



Slow Housing – Competitive Edge for Innovative Living Environments

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with Lorenzo Daldoss

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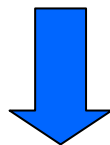
**8th International Conference of Finland Futures Research Centre and Finland Futures Academy
“Changing Foresight Practices in Regional Development - Global Pressures and Regional Possibilities”
7-9 June, Turku, Finland**

ECO-REGIONS

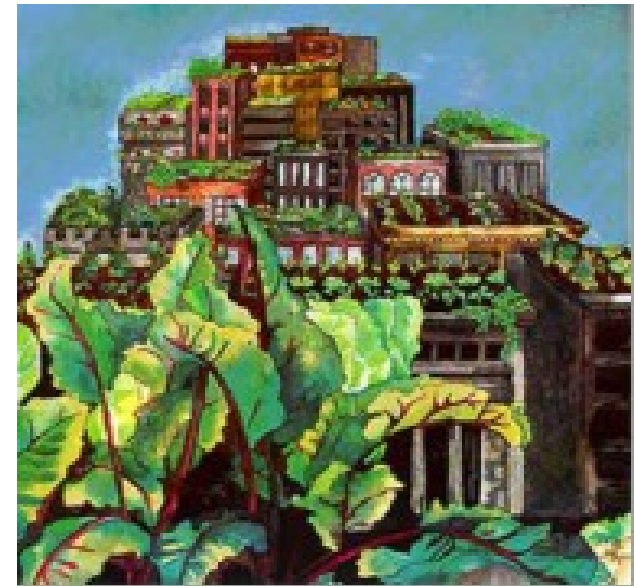
Experimental models of eco-efficient towns and regions

<http://virtual.vtt.fi/ekoseutu/>

- **project schedule 1st September 2004 – 31st December 2006**
co-financed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of the Environment, and VTT
- **cases of experimental and innovative housing, working/production and transport**

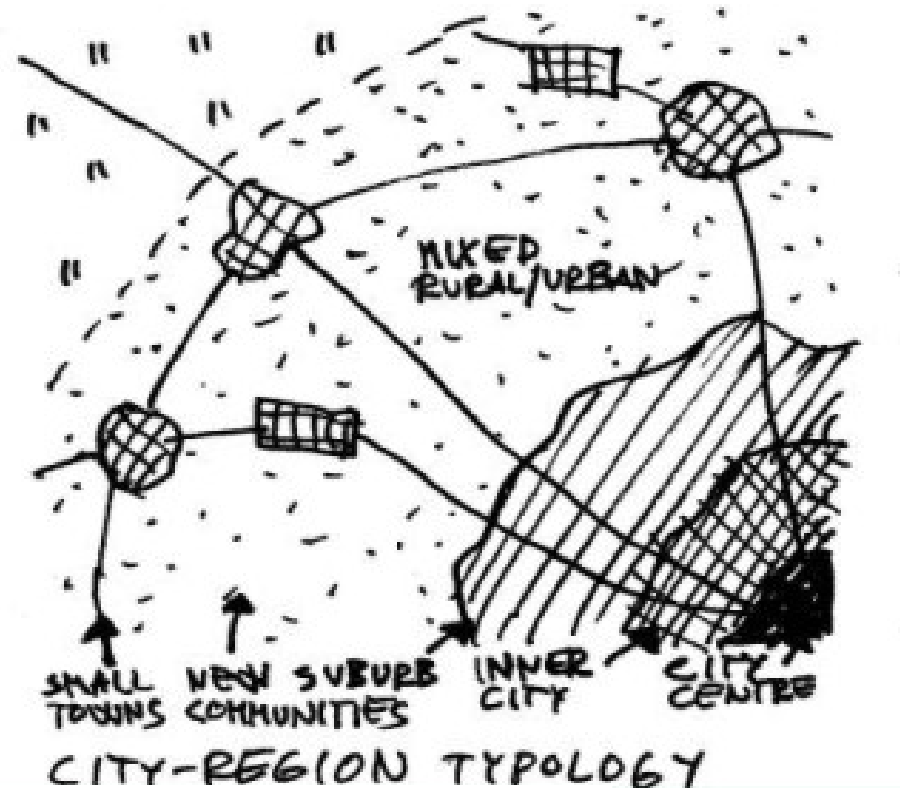


Slow Housing
- Competitive Edge for Innovative Living Environments



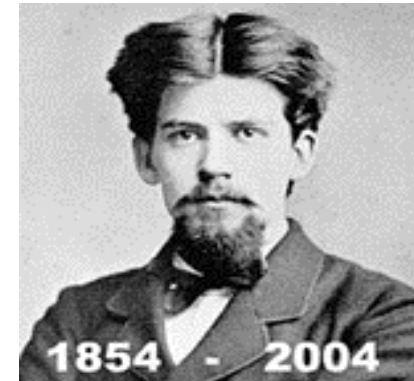
REGIONAL APPROACH

- holistic analysis of whole regions – rural regions consisting of small villages and small towns, as well as city regions



