



# **Accessibility in Vesilinna – a Tourism attraction in Jyväskylä**

Tea Suosara

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## Description

**Author: Suosara Tea**

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### **Abstract**

Today many people live with some kind of limitation or disability. Because tourism is considered to be a basic human right its versatility and equality are constantly being developed. Accessible tourism is a relatively new concept and many tourism destinations have started to develop their services so that they are reachable for everyone.

Vesilinna is one of Jyväskylä's tourist attractions. It has been since the 19th century. It is advertised greatly by the city to all the tourists. The accessibility of Vesilinna and its services has not been studied before. The purpose is to find development sites in order to make Vesilinna an accessible tourism attraction that is suitable for everyone, no matter of limitation and disabilities.

A research study was performed with six semi-structured interviews. Ten people were chosen for the interviews due to their various limitations and disabilities. Interviews were conducted on the site in order to get more reliable overall picture of the customer journey and its accessibility. In addition to the interviews, emails sent to the restaurant regarding accessibility were analyzed.

The results indicate that Vesilinna is reachable and most of its' services are accessible. Especially the restaurants' employees served different kind of customers equally. The interviewees felt that Vesilinna is a good tourism attraction, and you are able to visit there with anyone. With small adjustments Vesilinna would be even more equal from the accessibility point of view. The findings could be used as guide to develop Vesilinna's accessibility.

### **Keywords/tags (subjects)**

Tourism Industry, Accessible tourism, Equality, Tourism Attraction, Accessibility, Disability and Reduced Mobility

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### **Tiivistelmä**

Yhä useampi ihminen elää jonkinlaisen rajoitteen tai vamman kanssa. Koska turismista halutaan ihmisen perusoikeus, sen monipuolisuutta ja tasa-arvoisuutta kehitetään jatkuvasti. Esteetön turismi on suhteellisen uusi käsite ja moni turismikohte onkin alkanut kehittämään palveluitaan niin että ne ovat kaikkien saatavilla.

Vesilinna on yksi Jyväskylän turismikohteista, ollut jo 1800-luvulta. Sitä mainostetaan turisteille myös Jyväskylän kaupungin toimesta. Vesilinnan esteettömyyttä ei ole aiemmin tutkittu. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli löytää kehityskohteita, jotta Vesilinnasta saataisiin esteetön turismikohte, joka sopii kaikille.

Tutkimus suoritettiin toteuttamalla kuusi teemahaastattelua. Haastatteluihin valittiin 10 henkilöä jotka elävät erilaisten rajoitteiden ja kehitysvammojen kanssa. Haastattelut toteutettiin paikan päällä, jotta saatiin luotettavampi kokonaiskuva palvelupolusta ja sen esteettömyydestä. Tämän lisäksi ravintolalle lähetettyjä sähköposteja koskien esteettömyyttä analysoitiin.

Tulokset osoittavat, että Vesilinna on saavutettavissa esteettömästi ja suurin osa palveluista on täysin esteettömiä. Erityisesti ravintolantyöntekijöiden todettiin osaavan palvella erilaisia ihmisiä tasa-arvoisesti. Haastatteluun osallistuneet kokivat Vesilinnan olevan hyvä turismikohte Jyväskylässä ja siellä voi vierailla millaisella seurueella tahansa. Pienillä muutoksilla tulisi Vesilinnasta vielä tasa-arvoisempi esteettömyyden näkökulmasta. Tutkimustuloksia Vesilinnan palveluntarjoajat voivat hyödyntää apuna kehittämään rakennuksen ja palveluiden esteettömyyttä.

### **Avainsanat**

Turismiala, Esteetön turismi, Tasa-arvo, Turistikohte, Esteettämyys, Kehitysvamma ja rajoittunut liikkuminen

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# 1 Introduction

Vesilinna is a tourism attraction in Jyväskylä, Central Finland. It is highly recommended by Visit Jyväskylä Region, a tourism agency that operates in central Finland. On their website Vesilinna is described as a “place with scenic views” and can be found under Top attractions and landmarks section. (Visit Jyväskylä, N.d.) Reader can find the place also under restaurants and cafés as well as museums. This tells the visitor that Vesilinna is a place that has a lot to offer for a tourist. However nowhere is said if you are able to visit the place with limitations or disabilities.

According to World Health Organization (WHO) every 6<sup>th</sup> person lives with a significant disability. (Disability, 2022) That means 1.3 billion people worldwide. Goal of accessible tourism is to guarantee people with limitations to have the same possibilities as anyone else. They should have chance to function independently and equally. Accessible tourism covers a large segment of people with access requirements including mobility, vision, hearing, and cognitive dimensions of access. It also includes those who are travelling with children and seniors. “Accessibility is not only human rights. Accessibility for all to tourism facilities, products, and services should be a central part of any responsible and sustainable tourism policy” (UNWTO, N.d.).

The thesis focuses on accessibility in Vesilinna. The study focuses on Vesilinna because it offers various services for tourists but is still small enough to address in this thesis process. Goal is to find out how Vesilinna and its’ services are suitable for people with various limitations and make concrete improvement recommendations for the service providers. It is an old building on top of the Harju Ridge right next to city center. It has strong history in tourism with a unique view of the city due to its’ high location. Because the building is advertised as a tourism attraction it is important that it can offer the same experience for all tourists despite possible limitations. The research question will answer the question of how the accessibility can be improved in Vesilinna.

The best way to understand the accessibility is to have as authentic experience as possible. For this reason, there were interviews with people who had various disabilities or limitations. The interviews were conducted in Vesilinna while visiting the museum, restaurant, and observation tower. This way the interviewees were able to give practical information of the accessibility that

may affect to their visit. A list of the tourism attraction Vesilinna's good points and development proposals were compiled by using the information of the interviews and observations of the visit. The result of this study helps the museum and restaurant to make needed changes inside their facilities and services so that they are accessible no matter of limitations. Those results can be modified to other restaurants and museums as well. City of Jyväskylä can use study results as a guideline for their other buildings that may face same accessibility limitations. After the study Vesilinna can offer full information of their accessibility to people who need it.

## 2 Case Vesilinna

Vesilinna is a historical building that was founded back in the late 19th century. First there was a bird watch tower built out of wood and a small water container next to it. Quickly tourists found the place and it became a tourist attraction due to its' unique view of the city from higher altitude. Due to its' wooden structures it slowly started to be worn out due to its' popular usage. After World War two the city of Jyväskylä needed a larger water container. At this point the water container wanted to be combined with the observation tower. Vesilinna was built 1953 (Museovirasto, 2009).



Figure 1, Vesilinna (Toni Ikonen)

The building has always offered something for the tourists, but the main service is the observation tower. There have been various businesses working in the building for example radio station, elementary classes and summer café. During the summertime it offers the “the most jyvaskyla phenomenon” (Yle, 2021) to all its’ citizens when the famous Evening song plays at eight o’clock every evening. That song can be heard far away, on the other side of the city and it has been part of Jyvaskyla summer since 1976. In 2000 the building experienced a big renovation. The Natural Historical Museum got its’ spaces, restaurant was built so that it could be open all year around, elevators were installed (Museovirasto, 2009). The city of Jyvaskyla wanted to boost the attraction of the unique place.

Today Vesilinna is well known tourist attraction that offers its’ visitor museum, café and restaurant, and observation tower experiences. All the services are provided by different companies and entrepreneurs and if tourist want to find about the accessibility, they need to find the information from various sources wich is inconvenient.

