

Helsinki

A Helsinki we can be proud of

2025–2029 Helsinki city strategy





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Photo: Vesa Laitinen

A Helsinki we can be proud of

Helsinki provides all the conditions for living the best possible life. We have quality services, a vibrant capital culture, an easy-to-navigate scale and a fluid urban rhythm that makes everyday life function smoothly. Workplaces, universities, events and experiences interweave with our nature, sea and metropolitan dynamic in a way that makes our city unique.

Helsinki is international, bold and welcoming. A city where everyone can grow and reach their full potential, find a community and feel like they belong, and live an individually meaningful life.

Helsinki exists for its current and future residents. Our goal is to build a city that not only grows but also develops sustainably and responsibly. In Helsinki, everyone – regardless of their background or starting point – should be able to live a good life and pursue their dreams.

We draw on our strengths and boldly look towards the future. Our city needs more activity, vitality and growth. How Helsinki succeeds determines the success of all of Finland.

The world we live in is endlessly new and inspiring, yet it is also confronted by many complex problems. Challenges such as war, global warming, biodiversity loss, segregation and social exclusion do not respect borders, nor do they obey orders.

The consequences of each of these phenomena can be seen the world over, but cities have the power to prepare for and respond to them.

We must prevent regional segregation and make sure that every Helsinki resident feels as if they are part of the community. We must do more to combat climate change and prevent the loss of biodiversity, take responsibility for our long-term financial sustainability and safeguard our general security and preparedness.

To make this strategy a reality, we have to work together. We need the city's residents and associations to participate if we wish to succeed. The ability to take action does not distinguish between public and private.

The city cannot succeed without a committed and motivated staff. Helsinki must be the most attractive employer in the public sector.

It is our attitude that matters most: We exist for the people of Helsinki. We care about the wellbeing of the city and its residents.

Achieving ambitious goals requires clear direction and cooperation. This City Strategy invites everyone to join us in building a Helsinki we can be proud of.

Daniel Sazonov
Mayor of Helsinki





Photo: Sakari Röyskö

Strategic priorities

Pleasant neighbourhoods with a strong sense of community

We want every resident of Helsinki to be proud of their local neighbourhood. A good neighbourhood provides a smoothly functioning everyday life, accessible services and a pleasant living environment. Every neighbourhood should be appealing, lively and green. Well-functioning neighbourhoods encourage an active lifestyle and a strong sense of community. People's lives don't fit neatly into administrative categories or distinguish between public and private. We will make sure that each neighbourhood is pleasant and contains important local services from both the city and its businesses.

Helsinki ensures that basic services, such as a quality daycare centre, a good primary school, youth services, a dedicated personal doctor, a maternity and child health clinic and inviting cultural, sports and leisure activities are within easy reach. When building new neighbourhoods, we devote special attention to ensuring that the city's services are built up at the same pace as the rest of the area.

We encourage a grassroots urban culture and promote resident use of city spaces for their own activities. We offer a diverse selection of cultural offerings that are well distributed throughout the capital. Art and culture help build the identity, character and community of residential areas. We will strengthen the distinctive character of

different areas by adding more art to public spaces. In new areas and areas of the city undergoing suburban regeneration, we will continue to follow the Percent for Art principle, which reserves one per cent of a construction project's budget for art. We will also double the budget allocation for public art in areas where the percentage principle does not apply. Among other things, this allows for the addition of more murals to the cityscape. To increase the vitality of different areas, we will facilitate the temporary use of city spaces for operators in the art and culture sectors, and more broadly, all representatives of the third sector. This will create the potential for new, longer-term opportunities. We are also investigating the suitability of the financial model for the cultural sector for facilitating access to suitable facilities.

We look after the general condition of public spaces in every Helsinki neighbourhood. The condition of a residential area has a direct impact on how good, safe and pleasant it feels. We will enhance and improve the quality of the maintenance and cleaning of streets, parks, open spaces and other public areas. We will petition residents of the city, housing companies, property owners, event organisers and businesses to join us in our efforts to improve cleanliness and tidiness.

Each resident of Helsinki, no matter what part of the city they live in, should have easy

access to nearby nature. We keep the city's green areas in good condition. We will add more greenery and green spaces to streets, open spaces and other outdoor areas in the city infrastructure. All newly established areas of the city must have parks and green areas.

We will continue to expand the city's network of outdoor sports parks to evenly cover the different parts of the city. We will see to it that jogging paths, fitness stairs, sports fields, dog parks and outdoor gyms are properly maintained. We will ensure that the broad range of outdoor exercise opportunities in the city serves different Helsinki residents in a diverse way.

The districts and neighbourhoods of the city are distinctive local communities that play an important role. We support local organisations and associations and include their voice in the development of their area. Helsinki is shaped by its residents. We make a variety of methods available for people to share their experiences, wishes and opinions with us. We strive to develop these means of participation so we can reach Helsinki residents of all ages and backgrounds. We will maintain and develop our participatory budgeting initiative, expand the use of resident panels and continue the city's community house operations.

A wide-ranging and knowledgeable network of organisations, associations, sports clubs and volunteer groups is one of Helsinki's strengths. The City of Helsinki is an active partner with many organisations and associations. We advance operational opportunities for organisations and associations by making city spaces available to third sector operators.

Together with local associations, we plan concrete ways to enhance people's sense of agency, their willingness to forge connections and their desire to do something for their local community. Our activities promote the connection diverse communities and people from different backgrounds feel with Helsinki, as well as their identity as a Helsinki resident.

Helsinki is a children's city. We will continue our Child Friendly City work in accordance with the UNICEF model. Helsinki is also doing its part to implement the National Child Strategy, and we make sure child impact assessments are conducted throughout the city. We want to be a safe and fun city for children. We will build appealing new themed playgrounds. One of these themed playgrounds will be located in one of the city's suburban regeneration areas. Helsinki's playgrounds offer paddling pools and free summer weekday lunches for children under the age of 16. These and other family-friendly activities and exercise opportunities invite children and families to stay active and enjoy themselves.

We recognise the importance of art and culture on the wellbeing, growth and education of children and young people. In Helsinki, all children and young people have equal access to art and culture. The range of cultural activities offered to children in Helsinki is created in close cooperation with the multifaceted cultural sector that operates in the city. During this strategy period, we will make our Culture Kids programme, which invites every child to participate in cultural events designed for young children, a permanent part of our operations. We will safeguard traffic safety near schools and in areas where children attend recreational activities.

Photo: Jussi Hellsten





Widespread wellbeing

In Helsinki, everyone – regardless of their background or starting point – should be able to live a good life and pursue their dreams. All of Helsinki's residents should feel like they belong. We are resolutely working to ensure that every resident of Helsinki can live a good life in our city.

