



**Business
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The 2023 analysis of the current state of inclusivity in the tourism and event sectors of the City of Helsinki

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Summary

According to the [Helsinki Tourism and Events Programme 2022–2026](#), Helsinki aims to keep “inclusiveness and social and cultural sustainability at the core of development” (City of Helsinki 2022b, 19) and develop the City of Helsinki into “the smartest and most sustainable travel destination” (City of Helsinki 2021, 54). Inclusive operations take into account the diversity of people: age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, language, culture, physical characteristics, special needs and socio-economic status.

For these purposes, an analysis of the current state of inclusivity in the tourism and event sectors of the City of Helsinki was carried out. This was done using interviews, workshops, background material and benchmarking and by performing a SWOT analysis. Based on the analysis of the current situation, three key areas for development can be highlighted: **The representation of diversity in marketing, development of internal inclusivity and diversity and engagement of tourism and service companies as well as event organisers.**

The first area concerns the visibility of diversity in marketing and communications. When communications and content production are invested in and diversity is taken into account to a significant degree, this creates the immediate impression is that Helsinki belongs to everyone and everyone is welcome. The foundation consists of Helsinki’s completed groundwork and reputation as a safe, equal and non-discriminating place. The measures will strengthen Helsinki’s brand and reputation as an inclusive travel destination and place for events.

Another significant development area is the development of the organisation’s inner inclusivity and diversity. According to the interviews, the basic information and terminology concerning the target groups was considered lacking. Therefore, training the personnel will increase competence and understanding – inclusiveness stems from the organisation’s own work community, which is also enriched by the diversity of the personnel. Smooth physical and information system connections enhance all operations such as the uniformity of accessibility information and the quality and retrievability of the material in media banks.

The third development area is the engagement of tourism and service companies as well as event organisers: when companies and event organisers are educated and activated more, the amount of inclusive products, services and events in Helsinki will also increase. This will then be reflected in Helsinki’s reputation. For example, the development of the Think Sustainably service is a significant way of encouraging companies to engage in more inclusive operations.

By investing in these goals and measures, the work for the inclusive and socially and culturally sustainable development of Helsinki can be continued.

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1 Introduction

According to the [Helsinki Tourism and Events Programme 2022–2026](#), Helsinki wants to be the most sustainable destination in the world. Objective B.2 of the programme reads: "Helsinki residents, inclusiveness and social and cultural sustainability [are] at the core of development" (City of Helsinki 2022b). This report discusses the analysis of the current state of inclusivity in the tourism and event sectors of the City of Helsinki. The analysis was performed in November–December 2022 and January–April 2023 commissioned by the Tourism and Destination Management Unit. The aim of the analysis is to create a realistic picture of the current state of inclusivity in the tourism and event sectors and to identify the most important development areas.

1.1 Inclusivity

Inclusivity means participation and belonging. Inclusive operations take into account the diversity of people; nobody is discriminated against, marginalised or excluded. In places such as UNESCO's pillars of sustainable development and the national Sustainable Travel Finland programme of Visit Finland, inclusivity is part of social responsibility.

In inclusive operations, experiences and services are equally available to all, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, language, culture, physical characteristics, special needs or socio-economic status. Operations that serve everyone ensure the achievement of an equal, non-discriminating, open and participation-enhancing society and they promote the objectives of sustainable development. (Visit Finland 2020, 3.)

1.2 Target groups and customer potential

Visit Finland (2020) divides the target groups related to inclusivity into three main groups: people with disabilities, members of the LGBTIQ+ community and people representing different religions and cultures. These groups are referred to in this report as target groups.

People with disabilities are people who have a disability that affects their mobility, vision, hearing or understanding to a degree. The spectrum is very wide. Overall, ¹accessible² services are needed by approximately 15 per cent of the world's population. On a temporary basis, due to things such as recovering from an injury or when travelling with small children, they are needed by about 40 per cent (WHO 2011). An ageing population also creates new service needs.

The LGBTIQ+ community³ refers to the community of people of all ages who belong to gender and sexual minorities. The abbreviation LGBTIQ stands for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people, intersex people and queers. More information about these terms is available in the [LGBTIQ+ vocabulary](#) (Setä ry n.d.). The diverse group is also visible in statistics: The number of LGBTIQ+ families in Finland has tripled in the 2010s (Pietiläinen & Pohjanpää 2019) and, according to a school

¹ *Accessibility* refers to the equal consideration of all people in a particular physical environment (e.g. the space can be used and accessed equally by everyone).