## **2.1 Natural Historical Museum**

The Natural historical Museum locates on the entry floor of the building. It is owned and funded by the University of Jyvaskyla and it offers different exhibitions for their customers free of charge. As the University states “it serves you as a guide to Central Finland's diverse natural environment.” (University of Jyvaskyla, 2020) Larger groups can book private visits to the museum and guided tours are possible. It also has a small souvenir shop where you can buy for example post cards, toys, and gifts.





**Figure 2, Natural Historical Museum (Tea Suosara)**

On the university's museum website is no mention of the accessibility or other challenges that people with limitations might face. This can lead to assumption that the museum is accessible. A confirmation for that can be found from the Visit Jyväskylä website (N.d.) where the museum is stated to be accessible. The museum offers contact information where customers can ask about the accessibility detail before their visit.

## **2.2 Café & Restaurant Vesilinna**

There has always been a restaurant services in the building. It started on the sundeck with a small ice cream kiosk. In 2000 Vesilinna restaurant opened and started to serve customers all year around. Today the café & restaurant is a family-owned company that serves all customers who comes through the doors even if they do not buy anything but just came to see the view. It is a place to have a cup of coffee, enjoy a long lunch or host a party like a wedding. Restaurant can serve up to 160 guests and on the sundeck, they offer seats over 100 guests more (Café & Restaurant Vesilinna, N.d.).



**Figure 3, Café & Restaurant Vesilinna (Tea Suosara)**

What makes the restaurant so unique is its view to the city. The sundeck goes around the restaurant and people because of its high location the viewer can see all the way across the city. The view is the aspect that attracts the tourists. On the other side you can view the center and city parts after that. On the opposite side you can see the Matti Nykänen's Hill. If the weather is not perfect to enjoy the view on the sundeck, big heated windows all around the restaurant makes it possible to enjoy them inside as well.

On the restaurant's website (N.d.) reader can find the information that all their premises have unobstructed access. The same information is mentioned on the Visit Jyväskylä website. There are two elevators from the ground floor to the second floor that offer smooth access to the café and restaurant. However, there is no direct mention about the sundeck and if that can be accessed with wheelchair. The bathroom for disabled and diaper changes locates on the restaurant floor.

## 2.3 Observation Tower

Observation tower in Vesilinna is a place where tourists can view the city from a unique perspective and see a full 360-degree range of vision. It is located approximately in 33 meters, on the highest floor of the building. The observation tower is owned and maintained by the city of Jyväskylä. There is no entry fee, and the platform is open for everyone. It is open according to the opening hours of the restaurant and for that reason many assume it to be part of the restaurant business.



**Figure 4, Observation Tower (Visit Jyväskylä)**

On the restaurant's website (N.d.) is said that all their premises have unobstructed access. There is no specific mention about the observation tower, but reader might get the image that also the tower is accessible. On the Visit Jyväskylä website (N.d.) is a mention that there are stairs going to the viewing platform and for that reason cannot be accessed by a wheelchair. This mixed information can confuse the tourists.

### **3 Accessibility**

Accessibility is diverse term that has more than one definition. In general level it means that everybody is capable to participate in the community despite possible limitations and disabilities a person might have (Tanskanen & Suominen-Romberg 2009, 9.) It does not mean just being able to use services or products but also that information is available, and you can be part of the decision making (Invaliidiliitto, N.d.). It is an aspect that takes diversity into consideration while designing and developing environment, services, and products. Accessibility is something that effects to almost everybody's life at some point, latest when a person is a senior.

Universal Design is today's term that is often combined with accessibility. "The implication of this design approach is that access would become central to design, rather than an add-on for compliance reasons" (Darcy and Buhalis 2011, 9.) As seen in figure 1 by Darcy and Dickson (2009) from that design all benefit, not just the ones with access needs. Having an accessible environment, service, product do not cause any harm, just benefits for all.

A philosophy "Design for All" (DfA) that is nearly the same as Universal Design. In the DfA the goal is to find ways and strategies that advance accessibility and consider peoples' performance. The aim is equality. Using DfA the designers can understand the diversity of user needs. (Tahkokallio 2009, 5)

#### **3.1 Accessible Tourism**

The importance of traveling grows every year. It has grown 4% a year all around the world. Covid19 affected to that growth rapidly, but it also expanded domestic tourism. (UNWTO) As mentioned earlier in this thesis according to WHO every 6<sup>th</sup> person lives with some kind of disability or limitation. Because the number of travelers keeps growing it has raised the awareness of accessibility aspects. People who travel with disabilities it is important that the journey is accessible in every step form the decision to go on a trip ending when returning home.

"The concept of accessible tourism is based on the philosophy of Design for All" (Puhretmair and Nussbaum, 2011, 274) Destinations, services and products developed and designed with DfA

philosophy covers the largest groups of tourists as possible. Everything is designed so that people with or without limitations can explore them.

“Accessible tourism is a form of tourism that involves collaborative processes between stakeholders that enables people with access requirements, including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access, to function independently and with equity and dignity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products, services, and environments. This definition adopts a whole of life approach where people through their lifespan benefit from accessible tourism provision. These include people with permanent and temporary disabilities, seniors, obese, families with young children and those working in safer and more socially sustainable designed environments”Darcy and Dickson 2009, 34 (Darcy and Buhalis, 2011, 10-11)

There is no one correct definition for accessible tourism nor even real agreement for the evolving term. Accessible tourism has been described for example as disability tourism, easy access tourism and inclusive tourism. (Darcy and Buhalis 2011, 10). Harju-Myllyaho and Kyyrä (2013, 8-9) suggest that the concept accessible tourism should be accessible hospitality. It would create a welcoming attitude and willingness to serve all kind of customers despite their limitations. The tourism destination, attraction, service becomes more equal, sustainable and attracts new audience. In that matter it is also good for businesses as they could target more customers.

By United Nations World Travel Organization (UNWTO) (2023) travelling is considered a human right. Due to accessible tourism everyone can enjoy travel experiences. Many people have special needs that are not in connection into their physical fitness. The goal of constant developing of accessible tourism is to provide same access to destinations, services, and products for all the tourists. The development happens in small local businesses but also in bigger picture. As mentioned earlier the development happens in collaboration between stakeholders, governments, organizations and individuals (UN n.d.).

### **3.2 Dimensions of Accessibility**

Accessible tourism is broad topic, and it is not always understood how broad it actually is. It can be studied from various aspects and areas. The most notable area of accessibility is mobility. (Darcy and Buhalis 2011, 6) Physical disability are probably the easiest notable limitation that person

might have. However according to research conducted by Darcy and Buhalis (2011, 27) accessibility has more dimensions than physical and communicational. Accessibility relates also to social, cultural, economic, and political aspects. Jutila (2013, 115) agrees with the aspects of the accessibility and when studying the topic from certain point of view, it affects the emphasis of the dimensions. It is important to understand the broadness of the term accessibility. This study focuses on the physical and communicational aspects of Vesilinna's accessibility.

### **Physical Aspects**

Physical disability means that person has a limitation on their physical functioning. It can be limitations on mobility, dexterity or stamina. It also can be impairments that might be unseen on the outside for example epilepsy and blindness. Usually, physical disabilities and limitations are the easiest to notice and for that reason easiest to react. Person can be born with limitations, or it can develop throughout the years or happen suddenly. It can be something that you have to live with whole life or it can be temporary limitation. Baby can be born blind or without arm, elderly often loses some of their mobility, but it is not always directly combined with age. One can fall over on icy road and break their leg and must deal with physical limitations for months.