Our aim is to make Helsinki one of the least segregated cities in Europe, now and in the future. The city is committed to combating regional segregation and inequality between residents. We devote special attention to keeping differentiations between the realities of children and young people to a minimum. We are resolutely working to improve wellbeing in every neighbourhood of the city and support every resident on their journey through life. The city's divisions collaborate to prevent differentiation between residential areas, combat segregation and reduce inequality, while also including third sector operators in this work.

Helsinki's diverse selection of education services, social and health services, and culture and leisure services create the conditions for a good life. We pay attention to any differentiation between residential areas and use needs-based assessment to make sure that the services in different areas meet genuine resident need.

We will strengthen the wellbeing of children and young people in a holistic way. Through prevention, multidisciplinary collaboration and early intervention, we can stop many problems from arising or getting worse. The city will make a greater number of trained adults available to schoolchildren by investing in school youth work and school

coaches. We will intensify cooperation between homes and schools.

We will ensure that all children and young people acquire a strong command of basic knowledge and skills during their school journey, while also receiving the support they need. We will raise participation rates in early childhood education and care, in addition to devoting special attention to children who speak a language other than Finnish or Swedish at home. Our goal is for all children to have participated in early childhood education and care by the time they turn five years old. This is also helping us lay the groundwork for the introduction of two years of pre-primary education before children start school.

All children in Helsinki have an equal right to an education. We will increase basic education's needs-based funding, the allocation of which will rely on a newly adopted research-based funding distribution and calculation model. We will strengthen the learning journeys of children who speak a first language other than Finnish or Swedish and we will resolutely work to ensure that only those children and young people who genuinely need classes in second language Finnish (S2) or Swedish (R2) are referred to it. No child that has attended early childhood education and completed comprehensive school should have a further need for S2 or R2 language instruction.

All children and young people must be able to receive help when they need it. We will continue to implement Helsinki's therapy guarantee by ensuring swift access to low-threshold mental health services. We will

also monitor how well the entire service chain for mental health services for children and young people functions.

Making sure that all children and young people have the opportunity to participate in at least one recreational activity in part assures the existence of safe communities. It is therefore important that the city identifies those children and young people who would not otherwise have this opportunity.

Special attention will be devoted to young people who are, or are at risk of, ending up outside the labour market or education and training. We are working across the board to prevent youth exclusion with a broad spectrum of targeted preventive services. The City of Helsinki will continue to implement the Finnish Model for Leisure Activities, a national programme that funds after-school clubs. We will allocate additional fixed-term funding for the duration of the strategy period to provide recreational activities to children and young people who would otherwise be excluded or unable to participate.

We will strengthen families' trust in functioning primary healthcare and ensure that children that are ill receive treatment quickly. We support parenting with low-threshold services across the city's divisions. We will make sure that student services have enough resources to support children and young people, especially those with psychiatric and neuropsychiatric issues. Youth work and an active presence in young people's everyday lives help us identify situations that require intervention. Youth services will have a comprehensive presence in the different areas of the city. We will ensure that child welfare services, psychiatric care and schools work together

towards the best interests of children and young people. We will continue to use the Toivo peer support model and establish hybrid child welfare services units to address demanding cases.

Promoting health and wellbeing plays a central role in ensuring the overall welfare of our residents. In Helsinki's Welfare Plan, we focus in particular on the reduction of disparities in people's wellbeing and the promotion of daily exercise and an active lifestyle.

We will make sure that Helsinki's network of social and health service organisations can continue their preventive work to improve resident wellbeing. We will continue to provide preventive support for Helsinki residents with the joint development of service chains by the different divisions and third sector operators.

We promote the health and wellbeing of our older population. Our services should in particular reach out to older Helsinki residents who are at risk of marginalisation. We take the expanding older population into consideration in our planning of the city's different services. We will safeguard access to services with non-digital methods for people that require it. We will ensure flexible access to 24-hour care when needed. We will develop a diverse range of housing options for older people, including family care and communal living.

We will reduce loneliness among older people by enabling interactions and participation. We will offer seniors over the age of 68 free admission to the city's swimming halls between 11.00 and 15.00 on weekdays. Senior centres will offer a broad spectrum of activities that support



Photo: Vesa Laitinen



Photo: Kari Ylitalo

healthy lifestyles, an active life and a close community. We will help informal caregivers cope with their workload, give them support and provide them with flexible opportunities to take time off by adding to the selection of services provided.

We will ensure that fundamental and human rights are honoured in our application of the new Disability Services Act. We will secure the subjective rights of people with disabilities and a range of services that meet their individual needs.

Through the city's patrolling and outreach services, we will effectively find people in need of help who are unable to seek support on their own. This is also of importance in the prevention of polarisation and crime. We will lower the threshold for accessing services and prevent residents from falling into debt by facilitating customer fee relief and easing collection practices.

We will respond to the growing problem of substance abuse by strengthening our substance abuse services. In order to prevent drug-related deaths and develop the quality of substance abuse work, Helsinki will draw up a substance abuse services strategy and an action plan for preventing drug-related deaths. We will devote special attention to reducing the number of drug-related deaths among young people. We will ensure that people with substance abuse issues also have access to mental health

services. We will implement a programme to eliminate Hepatitis C in Helsinki. For those that need more acute psychiatric and multidisciplinary care, we will make sure they have access to the necessary treatment and are able to live a life of dignity. We will secure access to specialist psychiatric care in outpatient and inpatient settings.

We commit to ending homelessness in Helsinki by the year 2030. We will draw up a homelessness programme for the council term so we can seamlessly continue our work to assist the unhoused population. We will work to ensure the adequacy of supported housing and access to housing counselling.

A smooth everyday life and functional services

The good life of Helsinki residents is founded on a smooth everyday existence and functional services. People's situations in life vary. The significance of different services and phenomena changes at different stages of our lives. Each of the city's divisions has an important role to play in ensuring that Helsinki runs smoothly and provides residents with the conditions for a good life.

Helsinki offers quality services to its residents. Special attention is devoted to strengthening comprehensive education and ensuring easy access to healthcare.

We will ensure that every local school in Helsinki is a good, quality school. We will offer every student a first-rate, well-rounded education, in addition to the support they need. Our school premises will facilitate learning, and all schools will be able to provide printed study materials to the students. We will successfully carry out the government reform of support for learning. In addition to Helsinki's local public schools, there are several private and state-owned schools in the city. Some of these schools are a part of the city's service network. We monitor the operational conditions of these schools as well as their projects to upgrade their premises.

Every young person graduating from a school in Helsinki should have reading, writing and arithmetic skills and a sufficient command of general knowledge to manage in continued education and working life. The calculated class size in primary education will be reduced from 20 students to 18. We will expand basic education with two more hours of studies per week in the language of instruction and the reading of literature during the school day. We will enlist the help of libraries and maternity and child health clinics in our goal to make Helsinki a literacy capital. We will create faith in the future and inspire the will to succeed. We will ensure the comprehensive reach of our network of local libraries. Especially in those areas of the city where it has not been as widely available, we will expand our offering of weighted-curriculum options, which emphasise a certain subject or subject area. We will also make sure that every family is informed of the weighted-curriculum options available to them. We are drawing up a

language strategy that will define the future of language instruction in Helsinki.