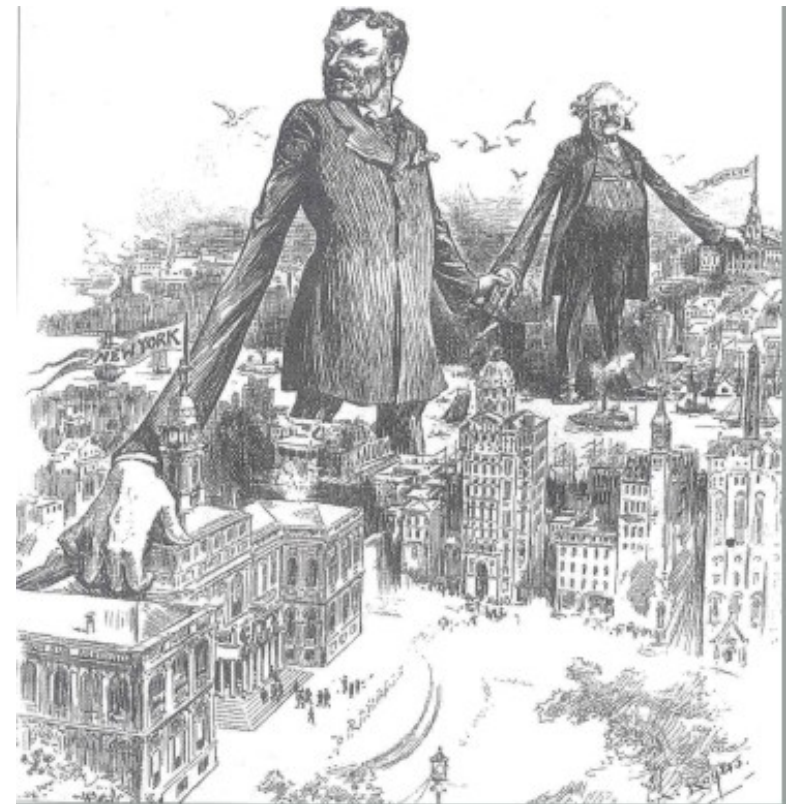
Breheny & Rookwood 1993; Lahti 2004

PATRICK GEDDES



<http://www.patrickgeddes.co.uk/>

- theoretical framework based on thinking of Patrick Geddes (1854-1932)
- "father" of regional planning
- rural / urban interaction
- thoughts of Geddes anticipate the idea of eco-efficient city and region

