

Progress of the Helsinki Tourism and Events Programme

Situation report 4/2023

Helsinki

City Board's Economic Development
Sub-committee meeting on 15 May 2023



Implementation of the programme – summary

- The implementation of the programme was affected by three significant external factors: the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the climate crisis. The pandemic is largely over, and the tourism and events industries have started to recover very quickly. At the same time, however, the war in Ukraine has a particular impact on tourism due to, for example, the lack of Russian tourists and the impact of the Russian overflight ban on Finland's accessibility from the important Japanese and Chinese markets. The events industry also suffers from the effects of the war through the fact that large world tours no longer visit Russia and, consequently, often also skip Finland. The number of overnight stays in hotels in Helsinki has been on the rise since the pandemic but, compared to other Nordic countries, Helsinki is lagging behind in terms of the recovery of international tourism.
- There have been particularly positive developments in the past year with regard to the increase in registered overnight stays, the number of hotel projects carried out and the number of tourism companies. On the other hand, customers' length of stay has slightly decreased, and the carbon footprint calculator and knowledge-based management platform have not yet been deployed.
- Overall, the measures in the programme have progressed very well. Most of the measures have been initiated and they have progressed within the framework of the plans made. Some of the measures have been scheduled to start later during the programme period.

The development of Maritime Helsinki, improvement of signage and creation of a land use plan for tourism and events, i.e. the master plan, have not progressed according to the desired schedule.

- Helsinki was chosen as the Finnish Travel Destination of the Year at the Finnish Travel Gala in autumn 2022. In addition, according to a consumer survey published by Taloustutkimus Oy in March 2023, Helsinki is the most attractive tourist city in Finland. Helsinki was also selected to participate in the European Union's Smart Tourism Destinations programme together with 45 other European destinations.
- A particularly positive note is the increased commitment of companies to taking forward the measures of the programme and the intensified cooperation between companies. This can be seen in the increase in the number of members of the Makers of Helsinki network, the number of event participants and the range of services implemented in corporate cooperation. In addition, cooperation between the Tourism and Destination Management Unit and the Brand and Events Unit has intensified as a result of the joint programme. It should also be noted that several other divisions, departments and units of the city have been involved in promoting the measures. However, there are still challenges in various city actors' understanding of what the tourism and events industries involve and how the needs of tourists and events should be taken into account when making plans and development measures.
- In addition to the measures set out in the programme, basic work has been done to promote tourism and events.

Situation in tourism and events

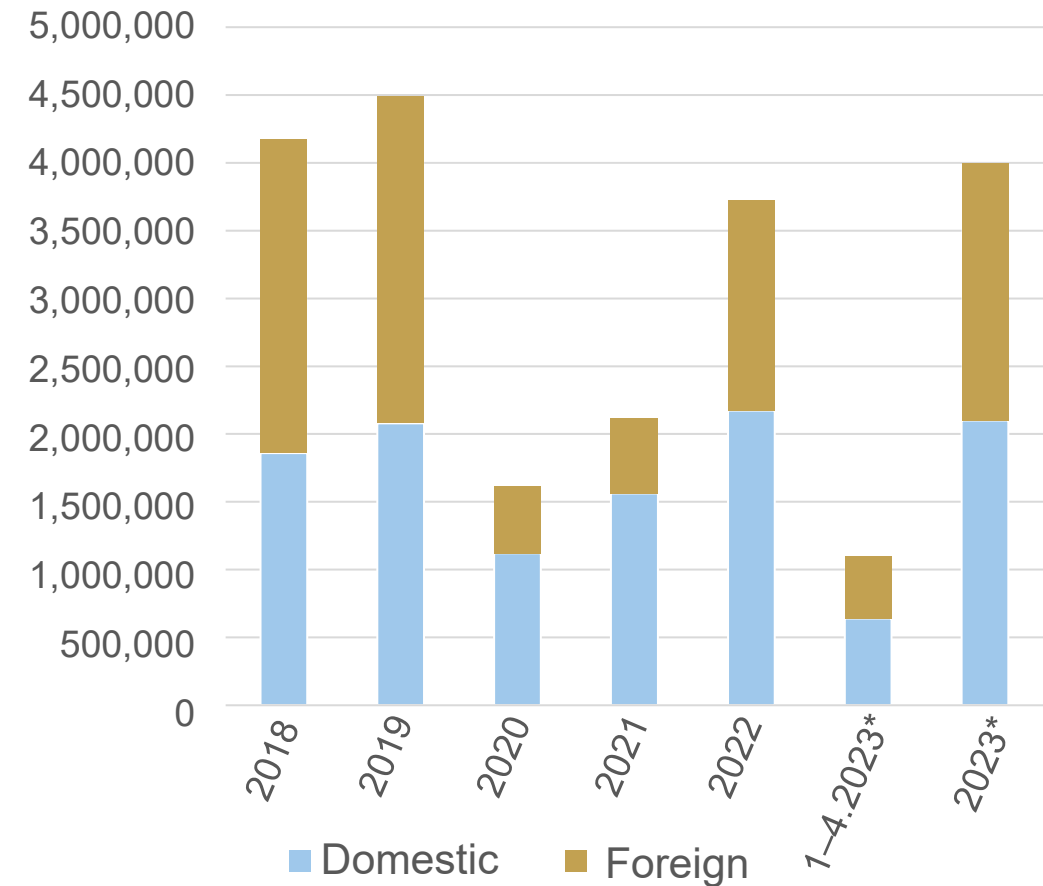
Helsinki



Overnight stays by foreign visitors in Helsinki have not yet returned to pre-COVID-19 levels

- In 2022, 3.7 million overnight stays were registered in Helsinki. In addition to a record number of Finns, the most significant international groups of tourists came from Germany, the United States and Sweden. The countries of origin are diverse, with 42% of international tourists coming from outside the top 10 countries.
- The length of stay at accommodation establishments was 1.7 days. There have been no major changes in the length of stay in the past few years.
- In 2022, the occupancy rate of accommodation establishments in Helsinki was 52.3% (74.4% in 2019). During big events, the occupancy rates approached 100%. The average room price was already close to the 2019 level.
- In 2022, the number of air passengers at Helsinki Airport was 12.88 million, which is about three times more than in 2021 (Finavia).
- Liner traffic at the port carried 7.95 million passengers, which is about twice as many as in 2021. 164 international cruise ships arrived in Helsinki (14 in 2021) with 162,000 passengers (11,000 in 2021) (the Port of Helsinki).
- 157 international association congresses were organised in 2022, with an estimated 27,600 participants (Helsinki Partners).
- In 2023, it is estimated that international tourist numbers and hotel financial metrics, such as occupancy rate and RevPar, will not yet reach the 2019 level. In the early part of the year, however, hotel room sales were already very close to the corresponding period in 2019. The largest numbers of international tourists are expected to arrive from Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Sweden. Tourism from Japan will start faster than tourism from China. 93 international cruise ships are expected to arrive.