We will ensure that vocational education and training has sufficient in-person instruction, study support and general knowledge instruction for students in compulsory education. We will anticipate the growth in demand for study places in general upper secondary schools and make sure that there are enough available.

We will ensure that our principle of providing every child with a place at a local Finnish-speaking daycare centre is applied year-round. In line with this same principle, we are evaluating methods by which we could provide a local daycare centre place to children who speak Swedish as their first language as well. New daycare centres are designed with the children's needs in mind to feel cosy and safe, with sufficient indoor space and multifaceted outdoor spaces that contain green areas. Daycare centres of various sizes are needed in Helsinki, so it is not necessary for all new daycare centre construction projects to build large facilities.

Collaboration will be intensified between the city's Education Division and Urban Environment Division in the planning and design of local schools and daycare centres, and there will be increased student and staff participation in the planning and design of the indoor and outdoor spaces.

Access to primary healthcare and the continuity of care will be improved. A 14-day target will be set, within which people should be able to gain access to a doctor or nurse. We will eliminate backlogs, especially

Photo: Ninni West





in areas with long queues for treatment, and ensure that people can always access care when they need it. We will introduce a personal doctor model, in which everyone who needs substantial healthcare, such as people with long-term illnesses, as well as others who wish to use this option, will be assigned a designated personal doctor. We will also implement an experiment in which medical trainees can also serve as designated personal doctors. Customer-friendly and convenient digital services will be taken into use in health services. We will build a new Health and Wellbeing Centre in the district of Malmi. The rest of our primary healthcare services will be improved with developments to the existing service network.

Cooperation and care chains between primary healthcare and specialised medicine will be intensified.

We will promote a shift in the focus of care towards primary healthcare. At the same time, funding should be allocated in an appropriate manner to preserve the operating conditions for top-level specialised medicine, research and training at the HUS network of university hospitals in Helsinki. We are also developing our Swedish-language social and health services and strive to provide quality, seamless services in Swedish as well.

A core component of a smoothly functioning everyday life is trouble-free transportation and mobility. We will ensure that it is convenient and easy to get around Helsinki on foot and when using various modes of transport. Different modes of transport each have a place at different times in a person's everyday existence. When planning the city and its transport system, we align our plans

with the different mobility needs of our residents.

The goal is for increasing numbers of Helsinki residents to choose public transport as their mode of transportation. The rise in public transport ticket prices will be curbed and we will work during this strategy period towards achieving a resident reduction in real ticket prices from 2026 levels. We will make sure that the ticket system develops in a direction that is encouraging for our residents. We will also ensure smoothly functioning public transport connections during large-scale construction and renovation projects.

Citywide conditions for pedestrians will be developed so they are pleasant and safe throughout the year. We are mindful of the accessibility of our city spaces.

Over the last ten years, cycling conditions in Helsinki have significantly improved. We will continue to systematically develop Helsinki's cycling conditions and network of cycle paths. The use of motor vehicles also has a place as a mode of transport for city residents. As the city infrastructure develops, we will ensure that the conditions for using motor vehicles are not substantially weakened.

Large cities are being built and repaired continuously. The inconvenience caused by work sites should be kept to a minimum. Construction and renovation projects that are disruptive to mobility will be broken up into phases. More solutions for speeding up the progress of road works and repairs will be put into use, and effective and measurable incentives will be added to project contracts to encourage more functional traffic arrangements and lead times at construction sites. We will minimize

work site inconvenience to our residents and provide smooth and safe pedestrian routes near work site areas. We will use the temporary urban environments created by maintenance or work sites to promote art and culture.

Development that respects nature and makes the city more attractive

Helsinki's urban development is founded on well-thought-out advancement of the city and its residential areas, a city environment that is in balance with valued nature areas, and a traffic system that primarily relies on public transport. Helsinki is creating a sustainable future for generations to come, while also preserving the city as a green and nature-filled place to live, move and grow. In Helsinki, all residents – old and new – should have the opportunity to live a good life.

Helsinki implements and advances investments in urban development that preserve the city's vitality and charm. During the strategy period, we will implement the following high-profile development projects.

Development of the old Hanasaari power plant and its surroundings provides an opportunity to create an architecturally ambitious, internationally appealing and multifaceted community that honours the area's rich history while also meeting the needs of the future. We will arrange an international idea and implementation competition to develop Hanasaari. Before the area is developed, we will enable its temporary use and include residents in the planning of this temporary function.

Development of the Hanasaari area is also linked to the development of three nearby spaces: the Suvilahti Event Hub, the Tukkutori Wholesale Market and the Helsinki Prison, which is scheduled for decommission. The goal is for the areas to someday combine to form an appealing urban hub.

We will ensure that the intensive construction and development projects being implemented in the new-build residential districts of Kalasatama, Jätkäsaari and Kruunuvuorenranta will be completed in full and to a high standard. During the council term, we will also advance decision-making on the residential areas of Hernesaari, Western Boulevard City, Koivusaari, Pasila, Malminkenttä and Östersundom. In the first phase, Östersundom will be developed into a model city for modern single-family housing close to nature. We are also preparing for the Ilmala area to be released for residential housing construction.

We will carry out infill development in a way that preserves the distinctive identities, spaciousness and character of the residential areas.

More nature and greenery will be added to the built-up areas of the city. We will draw up an action plan to make the built environment greener in new areas and issue recommendations for sufficient canopy cover and water-absorbing surfaces in every area of Helsinki. The goal is to increase the number of trees and canopy cover and make sure that every resident lives a short distance from green areas or waterways.

No construction will be planned in Helsinki's most valued nature areas. Decision-making

Photo: Ville Lehvonen



in Helsinki is based on up-to-date reports on the wellbeing of our city's natural environment. We will continue to advocate for the establishment of a national park in the city.

We will renew the districts of Pitäjänmäki, Herttoniemi and Vallila in a manner that meets the needs of commercial, industrial and cultural activities and also leaves open the possibility for housing construction. We will draw up a partial master plan for the development of Pitäjänmäki and the Herttoniemi-Roihupelto area with these principles in mind.

We will unite the city centre across the division created by the railway tracks. The current gap between the Central Railway Station and the district of Pasila will be transformed into an appealing connection route and public space for the city's residents to enjoy. This will strengthen the area's appeal, clarify the city structure and create new conditions for infill construction. We will launch studies and preparations for the construction of a new commuter train station at the crosstown street of Helsinginkatu. In this way, we will also utilise the space between Pasila and the city centre to its full potential.

During this council term, we will advance plans for the West Helsinki tramway and the West Harbour tramway in accordance with previous decisions. We will also participate in the project to build a new tramway in our neighbouring city of Vantaa. We will promote the construction of a tramway connecting the districts of Viikki and Malmi according to the proposed schedule. A prerequisite for implementation of the Viikki-Malmi tramway project is that the state participates in some of the cost. In our preparations, we estimated the state's share at 50 per cent.