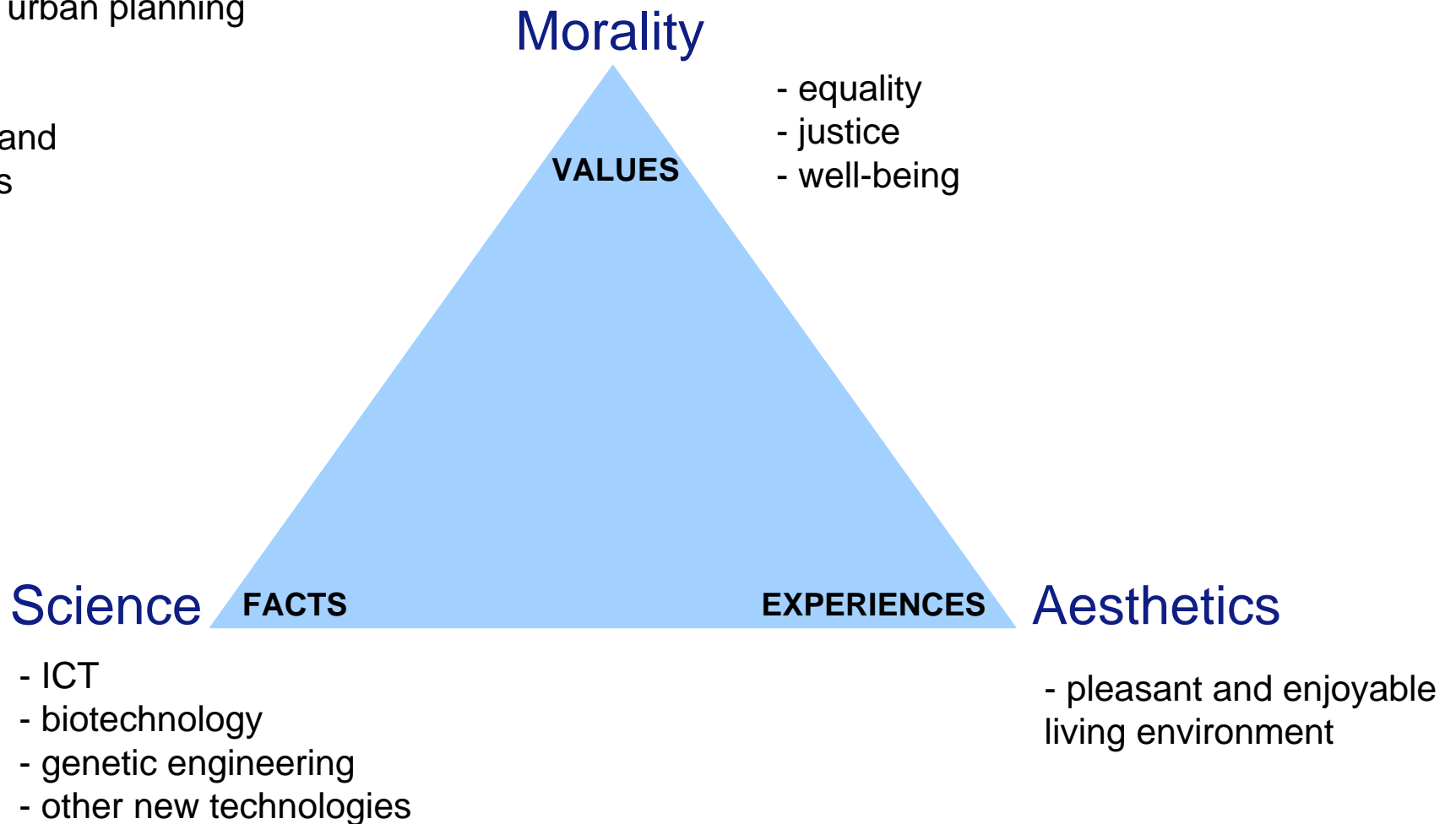


Rykwert, J. 2000. The Seduction of Place. New York.

GEDDES' TRIPOLIS

The aims of urban planning
to connect

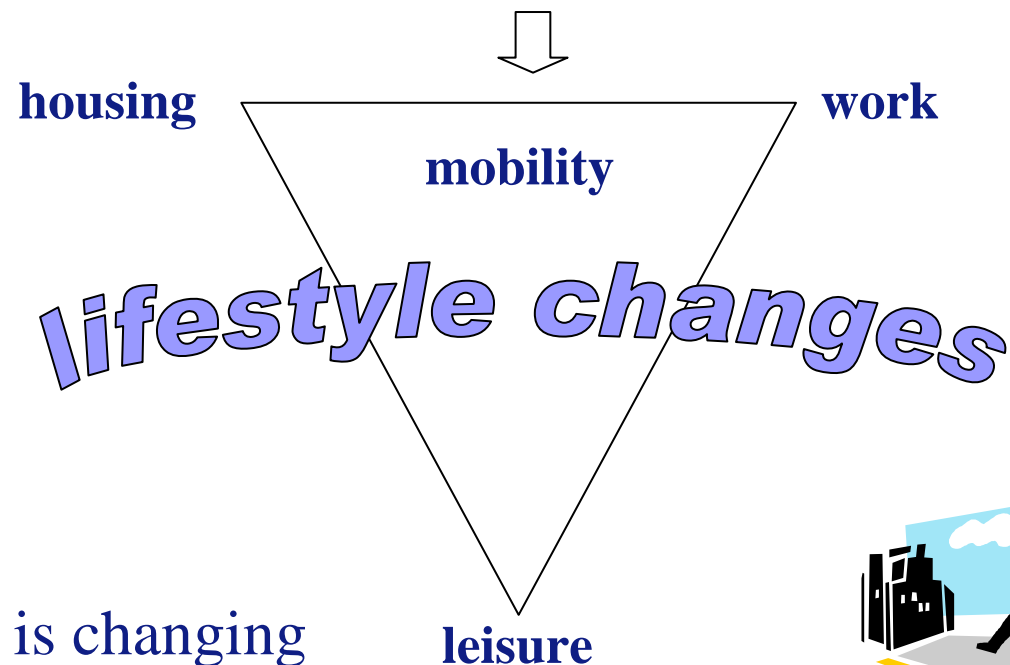
- 1) science,
- 2) morality, and
- 3) aesthetics



CHANGES IN THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT

"The Bermudan triangle of urban planning"