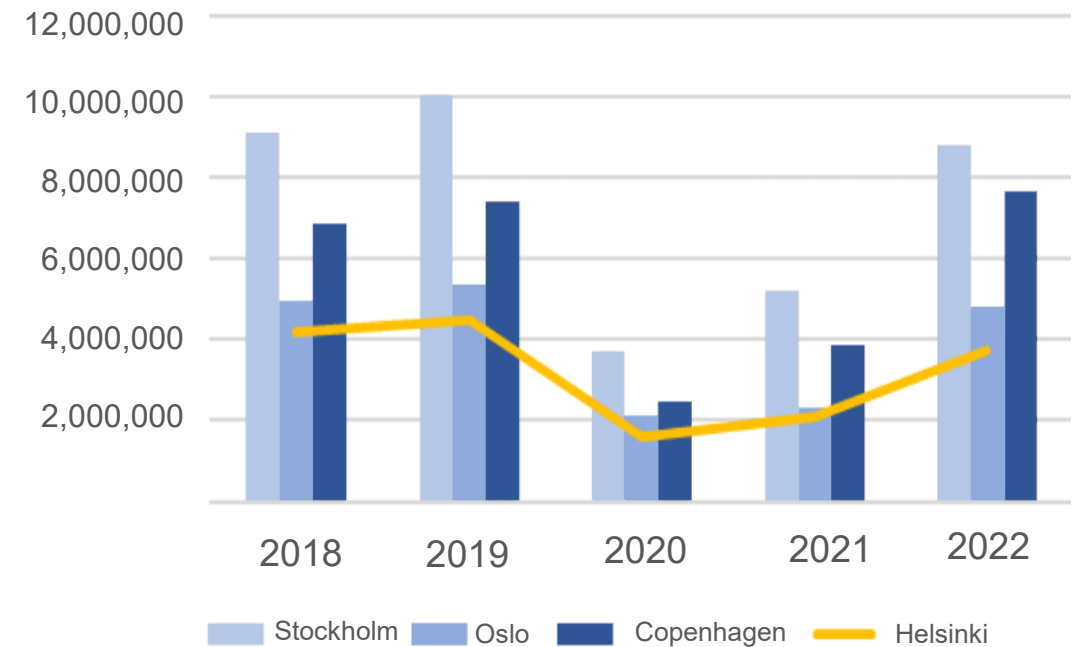
Registered overnight stays in 2018–2022, estimates for early 2023 and the whole year



The return of tourism in Stockholm, Oslo, Copenhagen and Helsinki

- Tourism in the Nordic capitals has recovered at different rates since the pandemic, also due to the cities' tourism structure, location and accessibility to the main markets.
 - In Oslo and Stockholm, the proportion of domestic tourists is higher than that of international tourists; in Helsinki, the proportions are more or less equal; and in Copenhagen, the number of international tourists is significantly higher than that of domestic tourists (2019).
- In all the cities, overnight stays by foreign tourists in 2022 lagged behind the figures for 2019.
 - Copenhagen -12%
 - Stockholm -13%
 - Oslo -22%
 - Helsinki -35%
- In Helsinki and Copenhagen, the number of overnight stays by domestic tourists in 2022 was higher than in 2019.
- Overall, Copenhagen is the only city where the number of overnight stays in 2022 exceeded the 2019 level.

Registered overnight stays in 2018–2022, estimates for early 2023 and the whole year

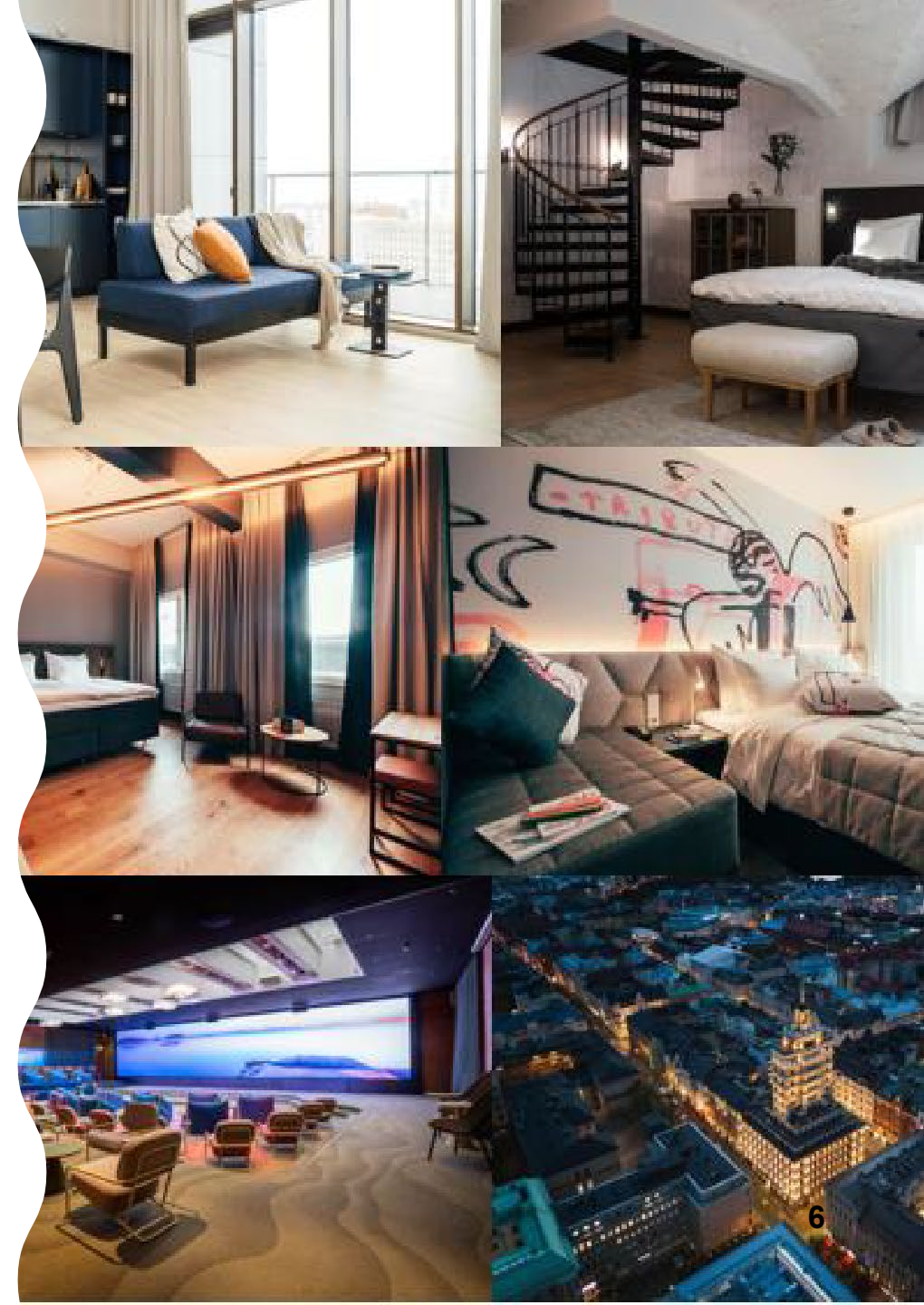


Source: Tillväxtverket, Statistics Norway, Visit Denmark, Statistics Service Rudolf

