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Podcast Transcript: International House Turku – Housing Episode

[Intro Music]

Jonathan: Welcome to the International House Turku podcast, your guide to living, working, and studying in Turku. We are your hosts, Jonathan Murphy...

Rosa: ...and Rosa Pamokchiian. Hello!

Jonathan: Hi! This week we're talking about housing: how to find a place to live in Turku and some very important main things to consider.

Rosa: And to help us navigate this topic, we welcome a housing specialist onto the podcast.

Jonathan: Sounds great. Let's get started.

Rosa: Let's go.

[Music bridge]

Jonathan: So, welcome to another episode of the International House Turku podcast. Here we are, Rosa, back in the studio, one of our favorite places in the city. How are you doing?

Rosa: Yes, I'm doing great, and I think it's—I'm especially excited to find out more about the topic of housing, because I do believe we probably have some stories that we can share with our listeners.

Jonathan: Yeah, definitely. Are you hyped about it?

Rosa: I am hyped about it.

Jonathan: I don't know if I consider myself a housing expert, but I have successfully managed to live in Turku for a number of years. But this is a topic that again we do get a lot of questions about, certainly in the soft landing service at International House. And I think for many people, you know, living somewhere is one of the most fundamental aspects of living, and things that someone is maybe most scared about before they move here.

Rosa: Yeah, absolutely. It's one of those really important main things that you have to consider before even moving here: Do you have a place to stay? Because anything else you can be like, "Oh well, I'll register for the bank account once I get to Turku" or whatever. But housing, you have to have. And how do you find a place? How do you make sure that it's an existing place, actually? And a lot of questions come along the way. So, how has it been for you, Jonathan? Have you been able to successfully find a place when you were moving to Turku, and what can you share with us?

Jonathan: Sure, yeah, let's open the topic up. Well, if I cast my mind back to when I stepped off the coach from Helsinki Airport a hundred years ago as a young man in Turku—we did have a place to live, but we didn't know what it was going to look like.

Rosa: Oh, nice.

Jonathan: So, I think I've mentioned on the podcast before that we moved here because my wife got a job at the University of Turku, which brought us over here. And of course, we didn't actually have a chance to visit the city before we moved here. So we just had to find a place online and play what I like to call "the online roulette" of just kind of seeing something, searching a bunch of websites, seeing if anything was in our budget, and then contacting the landlord and kind of trying to persuade them. And of course, it was maybe slightly easier for me because my wife is a Finnish citizen, so she had, for example, the *henkilötunnus*, the social security number. So we had a bit of credibility maybe with landlords.

But still, we were overseas and we didn't really have any history of being in Finland. So, fortunately, there was a private landlord who was willing to take a chance on us. But the good thing was that again, you hear all these horror stories about whether an apartment is real or not, and you pay your deposit and then you arrive in the city and there's nothing there. Fortunately, actually one of my wife's new work colleagues was very, very happy to go and actually see the building for us just to guarantee that it was real. So that put our minds at rest a little bit. But fortunately, it all worked out and we successfully picked up the keys and stayed there. It was a very nice one-bedroom apartment in Portsa, Port Arthur in the city, which was a great introduction to Turku, very close to the market square. And I think like many people, of course, the longer you live in a city, usually the further out you get as the suburbs come calling with family life. But it was certainly—I do remember that kind of stress and that relief in a way when you do actually arrive and you have the keys and you're like, "Okay, this is—I have a roof over my head." And it wasn't a perfect place, but for a first place in a new country, we were pretty happy with it.

Rosa: Yeah, that sounds like a very bold move to move to this city in the world. And I mean like again, like you said, it's kind of like a roulette. And how can you make sure that the pictures are actually—in reality, the place looks like in the pictures? It's kind of like, you know, when you're renting a place or Airbnb and then you go there and you're like, "This looks nothing like in the pictures."

Jonathan: Yeah, there's a lot you can do—magic you can do with pictures and a bit of Photoshop, I suppose.

Rosa: Yeah. And I guess also, even though your wife's colleague went to check it, but then again, you never know how the neighborhood feels like, what the neighbors are like, which you will find out kind of later on as you live in the place.

