

# **City of Helsinki's Accessibility Policies 2022–2025**

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# 1. Creation of accessibility policies: background, interaction, objective and content

## 1.1 Creation of accessibility policies

### 1.1.1 Background

According to the City Strategy, accessibility must be factored in when planning the urban environment and the City's services. Through active engagement, we are ensuring equal participation for persons with disabilities. We are also striving to create a memory-friendly city.

The Accessibility Policies 2022–2025 replace [the accessibility policies approved by the City Board in 2012](#) and [the City of Helsinki's Accessibility Plan](#) for 2005–2010. The City of Helsinki's Accessibility Plan for 2005–2010 formed the foundation for an accessible Helsinki. It was approved by the City Board on 14 November 2005.

Helsinki began to promote accessibility systematically through its Helsinki for All project in 2002, for example by drawing up accessibility guidelines. In 2012, the Mayor founded an accessibility advisory board, which created the first (now updated) accessibility policies. The latest report on their implementation was submitted to the City Board in 2016. The advisory board was discontinued in 2017 when the City underwent organisational restructuring. Legislation regarding accessibility has changed since 2012, and many of the policies drawn up at that time have already become a normal part of the operations.

[The accessibility indicators](#) were approved in 2009 by the Helsinki for All project's organisational departments' cooperation group and the advisory board. Due to the City's restructuring, these indicators were

updated in 2018, and the updated indicators were approved by the accessibility working group on 6 June 2018. Accessibility indicators are required for monitoring the progress made in the work towards accessibility, both domestically and globally.

An accessibility application called the Service Map ([palvelukartta.hel.fi/en/](http://palvelukartta.hel.fi/en/)) has long been used to make the City's accessibility work more visible. The accessibility guidelines for outdoor areas (SuRaKu) received a national accessibility award from the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities in 2011, while Helsinki came second in the European Union's Access City Award competition in 2015 and 2022.

Currently, matters pertaining to accessibility in Helsinki are coordinated and monitored by [the accessibility working group](#). The Administrative Director of the Urban Environment Division serves as its chairperson. The group members include accessibility contact people from the divisions, the accessibility ombudsman, the disability ombudsman and the secretary of the Elderly Citizens Council. The accessibility ombudsman serves as the group's draftsperson and rapporteur.

The City of Helsinki's accessibility policies, accessibility indicators and future monitoring system, created based on a database, are the accessibility working group's main tools for monitoring the implementation of accessibility.

## 1.1.2 Interaction during accessibility policy creation

The accessibility ombudsman created an updated draft of the 2012 accessibility policies, which were presented to the Council on Disability and the Elderly Citizens Council at a workshop on 5 November 2020.

The feedback was utilised when carrying out further work on the policies. As agreed during the accessibility working group's processing, the updated accessibility policies were submitted to the divisions for comments on 2 December 2020. On 26 January 2021, they were also presented to the steering committees of the Urban Environment Division's services, as well as the City Executive Office's extended steering committee for communications. Where necessary, details were discussed with the various division units. After the round of comments, the accessibility working group discussed the new version at its meeting on 17 February 2021. The Urban Environment Division's steering committee processed the updated version on 17 May 2021. After that, the divisions were asked to provide statements on the accessibility policies. The accessibility policies were also presented to the accessibility group of the Council on Disability in January 2022. The statements were taken into account in the finalised accessibility policies, as much as possible. The Urban Environment Committee proposed that the policies be approved by the City Board on 22 March 2022 and the City Board approved them on 27th of June.

It was decided that the city-level accessibility work would be coordinated and developed by the City Executive Office, tasked with the enhancement of this work according to the action plan, chairing the accessibility network, monitoring the City's accessibility work, updating instructions pertaining to accessibility and managing agreements. In 2019, an accessibility working group was formed to coordinate the City of Helsinki's accessibility work regarding its digital services. The working group was terminated in August 2020, but continues its work as an accessibility network, whose duties include communications and information distribution. Municipal enterprise and division-specific reports on the accessibility work are submitted within the network and monitored through reporting four times a year.

The indicators listed in the table of responsibilities, found as an appendix to the policies, can complement or replace existing accessibility policies, in addition to which the accessibility working group may decide to further define various operators' areas of responsibility for the policies.

The accessibility working group will update the City of Helsinki's accessibility policies and instructions sufficiently often as technology becomes more advanced and the conditions change. The need for updates will be assessed every two years. The City Board will approve any changes and updates to the policies.

## 1.1.3 Accessibility policies' objective and content

The City of Helsinki's accessibility policies apply to mobility around and use of buildings and outdoor areas. Additionally, the City of Helsinki's accessibility plan also requires that all public places be built and renovated in a way that makes them accessible.

The purpose of the City of Helsinki's accessibility policies is to serve as the shared general guidelines on accessibility for all the City and its divisions. The divisions are responsible for implementing the accessibility policies and making them part of their normal operating processes and procedures. One of the accessibility

policy aims is to increase cooperation between the divisions, thereby ensuring the continuous implementation of accessibility.

The accessibility policies have been divided into five focal areas: zoning and traffic planning, public buildings, public areas, housing and services. The policies apply to all divisions whose operations fall under these themes.

The accessibility policies include both existing and new policies, divided into the focal areas.

## 1.2 Accessible environment, accessibility target levels and digital accessibility

The City of Helsinki's accessibility policies apply to mobility around and use of buildings and outdoor areas. Additionally, the City of Helsinki's accessibility plan also requires that all public places be built and renovated in a way that makes them accessible.

### An accessible environment

- allows people to move around and use streets, squares, parks, yards and playgrounds with ease
- allows people to access buildings and operate inside them with ease
- allows people to move from place to place and access transport without the use of stairs
- has clear instructions and signs
- provides a good auditory environment.

**An accessible environment** refers to physical accessibility, e.g. functioning dimensions and solutions that bridge together elevation differences in a way that serves those who use assistive devices to move.

**Sensory accessibility** refers to the conditions formed primarily by the visual and auditory environments. Additionally, the sense of balance affects a person's ability to use escalators or spaces with moving lights, for example.

## Accessibility target levels

The implementation programme of the City of Helsinki's Accessibility Strategy (2000) had three approved accessibility target levels: special level, target level and basic level. In contrast, the accessibility goals set during [the SuRaKu project](#) (planning, construction and maintenance) were divided into two target levels: special level and basic level. The parties agreeing on the accessibility principles and implementation methods included e.g. the Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities, the Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired, the Kuuloliitto federation of the hearing impaired, the Finnish Association for the Welfare of Older People, and the cities of Helsinki, Espoo, Joensuu, Tampere, Turku and Vantaa. The work instructions were completed under the management of the Helsinki for All project and with support from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Materials are connected to the tactile sense. Guidance materials are used with the help of touch.

**The accessibility of a visual environment** refers to a suitably strong, constant and non-blinding lighting, the good colour rendering of the lighting and the use of contrast to make a space easier to sense visually. Furthermore, contrasting materials promote the use of the tactile sense instead of or in addition to eyesight. Clear signs, as well as tactile markings and contrasts that indicate elevation differences, are particularly important.

**The accessibility of an auditory environment** refers to good acoustics, functioning sound systems and assistive hearing devices.

**The accessibility of comprehension** refers to spaces that are easy to interpret and the use of clear, unambiguous solutions, such as symbols on signs.

**A universal design, a.k.a. Design for All**, is based on solutions that are suitable to all and take into account the varied individual needs and capacity to function. However, it does not remove the right of a person with a disability to receive the individual services that they require.

These instructions formed the foundation for the City of Helsinki's accessibility plan. They are also freely available to other municipalities, communities and planners. The instructions contain a set of criteria, with which the accessibility of outdoor areas can be assessed, as well as instruction cards for the criteria's practical application.

### The grounds for the two-level division of goals included the following:

- the instructions must be sufficiently clear and unambiguous
- an environment should be as uniform as possible to allow easy operation within it
- all locations share the same environmental user requirements.

## Special level

Special level areas are determined according to their services and usage, and they include areas, routes and locations whose accessibility requirements are higher than usual. All other areas are basic level areas in terms of their accessibility requirements.

**The following area types were typically defined as special-level areas in the SuRaKu criteria tables and instruction cards:**

**The special level locations include:**

- city-centre areas
- pedestrian zones
- public transport stations and stops
- health and wellbeing centres, family centres, care homes and their surroundings
- hospital environments and their boundaries with public areas
- sports venues and playgrounds intended for all (City-owned and located outdoors)
- shopping centres.

Areas that require a special-level status and their boundaries are always determined on a case-by-case basis, but the purpose of this list is to help planners estimate the requirement level of the areas they are designing and form logical combinations of such areas in terms of their intended use. The special-level requirements concerning the environmental elements differ somewhat from the basic-level requirements.

One example of such differences is the use of guidance tiles for guiding the visually impaired around an area, as these are only used at special-level locations.

## Basic level

The basic accessibility level is a public environment level characterised by high quality, accessibility and safety. All areas, except special-level ones, should meet the basic-level accessibility requirements. At the basic level, the various needs and circumstances of different users must be accounted for in the planning, construction and maintenance as much as possible, but the basic-level quality requirements do not include any special arrangements based on different user group requirements, such as guidance tiles for the visually impaired. The basic-level requirements are set in a way that makes an environment accessible for all user groups for the most part. The solutions that are currently in use and meet the basic-level user requirements have been noted in the criteria. The criteria also ensure that the basic accessibility goals of an environment are achieved round the clock and during every season.

## Accessibility

An accessible service or a product is one that everyone can use equally regardless of any disability or functional impairment.

Accessibility covers the following themes: accessibility facilitated by attitudes, sensory accessibility, accessibility of knowledge, accessibility of communications, cultural accessibility, financial accessibility and accessibility of decision-making.