full of turbulent changes within each sector and within interconnections

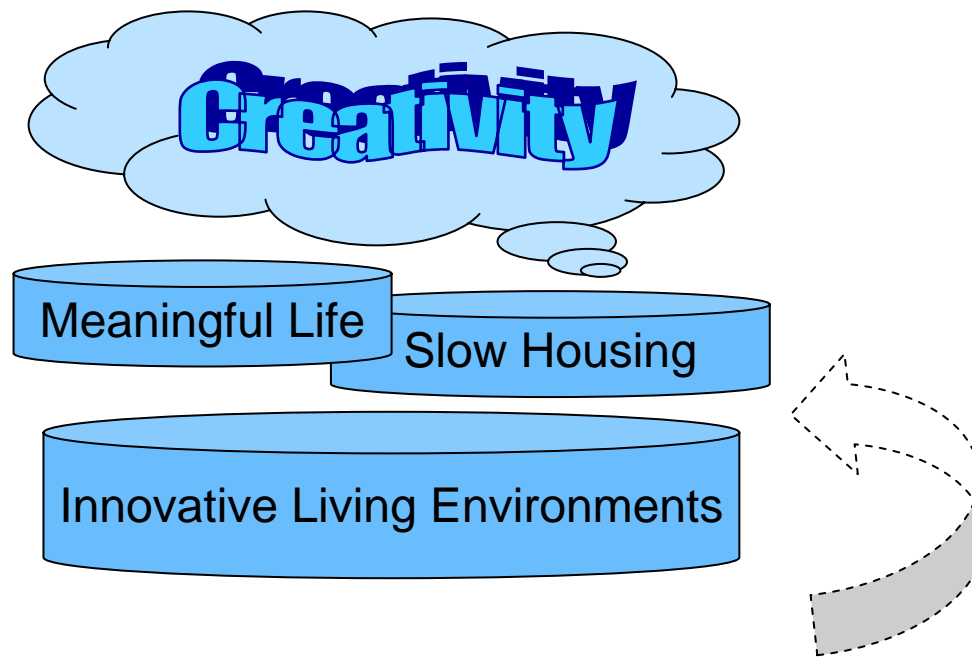


- how we work is changing
- how we live is changing
- how we spend our leisure is changing

Source: Heinonen et al. (2004). Ekohallittu etätyö. Suomen ympäristö 701.
(In Finnish. Eco-Managed Telework) Ministry of the Environment.

VISION OF A GOOD LIVING ENVIRONMENT

- Aristotle's ideal of good life



slow food \Rightarrow slow housing \Rightarrow slow design \Rightarrow slow cities \Rightarrow slow life
= slow philosophy

SLOW PHILOSOPHY



- **Slow food movement (1986)**

- promoting food and wine culture
- defending food and agricultural biodiversity worldwide
- defending local products and need for customer information

- **Slow housing**

- home as a haven for relaxation and socialising
- refers also to non-standardised construction methods and traditional materials

- **Slow design**

- design to slow human, economy and resource use metabolisms (encouraging the long view)
- repositioning the focus of design on individual, socio-cultural and environmental wellbeing

- **Slow cities movement (2000)**

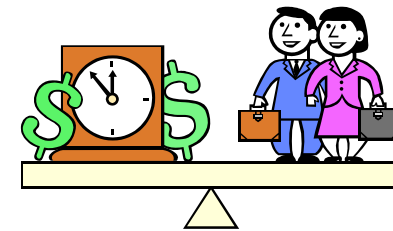
- aims to improve living conditions with the use of new technological devices
- respecting the heritage of the past

- **Slow Life**

- means taking time to dedicate to one's private life
- a life system more attentive to people's immaterial needs

SLOW MEANS

- **BALANCE**
- **control of time; calm and stress-free way of living**
- **control and consciousness of your own life**
- **It means quality of life.**
- ***Slow does not mean stupid,
speed does not mean smart.***



PROS AND CONS OF FAST FOOD / SLOW FOOD

	Positive aspects & impacts	Negative aspects & impacts
FAST FOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time savings • possibility to have a relatively low-cost meal • available everywhere, in every country • safe and solid brand • social meeting place • open almost 24/7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • largely unhealthy • lack of local traditions • monotonous and homogeneous brand • staff in strenuous conditions • sometimes crowded = not-so-fast food
SLOW FOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emphasis on local traditions • locally produced • whole life cycle for meals: producing, purchasing, making, consuming food • what, how and where produced, with whom • way of thinking, lifestyle • cultural & social experience • connecting people, socialising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time consuming • sometimes unpleasant surprises about quality and origin of food • lack of information • good quality ingredients may be expensive or hard to get throughout the year