Hotel capacity growing

- The hotel market is slowly recovering, and hotel performance is expected to exceed pre-COVID-19 levels within four years. The assessment has taken into account, for example, accessibility, the recovery of tourism demand, the opening up of market opportunities for new types of hotel concepts, especially in the higher hotel category, the growing interest in Helsinki, and stable economic and political markets.
- In 2022, five new hotels were opened in Helsinki with a total of 991 rooms/apartments. In addition to this, several hotels were renovated, such as Solo Sokos Hotels Helsinki and Tornio.
 - Hotel Ax, Välimerenkatu 18, 173 rooms
 - Hotel Mestari, Frederikinkatu 51–53, 237 rooms
 - Koti Hotel Katajanokka, Ankkurikatu 5, 124 rooms/apartments
 - Scandic Helsinki Hub, Annankatu 18, 352 rooms
 - Unity Helsinki, Välimerenkatu 22, 105 rooms/apartments
- In 2023, six hotels have been or are expected to be opened. In addition, several hotels are undergoing alteration and repair work, such as Hotel Kämp, the renovation of which will begin at the end of the year, and the punk hotel concept Hobo Hotel, which will open in the premises of the former GLO Hotel Kluuvi.
 - Noli Malmi, Vanha Helsingintie 19, 238 studios, March
 - Noli Herttoniemi, Työnjohtajankatu 11, 263 studios, May
 - Radisson Red Helsinki, Vuorikatu 24, 195 rooms and suites, August
 - Hotel Maria, Mariankatu 23, 117 rooms and suites, December
 - Grand Hansa Hyatt, Mannerheimintie 5, 224 rooms and suites, turn of 2023/24
 - Citybox Hakaniemi, Lyyra, 178 rooms, late 2023

Helsinki



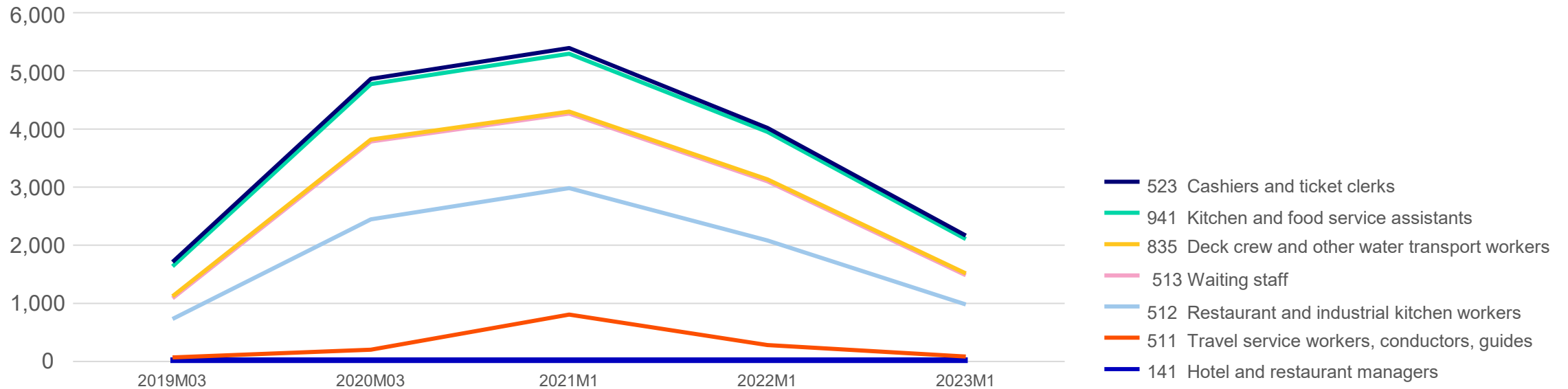
Labour mismatch challenge

- In 2022, the number of employed persons living in Helsinki increased in accommodation and food service activities by a total of 10% from the previous year (Statistics Finland). However, the number of jobs in Helsinki decreased by 3% during the same period.
- The number of unemployed people in certain occupational groups has decreased over the past year and the number of jobs has increased. It is difficult for companies to find competent and motivated employees at the moment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a large number of employees from the tourism and events industries moved to other sectors, started training in a new sector or retired earlier than planned.

- The number of establishments in tourism industries increased by 626 in a year, totalling 8,200 in January 2023 (Statistics Finland).
- Direct tourism income was estimated at €1.4 billion in 2022, about 20% less than in 2019.

Unemployed jobseekers in different tourism professions during certain months in Helsinki



Event visitors' spending in Helsinki in 2022 for selected events

<div>Floorball World Cup</div> <div>15.0 million €</div> <div>(calculated with 34,000 unique)</div>	<div>Finland-Sweden Athletics International</div> <div>5.3 million €</div> <div>(calculated with 32,000 unique)</div>	<div>HIHS</div> <div>9.5 million €</div> <div>(calculated with 39,500 unique) (NOTE: Tickets not included)</div>	<div>HCRD</div> <div>2.6 million €</div> <div>(calculated with 14,000 unique)</div>	<div>Antti Tuisku</div> <div>17.0 million €</div> <div>(calculated with 70,000 unique)</div>	<div>Sunrise Avenue</div> <div>18.3 million €</div> <div>(calculated with 67,700 unique)</div>	<div>Tuska Festival</div> <div>9.0 million €</div> <div>(calculated with 20,000 unique)</div>
Share of those arriving from outside Helsinki: 14 million €	Share of those arriving from outside Helsinki: 4.7 million €	Share of those arriving from outside Helsinki: 8.3 million €	Share of those arriving from outside Helsinki: 2.3 million €	Share of those arriving from outside Helsinki: 13.6 million €	Share of those arriving from outside Helsinki: 16.6 million €	Share of those arriving from outside Helsinki: 5.8 million €
Spent outside the venue: 8 million €	Spent outside the venue: 2.9 million €	Spent outside the venue: 4.2 million €	Spent outside the venue: 1.6 million €	Spent outside the venue: 9.8 million €	Spent outside the venue: 10.4 million €	Spent outside the venue: 2.1 million €

76.7 million €

Share of those arriving from outside Helsinki: 65.3 million €
Spent outside the venue by those arriving from outside Helsinki: 39.0 million €

Source: Sponsor Insight
impact analysis 2022

Varied times for tourism and events in 2022–2023

- Helsinki's tourism year 2022 was varied. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine caused a dip in tourism, which had started well after the pandemic. The war had a particular impact on cruise travel and programme services business. The recovery of tourism was slowed down by the geopolitical situation, Russian overflight ban, increase in costs and challenges in labour mismatch.
- July 2022 saw an all-time record in the number of registered overnight stays by domestic tourists. In 2022, domestic overnight stays already exceeded the pre-COVID-19 figures for 2019, but the numbers were still about a third behind for foreign visitors. In 2022, Helsinki's accommodation capacity increased by around a thousand rooms, which is why the hotel occupancy rates are not directly comparable to 2019.
- The events industry has recovered well – sales are already anticipating a return to the 2019 level. In terms of events, 2022 was a lively year for Helsinki. Where venues are concerned, the situation is made challenging by the fact that one of the most significant event arenas in Helsinki and the whole of Finland is not available due to sanctions related to the war. Labour shortage and the increase in costs also constitute obstacles to growth in the events industry. In addition, the events industry is still not sufficiently well perceived as a source of livelihood.
- In 2022, more than 5,000 events were submitted to the Helsinki event calendar (LinkedEvents interface, event type used for filtering: event, 14 different event types). In the summer of 2022, record numbers of visitors were attracted by many events in Helsinki, such as the Tuska and Flow festivals and the Helsinki Cup, which featured a record number of teams. The production effect of the Olympic Stadium, including the multiplier effects, was €194 million, and the employment impact was 1,427 jobs. In the light of the statistics, the events also had a major impact on hotel occupancy rates. During the most popular events, such as Ed Sheeran's concerts and the UEFA Super Cup at the Olympic Stadium, the hotel occupancy rates were close to 100%.
- As a result of long-term work, Helsinki was chosen as the Finnish Travel Destination of the Year 2022 at the Finnish Travel Gala. The win was based on Helsinki's excellent offer of international urban experience with a diverse selection of nature, culture, sports, architecture, restaurants, cafés and events. According to Taloustutkimus Oy's extensive consumer survey, Helsinki was also the most attractive tourist city in Finland for domestic tourists. In addition, Helsinki was selected to participate in the European Union's Smart Tourism Destinations programme together with 45 other European destinations.
- The outlook for 2023 for tourism and events is relatively positive. The recovery of tourism will be accelerated by, for example, the strengthening of the dollar, which will support the recovery of tourism from the United States. Helsinki's wide range of services, international congresses and events also support the recovery. On the other hand, the recovery is being slowed down by the global economic situation, the constant challenges in labour mismatch, the slower-than-expected return of Chinese and Japanese tourists (autumn 2023), the absence of Russian tourists and the Russian overflight ban, which complicates accessibility, prolongs flight times and also makes flights more expensive. Competition for congresses will become even tougher as several competitors, such as Tallinn, have introduced financial incentives for international congresses in the city. Another obstacle to growth is a lack of meeting rooms with a capacity of more than 500 people.