## 1.3 Accessibility legislation and guidelines

### 1.3.1 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Finland ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2016. As a result, disability is, first and foremost, viewed from the human-rights perspective, rather than seen as a medical or a social problem of an individual. The Convention includes an article on non-discrimination, which states that persons with disabilities must be able to access the same spaces as all other people and be able to function there, either independently or with assistance, without any special arrangements. The aim of the Convention is to mainstream topics that pertain to persons with disabilities in various areas of life. Mainstreaming means the inclusion of disability aspects in every phase of decision-making – planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment – and it aims to promote the equality of persons with disabilities. Article 9 of the Convention, Accessibility, defines accessibility as a prerequisite for

persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life. It also requires that everyone has access on an equal basis to the physical environment, such as buildings and outdoor areas.

According to the CRPD, an accessible environment is a human right, and it emphasises the importance of Design for All. This means e.g. that environments are designed in a way that allows everyone to use them without special arrangements.

Accessibility must be achieved comprehensively so that individuals can travel and operate with ease between home, work or a study place and hobbies. For example, the accessibility of transport can be achieved when the vehicles, stops, station buildings and passages are accessible.

### 1.3.2 Constitution and Non-discrimination Act

The Constitution states that all people must be treated equally and not discriminated against without an acceptable reason, e.g. based on disability or health. The Non-discrimination Act entered into force in 2015. Its purpose is to promote equality, prevent discrimination and enhance the legal protection of individuals who have been discriminated against.

The Non-discrimination Act prohibits discrimination. In addition to direct and indirect discrimination, denial of reasonable accommodation constitutes discrimination. Reasonable accommodation refers to individual measures taken to achieve equality for persons with disabilities. According to law, officials, education providers, employers, product suppliers and service providers must take the appropriate and necessary measures to accommodate persons with a disability, so that they are able to manage their affairs, use services, work and

study in the same way as everyone else. In addition to the needs of persons with a disability, the operator's size and financial situation, the nature and extent of the operations, the estimated cost of the accommodation measures and the available support for them are taken into account when determining what counts as reasonable.

When designing a built environment, care should be taken to choose solutions that suit everyone, wherever possible. Depending on a building's use and the operator, the minimum level required by regulations may be insufficient, and instead the circumstances must be assessed based on the Non-discrimination Act to find out what the building's accessibility requirements are, so that all people can use the space and services on equal grounds.

### 1.3.3 Accessibility in Land Use and Building Act

According to Section 5 of the Land Use and Building Act, the aim of land use planning is, based on interaction and an adequate impact assessment, to promote e.g. the creation of a safe, healthy, pleasant and socially functional living and operating environment that meets

the needs of various population groups, such as children, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Section 12 of the Act states that the purpose of building guidance is to create a good living environment that is



safe, healthy and pleasant, socially functional and aesthetically harmonious, and serves the needs of its users.

Section 117 of the Land Use and Building Act defines the requirements for construction. A building must be designed, constructed, altered and renovated, or its intended use changed, in a way that allows it to comply with the generally predictable essential technical requirements for structural strength and intended use.

A building must conform with its purpose and be capable of being repaired, maintained and altered, and, in so far as its use requires, also be suitable for people whose capacity to move or function is limited. In repair

work and alteration, the attributes and special features of the building and its suitability for the intended use must be taken into account. Alterations may not endanger the safety of the building's users or weaken their health. In addition, construction must in any case comply with good building practice.

According to Section 117e (Accessibility) of the Land Use and Building Act, an operator undertaking a construction project must ensure that a building and its yard and leisure areas are designed and constructed according to their intended use, the number of users and number of floors, so that their accessibility and useability are ensured, in particular, when it comes to children, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

### 1.3.4 Government Decree on Accessibility of Buildings

The Government Decree on Accessibility of Buildings entered into force in 2018. The purpose of the minimum requirements on accessibility of buildings is to help promote equality.

The Decree applies to the permit-based construction of new administrative, service, office, commercial, storage, production and housing units, in accordance with Section 125 of the Land Use and Building Act (132/1999). However, only Sections 2–4 apply to the construction of small residential buildings, and only Sections 2–5, 8, 10 and 11 apply to the construction of storage and production facilities.

According to Section 125 of the Land Use and Building Act, the Decree also applies to the permit-based con-

struction of administrative, service, office, commercial, storage and production units, as well as the renovation, alteration, extension, increase of gross floor space and change of use of the communal areas of blocks-of-flats into administrative, service, office, commercial or housing use, insofar as the improvement of accessibility is appropriate when considering the building's features, and the nature and extent of the measure in question. However, only Sections 2–5, 8 10 and 11 apply to the abovementioned measures carried out in storage and production buildings.

The regulations set out in the Decree regarding a building with a specific intended use also apply to spaces within other buildings that share the same intended use.

### 1.3.5 Act on the Provision of Digital Services

The European Parliament approved the Directive on the accessibility of websites and mobile applications (EU 2016/2102) at the end of 2016. Its purpose is to ensure that all residents can access government and municipal online services, including individuals who use assistive devices to access online services. The Directive determines the minimum requirements for the accessibility of public administrations' online services and mobile applications.

The Act on the Provision of Digital Services defines the minimum requirements for the accessibility of public

sector websites and mobile applications, for monitoring how well the accessibility is achieved and the obligations of the officials in connection to providing digital services to the public. The law entered into force on 1 April 2019, and it is used to implement Directive (EU) 2016/2102 in Finland.

The Regional State Administrative Agency for Southern Finland's accessibility monitoring unit is responsible for providing guidance on and monitoring the law's accessibility requirements.

## 1.3.6 Accessibility directives and standards

### European Accessibility Act

The upcoming EU Accessibility Act will determine the shared accessibility requirements for key services and products. They will apply to both public and private service providers. The national legislation required by the Accessibility Act will enter into force in Finland in summer 2022.

The purpose of the Accessibility Act is to facilitate full societal participation for persons with reduced mobility or functional impairment.

The European Accessibility Act defines which products and services it will apply to. However, it does not define the means with which physical and/or non-physical accessibility must be achieved.

Therefore, product suppliers and service providers can decide on their preferred solutions and, if they so choose, develop new accessibility solutions.

### Safety guidelines for designing and constructing lifts

Accessibility standard EN81-70-2017 places special requirements for lifts' control buttons, distances, dimensions, contrasts and accessories that allow persons with reduced mobility or functional impairment to use lifts with ease.

### Standard SFS-EN 60118-4 on the performance of induction loop systems

The functional features of induction loops are determined by the internationally approved standard IEC 60118-4:2014, and a standard also exists on several symbols.

## 1.3.7 Other guidelines

[The Ministry of the Environment's guide on accessible buildings and environments \(Esteetön rakennus ja ympäristö\)](#) aims to provide information for the design and construction of buildings and their surroundings in order for them to be accessible. The guide provides examples of accessibility solutions and recommendations as support in designing accessible buildings and environments. Its main content applies to non-residential buildings, but can be used in housing construction as well. The guide is based on the Government Decree on Accessibility of Buildings (241/2017) and the Ministry of the Environment's guidelines on accessible buildings.

**The Ministry of the Environment has published guidelines on accessible buildings.** They contain the regulations of Decree 241/2017, as well as their implementation recommendations. The purpose of the guidelines is to clarify the Decree's content, provide examples of

options that comply with the Decree and encourage the adoption of accessible solutions.

[The Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities has created a guide on accessible toilets and washrooms](#), which aims to help builders take the new accessibility requirements into account when constructing toilets and washrooms. The guide contains accessibility principles and good practices. The guidelines apply to the toilets and washrooms in ordinary homes, care home units and assisted housing units, as well the public accessible toilets and the related signs inside the buildings.

Municipalities' building control services have created uniform guidelines on how to interpret construction regulations. Guidelines also exist for accessibility and user safety regulations.

## 1.3.8 City of Helsinki accessibility instructions and guides

The City of Helsinki's instructions on accessible construction are stricter than the national-level ones. For example, special-level solutions, such as guidance floor tiles, were used in the central library Oodi.

The [SuRaKu guidelines](#) for accessible construction contain accessibility guidelines for designing, building and maintaining streets, green areas and yards. The practical guidelines were created through collaboration between the cities of Helsinki, Espoo, Joensuu, Tampere, Turku and Vantaa in 2004. The work instructions were completed under the management of the Helsinki for All project and with support from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

The SuRaKu guidelines formed the foundation for the City of Helsinki's accessibility plan. They are also freely available to other municipalities, communities and planners. The instructions contain a set of criteria, with which the accessibility of outdoor areas can be assessed, as well as instruction cards for the criteria's practical application.

The accessibility solution principles have been included in the City of Helsinki's [type drawings for street areas](#) (in Finnish), in accordance with the guidelines determined in the SuRaKu project.

The [guide Esteettömyys kouluissa ja päiväkodeissa \('Accessibility at schools and daycare centres'\)](#) (in Finnish) contains special accessibility requirements for various spaces at schools and daycare centres. The guide is intended to be read side-by-side with the *Esteetön rakennus ja ympäristö* ('Accessible building and environment'), published by the Ministry of the Environment in 2019. The latter contains an extensive list of accessibility regulations and instructions on schools and daycare centres. *Esteetön rakennus ja ympäristö* complements the accessibility guidelines and the City of Helsinki's accessibility policies for schools and daycare centres.

The [guide Esteettömyys uimahalleissa \('Accessibility at swimming halls'\)](#) (in Finnish) contains accessibility requirements for various areas at swimming halls. The

guide is intended to be read side-by-side with the *Esteetön rakennus ja ympäristö*, published by the Ministry of the Environment in 2019. The latter contains an extensive list of accessibility regulations and instructions on swimming halls as well. *Esteettömyys uimahalleissa* complements previously published guides on the accessibility guidelines and the City of Helsinki's accessibility policies for swimming halls.

**The quality requirements for health and wellbeing centres, family centres and senior centres**, determined by the Social Services and Health Care Division include design requirements and special accessibility requirements connected to these operations. These guides complement the *Esteetön rakennus ja ympäristö* guide, published by the Ministry of the Environment in 2019.

The [Induktiosilmukkaopas \('Induction loop guide'\)](#) (in Finnish) is intended to be used in the design, construction and maintenance of all the public spaces managed by the City of Helsinki. The guide determines which of the City's locations will receive a fixed induction loop system. The guide can be used when planning both new construction and renovation projects. However, the requirements only apply to renovation sites where necessary.