PROS AND CONS OF FAST HOUSING / SLOW HOUSING

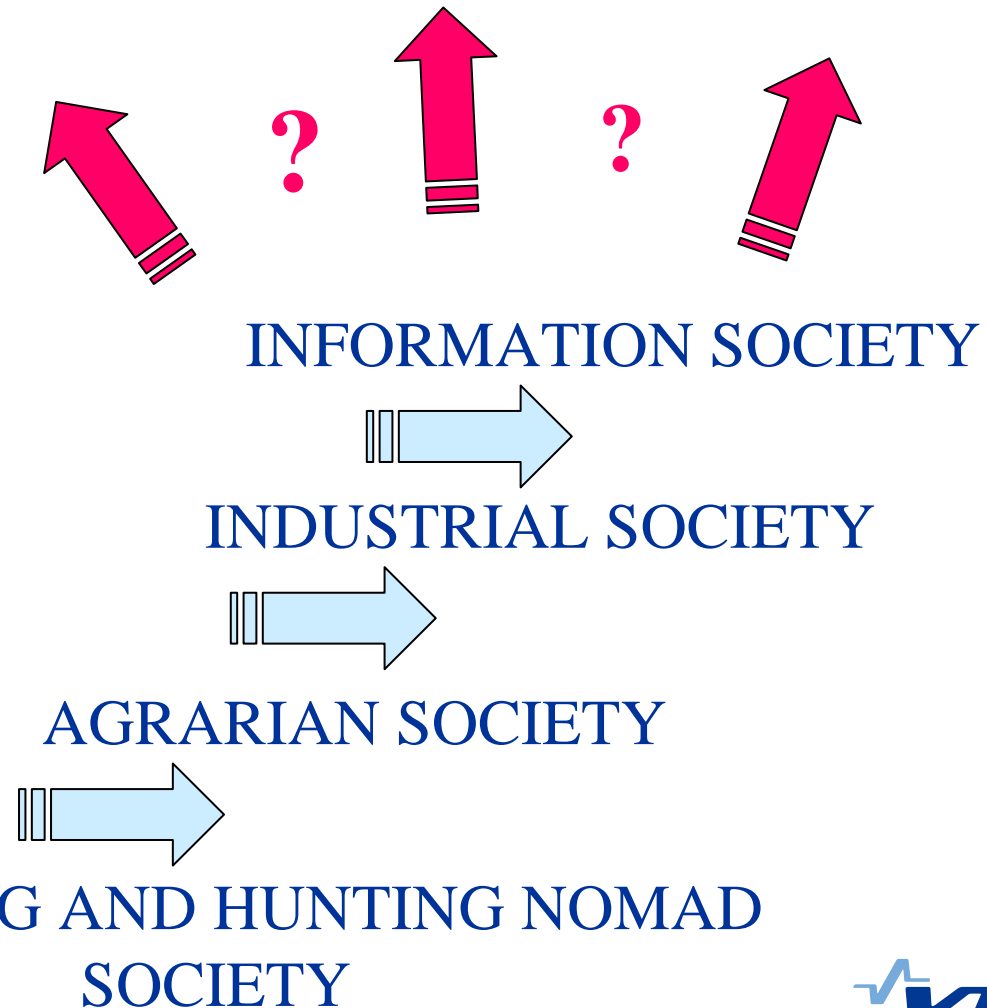
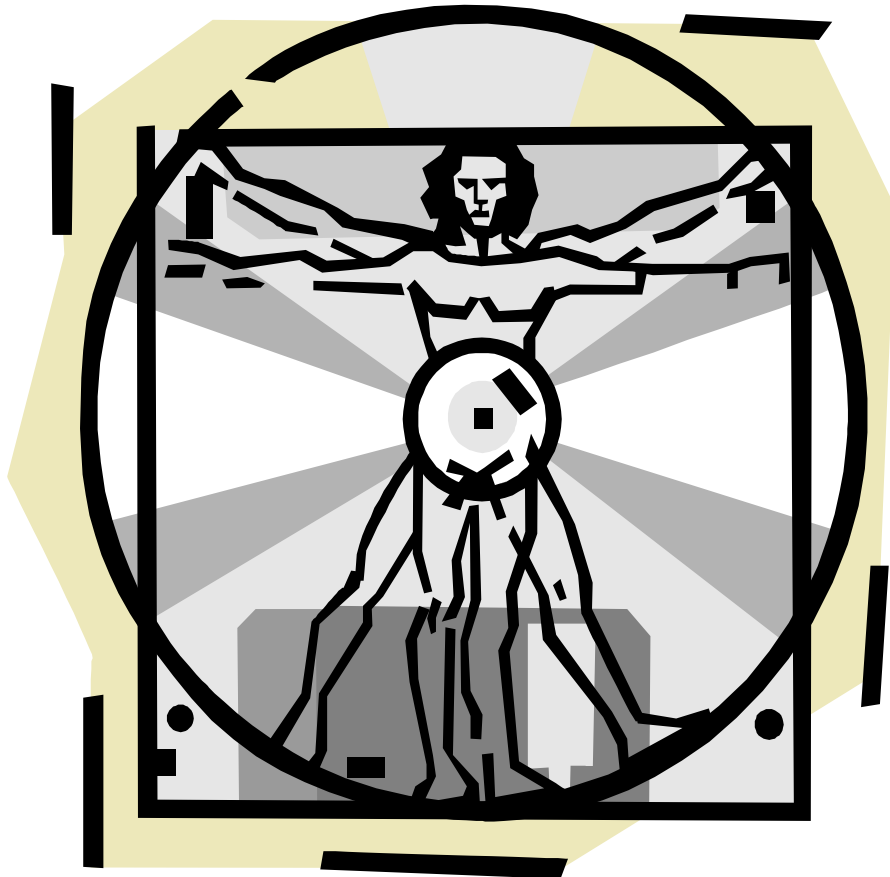
	Positive aspects & impacts	Negative aspects & impacts
FAST HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• home as a family and work life nerve centre for carrying out multiple activities in an efficient way	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• home as a hectic "24/7 active life control" tower, leaving little space for relaxation
SLOW HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• home as a haven for relaxation and socialising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• possible inefficiency when work and private life not flexibly connected

PROS AND CONS OF FAST LIFE / SLOW LIFE

	Positive aspects & impacts	Negative aspects & impacts
FAST LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• action and buzz almost 24 hours a day and 7 days a week• efficiency at work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• difficulties in reconciling work and family• stress, healthy problems
SLOW LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• no stress• time to spend with your family and friends• time for your own hobbies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• not enough stimulus• working career also slow? (unless slowness means high quality work, because e.g. less mistakes)• slowness = laziness = unproductiveness

EVOLUTION OF DIFFERENT SOCIETAL PHASES

BIO-SOCIETY - EXPERIENCE SOCIETY - DIGITAL SOCIETY



EXPERIENCE SOCIETY = CULTURE SOCIETY

Creative economy

"Emergence of culture society"



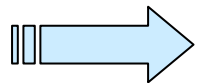
New culture products and services will be diffused in homes, and residential areas through increasing number of medias (tv, internet, multimedia services), interactive and spontaneous local culture products, housing becomes a culture product instead of a staple commodity.