Progress of the Tourism and Events Programme

Helsinki



Strategic goals

- A.** Helsinki is a vibrant and internationally attractive city for tourism and events
- B.** Helsinki is an international pioneer and solution provider in sustainability, tourism and events
- C.** Helsinki is a smart destination and a functional event city



A. Helsinki is a vibrant and internationally attractive city for tourism and events	B. Helsinki is an international pioneer and solution provider in sustainability, tourism and events	C. Helsinki is a smart destination and a functional event city
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Strategic choices

A.1. International visitors will generate the growth in tourism	B.1. Environmental sustainability and carbon neutrality at the forefront of development	C.1. Smart development of tourism and events is based on knowledge
A.2. Events strengthen the liveliness and vitality of Helsinki	B.2. Helsinki residents, inclusiveness and social and cultural sustainability at the core of development	C.2. City space-related decisions support tourism and events
A.3. International congresses and major events as drivers of growth	B.3. Helsinki is a world leader in sustainability, verified by indices and certifications	C.3. Helsinki is a functioning platform for events

Prerequisites for the development

A.4. Distinctive urban culture, food and unique nature enhance the city's appeal	B.4. The availability of skilled labour is vital for the sectors	C.4. Promoting companies' digital capabilities to increase their competitiveness
A.5. Good transport links and smooth customer paths as prerequisites for competitiveness	B.5. Focusing on comprehensive safety is a prerequisite for the city's appeal	C.5. Growth and renewal through accelerating innovation in the tourism and event sectors

Monitoring and progress of the programme

Strategic choices and the basic prerequisites for development have been turned into measures and indicators.

Measures and indicators appendix

B. Helsinki on kansainvälisesti kestävyiden edelläkävijä ja ratkaisija matkailu- ja tapahtuma-aloilla

Toimenpiteet	Vastuutahot
1. Kasvatetaan yritysten osaamista hiilineutraalisuuteen liittyen osana Helington tietäjä -verkoston yhteydessä.	Einkeino-osasto/Matkaluukko
2. Edistetään hiihtäjäliikelaajien kehitystä ja koulutusta. Matkaluukko, tapahtuma- ja ravintola-allele on luotu laukarit ja niiden jatkokehitys ja kädentöiden ovat keskeisiä. Terveystietä tullaan tekemään pohjasta selkeä, jossa identifioidaan parhait ja merkittävimmät toimenpiteet matkailu- ja ravintola-alan viherkentä.	Einkeino-osasto/Matkaluukko, Viestintäosasto/Brändiäkö, Kaupunki ympäristön toimiala/ Ympäristönsuojelu ja Ohjaus yksikkö
3. Uudistetaan kansainvälisiä yhteyksiä hiilineutraalisuuden parhaiden käytäntöjen edistämiseksi (mahdolliset hankkeet, seminaarit, ym.).	Einkeino-osasto/Matkaluukko, Kaupunkiympäristön toimiala
4. Edistetään kompensoinnin mahdollisuuksia yhteistyössä ekosysteemin toimijoiden kanssa.	Einkeino-osasto/Matkaluukko, Kaupunkiympäristön toimiala
5. Määritellään kansainvälisen nistelymatkailun keskeinen rooli Helington kestävä matkailun ja hiilineutraalisuuden kehityksessä, sillä vaikka tietyillä alueilla on tullen tuomat kasvatetut luovat matkailu- ja ravintola-allele, ne tietyillä alueilla on tullen tuomat määrän hiihtolodistajista. Terveystietä yhteyksiä Helington Sataman ja Green Baltic -järjestön kanssa kestävä matkailun kehittämisessä, sekä yhteistyötä varustamoiden ja matkajärjestäjien kanssa. On hyvä tuottaa, että varustamo ja jo alustat projektin maaseidon käyttämiseksi ja tehnyt selvitystä varustamoiden ja muiden satamien kanssa.	Einkeino-osasto/Matkaluukko, Helington Satama
6. Perustetaan Matkaluukko ja tapahtuma-alojen kehityksen toimintamalli joka laukarit kasvatetut kestävä matkailun kehityksen työryhmä. Ymmärtetään, että ryhmissä on edustus mm. Hiilineutraali Helington, ympäristöpalveluista sekä muista keskeisistä toimijoista. Ryhmälle muodostetaan alajoiko, joka vastaa GDS-indeksiä sekä STF-ohjelmien esittämistä edistämistä. Lisäksi GDS-indeksiä ja STF-ohjelmia löytyy niillä liittyviä alustoilta. Lisäksi alajoiko tehosta tietä yhteyksiä Helington Partnerien kanssa liittyä Valtio Vastuullisemmin - palvelun kehitykseen.	Einkeino-osasto/Matkaluukko
7. Edistetään kansainvälistä yhteyksiä ollemaan edellä verkoston avulla ja luodaan tarjontaa uusia kansainvälistä yhteyksiä vertaisorganismien kasvattamiseksi. Noudatetaan Helington sitoumusia kuten Glasgow Declaration, sekä YK:n maailman matkailujärjestön käsitteitä. Verkostot ja alustoimet kehitetään liittyä liite 3.	Einkeino-osasto/Matkaluukko
8. Raportoidaan matkaluukko- ja tapahtuma-alojen kestävä kehityksen edistymisen vuositoin osana osakokouksissa normaali vuositoukseen yhteydessä sekä osana kaupungin kehityksen kehityksen toimenpärönpöytä.	Einkeino-osasto/Matkaluukko, Viestintäosasto/Brändiäkö
9. Järjestetään tapahtumajärjestelyä ympäristö vastuullisuuteen liittyvää koulutusta.	Kaupunkiympäristön toimiala, Viestintäosasto/Brändiäkö
10. Tarkennetaan ja vahvistetaan vastikkeellisten kumppanuus sopimusten vastuullisuutta sekä ekologisen, sosiaalisen että taloudellisen vastuullisuuden osalta.	Viestintäosasto/Brändiäkö, Kulttuur- ja vapaa-ajan toimiala, Einkino-osasto
11. Osallistetaan kaupunkiympäristön toimiala kynnysmäärien luontopöytä ja kaupun yhteyttämisvoimien varmistaminen niin myös matkailu- ja tapahtumalaajien liittyvät yritykset. Keskitytään erityisesti henkilöihin, jotka ovat mukana matkailu- ja ravintola-alan kehityksessä.	Kaupunkiympäristön toimiala, Einkino-osasto/Matkaluukko, Viestintäosasto/Brändiäkö

