

Updated 12/2022: same content as  
the policy approved by the Helsinki City Board on 12 October 2015

# Communication policy



The City of Helsinki's communication policy guides the development and implementation of the City's communication activities. Communication is developed in cooperation with the City's marketing and brand development. Communication is managed and implemented on the basis of the objectives and measures of the City Strategy.

This communication policy is complemented by:

[The City of Helsinki's communication guidelines](#)  
[Helsinki's brand and visual identity](#)

# Helsinki communicates and engages in discussion with residents

Communication is relevant to everyone: management, supervisors, specialists and communication professionals. We want to be clear and understandable when communicating with the city community. We can do this by creating a dialogical operating culture both internally and externally and better communication methods

and tools for management, specialists and communication professionals alike. The goal is to make sure that residents, communities and companies are informed of the City's plans, operations and services in a timely manner and participate in the development of the city.

## One Helsinki

Clear  
language and  
good style

## Digital Helsinki

Clear role  
and common  
operating models

## A Helsinki for everyone

Influential channels

The right  
competence

# One Helsinki

The City of Helsinki's communication is transparent, up to date, honest and interactive. It is planned and proactive. Communication is managed and implemented on the basis of the objectives and measures of the City Strategy. We work together to communicate for the benefit of Helsinki on common cross-administrative themes and services. The City's communication is guided by the One Helsinki principle.

The City's communication is goal-oriented, regularly monitored and measured and continuously developed as the operating environment changes.

Alongside the development of communication, the City also develops its marketing and branding. The aim is to create a consistent, effective and economical way to market Helsinki and its services.

## Checklist for success:

- We are all committed to this common communication policy and its implementation.
- We have engaged all key actors to help to implement the policy.
- We take care of synchronising communication within the City.
- We proactively share information on planned communication among communication professionals and specialists.
- We also inform external partners about our communication policy.

# Clear role and common operating models

The City's communication professionals provide strategic support and advice to management and specialists and are involved as communication experts in the City's operational planning processes. The communication professionals actively and openly exchange information and expertise and identify cross-administrative communication needs.

Staff communication is part of goal-oriented management and the day-to-day work of supervisors. It supports the preparation and implementation of the City Strategy and changes. Active workplace communication engages and motivates staff.

## Let's remember these!

- The City Executive Office's Communications Department coordinates the City's communication, organises cooperation between the City's communication professionals and provides communication planning support and assistance to the City's divisions and enterprises.
- The City's communication professionals actively and proactively offer their expertise to management and specialists.
  - The communication professionals monitor the preparation of the City's decision-making processes and are involved in the early stages of communication planning.
- The City's communication network engages in cooperation at different organisational levels and on strategic themes.
- We utilise common communication plan templates.
  - The plans cover key messages, frequently asked questions, communication channels, communication responsibilities, communication materials, target groups, timetables and follow-up.
  - We share and edit the plans in shared workspaces and meetings.
- We encourage a culture of experimentation.
- The City's communication professionals have the support of management.

## Checklist for success:

- Communication measures are planned together with communication professionals.
- We make sure that the City's communicators have good internal networks and that they can participate in the preparation of matters and the planning of operations at an early stage.

# A Helsinki for everyone

The City's communication is transparent and interactive. We utilise interactive methods and promote transparency. Interaction relates both to the preparation of decisions and the implementation and development of operations.

We implement interaction in a goal-oriented manner, taking into account the needs of people and communities. The City serves as a facilitator and partner. We communicate and engage in discussion with the city community. When preparing important projects, we initiate dialogue in good time with those affected by the projects.

We reach the right people, communities and companies at the right time. Our messages cover relevant matters and are understandable and clear.

Interaction is promoted in close cooperation with the City's network of inclusion and interaction professionals. We develop and support professional competence related to interaction and ensure that City's divisions and enterprises have sufficient competence and tools for interaction.

## Let's remember these!

- We strive to promote interaction in all our communication – every message is a potential conversation starter in all channels and situations.
- We develop interaction competence, maintain a network of interaction professionals and provide them with training and opportunities to develop their competence.
- We maintain a high-quality database on interaction and effectively disseminate best practices on interaction within the City.
- We actively develop different interaction concepts that are approachable, inspiring and implementable with reasonable costs and serve the needs of service users.