[Sujuva.info](#) is a visualised collection of accessibility regulations, guidelines and recommendations to facilitate the design of accessible rail station infrastructure. It is intended for people who commission, design or maintain this infrastructure.

[Kaupunkitilaohje \('Urban space guidelines'\)](#) takes accessibility into account in products and arrangements, i.e. accessibility is an integral element of the guidelines.

Special-level accessibility play parks have been systematically determined for the entire city. The design and construction of accessible play parks aims to develop these areas in a way that makes them accessible to all user groups. Separate criteria have been created for the design solutions of special-level accessible play parks.

## 2. Current state of accessibility

The Audit Committee assessed the implementation of accessibility in 2019. The assessment states that the goals of the City of Helsinki's accessibility policies have been achieved, for the most part, in terms of the key element assessed. Accessibility has been built into the strategy's goals, spearhead projects and the divisions' policies. The City of Helsinki has been carrying out work towards accessibility that has been important both domestically and globally. The best examples of this include the accessibility guidelines for outdoor areas (SuRaKu) and the accessibility guidelines created by the City to ensure the accessibility of the built environment. [The Service Map](#) has existed since 2010 for reviewing services through various accessibility profiles.

Over the years, Helsinki has collaborated with other cities to create more detailed accessibility guidelines, in comparison to the national level (City of Helsinki's accessibility plan 2005–2010, SuRaKu guidelines, accessibility policies, guides), which direct zoning, area planning and construction quite well. The accessibility ombudsman takes part in the review and preparation phases of various projects.

### **Metropolitan Area Transport Ltd (formerly known as Helsinki City Transport)**

#### **Accessibility of tram transport**

Since 2018, all the trams have had low-floor tramcars. However, they are not completely without thresholds, because the tram floor must always be above the platform surface level to avoid the risk of tripping. New and renovated stops will be made accessible, provided that the street features permit this.

The Arctic tramcars and articulated trams with low-floor sections are equipped with a ramp that allows threshold-free boarding. If necessary, help with the ramp and any other accessibility-related matters regarding the trams can be requested from the drivers.

#### **Accessibility in future tram projects**

Accessibility will be factored in from the start in all new tram projects, such as the Jokeri Light Rail, the Crown Bridges Light Rail and the Kalasatama tram line pro-

jects when planning new routes. Accessibility indices and planning guidelines will be utilised when designing the stops.

The design of the future Artic XL light rail carriage is primarily based on the needs of families with children and individuals who move slowly, and the model has been tested with disability organisations. The entire carriage will have a low floor, and there will be place for wheelchair users and guide dogs.

#### **Accessibility at metro stations**

All metro stations have an accessible entrance and at least one lift. In addition to that, West Metro stations also have evacuation lifts. Furthermore, several stations have sound beacons at the front door and doors leading to the lifts, helping persons with impaired vision move around the stations.

Renovated stations have tactile and contrasting strips on the floor to mark the routes around them. The metro platforms and carriage floors are at the same level, and the West Metro has emergency exit platforms in the tunnels.

Any exceptional circumstances are communicated via audio announcements and platform screens. The same information is also fed through the induction loops, located on information boards, lifts and at service desks, directly to hearing aids, making it available for persons with impaired hearing.

### **Helsinki Region Transport – joint municipal authority HSL**

#### **Public transport information system**

The public transport information system is a versatile multichannel system that takes accessibility into account in the communications/when distributing information about exceptional arrangements. For example, messages with the same content are displayed on screens at stops, onboard vehicles, in the application, via email messages and on the hsl.fi website. The City of Helsinki's aim is for the City-managed infrastructure to support the public transport information system, for example by providing stops with electricity for screens, where necessary.

## Low-floor buses

The majority of the buses procured have low floors. Certain local bus lines in the Helsinki metropolitan area are operated by low-floor minibuses.

## Stop announcements

Most of the HSL buses have audio stop announcements in use. In 2018, Helsinki's Council on Disability granted an accessibility award to the announcements on trunk route buses and trams. The stop announcements improve the accessibility of public transport, both physically and non-physically.

## Education Division

The facilities used by the Education Division will be designed as accessible and suitable learning environments for all learners, promoting their growth, development and performance. Safe, healthy and adequate facilities provide a good setting for the division's operations and meet the service needs of individual areas. Furthermore, the division will take advantage of design advice and guidance to ensure that sensory defensiveness, gender neutrality, multiculturalism and social safety are taken into account. This will guarantee equal space to all learners. Accessibility will be promoted all the way from the planning phase to the operations by enhancing the objectives of early childhood education and care curricula.

## City Executive Office

### Lift project

The City's lift project provides advice to home owners, residents, caretakers and board members of housing companies in acquiring lifts to buildings.

### Helsinki Region Service Map

The Helsinki Region Service Map is a freely available map platform for sharing information about services and service branches around the entire metropolitan area. The accessibility of the services can be checked through the user profiles.

## Urban Environment Division

Accessibility has been one of the key elements guiding urban, traffic and street planning, as well as facility projects.

## Strategic Urban Planning

Strategic Urban Planning aims to direct the planning of functional and high-quality urban environments for all population groups. An accessible urban environment is particularly beneficial to children, young people, the elderly and persons with reduced mobility or functional impairment, while also being easy for other population groups to travel around.

### Detailed planning, public buildings and public areas

New areas will be designed to be either basic or special in their level of accessibility. Basic-level solutions meet the general criteria of an accessible environment, while the aim in special-level environments is to make them particularly easy and enjoyable for people to use and move around in. Additionally, special-level areas may have different types of special arrangements that help specific users, such as tactile maps and braille signs for persons with impaired vision.

Service locations are determined with their accessibility in mind, particularly when it comes to longitudinal gradients. Special-level areas are determined in cooperation with the zoning, transport and implementation planning unit, as well as the accessibility ombudsman, if necessary. In other areas, the goal is to achieve a basic accessibility level whose implementation complies with the guidelines intended for that level.

The accessibility criteria (existing accessibility and construction guidelines) are in use in master and detailed planning, as well as the related guidelines. The accessibility planning carried out when creating master and detailed plans is emphasised, and a section on accessibility has been added to the plan commentary.

The public transport lines and stops are placed in a way that allows pedestrians to have accessible connections from the stops to services and between services.

The type drawings that direct the street planning take accessibility into account. Furthermore, accessibility is also built into the urban space guidelines.

### Building control services

The building control services expect compliance with the Land Use and Building Act and regulations on accessibility. However, compliance with guidelines that are stricter than the criteria of the Land Use and Building Act or the decrees providing the Act with more detail cannot be required when granting building permits, but is recommended when providing guidance. Anyone carrying out a building project is responsible for ensuring accessibility.

## Facility projects

In order to ensure accessibility, the City has design guidelines in place. Anyone undertaking a construction project must recommend that the project designers comply with these guidelines.

## Housing production

All the new-builds constructed by Helsinki's housing production will be designed to meet, at a minimum, the requirements of the Government Decree on Accessibility of Buildings. In addition to these minimum requirements, two-floor residential houses will have a so-called survival floor, while two-floor blocks of flats/deck-access flats will, at a minimum, have space for a shared lift outside the flats.

During renovation projects, attempts will be made to make some homes accessible by removing barriers (lowest residential floors) and improve the accessibility in others. Solutions that improve accessibility only partially will also be possible. In addition to the buildings themselves, the yard areas must aim to be accessible, and special attention should be paid to improving the accessibility of entrances.

## Culture and Leisure Division

The Culture and Leisure Division's construction and renovation projects take accessibility and special groups' needs into account during the requirement as-

essment and project planning phases together with the Urban Environment Division. Any problems with accessibility in the existing indoor and outdoor facilities are resolved where necessary. The Culture and Leisure Division's services will provide training on accessibility, with a focus on the specific requirements of the various service units.

## Social Services and Health Care Division

The Social Services and Health Care Division sees accessibility as part of its normal operations. The division's service network plan emphasises accessibility.

## Accessibility development according to accessibility indicators

The progress made in accessibility, according to the accessibility indicators, cannot be assessed at the moment, because no centralised geographic data is available. However, the elements included in the indicators and objectives have been achieved reasonably well. Work is currently being carried out to gain information about accessibility in the form of geographic data.

# 3. Accessibility Policies 2022–2025

## 3.1 General operational principles

### Existing policies

The consultants used by the City are required to have skills in accessibility, in accordance with the competence requirements of the planning role. The principal planning officer must typically be able to make designs according to legislation, and the building control services will verify that the planning officers are qualified.

Furthermore, training on accessibility is continuously provided for the staff of the City of Helsinki's divisions, in addition to which it is ensured that both the clients and producers of the City possess sufficient skills and knowledge in accessibility. The divisions themselves must determine the type of training they require, and accessibility training must be organised in cooperation with disability organisations. The verification of the planning officers' competence in accessibility also requires the development of the accessibility training. User-level expertise is utilised in the training.

Nationwide networking: collaboration between municipal accessibility experts will continue.

Cooperation with the state: participation in the ministries' accessibility-related development projects.

Global cooperation: work with other countries' accessibility experts will continue. Since 2011, Helsinki has been a member of the Eurocities Barrier Free Cities network.

Private parties, such as land owners, businesses and tradespeople, will be included in the work as partners as early as possible when planning accessibility measures.

### New policies

Accessibility will be taken into account in the division's service and activity plans. The accessibility working group will create a model used to ensure that the divisions appoint accessibility expertise officers. These officers will monitor, promote and improve accessibility in their respective divisions, respond to accessibility-related feedback from the residents, provide advice and share information about accessibility in their divisions with the residents.

Accessibility is part of the purchase documents of projects. Similarly, accessibility requirements are taken into account in procurement tendering processes and various contracts. The housing production requires that special housing projects have references from similar projects. Designers and manufacturers of indoor signs will undergo tendering, and framework agreements that define the quality requirements for accessibility are created for purchasing sign designs.