Jonathan: Yeah, and I think those apartment buildings, you know, when you have literally someone living above you, below you, to the left of you, and to the right of you, it is again a lottery as to how loud that will be. And well, we—I think like many people in apartment blocks, we had some slight noise concerns in the first year. But again, I think that's just part and parcel of living.

Rosa: Yeah, and I think in here generally, people respect the rule of not making a lot of noise after 10:00 PM, which is really nice. And then not too early either, unless you have a construction going on. In which case I have been woken up several times, even before 7:00 AM. Though the working time is supposed to start at 7:00, but I recall one time being woken up by loud drilling around 6:00 AM, and me cursing the workers and the whole world.

Jonathan: Yeah, I think so. And I don't think I've been woken up that early, but we have lived places under renovation and I think Finland is the only place where I have seen construction workers early in the morning just blasting out heavy metal. It's like the stereotype, you know, for Finland loving heavy metal. And it's like, well, I don't mind a bit of heavy metal, so I prefer the heavy metal to the drill, so I can take that if it gets me up in a morning. But how about you, Rosa? How was your first place in Turku? Do you remember those first steps you took?

Rosa: Yeah. I don't know if I can say that I was luckier than you in a way that I had the chance to go check out the place, the apartment that we moved into in Turku, because I was already in Finland. I used to live in a different city than Turku. But then again, that meant that every time they had the apartment shows—showcasing the house basically—I had to drive for about like four hours to go check actually how it looks like.

And I have to say that that experience was very mixed—the hunting part—because you had really nice apartments, and then for that you would have like—the place that we actually got, I think we had like 34 people lined up to get the place. And I was thinking that, "Okay, we're not getting in." But hey, guess what? We got it, and it was a really nice—I think it was like a two-room apartment and we had our own sauna. That was a very luxury. Yes, next to a forest, we could walk the dog and enjoy the views.

But then other than that, of course, there were apartments that I checked that were quite old, not renovated, and the previous tenants were not as diligent, let's say, in doing some chores. So, and then maybe in a way or another, the neighborhood did not feel as safe. But maybe again, I wouldn't say in Turku we have like really scary neighborhoods, but depending what your needs are—what family you have or whether you're single or not—you might want to consider that. But maybe we'll get more detailed instructions by our housing counselor for that.

Jonathan: Yeah, and I also wanted to ask—you've mentioned on the podcast before, I think, that you moved to Turku for studies. That's why you came here. So did you consider applying to the student apartments at TYS?

Rosa: I did. And actually, I have an interesting story because I did not get the housing. Yes, and I think this is a lot of—probably our listeners can relate to it. But whether I indicated to them already a bit too late that I was willing to move to the student housing, or I cannot say whether that year was very busy, but I did not get a place from the student housing. So I had to within a month quickly try to find a place from the private market.

Jonathan: Wow, that's not a lot of time.

Rosa: Yeah, which sounded kind of a little bit scary. Because also considering July—first of all, a lot of people are not working. Second, like nice places have already been taken kind of, or what is there left? You have to choose from that basically. But yeah, I had to go through the private—like through private companies' offers and see what they have. But that again kind of works out. And I think once you have found the place, it's basically very straightforward. You fill in the application that you're willing to move, who's coming with you, whether you have that Finnish—notorious Finnish ID you mentioned about—the social security. And I think for us also, we were checked, like the credit history. And if that is okay, then you get an offer saying that if you're willing to move, it's yours starting that.

But a funny thing also, because I think a lot of our clients might not consider in Finland when you're renting an apartment: you have to kind of check the ad, because in some places it will mention that you have to have your own electricity contract. Which again, I was in such a rush moving in, I think I did not manage and did not fully consider it through. So the first day I moved into the apartment, there was no electricity in the place. Because I think it was also weekend, so I could only contact the office of the electricity company to get it on starting Monday. But it was an interesting experience and I remember taking my cell phone and charging it somewhere in the corridor, but not in my apartment, because I had to make sure that at least in emergency cases my phone is working. That kind of experience.

Jonathan: Hopefully there was a cafe nearby that you could get some warmth in and get some electricity.

Rosa: Yeah.

