

THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD SAUNA CHAMPIONSHIPS

CITY GOVERNMENT: Outlined by Assistant Chief of Office Terhi Mäkiniemi,
tel +358-38493303 / +358-505939663 terhi.makiniemi@heinola.fi

Heinola has organized the World Sauna Championships since 1999. At first the competition was fairly playful and relaxed but it has become more serious through the years. At the same time the original idea of going to sauna has become more and more distant.

After the events in the competition last summer, everyone certainly understands that the city doesn't wish to organize the competition in the same format. So that organizing the competition wouldn't have to be stopped, different ways to ensure the safety of the competitors have been considered. For example, the idea of lowering the temperature in the sauna has been presented, but that might cause a danger of dehydration or lack of oxygen to the competitors. However, the biggest concern is any action which contradicts the rules of the competition and causes medical risks. The control of the use of medical drugs, for example, would demand huge financial resources from the organizers, but would even that prevent the misuse of these drugs? Also, getting voluntary workers and sponsors might turn out to be difficult in the future.

The city has received plenty of feedback claiming that organizing the competition should not be stopped. If the city was to organize the World Sauna Championships in the future, the original playful and joyous characteristics of the event should be reintroduced. No ways to achieve this have been found. There are already numerous expositions and fairs with the sauna theme in Finland.

There are several high quality events in Heinola also this summer, even if the World Sauna Championships were not to be organized. Thousands of saunas will be heated in Heinola next summer, with steams that are healthy, safe and relaxing.

An assessment on the effect of actions to business life in this matter has been conducted.

MAYOR: The city government decides that Heinola no longer continues to organize the World Sauna Championships.