

# Assessment report

2023



Helsinki

Helsinki

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# Greetings from the Audit Committee

The purpose of the Audit Committee's assessment is to provide the Council with information about achieving the city's set objectives and the effectiveness of its activities. This annual assessment report presents the Audit Committee's findings and recommendations which the City Council, the City Board, other bodies, the Central Administration, and divisions can use to develop the city's operations. At the end of the year, the City Board will report to the Council on the actions taken based on these recommendations.

In its 2023 assessment report, the Audit Committee considered various strategic policies for the council term. This ensures that the Committee's assessments cover all 13 of the City Strategy's priority areas during its term of office. In practice, all the assessment topics in this report have evaluated the progress towards meeting the objectives or guidelines set by the Council in the City Strategy.

For its assessment, the Committee is divided into two commissions. The first commission is responsible for the Central Administration and the Urban Environment Division. Based on the assessments, the winter maintenance of pedestrian and cycle paths should already be considered in land use planning while also taking the quality of that maintenance into account. Clearer management is needed for developing urban renewal areas. The Port of Helsinki's carbon neutrality goal is progressing, but there is still work to be done.

The Committee's second commission is responsible for the Education Division, the Culture and Leisure Division, and the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division. The assessment of social guidance for families with children highlighted the need to develop the services for families with children as a whole. Access to treatment for people with drug dependence has been made easier, but facilities for these services are hard to find. Although the needs of foreign-language learners are recognised, the level of available support varies between schools.

You can read the assessment report  
and its background memoranda at  
[www.arviointikertomus.fi/en](http://www.arviointikertomus.fi/en)

You can learn more about the Committee's findings by reading this assessment report or exploring the rest of the [www.arviointikertomus.fi/en](http://www.arviointikertomus.fi/en) website. More detailed background notes on the assessments are also available on the website. In this way, residents and others interested in Helsinki's activities can obtain comprehensive information on how the city has performed its tasks based on the findings of the Audit Committee.

The Audit Committee would like to thank the professional staff of the Audit Department and other people involved in preparing the 2023 assessments and hopes that you find the assessment report interesting and engaging!

Yours sincerely,  
**The City of Helsinki's Audit Committee**



# Summary

According to Section 121 of the Local Government Act (2023), the Audit Committee's task is to assess whether the municipality and the municipal group have achieved the operational and financial targets set by the City Council and whether their operations have been organised effectively and appropriately. Below are some extracts from the 2023 assessment results.

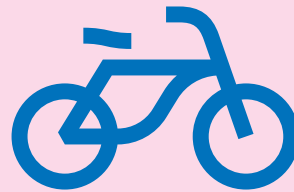
## **Services for families with children should be developed as a whole.**

Social guidance for families with children is early, low-threshold support for families. Access to the service has been improved and the service expanded. However, queues have increased as clients in need of more intensive services are referred to this service. In addition, congestion and staff shortages in other services undermine access to various services. Different services perform work that partly overlaps. The Audit Committee recommends better defining the division of labour in service needs assessments and securing staff availability and customer access to services that meet their service needs.



## **The availability and permanence of staff must be ensured in youth work.**

Youth outreach work was highlighted during the coronavirus pandemic. Since the end of the pandemic, the number and accessibility of youth facilities have not been sufficient. Due to lower salaries than in neighbouring municipalities and extensive job descriptions, Helsinki is no longer as attractive an employer as it used to be. This has reduced the availability of qualified staff. The Audit Committee proposes drawing up a plan to improve the pay, training and job profiles of youth workers to increase the attractiveness and retention in that sector in Helsinki.