Our plans for the development of the north-south boulevard of Mäkelänkatu support a future tramway solution. The entire project will be implemented in two phases, starting with construction that complements the Kämpylä station. Decisions about any future rail links that may connect to the area will not be made during this strategy period. Helsinki's proposed Jokeri 0 light rail extension project will be postponed and moved from first phase planning back to longer-term planning in the master plan implementation programme. We will ensure that a sufficient amount of development is carried out along the planned tram lines so the projects will prove economically sustainable for the city.

We will continue our work to develop the districts of Malminkartano, Kannelmäki, Malmi, Mellunkylä and Meri-Rastila as part of the city's suburban regeneration project, which seeks to prevent regional segregation and promote balanced development of the city. We will also identify other areas of the city where the socio-economic conditions of the residents correspond to those of the suburban regeneration areas, and direct special measures to these additional areas.

We will invest in improving the condition and pleasantness of train and metro stations and their immediate surroundings across the entire city. In the coming years, renovations will be carried out at metro stations in the districts of Kontula, Herttoniemi, Vuosaari, Itäkeskus, Myllypuro and Sörnäinen as well as at train stations in Malminkartano, Kannelmäki and Pohjois-Haaga. In addition, the state will carry out similar renovations at stations in Malmi, Tapanila, Puistola and Valimo.

We are ambitiously developing the district of Itäkeskus in eastern Helsinki. The renewal

includes many elements: the development of the local detailed plan for the Puhos shopping centre area, the renovation and expansion of the Stoa Cultural Centre, the renovation of the Itäkeskus swimming hall, the development of the Itäkeskus metro station and public transport terminal, and the construction of a new Itäkeskus Comprehensive School. We are also exploring the possibility of building a new area in Itäkeskus that would be suitable for outdoor events.

As a continuation of our city's architectural programme, we are launching the A More Beautiful Helsinki programme to ensure that new construction in Helsinki is timeless, architecturally ambitious and of a high quality.

For several years now, housing production in Helsinki has hovered at a level that is unable to meet the demand created by the city's population growth. In order to accelerate housing production, Helsinki is enacting various measures to make sure that the supply will be sufficient. At the same time, we will continue our commitment to housing policy goals that prevent and reduce regional segregation.

We are resolutely promoting the introduction of a new rent-to-own housing model. During 2026, we will create a functioning intermediate model that will make it possible to achieve the model's goals set out in our Housing and Land Use programme. The goal is a mixed and versatile distribution of housing tenures and modes of finance in all different areas of the city.

We will continue for two more years the land use policy principles that give developers of

residential plots intended for freely financed owner-occupied housing production the option of purchasing the plot instead of renting it. We will assess the need to continue applying this principle halfway through the council term. We will continue to evaluate our land use policy.

We will ensure that residential plots released for reallocation are made available to potential developers quickly and make greater use of continuous plot applications in our selection process. We will organise more price competitions and threshold payment competitions and also introduce an auction model to our plot allocation process.

Together with residential housing developers, we will promote solutions to facilitate construction on suitable residential housing plots. We will grant derogations for factors that present significant obstacles to construction, while at the same time ensuring housing quality. We will make it possible to implement housing projects in phases, if the phases are clear entireties of a suitable size. Together with the industry, we will continue to resolutely develop properties that are conducive to changes in how they are used. Within the framework of the city plan, we are actively seeking suitable sites for single-family housing and prioritising these sites in our plot allocation. We will also explore new single-family housing solutions for living in the city.

We will identify the most effective ways to secure the construction of senior centres and student housing, even in situations where the state does not grant investment support for the projects.



Photo: Keksi Agency

Activity, vitality, skills and growth

How Helsinki succeeds determines the success of all of Finland. Helsinki needs more activity, vitality and growth, or in other words, new businesses, skills and investment. We are strengthening Helsinki's role as an appealing city that generates knowledge, research, creative innovations and growth. We are actively working to ensure that people and companies in Helsinki can succeed. Helsinki must be the best possible place to develop innovative ideas and establish growing businesses.

We want the world to see Helsinki as a city of interest. Helsinki must become the most attractive place in northern Europe to establish a company and invest. Helsinki is a flexible and active partner to companies of all types and sizes.

To accelerate growth, we must identify Helsinki's strengths and capitalise on them in a purposeful way. We take full advantage of the growth potential of businesses in the creative sector, while also recognising the importance of art and culture for the city's vitality. We are doing our part to strengthen the start-up ecosystem in Helsinki. When it comes to the circular economy, we are a bigger player than our size suggests. We will strengthen and expand our Health Capital Helsinki programme that boosts collaboration and innovation in the health care industry. We are also prioritising our maritime identity in our economic policy. We are working to make Helsinki's maritime cluster a global leader.

We support the growth of sustainable tourism and are strengthening our cooperation with operators in the tourism and hospitality industries. We invest in the marketing of Helsinki and its strengths. We

will create the conditions for year-round tourism, events and experiences, including during off-peak seasons. We will attract high-profile international events and congresses. We are doing our part to promote a thriving food and restaurant culture in Helsinki. Concerts and festivals enliven Helsinki and make the city more pleasant and interesting. We will make sure that we have suitable venues for high-profile events and enough capacity to host large conferences. We will develop the necessary conditions for a diverse and lively nightlife.

We will ensure that the city always has space for growing and diverse business activities. Land use, business premise development and traffic planning should all support this goal. Helsinki is open-minded when presented with new initiatives and actively encourages the birth of new types of business activities. We will transform and expand our Innovation Fund to encompass a broader spectrum of investments that enable growth and vitality.

Everyone in Helsinki should have the opportunity to study and find work. We offer the best employment services in Finland, based on the genuine needs of companies and Helsinki's working-age residents. We will boost the impact of employment services with increased cooperation between the city's divisions and the Helsinki Employment Services municipal enterprise. We will develop our employment services by devoting special attention to services for young people, the resolute reduction of long-term unemployment and the promotion of employment opportunities for people with partial work ability. We will also strengthen our cooperation with Helsinki's institutions of higher education.

We will invest in attracting skilled workers from abroad and helping them to successfully find their place in our city. We will devote special attention to ensuring that these skilled workers and their families feel at home in Helsinki. We will ensure that people moving to Helsinki have access to smooth, effective and accessible one-stop services for new arrivals. We will create a path and structures for more people to integrate into Finnish society using the second of our two official languages: Swedish.

A vibrant city centre is a key factor in Helsinki's appeal and the calling card of Finland's capital. We want to develop the city centre into the true heart of Helsinki, a pleasant and inviting place that people want to visit.