With physical disabilities and limitations accessibility is often a crucial part of the decision making. When traveling person must know if the buildings, they are going to visit are accessible. Physical accessibility refers to not just buildings but transportation and environment and of course traveling to the destination without any inconvenience due to access (Jutila and Harju-Myllyaho 2017, 223-224).

Physical accessibility is often linked with just things that can be seen but it is much more than that. The accessibility should be a feature, not something that is made just for a person. The reachability of an environment can be improved by evening level differences, using ramps instead of stairs, installing elevators, having wider doorways with electrical opening option. For people who do not have any limitations or disabilities affecting their accessibility do not often even consider these things. People with limitations and disabilities might have to change their whole plan because they are not able to visit a restaurant because of stairs or cannot use a bathroom because the doorways are too narrow. Many countries have settled laws and regulations

considering accessibility when creating new buildings and environments. This way the physical aspects of accessibility are part of the development plan from the beginning.

As mentioned earlier a visual environment is part of the physical accessibility. People with limitations of their sight need to be considered when planning for example lighting. Too dim lighting can cause difficulties to move around safely. Part of the visibility is also the reflections of various surfaces, the distinctiveness of doorways and clear guidance. Sight limitation or disability does not always mean that there should be extra bright light everywhere. It is very individualized how much light they need.

Another aspect of physical accessibility is the acoustic of the environment. The barrier-free hearing environment is functional in terms of acoustics, and the space has been supplemented with various listening systems if needed. Hearing aid users are helped by an induction loop installed in the rooms, through which the sound is transmitted directly to the device. Organizing adaptations is not complicated and on the other hand people with normal hearing benefit of the good acoustic as well. (Kuuloavain, n.d.). Air inside is part of the physical accessibility as well (Vates, N.d.). Bad air can cause various problems even for people who do not have any specific limitations or disabilities. 10-40 percent of the population suffers smell oversensitivity (Vates, N.d.).

### **Social Aspects**

Social accessibility refers to attitudes, equality and discrimination. It can be seen as equal chances to participate and work in various society industries like workplaces, schools and politics. It means that everyone can be themselves without any fear of discrimination, downplay or bullying, everyone are treated the same. (Saavutettavuus, N.d.) A socially accessible environment encourage all people part of the society to participate and be part active with their own possibilities and skills.

Seeing a customer coming on a wheelchair there should be no problem to serve them. At a café the waitress can offer to carry the tray to the table and this way help the customer. The disability and limitations caused by the wheelchair are easy to notice and therefore the service provider can quickly adapt their service as needed. The challenge is when the customer does not have any

visible limitations, but you still are not able to serve them normally. There might be communicational challenges, for example the person might be deaf. As all physical disabilities don't necessarily show outside the communicational aspect is important.

Not all can communicate as what is considered to be normal. They might have a disability, a physical or cognitional, that affects to that. Professional employees can be hard to find throughout the travel process. Too often if customer has a personal assistant, the actual customer is forgotten and all the speak is directed to the assistant. Employees should be able to communicate with a person who travels with disabilities or limitations the way they need to be communicated with. Being able to communicate with everyone does not mean that you need to sign language or braille. Sometimes all it takes is some patience, piece of paper and a pen or just pointing various things.

Another important part of the communicational aspect is communicating online. Today's web accessibility is a growing field of accessibility, and that concept is opened more broadly in the next chapter.

### **3.3 Information Seeking and Web Accessibility**

When talking about accessibility one very important aspect is the amount and accuracy of information given of the location, service, or product. Today most people get their knowledge online. When considering going for a lunch to a restaurant, a person on a wheelchair would check the restaurant's website if they were able to go there. Unfortunately, this information is not available from all the places. Traveling with people who have disabilities or limitations can usually be quite time consuming because if the information is not available, and you need to contact the destinations or service providers directly to get details. It is not just about the information given in written but the knowledge of the personnel. If the employees do not know how to answer questions the business could lose a potential customer. Often there is no knowledge because no one has thought of the issue before someone asks. Professional workers should be ready to give any needed information and guide correctly when it comes to accessibility.

Web accessibility is term that has become more important when the technology has developed rapidly. As stated earlier today almost all information can be searched from various sources



online. With certain disabilities and limitations that information might not be available. There are tools and technologies that are designed and developed so that people with disabilities are able to use online services and find information. Simple example of providing more accessible tools online is the zooming possibility, to be able to make the text bigger. Some websites provide the possibility for the text to be read out loud, so that people with sight limitations are able to get the same information that people who can read it themselves.

### 3.4 Laws and Regulations

There are laws and regulations considering tourism in general. However, there are the regulations considering accessibility has often seen as an optional possibility. The laws and regulations vary in different countries, but some basic guidelines are written. United Nations have created Convention On The Rights Of Persons With Disabilities (N.d.) that states the basic human rights, which include accessibility. Basic rights belong to everyone no matter of their possible disabilities or limitations. The convention is considered to be a moral compass that guides various new laws and regulations that develop accessibility in a long-lasting process. In Finland 2015 the Non-discrimination Act was established. This law obligates public officers, employers, educational systems and private service providers to have their services accessible for everyone. This law is a step toward fulfilling the United Nation's convention. (Esteettömyys ihmisoikeutena, 2015)

In Europe there is the European Accessibility Act that every EU country need to adapt to their laws. This act requires that both public and private sector actors guarantee the accessibility of certain products and services. Products and services that comes to market after the end of June 2025 must fill accessibility requirements. In Finland the act has been implemented by new "Act on Accessibility Requirements for Certain Products" (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2023) There are also regulations set by European Union. There are regulation considering what kind of help people with limitations and disabilities are justified to get when using public transportation inside EU. For example traveling by airplane people with limitation are justified to get help with their luggage, getting in and out of the place and moving inside the plane. All that help need to be free of charge. Usually it just need to be asked beforehand. (Vammaisten tai liikuntarajoitteisten matkustajien oikeudet n.d.)

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) is created by UNTWO. The goal is to require companies to make their websites and applications compliant. It means providing text alternatives for non-text content, making sure any interactive elements are accessible via keyboard navigation or voice commands and ensuring that text is readable without color contrast issues. WCAG is important today when everything is online. In Finland there are amendments added to the act. Amendments that considering the web accessibility are Act on the Provision of Digital Services and the Act on Electronic Communication Services. (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2023)

In Finland there are laws and regulations considering building new public buildings. Those laws include for example the minimum measurement of bathroom for disabled and how wide the entrance need to be. However, there are exceptions as always. Buildings that are historical can be protected so that there are no possibilities to make the properties accessible or there might be limitations otherwise. When tourism service providers locate in historical buildings that limits their accessibility it can be harmful for their business. The law 241/2017 defines for example that a public building need to have a flat platform leading to the building. It needs to be at least 1200 millimeters wide. It can also be a slope, which must not have camper of more than five percent. If there is a staircase leading to the building, a lift designed for wheelchairs must be built in order to get over the stairs. Additional to that inside the building needs to be flat spaces that the wheelchair can turn around. That space need to be at least 150 cm wide. (Valtioneuvoston asetus rakennusten esteettömyydestä, 2017.)

Lisäksi rakennuksessa tulee olla tasaisia 13 kohtia, joissa pystyy kääntymään pyörätuolilla. Pyörätuolin tarvitsemaksi kääntösäteeksi on määritelty 1500 millimetriä ja se pätee jokaisessa rakennuksen osassa. Lisäksi laissa on määritelty tarkat kriteerit rakennuksen oville, sisäänkäynnille, sisäisille kulkuväylille, rakennuksen muille tiloille, WCja pesutiloille, sekä kokoustiloille. (Valtioneuvoston asetus rakennusten esteettömyydestä 2017.)

