

City of Helsinki Welfare Plan 2026-2029

Summary

Approved by the City Council on 22 April 2026

The Welfare plan is available on our website: <https://hyte.hel.fi/en/welfare-plan/>

Helsinki



City Strategy 2025–2029, A Helsinki we can be proud of

Promoting health and wellbeing plays a central role in ensuring the overall welfare of our residents. In Helsinki, everyone – regardless of their background or starting point – should be able to live a good life and pursue their dreams. In Helsinki's Welfare Plan, we focus in particular on the reduction of disparities in people's wellbeing and the promotion of daily exercise and an active lifestyle



City of Helsinki's program entity for the council period 2026–2029



Consolidating programme packages

Environment and climate – Environmental Protection Objectives 2040

- Climate programme
- Nature Reserve Programme 2025–2040
- LUMO programme 2021–2028
- Baltic Sea Action Plan
- Action Programme for the Circular and Sharing Economy

Transport

- Bicycle Action Plan
- Walking Promotion Programme
- Parking policies
- Traffic Safety Development Programme



Renewal programmes package

Segregation prevention objectives

- Homelessness programme
- Substance abuse prevention strategy

Objectives for growth, competence and vitality

- Tourism and events development programme
- Immigration and integration development programme

Maritime Helsinki action plan

A More Beautiful Helsinki programme

- Cultural Environment Programme



Established programmes package

- Welfare plan* (council)
- Equality and non-discrimination plans*
- Service strategy for the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division* (council)
- Decision on the level and standard of rescue services in Helsinki* (council)
- Housing and land use programme (council)
- Implementation programme for the city plan

**Statutory*

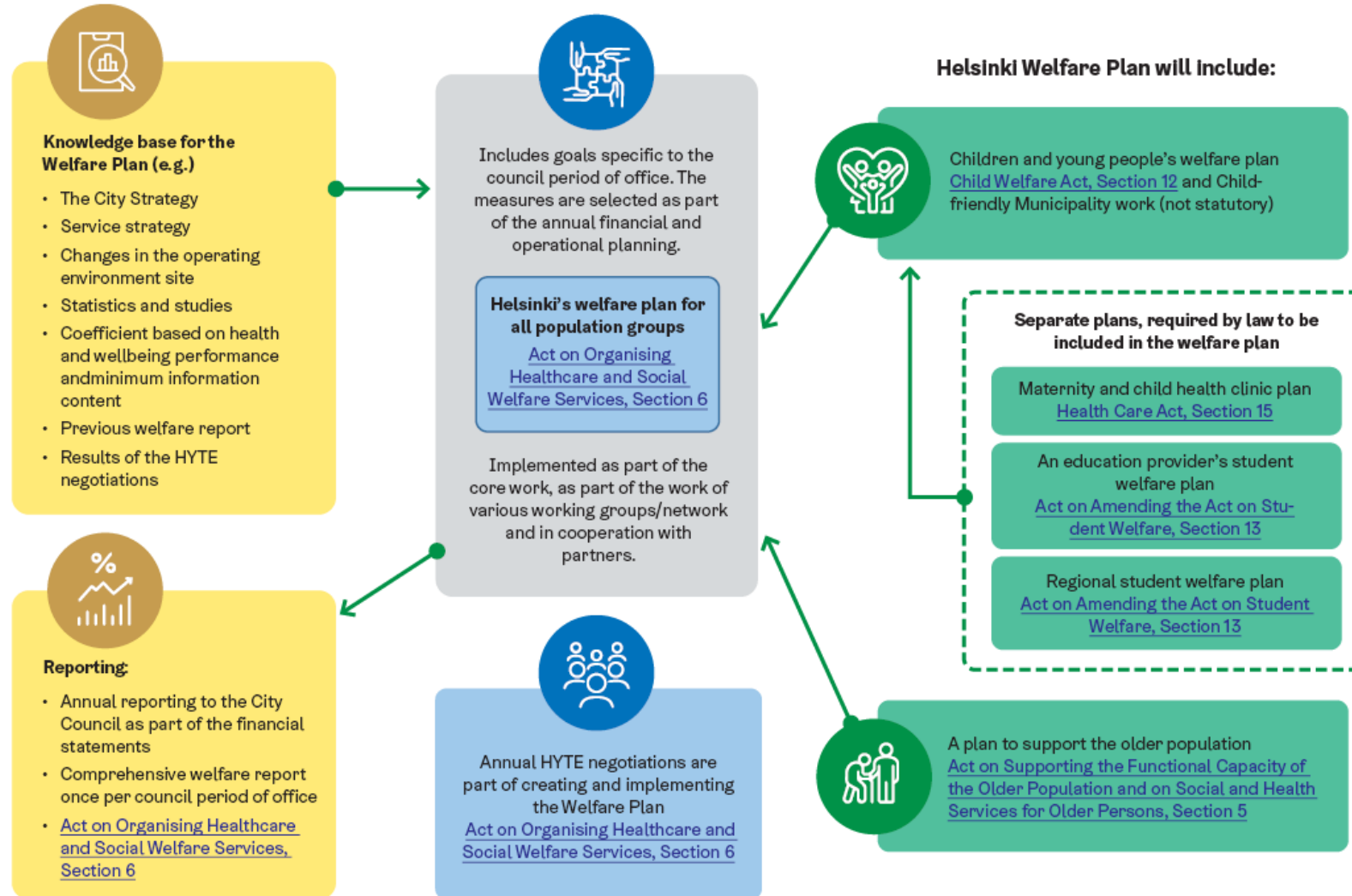
What is health, welfare and safety promotion (HYTE)?