The vitality of the city centre is created by its people, businesses and experiences – it is where things are happening. We will increase the number of people who visit and handle matters in the Helsinki city centre. We will provide more opportunities for people to live in the city centre and its immediate vicinity. We aim to increase the number of jobs and tourists in the city centre area. Success in this endeavour requires the close cooperation of all the entities that operate there. We will enlist the support of cultural institutions, property owners, hotels, restaurants, shops and operators in the event industry in helping to develop the city centre.

The development of the South Harbour bay and the planned Museum of Architecture and Design are key new developments that will add to Helsinki's appeal. We are implementing the decision-in-principle to reorganise port operations in the city centre.

The Museum of Architecture and Design is scheduled to open in 2030. We will ensure that a charming new South Harbour bay environment will be ready by the time the museum opens. We will declare the opening year a jubilee year for architecture and design in Helsinki.

The Helsinki city centre should be attractive and enjoyable year-round. In order to boost the city centre's appeal, we will invest in projects to develop the city and add to its vitality. We will improve and beautify our central squares and plazas. We will also add more greenery to the city centre. Property owners will be encouraged to come up with new and innovative solutions for attracting residents to the city centre in every season.

We want the city centre to be full of activity year-round. To this end, we will make city spaces available for a wide range of cultural activities and events, recognise the increasingly diverse and versatile field of different operators in the cultural and event sectors, and support the operating conditions of new and established operators in these sectors. We will also devote special attention to improving the operating conditions of downtown brick-and-mortar stores and small businesses. We will ensure that both children and their families find the city centre pleasant and attractive.

The Helsinki city centre must be accessible from every direction via various modes of transport. We will lower the threshold for people to come to the city centre by public transport or motor vehicle. We will draw up a traffic system plan to ensure the continued pleasantness and development of the city centre, while at the same time ensuring the smooth flow of traffic. We are seeking solutions to make full use of the service



Photo: Tuukka Ylönen



Photo: Juho Kuva

tunnel, including for the purpose of entering the parking halls from different access routes.

Helsinki's proximity to the Baltic Sea makes it a distinctive and unique capital city, as the seawater surrounds the Helsinki peninsula on three sides. The nearby sea is an intrinsic part of the lives of Helsinki residents. We will ensure that Helsinki continues to be an attractive and smoothly functioning maritime city.

Helsinki's maritime services and recreational opportunities should be accessible to everyone. We will promote the accessibility of Helsinki's archipelago and develop water transport, while also strengthening the infrastructure of the beaches and islands, developing seaside services and improving recreational opportunities. We will improve the conditions for small boating and other water transport. We will resolutely nurture and protect our one-of-a-kind archipelago and marine environment.

Population in Helsinki

684 000
inhabitants



143
registered
first languages

Source: City of Helsinki, population register 31.12.2024

Increase in the
number of residents
during the years
2015–2024, in total

63 300

Statistics Finland 31.12.2024



Migration gain
from abroad

37 300

Migration gain from
domestic migration

15 100

Source: Statistics Finland

Total migration gain
(from within Finland and
abroad)

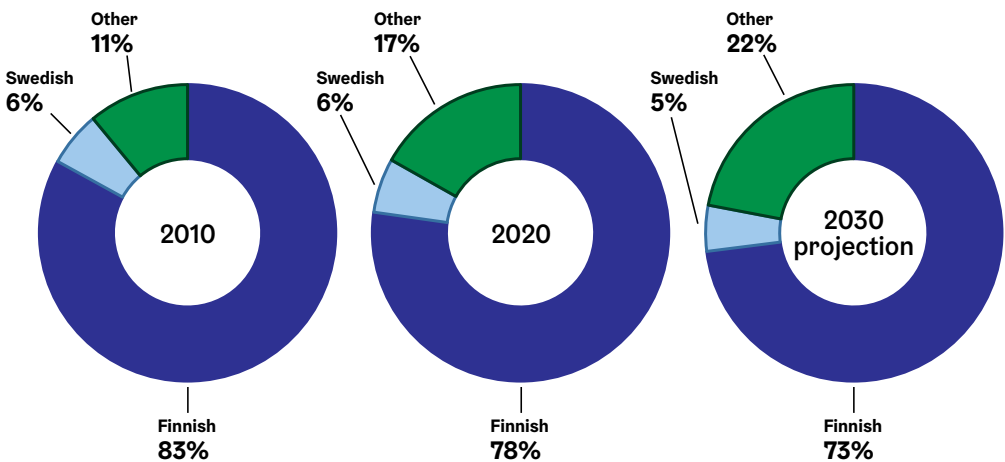
52 400

Natural population
increase

10 900

The population is growing older and more diverse

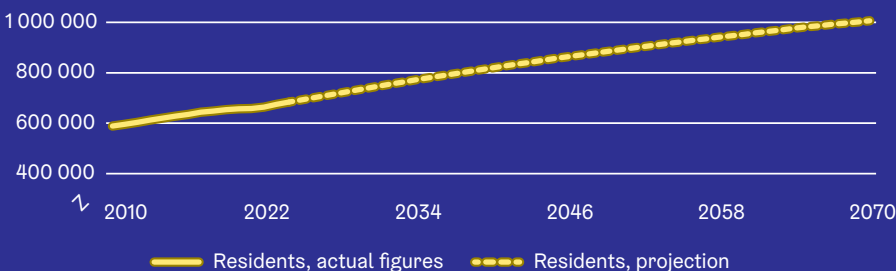
Helsinki population according to language group



Source: City of Helsinki, Urban Research and Statistics

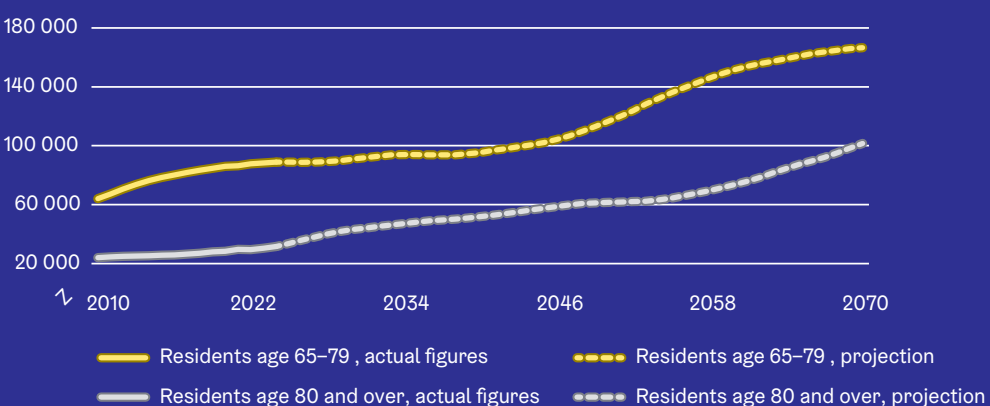
The population of Helsinki continues to rise

Population and population projection in Helsinki



Sources: Statistics Finland (actual figures), City of Helsinki, Urban Research and Statistics (projection)

Population and population projection, age 65 and over



Sources: Statistics Finland (actual figures), City of Helsinki, Urban Research and Statistics (projection)

Cornerstones of our operations

Financial management

A strong municipal economy is a prerequisite for Helsinki to be able to improve its services, make the necessary investments to develop the city and keep the tax burden on city residents at a reasonable level – now and in the future.