² *Accessibility* also means that all people are taken equally into account in the availability of information and services (e.g. everyone can use a particular website and understand its content equally).

³ LGBTIQ+ is the term Visit Finland uses to refer to gender and sexual minorities.

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survey conducted in 2019, 15 per cent of pupils identified themselves as belonging to the LGBTIQ+ population (THL 2019). It is important that the target group is provided with safe spaces and ⁴ representation in materials.

People of different religions are a diverse group, as belief and doctrine systems are a wide range of customs based on different norms and values, and even people of the same religion can practise their religion in different ways. The most widely practised religions in the world are Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Religions can be taken into account as different needs: for example, the demand for Muslim- and halal-friendly services has been responded to with halal tourism and the related internationally recognised standards such as [CrescentRating](#).

In addition to the groups mentioned above, multilingualism should also be taken into account. According to Statistics Finland's (2021) population structure statistics, 458,000 persons speaking a foreign language lived in Finland in 2021 (a language other than Finnish, Swedish or Sámi). The number grew by more than 25,000 persons from the year before – the sharpest increase in 40 years. The population growth of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area was completely based on this segment of the population.

According to various studies, the economic impact of the development of inclusivity and diversity is significant, and much research on the subject has been carried out in the tourism sector. For example, a person with no disabilities who travels to Spain spends, on average, EUR 600, whereas a person with a disability spends EUR 800 (UNWTO 2020). The LGBTIQ+ population has been found to travel year-round and more than the average, and they spend more money at their destinations than the average tourist (CBI 2020). Before the pandemic, the number of Muslim tourist was growing steadily and in 2019 it was 164 million tourists, 45 per cent of whom are groups of women and women travelling alone (Mastercard-CrescentRating 2022).

Inclusivity and diversity have been found to improve the competitiveness of services. According to the UNWTO (2021), a central requirement for recovering from the pandemic is the development of accessibility and, through that, reaching of new customer groups. It should also be noted that generation Z ⁵ and women in particular appreciate diversity and require organisations and brands to take a stand and real action instead just talking about it. This relates to social responsibility as well. Diversity and inclusivity are prominent elements of the marketing and markets of big international brands.

The development of inclusivity and diversity must apply to all stages of the customer's purchase path (Visit Finland 2020). In addition to the fact that physical structures require development, services need to be developed from the perspective of the LGBTIQ+ population, people of different religions and people who need accessible services. Marketing and communications must be invested in, and targeted and purchasable products must be made available. The targeting of marketing and communications or products – and making them both exclusive and inclusive at the same time – requires knowledge and competence.

⁴ *Representation* refers to the representation and visibility of human diversity and marginalised groups in materials, allowing different viewers to identify with the people in the materials. The term is particularly connected to communications, but it also concerns entities such as work communities and groups of operators.

⁵ Generation Z is made up of people whose year of birth is around 1997–2012.

2 Analysis of the current situation

The analysis of the current situation was compiled using interviews, workshops, background material and benchmarking. A SWOT analysis was also compiled of all data processed. This report highlights the most important observations. The analysis can be viewed in more detail in the full analysis of the current situation (appendix 1).

2.1 Interviews and workshops

16 people were interviewed for the current situation analysis. They all worked at the Helsinki City Group or key stakeholders. After the interviews, a total of three (3) workshops were organised.

In interviews, many felt that Helsinki already has a good foundation as an inclusive and diverse destination. It is noteworthy that all the interviewees have evidence of some kind of actions promoting diversity and inclusion. The measures mentioned by the interviewees included:

- personnel training sessions
- network meetings
- published guides
- website accessibility testing
- hiring a diverse range of professionals, and
- regular updates of guidelines and criteria.

According to the interviewees, the city's internal operations need comprehensive coordination and personnel training. Experts in the subject have huge amounts of information, competence and completed work, but it is not yet being relayed to other employees: those unfamiliar with the subject feel that the subject takes up time, because they have to look for information from multiple different sources. Especially the people who do not work on the theme seemed to have shortcomings in their command of the basic information and terminology concerning the target groups.