## **Winter maintenance of pedestrian and cycle paths should already be taken into account in land use planning.**

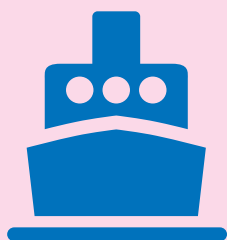
Winter maintenance is carried out in accordance with the product cards and work instructions prepared by the city, but the practical work is hindered by rapidly changing weather conditions, extreme weather phenomena, material shortages and equipment breakdowns. In snowy years, the problem is the lack of suitable space for piling snow. There has not yet been time to prioritise winter maintenance for pedestrian traffic. Although the city has increased the winter maintenance of cycle paths, the proportion of people satisfied with winter cycling has not increased. Taking winter maintenance into account in land use planning would allow for more effective snow management. Its quality could also be improved by increasing the incentives for contractors to adhere to their contracts.

## **Access to treatment for people with drug dependence has been made easier, but facilities for these services are hard to find.**

Services for people suffering from drug dependence can reduce the harm caused by drug use and improve the amenity and safety of the surrounding area. The city's substance abuse services have facilitated access to treatment for people who use drugs through a number of reforms that have improved access to opioid substitution and detoxification treatment. Once resources have been transferred to the initial services, access to the final services, such as rehabilitation, may become more difficult. The effects of the reforms should be monitored. However, the main obstacle to the development of substance abuse services is the difficulty in finding suitable facilities for them. Facilities are difficult to obtain because residents and business owners are opposed to the placement of substance abuse services in their neighbourhoods. The need for services has increased because drug use has become more common, and the legal requirements for the provision of services have become stricter.

### **Libraries have become more attractive, but cooperation with educational institutions needs to be developed.**

Libraries have taken numerous measures to increase reading and literacy. The city has increased the attractiveness of libraries, which is reflected in the increased number of visits. At the same time, the regional network of local libraries around Helsinki is secured. In future, the city should continue to develop cooperation between libraries and secondary schools. It should also promote measures that will increase the number of library visits by secondary school students.



### **Port's carbon neutrality goal progressing, but work remains.**

Emissions from shipping account for the majority of the Port's emissions, 80% in total. These emissions will be reduced by a quarter by 2030. The Audit Committee recommends amending the Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan to take into account methane and other greenhouse gases in addition to carbon dioxide. Emissions from heavy goods vehicles and port machinery have increased, contrary to the targets. They account for a total of 18 per cent of the Port's emissions. By contrast, the Port's own emissions appear to be on track to become carbon neutral as early as 2025. However, the Port's own emissions only account for a small share of the total emissions sources, only two per cent.

### **The Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division is adequately prepared for incidents and emergencies.**

The preparedness processes of Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services are based on continuous development work. This assessment shows that the power supply, water supply and materials management processes are appropriately organised under normal conditions. Civil defence in the City of Helsinki is partly well-organised, but there are differences between the conditions of civil defence structures and bedrock shelters. The Audit Committee recommends that the division ensure the necessary human resources for preparedness and continuity management tasks.

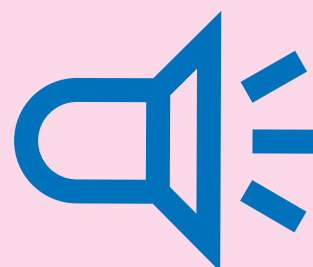


### **Urban renewal areas need clearer management.**

Over the years, awareness of urban renewal and its objectives has increased within the city organisation. Urban renewal is only just beginning, and so far relatively minor measures have been taken in the areas. The Audit Committee recommends that the areas should be developed to improve the operating conditions for businesses. At the same time, the city must ensure effective coordination between its divisions in the urban renewal areas.

### **Needs of foreign-language learners identified; level of available support varies at schools.**

A quarter of the pupils in Finnish-language comprehensive schools are foreign-language pupils, and their share is growing. The Education Division is well-prepared for the situation. The division has increased language-aware and multilingual pedagogy through various measures. However, language-aware instruction is carried out at schools to varying degrees. In the opinion of the Audit Committee, the division should ensure that preparatory education, S2 teaching and multilingual instructors have sufficient resources to support foreign-language pupils in all schools. Schools should also receive adequate guidance and tools for the appropriate use of resources intended to support foreign-language pupils. The Audit Committee also recommends continuing measures to establish language-aware pedagogy and anti-racist approaches.