Jonathan: Yeah, I think this is all part and parcel. This is all part and parcel of that first experience. And you know, we've both lived in different countries as well, and until you get that roof over your head, it can be pretty stressful. But it's great that you are an example of someone—because we do have a lot of clients at International House who unfortunately do not get the TYS apartments. And it's good to show that there is—there are things out there, even if, you know, like you said, you have to be flexible and sometimes you might have to have a couple of days charging your phone in the corridor or a couple of days, you know, in kind of temporary places, but there's some options there.

Rosa: Yeah, definitely. And again, like in any case, International House and other advisors are there for you if you are unsure how it works or if you need any help.

Jonathan: Yeah, and speaking of advisors, so for the last, I think for the last year or so, slightly longer, International House Turku has offered a specific housing advice service. Which has been great because again, we have our own experiences of housing, but maybe like I said, I certainly would not call myself kind of a housing expert.

Rosa: Exactly.

Jonathan: Exactly so. In these cases, it's very good to defer. So we'll take a quick break now, and when we come back, we will be inviting a real housing expert to the studio to answer some more in-depth questions about housing in Turku.

Rosa: See you in a bit.

Jonathan: See you then.

[Music bridge]

Jonathan: Welcome back to the International House Turku podcast. And as we promised, Rosa, we have a housing expert in the studio with us.

Rosa: Yes, we do! And we're very excited to welcome our guest, Anna Poikkijoki, who's working as a housing advisor for Otos-säätiö and also working very closely with International House Turku. Welcome Anna.

Anna: Thank you so much, Jonathan and Rosa. I'm really happy to be here. I'm glad that I was invited.

Jonathan: We are very, very glad that you decided to accept the invitation because as we just said before the break, you know, we have dealt with a lot of queries about housing as part of the soft landing service over the last few years, but I don't think either of us have maybe, you know, so much expertise. So we're hoping that you can come in and be our expert for us and we can ask you all the difficult questions.

Anna: Oh, please do. As the official expert on the episode, please just bring in all the questions and I'll see how well I'm able to answer them.

Rosa: So let's jump into the most difficult question of all then. Introduce yourself.

Anna: Well, as Rosa already mentioned, my name is Anna Poikkijoki and I work as a housing advisor or housing counselor at Otos-säätiö. I've been working there for approximately one year now, and before that I started my Turku career as a housing counselor at the International House Turku, where I was working for like over one summer—it was summer 2024. And before that I've been working as a housing counselor in Helsinki for a couple of years.

Rosa: Yes, so you are familiar with all the issues related to housing and hopefully today you can share some secret tips or important things for our listeners.

Jonathan: Yeah, definitely. And maybe we can just start the discussion then by talking about the service. So you mentioned that you are an advisor, a counselor, so I was kind of wondering, you know, what are the typical things that people would ask you or come to your service for? What are the main things they would ask?

Anna: Well, maybe the main thing or one of the main things is that people for any reason need to look for an apartment. It can be because their financial situation has changed, something in the family has changed—divorce, baby being born, whatever reasons—they need a bigger or smaller apartment. They need to find for cheaper apartment, or they are going to arrive from somewhere else to Turku and they don't know where to start, for example.

Jonathan: Sure. And I think like we discussed in the first part of the episode, we've definitely been in that position where you find yourself in this new life situation, let's say.

Rosa: Yeah, and definitely it's very good to have somebody holding your hand or giving you all this information of, "Oh, you should probably know this," or "This are where the more affordable maybe housings are in Turku area." So then you are providing all of these to the people who contact you.

Anna: Yeah, yeah, yeah. We get a lot of people especially from newcomers about like what are the safest area, so are there any areas that you should avoid or like something about like the prices, what is included normally when you rent an apartment, furniture, anything—because it's very different in Finland compared to like other countries.

I myself have been as an international student actually in both in Canada and in Hong Kong, and I did not get much support when I was moving abroad. I had to figure out everything myself. And I was in Hong Kong, I was lucky enough to get like the official student housing from the university, but in Canada I was not lucky, and but the university did warn in advance that there is like a specific number of apartments available or shared rooms available on campus, and most students will not be lucky enough to get one, and I was one of the unlucky ones. So then I had to start like figuring out other options, and it was just like Google was my best friend.