We are committed to upholding Helsinki’s sustainability principle, which calls for controlled increases in operating expenditure, moderate investment and the application of the principle of state funding for our social, health and rescue services.

Helsinki must respond to the needs of its growing population and cost increases when financing its services. In a resolute effort to increase the city’s productivity, we are also introducing targeted productivity measures. Helsinki is drawing up a citywide productivity plan, in addition to separate productivity plans for each of the city’s divisions and its central administration.

We are committed to maintaining industrial peace in our organisation during the council term. We will not pursue the incorporation of municipal enterprises, changes to the city’s management system or new outsourcing of health station services. Whether the current outsourcing of health station services will continue will be evaluated separately, based on the results.

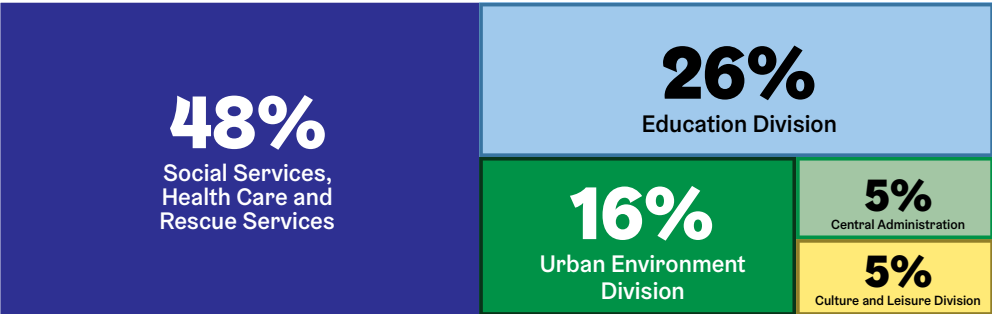
The total increase in the city’s operating expenditure is measured in accordance with population growth, the general cost increase as measured by the price index for basic services, and the annual productivity improvement requirement. The annual productivity improvement requirement at the citywide level has been set at one per cent. This applies to all of Municipal Helsinki, with the exception of core services in the Education Division and the Culture and Leisure Division. Core services include all the services in the divisions, with the exception of shared services.

Helsinki will gauge its investment level to correspond to the city’s growth, vitality and service need development, while at the same time ensuring the sustainability of the city’s finances and a moderate level of long-term debt and liabilities. We will steer the 2026–2035 investment package for the duration of the strategy period. We will curb increases to the city’s tax-financed liabilities (city debt, tax-financed corporate investments and rental liabilities for business premises) from present levels. The increases must be tamed in such a way that the per-resident share of the total liability will stop rising within the planning horizon. We will divide our investments into phases towards this goal and prioritise them more strongly than we do at present.

We will separate investments in the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division from the rest of the city’s investments. Liabilities arising from investments in social, health and rescue services must be able to be covered by state funding. We will prepare and make the necessary decisions regarding the premises used by the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division, so that the

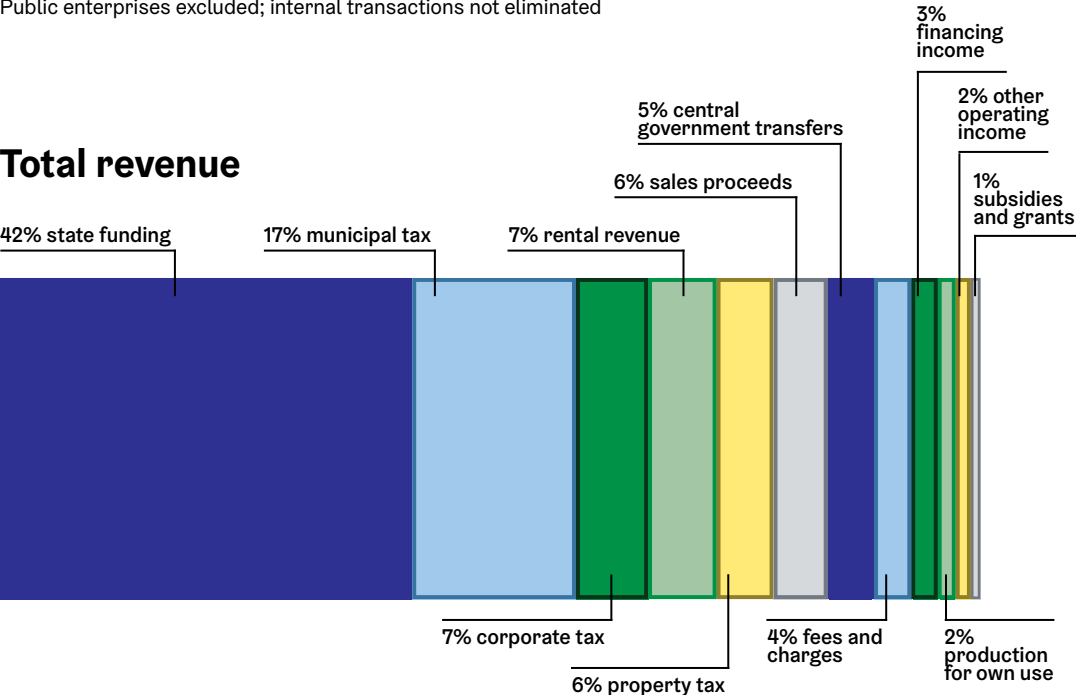
City economy 2024

Operating expenses



Total EUR 6 091 million
Public enterprises excluded; internal transactions not eliminated

Total revenue



Total EUR 6 422 million
Public enterprises and funds included; internal transactions eliminated

Source: Helsinki’s Summary Financial Statement

organisation related to the premises meets risk management requirements.

The principle of state financing is applied for the provision of social, health and rescue services. The services are financed with state funding allocated to Helsinki, in addition to the division's own income. With our Change programme for the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division, Helsinki safeguards the quality and continuity of services, regardless of annual fluctuations in funding increases. Helsinki will strengthen its role as an organiser and make effective use of multiple service providers. We will resolutely work to secure a reasonable and fair level of state funding.

To ensure that the tax burden on its residents will remain reasonable, Helsinki will not increase its municipal tax and property tax rates.

We will pursue an active and inventive business and innovation policy that facilitates an increase in Helsinki's revenue base and safeguards our investment capacity. As part of our business policy measures, we are taking proactive steps to increase the city's corporate tax revenue.

We will comply with our global responsibility to operate in good faith by promoting practices that facilitate ethical public procurement.