By following these laws and regulations considering accessibility, companies can ensure that their products are accessible to everyone regardless of disability status. Doing so not only helps them meet their legal obligations but also allows them to provide a better user experience for all customers.

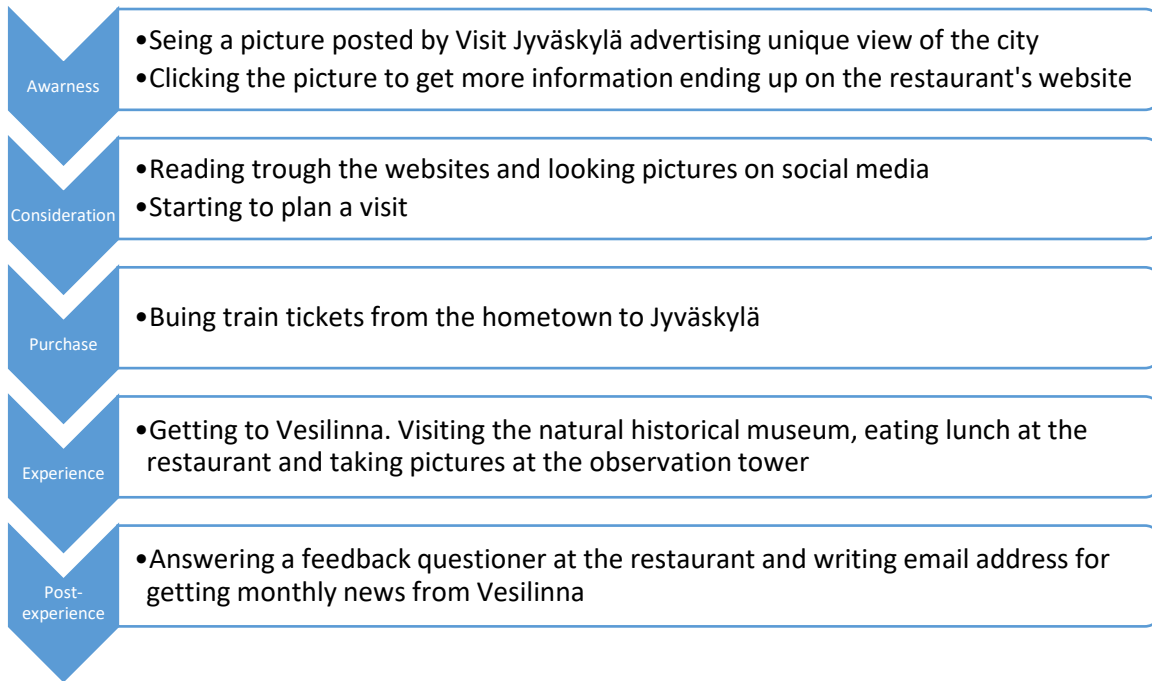
## 4 Customer Journey Map

Customer journey map is a visual presentation of the customer's journey of using a service or buying a product. The steps are in chronological order and the map describes everything from the awareness to the post-experience. It helps understand the customer's interaction with the company through all the aspects and touchpoints during their lifecycle. (Pennington 2016, 83.)

Usage of the customer journey map varies. It can be used as a help tool when orientating a new employee or developing the quality of the service. Usually, it is used when you need to see things from the customer's perspective. In the customer journey map, every single step of the customer is detailedly opened and explained with drawings, pictures and diagrams. Meaning is that all the barriers and possibilities of development can be analysed. (Viladàs 2011, 150, 151.) Customer journey map can be filled in each stage of development. (Palvelupolulla kehitetään parempia palveluita 2018)

Most often the customer journey map is divided into five parts. It starts with awareness, following by consideration and purchase. After those is the actual experience and lastly post-experience. Today the customers make the journey mostly independently. That makes the customer journey in some cases more difficult because there is no human interaction or there might be contact with a marketing person, customer servant and salesperson. The goal is to create a seamless customer experience. (Gerdt & Korhikoski 2016, 46) A good customer journey map is based on the behavior of real customers. (Norton & Pine 2013, 13)

Visiting a tourism attraction, customer journey map includes many aspects depending what kind of services are offered. The journey starts from inspiration and awareness. Future customer might see a photograph of the site on social media and inspire to organize a trip. After having the inspiration, they start to consider if they should and could make a trip to the tourism attraction. When they finally get to the attraction the experience starts. This is usually the latest point where the first interaction with the company's employee happens. After they have visited the place, they have the post-experience. That means that they could receive an email asking their feedback of the customer posting a picture to their own social media site. In the chart number 1 is presented customer journey map of visiting Vesilinna.



## 5 Implementation of the research

### 5.1 Purpose of the Thesis and Research Question

Many people are not aware of the various accessibility aspects in tourism. People without limitations advertise destinations and attractions but do not consider if they are accessible for everyone. Even tourism organizations for example Visit Jyväskylä recommend places to visit without knowledge of accessibility. As a tourism attraction, Vesilinna should at least be aware of their accessibility and possible limitations.

The goal of this research is to find concrete ways for the Vesilinna to develop their facilities and services so that they would be accessible for everyone. To reach this goal a research study will be implemented. The study is done by research-based development work. The main research question that the thesis tries to find answer is

How could Vesilinna develop its' accessibility?

To find those development ideas considering accessibility the study asks from people with disabilities or other limitations what are obstacles that they face when visiting places like

Vesilinna. How are their visit going to be easier, what elements are missing. Study will find out peoples' needs for equal and independent function.

With the data collected and analyzed the service providers at Vesilinna and the owner of the building will get knowledge of the accessibility of the building and its' services. The study will provide examples of small renovations and innovations for the service providers to become more reachable and equal when it comes to accessibility. Development ideas will be both tangible and intangible. Due to this study, they are able to write the necessary information to their website, to inform tourists beforehand if there are limitations for their services due to persons' disabilities.

## **5.2 Research Methods**

The data collection method in the thesis was a semi-structured interview (focused interview) which does not force the form of the research to be qualitative or quantitative. There is no strict way, form, or order to the questions, which is typical for interviews where questionnaires are used. The interview runs theme by themes, and the intensity of each theme might vary. The purpose is to let the voice of each interviewee to be heard although the themes are the same to everybody. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2011, 47, 48) The questions for the focused interview used in the present study (Appendix 1) were planned so that they covered the research questions. The questions were planned so that the interview would be more of a conversation instead interviewees answering direct questions. The research questions were answered with the interview questions. In addition, there were more precise questions under the main questions.

Even though the semi-structured interview does not force the research to be qualitative, it is the form of data collected. Qualitative research studies aim to interpret participants' knowledge, practices, and perceptions in the researched question. Qualitative research "aims in picturing real life" (Hirsjärvi et al 2004, 152) and for that reason is better choice for this study rather than quantitative method.

This case study is done by research-based development work. There will be a semi-structured interviews with people with disabilities that affect their access. Semi-structure interview has larger themes with open-ended questions rather than specific questions that leave no room for the voice of the interviewee. It does not have a strict structure but has theme that holds the interview

together so that the interviewees do not drift away from the subject. The semi-structure interview is meant to be more of a conversation than filling a questioner. It is a personal level research method that requires high attention during the interview to reach the needed depth of answers. It also requires knowledge of the themes for the interviewer to know how to interpret the answers.