Jonathan: Sure, I remember those days. It's unlucky for you but maybe lucky for your clients because you've had this experience of kind of when things go a little bit wrong and you need to think on your feet maybe.

Anna: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Paying the deposit and everything like figuring out how how everything works when you like make a transfer like between banks from different countries and actually like signing a contract, how does it work, do you do it like online or do you have to send like the paperwork like between countries and all of that—it can be stressful.

Rosa: It is, it is. And actually you touched upon several things that I already wanted to ask you, because you said that, okay, let's say an international student wants to move to Turku

and they didn't get the student apartment. How early do you think they should prepare or how early they should start this hunting process? Do you have approximate time frame that you should give the listeners?

Anna: Oh my, maybe a few months before arriving would be good, but it all depends on like what type of housing providers you are looking for an apartment. If, for example, there are like some housing providers to which you actually have to make an official application, like a written application—they have a form for that on their web page. Those applications are usually valid for three to four months at a time, so those applications you can make already three to four months before arriving.

But then even if you make that application or those applications as early as three months before you arrive, it does not mean that you get like a reply immediately. It might still take until like one month before arriving before you hear anything. Because normally even if you can send in the application early, how like people who already rent from those housing providers, they have like one calendar month like period of notice. So when this month I decide to end my contract, my contract ends at the end of the next month. So they might not have anything available to offer to you.

Jonathan: Okay. And these kind of applications then, is there any—does the applicant need any kind of special information? Does it cost anything, for example? Do they need the ID number?

Anna: Well, it doesn't cost anything to send the application, so no money is involved—something is free even in Finland. But I mean, most of the applications do require that you enter your social security number. There's only I think one or two applications that I know of that you can fill out without that number. So you do need to have like your residence permit papers in order so that you do have the social security number. And then also many housing providers ask you to send them a copy of your residence permit, and then they will also ask you to send them a copy or confirmation of your registration at the DVV that you are like a resident, officially residing in Turku. But of course you can't do that before you are here, but then that is something that most housing providers will ask.

Rosa: Yeah, very detailed information. And let's say you're someone who didn't get, for whatever reason, the security is there at all any option for those people? Is there a private market? Are there any other people who you can find a house from? Do you have any information for those?

Anna: Well, there's of course private people, private owners of apartments who are always looking for tenants, so that is an option. There's like a specific web page where you can find all these landlords, and then there's Facebook groups. And one of the web pages kind of run their own—I call it like the Facebook page for house hunting, because I mean you have to both as a housing provider and a seeker you have to create your own profile where you like write something about like what kind of apartment you're looking for, are you moving alone

or with family or with another co-habitant, and you know, something like a bit of background of yourself—like do you work, study, why are you looking for an apartment etc.

Jonathan: Okay. Perhaps we can share some of those links maybe in the episode description. That would be really useful for the listeners, because so many do find themselves in this situation where they maybe don't get their first choice and have these kind of pending applications, but the closer it gets to either their arrival in Finland or maybe the end of their temporary accommodation, then the more difficult it gets. But we do have quite a lot of clients who've been—if they don't have the ID number in particular, they're maybe thinking about subletting, about that kind of slightly—I don't want to say shadier, but kind of slightly less formal arrangement. I mean do you have any advice for anyone who is looking at a sublet or is currently subletting?

Anna: Well, maybe the most important piece of advice would be that do make a contract in writing. I've been subletting myself, there were no problems at all, so I mean it's nothing like super strange, it does happen and I think that it's more common than people maybe think. But maybe the most important thing is that even if you are subletting, make a written contract. Because if something happens—the worst case scenario and you go to a court—even though like an oral agreement is binding, but still like it's very difficult for you to prove what has been agreed on if you only have been agreed about it like orally. So a written contract is always the best solution, I think.

Rosa: Yeah, that's a very good piece of advice. Yeah. And I think we kind of like jumped around all kind of issues, but generally can you kind of like pinpoint, what are generally the biggest issues in Turku when it comes to renting, finding an apartment? Do you have like kind of point?