The impression was that visual communications had progressed in the last few years, but there was still room for improvement. More visual material is needed. However, the procurement of descriptions and footage highlighting inclusivity and diversity was deemed to be challenging in many ways; finding people to make a film is difficult and they might not want to be labelled as belonging to a special group.

In addition, the interviewees mentioned that many international event locations and travel destinations are considerably ahead of Helsinki due to their population structure and diversity. They also benefit from having long tradition and experience in inclusivity and diversity work.

The interviews also revealed that, in the context of corporate cooperation, inclusivity is an abstract concept for many companies and service providers; it is not fully understood. The responsibility is perceived to be too much for a company that does not necessarily have competence in the subject matter. According to the interviewees, the topic should be deconstructed and made concrete for both tourism companies and event organisers in order to generate interest and awareness.

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Many companies in Helsinki have already developed their services to suit these target groups. For example, Gay Travel Finland⁶ lists several service providers, and many events in Helsinki have cooperated with this service provider to promote LGBTIQ+-friendliness. *Sustainable boost for tourism companies*: In 2022, the training sessions organised by the *Southern Finland* project were attended by several service providers based in Helsinki.

2.2 Analysing the background material

For the purpose of the analysis, several documents, both readily available and sent by the interviewees, concerning the themes of inclusivity were examined. For example, the [Helsinki Tourism and Events Programme 2022-2026](#), [The City of Helsinki's Accessibility Policies 2022–2025](#) and the [City of Helsinki's equality and non-discrimination plan for services 2022–2025](#) contain many good objectives and proposals for measures on the theme. The City of Helsinki also has numerous checklists and guides that are ideal for training and guidance material:

- The materials of the City of Helsinki's project on the social responsibility of the Helsinki Road Map for Events (Milton Group 2022) comprehensively include social responsibility and, therefore, themes of inclusivity that can be applied to other sectors as well. For example, the document on social responsibility at events ("Sosiaalinen vastuullisuus tapahtumissa") includes an expansive list of questions related to social responsibility that could be summarised and applied to activities other than just event organisation.
- [The guide to norm-conscious communications](#) (City of Helsinki n. d. 3) is a comprehensive guide on the topic, covering a wide range of issues related to inclusive communications. The guide also includes quick tips.
- The website [Helsinki for All](#) contains a comprehensive collection of expert information related to the development of accessibility, and it can be used freely by anyone. The website contains, for example, [the Accessibility Dictionary](#) (Helsinki for All n. d. 1).

In terms of visual materials, the city has taken a great leap forward, but investing in the materials must continue. The City of Helsinki has two image banks – the MyHelsinki image bank (materialbank.myhelsinki.fi) and the city's material bank (helsinki.contenthub.fi) – and a visual materials guideline that has proven to be effective (City of Helsinki n. d. 5). However, the image banks have not been synchronised, they have been processed using different systems and different people are involved in the projects, which means that the image banks use inconsistent keywords. For example, the main themes of the search functions in the MyHelsinki image bank include *LGBTIQ+* and *Equality*, but not *Accessible* or *Accessibility*. The tags used have a large number of different terms.

Accessibility has been developed to a high level:

- From an international perspective, the City of Helsinki's Service Map (<https://palvelukartta.hel.fi/en/>) is a unique service that contains service-specific accessibility information. As a result, the City of Helsinki won second place in the European Commission's Access City Award - competition in 2015 and 2022. The data resource is built so that it guides

⁶ A private, commercial website for LGBTIQ+ tourism (www.gaytravelfinland.com).

and advises the user of the data and forms, on the basis of the criteria filled in, a description of accessibility. The data is then transferred from the database on the city platform to both the Service Map and the MyHelsinki website. The Service Map provides open data through an open interface to anyone who wants it. However, the service still needs to be developed. In 2023–2024, accessibility issues concerning playgrounds and restaurants will be prepared. However, it should be noted that, for example, creating a set of questions targeted at different industries requires a lot resources.

- The [MyHelsinki](#) website contains a wealth of information on accessibility and articles produced by a wide range of people, aimed at disability groups and the LGBTIQ+ population. However, not all sites may have adequately clear and objective accessibility descriptions that are based on uniform criteria. The website contains an accessibility statement, and an accessibility survey concerning the site has been concluded. The site is currently being redesigned, and the needs for inclusivity and diversity should be taken into account in the redesign.