# The Audit Committee's activities

## The Audit Committee's duties and composition

The Audit Committee is a statutory body directly accountable to the City Council, tasked with ensuring the administrative and financial audits of the City of Helsinki and the City Group, as well as assessing their objectives, effectiveness and appropriateness in accordance with the Local Government Act. The Committee prepares the administrative and financial audit matters that the City Council decides on and supervises compliance with the obligation to declare private interests as defined in the Local Government Act. The Audit Committee is independent of the City's executive management and other organisational bodies.

On 2 August 2021, the City Council appointed the Audit Committee for the 2021–2025 term. The Committee has nine members, each of whom has a personal deputy. The Committee's assessments are prepared in two commissions whose compositions are described on the next page. The division of responsibilities between the commissions is attached to the assessment report.

The Audit Department assists the Audit Committee in assessing the achievement of the objectives set by the Council and the effective and appropriate organisation of activities, as well as in monitoring declarations of private interest. The Audit Department also assists the City Auditor in the statutory audit of the City's accounts.

In 2023, Audit Director Timo Terävä was the head of the Audit Department and the rapporteur for the Audit Committee. Assessment activities were managed by Assessment Manager Minna Tiili until August, then by Senior Performance Auditor Liisa Kähkönen in addition to her own duties, and from 2024 onwards by Assessment Manager Timo Cantell. Audit activities in 2023 were supervised by Audit Manager Arto Ahlqvist, and Controller Vilma Lamminpää was responsible for monitoring declarations of interest. The Secretary of the Audit Committee was Vilma Lamminpää. A total of 17 people worked in the Audit Department.

## Assessment activities

Each year, the Audit Committee assesses whether the operational and financial objectives set by the City Council for the City and the City Group have been

achieved and whether the activities have been organised effectively and appropriately. These are tasks that the Local Government Act sets out for the Committee. The findings and recommendations of the assessment are presented in this assessment report.

The background memoranda of the assessment report are available at [www.arviointikertomus.fi/en](http://www.arviointikertomus.fi/en).

The assessment report will be discussed by the City Council on 19 June 2024. Before the City Council discusses the assessment report, the Audit Committee will request the necessary statements from the City Board and other bodies and submit them to the City Council for information. Later in the year, the City Board must give the City Council an account of the measures the persons responsible for the operations and those accountable have taken as a result of the assessment report.

The Audit Committee carries out its assessment work systematically. In its action plan adopted on 14 December 2021, the Committee has outlined that most of the changing assessment topics will be linked to the City Strategy and will focus on all its main elements during the council term.

In fact, the assessment report's table of contents is mainly based on the priorities in the City Strategy. Annually recurring assessment topics include progress towards binding objectives, financial assessment, and monitoring the effectiveness of recommendations. The annually changing assessment topics are decided in each year's assessment plan.

The 2023 assessment plan was prepared jointly by the Audit Committee and the Audit Department. The Committee approved the assessment plan on 9 May 2023, and it was updated on 12 September 2023. The preparations for the plan took into account the suggestions for assessment topics put forward by councillors, council groups and city management, as well as suggestions made by residents through the Kerro kantasi (Voice your opinion) service.