Creative economy flourishes in a creative living environment.

Source: Heinonen et al. (2005). Asumisen kehitysnäkymät 2010-2030. (In Finnish. Perspectives of future housing 2010-2030. VTT)

INDIVIDUALITY RULES IN EXPERIENCE SOCIETY/CULTURE SOCIETY

Individual ways of life and modes
"Identity out"

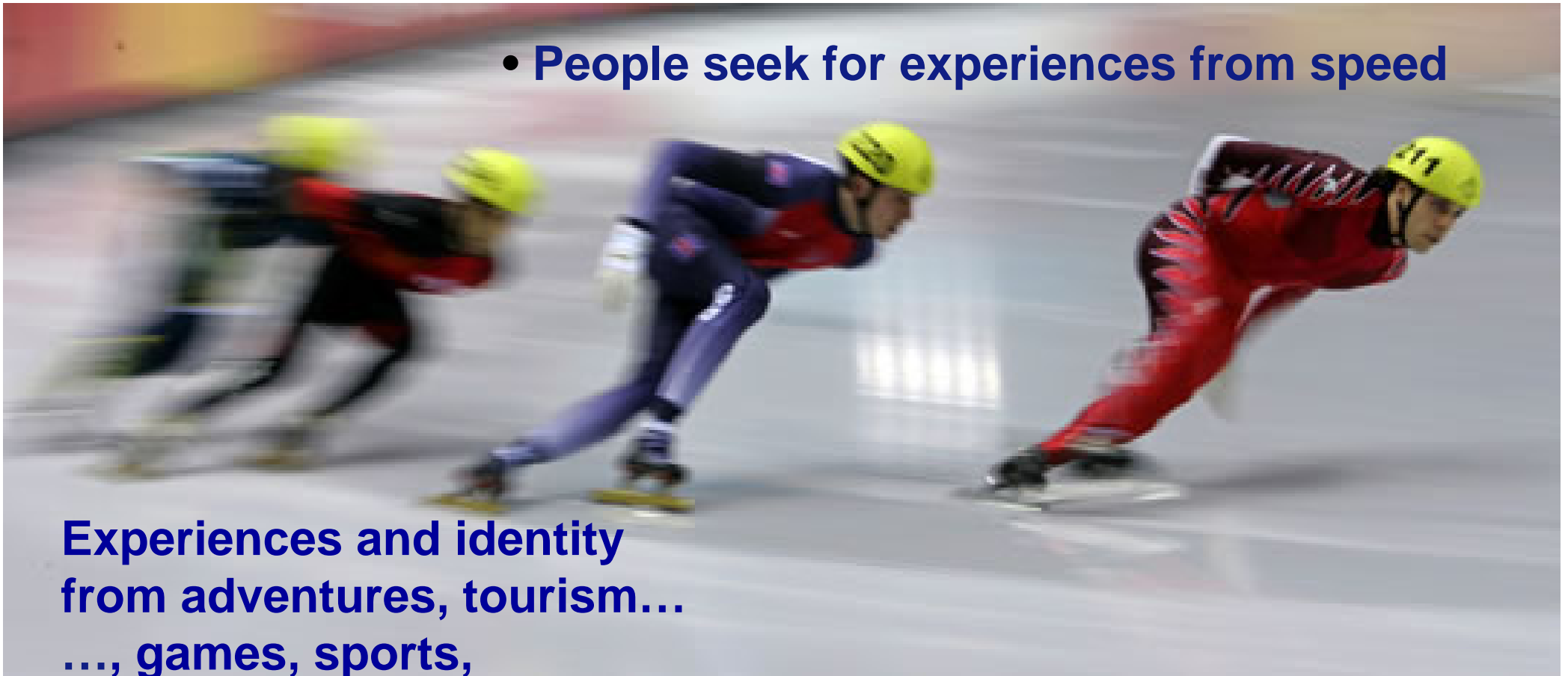


Branded homes, social status related housing solutions, housing and living environment expressing the way of living and the identity. New subcultures of housing sprout out on a set of values and ethnical diversity. The footprint of experience society is both ecological and cultural...

Source: Heinonen et al. (2005). Asumisen kehitysnäkymät 2010-2030. (In Finnish. Perspectives of future housing 2010-2030. VTT)

EXPERIENCE SOCIETY (1/2)

- People seek for experiences from speed



**Experiences and identity
from adventures, tourism...
..., games, sports,
entertainment, technology...**

EXPERIENCE SOCIETY (2/2)

- People seek for experiences from "slowness"

Experiences and identity from nature, religion, retreats, silence, relaxation, etc.