### **5.3 Data collection**

Target group for this study are people with different physical or intellectual limitations, disabilities or age that can cause limitations. People who are considered when talking about accessible tourism. All the interviewees are loyal customers of the restaurant that operates in the building and this way are easy to find and approach. They were chosen due to their different disabilities and limitations.

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, data for this study is collected in three different ways; a semi-structured interview, visit and email feedback collection. The interviews were conducted when visiting Vesilinna at the same time. This way the interviewees did not need to try to remember physical aspects in Vesilinna that affected to their visit from the accessibility point of view. While the data was collected the restaurants' terrace was under construction while this data was collected, and a normal visit was not possible. With special arrangements the visit was conducted but there were no café or restaurant services at that point. However, because the interviewees were regular customers at the restaurant, they were able to think about the restaurant's services out of memory.

#### **Interviews**

“The number of the interviewees depends on the purpose of the research. As many interviews should be conducted as is needed for the acquisition of the data.” (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2011, 58)

There were total of six interviews with ten interviewees conducted. The number was calculated beforehand so that the data collected would be broad and enough for this study. If the collection and analysis would lack of needed information more interviews would be conducted. The interviewees were chosen due to their various disabilities and limitations and knowledge. The interviewees were with a person who uses electric wheelchair and her assistant, a woman who

has hearing loss and for that reason has implants, former teacher at school of students with sight limitations and total blindness, intellectually disabled girl with her mother as a support person. Because accessible tourism covers not just people with diagnosed disabilities and limitations but also those who has challenges in their movement or other factors that can affect to the visit. For that reason, an elderly, already retired couple were interviewed. As age can be a limit also when it comes to young children and their needs while traveling, another interview was conducted with a mother who had two children the age of four years and six months with her.

All the interviewees were first contacted at the restaurant in December 2022 which was the most convenient way to ask them to participate in the study. The interview dates were set on the January 2023 and at that time they also signed a written contract that explained to them this research study, why and how it is done. On the contract was mentioned how the collected data is used and that interviewees stay anonymous. All interviews were conducted on the first week of February 2023.

There interviewer had a questionnaire with her, but the goal was to have a conversation instead of the interviewees just answering the set questions. The questioner (appendix 1) was more as a guidance and to make sure that all the needed information was gathered during the interviews. The interviews recorded and then written out for the analysis. This way the interviewer was able to focus on the interview instead writing notes. Interview was basically divided into three parts: Natural Historium Museum, Café & Restaurant Vesilinna and Observation Tower.

The place for research interviews depends on the research questions and problems, resources and the interviewee. The place could be almost anything, home, public space, via Teams. Main thing is that the place should be calm, planned beforehand and easy to minimize all distraction factors. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2011, 73-74) For these interviews a visit to the sight at the same time was the best plan and suited all the interviewees.

## **Visit**

Because the goal of this thesis was to find concrete development ideas to Vesilinna's accessibility was a visit to the sight crucial. Idea of the visit was to find physical points of the building that limits

accessibility and take photographs of them to show the readers what they are. First the idea was to visit the building after the interviews were conducted so that it would be easier to find the actual targets that affected to the access. It is critical to know what to look at effectors to accessibility from various point of views. As a person who does not have any kind of limitations there might be nothing that would affect the visit when thinking about accessibility. For that reason, it was important that a person with limitations could point out various aspects considering the accessibility. To be able to that as accurate as possible a visit was more reliable way to tell and show the aspects rather than just trying to remember from memories.

### **Feedback emails of the Restaurant**

The restaurant has received multiple emails from customers considering the accessibility of the restaurant and that way the whole building. The restaurant owner has provided these emails to be analyzed for this thesis. These emails will give more broader image of the needed changes especially online, that would make the tourism attraction Vesilinna more accessible. Most of the emails are questions considering accessibility before the visit of tourists.

For this study the restaurant's owner sent 25 emails with questions about accessibility. The emails were received by the restaurant between June 2021 and December 2022. The emails were forwarded by the owner of the email after they deleted the information that would have revealed the sender. This way there were no need to ask every email sender if they allow the message to be used in this thesis.

## **5.4 Analysis of the Data**

Kalela Jorma (2000) has written that if you can answer the research question, you have enough data. In this study there is an assumption that six interviews and visit and emails are enough for reaching the goal which was a correct assumption. While analyzing the data it is important to see it as data and not opinion or experience. However, because accessibility is something that people with limitations experience it cannot be ignored at this data analyzation. All own expectations of the analyzer should be forgotten. Aim of the analysis is to structure the data and produce perceptions. Then combine perceptions with theory and find answers to the main questions of the study.



To make it more structured and clearer to understand the analysis is in two different parts; first part is analyzing the personal interviews and visits to Vesilinna, and the second analysis was conducted on the emails sent from the owner. The interviews and visits discussed about the access of the actual building and its' services. The emails give more analysis about the accessibility information given before the visit, the web accessibility and needed developments online.

### **Interviews and Visits**

All the interviews were written out from the recordings made during the interviews. This way the analysis was based on written texts instead of voice recordings. Notes were written during the interviews as well and those were part of the analysis as well. Interviews started at the main entrance to the building.

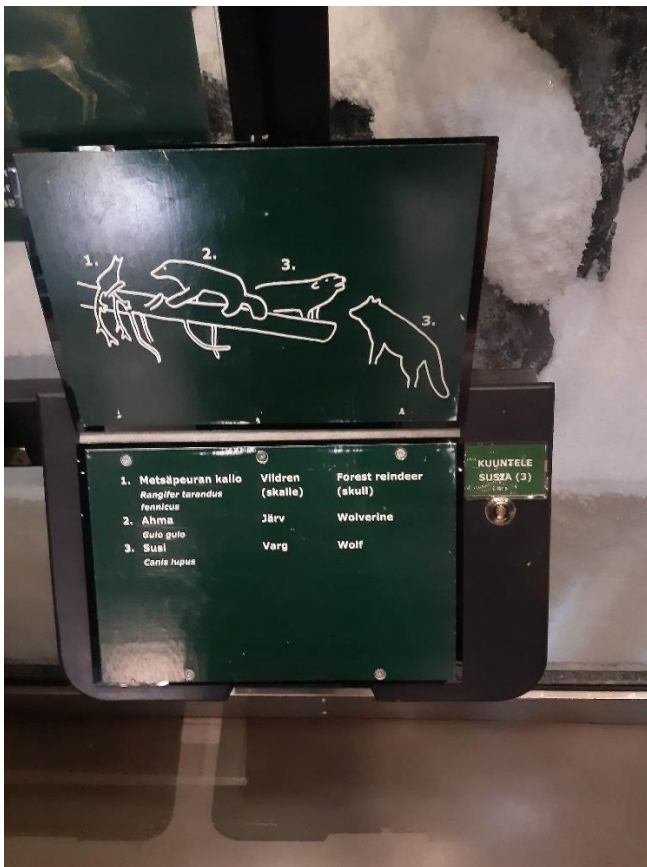
Elderly couple, person on a wheelchair with her assistant, person with cognitive disability with her assistant and former teacher came with a car because they did not have the strength to walk up the ridge. The rest interviewees, mother with two children, person with hearing loss walked from the city and needed a minute to catch their breath. All of them mentioned that it would be nice if a bus would ride up the hill because without a car possibility four out of the six interviewees would not be able to visit Vesilinna.

### **The Natural Historical Museum**

Four out of the six interviewees asked where the museum is in the building. This indicated that not many of the interviewees had visited the museum before and did not know what they would see and experience. The toddler with her mother however knows what to expect, and the child was overly excited to visit the place once again. The mother liked to visit the place because she could see the child's enthusiasm and it is easy to walk around with another child on strollers. The wide aisles got positive feedback from all the interviewees, it is easy to move around even with a wheelchair.