2.3. Benchmarking examples

The benchmarking process used as benchmarking examples a few international destinations that have significantly developed their inclusivity and diversity and are known from the perspective of accessible tourism and LGBTIQ+ tourism.⁷

London in Great Britain was assessed from the perspective of accessibility:

- Under the Visit London website operates the Accessible London website.
- Its partner organisation is the AccessAble organisation that covers the entire Great Britain and that surveys and produces accessible information and trains and audits service providers in the tourism and event industries.⁸
- Accessible London has been featured on the site in a manner that is comprehensive and covers the entire service chain.
- Each product and service description provides separately relevant accessibility information, and a link to additional information is prominently displayed. There are product and service descriptions from many different industries, and London's attractive destinations and services are featured extensively.
- All disability groups have been taken into account, and there are, for example, programme services with audio description or they have been interpreted into sign language.
- However, accessibility is not visible in visual communications.

⁷ The event industry has been benchmarked in the project social responsibility of the Helsinki Road Map for Events (Miltton Group 2021), which compares Helsinki to Stockholm and Sydney.

⁸ A similar national example can also be found in Germany (Reisen für Alle n. d.), where multidisciplinary, detailed guidelines and a training programme have been drawn up for the development of accessible tourism. The German example emphasises that information must be reliable, detailed and verified. The accessibility information in the Service Map meets these quality requirements.

For the LGBTIQ+ tourism, the comparison destinations were Long Beach in California and Tel Aviv in Israel:

- Visit Gay Long Beach is a non-profit service for LGBTIQ+ tourism in the Long Beach area that curates safe spaces and advertises a variety of services targeted at the LGBTIQ+ population.
- Visit Israel has for a long time cooperated with Tel Aviv Pride, making Tel Aviv Pride iconic and the biggest Pride event in the region and Tel Aviv a popular destination for LGBTIQ+ tourists.
- Both destinations have published their own websites dedicated to LGBTIQ+ tourists and the communications on the sites are spectacular, colourful and targeted.
- Cooperation with various operators and certification programmes is emphasised.

2.4 Think Sustainably and Sustainable Travel Finland

2. 4.1 The Think Sustainably service

Think Sustainably is a free-of-charge service intended for tourism and service companies and events, and it is used in Helsinki and Tampere. Joining the service happens online and requires filling in at least the minimum number of the required criteria. Three (3) of these criteria address the topic of inclusivity:

- “The operator employs people who have trouble getting employed.”
- “The operator actively and visibly promotes equality and non-discrimination. In addition, both customers and personnel have clear instructions for reporting and addressing inappropriate behaviour.”
- “The location is unobstructed and accessible. The related accessibility information is clearly available.”

The Think Sustainably service implements effectiveness assessments regularly (the latest one in 2022, see Demos Helsinki – City of Helsinki 2022). According to the respondents, participation in the service is easy, and it is perceived as concrete, useful and activating:

- 80% say that the service has encouraged the transition to more sustainable activities.
- 50% have made changes to their operations through the service.
- 13% say they have gained new business or new customers through the service.

The respondents to the impact assessment would like to have more cooperation, networking, concrete support and information on the service and meeting the criteria, as well as joint projects. Helsinki Partners is expected to provide more visible and diverse communications and to increase the number of participants and the visibility of the service. The competence and awareness of companies should be developed by implementing diversity- and inclusivity-related training, networking events and concrete case presentations.

From the perspective of inclusivity and diversity, a few development proposals emerged. There are only three criteria related to inclusivity. Of the target groups, only persons with physical disabilities have their own criteria. In addition, in self-assessment there is always the risk of the criteria being arbitrarily interpreted.

2.4.2 Sustainable Travel Finland programme and Datahub

[Sustainable Travel Finland](#) (STF) is a national, seven-step (7) sustainability programme managed by Visit Finland. Obtaining the STF label requires the preparation of a sustainable tourism development plan, and an auditable certificate (e.g. Ekokompassi, Nordic Ecolabel, ISO 20121), in which the share of inclusivity and diversity has been taken into account in many different ways. The participants themselves define the contents of the development plan using the self-assessment targets of the different phases, which also include an expansive selection of themes of inclusivity and diversity. The self-assessment targets are clear and address one topic or target group at a time. The development plan sets objectives that are verified with measures. Visit Finland accepts or rejects the application.

