city plan included no words relevant to multiculturalism, authenticity, ethnic retailing nor immigrant amenities. Interestingly, the city plan proposed the renovation of some old strip malls (p. 35), but the ones to be restored are not named in the city plan.

In the Puhos case, the competition organizer was the City of Helsinki who is also the landowner. The program was written by the City of Helsinki and politically approved. The competition was held in its first phase as an open competition and received a total of 48 entries. The jury committee selected four proposals to the second phase. The competition program acknowledged the multicultural identity of the area (Competition program, pp. 5, 6, 60, 82, 94). However, the information on the space usage at the time of writing the program was incorrect. It was mentioned that the tenants with immigrant backgrounds were concentrated in the oldest part of the mall; thus, the intention is to demolish the

newer parts (Competition program, p. 60). In reality, the newer parts of the mall have been used by ethnic retailers for a long time. Planner C communicated being "sorry that the information was partly incorrect" and that such generalization "was not intended". Furthermore, the evaluation criteria encouraged solutions promoting the preservation of multiculturalism (Competition program, p. 94). Nevertheless, there was no experienced juror in multicultural planning in the 12 members of the jury committee. Planner B admitted that the jury should have been diverse, and it would have been better if the ethnic groups were represented, as most of the public feedback was raised by mainstream not people of ethnicity. However, Planner A reported that when negotiating with a business-led development, the city advised the board of directors of the mall to discuss with the entrepreneurs, to avoid overriding the board. This information raises another shortcoming for two reasons. First, there was no communication with the ethnic retailers about the future of their businesses.

No one has approached us to discuss the destiny of our business. The restaurant is popular . . . , it also hires many immigrants and will for sure impact their lives to close down with no prior information. (Iraqi of a Kurdish descent, 50 years old, male)

Newspapers have also published stories about the municipality failing to inform the entrepreneurs about the future of the mall (Lipchis, 2020). Second, the board of directors represents a fragmented ownership (Hewidy & Lilius, 2022b). If the board was in favor of the demolition, the discussions with the retailers would have not been meaningful. The city has already admitted the weakness of public participation, stating: "There is no evidence of reaching a foreign-speaking population based on the answers to the survey" (Public Participation Report, 2021). In response to the online feedback, respondents requested to be approached in Somali, Persian and/or Arabic. However, these were not included in the language of communication:

We have been advised by the owners of Puhos [shareholding companies] to use simple Finnish and English. There was also a question of resources of how many languages we can use. [We recognized] that in order to get feedback from the tenants, we need to organize live meetings in co-operation with the owners. This we shall do in the next stages when COVID restrictions allow it. (Planner C)

This raises the question of what will be the topic discussed with the tenants after a decision demolishing 60% of the mall and displacing them from the rest of the premises? Planner A regretted such impacts on the tenants and destroying a vibrant hub stating:

it as a shame . . . the ecosystem will be harmed by such development. We'll think in the future about the representation of a juror [specialized in planning for diversity] and better public participation. We would like to keep the bazaar feeling atmosphere. The absence of a clear criteria [for assessing inventions for multiculturalism] or a jury member, we did discuss it, but I admit it is a fault. (Planner A)

Nevertheless, such shortcomings were not extended to the entrants. The first prize winner suggested a market-hall that could host the current retailers, to be built before the renovation and include all the businesses. However, as the idea was suggested in the first stage of the competition, the entrants received a refusal by the city. In the second stage, the second prize winner, according to which the sector of Puhos mall will be developed, proposed a purpose-built mosque because two prayer rooms will be displaced. However, the jury requested the removal of the mosque from the proposal, and Planner C clarified the decision stating that they have dealt with the mosque proposal as a "building regardless of its function," i.e., it was the building itself that was the issue, not the fact that it was a mosque. Therefore, it seems that the planners did not oppose the mosque for its function but for its building mass at this location. The planner's argument for rejecting the building mass because of cutting the visual accessibility suggested that esthetic values were prioritized over the functionality of the building to the immigrant community. Thus, the question to be raised then is: what about the users of the two prayer rooms that will be displaced from the strip mall?