A unitary comment from all the interviewees was that the museum is a bit too dark. Elderly couple had some trouble to see their steps and the still lives layouts of the animals were too dark for

them to see every detail. The sound of an owl howling was a bit intimidating at the beginning for some of the visitors, but they got used to it quite fast. The interviewee with hearing limitations needed to turn down her hearing aids because the owl sound was too loud. The museum has multiple still lives animals and each layout has an information of which animals there are (see figure 5). The interviewees all liked that there was no need to guess what animals were which. On those information boards is also a possibility to listen the voices of some of the animals which was the best feature when asking the child and cognitively disabled interviewee.



**Figure 5 Information board with voice button (Tea Suosara)**

The former teacher of the sight disabilities and limitations students mentioned that the museum is a nice place, but she would not have brought any of her students there. The darkness of the place and the layouts makes it even harder for the people with sight limitations to see and the teacher said that it can cause anxiety. For blind people the museum does not offer anything. The still life

layouts are amazing but if you are not able to see it, there is no other way to experience it. The information of the layouts is only in written texts so blind person is not able to read it.

### **Vesilinna Café & Restaurant**

All the interviewees have been using the services of the Café & Restaurant Vesilinna earlier. They all considered to be regular customers and use the services at least once a month, so the place is very familiar for them. It made the interview possible because due to the renovation the restaurant was closed and there was no possibility to actually try the service in person. With special permit from the owners visits to the restaurant with the interviewees were made possible.

Everyone used the elevator to get to the restaurant floor and this way it is easy to access. The person on a wheelchair mentioned that she can easily fit to the elevator but has some friends with electrical wheelchairs who are not able to fit their chair there. The strollers, even double strollers fit to the elevator but tightly. Three of the interviewees mentioned that there are three elevators that two says the restaurant is on the second floor but on the third one the restaurant locates on the third floor, and this can be confusing.

When entering the café, it is surrounded with a welcoming feeling. The employees greet as soon as possible and serve the customers with a smile on their face. All the interviewees said that they have gotten good service and something extra without even asking. The toddler was a bit fuzzy on their last visit before Christmas and instead of just serving the mother the employee tried her best to cheer the toddler. Together they chose the best treat and drink from behind the counter and after that the toddler was happy again.

The elderly couple likes to come to have a lunch at Vesilinna because the employees already know their order. They need a little bit of help with carrying drink glasses and coffee cups and they do not need to ask for the help, it is offered straight away. What is the best part of visiting the café and restaurant from the person with the cognitive limitations mind is that she is treated as any other customer. Instead of asking the personal assistant what the customer wants to eat or drink the employees talk to the customer even though the assistant answers. That is just one example

that five out of six interviewees told about equality and how it can be seen among the employees' attitudes.

The restaurant itself is very open and bright and those things gets high appreciation from the teacher of sight disability and limitation students. It is more convenient to visit a place where there is a lot of light to help them see even the shapes. The employees can describe the look of the cakes' appearance as well as their taste. Some of the allergens were not clear for all the employees but they always would ask and make sure from the bakers when needed.

Even though the restaurant seems spacious due to the natural light from big windows the spaces between some of the tables seems a bit too narrow was mentioned by all of the interviewees and they wished for more space. The view from the restaurant is one of the important factors that attracts all the interviewees and why they bring their guests there to visit. Access to the terrace was easy from all the interviewees point of view.

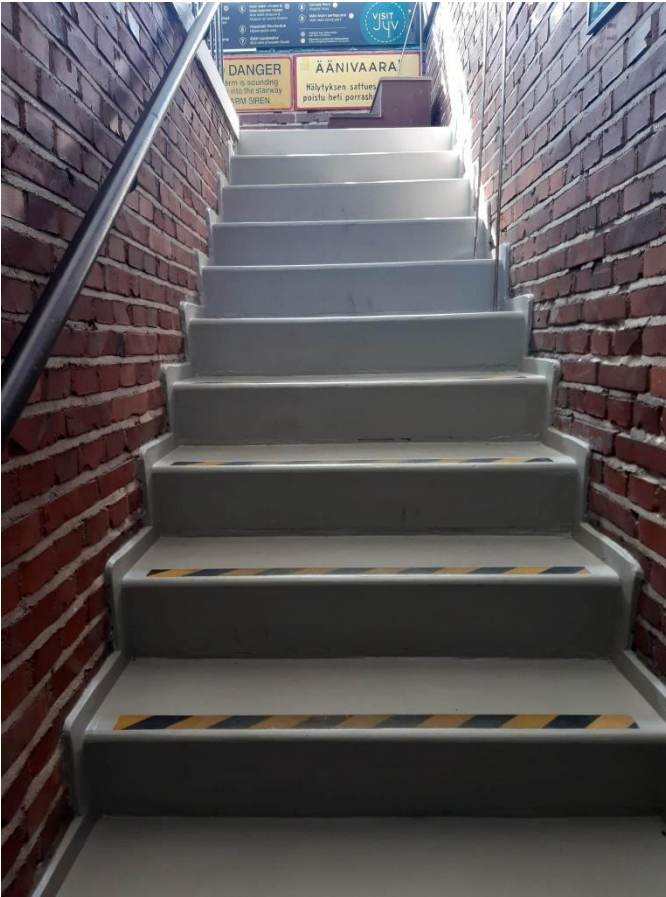
The disabled restroom locates on the restaurant floor. The same restroom has a nappy change table inside. When the restaurant is open it does not cause any trouble to get there because the elevators are in action. However, if the restaurant is closed, the elevators are closed as well. When the museum is open and restaurant is not, the customers need to ask the employee of the museum to open the elevators and cause more work for them. The restroom is spacious, and you can easily fit a wheelchair or strollers inside. The interviewee on a wheelchair mentioned that the sink is not adjustable and is not very convenient to use (see figure 6). They also brought up the there is a trashcan that need to be stepped on to open the lid and it is a problematic to use for a person in a wheelchair.



**Figure 6 Bathroom unadjustable sink (Tea Suosara)**

### **Observation Tower**

Every interviewee knew about the existence of observation tower in Vesilinna. Most of them had visited it during some earlier visit and like to take their guests up there to see the view. The tower locates on the top floor and there is no access with elevator or any other accessible enter. The visitor can take elevator to the fourth floor but after that there is still one and half floors of wider stairs and more narrow stairs. (See figure 7) It cannot be accessed by wheelchairs or strollers and people with weak legs or severe mobility limitations are not able to get there. None of the interviewees had not tried to find the information of the accessibility of the tower beforehand. Some had asked the employees about the accessibility, and they were able to tell about it very well, even the exact number of stairs.



**Figure 7 Stairs to the observation tower (Tea Suosara)**

From the interviewees the elderly couple do not visit the tower anymore. They have visited it years ago but nowadays their knees are not strong enough for the stairs. The mom with a toddler and a baby has visited the tower with her first child but think that it is too hard to visit with two children. She does not feel safe to take them both due to the narrow stairs that lead up. Also, the windows are too high for a child to see the view themselves. There are few stairs that are movable that eases short persons to see the view (see figure 8). However the mother does not feel that the stairs are steady enough for an energetic child. Person on a wheelchair has never visited the tower but has seen pictures taken from there as well as the 360 view that Visit Jyväskylä has on their website. The thing that is common to all who do not visit the tower is that they enjoy the view from the restaurant's terrace.