TIME AS A CRUCIAL ELEMENT FOR QUALITY OF LIFE

The Greeks had two words for time:

1) Chronos

- linear, chronological and quantifiable
- the absolute time (public time)

2) Kairos

- qualitative, time of opportunity, chance and mischance
- the event time (personal time)

Clash between personal and public time flows

TIME KNOWLEDGE



1. Personal time management

"Life well spent is long"

Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519)

2. Utilisation of on-line world (real time)

universal connectivity

3. Utilisation of desynchronisation of society

maximum mobility

maximum immobility

4. Futures thinking (proactivity, foresight)

INNOVATION AND INNOVATIVE ENVIRONMENT

Innovation is not an "externality", nor a deus ex machina.

INNOVATION

= realisation + new idea + implementation + creating value

GOOD INNOVATIVE ENVIRONMENT

= information flows + networks + buzz + action + trust

INNOVATIONS EVOLVE WITHIN OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

= encompassing both working and housing environments.

Source: Finnish Committee for the Future (2005). Technology Assessment 23 Regional Innovative Environments

THE FLOW

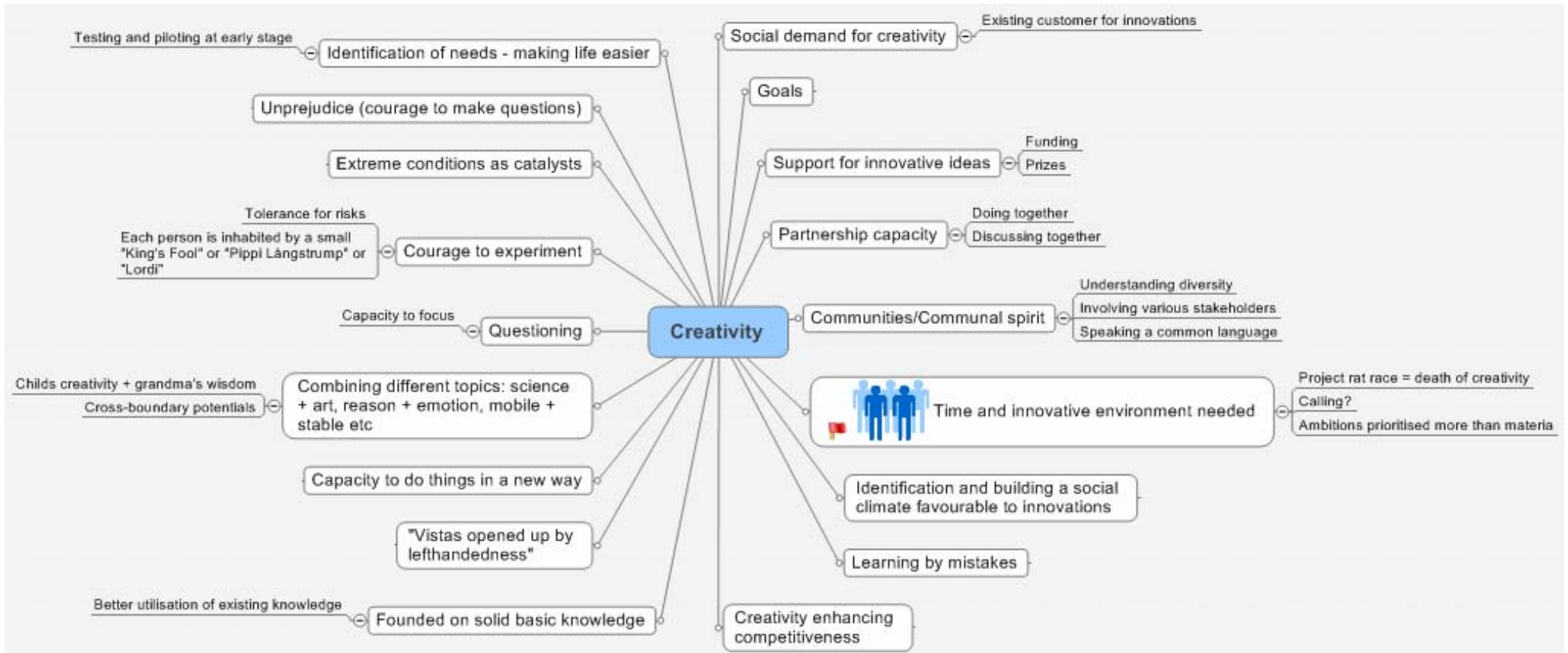
- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi suggests another source of innovation

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly (1990). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*.
New York: Harper and Row.

- a generic feature of the human psyche is that humans feel happy when they successfully perform at the edge of their capabilities
- optimal experiences -> give meaning to life
- intensive concentration and immersion in what you are doing
- by controlling our consciousness, sense of time evaporates

Can slow life create such environments for optimal experiences (flow)?