Ensisijainen toimiala:  + 
Matkailu + Toimittamiset

SDG:    

Seuranta ja mittarit:

- Seuranta ja mittaukset:
 1. Suorituskykyä ja liikunnan ilmiöitä - ohjelma - kuinka moni hieskirkkainen yritys laskee hiihtäjäliikkeenä
 2. Matkailualan hiihtäjäliikenne - laskea aloitetaan, kun lasken käyttö on yleisty
 3. Tapaturma-alan hiihtäjäliikenne - laskea aloitetaan, kun lasken käyttö on yleisty
 4. Vastikeistien kumppanuustapahutimien sopimukin vastuullisuuslauseiden vahvistaminen
 5. Ristelyjen määrä vuositulosta
 6. Ristelyt mallista suunnattu rajatutkimus vuonna 2023 (edellinen 2019)
 7. Tiedon keräily kehityksen vuoropapotti
 8. Koulutustilaisuuksien tms. osallistujamäärä ja asiakaspaallatuiden reititukset tms.
 9. Kasvun ja kuntoarvojen yhteyssuhteen tutkiminen tms seuranta

Parties responsible for the measures have been specified along with the schedules. The progress of the measures is monitored quarterly with the help of traffic lights.

Here, you can see at a glance how the 93 measures of the programme have progressed overall.

- Green = active and progressing as planned
 Yellow = started but with obstacles
 Red = not progressed
 Grey = postponed to future years

A.1.	1	A.4.		B.1.	1	B.3.	0	C.1.	2
A.1.	1	A.4.		B.1.	1	B.3.	1	C.2.	1
A.1.		A.4.	1	B.1.	1	B.3.	1	C.2.	1
A.2.	1	A.4.	0	B.1.	1	B.3.	1	C.2.	2
A.2.	1	A.4.	0	B.1.	1	B.3.	1	C.2.	1
A.2.	1	A.4.	3	B.1.	2	B.3.	1	C.2.	2
A.2.	1	A.4.		B.2.	1	B.3.	1	C.2.	2
A.2.	1	A.4.	1	B.2.	1	B.4.		C.3.	3
A.2.		A.5.	2	B.2.	2	B.4.	3	C.3.	1
A.2.	2	A.5.	1	B.2.	3	B.4.	1	C.3.	1
A.3.	1	A.5.	2	B.2.	1	B.4.		C.3.	1
A.3.	2	A.5.	2	B.2.	1	B.5.	1	C.4.	1
A.3.	1	A.5.	1	B.2.	1	B.5.	1	C.4.	3
A.3.	1	A.5.	3	B.2.	1	B.5.	1	C.4.	2
A.3.	1	B.1.	1	B.2.	1	B.5.	1	C.5.	2
A.3.	2	B.1.	1	B.2.		B.5.	1	C.5.	2
A.3.	3	B.1.	1	B.2.	1	C.1.	1	C.5.	
A.3.	2	B.1.	2	B.3.	1	C.1.	1		
A.3.	2	B.1.	2	B.3.	1	C.1.	1		

Monitoring and progress of the programme

Helsinki is a vibrant and internationally attractive city for tourism and events	2021	2022	Objective for 2026
More registered overnight stays (2021)	2.1 million	3.7 million	5 million
More congresses of international organisations (2021)	143	158	450
Increase in the total number of confirmed hotel investments in 2021–26 and diversity (2021) (under construction)	8	12	30
More tourism enterprises and outlets in the sectors (2021)	7,674	8,300	8,000
Development and classification of event locations (NEW)	no	no	yes
More major events in Helsinki	N/A	N/A	N/A
Prolongation of registered overnight stays	1.8	1.7	1.9
Helsinki is an international pioneer and solution provider in sustainability, tourism and events	2021	2022	Objective for 2026
More Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) labels	16	26	200
More events with environmental certifications	N/A	xxx	N/A
Helsinki improves its ranking in the Global Destination Sustainability (GDS) index	16	12	1
Resident satisfaction with tourism and events remains at a good level	good	good	good+
More carbon footprint calculator users	0	0	200
Helsinki is a smart destination and a functional event city	2021	2022	Objective for 2026
More products in the tourism DataHub database	164	256	500
More users for the knowledge-based management platform	0	0	150

Note: The carbon footprint calculator and knowledge-based management platform have not yet been deployed at the time of reporting.

Cooperation groups in tourism and events

The city invests in the networked management of the tourism and events industries ecosystem. In 2022, the city launched two new groups: the City Group's internal Tourism Cooperation Group and the Helsinki Tourism Advisory Board.

City Group's Tourism Cooperation Group

- The city's internal group
- Four meetings per year
- Coordination responsibility: Tourism and Destination Management Unit

Helsinki Tourism Advisory Board

- A group of executives from tourism companies and other stakeholders outside the city
- Four meetings per year
- Coordination responsibility: Tourism and Destination Management Unit

Sustainability action group for the tourism and event sectors

- The city's internal group
- Four meetings per year
- Coordination responsibility: Tourism and Destination Management Unit

Management team for safety in tourism

- A group consisting of representatives of the city, security authorities and companies
- Two meetings per year
- Coordination responsibility: Tourism and Destination Management Unit

The groups have helped to intensify cooperation between different actors and, on the other hand, increased the understanding of the importance of tourism and events in the City Group.

Major event-steering group

- Internal group of the city's top management
- Two meetings in 2022, four meetings in 2023
- Coordination responsibility: Brand and Events Unit

Event steering group

- The city's internal group
- Ten meetings in 2022 and 2023
- Coordination responsibility: Brand and Events Unit

On-site event group

- The city's internal group with representatives of the police and HSL
- Ten meetings in 2022 and 2023
- Coordination responsibility: Brand and Events Unit

In addition, there are several other practical action groups to support the development of tourism and events.

Key measures in the past year

Helsinki



A. Helsinki is a vibrant and internationally attractive city for tourism and events

Strategic choices

1. International visitors will generate the growth in tourism
2. Events strengthen the liveliness and vitality of Helsinki
3. International congresses and major events as drivers of growth

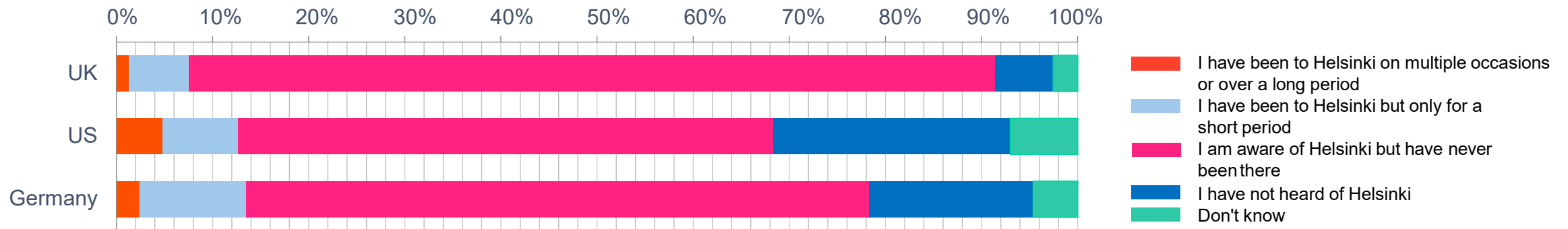
Prerequisites for the development

4. Distinctive urban culture, food and unique nature enhance the city's appeal
5. Good transport links and smooth customer paths for visitors as prerequisites for competitiveness



