

Preface

Ladies and gentlemen!

On behalf of the City of Tampere, I warmly welcome you to our city and to this Congress Hall.

Tampere is the second largest centre of growth in Finland. We have more than 210,000 (two hundred and ten thousand) inhabitants and in the Tampere Region there are about 350,000 (three hundred and fifty thousand) inhabitants. Tampere has been an industrial pioneer in Finland since its foundation in 1779 (seventeen seventy-nine). The city is still a significant centre of export, mechanical engineering and automation. But nowadays the majority of its population works in post-industrial sectors, such as information and health technology, welfare services, and creative fields.

Tampere has several times been chosen Finland's most attractive city. The factors that contribute to its popularity include excellent work and educational opportunities, lively cultural life and good connections. Two-thirds of Finns live within a 200 km radius of Tampere and this area encompasses almost all of the largest cities in the country.

I hope you have time to walk around in the centre of Tampere, where there is Tammerkoski rapids and the old red brick industrial area—Finlayson and Tappel-la—our 'old town'. That area is nowadays full of cultural attractions like galleries, restaurants and museums. There are also many parks close to the city centre.

Pyynikki is the highest gravel ridge in the world. It is a nature lover's paradise. The area offers beautiful scenery to our lakes Näsijärvi and Pyhäjärvi—and there is a nice old observation tower café too!

But I do not have time to list all the attractions in Tampere, so let's go on!

The theme of your conference is very topical in many places, and Tampere is no exception. The number of senior citizens is increasing rapidly, as is the need to develop new preventive social and health care services.

Tampere aims to reduce reliance on institutional care of the elderly and improve the availability of services provided at home. This requires cooperation between the city, organizers and businesses. This is especially vital for preventing increasingly common illnesses, such as diabetes, dementia and various mental problems.

Extensive international cooperation is required to solve these problems: cooperation between researchers, those who work with the practical applications, and the decision-makers. For this, your conference provides an excellent setting.

I bid you all welcome to Tampere. I hope you have very interesting days here and also I hope you have time to visit and enjoy the summer of Tampere!

Timo P. Nieminen,
Mayor of Tampere