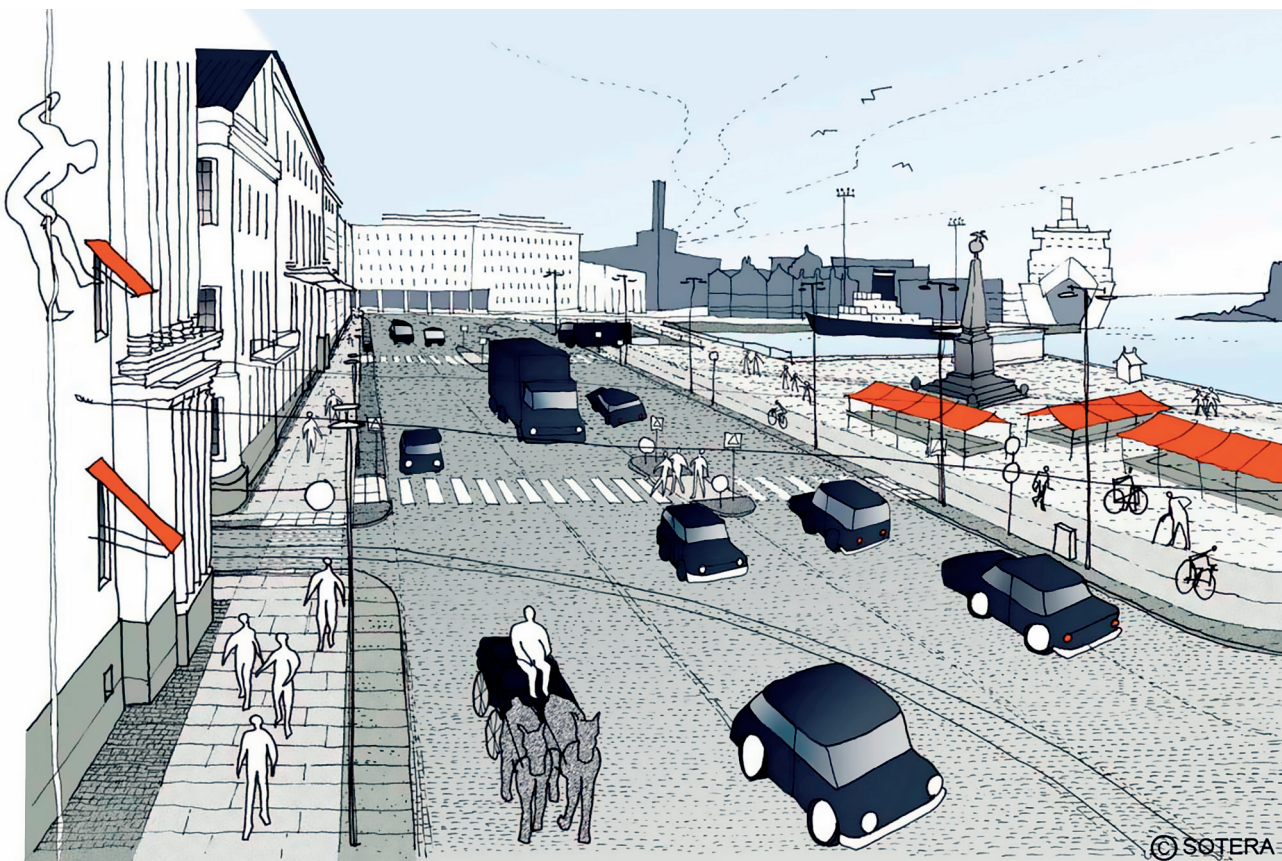




# HELSINKI FOR ALL



Creating an accessible and safe environment strengthens the well-being of the city's residents and the overall functioning of society. The goal of Helsinki's accessibility work is a city in which everyone can move and live with ease, regardless of age and physical condition.

## What is meant by an accessible environment?

- Easy and convenient movement and activity in streets, squares and parks, yards and playgrounds.
- Easy access to buildings and unimpeded movement once inside.
- Stairless access from one place to another and between transport modes.
- Clear directional signs.
- A good acoustic environment.

## All Finland to become accessible

The SuRaKu (from the Finnish words for “design”, “construction” and “maintenance”) programme headed by the City of Helsinki, and with the participation of six Finnish cities, was launched in 2003. Its task was to create a set of accessibility guidelines for the design, construction and maintenance of the city’s public street, park and yard areas. The SuRaKu guidelines were completed in 2004.

The SuRaKu guidelines, which are also used by other municipalities, communities and designers, have laid down the basis for the implementation of the City of Helsinki’s accessibility plan.