## 3.2 Accessibility focal points

An accessible end result is the goal during all the phases of the planning, construction and maintenance process. Zoning and the related traffic plans create a foundation that largely determines the later design of streets, parks and blocks. Ensuring accessibility and levelling plans that are generally as functional as possible requires increasingly careful overall planning during the zoning phase.

Decisions made during this phase, e.g. on street and driveway locations or street dimensions, cannot be significantly altered at a later planning stage. If a plan contains a street area that is too steep to be accessible or too narrow for various operations to be safely placed and separated there, the street planning phase offers few opportunities to remedy the situation.

The street and park designs determine the detailed dimensions, levelling, surface materials, structures and equipment of public areas, as well as their locations. This makes street and park designing and guidelines a key element in achieving accessible environments.

In practice, the physical structures of an environment are created during the construction phase. Unless construction is carefully carried out according to the plans or if the deviations from the intended dimensions ex-

ceed the limits, the surface materials and structures of streets may form barriers. An accessible environment requires great accuracy when constructing passage-way surfaces and structures.

The guidelines on making accessible arrangements during construction and maintenance, and ensuring accessible communications must be followed. Contract-specific plans must be created for the special arrangements during work when making the preparations for a procurement process, so that the client can require and monitor that all the work phases comply with the plans.

Ensuring accessibility throughout the entire chain requires close cooperation between different divisions during the process. It is important to ensure that the objectives that have been set remain in place when the responsibilities are shifted from one division to another in a joint process.

The accessibility policies have been divided into five focal areas: zoning, traffic planning and public transport, public buildings, public areas, housing and services. The policies apply to all divisions whose operations fall under these themes.

### 3.2.1 Zoning, traffic planning and public transport

#### Accessibility target levels

##### Special level

Special level areas are determined according to their services and usage, and they include areas, routes and locations whose accessibility requirements are higher than usual. All other areas are basic level areas in terms of their accessibility requirements. A more detailed description of the target levels can be found [on page 6](#).

#### Accessibility in areas of new zoning and changing land use

##### Existing policies

A city plan is a strategic plan whose creation includes a rough assessment of the social, health and comfort-related effects on people. At a local master plan level, areas are reserved e.g. for public services, which may include both basic and special-level sites. The terrain and transport-related accessibility must be taken into account at the site-specific level. However, the concrete decisions

on accessibility, for example when it comes to the location of buildings and access routes, are not made until the detailed planning phase.

New areas will be designed to be either basic or special in their level of accessibility. Basic-level solutions meet the general criteria of an accessible environment, while the aim in special-level environments is to make them particularly easy and enjoyable for people to use and move around in. Additionally, special-level areas may have different types of special arrangements that help specific users, such as tactile maps and braille signs for persons with impaired vision.

Service locations must be determined with their accessibility in mind, particularly when it comes to longitudinal gradients. Special-level areas are determined in cooperation with the zoning, transport and implementation planning unit, as well as the accessibility ombudsman, if necessary. In other areas, the goal is to achieve a basic accessibility level whose implementation complies with the guidelines intended for that level.



The accessibility criteria (existing accessibility and construction guidelines) are in use in master and detailed planning, as well as the related guidelines. The accessibility planning carried out when creating master and detailed plans is emphasised, and a section on accessibility has been added to the plan commentary.

The viability of the principles and solutions defined in the local master plan is verified during the preparation of a detailed plan. It is particularly important to make sure that the special accessibility areas and routes can be created as planned. This requires cooperation between the creators of the zoning, traffic arrangement and implementation plans. The plans for all special accessibility level areas are created in collaboration with the accessibility ombudsman. However, in certain areas, steep gradients make it impossible to achieve accessibility in the best possible way.

Extensive amendments to the plans of old areas or urban infill plans ensure that the accessibility target levels set for these areas at higher planning levels are taken into account and implemented wherever possible.

## **Placement of operations and accessibility of services**

### **Existing policies**

Adequate space must be reserved for public and private service operations (e.g. private medical clinics) and operations must be located with the accessibility aspects in mind.

Buildings of public and private services must be located near good, accessible public transport connections.

Accessible and safe connections from the street to a property and building entrance must be ensured. Entrances in everyday use must be made accessible, where possible, as going around a building to reach an accessible entrance may occasionally be very difficult for persons with reduced mobility or functional impairment (e.g. due to weather, other difficulties in moving around a building and a lack of accessible parking spots in a private car park).

### **New policies**

A detailed plan must ensure the adequacy of the number, capacity and location (e.g. distance from the main entrance) of accessible parking spots and drop-off areas. Sufficient space reservations and accessible passageways are important. A city-wide plan will be drawn

up on accessible parking spots in the street area, and their locations will be published on the Service Map.

## **Functionality of public transport network**

### **Existing policies**

The public transport lines and stops are placed in a way that allows pedestrians to have accessible connections from the stops to services and between services.

An accessible transfer option from one transport means to another is provided.

The dimensions of stops and terminals take the requirements of drop-off traffic, persons with reduced mobility or functional impairment, people with prams and mechanical cleaning implements into account.

## **Accessibility of streets, parks and nature trails**

### **Existing policies**

The aim is to place the streets, parks and nature trails in new zoning areas in a way that their gradients do not exceed the permitted longitudinal gradient, which is 5% for the special level and 8% for the basic-level areas.

### **A policy that requires improvement**

The aim is to provide enough space for snow deposits. The accessibility space reservations must also be verified for winter conditions (sufficiently wide passageways). For example, suitable areas and route dimensions for temporary snow deposits are marked in area illustrations.

## **Traffic planning**

### **Existing policies**

Traffic arrangements are always planned by using the relevant type drawings of the street areas.

The accessibility level of an area, either special or basic, is verified and recorded in the traffic plans.

Pedestrian and cycling lanes are always separated from the rest of the traffic, if possible, and adequate space for this is reserved during the zoning phase.

The light signals for traffic are designed with the accessibility aspects in mind.

The Traffic and Street Planning Unit has created guidelines for companies that rent out electric scooters.

### New policies

The development programme for traffic safety was updated in 2021. The proposed measures include the creation and updating of the traffic safety related planning principles, as well as improving the safety of pedestrian crossings, among other things. Accessibility will be taken into account when carrying out these measures. Furthermore, the development programme also proposes that a cooperation group be formed to exchange information between various operators.

The aim is to determine the time available to cross the pedestrian crossings closest to special-level sites in a way that allows pedestrians to cross the entire street at the calculated speed of 0.8 m/s or, if this is not possible, at least reach the next traffic island of a sufficient width.

### Public transport vehicles, information system and terminals

#### Existing policies

The public transport (HSL and Metropolitan Area Transport) vehicles are accessible and easy to use.

The public transport information system is a versatile multichannel system that takes accessibility into account in the communications/when distributing information about exceptional arrangements. For example, messages with the same content are displayed on screens at stops, onboard vehicles, in the application, via email messages and on the hsl.fi website. The City of Helsinki's aim is for the City-managed infrastructure to support the public transport information system, for example by providing stops with electricity for screens, where necessary.

## 3.2.2 Public buildings (City-owned and private facilities in public use, excluding residential buildings)

### Accessibility target levels

#### Special level

Special level areas are determined according to their services and usage, and they include areas, routes and locations whose accessibility requirements are higher than usual. All other areas are basic level areas in terms of their accessibility requirements. A more detailed description of the target levels can be found [on page 6](#).

### Facilities owned or rented by the City from an external party

#### New policy

The facilities owned or rented by the City from an external party will be required to have the same level of accessibility. The accessibility of rented facilities will be verified before signing a lease. The facilities' suitability for their intended use will also be verified.

### Project plan

#### Existing policies

The aim is to arrange an accessible entrance for all of the administrative buildings used by the City.

All of the City's administrative buildings that have a customer service desk have accessible customer service facilities, as well as accessible toilets in areas open to the public.

#### New policies

The aim is to require that the outdoor and indoor areas of the city-owned and private buildings in public use have the same accessibility target levels.

Sound beacons will be installed at the entrances of special level locations.

In order to ensure accessibility, the City has design guidelines in place. Anyone undertaking a construction project must recommend that the project designers comply with these guidelines.

The project director of the Urban Environment Division's Premises Services will direct the design of buildings with the representative of the user division's premises services. The accessibility ombudsman will review the plans (at least those for special-level sites before a project plan is submitted for decision-making).

The appointed representatives of the Council on Disability and the Elderly Citizens Council will take part in reviewing the plans when important special-level construction projects are planned.

### Accessibility reviews at special-level sites

#### New policies

The principal planning officer will compile an accessibility review for a special-level location and the accessibility ombudsman will provide feedback on it. An installation plan will be drawn up for sanitary spaces, specifying the

locations, dimensioning and installation heights of fixtures and equipment. The operator undertaking a project must have their plans reviewed. A plan must be created for the signs to be installed at a special-level location, and it will be reviewed by the accessibility ombudsman and a representative of the building control services. The operator undertaking a project must ensure that sufficient funding is allocated for designing and implementing a sign plan.

When it comes to the City's largest special-level undertakings, an accessibility group can be appointed to monitor a project and accessibility reviews can be carried out during construction and before a site is commissioned for use. The need for the measures described above is determined in an accessibility review, included as an appendix to a building permit.

## **Ensuring accessibility of non-residential buildings**

### **Existing policies**

The accessibility of a building must be reviewed during the completion phase. The operator undertaking the project is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate review of practical functionality is carried out.

### **New policies**

The principal planning officer and the operator carrying out a special-level project must conduct a separate accessibility review with experts. During the review, they must verify that all the items specified in the accessibility review have been taken into account in the implementation and that the sanitary spaces have been built according to the installation plan. A statement on the accessibility must be completed before the building control services carry out the final review in order to allow the use of a building or a part of it to commence. The principal planning officer will verify the statement on the accessibility.

## **Accessibility of temporary facilities**

### **New policies**

A temporary facility is a place for relocating operations during renovation, for example. The customers and

staff of a temporary facility must be able to use the space and move around it without barriers. Furthermore, an accessible place for meetings must be available (an accessible meeting room or venue). At least half of the locations repeatedly serving as temporary facilities (e.g. basic education facilities) must be accessible. Special classrooms, as well as facilities intended for meals and exercise, must be accessible. If an operating unit has several special classrooms of a similar type, it will be enough for one of each type to be accessible. All of these accessible facilities must have barrier-free access to an accessible toilet. All of the operating facilities of special schools and daycare centres (e.g. groups for persons with severe (TOI) or multiple (MOVA) disabilities) must be accessible.