Climate and nature

Helsinki takes its obligation to combat climate change and biodiversity loss seriously. We have committed to the implementation of ambitious climate goals. We are raising our emissions reduction

targets by striving to achieve an 85 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by the year 2030. Helsinki has also pledged to achieve its target of net-zero carbon emissions by the year 2040 at the latest.

We will reduce traffic emissions and make sure that public transport and other more sustainable modes of transportation appeal to everyone. We will promote the electrification of motor vehicle traffic, in particular by ensuring the construction of charging infrastructure together with private operators. We will ensure that the city's ports make shore-side electricity available to vessels, and that the conditions are in place for the electrification of boat traffic. We will also electrify local water transport.

Non-combustion-based energy production plays a vital role in the city's ability to reduce Helsinki's carbon emissions and mitigate environmental impact. We are also preparing for the possible placement of a small-scale nuclear production plant in Helsinki, if regulatory changes allow.

In order to reduce indirect emissions, Helsinki will focus on reducing the emissions created by its construction of housing and infrastructure as well as its public procurement. Examples of the city's pioneering measures in this area include the use of carbon-binding concrete and the rapid adaptation of other low-emission or circular economy building solutions. We are tightening the carbon footprint requirements we have set for construction. Promoting the circular economy in construction is one of the city's top business policy priorities. As Finland's largest public procurer, Helsinki is also working to reduce the indirect

emissions and environmental impact of its procurements.

Helsinki is preparing for extreme weather phenomena caused by climate change in a proactive and risk-minimizing manner. We are compiling these measures in a separate preparedness plan. We are preparing for the effects of climate change by adapting our city infrastructure and site planning to meet the demands created by torrential rain, floods and heat waves. We are reducing heat islands in the city's indoor and outdoor spaces with appropriate city planning and construction. We are ensuring that Helsinki is adequately prepared for stormwater, seawater and waterway flooding. We are adding more green infrastructure.

Protecting nature and its biodiversity is the foundation of Helsinki's environmental policy. We will continue Helsinki's long-term work to conserve the city's one-of-a-kind urban nature. We will launch a new nature conservation area programme that will create a framework for establishing eight new protected nature areas each year. One of the goals of the partial master plan for the district of Östersundom is to conserve its most valued nature areas while also promoting its land use objectives. We will continue to work towards our climate and environment goals listed in the 2024 City Council-approved Environmental Protection Goals 2040, which ensures the preservation of Helsinki's green areas, along with other measures.

We will safeguard the diversity of our region's aquatic nature. We will devote special attention to protecting the Baltic Sea and its underwater marine environment. We will stop dumping snow into the sea. We will make sure that our winter maintenance

practices do not endanger small waterways. We will rehabilitate and maintain streams, rapids and other waterways. We will compile each of the city's activities that support the wellbeing of animals into one animal welfare programme.

Staff and leadership

Without a committed and motivated staff, it is not possible for the City of Helsinki to operate smoothly and efficiently. We want the City of Helsinki to be the most attractive employer in the public sector. We offer interesting and meaningful tasks that have broad appeal. We invest in good human resources (HR) policy and quality management. The city's ability to attract and retain employees will be resolutely developed.

We will devote special attention to the recruitment of Swedish-speaking employees and Swedish language training for our staff. We will also acknowledge the city's growing diversity and multilingualism in our recruitment and employment relationships. The City of Helsinki supports an increase in our staff's diversity.

The city's longstanding HR policy is both consistent and responsible. We work to improve the city's employee experience and employer image, as well as monitor the development of both. We maintain an encouraging work culture, provide pleasant and healthy working conditions and encourage our staff to continue developing their personal and professional skills. We also encourage our staff to engage in job rotation and pursue diverse career paths. We make several tools available that encourage our employees to work as a team.

The City of Helsinki will not dismiss or lay off staff in the event of changes, as long as the employees in question are prepared to transfer to new tasks that match their skills and job experience.

We continue to maintain a robust dialogue with our staff's labour organisations and ensure that the City of Helsinki's wage and salary levels remain competitive. One way we do this is by continuing to carry out our salary development programme in line with the requirements of our strategy period. We encourage our staff to perform well and reward good individual and group performances.

Every Helsinki employee has the right to good and inspiring leadership. We continuously develop and assess the quality of our management, based on data. We promote quality leadership by training our supervisors and maintaining an encouraging work culture. To improve employee wellbeing and reduce absences due to illness, we are improving the city's management of working ability.

Security and preparedness

Helsinki ensures the safety and security of its residents and the city in all circumstances. Helsinki's status as a capital city requires that we maintain adequate crisis preparedness, readiness and continuity of services.

In the current situation, the risk presented by various forms of hybrid threats, threats to critical infrastructure, and sabotage such as cyberattacks has grown. Helsinki is preparing for everything from small, isolated disturbances to more comprehensive and

serious threat scenarios. The city is also strengthening its preparedness for more frequent extreme weather phenomena.

We maintain a high standard of risk management throughout our organisation. We take continuity management and preparedness for disruptions and crisis situations into consideration in our planning of the city's service production as well as in the competence and skills development of our staff.

We will strengthen the readiness of Helsinki's residents and their independent preparations for various disruptions and crisis situations. We promote the critical literacy of our city inhabitants as well as their ability to recognise disinformation.

We ensure that the city maintains a reliable and trustworthy digital services environment. We safeguard the data security of the city's services. We will improve our digital security of supply and assess the city's possible dependencies on cloud services and information systems outside the EU. We will safeguard the operations of critical infrastructure such as the electrical grid and water distribution in every circumstance.

We are strengthening our civil defence. We are resolutely developing the city's civil defence preparedness. We are investing in the construction and renovation of civil defence shelters.

We safeguard the city's safety and security by reacting swiftly and preventively to threatening phenomena and situations. All areas of Helsinki will be kept safe. We are resolutely working to increase people's sense of safety and security in the city. We are also developing the safety and

security culture of the city organisation. The security aspect is comprehensively and systematically considered in all the city's operations and development.

Helsinki creates a sense of safety and security every day by providing reliable services, employees that work among the city's residents and other ways of being present. The patrolling and outreach work of different services plays an important part in strengthening the safety and security of different areas. We make sure that children and young people can enjoy their recreational activities safely and that operators who receive grants from the city for this purpose comply with our ethical principles. We are expanding anti-racism instruction at all levels of education.

We will intensify our cooperation with the police and maintain a close security cooperation network with the central government authorities. We will ensure that the Helsinki Rescue School for training rescue professionals can continue its operations.

We combat misogynistic and other gender-based harassment and violence by actively intervening in observed incidents, increasing support services and investing in preventive measures.

A pleasant urban environment that is in good condition strengthens local feelings of safety and security. We will ensure that all city spaces are well-maintained and tidy, and other conditions that strengthen safety are in order. We promote traffic safety and an urban environment where children can move around safely and independently. When planning traffic arrangements, we will not

plan unnecessary routes through residential areas.