A.1. International visitors will generate the growth in tourism

- Helsinki's tourism marketing investments have focused on international markets. The main target markets have been Germany, the United Kingdom and Japan, where the efforts have included the Helsinki Curious campaign aimed at potential visitors. The aim of the campaign was to increase the awareness and attractiveness of Helsinki through marketing (digital channels and outdoor advertising) and communications (illustrations by artists from London, Berlin and Tokyo based on stories told by people who have visited our city). In addition, PR measures and tour operator sales have been strongly made for the US market in addition to the above markets.
- Helsinki was visited by 270 media representatives and 40 influencers in addition to the press releases prepared, whose main themes were design, sustainability, cuisine and well-being. Based on these, 160 articles have been published in international media.
- In 2022, 220 people participated in excursions for tour operators.
- The different language versions of the Myhelsinki.fi website and the contents of digital channels have served international visitors. The number of visitors has risen after the pandemic almost to the 2019 level.
- In 2022, Helsinki Tourist Information provided service in 18 languages to a total of 177,300 people face-to-face and on digital channels, with an increasing number of international visitors towards the end of the year. Tourist Information's permanent service point opened at the new office by Senate Square in October. During the summer season, Helsinki Helpers served visitors at the Biennial Pavilion and also made their way to the streets, ports and major international events. Helsinki Tourist Information's customer satisfaction remained at an excellent level, 4.8 (on a scale of 1–5). Digital tourist information services were developed to better meet the needs of visitors.
- In autumn 2022, a Master's thesis was completed on the views of Tourist Information customers on the future of tourist information services. The advancement of the measures proposed, such as digital lists, has been started. The data collected by Tourist Information on the needs of customers is now being taken to a new knowledge-based management platform where the information will be more easily available and usable by various stakeholders.



A.2. Events strengthen the liveliness and vitality of Helsinki

- The utilisation of events in Helsinki's external communications and marketing has been strengthened as planned by the City Executive Office's Communications Unit, Helsinki Partners and the Culture and Leisure Division. In 2023, this work will be continued and further strengthened.
- Helsinki's city-wide partnership events and major events in 2022, such as the UEFA Super Cup 2022, Finland-Sweden Athletics International and Helsinki Ski Weeks, were used in a variety of ways to strengthen Helsinki's reputation.
- Helsinki's liveliness and vitality are strengthened by, for example, various event experiments at different venues. Close cooperation with event organisers before, during and after the event gives a good understanding of how venues in the urban space can be utilised and developed in the long term, not forgetting the surrounding environment and natural values. Such experiments include the Mamma Mia musical in Kaivopuisto Park and the U Nation Festival at Kansalaistori Square in summer 2023.

A.3. International congresses and major events as drivers of growth

- Based on the national major events strategy (2023–2033) and the Helsinki major events report, a proposal for further measures relating to major event hosting applications will be prepared in Helsinki. The further measures will be addressed by the major event-steering group in 2023.
- Major events act as accelerators for culture, sports and other sectors and for the events industry in general. Events will generate growth and jobs in the service sector and improve public finances. There is also significant and as yet untapped potential in events to attract international tourists. For these reasons, among others, it is also justified to support the events industry at a time when the city's financial situation is tight.

Notes on the national major events strategy and the Helsinki major events report:

- In the case of major events, the focus should be both on Helsinki and abroad, and future changes in the events sector should also be taken into account. Existing events in Helsinki must be strengthened and the development of new ones supported. In addition, additional resources should be considered to attract new events.
- The best-known and largest cultural events and festivals are organically grown and based on the local perspective. These events and support for their internationalisation must be identified.
- The most effective tools for measuring the effectiveness of events will be identified and their implementation will be ensured in order to produce comparable and continuous effectiveness understanding and information.
- Funding and partnership models for events will be clarified and developed to a separately defined extent.
- Knowledge of the events industry and related special issues among relevant authorities will be increased.
- The operational prerequisites of events will be improved in zoning and planning, including adaptability, taking event areas into account, transport connections and ancillary services.

A.3. International congresses and major events as drivers of growth

City-wide preparation of major event hosting applications and major events has been carried out in Helsinki for the coming years 2024–2031 as follows:

- Tall Ships Races 2024 Helsinki
- UEFA Women's EURO 2025, joint Nordic major event hosting application (UEFA Executive Committee meeting on 4 April 2023). The winner in the hosting application process was Switzerland.
- World Gymnaestrada 2031, joint planning and application process with the Finnish Gymnastics Federation.

International congresses

Congress sales started well after the COVID-19 pandemic. New approaches have been introduced in marketing. Opportunities for combining business and leisure tourism have also been investigated. Twenty-five congresses have been won for 2023 with an expected 17,000 participants, and 18 congresses with 14,000 participants for 2024. In 2022, Helsinki won three major congress applications:

- AIA Incentive group from Thailand, October 2022, 1,200 participants
- Critical Communications World CCW, 2023, 3,000 participants
- International Council of Nurses ICN, 2025, 8,000 participants

During the early part of 2023, four congresses have been won for the coming years, which are expected to have a total of 3,500 participants and an estimated revenue impact of approximately €5.5 million for the city. On the other hand, the 4,000-person AMEE Congress for 2026 was lost because HSL tickets were not available free of charge to congress participants as in previous years. In terms of the revenue impact, the loss was €6.3 million. Helsinki Partners will make congress sales and meet in person with around 300 international buyers in 2023. In addition, the new CRM tool will facilitate maintaining and engaging existing contacts.

A.4. Distinctive urban culture, food and unique nature enhance the city's appeal

- Helsinki's brand and marketing strategy guidelines were updated in 2022, taking into account urban culture and cuisine, events and the roles of unique nature and urban space as tools for strengthening Helsinki's attractiveness.
- Maritime Helsinki is one of the city's key attraction factors. While Helsinki Biennial presents itself as a top maritime product, the lack of a project manager for Maritime Helsinki has slowed down the systematic coordination and promotion of the project.
- Helsinki's appeal for visitors and tourists has been developed by taking care of the prerequisites and attractiveness of cultural activities. Cultural environments were strongly highlighted in Helsinki's cultural environment programme as attraction factors for tourism with diverse examples.
- Helsinki highlighted the best aspects of the city as a food destination at the Matka Nordic Travel Fair 2023 by bringing in a group of restaurants in cooperation with Food Camp Finland and Messukeskus. Helsinki Food Court consisted of six restaurants highlighting the diversity and high quality of Helsinki as a food destination. In addition, the food court offered comprehensive tourism information about Helsinki. It interested both visitors to the fair and the media. Since the fair, more than 20 articles on food tourism have been published so far, and there has been an increase in questions about food tourism among Tourist Information customers.
- In cooperation with other actors, Helsinki is applying to host food-themed Bocuse d'Or and Michelin events during 2023.
- The city maintains the paid Makers of Helsinki network, whose operating model was revamped in 2022 to include regular morning coffee information sessions, matchmaking events, a recruitment event aimed only at the network and an excursion for international tour operators. In addition, regular introductory visits to the sites and services of the network partners have been started to complement the existing network benefits, such as the available current information and business development measures. The network was joined by 22 new partners in 2022 and 12 new partners in the first quarter of 2023. The network meetings were attended by about 150 people per event and the morning coffee information sessions by 45–88 people per session. On a scale of 1–5, the partners' satisfaction with the activities was 4.2 and with cooperation with the Tourism and Destination Management Unit 4.4. 'Eventness' content has been added in the networking activities, and new operators in the events industry are actively being sought to participate. All events operators can join the network at an introductory offer price of €500/year, regardless of their turnover. Restaurant operators are also being actively attracted, but the difficult situation in the industry since the pandemic has made it difficult to get companies involved.