Two commissions prepared the assessment report throughout the year. They met to discuss the implementation plans, memoranda and draft text of the assessment report. In addition, the commissions made a total of six assessment visits to the Central



# Composition of the Audit Committee

## First commission



**Deputy Chair Dani Niskanen**  
*Deputy Member Leila Kaleva*



**Nita Austero**  
*Deputy Member Pertti Hyvärinen*



**Jussi Junni**  
*Deputy Member Virve Magdaleno*



**Terhi Peltokorpi**  
*Deputy Member Jukka Ihanus*

## Second commission



**Chair Nuutti Hyttinen**  
*Deputy Member Marika Sorja*



**Iida Haglund**  
*Deputy Member Juha Christensen*



**Sandra Hagman**  
*Deputy Member Jani Valpio*



**Mikael Jungner**  
*Deputy Member Kimmo Niemelä*



**Petrus Pennanen**  
*Deputy Member Emma Ringbom*

Administration, divisions and group entities. Most of the practical assessment work is carried out by Audit Department employees. The assessment is based on criteria that may be set out in legislation, the City Strategy or other relevant city policies. The knowledge base for the assessment typically consists of documents, interviews, written requests for information and statistical data. The conclusions and recommendations in the assessment report are based on findings from the assessment materials.

The secretaries of the commissions coordinate the assessment work by the commissions. Senior Performance Auditor Petri Jäske served as secretary of the Committee's first commission, and Senior Performance Auditor Liisa Kähkönen served as secretary of the second commission. Senior Performance Auditor Aija Kaartinen was responsible for methodological support and training for the assessment work. The Assessment Manager and the Senior Performance Auditors are responsible for the quality assurance of the assessment work. In addition to internal quality assurance, the correctness of the content of the assessment memoranda and assessment report texts is verified by the subject of the assessment.

Figure 1 shows how the Audit Committee's assessment work proceeds chronologically.

