

Cross-border mobilities between Estonia and Finland

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Cross-border mobilities

- The division of the Earth into sovereign political units (= states) resulted in **territorial borders** and various kinds of cross-border mobilities of goods, people and ideas
 - Between neighboring countries develop **connections** (exchange of material goods as well as travel and migration of people) and **separations** (formation of different practices and identities), and some people connect back-and-forth and become **transnational**
- Cross-border mobilities enhance the **potential for innovations** due to people's enough but not too similar **cognitive proximity** (people understand each other but have slightly different perspectives)

Cross-border mobilities

- **Contiguous borders:** easy access, no major physical obstacles, smooth border bureaucracy → fast connection between rather similar neighboring countries and easy practices for transnational people
- **Non-contiguous borders:** constrained access, major physical obstacles (water, mountains, etc.), slow border bureaucracy → usually extended (time-space) connection between neighboring countries and restrictions to become transnationals
- How to overcome **constrains** (such as too long time-space distance) between Finland and Estonia to facilitate innovations?

Histories and futures of mobilities between Finland and Estonia – 0.0

- Important to **remember and interpret** the long-term “cross-border” mobilities between Finland and Estonia that reach to the era when the humankind had not even invented yet political borders or territorial consciousness of “Estonia” and “Finland”
- **We** were together as “(pre)transnational” people until a few thousands of years ago a group left to the North

...and whether those who left behind were more clever or stupid remains an eternal topic of folklore and friendly jokes.

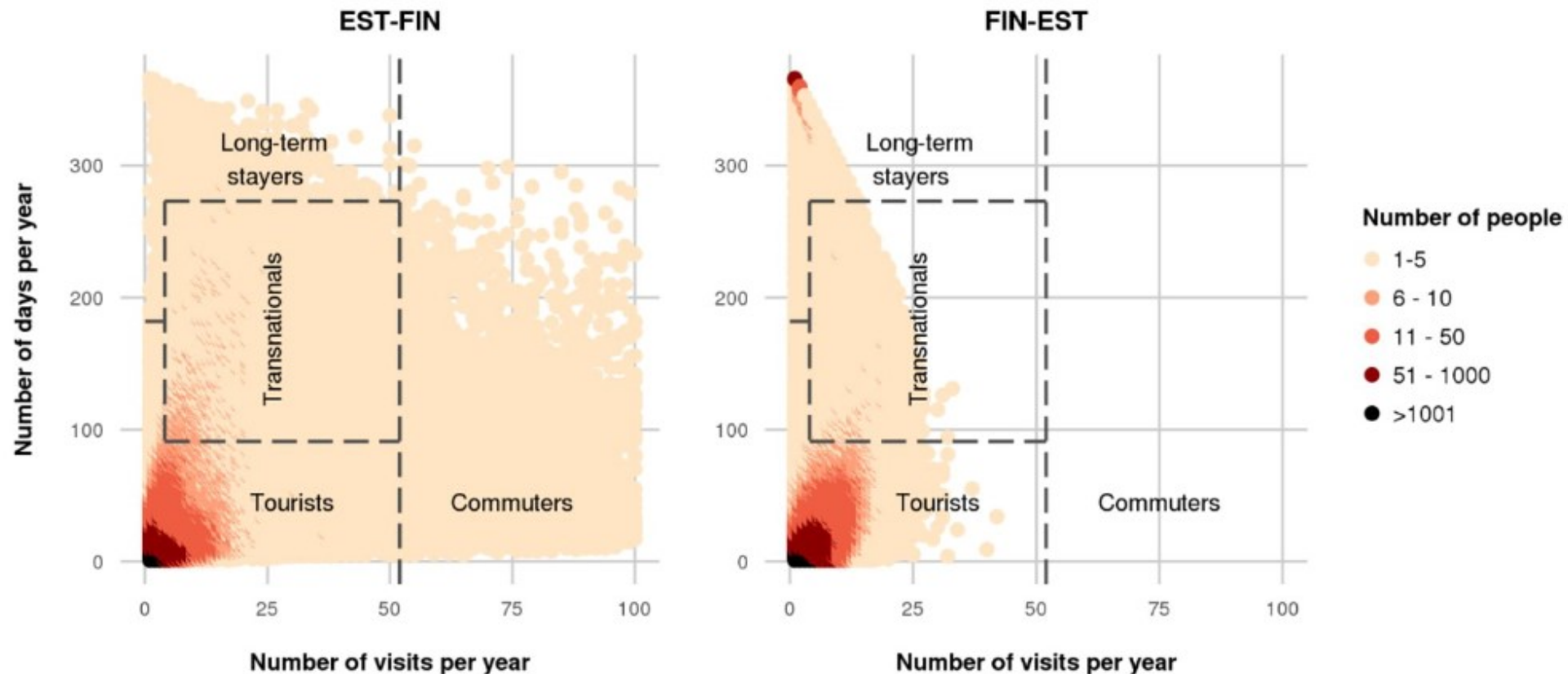
Histories and futures of mobilities between Finland and Estonia – 1.0

- In the eve of constructed "national" consciousness in the 19th and early 20th century, the significance of **cultural** cross-border mobilities between Estonia and Finland cannot be undermined for the formation of these two countries
- Koidula, Kreutzwald/Lönnrot, Päts, Granö...
- Remembering the **roots**

Histories and futures of mobilities between Finland and Estonia – 2.0

- **Economic** cross-border mobilities got mixed with and broke through the **political** and **cultural** dimensions in the past 60 years
- Cross-border “**shopping**” (utilizing the advantages of the price/quality differences in material goods, business opportunities and people’s skills) was a key motive between Finland and Estonia
- Regular interactive **logistics** (physical and digital connections) facilitated the emergence of transnational people

Histories and futures of mobilities between Finland and Estonia – 2.0



EST→FIN On average 3,700 daily visits, on average 383,000 people yearly

FIN→EST On average 6,600 daily visits, on average 1,453,000 people yearly

In total around 20,000 transnationals (by EST-FIN & FIN-EST mobility practices)

Histories and futures of mobilities between Finland and Estonia – 2.0

- In March 2020, the **lockdowns** installed to prevent the spread of the Covid-19, the mobilities (of people) between Finland and Estonia were reduced abruptly and substantially.
- Cross-border mobilities between Finland and Estonia are important but they cannot be taken for granted (...as in 1940).
- What will be the short- and long-term impacts from the lockdown in 2020 to cross border mobilities between Finland and Estonia?

Histories and futures of mobilities between Finland and Estonia – 3.0

- Will more people (wish to) **return** from Finland/Estonia to their original homeland or just use advanced digital transnational practices?
- How “the mobility **bubble**” between Finland and Estonia could be used more strategically for enhancing both countries’ **crisis preparedness** and **security of supply**?
- What about **enhanced** physical (“tunnel”) and digital (“6G”) **connections** between Finland and Estonia?
- How to maintain **proper cognitive proximity** (remain enough but not too similar, including among transnationals) to foster innovation potential and processes between Finland and Estonia?

Reflections

- **Cross-border mobilities** between Finland and Estonia have been and will be an **advantage for both countries**.
- **Transnationals** can become crucial mediators to support an appropriate cognitive proximity that is vital for innovation development in and between Finland and Estonia
- "Glue" is needed to motivate the maintenance of the Finnish-Estonian connections – and some of it can be also in a liquid form ;)