In the Kontula case, the competition organizer consisted of four shareholding companies, and the city was represented in the jury (the city is also the landowner). The competition program was written by an external consultant without political approval by the city. The competition was an invitational

idea competition arranged in 2020 to propose developments to the Kontula strip mall. There were five entrants invited by the organizers. All the shortcomings found in the Puhos competition were also found in the Kontula competition. Moreover, the competition program showed that the organizers were not concerned about the improvements achieved by ethnic retail. Instead, the area attractions were introduced as followed: “The most attractive anchors are the three large hypermarkets: S-market, K-Supermarket Kontumarket, and Lidl. In addition to grocery stores, the shopping center also has an alcohol retailer, Alko” (Competition program, p. 19). The question about ignoring ethnic retail and restaurants at the mall was addressed to Planner D who stated feeling “ashamed that such a statement has gone through the program” and that “she has not read the text well enough.” Planner E clarified that focusing on mainstream chain tenants was due to their demand for large premises and that she has not “realized how funny the statement sounds.” Therefore, it made sense that the evaluation criteria included no mention of such diversity. Nevertheless, the jury committee has criticized all entrants wondering: “How could the area’s multiculturalism be better employed and integrated, and its different nationalities encouraged to engage in the life of the place, this applies to all the entries?” (Competition Jury’s evaluation protocol, p. 43).

The program requested high volume: 70,000 m<sup>2</sup> of residential units and 30,000 m<sup>2</sup> for retail spaces, which led an entrant to propose the demolition of the entire mall. Surprisingly, this proposal has been selected as the winner. In the Kontula case, the five entries were displayed online by the city to collect public feedback. However, all the relevant material and the competition entries for commenting were in Finnish language only. The responses of 346 respondents were given in Finnish except for one in English who revealed being an entrepreneur at the mall. The favorite proposal selected by the public (98 comments) was the proposal suggesting the preservation of the existing retail premises, as argued in this comment (translated by author): “Saving existing buildings also keeps property prices moderate and allows existing entrepreneurs to remain in the area” (Anonymous comment on the public’s favorite proposal).

There were concerns (54 comments) that large-scale constructions would abolish the existing community and architecture. The local knowledge production prior to the competition was described as below: “Before the competition we had several meetings with residents. We consulted them and some entrepreneurs in the competition brief. We arranged workshops for children at schools, many of whom were of an immigrant background” (Planner D). However, the interviewed planner’s clarification about consulting residents, citizens and entrepreneurs was not reflected in any of the documents. Finally, Planner D justified gentrification as followed: “[gentrification] is beneficial for the welfare of the Kontula area in general, it is for better education and health services in general [it is] for the public good” (Planner D).

## Discussion: Non-decision and urban homogenization

Concerning the first question, the findings showed a clear mismatch between the city of Helsinki urban planning and its branding regarding place-based identity. The reflectivity of urban planning to place-based identity is discussed first followed by a discussion of the representation of place-based identity in the city branding.

Regarding urban planning, although the city master plan, for example, mentioned among its objectives the strengthening of the urban identity to prevent segregation, it did not clarify whose identity, what kind of identity and how certain identities can prevent segregation. It seems that a new urban identity is sought for through urban renewal. It is the urban identity that reduces cultural visibility and thus the signs of the overrepresentations of the ethnic groups in both areas; this can be perfectly created through homogenization. Similar ignorance was also found in other documents such as both competition programs. Furthermore, planners consider gentrification a “public good” and beneficial for the welfare of the neighborhoods. The process of involving local public prior to the competition and after the displaying of their results was selective and sketchy. Some of the interviewed entrepreneurs reported lack of information about the intended regeneration as well as inviting certain

retailers and excluding others. In fact, the procedural actions to involve ethnic retailers were not evident and communication with them was either weak or in Finnish language through the available forum online. As planners justified the situation, mainstream chain tenants have a demand for large premises, subsequently chain stores are the favorite occupiers. This is another indicator that small tenants and their needs are intentionally ignored. It seems that the new identity sought for in the studied cases is the one enforced by non-decision making and erasing the place-based identity that has been spontaneously formed.