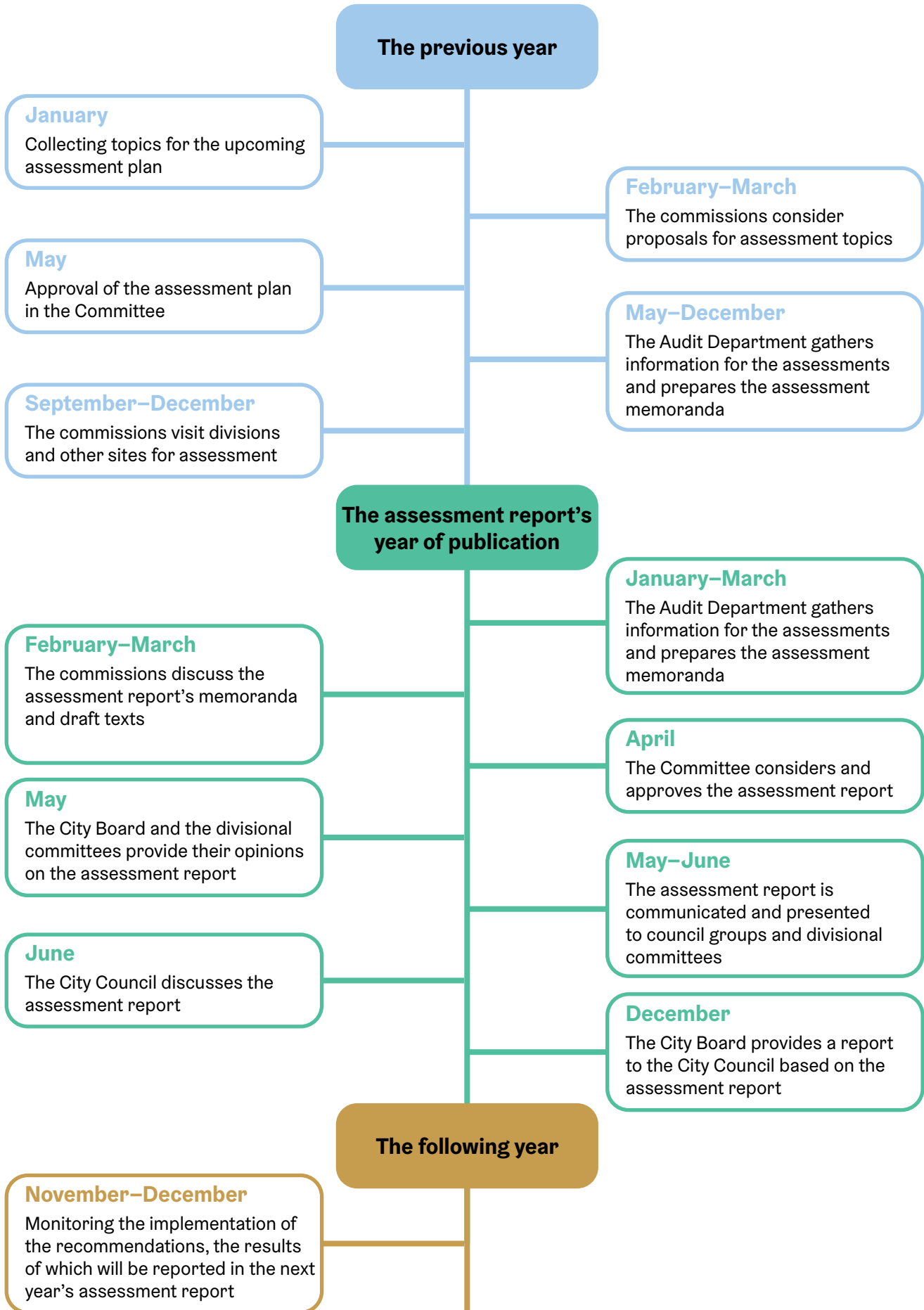
## Auditing activities

The City of Helsinki's audit for the accounting periods 2023–2024 was put out to tender, and on 15 March 2023, the City Council selected KPMG Oy Ab as auditor, as they had submitted the most cost-effective bid overall. Jorma Nurkkala, a public administration auditor (JHT) approved by the Central Chamber of Commerce (KHT), was appointed as the main auditor. The auditor gave the Committee three reports on the 2023 financial audit and presented the audit findings at the Committee's meetings. The City Council will discuss the audit report and the public summary report of the 2023 audit on 19 June 2024.

## Monitoring the declaration of private interests

Under the Local Government Act, elected officials and officeholders are obligated to declare their private interests publicly. The Audit Committee is tasked with monitoring compliance with the obligation to declare interests and notifying the City Council of such declarations. The Audit Committee recorded the private interests declared by elected officials and officeholders in its meetings on 30 May and 7 November 2023. The declarations were discussed by the City Council on 21 June and 13 December 2023.

**Figure 1. Annual plan for the Audit Committee’s assessment work**



# Assessing the binding operational targets

## **A higher proportion of targets were met than before**

The 2023 budget had a total of 31 binding operational targets for the divisions, municipal enterprises and departments, which the City Council had approved. According to the Audit Committee's assessment, 18 targets, or 58 per cent, were achieved. The percentage at which the targets were met was 16 percentage points better than in 2022.

The financial statements also assessed 18 targets as met. The financial statements assessed 13 binding operational targets as unmet, one more than the Audit Committee's assessment. The difference between the financial statements and the Audit Committee's assessment arose from the fact that the Audit Committee considered it impossible to comment on meeting one of the objectives. The budget had not set target values for the indicators of treatment guarantees at health stations in the Social Services and Health Care Division, but did so at a later stage. Consequently, the Audit Committee considers that meeting this target and its single indicator cannot be assessed.

The City Council considered and approved the deviations from the targets in its meeting on 28 February 2024.

## **The rate at which target indicators were met was slightly better than in 2022.**

There were a total of 46 indicators to measure the achievement of the objectives. Of these, 60% were achieved (Figure 2), a slightly higher percentage than in the previous year (58%). According to the Audit Committee's assessment, the achievement of one indicator could not be assessed because the budget had not set a target level for it. This was the above-mentioned indicator of the treatment guarantee at health stations.

## **The objectives of the Education Division and the Culture and Leisure Division had the best results.**

According to the budget compliance guidelines, a binding target is considered achieved if all of its indicators specified in the budget are met. Failure to achieve even a single indicator means that the target is not met. The divisions' targets have a varying number of indicators.