## **Building maintenance**

### **New policies**

Once a building has undergone a final review and it has been commissioned, the building's owner or tenant, depending on the site's table of responsibilities, is responsible for verifying that its technical equipment is functioning appropriately (electric door openers, induction loops). Furthermore, accessibility improvements must be carried out outside of basic renovation measures as well.

## **Terms and conditions for rent and conveyance of property**

### **New policies**

The accessibility goal will be included in the terms and conditions for the rent and conveyance of property.

## **Accessibility of air raid shelters**

### **New policies**

The accessibility of air raid shelters intended for the residents will be assessed and the aim is to improve its level. Information on accessibility will be added to the City of Helsinki's air raid shelters listed on the Service Map.

## **3.2.3 Public areas**

### **Accessibility target levels**

#### **Special level**

Special level areas are determined according to their services and usage, and they include areas, routes and

locations whose accessibility requirements are higher than usual. All other areas are basic level areas in terms of their accessibility requirements. A more detailed description of the target levels can be found [on page 6](#).

## Network reviews and public area plans

### New policy

During network reviews and in public area plans, the target levels of special and basic-level routes (park, recreation and nature trails) and areas will be reviewed and updated, and special-level accessible play parks will be recorded, wherever one has been specified for an area. New accessible resting places will be added (every 50 m in special-level areas and every 250 m in basic-level areas).

## Local outdoor exercise facilities

### New policy

Outdoor exercise venues must also have special-level exercise areas. The locations of the special-level outdoor exercise venues will be determined at the city level. The accessibility criteria will be factored in when planning and building local exercise venues, and selecting the equipment.

## Accessibility of natural sites

### New policy

A network review and a long-term plan will be created for the locations of accessible natural sites.

## Urban space guidelines

### New policy

A range of signs suitable for the outdoor environment will be developed for the urban space guidelines, using the accessibility symbols created in the Helsinki for All project.

## Model solutions for natural site structures

### New policy

Model plans will be created for the accessible structures of natural sites.

## Streets and park routes

### Existing policy

The continuity of passageways (walking and cycling) is ensured through cooperation between different divisions.

### New policy

Special and basic-level routes planned as accessible will be made accessible. A long-term plan will be created for turning streets and park routes into accessible ones.

## Winter maintenance

### Existing policy

The winter maintenance purchase documents for streets define the accessibility criteria for different routes in terms of their winter maintenance. The client instructs the service providers on routes and areas defined as accessible.

### New policy

Winter maintenance will pay special attention to maintaining the accessibility of pedestrian and cycle routes under winter conditions as well, so that all residents can move around the urban area safely and easily.

## Play parks

### New policies

Play parks defined as special-level ones will be renovated in cooperation between different divisions, according to a renovation programme, so that they will comply with the accessibility criteria. The accessibility criteria will be added to the policy on play services. All new play park buildings will be made accessible.

An accessibility target level and objectives will be recorded in the project programmes.

## Parks

### Existing policies

The accessibility target level – either special or basic – is recorded in the park plans.

Accessibility is taken into account in renovation projects.

## Permit terms and conditions for public areas

### Existing policies

The criteria for the location, number and features of advertising stands are reviewed, including the policy on A stands.

### New policies

The existing guidelines will be reviewed in terms of the accessibility aspects, and future updates will account for a potential need for alterations (events, beer gardens, worksites, temporary structures).

## Lighting

### Existing policy

The lighting level and method are defined with accessibility in mind, and criteria are set for special and basic-level accessible routes and areas.

## 3.2.4 Housing

### Housing stock accessibility reviews and rectifying accessibility shortcomings

#### New policy

The accessibility level of the common facilities, entrances (such as door opening, steps in front of the door/ramp), air raid shelters and yard areas of the City of Helsinki's housing companies will be assessed and shortcomings in accessibility will be systematically remedied outside of major renovation projects as well.

### Housing unit design

#### New policies

As the population ages, the number of residents who require assistive devices at home and for mobility will increase. Housing designs must ensure that assistive mobility devices can be safely stored in an assistive device/pram storage room or an outdoor exercise equipment room.

Accessible parking spots will be located near homes in a way that facilitates their functional use. It is often only possible to place accessible parking spots and, possibly, guest parking spots near homes. However, a low number of parking spots must not make it more difficult for persons with reduced mobility or functional impairment to use their car.

The City must publish the locations of the accessible parking spots at the City-owned residential properties on the Service Map.

### Terms and conditions for property conveyance and land lease

#### New policy

In its terms and conditions for property conveyance and land lease, the City must ensure that the property and parking companies will do their part in providing accessible routes for transport service and drop-off vehicles to the yard areas of the buildings.

### The City's housing consultation

#### New policy

The City's housing consultation service must be further improved and expanded, so that residents can also receive advice on housing-related accessibility issues. Housing-related accessibility advice should be provided to all who live in the city. In addition to making alterations to housing units, residents will need instruction and advice whenever their private housing company must contact the City's Land Use and Street Plan Unit in order to make the housing company's entrance accessible.

### Fixing, modernising or replacing a lift

#### Existing policy

Solutions that maintain the same lift car dimensions or increase them should be utilised when fixing, modernising or replacing a lift.

### Alterations to housing units

#### New policy

The City of Helsinki's guidelines will apply when making alterations to housing units. The multi-stage process of carrying out bespoke alterations in a housing unit based on the Act on Disability Services and Assistance must be coordinated, improved and expedited through cooperation between the divisions.

### Housing for the elderly

#### New policy

The City will further develop the housing solutions for the elderly. These include solutions somewhere between intensive assisted living and usual living arrangements, in which the quality and quantity match the aging population's needs and help the elderly live independently in their own homes.

### Business collaboration

#### New policy

Cooperation with businesses will be increased in terms of the accessibility of living environments (e.g. when a route passes via a shopping centre or another service).

## 3.2.5 Accounting for accessibility in digital services

### Accessibility Act, new policies

The European Accessibility Act requires that authorities and the private sector make certain products and services accessible. Every EU country must implement this Act by 28 June 2022 at the national level.

#### The Accessibility Act's objective

- To increase the availability and movement of accessible products and services by increasing cohesion between individual member countries' relevant regulations.
- To make products and services more accessible, thereby improving social participation and promoting independent living of persons with disabilities.

#### The Accessibility Act applies e.g. to the following products:

- Computers and their operating systems
- Self-service terminal devices, such as payment terminals, ATMs and ticket machines
- Smartphones
- Devices, such as converter boxes and digital television devices, used to access audiovisual media
- Devices for reading e-books.

#### The Accessibility Act applies e.g. to the following services:

- Telecommunications and communication services
- Transport-related services, such as websites, mobile applications, online tickets and their purchasing, real time travel information
- Consumer banking services
- E-books and the software to use them
- Online shops.

#### The Accessibility Act must also be taken into account with the following:

- Calling the emergency number (112)
- Built environment
- Public procurement.

Furthermore, the Act applies to the service environment. Therefore, product suppliers and service providers can decide on their preferred solutions and, if they so choose, develop new accessibility solutions.

The Act factors in the accessibility of the built environment that surrounds accessible services as well. The

purpose of this is to ensure that any barriers in a built environment will not pose new limitations on the use of a service.

### Surveys

#### New policy

In addition to map-based surveys, alternative participation ways will be offered and these will be clearly indicated in the letters that accompany the surveys.

### Sign language and plain language

#### New policy

The City's communications will be carried out in an accessible manner in sign language and plain language. More information will be available in the City of Helsinki's communication policies and guidelines.

### Organising events and reserving facilities

#### New policies

Events held by the City will be accessible whenever possible, and they will be organised in facilities that are as accessible as possible. Accessibility will be made a strong objective/recommendation between the City and private organisers/operators renting facilities when signing a rental and/or other agreement. This means that an event organiser must ensure the accessibility of their event within the framework of what the venue has to offer. The event guidelines for organisers compiled by Helsinki provide tips on accessible events.

The accessibility of the facility reservation systems (Varaamo and the City's internal meeting room booking system) will be verified, and questions on the accessibility of meeting facilities will be added to these systems.

The option of participating remotely will be offered for events open to the residents.

### Developing the Service Map

#### New policies

New items will be added to the list of questions in the Service Map's accessibility application (theatres, ferry terminals, coach and metro stations, concert halls, play parks and playgrounds, lifts in public areas, polling stations).

The Central Election Committee will choose accessible venues as polling stations. The information will include a note on the polling stations' accessibility (a link to the Service Map's accessibility information).

## 3.2.6 Accessibility of digital services

### Definitions

#### Digital service:

- Everyday services that utilise information technology, e.g. society's functions, such as banking, public transport, finding information, sending messages and communication in health care.

#### Digital accessibility:

- Non-physical accessibility is linked to digital services, websites, applications and publications. Physical accessibility, on the other hand, pertains to the physical world, for example to removing barriers that hinder mobility or function.
- Digital accessibility means that information is presented in a way that makes it available to everyone at all times. All users must be able to read (see or listen to) the content, regardless of the publication or presentation method.

**The Act on the Provision of Digital Services** aims to promote the accessibility, quality, data security and content accessibility of digital services, thereby improving everyone's ability to use digital services on an equal basis. Chapter 3 of the Act on the Accessibility of Digital Services defines the accessibility criteria and the means to fulfil them.

On 24 October 2019, the City of Helsinki's Digital Steering Committee stated in its minutes that Helsinki will aim to reach level AA- or higher, as defined in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), in the accessibility of its digital services.

#### Technical accessibility guidelines (WCAG)

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 is a set of instructions created by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). W3C is an international organisation that provides recommendations on how websites display their content.

WCAG 2.1 is used extensively, and it often serves as the foundation for accessibility legislation as well. All public sector websites must meet the criteria defined in the Directive on the accessibility of websites and mobile applications.

