

Photo Seppo Samuli



Riitta Konkola

## Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences begins operations

**H**elsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences began operations on 1 August 2008, having four faculties: Culture; Economics and Business Administration; Health Care and Social Services; and Technology and Transport. Through the merger of EVTEK and Stadia, Metropolia has become Finland's largest university of applied sciences; it has 48 degree programmes, eight of which provide teaching in English. There are approximately 14,000 students and a staff of 1,100. Metropolia operates from 21 locations in Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa. Metropolia's Rector and Managing Director is **Riitta Konkola** with **Lea Ryyänen-Karjalainen** as Vice Rector.

Metropolia University of Applied Sciences is run by Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulu Oy, which is owned by the cities of Helsinki, Vantaa, Espoo and Kauniainen and the municipality of Kirkkonummi. ■

## Metropolia creates new kind of expertise

**A**ccording to **Riitta Konkola**, Metropolia Rector and Managing Director, the merger of two successful institutes of higher education – Stadia and EVTEK – into a multidisciplinary university of applied sciences seemed like an interesting and a good solution right from the start. "The sum total of them was excellent: strong technology combined with areas of application, for example, the Health Care and Social Services, and on the other hand a business perspective and the creative side through the Faculty of Culture.

She says that Metropolia not only creates new kind of expertise, but also considers it an important aspect of its operations that the municipalities in the capital region find concrete areas of cooperation. She emphasises the multidisciplinary nature of

Metropolia, in which the actual size of a faculty is not important, albeit Metropolia will become a major provider of technical learning.

She considers Metropolia's special strength that the expertise and various partners are found in the same house. For example, the 'users' required for technological development are already there through the extensive labour market network. ■

## Winds of change

**T**he globe has shrunk immensely during less than a single generation. We have the Internet, Internet phone calls, email and enormous databanks at our fingertips – and all of this practically free. An electronic 'parcel' will go anywhere in the world in a matter of seconds and the price will not depend on its size. Globalisation means that work will be done where it is most practicable. Many types of work requiring less skills are already being done in countries with the lowest labour costs. On the other hand, many foreign high-expertise engineering and software businesses have moved or expanded to Finland.

On our shrunken planet, one could say that the role of a Finnish city has been adopted by the whole of Finland and the role of Finland by the whole of Europe. The dense network of universities of applied sciences was created during a period of optimisation of municipal functions. In a decentralised network, quantity tended to rise above quality, but now it is time to put more emphasis on the quality of teaching and research. Every university of applied sciences should aim for a good European average, and some areas should strive for European excellence. Only that way can we keep the wheels of our society properly in motion."

This is what Professor **Yrjö Neuvo** writes in the leader of the first issue of Focus. Mr Neuvo is the Deputy Chairman of the Board of Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulu Oy. ■



Yrjö Neuvo

Photo Seppo Samuli

## Prediction of future increasing in all sectors of life

**C**ooperation between businesses, the public sector and the research and education sector will increase in the future, because there is a genuine need for it.

There is widespread need to have a higher awareness of what is going on elsewhere, a better grasp of what people are thinking in different sectors of society, and a deeper understanding and more experience of different sectors. This is the view held by **Markku Wilenius**,

Professor of Futures Studies at the Turku School of Economics, who has been working for the German financial services company Allianz since December 2007.

He emphasises that since the world is changing at an ever faster rate, future research and long-term planning is generally more and more important. He lists three key things that will change the world in the next two decades more than anything else since the Second World War: changes in demographic structures and dependency ratios; changes in the climate, environment and natural sources; and the distancing of the financial markets and real economy from each other.

Wilenius says that many recognise the facts that cause these changes, but cannot see the link between them and their own activities. "When more and more people ask this question, awareness about it will grow." ■



Markku Wilenius

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Translations by Robin Maylett