- Welfare, health and safety promotion is **promotional and preventive work** that supports all Helsinki residents' opportunities for wellbeing, health, inclusion, equality, safe everyday life and good working and functional capacity. These opportunities are created by providing conditions that support wellbeing and healthy choices, and by strengthening agency, optimism and faith in the future.
- In its **broadest sense**, health and wellbeing promotion work is work carried out in services provided by different City divisions and the City Executive Office, as well as in cross-administrative cooperation, targeting individuals, families, communities and the population at large as well as their living environments.
- The work **is based** on the World Health Organisation's One Health approach, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of human, animal and environmental wellbeing and health. The model supports the goals of sustainable development by addressing health and welfare challenges and promoting the wellbeing of populations and ecosystems. It is closely linked to the planetary wellbeing approach, which looks at the impact of human activity on the welfare and wellbeing economy of the whole planet. The model is designed to promote the wellbeing of both current and future generations.
- Health and welfare promotion **is guided by** a systemic and holistic approach. The focus is on the experience of quality of life, based on the individual's physical and mental functioning, social wellbeing and the healthiness and functionality of their living environment.
- The **cross-cutting goal is to narrow the gaps in well-being and health**. This means that in addition to general and universal measures and services, targeted solutions are made that take into account the different cultural, economic and social backgrounds of Helsinki residents. This will equalize the different opportunities for Helsinki residents to live a well-being, healthy and safe life, and bring the living conditions of those in a weaker position into a more equal position with others.

What is a Welfare plan?

- The City of Helsinki Welfare Plan defines the cross-administrative objectives for promoting the wellbeing and health of the residents of Helsinki for the 2026–2029 council period. The measures and indicators of the Welfare Plan are developed separately as part of the annual planning of the finances and operations of the divisions and the City Executive Office.
- The Welfare Plan is structured based on two priority areas around which the objectives have been built. To the Welfare plan has been selected objectives whose promotion requires cross-administrative cooperation. The perspective of reducing inequality in wellbeing and health has been taken into account in all measures promoting the objectives.
- The welfare plan has been structured in the manner required by legislation to guide and support the management and coordination structure of HYTE, which was renewed at the beginning of 2025. In practice, the life cycle working groups for children, young people and families with children, working-age people and the elderly are responsible for implementing the wellbeing plan. The Strategy Department is responsible for monitoring the welfareplan in cooperation with the sectors and reports regularly on success.
- Statutory HYTE negotiations have been built into a close part of the implementation of the welfare plan. This strengthens cooperation between organizations and other partnerships in implementing the goals.
- The welfare plan has been prepared in cooperation between the City Office and the sectors, and the HUS Group and the Senior Citizens' Council have been involved as required by law.

