

# Helsinki promises no hiccups in campaign to host the European Medicines Agency

Press release, 28 September 2017

**Helsinki promises no hiccups whatsoever if the decision is made to relocate the European Medicines Agency in the Finnish capital. The quirky campaign launched on Thursday, assuring the EU of smooth sailing and great livability for the agency's personnel in their new home. It also addresses Helsinki's wider aim of becoming one of the world's health capitals both in terms of research and the commercialisation of the health and life science industries.**

No hiccups whatsoever, promised the Finnish Minister of Social Affairs and Health **Pirkko Mattila** and the Mayor of Helsinki **Jan Vapaavuori**, when they outlined the detailed and concrete plan to relocate the European Medicines Agency (EMA) to Helsinki.

Known for its high liveability scores in global rankings, its leadership in digital health, and one of the most efficient healthcare systems in the world, the city of Helsinki kicked off its campaign in Brussels to relocate the EMA to the Finnish capital, assuring no hiccups during the relocation process.

As well as promising a hiccup-free move for the agency and its employees, the city's offer of hospitality also extends to their families, with special services allocated to assist with their integration.

"Helsinki is the perfect location for medical research," said Jan Vapaavuori, the Mayor of Helsinki. "It has bio banks, universal healthcare, and a unique national identification number system, which helps to make recalling information easy. As a city, it has everything to offer, whether in terms of quality of life, one of the best start-up scenes

in the world, and a great educational system in which to relocate children and young people, or its excellent liveability in one of the safest countries in the world. Not to mention that placing the EMA alongside the European Chemicals Agency in Helsinki would enhance the EU's global regulatory competitiveness. And to cap it all, we promise no hiccups for everyone involved in the relocation. We know we can deliver.”

Helsinki's liveability has been also been proven in practice – ECHA's move to Helsinki demonstrated strong employee retention, as little as 3-5% expert employee turnover in the first five years.

### **Helsinki aims to be one of the world's health capitals**

In addition to ticking all the boxes in its application for the EMA, Helsinki also has the wider aim of becoming one of the world's true health capitals. Its robust talent pool and research expertise, combined with Finland's leadership in IT and communications, form a vibrant life-science and med-tech industry in the Helsinki region. With over 500 life-science companies, employing some 21,000 professionals, Helsinki is working hard to be the best location in Northern Europe for healthcare development.

Helsinki also boasts a globally leading health organisation named HUS, and high willingness amongst the general public (99%) to take part in medical research, with more than 98% of patients giving permission for their samples to be stored in bio banks. For HUS, this means up to 500,000 new samples every year.

“We look forward to welcoming the European Medicines Agency's experts to the community of medical and pharmaceutical professionals that have made Finland a benchmark for healthcare development worldwide,” said Pirkko Mattila, Finland's Minister of Social Affairs and Health, “and to providing a stable, supportive, and hiccup-free home for their families.”

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