Anna: Well, I would say that lately the biggest issues both for incoming internationals and people who already are in Turku is the pricing. The prices on everything—housing included—has increased, and the level of income that people have hasn't increased as much—not at all for most I would say. So I mean pricing is—I think it's the like the issue or problem number one. Because I mean there are—if you look at like numbers of available apartments, there are loads of available apartments, that's not the problem. But but the problem is that they are too expensive for people to afford them.

Jonathan: How—do you have any figures? I know it's hard to say because of so many types of places, but do you have any rough figures about what the average cost for an apartment is, let's say? Because we have students as well who find something again on a Facebook group and they're like, "Okay, I found this like great apartment and it's only 2,000 euros a month for one room! Does this look okay?" No. Don't take it. But like what—what would you advise people to, you know, to expect for maybe the cost, let's say?

Anna: Yeah, of course. I mean for like a studio apartment—and they are usually like between 20 and 30 square meters, they can be a bit smaller of course as well—I would say that the

average prices are 500 to 600 euros per month. And in general that is only the rent. It does not have like necessarily water included, or it could have like a water fee already included. Electricity is not included in that. Internet connection and all the extras are not included.

However, compared to maybe some other countries, there is already always in the rental apartments—there is a fridge, there is a stove, and and all these kinds of things. The furniture is not there, but but all the other like basic things that you need for cooking and keeping your food fresh exists.

Rosa: That's a very good point you mentioned, because we were reflecting earlier during the break and I also mentioned that the first night when I rented my own apartment, I had to sleep on the floor on a mattress because obviously the apartments usually do not come with a bed, do not come with any sofas or anything, so you have to take care about it yourself.

Jonathan: Yeah, and again I think that really trips up a lot of our especially students. If you come in after like a 17-hour flight and you finally get the keys to your apartment and you open the door and there's nothing there. Just an empty room.

Anna: It can be a bit of a shock. But then at the same time, sometimes I wonder like what goes on in people's minds, I mean—because then it kind of feels sometimes like counter-intuitive for somebody to expect that all the furniture and and everything would be there. But maybe it's just me.

Jonathan: No, I think it's so easy, you know, like I say, we've all lived abroad, we've all lived in different countries, and I think it is so easy, especially when you're kind of—like especially when I was younger when I was living, I think I lived in Thailand when I was about 23, and I just had this real vision in my head of what my apartment there would look like, you know, and kind of a swimming pool and kind of, you know, on the beach and that type of stuff. And then you realize that, "Oh, actually I don't have that option and I have this, again, 20 square meters, you know, with no furniture." And it was difficult to adapt to that kind of thing.

So I mean one of the things we're trying to do with the universities as well is of course we have the kind of information webinars and we try and give the information in advance, but but it's great that there's a service like yours that is there to maybe help people who haven't read the information material and are kind of expecting, you know...

Anna: Yeah, and I think in general it doesn't really matter how much information you pour onto people and how many leaflets you give them, they will never go through all of it. They will always miss the information that they then eventually need. But I mean yeah, we are here to to help anybody who needs like any kind of like advice, whether it's just like a quick question by email or actually like more help like filling in the applications like together if if they feel like unsure about how to fill them in or like where to look for them, then that's what we are here for—to help people.

Rosa: Yeah, I think that sounds really good, Anna, in a way that of course we could keep on talking and talking about generally what is going on on housing, but every particular person, individual, family have their own needs, their own questions. So in those cases they could contact you maybe and get a specific information of how they should proceed from that point on.

Jonathan: Yeah, definitely. And I think again, there's a lot to touch upon here, you know, again we were talking—talking in the break amongst ourselves about how Turku really is a growing city. So it's great you said that the availability isn't so much of a problem at the moment, but again I think maybe it might become a problem depending on how many people are kind of moving here in the next 10 to 15 years. So it's really nice that again that people are thinking about this and there are services again to help newcomers. I think that's really valuable and the type of thing that I would have wanted eight years ago. But the next best thing is that you're here now, I suppose.

Rosa: But where can people find your information? Of course maybe we can share—we can share, I think, on the International House website for example there's a page.