The content of the Welfare plan is guided by the city strategy, extensive legislation and the knowledge base



Most Helsinki residents are doing well. They are satisfied with their lives and feel that their quality of life or health is at a good level.

- Several aspects related to physical functioning and social wellbeing have seen positive development in recent years, such as increase in active lifestyles and reduced experiences of loneliness.
- While the wellbeing of Helsinki residents is excellent in many ways on average, one concerning factor is related to the clear and pervasive differences in wellbeing between different population groups. These differences are particularly marked by gender and socioeconomic status, but also between different regions. They can be seen among children, young people, working aged people and older people. The gap between population groups has also partially widened over the past decade. Also, the state of the mental wellbeing of Helsinki residents is concerning.
- Based on extensive international research literature, which has also assessed Helsinki residents it is known that quality of life, life satisfaction and perceived health are explained by different dimensions of wellbeing, such as physical functioning, mental or social wellbeing and a safe living environment that promotes health. Thus, by promoting development that supports these dimensions, the quality of life and health of residents can be strengthened.

Priorities of the Welfare plan

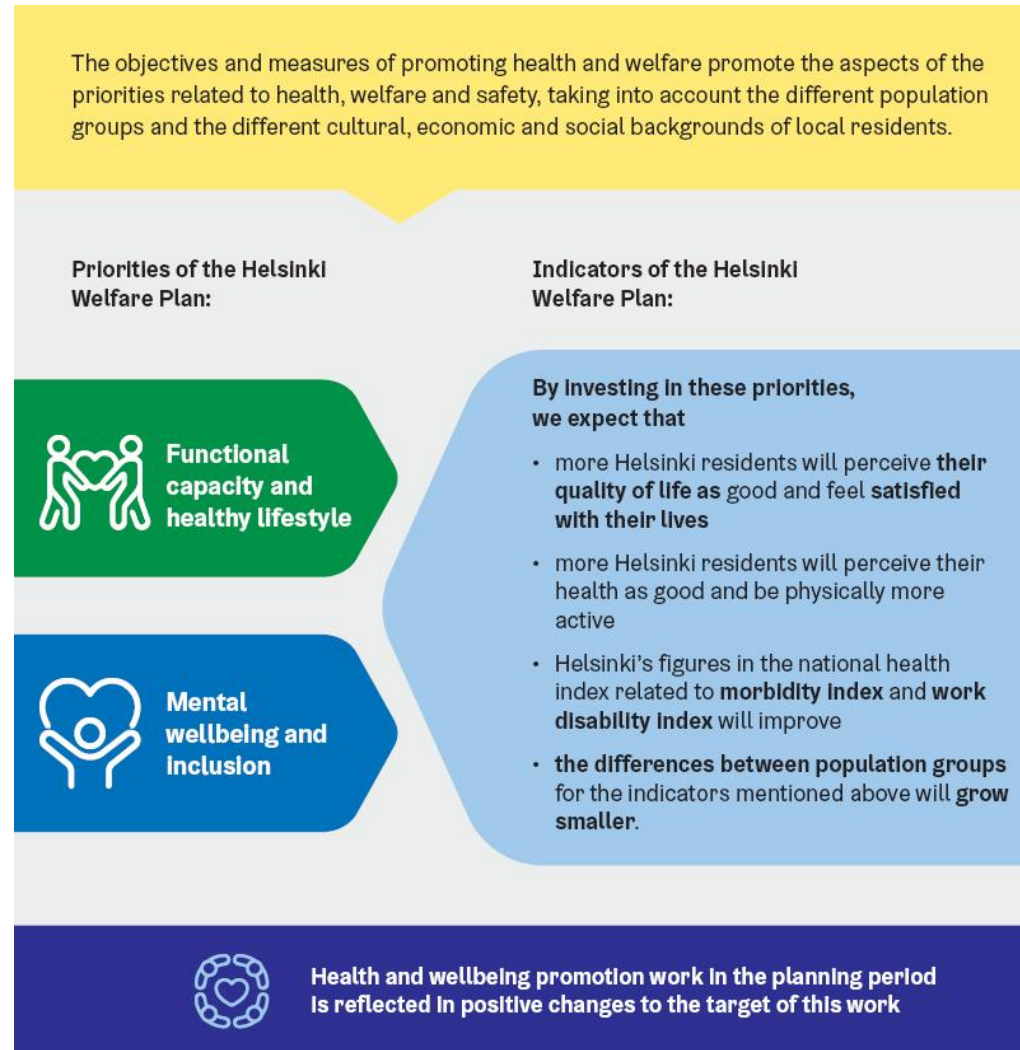
Functional capacity and healthy lifestyle