Service providers feel that the STF programme is not a low-threshold programme like the Think Sustainably service. It requires work from the participants, includes numerous elements and a wide range of criteria, and the information related to it needs to be updated annually. Therefore, it is recommended that the participating companies participate in STF coaching.

In the national database Datahub maintained by Visit Finland,⁹ service providers can mark their STF status and sort products as *accessible*, *LGBTQ+-friendly* and *child-friendly*. Datahub had (16.12.2022):

- 12 Helsinki-based companies with an STF label
- 98 Helsinki-based companies, 239 products and 68 STF products
- 31 Helsinki-based companies, 63 products and 18 STF products, when the search is narrowed down with the accessibility tag
- 10 Helsinki-based companies, 14 products and 1 STF product when the search is narrowed down with the LGBTQ+ tag.

Visit Finland has increased the importance of the STF label in the sales events it organises, and during the analysis of the current situation, Visit Finland announced its first sales events that are open only to those who have received the STF label. The importance of the STF programme is also influenced by the priorities of public funding, which guide companies to take into account sustainable development and implement measures related to it. The Think Sustainably service should be developed to be consistent using the criteria of the STF programme and thus encourage companies to follow the STF path.

2.5 SWOT analysis of the current situation

At the end of the analysis of the current situation, a SWOT was compiled to highlight the City of Helsinki's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats from an inclusivity perspective.

2.5.1 Strengths

⁹DataHub is a national database maintained by Visit Finland where Finnish companies providing tourism services can save information about their company and the products and services they offer. The interface allows different domestic and international operators to search for and publish information on companies and products in the tourism sector through their own channels.

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- Helsinki is a diverse city where the proportion of the population from a foreign background is constantly growing.
- Both structural accessibility and information related to accessibility (e.g. Service Map) have been developed to a level that is high even on an international scale.
- In recent years, much has been invested in both the city's material bank and the MyHelsinki image bank, as well as in the related guidelines, and the material has been diversified.
- In connection with the update of the MyHelsinki website, inclusivity and diversity will be taken into account better than before.
- The Think Sustainably service benefits the participants, it is seen as effective, it is updated regularly and it encourages participants to continue on to the path of Sustainable Travel Finland.
- The City of Helsinki is very determined to develop the diversity of its personnel by, for example, using anonymous recruitment and positive special treatment.

2.5.2 Weaknesses

- The knowledge of the experts in the subject, the work carried out, the competence, and the different measures are not yet being relayed completely smoothly on to stakeholders or within units.
- There are still issues in the management of basic information and terminology concerning the target groups and in the identification of privileges.
- The city's internal information and all training sessions are only available in Finnish and possibly Swedish, not in any other languages.
- The criteria of the Think Sustainably service do not yet include comprehensively enough the key target groups of inclusivity and diversity.
- At the moment, the Service Map does not apply to all services and, for example, there are no hotels or restaurants.
- Marketing and communications aimed at target groups need to be developed, for example from the perspective of the representation of diversity and the more visible utilisation of Helsinki's pull factors.
- Companies and event organisers do not yet recognise the business potential of diversity and inclusivity, the scope of development needs or brand value, which means that the number of targeted services and products is also limited.

2.5.3 Opportunities

- Helsinki's brand as a diverse and inclusive destination can be enhanced by utilising the good groundwork already done and Finland's reputation as a safe, equal and non-discriminating destination in an international context.

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- It is beneficial to understand that these target groups are already included in the target groups currently pursued by Helsinki. Therefore, LGBTIQ+ communications can be targeted at, for example, wealthy women, LGBTIQ+ families and non-binary genders, and LGBTIQ+ communications are an opportunity to stand out from the benchmarking destinations.
- Both marine and urban nature themes offer plenty of opportunities to develop and highlight destinations, services and products that are related to the theme but differ from other countries and destinations.
- When measures promoting diversity are invested in now, they will be a seamless part of the organisation in the future (e.g. instead of separate descriptions of diversity, all images represent human diversity by default, and instead of separate articles, different groups are taken into account in all articles).
- Many studies have found that measures that focus on diversity strengthen the brand, improve competitiveness and customer satisfaction and, among other things, even out seasonal fluctuations at company level.