### The SuRaKu guidelines contain

- criteria by which the accessibility of outdoor spaces can be assessed and directed

- instructions based on model designs whose criteria can be applied to the design of outdoor public spaces.

General instructions are provided on the instruction cards for the design, construction and maintenance of accessible public areas. Instructions are also provided on the criteria charts and instruction cards for special-level areas considered more challenging from the accessibility standpoint. To facilitate design and construction, a target level is first specified for the area, route or location.

The accessibility criteria and instruction cards can be found at:

[www.hel.fi/helsinkikaikille](http://www.hel.fi/helsinkikaikille)



### Pedestrian and cycle path – for all

- Clear separation between pedestrian and cycle paths.
- Resting places at side and material differentiated from pathway.
- Paths’ intersections clearly marked with different materials.
- Lampposts on same side of pathway direct movement.
- Tree branches do not impede movement.

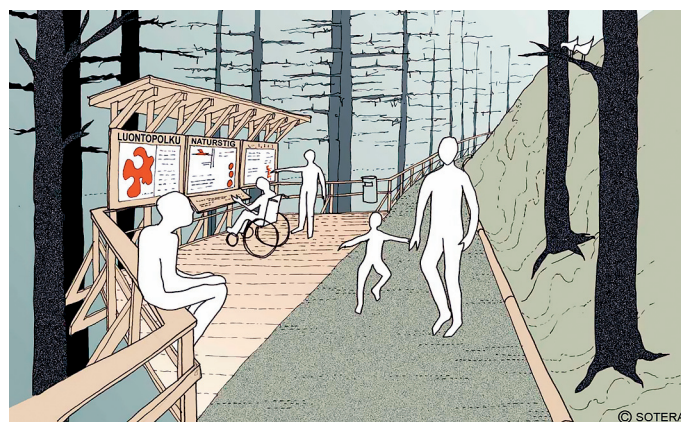
### Park’s information panels – for all

- Information panels set back from pathway.
- Different paving material; guide rails lead to panels.
- Relief map and other information identifiable.



### Public transport platform area – for all

- Platform’s edge markings clearly perceivable.
- Furnishings clearly located in their own zone.
- Clear signage at sufficient height.
- Adequate lighting.





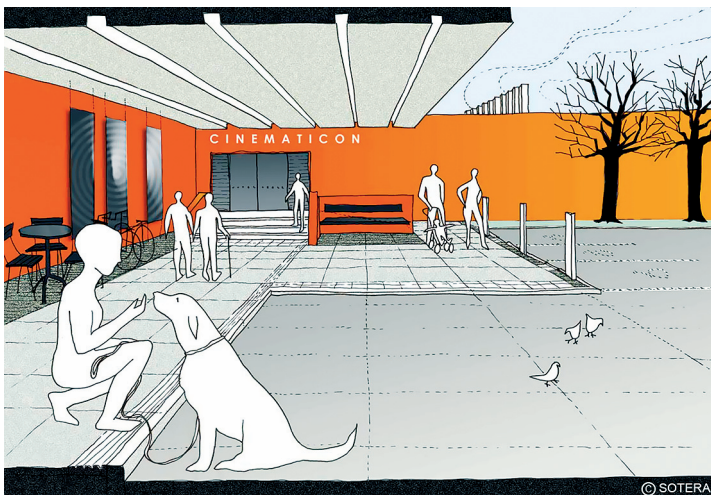
## City of Helsinki accessibility guidelines

The purpose of the City of Helsinki's accessibility guidelines is to function as general guidelines for the entire city and across all administrative branches with regard to accessibility work. The accessibility guidelines constitute an overall framework both for the accessibility implementation programmes of the various administrative branches and for interaction between the branches themselves. Actual implementation measures and time-tables are specified in the implementation programmes and plans of the individual administrative branches.

The accessibility guidelines are divided into five focus areas:

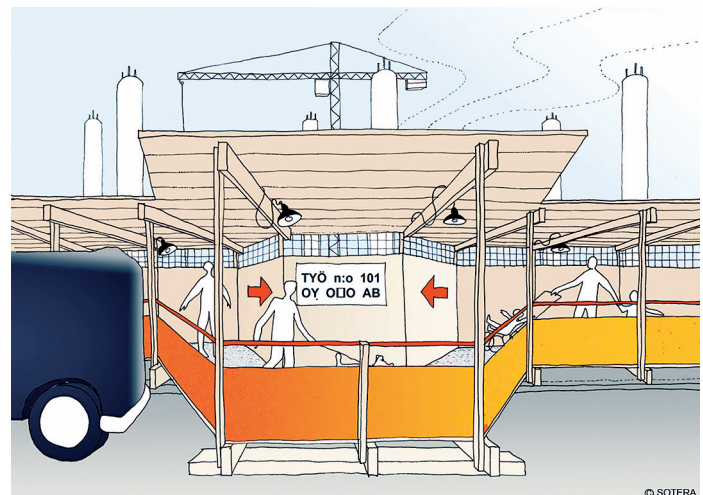
- Planning and traffic planning.
- Buildings.
- Public areas.
- Residential environment.
- Services.