Regarding the city branding, Marketing Helsinki has considered the unique place-based identity, created by ethnic clusters at Puhos and Kontula, a potential for the visitors of the city and published on the website encouraging journeys to both destinations for discovering authentic food. In fact, immigrant amenities were a clear presentation of the embedded cosmopolitanism of culinary consumption (cf., Farrer, 2017). Thus, MyHelsinki initiative has acknowledged the stories and experiences reported by the local guides and praised them as touristic destinations in a bottom-up approach. Marketing Helsinki reflects an awareness of the importance of unique food experience for visitors (cf., Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Hall et al., 2003). Accordingly, through eateries and dining both cases have become immaterial heritage and cultural attraction representing an important factor for visits (cf., Kim & Eves, 2012). Ethnic retail in Helsinki has succeeded to fill a niche market and offer new forms of specialization created by cultural differentiation forming more heterogeneous retail segments resisting retail homogenization (cf., Hoffman, 2003). In such a process, the place-based identity was obvious as locus of meanings (cf., Lefebvre, 1991), and ethnic retail proved its capacity to play a role in the lived space equally attracting both foodies and mainstream clientele. Marketing Helsinki, therefore, has given the possibility for immigrants to contribute through their innovative hubs in the regeneration of their neighborhoods (e.g., Hewidy, 2022b; Hewidy & Lilius, 2022b). However, the created place-based identities were ignored by urban planning resulting in a comprehensive image of the city that is solely drawn by the planning policy with its prioritized topics (see Figure 8).

To answer the second question about the potential impacts of urban renewal on ethnic retail in Helsinki, the terms *value* and *actors* need to be brought to the discourse. To simplify, place-based identity created by ethnic clusters can be considered as (a) intellectual: when the city acknowledges its diversity and praises it as a *value*, and (b) substantial: defining entrepreneurs and their clientele enjoying their use value, be it functional or social, as the *actors*. When the place-based identity is ignored as a value and relevant actors are excluded, the impacts of urban renewal policies affect both the city and the immigrant community. On the one hand, the city intentionally loses distinctive places regardless of branding them: the expected disappearance of places offering the possibility to make memories in an authentic atmosphere. As a result, foodies, typically from the middle class, will have no

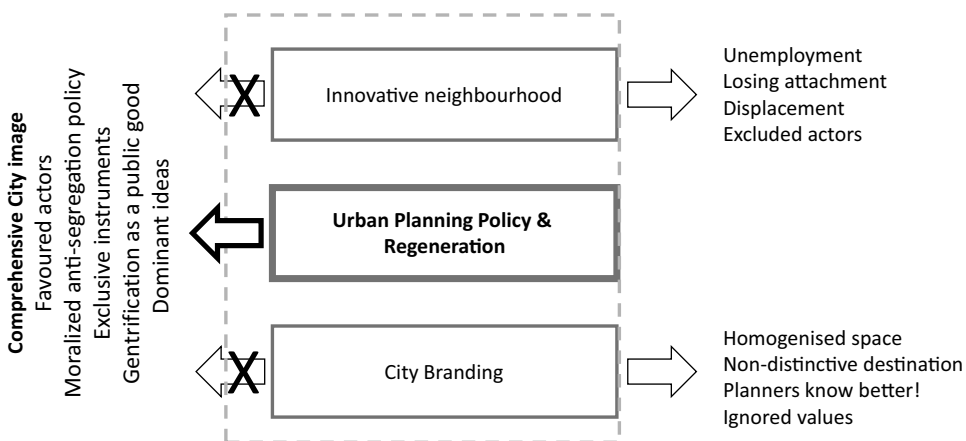


Figure 8. The power practiced by urban planning: the impacts on the branded innovative neighborhoods.

more interest to visit these neighborhoods. Thus, the innovative neighborhoods' potential is not engaged in urban regeneration. Furthermore, destinations of cultural visibility combining shopping to leisure will be lost. On the other hand, the immigrant community will lack the place attachment, belonging and lose social networks (cf., Newman & Wyly, 2006; Zukin et al., 2009). The entrepreneurs will lose their clientele and get displaced and many of their staff will be unemployed, converting them from taxpayers into social welfare beneficiaries. Furthermore, the spillover of agglomeration of operating diverse trades and services will be lost. The reason for such impacts is the simplification of dealing with immigrants through the control of their spatial pattern via anti-segregation policy in a clear absence of multicultural planning.