A.5. Good transport links and smooth customer paths for visitors as prerequisites for competitiveness

- There has been cooperation with Finavia and airlines to attract new flight routes and operators. For example, since Ryanair opened new direct flight routes to Helsinki, the city has been marketed in the target markets in cooperation with the airline.
- The Port of Helsinki and the city have jointly promoted sustainable cruise travel. There have also been several discussions about promoting the measures of the action plan for the development of tourist bus services, unfortunately not always in a positive way. In addition, joint campaigns have been planned with shipping companies for the German market, for example.
- Helsinki actively and persistently strives to develop the visitor experience for tourists. The Tourism and Destination Management Unit started developing a Helsinki visitor experience management model in autumn 2022 together with stakeholders.
 - More than 40 people from 16 different organisations have participated in the cooperation. Active cooperation in developing the visitor experience has been carried out with, for example, Finavia, the Port of Helsinki and VR, since good transport connections are a natural part of a functional customer path.
 - The management model and development roadmap were completed in April 2023.
- The City of Helsinki has supported HSL in its ticket type development in event requirement specification work to enable HSL in future to serve the more coherent construction of the visitor experience of major events and congresses.

B. Helsinki is an international pioneer and solution provider in sustainability, tourism and events

Strategic choices

- B.1.** Environmental sustainability and carbon neutrality at the forefront of development
- B.2.** Helsinki residents, inclusiveness and social and cultural sustainability at the core of development
- B.3.** Helsinki is a world leader in sustainability, verified by indices and certifications

Prerequisites for the development

- B.4.** The availability of skilled labour is vital for the sectors
- B.5.** Focusing on comprehensive safety is a prerequisite for the city's appeal



B.1. Environmental sustainability and carbon neutrality at the forefront of development

- A sustainability action group has been established in the city for the tourism and events sectors as part of the city-level sustainable development working group. The group has a broad representation of the city's various divisions, including expertise in equality work, accessibility, inclusion, environmental protection, marketing, tourism and events.
- The City of Helsinki aims to be carbon-neutral by 2030. The tourism and events sectors must also respond to the global climate crisis with their own actions. By being a pioneer, Helsinki can achieve significant competitive advantage.
 - Helsinki has signed the UN's Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism, committing to achieving zero emissions from tourism by 2050.
 - The city will measure emissions from tourism in cooperation with several municipalities in Uusimaa and Visit Finland in spring 2023. For the first time, this measurement will create a clear overall picture of emissions from tourism.
 - The Urban Environment Division and the City Executive Office's Communications Unit have together created a carbon footprint calculator for events. The calculator will be launched in late 2023 among event producers.
 - The city has been working in cooperation with Visit Finland to create a carbon footprint calculator for tourism companies. A test version of the calculator is in use, and the actual calculator will be rolled out more extensively in autumn 2023.

B.2. Helsinki residents, inclusiveness and social and cultural sustainability at the core of development

Involvement of Helsinki residents in developing the tourism and events sectors

- The well-being of Helsinki residents must be the starting point for all development. The tourism and events sectors have a number of positive effects on the city. However, it is also possible that tourists or event participants will have negative effects.
- The city implemented the “Involvement of Helsinki residents in the development of tourism and events industries” package in spring 2023.
 - In cooperation with the Helsinki Tourism Foundation, a study of the views of Helsinki residents on tourism and events was carried out in 2023. The study was also carried out in 2019 and 2021 (for tourism). The locals’ view of the tourism and events industries is very positive.
 - In addition, Helsinki’s Targets of Tourism Development 2023 survey was carried out, seeking concrete development ideas from both local residents and industry representatives. 108 responses were received and an implementation plan will be drawn up on their basis.
 - In March, an event open to all was arranged at the City Hall, where the public had the opportunity to comment on the status and development plans of tourism and events.

Inclusiveness of tourism and events

- Helsinki is a safe and equal destination for tourism and events, especially when compared to many other destinations around the world. However, the city still has a lot to do in terms of inclusiveness.
- An analysis of the current inclusiveness status of Helsinki’s tourism and events was carried out in spring 2023. Based on the analysis and its recommended measures, the city is going to promote inclusiveness more systematically than before.
- In 2020–2021, the social responsibility of events was investigated and developed city-wide. In 2023, a checklist will be drawn up to support event operators in relation to social responsibility and implemented in cooperation with Pentagon Design. In addition, the list will be piloted together with event promoter Fullsteam at the Sideways Festival in summer 2023.

B.3. Helsinki is a world leader in sustainability, verified by indices and certifications

- By 2026, the city aims to be at the top of the Global Destination Sustainability index. Helsinki's ranking in the index rose by four places in 2022. Helsinki now ranks 12th in the index. The total index figure for Helsinki increased from 72.6% to 82.8% in a year. The 70 indicators of the index will continue to guide the development work relating to the sustainability of tourism and events.
- Maintained by Visit Finland, the Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) programme guides tourism companies and the city towards more sustainable tourism. As a pilot site, Helsinki has been part of the programme from its inception and it is aiming for the STF label by the end of 2025. This means that 51% of tourism companies operating in the international market must also have a company-specific STF label. This is one of the reasons for the Sustainable Growth for Tourism: Southern Finland project has provided training for companies, company-specific Sustainable Travel Finland path training and de minimis aid for environmental certification.
- The city started the tourist destination certification process in spring 2023. The certification supports Helsinki's work towards becoming the most sustainable travel destination in the world.

B.4. The availability of skilled labour is vital for the sectors

- Labour shortages have been a challenge for the tourism industry for years, but the situation has further deteriorated as a result of the pandemic.
In the events industry, the situation has become more challenging, especially due to the pandemic.
- Challenges in labour availability and mismatch have been particularly discussed by the Helsinki Tourism Advisory Board together with the most significant tourism and events companies in Helsinki. In addition, joint measures have been planned with educational institutions.
- Helsinki Employment Services have implemented measures targeted at the tourism and restaurant industries, such as recruitment events and short vocational training courses, tailored in cooperation with companies and Stadin AO, the Helsinki Vocational College and Adult Institute.
- In cooperation with employers in the tourism, restaurant and events sectors, the city organised a tourism recruitment event in February. The event was attended by 20 companies and about 250 jobseekers. Both the companies and jobseekers found the event useful. In connection with the marketing of the recruitment event, a social media campaign was carried out about the importance, growth and employment opportunities of tourism. It reached over 800,000 individual people.
- Good Jobs at Events! is a project built by the City of Helsinki in 2022 to connect employers in the event industry and Helsinki-based jobseekers. Through the service, employers in the event industry can find employees suitable for various job descriptions. It is possible to receive short-term and longer-term pay subsidy for employment and support for employee training and induction.