2.5.4 Threats

- If the shortcomings, privileges and underlying prejudices you yourself or your organisation may have are not recognised and if the fears and needs or business potential of different target groups are not understood, the necessity of the measures serving the target groups will be questioned and implementing the measures will become slower and more difficult.
- If marketing and communications targeted at the target groups are not integrated into the rest of the comprehensive marketing and communications, they will not produce the desired results.
- If diversity is only focused on from the customer perspective, knowledge and understanding remain superficial; diversity and inclusivity stem from the organisations' own work community.
- The pursuit of inadequate or superficial sustainability can be regarded as greenwashing or pinkwashing (e.g. the implementation of LGBTIQ+ communications only during Pride even though the communications could be year-round).
- If tourism and service companies and event organisers do not become more active and competence is not improved, there will not be enough targeted services, which will lead to a situation where Helsinki is not seen as a genuinely diverse and inclusive destination.

3. Proposed measures

A. Representation of diversity in marketing

When the representation of diversity is strongly emphasised in both brand image and visual communications, it is an immediate sign that Helsinki is for all and everyone is welcome. By investing in targeted, sustained and current content production, the target groups can be reached better than before. Various measures, such as the organisation of an annual seminar, can be used to increase the visibility of Helsinki among the target groups, activate stakeholders and strengthen the brand. In addition, participation in international LGBTIQ+ tourism events, for example, makes communications more credible.

Helsinki can invest in high-quality accessibility that covers the entire service chain and the comprehensive information provided about it and, at the same time, make target groups more prominent in its image materials than the benchmarking example London does in its own communications. The maritime Helsinki and the strongly present and easily accessible nature also differentiate Helsinki from London. These strengths have even been noted and highlighted in Helsinki’s brand research and brand work. According to a survey of people with disabilities (Järviluoma et al. 2022), nature and nature activities are considered interesting.

The Helsinki brand can be strengthened by deepening the good groundwork with Helsinki Pride to be year-round. Another advantage is that, while LGBTIQ+ marketing elsewhere in the world often focuses on white, cisgender¹⁰ gay men, in Helsinki the marketing can be targeted at women, LGBTIQ+ families and non-binary genders, for example.

A.1. Diversity in marketing and communications strengthens Helsinki's international brand

Measure	Party responsible
1. The MyHelsinki website highlights how Helsinki belongs to everyone and how Helsinki is committed to non-discrimination, safety and equality, and promotes inclusivity and diversity.	Helsinki Partners
2. The diversity challenges of photography are tackled. Photographs show an increasing number of diverse families, couples and seniors as tourists and eventgoers. More detailed diversity instructions are attached to the Image Instructions .	Communications Department Helsinki Partners

A cisgender is a person who feels that their gender identity corresponds to their biological sex determined at birth.¹⁰

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Measure	Party responsible
<p>3. When presenting Helsinki as a tourism and event destination at sales and marketing events, for example, a pitch that emphasises diversity, showcases Helsinki’s special characteristics and Finland’s good record in equality, non-discrimination and safety is used.</p>	<p>Helsinki Partners</p>
<p>4. As part of the redesign of the My Helsinki website, information related to accessibility is organised on its own website under the MyHelsinki website (or a website under Helsinki for All that has its own accessibility section) and in information fields related to each destination.</p>	<p>Helsinki Partners</p>
<p>5. More targeted, high-quality and multi-channel information is produced for different target groups.</p> <p>5.1. Entities such as <i>Helsinki for the elderly</i>, <i>Helsinki of LGBTIQ+ tourists</i>, <i>Accessible maritime Helsinki</i>, are also made as printed publications, because people need them, especially people who require accessible services.</p> <p>5.2. Communities and customer groups from the target groups are engaged more actively in content production and genuine, inspiring content.</p> <p>5.3. Marketing campaigns targeted at groups such as the LGBTIQ+ population, the elderly and people needing accessible services are conducted.</p> <p>5.4. Market research on the potential of inclusive tourism and events is conducted.</p>	<p>Helsinki Partners</p> <p>Tourism and Destination Management unit</p>