#### The accessibility requirements apply as follows:

- Websites published on or after 23 September 2018 must comply with the accessibility requirements by 23 September 2019.
- Websites published before 23 September 2018 must comply with the accessibility requirements by 23 September 2020.
- Mobile applications must comply with the accessibility requirements by 23 June 2021.
- Intranet sites of authorities and bodies governed by public law – including those used at workplaces – must comply with the accessibility requirements if published on or after 23 September 2019. The accessibility requirements apply to intranet sites published before 23 September 2019 only if an entire intranet site is renewed, e.g. due to the acquisition of a new publishing system. In that case, when acquiring a publishing system it should be ensured that it supports the implementation of the accessibility requirements.

#### The Directive on the accessibility of websites and mobile applications in procurement

In order to facilitate the design, production and administration of accessible services, publications and online content, procurement documents must define the accessibility objectives and requirements. Accessibility-related requirements may be set for a service to be procured and/or for the service provider.

Accessibility can either be defined as a separate item or included in the requirements on useability, ease-of-use and operational reliability.

Accessibility-related requirements may be set for the service provider (references, competence), persons responsible for providing the service (experience, expertise) and/or the service to be procured.

#### Digital services

New digital services must be accessible.

Helsinki aims to achieve level AA- or higher, as defined in the WCAG 2.1. guidelines, if reasonably possible.

The procurement documents must always define the acquisition-specific accessibility requirements, used to ensure the accessibility of a new service (perceptibility, controllability, understandability and operational reliability).

### **Publications, online content**

Service providers must be required to comply with the requirements defined in the City's accessibility guide when designing, creating, acquiring and maintaining online content and publications.

### **Verifying accessibility**

Service providers must be required to demonstrate the accessibility of the procured digital services.

The client must consider e.g. whether it is necessary to state that automated accessibility verification tools are insufficient for a specific procurement, and instead automatic tools may only be used as support in manual testing.

### **Existing policies**

Based on a decision on accessibility, the city-level accessibility work is coordinated by the City Executive Office and the work is developed onwards together with the divisions and municipal enterprises.

The special responsibilities of the City Executive Office include chairing the accessibility network, monitoring

the City's accessibility work, updating the accessibility-related guidelines and managing contracts.

The accessibility work of the City of Helsinki's digital services is coordinated by the accessibility network, whose duty is to maintain communication and distribute information. Municipal enterprise and division-specific reports on the accessibility work are submitted within the network.

The consultants used by the City are required to have skills in accessibility, in accordance with the competence requirements of the planning role.

Furthermore, training on accessibility is provided for the staff of the City of Helsinki's divisions and municipal enterprises, in addition to which it is ensured that both the clients and producers of the City possess sufficient skills and knowledge in accessibility. The needs of the division and municipal enterprise staff members determine the type of training required. Additionally, accessibility training may be organised in cooperation with disability organisations. User-level expertise is utilised in the training.



# 4. Monitoring and assessment of accessibility implementation

A communication tool has been developed based on geographic data in order to monitor the progress of the accessibility work. This tool is called the Helsinki Region Service Map, and it receives the accessibility data from an operating location register's application.

Reports on the accessibility information provided by individual operating locations are available from the register. These so-called Bo reports can be further developed and utilised in planning and monitoring the accessibility data.

The City of Helsinki's accessibility policies, accessibility indicators and future reports, created based on the accessibility application's database, are the accessibility working group's main tools in monitoring the implementation of accessibility.

The progress made in the implementation of the accessibility policies will be reported to the divisions' steering committees every two years, going forward. The reports made to the City Board will follow the reporting procedure of the working groups appointed by the City Manager, and reports will be submitted to the City Board when updating the accessibility policies. Additionally, a review of the promotion of accessibility in a specific division may be presented to the division's committees, if the division's administration so chooses.

A city-level accessibility network will monitor how well accessibility is achieved and report to the City's Digital Steering Committee. The accessibility auditing will be centralised to the City Executive Office's Digital Unit, which will arrange a tendering for the service providers and monitor that the website receives appropriate amendments based on the audits.

# Appendix: Table of responsibilities

## 3. Accessibility policies in 2022–2025

### 3.1 General operational principles

#### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The consultants used by the City are required to have skills in accessibility, in accordance with the competence requirements of the planning role. The principal planning officer must typically be able to make designs according to legislation, and the building control services will verify that the planning officers are qualified.	An existing policy	All the City Executive Office divisions, the Metropolitan Area Transport and HSL procurement units. Recommended that HSL be in charge, because it operates across several cities.	The result meets with the accessibility criteria, customer feedback.
Training on accessibility is continuously provided for the staff of the City of Helsinki's divisions, in addition to which it is ensured that both the clients and producers of the City possess sufficient skills and knowledge in accessibility. The divisions themselves must determine the type of training they require, and accessibility training must be organised in cooperation with disability organisations. The verification of the planning officers' competence in accessibility also requires the development of the accessibility training. User-level expertise is utilised in the training.	An existing policy	The accessibility ombudsman with all the divisions, as well as the accessibility contact persons from the Metropolitan Area Transport and HSL. Recommended that HSL be in charge, because it operates across several cities.	The number of training sessions organised and their participants.

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
<p>Nationwide networking: collaboration between municipal accessibility experts will continue. Cooperation with the state: participation in the ministries' accessibility-related development projects. Global cooperation: work with other countries' accessibility experts will continue. Since 2011, Helsinki has been a member of the Eurocities Barrier Free Cities network.</p>	An existing policy	The accessibility ombudsman	Participation in the network's events.
	An existing policy	The accessibility ombudsman	Reporting on the cooperation.
	An existing policy	The accessibility ombudsman	Participation in the network's events.
<p>Private parties, such as land owners, businesses and tradespeople, will be included in the work as partners as early as possible when planning accessibility measures.</p>	An existing policy	All divisions, the Metropolitan Area Transport and HSL. Recommended that HSL be in charge, because it operates across several cities.	Feedback received.

## New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
<p>Accessibility will be taken into account in the division's service and activity plans. The accessibility working group will create a model used to ensure that the divisions appoint accessibility expertise officers. These officers will monitor, promote and improve accessibility in their respective divisions, respond to accessibility-related feedback from the residents, provide advice and share information about accessibility in their divisions with the residents.</p>	From 2022 onwards	The accessibility working group, all divisions, the Metropolitan Area Transport and HSL. Recommended that HSL be in charge, because it operates across several cities.	Accessibility reports to the divisions' administration.
<p>The housing production requires that special housing projects have references from similar projects.</p>	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Housing Production	The accessibility working group's report.
<p>Designers and manufacturers of indoor signs will undergo tendering, and framework agreements that define the quality requirements for accessibility are created for purchasing sign designs.</p>	From 2022 onwards	The procurement units of the City Executive Office and the Urban Environment Division together.	The tendering and framework agreements have been completed.

## 3.2 Accessibility focal points

### 3.2.1 Zoning, traffic planning and public transport

#### Accessibility target levels

##### Special level

Special level areas are determined according to their services and usage, and they include areas, routes and locations whose accessibility requirements are higher than usual. All other areas are basic level areas in terms of their accessibility requirements.

A more detailed description of the target levels can be found [on page 6](#).

#### Accessibility in areas of new zoning and changing land use

##### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
A city plan is a strategic plan whose creation includes a rough assessment of the social, health and comfort-related effects on people. At a local master plan level, areas are reserved e.g. for public services, which may include both basic and special-level sites. The terrain and transport-related accessibility must be taken into account at the site-specific level.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Spatial Planning	Accessibility is included in the city plan, designs and reviews.
The concrete decisions on accessibility, for example when it comes to the location of buildings and access routes, are made during the detailed planning phase.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning	The accessibility solutions are described in the plan commentary.
New areas will be designed to be either basic or special in their level of accessibility.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning	The accessibility solutions are described in the plan commentary.
Service locations must be determined with their accessibility in mind, particularly when it comes to longitudinal gradients. Special-level areas are determined in cooperation with the zoning, transport and implementation planning unit, as well as the accessibility ombudsman, if necessary. In other areas, the goal is to achieve a basic accessibility level whose implementation complies with the guidelines intended for that level.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning, Traffic and Street Planning, Urban Space and Landscape Planning Urban Environment Division: Public Areas	The accessibility solutions are described in the plan commentary.

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The accessibility criteria (existing accessibility and construction guidelines) are in use in master and detailed planning, as well as the related guidelines. The accessibility planning carried out when creating master and detailed plans is emphasised.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Master and Detailed Planning	The accessibility solutions are described in the plan commentary.
The viability of the principles and solutions defined in the local master plan is verified during the preparation of a detailed plan. It is particularly important to make sure that the special accessibility areas and routes can be created as planned. This requires cooperation between the creators of the zoning, traffic arrangement and implementation plans. The plans for all special accessibility level areas are created in collaboration with the accessibility ombudsman. However, in certain areas, steep gradients make it impossible to achieve accessibility in the best possible way.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning, Traffic and Street Planning, Urban Space and Landscape Planning Urban Environment Division: Public Areas	The accessibility solutions are described in the plan commentary.
Extensive amendments to the plans of old areas or urban infill plans ensure that the accessibility target levels set for these areas at higher planning levels are taken into account and implemented, wherever possible.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning	The accessibility solutions are described in the plan commentary.

## Placement of operations and accessibility of services

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Adequate space must be reserved for public and private service operations (e.g. private medical clinics) and operations must be located with the accessibility aspects in mind.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning	The accessibility solutions are described in the plan commentary.
Buildings of public and private services must be located near good, accessible public transport connections.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning	The accessibility solutions are described in the plan commentary.

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Accessible and safe connections from the street to a property and building entrance must be ensured. Entrances in everyday use must be made accessible, where possible.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Premises, Building Control Services and the user division's premises services	The number of accessible entrances on the Service Map.

#### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
A detailed plan must ensure the adequacy of the number, capacity and location (e.g. distance from the main entrance) of accessible parking spots and drop-off areas. A city-wide plan will be drawn up on accessible parking spots in the street area, and their locations will be published on the Service Map.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning and Traffic Planning	The number of accessible parking and drop-off spots.