The accessibility guidelines concern all administrative branches whose activities relate to the project in question.



### Building's entrance area – for all

- Building's entrance clearly visible.
- Ramp as well as stairs at entrance.
- Street furniture in separate zone.
- Bollards for traffic barriers marked clearly.

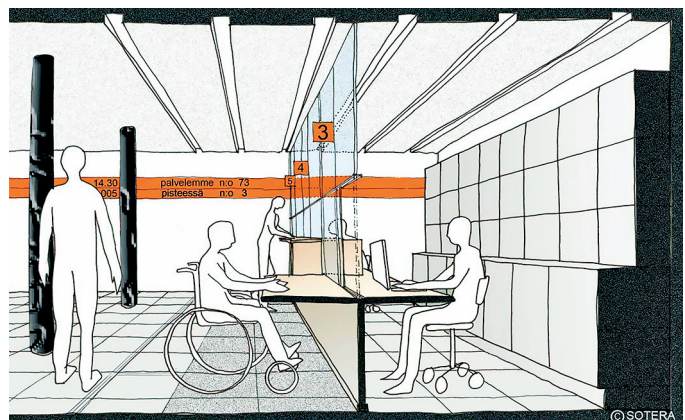


### Walkway bypassing construction site – for all

- Sufficiently wide ramps.
- Protective fence and canopy.
- Proper lighting.
- Clear directional signs.

### Customer service counter – for all

- Contrasting floor colour leads to customer service point.
- Customer service counter separated by glass requires induction loop.
- Service desks at different heights.



## The City of Helsinki accessibility plan

The plan guides the design and improvement of street and green areas, public buildings and public transport modes in accordance with accessibility requirements. The accessibility target has been split into the basic and special levels.

Special-level areas for which recommendations have been drawn up include

- pedestrian streets
- city-centre areas
- immediate surroundings of health centres, service buildings, etc.
- areas with a predominance of elderly and disabled residents
- public transport terminal and parking areas
- public recreational areas and playgrounds designed for all

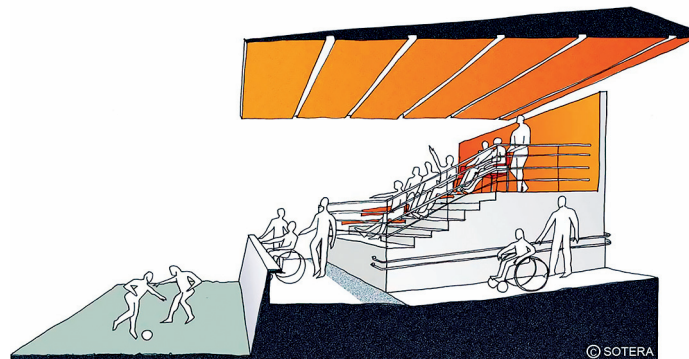
- accessible routes, for example in recreational areas.

A basic level of accessibility requirements has been formulated for other areas.

Needs-based prioritisation is founded on the actual needs of users of the environment; this is the primary starting point for the City of Helsinki accessibility plan. A set of priorities based on construction economy can be used, for example, to guide accessibility planning for large-scale renovation and repair projects; the targets for sustainable development approved by the City of Helsinki are also taken into account.

### Spectator seating – for all

- Path to seating facilitates accessibility for all.
- Railings do not block views.
- Clear colour scheme.
- Handrails at two levels.



## Equality is the goal

### The cornerstones of accessibility are

- legislation
- standards
- functional design
- education
- communications
- socio-political support
- co-operation.

### Accessibility is promoted by

- functional designs
- concrete solutions
- availability and attainability.

### Accessibility solutions include

- ramps
- railings
- resting places
- kerb stones for all
- low-floor transport
- automatic door opening mechanisms
- highlighting of doors with colour contrast
- winter maintenance
- lifts
- guide plates
- orientation stripes

- platforms
- relief signs
- warning areas
- sound signs
- colour contrast
- good acoustics
- nonglaring lights.

### Implementing accessibility requires

- political commitment
- practical measures
- co-operation
- interaction.

**Send us your ideas, questions and opinions!**  
**A Helsinki for All is our common goal!**



### HELSINKI FOR ALL

P.O. Box 1500, 00099 City of Helsinki, FINLAND  
[www.hel.fi/helsinkikaikille](http://www.hel.fi/helsinkikaikille)