TIME AND INNOVATIVE ENVIRONMENT AS PREREQUISITE FOR CREATIVITY



Source: Finnish Government Information Society Programme. Futures Workshops 2006. Helsinki.

OPTIMAL LIVING ENVIRONMENT

- houses, spaces, surroundings -

- functional
- safe
- healthy
- pleasant
- stimulating
- peaceful
- silent
- aesthetic
- accessible
- communal
- individual
- ecological

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INNOVATIONS EVOLVE WITHIN OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

- both working and housing environments
- meaningful life should be achieved in both (working + housing)
- a necessary prerequisite for this is balance between work and family



INFORMATION SOCIETY TURNED INTO AN EXPERIENCE SOCIETY

...experiences being sought from
slow housing (silence and
peaceful milieu)...also from clean
environment and clean food..

...therefore living in the
countryside becomes attractive...

Finland already the promised land
of summer cottages
(almost 500 000,
population 5 million)

Source: Heinonen (2005). Ekotehokkaan maaseudun ja kaupunkiseudun innovatiivisia kokeilumalleja. (In Finnish. Eco-Regions.) Espoo.

SLOW HOUSING ENABLED IN RURAL ENVIRONMENTS



- Locally produced food appreciated:
- reliable origin;
 - supports local economy;
 - less transportation.



locally produced food is a related concept to slow food

slow food emphasises making food in no hurry and as a holistic process
- from fetching the raw materials (growing) to making a meal and having it in good company



slow food can be incorporated in *slow housing, slow living*.....

SLOW HOUSING IN RURAL LIVING ENVIRONMENT CAN INCLUDE EFFICIENCY



Thoughts from a person who moved to the countryside

Hannu Kytö, Leena Aaltola (2006) Muuttuva maalle muuttaja, p. 53 :

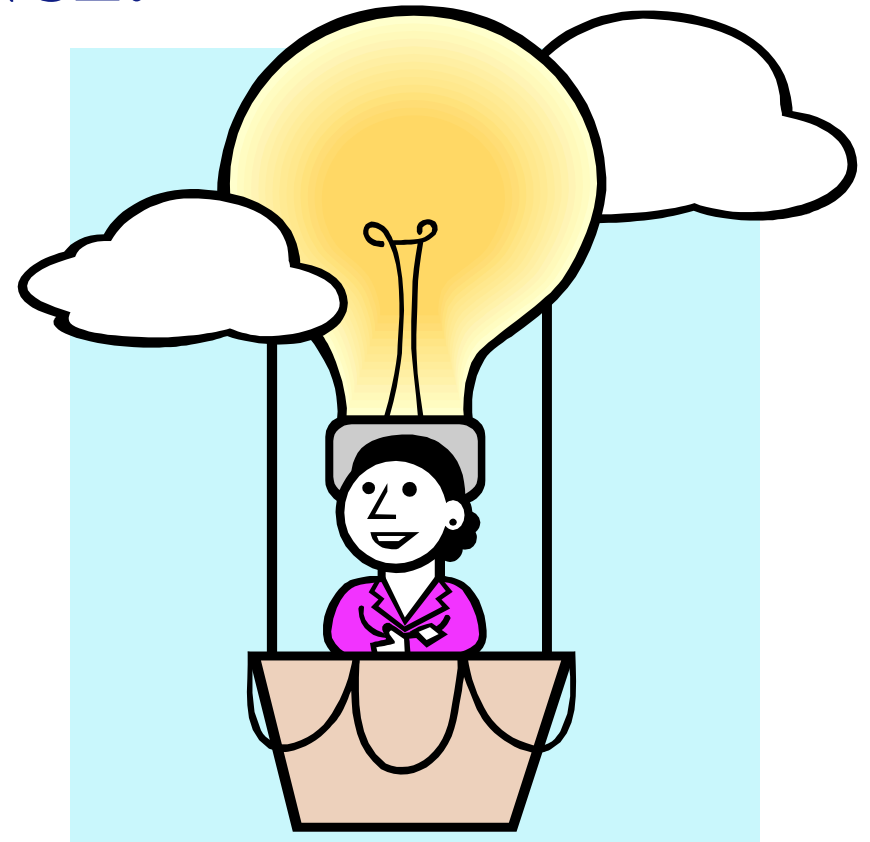
... "If you want to work efficiently, it is easier to work in the countryside. Unnecessary business meetings, "long lunches" and other stressful making fuss is eliminated. You can work more efficiently and leisure in rural settings is "healthier!"

A woman, 48 yrs, moved to Vesilahti from suburbs.

CONCLUSIONS (1/2)

SLOW MEANS BALANCE:

- **work + leisure**
- **quantity + quality**
- **material + immaterial**
- **science + art**
- **urban + rural**
- **people + places**



CONCLUSIONS (2/2)

- Can "Slow" generate "Flow"?
- Slow concept (slow housing) can create a fertile soil for innovations that would have not emerged in the pressures of tight schedules
- Who will pick up the challenge of developing A Slow Region?



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Thank You!

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