If a target has many indicators, and even a single one is not met, the target will not be achieved.

Figure 3 shows that the objectives of the Education Division and the Culture and Leisure Division had the best results. Both divisions had two targets, which they met. Every division achieved at least half of its targets.

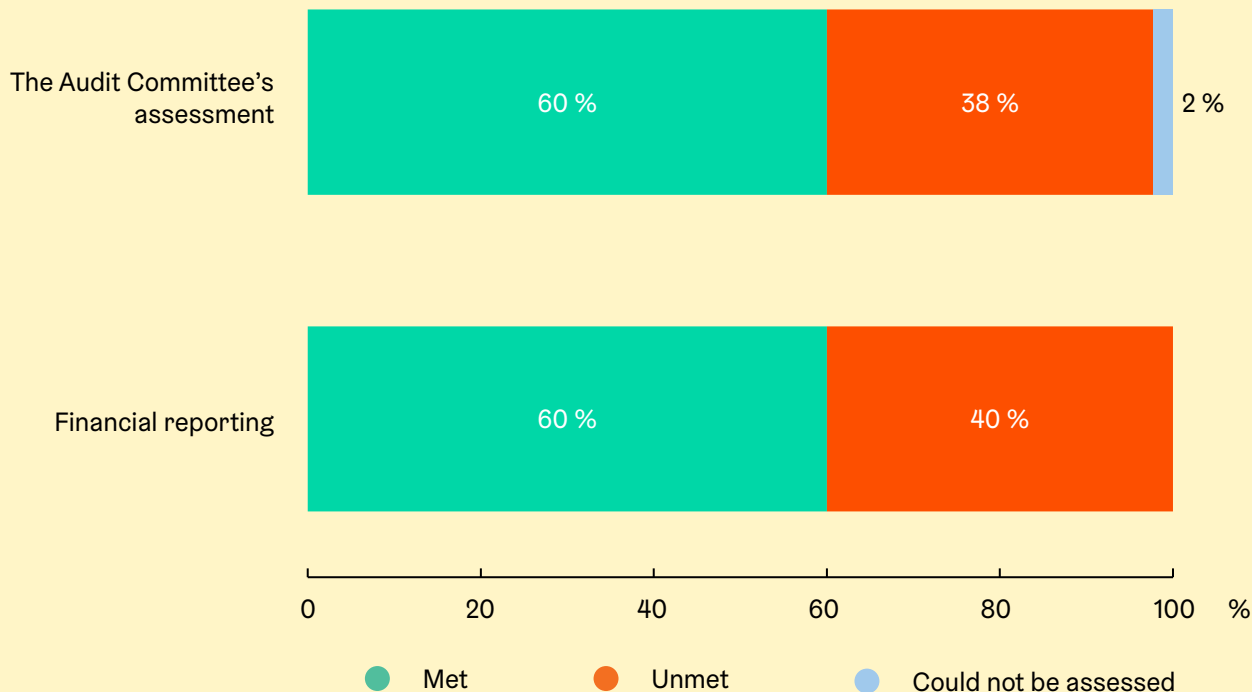
## **Targets for residential planning and housing starts were not met**

The City Executive Office had six targets, and four were met. The targets had six indicators, four of which were achieved. The target for the number of started housing units, which was shared with the Urban Environment Division, was not met. Reasons for the slowdown in housing production include the sharp increase in construction costs that started in late 2021 and the sharp increase in energy prices, consumer prices and interest rates triggered by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022. According to the City Executive Office, the same reasons prevented the goal of increasing the housing stock in urban renewal areas from being achieved. In contrast, targets such as those for the city's finances were met. However, the documentation for the two financial targets was inadequate, as the supporting documentation does not allow external evaluators to determine how the values for the indicators were calculated.