## Checklist for success:

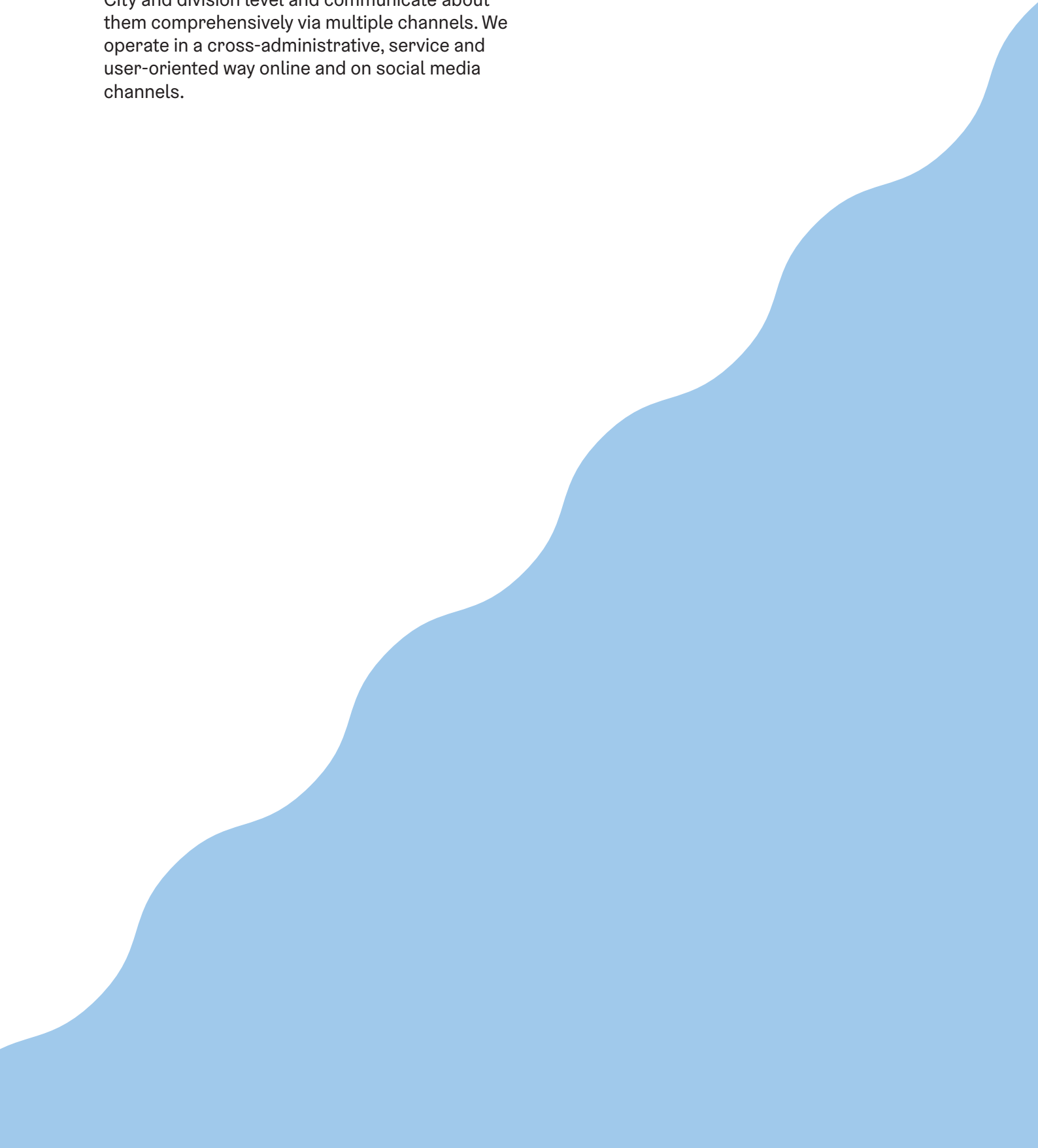
- We effectively share and widely adopt best practices for interaction.
- We get to know the communities that we want to reach and understand their needs and aspirations.
- We make sure that we reach all the people we want, at the right time, through the right channels and in the right situations.
- We also contribute as experts to the public discussion on the City's matters in channels outside the City.
- Our management and specialists identify the impact of decisions on different communities and people during the preparatory phase.
- We take transparency and participation opportunities into account in the preparatory phase.

# Influential channels

We identify the channels and tools with the best reach, which we use to communicate key themes and services.

We identify the most critical services at the City and division level and communicate about them comprehensively via multiple channels. We operate in a cross-administrative, service and user-oriented way online and on social media channels.

Through staff communication channels and tools, we improve the interactivity of operational planning and promote workplace communication without being location-specific.



# Digital Helsinki

Our digital channels and services form a consistent and accessible whole. We activate new networks of creators and specialists and look

for fresh operating methods. The City communicates and provides services interactively through digital channels.

## Checklist for success:

- We know the users of our channels, what their needs are and what added value the service brings them.
- We understand that a digital service is part of both service provision and communication.
- We make the user experience easy and convenient: we test the service, listen to users and involve city residents and the city community in the development of services.

### Good question!

- Who do we need to reach in particular?
- Why do these city residents and communities want and need the service?
- How do we measure and monitor the use of services?
- How do we develop the service?
- How often do we test the functionality of services with their users?

# Clear language and good style

We use good and clear language in our communication. We make sure that the content is understandable and readable. We adopt a user-centric and solution-oriented approach. We add emotion, personality, context and storytelling to your communication.

We communicate in a variety of effective ways to city residents, communities, staff and partners.

Brand tone of voice:

Humane: We use clear language and always take the viewpoint of the listener into consideration with compassion.

Open: The way we talk is honest and transparent, which makes us easy to connect with.  
Surprising: Our colourful and diverse way of living and our love for our hometown is often made apparent in the way we express ourselves.

Further information: [Brand tone of voice](#)

## Let's remember these!

- We address communities in styles and tones that suit them.
- We provide training in clear language use and presentation skills, as well as good tips for specialists and management.
- Together with key specialists, we contribute to the creation and adoption of understandable terminology.
- We utilise visuals and illustrations in our communication, including videos, infographics and images.

### Good question!

- How and by what means do we address our audience?  
When do we need images, infographics, videos and interaction in addition to text?
- What style and tone is right for each situation?

# The right competence

The changing world and operating environment require a continuous updating of communication competence and new practices. Communication is part of management and relevant to everyone: management, supervisors, specialists and communicators.

Communication professionals know how to plan and anticipate communication. We provide communication assistance and support to management and experts. We use communication

to promote transparency and inclusion in decision-making processes. We are skilled in crisis communication.

We develop communication as a frontrunner in the public sector. We work together in the City and share our expertise. We know how to measure the effectiveness of our communication, and we keep our competence up to date.

## Checklist for success:

- We keep our competence up to date: We develop the communication sector, follow trends and innovations in the sector, participate in training and coaching and share information about them.
- We make sure that training and employee onboarding plans include an up-to-date communication section.

### Good question!

- Is the City's communication competence at a level that adds strategic value to the City's management?
- Do management and specialists recognise their communication role?