#### Functionality of public transport network

##### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The public transport lines and stops are placed in a way that allows pedestrians to have accessible connections from the stops to services and between services.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning, HSL Recommended that HSL be in charge, because it operates across several cities.	Customer feedback received.

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
An accessible transfer option from one transport means to another is provided.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning, HSL Recommended that HSL be in charge, because it operates across several cities.	Customer feedback received.
The dimensions of stops and terminals take the requirements of drop-off traffic, persons with reduced mobility or functional impairment, people with prams and mechanical cleaning implements into account.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning, HSL Recommended that HSL be in charge, because it operates across several cities.	Customer feedback received.

## Accessibility of streets, parks and nature trails

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The aim is to place the streets, parks and nature trails in new zoning areas in a way that their gradients do not exceed the permitted longitudinal gradient, which is 5% for the special level and 8% for the basic-level areas.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning, Traffic and Street Planning, Urban Space and Landscape Planning	The number of accessible passages in streets, parks and natural areas.
Pedestrian and cycling lanes are always separated from the rest of the traffic, if possible, and adequate space for this is reserved during the zoning phase.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning	The number of accessible passages in streets, parks and natural areas.

## A policy that requires improvement

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The aim is to provide enough space for snow deposits. The accessibility space reservations must also be verified for winter conditions (sufficiently wide passageways). For example, suitable areas and route dimensions for temporary snow deposits are marked in area illustrations.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning, Traffic and Street Planning, Urban Space and Landscape Planning	The amount of customer feedback received.

## Traffic planning

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Traffic arrangements are always planned by using the relevant type drawings of the street areas.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning	The measure is implemented in the traffic designs.
The accessibility level of an area, either special or basic, is verified and recorded in the traffic plans.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning	The measure is implemented in the traffic designs.
The light signals for traffic are designed with the accessibility aspects in mind.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning	The number of audio guided junctions (% of all junctions).
The Traffic and Street Planning Unit has created guidelines for companies that rent out electric scooters.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning	The guidelines have been created.



## New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The aim is to update the development programme for traffic safety. Accessibility will be taken into account when carrying out these measures.	By the end of 2021.	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning	The update has been completed.
The aim is to determine the time available to cross the pedestrian crossings closest to special-level sites in a way that allows pedestrians to cross the entire street at the calculated speed of 0.8 m/s or, if this is not possible, at least reach the next traffic island of a sufficient width.	Continuous action	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning	Number of pedestrian crossings (%) with a long green interval.

## Public transport vehicles, information system and terminals

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The public transport fleet is accessible and easy to use.	An existing policy	HSL and Metropolitan Area Transport Recommended that HSL be in charge, because it operates across several cities.	Number of Metropolitan Area Transport's low-floor trams: % of all trams (rush hour separately). HSL Number of low-floor buses: % of all buses (rush hour separately).
The public transport information system is a versatile multichannel system that takes accessibility into account in the communications/when distributing information about exceptional arrangements. For example, messages with the same content are displayed on screens at stops, onboard vehicles, in the application, via email messages and on the hsl.fi website.	An existing policy	HSL Recommended that HSL be in charge, because it operates across several cities.	Customer feedback received.

## 3.2.2 Public buildings (City-owned and private facilities in public use, excluding residential buildings)

### Accessibility target levels

#### Special level

Special level areas are determined according to their services and usage, and they include areas, routes and locations whose accessibility requirements are higher than usual. All other areas are basic level areas in terms of their accessibility requirements.

A more detailed description of the target levels can be found [on page 6](#).

### Facilities owned or rented by the City from an external party

#### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The facilities owned or rented by the City from an external party will be required to have the same level of accessibility. The accessibility of rented facilities will be verified before signing a lease. The facilities' suitability for their intended use will also be verified.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Premises	The accessibility criteria and parties responsible for ensuring the accessibility of the facilities will be included in leases.

### Project plan existing policies

#### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The aim is to arrange an accessible entrance for all of the administrative buildings used by the City.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Premises	The number of accessible entrances on the Service Map.
All of the City's administrative buildings that have a customer service desk have accessible customer service facilities, as well as accessible toilets in areas open to the public.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Premises	Number of accessible toilets on the Service Map.

## New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The aim is to require that the outdoor and indoor areas of the city-owned and private buildings in public use have the same accessibility target levels.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Building Control Services	The accessibility information of buildings is provided similarly on the Service Map.
Sound beacons will be installed at the entrances of special level locations.	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Premises; Social Services and Health Care Division: Premises Services; Metropolitan Area Transport	The sound beacons have been installed.
In order to ensure accessibility, the City has design guidelines in place. Anyone undertaking a construction project must recommend that the project designers comply with these guidelines.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Premises	The compliance with the planning guidelines has been included in the project plans.
The appointed representatives of the Council on Disability and the Elderly Citizens Council will take part in reviewing the plans when important special-level construction projects are planned.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Premises; Social Services and Health Care Division: Premises Services; Metropolitan Area Transport	The interaction has been included in the project plan.

## Accessibility reviews at special-level sites

### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The principal planning officer will compile an accessibility review for a special-level location and the accessibility ombudsman will provide feedback on it. An installation plan will be drawn up for sanitary spaces, specifying the locations, dimensioning and installation heights of fixtures and equipment. The operator undertaking a project must have their plans reviewed. A plan on the signs to be installed at special-level locations will be created, and it will be reviewed by the accessibility ombudsman and a representative of the building control services. The operator undertaking a project must ensure that sufficient funding is allocated for designing and implementing a sign plan.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Premises, Building Control Services	The accessibility ombudsman's comments have been recorded in the accessibility review. An installation plan is required for all sanitary spaces. The creation of a plan for signs is included in the special-level locations' accessibility reviews.
When it comes to the City's largest special-level undertakings, an accessibility group can be appointed to monitor a project and accessibility reviews can be carried out during construction and before a site is commissioned for use. The need for the measures described above is determined in an accessibility review, included as an appendix to a building permit.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Premises, Building Control Services	The number of accessibility groups formed (% of all special-level projects).

## Ensuring accessibility of non-residential buildings

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The accessibility of a building must be reviewed during the completion phase. The operator undertaking the project is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate review of practical functionality is carried out.	An existing policy	Party undertaking a project	The functionality survey is documented before a building is commissioned for use.

## New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The principal planning officer and the operator carrying out a special-level project must conduct a separate accessibility review with experts. During the review, they must verify that all the items specified in the accessibility review have been taken into account in the implementation and that the sanitary spaces have been built according to the installation plan. A statement on the accessibility must be completed before the building control services carry out the final review in order to allow the use of a building or a part of it to commence. The principal planning officer will verify the statement on the accessibility.	From 2022 onwards	The principal planning officer and party undertaking a project	The accessibility review is documented before the final review by the building control services.

## Accessibility of temporary facilities

### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Customers and staff must be able to use the space and move around it without barriers. Furthermore, an accessible place for meetings must be available (an accessible meeting room or venue). At least half of the repeatedly used locations (e.g. basic education facilities) must be accessible. Special classrooms, as well as facilities intended for meals and exercise, must be accessible. If an operating unit has several special classrooms of a similar type, it will be enough for one of each type to be accessible. All of these accessible facilities must have barrier-free access to an accessible toilet. All of the operating facilities of special schools and daycare centres (e.g. groups for persons with severe (TOI) or multiple (MOVA) disabilities) must be accessible.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Premises; Education Division: Premises Services; Culture and Leisure Division: Premises Services; Social Services and Health Care Division: Premises Services	The policy is in use.

## Building maintenance

### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Once a building has undergone a final review and it has been commissioned, the building's owner is responsible for verifying that its technical equipment is functioning appropriately (electric door openers, induction loops). The user is responsible for providing instruction on the use of the technical equipment. Furthermore, accessibility improvements must be carried out outside of basic renovation measures as well.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Premises; Education Division: Premises Services; Culture and Leisure Division: Premises Services; Social Services and Health Care Division: Premises Services	The accessibility of accessibility improvements. Ensuring functionality and providing instructions on use: amount of customer feedback. The Service Map reports on accessibility problems are used in the reporting.

## Terms and conditions for rent and conveyance of property

### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The accessibility goal is included in the terms and conditions for the rent and conveyance of property. The viability of accessibility must be ensured during zoning, as well as area, traffic and construction planning.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Land Property and Plots	The policy is included in the terms and conditions for the rent and conveyance of property.

## Accessibility of air raid shelters

### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The accessibility of air raid shelters intended for the city's residents will be assessed and the aim is to improve its level. Information on accessibility will be added to the City of Helsinki's air raid shelters listed on the Service Map.	From 2022 onwards	Rescue Department	The accessibility information of air raid shelters can be found on the Service Map.

## 3.2.3 Public areas

### Accessibility target levels

#### Special level

Special level areas are determined according to their services and usage, and they include areas, routes and locations whose accessibility requirements are higher than usual. All other areas are basic level areas in terms of their accessibility requirements.

A more detailed description of the target levels can be found [on page 6](#).

### Network reviews and public area plans

#### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
During network reviews and in public area plans, the target levels of special and basic-level routes (park, recreation and nature trails) and areas will be reviewed and updated, and special-level accessible play parks will be recorded, wherever one has been specified for an area. New accessible resting places will be added (every 50 m in special-level areas and every 250 m in basic-level areas).	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Urban Space and Networks	The information on accessible routes is up to date.  The information on the current accessibility of accessible special-level play parks is up to date. The number of accessible resting places is established.

### Local outdoor exercise facilities

#### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Outdoor exercise venues must also have special-level exercise areas. The locations of the special-level outdoor exercise venues will be determined at the city level. The accessibility criteria will be factored in when planning and building local exercise venues, and selecting the equipment.	2022–2025	Culture and Leisure Division, Urban Environment Division: Neighbourhood sports programme	The locations of outdoor exercise venues have been determined at the city level. The number of accessible outdoor exercise locations (including the equipment).