Measure	Party responsible
<p>6. Assuming a leading role in the development of diverse and inclusive tourism in Finland.</p> <p>6.1. On the theme, an annual and international seminar or conference that is aimed at the tourism industry and destinations is organised.</p> <p>6.2. Becoming a member of European LGBTQ+ Travel Alliance (ELTA).</p> <p>6.3. The process of having Helsinki certified as an LGBTQ+-friendly destination is investigated. The QueerVadis, the only certificate for LGBTQ+ inclusivity, is considered.</p> <p>6.4. Conversations on cooperation, especially related to tourism, city marketing and business, with Helsinki Pride are activated (Visit Tel Aviv and the Tel Aviv Pride cooperation as examples).</p> <p>6.5. Related international and notorious marketing events such as IGLTA Convention or the theme-specific events of ITB Berlin are attended.</p>	<p>Tourism and Destination Management unit</p>
<p>Indicators and monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of visitors to the different sections of the MyHelsinki website, the number of visitors to Helsinki for All and the accessibility section • Theme-specified materials, campaigns and market research made • European LGBTQ+ Travel Alliance (ELTA) membership • QueerVadis certificate • Implementation of an international conference/seminar, number of attendees • Participation in international marketing events on the theme 	

B. Developing internal inclusivity and diversity

The interviewees called for internal training for the city organisation, the themes of which include target group understanding and customer encounters (e.g. encountering different disability groups and communication, safe travel experiences, underlying attitudes and prejudices). The training sessions can be webinars, face-to-face coaching and online material.

Having a command of the basic information and terminology concerning the target groups and understanding one's own privileges is necessary for the genuine promotion of inclusivity and diversity, the objective processing of matters and for ensuring that the language used does not inadvertently offend anyone. Commitment to non-discrimination, safety and equality as well as the implementation of inclusion and diversity also require training. The diversity of personnel enriches the work community.

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The structures, the interfaces of different systems, the transfer of information from one operator to another and the possibilities provided by AI also need attention. The structural accessibility, safety and overall accessibility of the maritime Helsinki and natural sites must be improved. Different material banks require standardisation and common practices so that information and material can be found and utilised.

B.1. Training of personnel improves competence and understanding

Measure	Party responsible
1. The city's current training selection content's suitability for the promotion of the diversity and inclusivity work in the tourism and event sectors is ensured.	Tourism and Destination Management unit
2. The materials are collected in the city's Teams channel under one headline (e.g. "social responsibility" or "inclusivity in the tourism and event industries").	Tourism and Destination Management unit
3. Experience-based experts, DEIB and tourism sector experts and different operations models and best practices examples are utilised in the planning of the training.	Tourism and Destination Management unit

B.2. Diverse personnel contribute to the creation of innovations

Measure	Party responsible
1. The recruitment of personnel who are as diverse as possible is made possible.	Recruiting parties
2. Training materials are produced in languages other than Finnish or Swedish.	The City's Human Resources Department

B.3. Smooth physical and information system structures make all operations more efficient

Measure	Party responsible
1. The accessibility of maritime Helsinki and Helsinki's nature sites is developed as part of the measures included in the nature service policies.	Urban Environment Division
2. The development of the Service Map is continued in accordance with the accessibility policies and the City Board's decision.	Urban Environment Division, Accessibility Ombudsman

Measure	Party responsible
3. The search terms and themes of different image banks are standardised.	Communications Department Helsinki Partners
4. The possibilities provided by AI are assessed.	Tourism and Destination Management unit
Indicators and monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Teams channel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Materials compiled in the internal Teams channel • Service Map: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The amount of accessibility information added to and available in the Service Map • Image and material banks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Standardised search themes (Main themes): Equality, LGBTIQ+, Accessibility/Accessible added as a search theme ○ Number of images retrieved with search terms • Maritime Helsinki and natural sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Results of development measures for maritime Helsinki and nature sites 	

C. Engaging tourism and service companies and event organisers

Developing and activating the know-how of tourism and service companies and event organisers go hand in hand. Diversity and inclusivity, incentives and obligations and guidelines targeted at companies must be highlighted at all stakeholder events. Developing the Think Sustainably service is a significant measure with which to encourage companies engage in more inclusive operations and on to the STF path. More and more training is needed to improve target group understanding, identify business potential and develop inclusive and diverse business operations. Developing, in cooperation with event organisers, policies on free and discounted tickets makes it possible for persons with a low income to participate in events. An example of this is [Kaikukortti](#).

