

Congratulations from Finland

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Ismo Söderling

The Population Research Institute at Väestöliitto, the Finnish Family Federation, sends its heartfelt and warm congratulations.

Our interactions with Estonian demographers were invigorated with the perestroika and the ensuing national independence of your country. We especially remember how, in the early 1990s, several Estonians visited Finland for weeks or months as part of a special grant. Many of them as academic visitors to our Institute, and several also staying in Väestöliitto's apartments in Tapanila. We could enjoy the future crème-de-la-crème of Estonian demography including Anders Vikat, Allan Puur, Luule Sakkeus, Hill Kulu, Dagmar Kutsar, Mall Leinsalu and others.

At that time, demographic publications, especially in English, were hard to get in Estonia, and our visitors took the opportunity to explore the library of the Population Research Institute. We have a vivid memory of Allan Puur standing on long stairs in the library, systematically going through every single book and journal issue. Anneli Miettinen did her

own private calculations and estimated, that during his 3 months in Finland Puur read or at least browsed on average 200 publications a day.

Perhaps one consequence of this is that, to our great envy, several of the most influential publications on Finnish fertility and family life was done by Estonians, for instance Anders Vikat on childbearing during the Finnish recession in the 1990s or Hill Kulu on the 7 year itch in Finnish marriages.

We were also amazed at how such a small population could produce so many outstanding demographers. Probably much of the credit goes to Kalev Katus, who also visited Helsinki regularly. Kalev Katus was involved in many collaborations, including PhD supervisions, up until his sudden and untimely death at the Nordic Demographic Symposium in 2008.

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