Good functional capacity and maintaining personal health and healthy habits such as sufficient exercise, sleep, nutrition and abstinence from substance abuse, support a meaningful daily life and wellbeing throughout a person's life. These habits develop in interaction with the environment and other people. Healthy lifestyles help prevent public health problems and support an individual's functional capacity from an early age. A safe and meaningful everyday environment encourages everyday mobility.

Mental wellbeing and inclusion

A socially sustainable society is built on mental wellbeing, community and inclusion. A city supportive of these offers all residents the chance to make a change in their lives and their environment and to be seen and valued. Good mental health is an asset that supports quality of life and functional capacity, developing through interactions with the everyday environment. When everyday life is safe, people have the resources to look after themselves and their loved ones, to study, to work and to pursue their hobbies. The everyday environment includes things such as homes, local nature, accessible services and a functional and accessible urban structure. An experience of inclusion helps strengthen the sense of belonging and meaning within a community.

Effectiveness aspects of the Welfare plan



The objectives for population groups for 2026–2029



Children, young
people and families
with children



Working-age
people



Older people

Functional capacity and healthy lifestyle

1. Decreasing the proportion of children and young people with low physical activity.
3. Increasing the physical activity of working-age people.
5. Increasing the physical activity of older people.

Mental wellbeing and inclusion

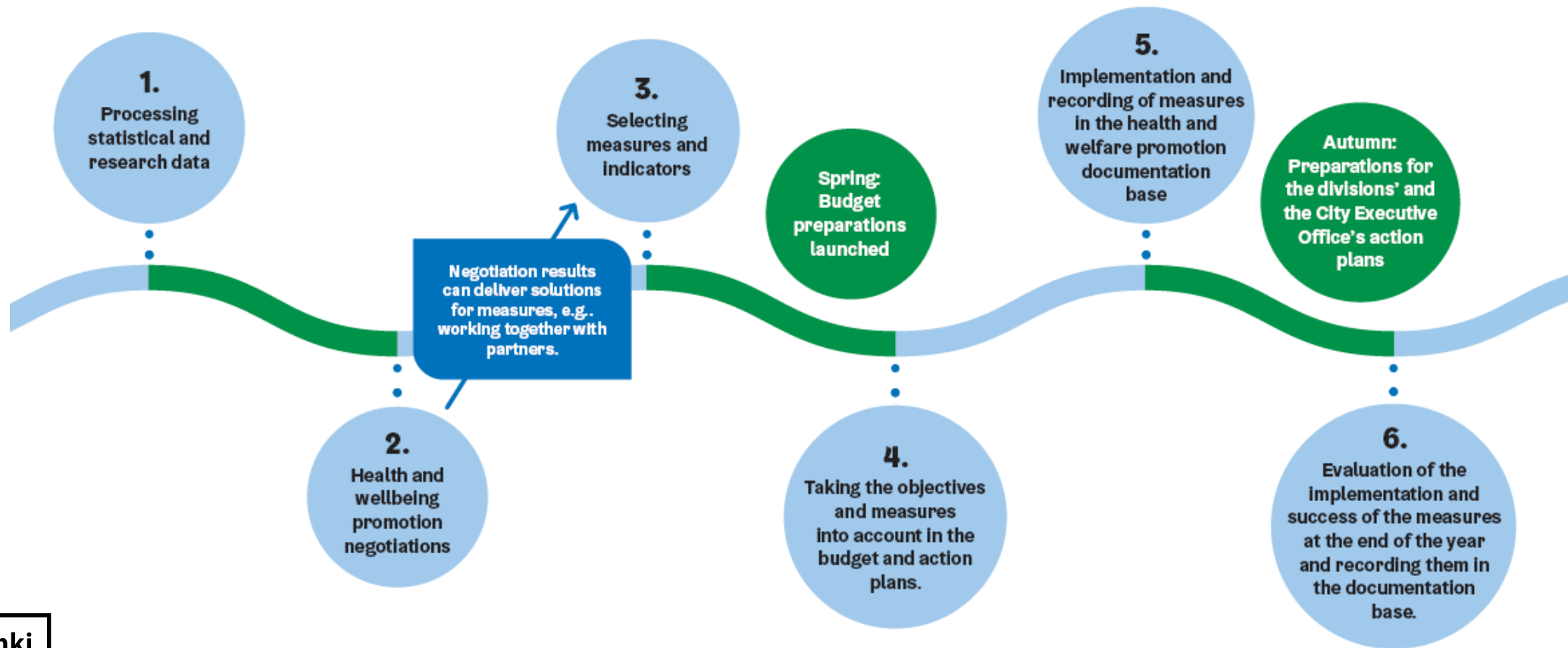
2. Strengthening the confidence of children and young people to influence their own future.
4. Reducing loneliness and feelings of exclusion among young adults at risk of social exclusion.
6. Reducing loneliness and exclusion among older people.

Objectives of the Child-
friendly Municipality work

City's internal development objectives

- The effectiveness of the governance and coordination structure of health and welfare promotion will be assessed and developed.
- The development work related to health and welfare data will continue.
 - The development of the coefficient based on health and wellbeing performance will be invested in to increase funding for the promotion work, wellbeing reporting and statistical and research reviews by lifecycle working groups.