C.1. Corporate cooperation expands selection of targeted services

Measure	Party responsible
1. The criteria of the Think Sustainably services is developed by adding inclusivity and diversity criteria to them, by utilising the self-assessment criteria of Sustainable Travel Finland and by clarifying the criteria even more.	Helsinki Partners

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Measure	Party responsible
<p>2. Companies, events and other service providers are actively encouraged to join the Think Sustainably service.</p> <p>2.1. Campaigns and communications about the benefits of the service are conducted.</p> <p>2.2. Partners for things such as marketing campaigns are primarily selected from the participants in the Think Sustainably service.</p> <p>2.3. Participants are awarded prizes for being the most sustainable operator of the year, for example.</p>	<p>Helsinki Partners</p> <p>Tourism and Destination Management Unit</p>
<p>3. Obliging tourism and event companies to implement measures related to diversity and inclusivity.</p> <p>3.1. Obligations are added to the agreements for event cooperation partners, urban spaces and marketing campaigns (e.g. participation in the Think Sustainably service).</p> <p>3.2. A concrete checklist of the obligatory elements is prepared.</p>	<p>Helsinki Partners</p> <p>Brand and Events -unit</p> <p>Tourism and Destination Management Unit</p>
<p>4. More training related to the theme is conducted for tourism and event companies, thus increasing competence and understanding.</p>	<p>Brand and Events -Unit</p> <p>Tourism and Destination Management Unit</p>
<p>5. Easy-to-read guides and tools that are understandable from the service providers' point of view, such as the TOP-10 tips for developing inclusive tourism, are produced. It is also good to develop the criteria by which future investments can be influenced (e.g. criteria for an accessible water traffic vessel).</p>	<p>Tourism and Destination Management Unit</p>
<p>6. Policies, action plans, incentives and obligations are communicated actively at stakeholder events.</p> <p>6.1. More themes of social responsibility, diversity and inclusivity are added to the stakeholder work (e.g. the meetings of the Makers of Helsinki network).</p>	<p>Tourism and Destination Management Unit</p>

Measure	Party responsible
<p>7. Companies and events are encouraged to implement measures related to diversity and inclusivity.</p> <p>7.1. A prize and the criteria for it are created in cooperation with different stakeholders (e.g. the most diverse/responsible/accessible/LGBTIQ+-friendly service/destination/event) and media coverage related to it is provided.</p> <p>7.2. The free and discount ticket policies of events are reviewed in cooperation with event organisers and healthcare and social welfare to establish whether it would be possible to allocate a free ticket quota to Helsinki residents with low income.</p> <p>7.3. Whether establishing a system, similar to Ekokompassi, whose criteria involve diversity and inclusivity should be established in the longer term is considered.</p>	<p>Tourism and Destination Management Unit</p> <p>Brand and Events -Unit</p>
<p>Indicators and monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Think Sustainably service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of participants ○ Three (3) new criteria concerning inclusivity ○ Number of parties that have met the criteria ○ Prize for being the most responsible operator of the year ● Destination-level indicators of the STF programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The number and percentage of STF-certified tourism companies providing accessible services to all. ○ The number and percentage of STF-certified tourism companies marketing services to the LGBTQ+ target group. ○ The number and percentage of STF-certified, accessible travel products. ○ The number and percentage of STF-certified travel products targeted at the LGBTQ+ target group. ● The indicators of the STF programme are evolving and, for example, the number of parties that have met the criteria and the dispersion between criteria have been brought up in the development proposals. ● Material for service providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contractual obligations and checklists made ○ Guides produced ● Training and coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Training and coaching conducted, number of participants ● Other external indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Booking.com: The number of accommodation listings meeting different accessibility criteria. It is good to consider what criteria will result from such a wide range. ○ Expedia: number of accommodation listings meeting different accessibility criteria, number of LGBTIQ+-friendly accommodation listings ○ Number of We Speak Gay recipients 	



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