Anna: Yep, there is a page specifically for housing-related questions on on the web page of International House Turku, and my contact information is there. So you can find my information there directly. And otherwise there is on the web page of Otos-säätiö you can of course find like the general email address and the phone number where anybody can call or send an email and ask any kind of questions that they have in their mind.

Rosa: That's great. You will get a lot of inquiries probably after the podcast goes live. But usually I think as a tradition we also ask our guests a question as of when you were a young student moving to study or moving to the work life, if you reflect back, what would be one advice now that the wiser Anna would give to herself, to her younger self? Do you have one thing or maybe multiple things that you would want to advise yourself? Maybe as a young student going to either Canada...

Anna: Yeah.

Rosa: ...or Hong Kong.

Anna: I don't know, I think I was a bit too laid back already then. I tended to think that I have no idea how things are going to like how I'm going to figure it out, but somehow I will. I already had that mentality, maybe sometimes it was not always a positive thing.

But maybe just like as a reminder, as a confirmation for anybody who is wondering, it's like you will figure it out one way, one way or another. And and maybe sometimes—because I remember that I did feel a bit shy about asking for help when I was younger. Maybe sometimes I'm not maybe shy, but I feel that I should figure things out on my own. And then maybe just to remind myself and and everybody else at the same time that it's always okay

to ask if you don't know. It's better to better to ask than feel sorry afterwards that you didn't ask.

Jonathan: Yeah, very true. I think that really makes a lot of sense, and you can apply that, you know, to so many of the things that we talk about on the podcast. That, you know, there are people from the city, from your employer, from the university, whatever reason you're moving to Finland for, like there are people here to help and people who've been there in that position, and I think that's, you know, great to reach out to them.

Rosa: Yeah, exactly.

Anna: Yeah, exactly. And I think in general it doesn't really matter how much information you... wait, I said that. It might not figure—like it might not go like the way that you had planned or you had expected, but one way or another it will sort itself out.

Jonathan: Yeah, that's very reassuring. Don't they say like that moving is the most stressful, second most stressful life event? So, you know, we hopefully we can—anything we can do to calm people's anxiety about moving.

I mean one of the things we're trying to do—with the universities—oh, wait, let me check. But but but where can people find—oh, I've already asked that. But Turku is a very small place. Maybe if you like look at like the size of the city's towns in Finland, it is like on the bigger like side, but still. Many, many international students who arrive to Turku, they arrive from places that are way bigger than Turku. So even if they feel stressed about not knowing where everything is and and how to go about things, they are still arriving to a very small place.

Jonathan: True. Unless you move here from Pori, of course.

Anna: Well, yeah. From Pori or from another teeny tiny village, then it's a different thing. But if you come like from a from a city that is like on European level or global level an average-size city, chances are that it's like at least three times bigger than Turku.

Jonathan: Absolutely. And yeah, and again, when students coming from those other backgrounds, again, sometimes like the prospect of living slightly further out is quite natural and and commuting in. Although when I was moving here, I really wanted to be like in the center, because I didn't trust the buses yet, exactly.

Anna: Yeah, that's actually—it's funny, because that's many people arriving—they ask about that or they have like these very specific like requests about being either like really next to the university or super close to the city center. And then I'm there like, "You do not realize like how small Turku is and and how good the local transportation is. Like you really don't need to be living right next to the on campus or right next to your university building or next to the marketplace to like be close to everything. It's normal to be like a bus ride away from the from the city center or on campus, and you will still be in the city center or on campus in like less than less than half an hour."

Jonathan: Yeah, certainly that was a big thing for me when we moved out to the outskirts and my bus ride went from being six minutes to 15 and a half minutes. But maybe that's a topic for another—we could do a sequel to this episode about buying. We haven't really talked about buying a house, but maybe we could do a separate episode about buying.

Anna: We do, but mainly that those advices about housing are more based on our personal experiences, because I mean housing counseling per se is—it's not necessarily primarily meant for people who are looking for buying. But I mean, of course, whenever we can we can help, we do give information on that as well, if we are able to help.

Jonathan: Okay, that's good to know. And again, I think we've had a few questions about that, so maybe we can have a separate episode about buying a house. Anna, thanks so much for coming in today. It's been great to have you on on the podcast.