- National and international cooperation will continue.
 - International cooperation in the Bloomberg Philanthropies-funded Partnership for Healthy Cities network will continue.
 - We will actively participate in the AI4 Healthy cities research project.
- The connection between the health and wellbeing promotion service concept and the structures and operations of city-level management of this work will be continued.

Knowledge-based implementation of the Welfare plan in life cycle working groups (annually)



The success and progress of the welfare plan is reported in annual reports and in an comprehensive welfare report

- The **annual reporting** of the plan will be coordinated with the City's financial statements published in the spring.
- **The comprehensive welfare report to be published in 2029 will be built around two main sections:**
 1. Assessing the success of the objectives and measures of the Welfare Plan based on the life cycle groups evaluations
 2. A description of the state of the population's wellbeing, health and safety, based on research and statistical data.
 - reporting on the status of the phenomena related to the objectives of the Welfare Plan (e.g. physical activity, marginalisation and loneliness) in Helsinki based on statistical and research data.
 - particular attention to examining physical activity in different age and population groups through the selected indicators
 - This section of the welfare report will also take into account the five indicators of the Welfare Plan which are used to monitor the general wellbeing, health and safety of Helsinki residents in the long term.
 - In addition to the above, the description takes into account the coefficient indicators based on health and wellbeing performance of municipalities and wellbeing services counties, the conclusions of HYTE consultation, the effectiveness indicators of the City Strategy and other statistic and research data.

Communications

- The priorities, objectives and measures of the Welfare plan are communicated in accordance with a separate communication plan. Both the City Executive Office and the divisions will communicate on the plan's implementation.
- The presentation of the Welfare plans implementation will continue throughout the council period of office as part of the Stadin HYTE virtual 'morning coffee' meetings.
- The Welfare plan is available on our website: <https://hyte.hel.fi/en/welfare-plan/>