## Conclusion: Speaking truth to power

The studied cases in this paper showcase an urban development of spaces where the interests of diverging stakeholders are unevenly reflected in the planning decision. From one side, both strip malls proved to be initiatives taking place in socially innovative neighborhoods and Helsinki Marketing received such successes by praising and branding. From the other side, urban planning authority and policies ignored the ethnic clusters and other stakeholders, and values were selectively involved in the regeneration process. It is rather complex to understand the reasons for the non-decision making in urban renewal in Helsinki in the light of Lukes's theorization of power, governance, urban policy, and procedural actions. The spatial pattern of immigrants in Helsinki is already formed (three districts in Helsinki host 70% of immigrants, see Figure 2); thus, the intended urban renewal will have no effect on reducing segregation (see Bolt et al., 2010). Contradictorily, planning policy and planners moralize the social-mix and gentrification to justify them as a solution for the segregated areas and for public good (cf., Uitermark, 2003). Furthermore, the mass media publishes that the demolition of strip malls contributes to the stigma recovery (e.g., Färding, 2021). Such a moralized discourse about anti-segregation can be understood under the radical dimension of power, *power through domination* (Lukes, 2005), that shapes all actors' preferences and conceptions to accept the decision. Literature on unbalanced power between actors (Amore, 2017; Amore et al., 2017) urges more inclusive community participation.

Regarding *power through decision making*, an exclusion of certain actors is evident. For the city, the actors included were the board of directors in the Puhos case and the competition organizers in the Kontula case; thus, entrepreneurs were absent. In both competitions, the selection of jurors is another exclusion of actors: none of the jury members had expertise in multicultural planning. Regarding *power through agenda setting*, diversity as a value was restricted from the city master plan, it was not permitted to be politically handled. On the other hand, the main topics considered in developing both areas in the city plan were segregation, pedestrian-friendly environment and creating new urban centers. This was a clear employment of the non-decision making that has limited the scope of decision to other topics, but not diversity as a value (cf., Lukes, 2005; Robertson & Beresford, 1996). The paper further draws on Le Galès (2011) to criticize the sole use of Finnish language in both competitions and in displaying the Kontula entries online, which was a communication-based instrument regulating the political relation (audience democracy as by Le Galès). In doing so, favored stakeholders were kept involved in the process, and those who represent an innovative neighborhood, actors who transformed abandoned malls into livable hubs and are striving to get communicated, were exposed to local governing succumbed to the top-down anti-segregation agenda (cf., Amore et al., 2017). It was clear that planning was performed as a social control device in regulating the reproduction of the space in both cases, thus enabling an elite control of the societal resources such as place-based identity (cf., Yiftachel, 1998) through preserving the power of the ruling class (cf., Parsons, 1995). The few ideas proposed in both competitions that could have preserved both hubs were not welcomed as a sign of manipulation of ideas practiced through the exclusion of any alternatives from the agenda (cf., Rose & Davies, 1994); a typical "mobilization of bias" (Schattschneider, 1975).

Communicative planning, which is acknowledged in the Finnish planning system, assumes that the groups enter public deliberations as disempowered and equal participants. However, the public sphere is not neutral regarding power relations of the system or the domestic sphere. Accordingly, if power difference manifests itself in public sphere, the least powerful groups have the lowest influence on the planning decision outcomes. The author thus argues that knowledge, including this paper, can be one of the required tools in balancing the imbalanced power or at least speaking *truth to power*. Urban renewal in such an attitude is a violent planning and social cleansing action. Furthermore, with the emergence of neoliberal policies, land has become a source of growth; thus, planning usually tends to achieve an added value out of planning process.

Finally, this paper calls for more research on the impact of urban renewal on place-based identity, namely, in areas where immigrants can convert their socioeconomic exclusion into a success. Moreover, further studies are needed to inform the practice of how to integrate immigrants' neighborhoods as a potential in urban growth rather than simplifying dealing with them solely through anti-segregation policy. Otherwise, more urban places that not only host immigrant amenities but are also full of meanings and values will be further demolished.

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