Anna: Thank you for a very positive hope to the listeners that things will work out, don't worry.

Jonathan: Definitely! And we'll be back with the outro in a moment.

[Music bridge]

Jonathan: So, Rosa, we made it to the end of another episode of the podcast. As usual, I look to you. What have we learned today?

Rosa: Yeah, hopefully by the end of this episode, by this point, the listeners have gotten a fair idea of what it is like getting an—a housing, their first housing in Turku. And really important points that we got from Anna of making sure that you do get a contract, a written one, just in case to be clear for yourself and for your landlord. As well as the timing—like beforehand search is very, very important, I believe. And absolutely I guess again the budget, knowing what you have, what you can find. So basically again trying to figure these things out beforehand. But then again, not stressing too much because if for whatever case you feel like you're hitting a wall with all these questions, there are services in Turku that will help you figure it out. There is a lot of information available, and there is Anna with her positive attitude that things will work out, so don't stay on your own.

Jonathan: Very, very sage advice, and I think everyone will be hopefully rushing to contact Anna as soon as this episode is over. But thanks again for being here. And I hope you're enjoying the winter. It's been pretty cold recently.

Rosa: It has been really cold. How have you been coping with the cold?

Jonathan: It's been cold. I feel anything kind of like minus—about minus 15 I'm quite happy with, but when it hits below minus 15, like I would just be quite happy to stay in a duvet all day. Although it's been quite sunny and people have been at least getting out into into nature. And I hear people have also been walking on the river recently as well.

Rosa: Oh yeah, it's really interesting. I have been seeing people walking, and I also saw people even walking their dogs on the ice, so it's a thing.

Jonathan: It's a thing. So again, if you are listening to this episode slightly later, maybe check the condition of the Aura River. But I haven't done it yet, but it'd be really cool to walk over.

Rosa: Yeah, this is your chance to walk on the river. But then be watchful about the ice on the sidewalks. Those are dangerous.

Jonathan: Yeah, I haven't slipped over this year, which is great because the older I get, the less my back can handle being on the ground. But hey, again if any listeners have any questions about this episode, then of course you can contact us at the usual places. We have the email address talent.advisor@turku.fi. And I think most of you are already following International House Turku on social media, but if you are not, we have the usual Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram as well. So please send us your questions, comments, and any opinions you have about the podcast.

Rosa: And where can our listeners meet you in person, Jonathan? Because we do have an event coming.

Jonathan: We do have some events, yes! Of course we will be continuing with our famous *Bisbis-perjantai*, which is the last Friday of every month this season. I have to say that I have so many Bisbis donuts, but recently I had a *Bisbis-laskiaispulla*.

Rosa: What is that?

Jonathan: Which is so—the laskiaispulla, the cream and jam/possibly almond filling, kind of like donut—like buns, I guess—buns with the cream in the middle around Easter. And my wife thought it would be a great joke to get me from the bakery one with a kind of a Bisbis hybrid.

Rosa: I'm afraid to ask. Did you like it or...?

Jonathan: Well, it was okay. It was okay. But it was not a Bisbis. I don't think it was quite as good as either Bisbis or laskiaispulla. It was so sweet, like I have a sweet tooth, but it was like so sweet. So—but please if anyone else has tried one, then I'd be interested to hear what you think. And maybe we'll serve some at the Bisbis that's closest to the Easter holiday.

Rosa: And I think about also the laskiaispulla, we better not start the conversation whether it should be the jam or the almond one because we might end up fighting.

Jonathan: Exactly, yeah. This was actually a jam one which I think went with the Bisbis, the jam was kind of was better. I think the almond would have been way way too much. Even though I'm normally an almond supporter.

Rosa: But we will have just Bisbis, the classic for the end of February.

Jonathan: Just the classic Bisbis will be happening at the end of February. So hopefully see you there. Hopefully from your own cozy apartment in Turku you're listening to this podcast. But again if you have other questions then review the whole episode and if anything contact Anna.

Rosa: Yes, thanks again to Anna, thanks to Producer Markku as always. Thanks Jonathan.

Jonathan: Thanks Rosa! And see you next time.

Rosa: Bye!

Jonathan: Bye!

[Outro music]