Advocacy and internationalism

Helsinki engages in proactive and goal-oriented advocacy. Our advocacy is based on up-to-date information, robust expertise, a solution-oriented dialogue with the state, and partnerships with other large cities.

The City of Helsinki's advocacy aims to increase the authority of large cities in national and European Union (EU)-level decision-making. Helsinki works actively to strengthen the common voice of cities nationwide and it also plays a significant role in European networks. We will diversify and strengthen our advocacy related to EU decision-making and EU funding.

Helsinki's resolute and long-term advocacy promotes state-level solutions that acknowledge the unique challenges, circumstances and role of the capital.

Helsinki strengthens its international role, visibility and appeal by carrying out innovative measures and maintaining an active presence in global networks. Helsinki actively seeks out influential and fruitful international partnerships. Fellow capitals, major European cities and other world metropolises that can help us pursue our objectives are natural partners. We continue to track our progress towards Helsinki's achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Education in Helsinki 2024



59 400

students attend 128 primary schools

Source: National Agency for Education, Vipunen



52 200

students attend 61 secondary education institutions

Source: National Agency for Education, Vipunen



37 800

students in universities of applied sciences

Source: Statistics Finland



40 300

students in universities

Source: Statistics Finland



30 400

children in early childhood education and care

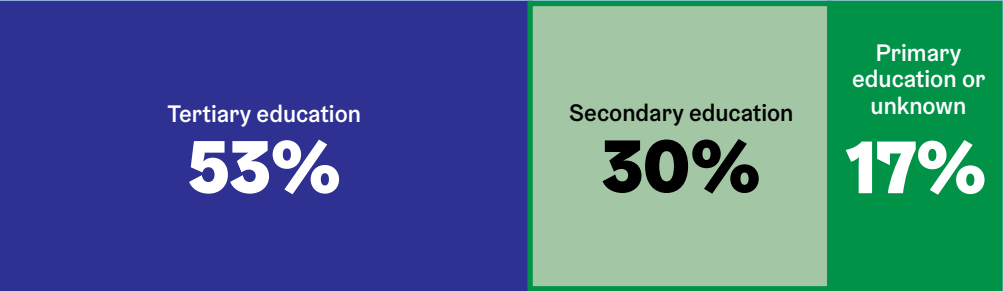
5 900

of which attend pre-primary education

Source: National Agency for Education, Vipunen

Education level

Age 25–54



Source: City of Helsinki, Helsinki Region Infoshare

How we work

We exist for the people of Helsinki. We care about the wellbeing of the city and its residents.

The matters of the city and its residents are handled in a committed, reliable and responsible manner throughout our organisation. We work together across administrative categories and divisions towards the city's common goals. We are proud to carry out our tasks well.

Our work is open and straightforward. It should be smooth and easy to handle matters with the city. We are improving our responsiveness and customer service. Questions and contact requests are answered without delay. Minor problems that are easy to address are quickly resolved.

We do not do everything ourselves. We work in cooperation with the third sector, businesses and residents of the city. We have an open mind and positive attitude when it comes to new ideas. We help residents and businesses find solutions to their problems. Helsinki supports success.

In Helsinki, everyone is free to live their life in their own authentic way. Equality, non-discrimination and the promotion of human rights are key values. Helsinki is a city where different lifestyles and opinions can coexist in harmony. Helsinki shares in the important celebrations of its residents and respects different cultures. We intervene in racism and discrimination and promote an equal and fair city, where it is possible for everyone to live a good life. We systematically intervene in discrimination against minorities and our staff is trained to actively respond to it.

Helsinki is a bilingual city. Bilingualism is a living part of Helsinki's identity and one

of our city's strengths. It boosts Helsinki's competitiveness and distinctiveness and deepens our connections with the other Nordic countries and their capitals. We will ensure that quality and comprehensive services are available in both Finnish and Swedish.

It is important that matters can also be handled in Helsinki in the English language. We are acknowledging the city's increasingly diverse language communities in our services and strengthening the possibility to handle city-related matters in other languages, as necessary. We are utilising multilingual services and communications to reach out to and include different residents of the city, while also promoting the use of clear and easy-to-understand language in our services and communications.

We rely on research data in the development of our operations, and we also conduct research ourselves. We work in collaboration with local universities and the Urban Policy Council, among others, to improve and develop our work.

We stay current. Digitalisation and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) are an integral part of a modern city and its operations and services. AI is revolutionising the way our society, education and work functions. The city will assess the potential of AI and put it into practice in the development of its services and processes. The city will also closely monitor the impact of AI on education. Helsinki is a pioneer in the development and implementation of the ethical use of AI.

We are proud to be a part of building the world's best life in Helsinki.



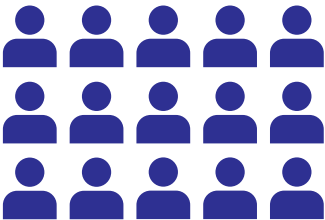
Photo: Vesa Laitinen

Employment in Helsinki

430 886

jobs

Source: Statistics Finland, Employment statistics 31.12.2023



1 700 +

start-ups in the Helsinki area

Source: Business Helsinki, Helsinki Dealroom 2025



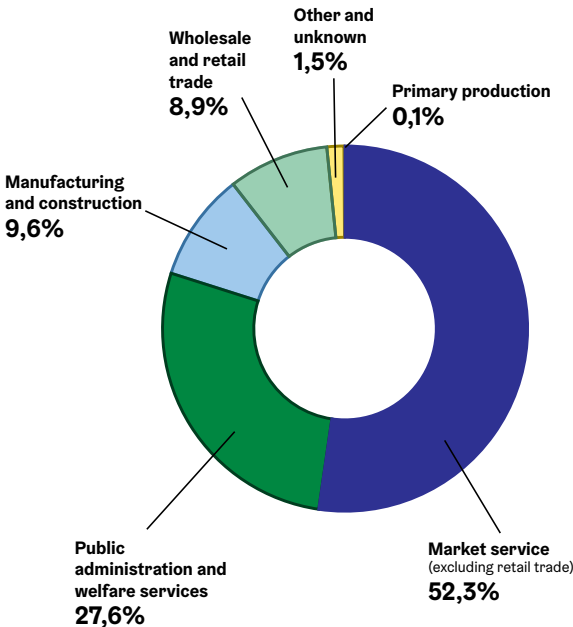
89%

of jobs are in the service sector

Source: Statistics Finland, Employment statistics 31.12.2023



Industry distribution



Source: Statistics Finland, Employment statistics

Unemployment in Helsinki

(31.5.2025)

47 474

unemployed jobseekers, of which

96%

unemployed

4%

fully laid off

Source: KEHA Centre, Employment Service Statistics (May 2025)

A stylized map of Finland is shown in a dark blue color against a light blue background. The word "Helsinki" is written in white inside a white-outlined speech bubble that points to the capital city's location on the southern coast of the country.

Helsinki