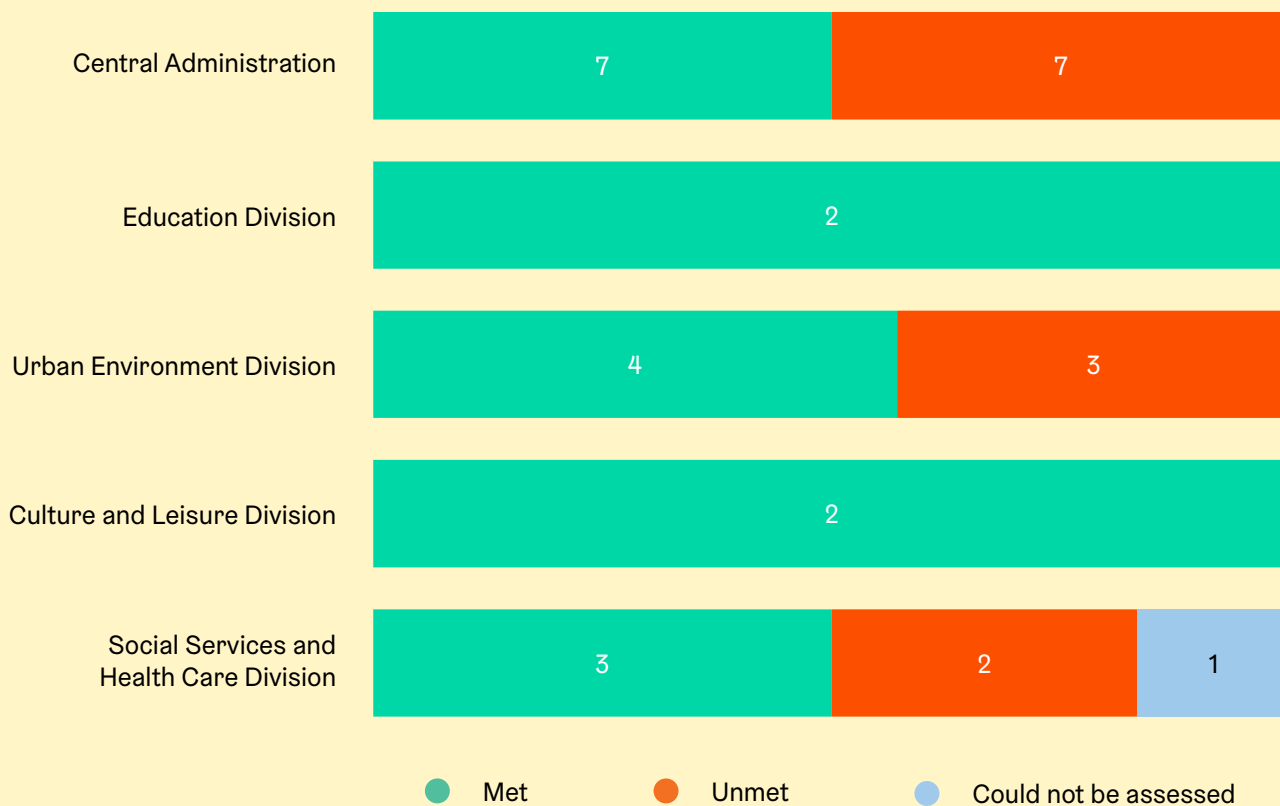
One of the Audit Department's binding objectives was met. Palvelukeskus Helsinki and Occupational Health Helsinki both had one binding target, which was related to customer experience. Neither municipal enterprise met its target. Construction Services had three objectives, of which the one related to customer satisfaction was achieved. The targets that were not met were increasing the share of electric cars in the city's fleet and improving the employer recommendation index. Financial Management Services had two binding operational targets, both of which had one indicator. The financial performance target was met, but the customer satisfaction target was not.