B.5. Focusing on comprehensive safety is a prerequisite for the city's appeal

- The significance of safety and security in customer decision-making is strongly emphasised, whether it is about health security, uncertainty about the global security situation, cybersecurity threats, security of programme services and events or a general sense of security.
- Completed in 2022, the Helsinki Tourism Safety Development Plan 2021–2025 was updated and its systematic implementation is underway. The Compass handbook for companies, completed in 2022, was also updated in early 2023.
- Companies were supported in crisis communication at the beginning of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the energy crisis. The growth of companies' security expertise was supported by workshops, information sessions and communications.
- A management team for safety in tourism and events, led by the Tourism and Destination Management Unit, was launched in autumn 2022, consisting of 11 members from the city organisation, various authorities and a representative of the industry. Helsinki-level indicators for safety in tourism were defined with the management team in order to monitor the safety situation and evaluate the effectiveness of the measures.

C. Helsinki is a smart destination and a functional event city

Strategic choices

- C.1. Smart development of tourism and events is based on knowledge
- C.2. City space-related decisions support tourism and events
- C.3. Helsinki is a functioning platform for events

Prerequisites for the development

- C.4. Promoting companies' digital capabilities to increase their competitiveness
- C.5. Growth and renewal through accelerating innovation in the tourism and event sectors



C.1. Smart development of tourism and events is based on knowledge

- The development of and decision-making on the city as a venue for tourism and events must be based on systematically collected, up-to-date information. To support knowledge-based management, specification work was carried out to summarise previous views and reports on knowledge-based management, as well as thorough reflection based on them, into a coherent and concrete requirement specification, which was then used as a guideline for a further development project.
- A knowledge-based management platform for tourism and events in Helsinki, DataLokki was prepared through extensive cooperation during a six-month deployment project, and implemented in May 2023. The platform collects data relating to tourism and events in Helsinki into a single software package, where the information is visualised in information windows. This makes the information widely usable and shareable, both within the City Group and with companies, other stakeholders and tourism regions. In addition, it supports the development of the expertise, product development and business of various actors and can be used in development and decision-making relating to the city's activities. The systematic development of the platform and knowledge-based management will continue after the deployment project.
- In 2022, the City of Helsinki commissioned Sponsor Insight to compile an impact analysis of the economic impact of selected summer events in Helsinki on the Helsinki economic area. This impact analysis will be continued in 2023. In addition, it has been decided to test a new digital method for measuring the impact of events at selected events in summer 2023.

C.2. City space-related decisions support tourism and events

- The aim of the tourism and events master plan, or land use plan, is to create a basis for the long-term strategic development of tourism and events, taking into account their current and future needs. Preparatory work for the plan is ongoing, with the aim of completing the preliminary study (current status and needs) in 2023. The slow start has been especially due to the challenges in cooperation within the city and understanding the importance of the matter.
- Since 2022, a tourism expert has also been invited to the urban development and planning service meetings coordinated by the City Executive Office in the city centre and West Harbour, for example.
- Event area development coordinated at city level by the City Executive Office is carried out in close cooperation with the Urban Environment Division:
 - Malmi Airport and Kalasatama project groups
 - Kaivopuisto and Kansalaistori pilot experiments
 - Consideration of events in the plans of Kaisaniemi and Hesperia Park
 - Cooperation group between the City of Helsinki and the business sector to strengthen the vitality of the city centre (HELY group).
 - More extensive coordination is needed in the city with regard to the use and development of event areas:
 - The preconditions for the use of existing event areas and event infrastructure, if any, must be easily available to the event organisers, for example in the form of event area cards.
 - Renovation and repair plans for existing event areas must be available to event organisers in good time. When existing event areas are decommissioned, either completely or temporarily, functional temporary areas must be specified for the events in those areas.

C.3. Helsinki is a functioning platform for events

- The city carried out a resident survey on the environmental impact of events in 2022. According to the results, residents were well aware of the importance of events in terms of the economy, revitalisation and reputation of the city. Littering and urination in the vicinity of events were regarded as more disturbing than noise.
 - After the resident survey and consultation with event organisers, the Urban Environment Division prepared noise restriction guidelines for outdoor event locations for 2023–2025.
 - To support the noise restriction guidelines, there is also a prioritisation method managed by the City Executive Office's Communications Unit, in which the practices of event organisers are graded in terms of functionality, internationality, brand value and environmental responsibilities. The operator with the most points will get longer playing times.
- It has been decided to continue the major event-steering group in 2023–2025. The group discusses Helsinki's strategic policies regarding major events and 'eventness' in Helsinki. Other eventness work groups will also continue to work within their fields of operations.
- Preparations for an external Advisory Board for events have been started.
 - The group will be set up to ensure that the city has continuous and systematic contact with event organisers. The aim of the group is to promote measures important to the event industry, including in decision-making by the city where applicable. There has been an idea that membership in the group consists of regular members and annually changing members, and the group is also chaired by one of its members.
- The one-stop-shop principle for events, i.e. electronic services for event organisers in event notifications and permit practices, has been prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Employment and the Economy. Preparations are being made for its implementation in autumn 2023.
- Section 42 of the City of Helsinki Building Regulations, concerning the organisation of events, will change in 2023 so that it will be possible to organise longer-term events without a permit from Building Control. The duration is currently two weeks and will change to two months.

C.4. Promoting companies' digital capabilities to increase their competitiveness

- The city's role as a key actor in promoting the integration of different systems has been identified. The city has supported the business expertise and digital capabilities of small businesses by organising webinars and workshops. In addition, the creation of a digital product offering for companies and the distribution of product inventory have been supported in different ways. At the end of 2022, the number of Helsinki tourism products in the national tourism product database DataHub was 256. On 3 April 2023, the number of products was 270, showing an increase of 14 products in the first quarter of 2023. The goal is to increase the number to 350 products by the end of 2023. Growth has been supported by enhanced communication, personal contact with tourism companies and the addition of events managed by the City Group to the database. Growth is being held back by the lack of a two-way interface from the city's databases to Visit Finland's DataHub, through which information could be transferred automatically.
- It was decided to run down the MyHelsinki Open API in a controlled manner by summer 2023 for technical and financial reasons. Tourism information is maintained in three separate databases with their own functional interfaces. It would be ideal to make the product information available to developers in a more resource-efficient manner when the city's API Gateway is at a more advanced stage.
- The MS Dynamics customer relationship management system was introduced in April 2023. The system enables the efficient processing of business information and monitoring of the growth of the partner network's turnover. Its implementation has been delayed from the initial timetable target by the challenges seen in coordinating the project.

C.5. Growth and renewal through accelerating innovation in the tourism and event sectors

- As a result of the Makers of Helsinki network meeting in spring 2023, a meeting was organised between tourism and event companies and startups based in Helsinki. Ten startups presented themselves to the network, after which the companies were able to talk to each other. The startups were selected in cooperation with Business Helsinki's growth companies team. 70% of the respondents to the event's feedback survey found the introduction of startups useful.
- The Sustainable Growth for Tourism: Southern Finland project's pilot application sought solutions that support the growth of tourism companies' business and utilise data to experiment with tourism companies. Seventeen offers were submitted of which three innovative solutions were selected for the experiment.

Helsinki