## Urban space guidelines

### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
A range of signs suitable for the outdoor environment will be developed for the urban space guidelines, using the accessibility symbols created in the Helsinki for All project.	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Urban Space and Networks	The signs have been completed.

## Accessibility of natural sites

### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
A network review and a long-term plan will be created for the locations of accessible natural sites.	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Environmental Protection, Nature and Environmental Awareness	A network review and a long-term plan have been created.

## Model solutions for natural site structures

### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Model plans will be created for the accessible structures of natural sites.	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Environmental Protection, Nature and Environmental Awareness	The model solutions have been completed.



## Streets and park routes

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The continuity of passageways (walking and cycling) is ensured through cooperation between different divisions.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning	The walking and cycling routes have been determined at the city level. The special and basic-level routes already defined are used as the basis.

### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Special and basic-level routes planned as accessible will be made accessible. A long-term plan will be created for turning streets and park routes into accessible ones.	2022–2032	Urban Environment Division: Traffic and Street Planning, Urban Space and Landscape planning, Public Areas	The number of accessible routes is established.

## Winter maintenance

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The winter maintenance purchase documents for streets define the accessibility criteria for different routes in terms of their winter maintenance. The client instructs the service providers on routes and areas defined as accessible.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Public Areas	The accessibility criteria are included in the winter maintenance purchase documents.  The client has provided instructions to the service providers.

## New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Winter maintenance will pay special attention to maintaining the accessibility of pedestrian and cycle routes under winter conditions as well, so that all the residents can move around the urban area safely and easily.	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Public Areas	The accessibility criteria are included in the winter maintenance purchase documents. The client has provided instructions to the service providers.

## Play parks

### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Play parks defined as special-level ones will be renovated in cooperation between different divisions, according to a renovation programme, so that they will comply with the accessibility criteria. The accessibility criteria will be added to the policy on play services. All new play park buildings will be made accessible.	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Urban Space and Landscape Planning, Premises; Education Division: Premises Services	The number of accessible play parks and play park buildings on the Service Map.
An accessibility target level and objectives will be recorded in the project plans.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Premises; Education Division: Premises Services	The accessibility target level and goals have been recorded in the project programmes.

## Parks

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The accessibility target level – either special or basic – is recorded in the park plans.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Urban Space and Landscape Planning, Public Areas	The accessibility target level has been recorded in the park plan commentary.

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Accessibility is taken into account in renovation projects.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Public Areas	The accessibility measures have been recorded in the park plan commentary.

## Permit terms and conditions for public areas

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The criteria for the location, number and features of advertising stands are reviewed, including the policy on A stands.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Land Use and Monitoring	The policy has been updated.

### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The existing guidelines will be reviewed in terms of the accessibility aspects, and future updates will account for a potential need for alterations (events, beer gardens, worksites, temporary structures).	2022–2023	Urban Environment Division: Land Use and Monitoring	The instructions have been updated and accessibility has been included in them.

## Lighting

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The lighting level and method are defined with accessibility in mind, and criteria are set for special and basic-level accessible routes and areas.	An existing policy	Urban Environment Division: Urban Space and Landscape Planning	The lighting criteria for accessible routes and areas have been created.

## 3.2.4 Housing

### Housing stock accessibility reviews and rectifying accessibility shortcomings

#### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The accessibility level of the common facilities, entrances (such as door opening, steps in front of the door/ramp), air raid shelters and yard areas of the City of Helsinki's housing companies will be assessed and shortcomings in accessibility will be systematically remedied outside of major renovation projects as well.	2022–2025	Helsingin kaupungin asunnot (HEKA), Helsingin Asumisoikeus (HASO)	The accessibility level has been assessed and a long-term plan has been drawn up for accessibility improvements.

### Housing unit design

#### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
As the population ages, the number of residents who require assistive devices at home and for mobility will increase. Housing designs must ensure that assistive mobility devices can be safely stored in an assistive device/pram storage room or an outdoor exercise equipment room.	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Housing Production	The safe storage of assistive devices has been guaranteed.
Accessible parking spots will be located near homes in a way that facilitates their functional use. It is often only possible to place accessible parking spots and, possibly, guest parking spots near homes. However, a low number of parking spots must not make it more difficult for persons with reduced mobility or functional impairment to use their car.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Housing Production	The number and location of accessible parking spots have been recorded in the plans.
The City must publish the locations of the accessible parking spots at the City-owned residential properties on the Service Map.	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Housing Production, HEKA, HASO	The accessible parking spots of residential properties can be found on the Service Map.

## Terms and conditions for property conveyance and land lease

### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
In its terms and conditions for property conveyance and land lease, the City must ensure that the property and parking companies will do their part in providing accessible routes for transport service and drop-off vehicles to the yard areas of the buildings.	From 2022 onwards	Urban Environment Division: Land Property and Plots	The terms and conditions for property conveyance and land lease ensure that accessible routes for transport service and drop-off vehicles exist to the yard areas of the buildings.

## The City's housing consultation

### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The City's housing consultation service must be further improved and expanded, so that residents can also receive advice on housing-related accessibility issues. Housing-related accessibility advice should be provided to all who live in the city. In addition to making alterations to housing units, residents will need instruction and advice whenever their private housing company must contact the City's Land Use and Street Plan Unit in order to make the housing company's entrance accessible.	From 2022 onwards	City Executive Office, Financial and Planning Services; Social Services and Health Care Division: Advice for the Disabled Unit	

## Fixing, modernising or replacing a lift

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Solutions that maintain the same lift car dimensions or increase them should be utilised when fixing, modernising or replacing a lift.	An existing policy	City of Helsinki lift ombudsman; Urban Environment Division: Building Control Services	

## Alterations to housing units

### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The City of Helsinki's guidelines will apply when making alterations to housing units. The multi-stage process of carrying out bespoke alterations in a housing unit based on the Act on Disability Services and Assistance must be coordinated, improved and expedited through cooperation between the divisions.	2022–2023	Social Services and Health Care Division: Disability Services; Urban Environment Division: Premises	Customer feedback received.

## Housing for the elderly

### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The City will further develop the housing solutions for the elderly. These include solutions somewhere between intensive assisted living and usual living arrangements, in which the quality and quantity match the aging population's needs and help the elderly live independently in their own homes.	2022–2025	City Executive Office: Financial and Planning Services, Housing	The quality and quantity of new housing solutions.

## Business collaboration

### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Cooperation with businesses will be increased in terms of the accessibility of living environments (e.g. when a route passes via a shopping centre or another service).	2022–2025	Urban Environment Division: Detailed Planning, Building Control Services	The number of joint projects carried out.

## 3.2.5 Accounting for accessibility in digital services

### Surveys

#### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
In addition to map-based surveys, alternative participation ways will be offered and these will be clearly indicated in the letters that accompany the surveys.	From 2022 onwards	All divisions	Alternative ways to participate are available.

### Sign language and plain language

#### New policy

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The City's communications will be carried out in an accessible manner in sign language and plain language. More information will be available in the City of Helsinki's communication policies and guidelines.	From 2022 onwards	City Executive Office: Communications	More information will be available in the City of Helsinki's communication policies and guidelines.

### Organising events and reserving facilities

#### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Events held by the City will be accessible, whenever possible, and they will be organised in facilities that are as accessible as possible. Accessibility will be made a strong objective/recommendation between the City and private organisers/operators renting facilities when signing a rental and/or other agreement. This means that an event organiser must ensure the accessibility of their event within the framework of what the venue has to offer. The event guidelines for organisers compiled by Helsinki provide tips on accessible events.	From 2022 onwards	City Executive Office: Communications Department, Brand Unit in cooperation; Urban Environment Division: Land Use and Communications	The event guidelines for organisers compiled by Helsinki provide tips on accessible events.

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
The accessibility of the facility reservation systems (Varaamo and the City's internal meeting room booking system) will be verified, and questions on the accessibility of meeting facilities will be added to these systems.	2022–2023	City Executive Office, Strategy Department	The accessibility information of the premises can be found on Varaamo and the City's internal meeting room reservation system. An accessibility statement exists on how the reservation system's accessibility is ensured.
The option of participating remotely will be offered for events open to the residents.	2022–2025	All divisions	Customer feedback, statistics on the accessibility of events.

## Developing the Service Map

### New policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
New items will be added to the list of questions in the Service Map's accessibility application (theatres, ferry terminals, coach and metro stations, concert halls, play parks and playgrounds, lifts in public areas, polling stations).	2022–2025	Culture and Leisure Division, Port of Helsinki, Metropolitan Area Transport, Urban Environment Division, Central Election Committee	The accessibility information can be found on the Service Map.
The Central Election Committee will choose accessible venues as polling stations. The information will include a note on the polling stations' accessibility (a link to the Service Map's accessibility information).	2022–2025	Central Election Committee	The accessibility information can be found on the Service Map.



## 3.2.6 Accessibility of digital services

### Existing policies

Policy / Measure	Schedule	Party responsible	Indicator
Based on a decision on accessibility, the city-level accessibility work is coordinated by the City Executive Office and the work is developed onwards together with the divisions and municipal enterprises.	An existing policy	City Executive Office	
The special responsibilities of the City Executive Office include chairing the accessibility network, monitoring the City's accessibility work, updating the accessibility-related guidelines and managing contracts.	An existing policy	City Executive Office	
The accessibility work of the City of Helsinki's digital services is coordinated by the accessibility network, whose duty is to maintain communication and distribute information. Municipal enterprise and division-specific reports on the accessibility work are submitted within the network.	An existing policy	The City Executive Office and the accessibility network together	
The consultants used by the City are required to have skills in accessibility, in accordance with the competence requirements of the planning role.	An existing policy	All divisions	
Furthermore, training on accessibility is provided for the staff of the City of Helsinki's divisions and municipal enterprises, in addition to which it is ensured that both the clients and producers of the City possess sufficient skills and knowledge in accessibility. The needs of the division and municipal enterprise staff members determine the type of training required. Additionally, accessibility training may be organised in cooperation with disability organisations. User-level expertise is utilised in the training.	An existing policy	City Executive Office, accessibility network, all divisions	

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