**Figure 8 Movable stairs in observation tower (Tea Suosara)**

The former teacher of sight limitation students does not see any additional value that the tower would bring for people with sight vision limitations or loss. The view is offered for the seeing tourists. There are no explanations or relief that would make it possible for blind people to feel and visualize the unique view. If they have an assistant or a friend, the view can of course be described but it does not give the same experience.

A comment that three out of the six interviewees said was about the acoustics of the tower. It is a harsh cubic that has nothing to soften the voices. The hearing implants needed to be turned off as the talking voices sounded so loud. The mother tells how the exiting screams from a toddler played in her ears for days. The assistant of the person with cognitive disabilities commented the loud voices as well and told that on one visit someone had dropped a soda can on the floor and the noise had scared the disabled person so badly that they will not visit the tower anymore.

## **Emails**

All the emails were from possible visitors who needed to know more about the accessibility or possible special arrangements due to their limitations before they would come for a visit. There were two questions that were the most asked

1. Is the restaurant accessible by wheelchair or strollers?
2. Is there separate cabinet that could be reserved for a group that might disturb others' visit?

The number one question was asked in 17 of the 25 emails. People wanted to know if they are firstly even able to access the building, the restaurant and the observation tower with wheelchair or strollers. They were not able to find the information of the accessibility online from the restaurant's website. On the site there was just mention that everyone is welcomed. On Visit Jyväskylä website is a mention that the restaurant is accessible by wheelchair, but the observation tower is not. However, Visit Jyväskylä is not the service provider, so the customers did not check on their site and for that reason did not find the information.

The measurement of the elevators was asked in three out of the 25 emails. Wheelchairs are different sizes. The manual ones are smaller and can easily fit to a normal size elevator. The electrical wheelchairs vary in size more and typically need more space and not all of them can fit to the elevators in Vesilinna.

Question about the cabinet was the topic in eight of the 25 emails. Groups of people with limitations wanted to come to visit the café and restaurant but due to their severe disabilities and limitations they wanted to know if there is a cabinet so that they would not disturb other customers. These groups were from example daycares, halfway houses, and housing for disabled people. The disturbance that they might cause for other customers were loud noises or anxiety due to the disabilities and limitations that show on their appearance.

10 out of the 25 emails mentioned that they firstly asked the question either via phone or by visiting the place. They did not necessarily get the answer directly on the first time. Either the employees did not know and directed the customers to contact the restaurant via email or they needed to get more detailed answer for example exact measurement of the elevator.



Even though the questions were directed to the restaurant, can be assumed that the museum receives the same kind of questions from their customers as they do not have the accessibility information on their website either.

## 6 Results

The museum is easy to access. It locates on the first floor. The outdoors can be locked with a hook so that they stay open. That way it is easy to enter with a wheelchair or strollers, the visitor does not need to try to keep the door open when entering. The museum's door does not have the same factor and the door is quite heavy. However, the museum itself is very open and easy to move around with strollers or a wheelchair and because it is fully accessible even the elderly couple liked it that they did not need to worry about steps. It does not cost anything to visit the museum but only the mother with two children knew about it, other interviewees thought that it would cost something. Everyone felt that the museum is very educational in a positive way. Having the information of the animals and the sounds was a nice extra touch.

Even though the museum is accessible and offers a lot for the visitors it has forgotten people with sight limitations and disabilities. There is a lot to see and learn but if you are not able to see there is no optional way to learn for example with touch. There is no information with braille on the plaques so blind people do not even know what animals the layout has. Due to the dim lighting, it is more challenging to see around even with people who has a normal sight vision.

The Café & Restaurant Vesilinna is accessible for most of the people, but for some of the electrical wheelchair the elevators are too small. The atmosphere is welcoming, and the employees treat every customer equal. They give each customer the needed special attention and service style without making a number out of it. They have time to give each customer as much as needed. The allergens were unknown of some of the products, but the employees always asked the needed allergen information from the bakers and chefs.

The restaurant is very bright with a lot of natural light and easy to go around. However, it seems spacious but when walking to the window tables the spaces are too narrow at some sections. That makes moving with a wheelchair, strollers or just bigger bag challenging. Terrace is a part of the

attraction and for that reason many of the customers visit there if the weather allows. Access to the terrace is easy and the employees assists if needed.

The disabled bathroom exists but other than that it is not very convenient. The sink is firm and very steep (see figure 6). That makes it impossible for someone to use because the wheelchair might not fit underneath. The trash bin has a lid. That is a good factor due to the diaper change table inside the bathroom. On the other hand, people who has mobility issues are not able to use that bin because you need to step on it for the lid to open.

The observation tower is popular among people who does not have limitations affecting their access. The view is something that many locals want their guests to see. But many challenges occur if a person have physical or cognitive limitations or disabilities. Fortunately, the restaurant's terrace offers good view as well so people can enjoy it without getting up to the observation tower. However, the view on from the terrace is quite blocked by trees on the ridge and there is a strong wish from every interviewee that the trees would be harvested.

There are multiple challenges and grievances that make the visit uncomfortable or not safe. For children the windows are too high, so they need to step on movable stairs, however those stairs are not safe from the parent's point of view. The observation tower is a hard cupid made out of concrete and glass windows and it does not have anything that would soften the voices and the interviewees complained about that. For people with sigh disabilities or limitations the tower does not give the same joy and chance than to those with good sight. There are pictures with signs telling what the visitor can see (see picture 3) but for people who are blind those pictures or texts do not give any value because the information signs are not written in braille. The view from the observation tower is not described for blind people so it does not give them any value either.

From the data collected from emails received from the restaurant the analysis is clear. There should be more information online. Both service providers, the museum and restaurant should update the accessibility information on their website. It seems that the restaurant employees are trained so that they can answer questions about accessibility or at least know where to direct these questions. If the employees were not trained on the topic there could be even more emails

considering the accessibility topic because now in the 10 emails, there were mention that they did ask the employees, but they were not able to help them all the way.

The web accessibility was not directly asked on the interviews nor did it come on the emails. The natural historical museum has an option on their website it to be read out loud. The restaurant website does not have this option nor does the Visit Jyväskylä website that advertises Vesilinna as tourism attraction.

## **7 Conclusion and discussion**

The goal of this thesis is to find concrete development ideas for Vesilinna to become more accessible. Vesilinna was built in 1950s when accessibility was not considered to be part of the design and building phase. Today as 1.3 billion people worldwide (WHO, 2022) live with a disability that significantly affect their lives, it is important that accessibility is part of a tourist attraction's or any other company's business plan.

Vesilinna locates on top of Harju's ridge. It is accessible by car and there is parking place around the building. You can also reach the building by walking, however that can be quite an exercise due the location. Visitor can walk the Nero stairs or along the paths, but it can be almost impossible with mobility limitations or disabilities. The city does not offer any bus route going up the hill but maybe that is something that should be reconsidered. When city advertises Vesilinna as a tourism attraction with a special view they should provide a possibility for each visitor to be able to see the view.

The museum is a very educational and exiting place to visit especially with children. It is easy to access and move around. They provide a lot of information and interesting things but only if you can see. With sight limitation and disabilities, the museum does not offer any value. They could add a 3D models of each still life layouts and the information on the plaques could be on braille as well. The rocks on display could be free to touch and perhaps even some of the filled animals. This way sight limitations would not preclude the enjoyment of the visit at the museum. The overall lighting could be a bit brighter.

The café and restaurant are easy access with an elevator and the atmosphere is welcoming. The training of the employees at the restaurant about the accessibility is on high level and they are able to face all customers with positive attitude. They treat all the customers the same and equal and offer special help without making a number of it. For example, offering to carry the café tray when the customers hands are full or opening the doors wider for twin strollers. The basic allergens of the products should be seen by the customers directly so that not everyone need to ask if something is lactose or gluten free. They also should have an ingredient list of each product so when person with more specific allergies ask, they could easily check, instead of asking around.

Restaurant is bright and you can easily see every step. However, spacing between tables is too narrow and challenging to fit to move around. Restaurant might think that if they remove just one table it can make a big difference. The terrace is spacious and the access there is easy. During the renovation the access was made even better (see figure 9). The disabled bathroom would need an adjustable sink instead of the firm one and a bin without a lid.



**Figure 9 Wheelchair access to the terrace (Tea Suosara)**

The observation tower is a tourism attraction that provides a unique view of the city and for that reason is popular among tourists. Unfortunately, because the building is old it is not designed to be accessible, it is not possible to install an elevator to go all the way up. For that reason, it cannot be fully accessible. However, it could be more accessible and enjoyable with small adjustments. From the safety point of view building railing for the movable stairs would make a big difference. The children would be able to see the view safer and parents could enjoy it as well and not having to worry so much of the child's climbing. Having some acoustic wall or fabrics would minimize the noise challenges. To make the tower to be an attraction for people with vision limitations having a relief of the view would be a good idea. Also, explanations of what is where in braille would make the visitors with sight limitations more equal.

For the visitors who cannot access the observation tower the best option is to admire the view from the restaurant's terraces and that is what almost all the customers of the restaurant do. The view is largely covered with big old pine trees, if they would be cut it would open the scenery and be more enjoyable and this way more equal compared to the scenery from observation tower.

Both the museum and restaurant should add the accessibility information on their website. It would help the potential customers to know if they are able to visit the attraction and use its' services. Also, it could lower the number of emails considering the topic and this way less worktime would be used answering the same question. The measurement of the elevator would be a good addition to the basic information of the accessibility so that then people in big electrical wheelchair do not need to disappoint at the sight if they are not able to fit the elevators. The restaurant could consider making their websites accessible for everyone but a study on the need of that feature would be recommended as it was not studied in this thesis.

## 8 Ethicality and reliability of this Thesis

In this report all the references are marked in JAMK reporting style and listed in reference list. It is important for the reader to know where the information has originally come from. This way they can look more deeply into subjects if they prefer. Writing all the references also gives credit for the original writer and raises reliability. Another part of reliability in this report assesses the consistency of the study results. If the interviews would be conducted with other people with similar limitations and disabilities, would the results be in line (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021). The

reliability can be tested by conducting another interview with different people with similar disabilities and analyze if their experiences about the accessibility are the same.

Because accessibility can be a sensitive topic the interviews must be done in high moral and ethics. It was important not to let the interviewees to feel uncomfortable or raise any issues on their disabilities during the interviews. The questions were planned to be about bigger overview rather than personal. In the thesis all the answers will be handled anonymously so the reader cannot know who the interviewees are and this way protect their identities.

Aspect that demands high ethic is the data collection. After Personal Data Act was settled in 1999 it has become important to share information not just about the research topic and goals but also how the collected data is managed and will it be destroyed after the study is over or saved for further use. The reason for providing more information is to convince the audience and lower suspicion. (Kuula, 2006) For this thesis a signed contract was made with the writer and all the interviewees. All the information was given in a written form with contact information so that the interviewees can ask more information throughout the process. The whole research process was made with opaque. The author evaluates that the interviews, email, research analysis had a good validity. The chose research methods and measures were planned so that they fit he thesis aim well. The interviews were conducted with high ethical standards and the results as well as the content analysis were reported rightfully and objectively. Identities of the interviewees were protected throughout the whole thesis process. The recordings and writings of the interviewees and their analyses were safely destroyed after use.

## **9 Utilization and Further Research**

The big goal of this thesis process was to find out the weak spots of Vesilinna from the accessibility point of view and develop concrete ideas to improve those spots. If the study would have only pointed out the problems and not offered any development suggestions the thesis would have not been improving research work. The development ideas were considered to be executed without any bigger renovations or remodeling. Vesilinna is an old building that itself sets some limits. The development suggestions should mostly be on the level that the entrepreneurs are able to do those in small budget and effort. Many of the development suggestions are free to carry out. It is more about the information providing beforehand, setting the tables differently and brighten the

lighting. Small things to make better experiences for the tourists. Bigger development suggestions consider more of the city's work, something that the entrepreneurs of Vesilinna are not able to do themselves. The building is owned by the City of Jyväskylä and they advertise Vesilinna a lot. For this reason the larger ideas would need to be discussed with a representative from the city.

Not all the development ideas need to be materialistic. Social interaction with people with limitations and disabilities are just as important than moving smoothly around. Each customer is a person who needs different service and special help when they use Vesilinna's services. Training employees to face and help people with limitations and disabilities is crucial and can make all the difference. From the experience from the interviewees, it seems that the education of the restaurant's employee is on high level when it comes to facing people with various disabilities. For the museum's employees training of facing customers without limitations another study should be made. During this thesis the interaction with them was minimum, a visit to the museum is more independent than a visit to the restaurant. For that reason, the thesis did not make any analysis of their knowledge and attitude towards people with limitations and disabilities.

If people want to study the topic more a broader study of the various tourism attraction in Jyväskylä that the city and Visit Jyväskylä advertise. There has been a study of the physical, digital and inclusive accessibility in Central Finland (Partanen and Riekkinen, 2022) but not about the services at least in broader image. A further study of the accessibility information provided online by tourism service providers would be a good research study. To be able to write all the needed information about accessibility of a tourism attraction or service provider online and standardized information would make everyone's work easier and the customers would find the needed information from everyone's websites.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Interview structure and questions

Interviewee and interviewer will meet by the main doors

1. How did they get to the building?
2. Was it easy or challenging to reach the top of Harju Ridge?
3. Do you already know if you can enjoy all the services that Vesilinna offers or are there some limits?
  - Where did they get the information of accessibility beforehand?
  - Was there enough information about the accessibility?

First visit is the museum owned by University of Jyväskylä. It is located on the ground floor right in front of the main doors. The entry is free of charge and opening hours are Tuesday-Friday 12-18 and Saturday-Sunday 12-17, some changes might occur.

4. Have you visited the museum before?
5. Is it easy to get inside the museum?
6. How can the interviewers \_\_\_\_\_ around the museum?
  - see
  - hear
  - feel
  - move
7. Do they feel safe walking around?

Second visit is the Café & Restaurant Vesilinna. It locates on the second floor that you can reach by elevator or walking stairs. It is open Tuesday-Wednesday 11-18 and Thursday-Saturday 11-21, some changes might occur. During visit the restaurant is closed but we are still able to visit the premises.

8. Is it easy to get on the second floor?
9. Is it convenient to use \_\_\_\_\_ services?
  - café
  - restaurant
  - drink
10. How can the interviewers \_\_\_\_\_ around the restaurant / terrace?
  - see
  - hear

- feel
- move

11. Has the staff made something special to make your visit smoother?

Lastly a visit to the observation tower. It locates on top of the building approximately in 30meter high of the ground. You can take an elevator to the fourth floor but there is still stair after it.

12. Can you get to the observation tower easily?

13. How can the interviewers \_\_\_\_\_ around the observation tower?

- see
- hear
- feel
- move

14. Do you feel safe high up?