Two of the Urban Environment Division's four binding targets were achieved. There were ten indicators, and six of these were met. For the objectives of resident experience and promoting the growth and vitality of the city, the indicators did not meet their target levels for response times to customer feedback, new housing

**Figure 2. Percentage of achieved binding target indicators for divisions, enterprises and departments in 2023**



**Figure 3. Number of achieved binding targets by division in 2023**



starts, the total square metres of planned housing, and the levelling of differences in area housing prices. The indicators of customer satisfaction in park and street management were met. All three indicators for the goal of environmental sustainability were met. The indicators covered aspects such as heating systems in facilities, environmental targets for construction sites and carrying out nature monitoring. The objective of improving the division's productivity and one of its indicators were also met.

Helsinki City Transport (HKL) also operates within the Urban Environment Division. Two of Helsinki City Transport's three objectives were achieved: maintaining balanced finances and its transport operator's rating from customers. The target for the number of cancelled metro departures was not met. Since the creation of Metropolitan Area Transport Ltd (Pääkaupunkiseudun kaupunkiliikenne Oy) at the beginning of 2022, HKL has only been responsible for the operations and infrastructure of the metro.

### **Increase in early childhood childcare workers enrolled in apprenticeship training**

The Education Division met two of its targets and three indicators reached their target levels. The indicators were related to the use of emotional and interpersonal skills programmes in basic education, upper secondary school students' sense of inclusion in the school community, and an increase in the number of early childhood childcare workers starting apprenticeship training.

Three of the six objectives for the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division were achieved. The targets had 13 indicators, of which seven were met, five were unmet, and one could not be assessed, according to the Audit Committee. The indicators of the achieved objectives met their targets, as the number of older adults in 24-hour institutional care decreased, the departure and arrival times of rescue operations were sufficiently short, and the target level of safety points for accident prevention was exceeded. The goal of promoting wellbeing and health and preventing social exclusion could not be assessed

because one of the indicators could not be assessed for having been met. The target levels for this indicator were not set in the budget, but only later. Of the seven other indicators for this objective, four were met and three were unmet. The objectives for urgent emergency care and the active use of the Maisa service were not met.

The Culture and Leisure Division had two binding operational targets, each of which had one indicator. Both objectives and indicators were achieved. The indicators for the objectives were the number of visits to the division's services and the unit costs of service packages.

### **Conclusions on meeting the objectives**

Fifty-eight per cent of the binding operational targets and 60% of the indicators in the 2023 budget were met. The Education Division and the Culture and Leisure Division achieved their binding targets especially well.

The Audit Committee's assessment of meeting the objectives deviated from the assessment in the financial statements regarding one indicator. According to the Audit Committee's assessment, it cannot be assessed because the budget did not set target values for the treatment guarantee indicators for health stations; this was done later. The documentation for the City Executive Office's two indicators was inadequate, as the supporting documentation does not allow external evaluators to determine how the values for the indicators were calculated.

### **The Audit Committee finds that**

the City Executive Office should

- ▶ ensure that the attachments to the documentation for binding targets provide all the information that the external evaluator needs to be able to establish that the values for the indicators have been calculated correctly.

# Targets set for the Group

## There are often no target values set for the objectives of subsidiaries

The assessment of the objectives set for the Group focused on the progress of the objectives for the subsidiaries in the cultural sector in 2023. A total of 14 objectives were set in the ownership strategies of the four subsidiaries in the cultural sector. According to subsidiary reporting, nine of the objectives, or 64%, were achieved. The Audit Committee's view is that seven, or 50%, of the objectives were achieved. Seven objectives could not be assessed because no target levels or criteria had been set for their indicators, or the indicators were otherwise unclear.

Whether or not these objectives have been met is not explicitly clear from all the statements provided by the cultural sector subsidiaries. Target levels or criteria have not always been set for the indicators of these objectives. Some of the indicators leave room for interpretation as to what it is intended to measure. In addition, a single indicator may include two different items, making it challenging to assess whether the targets have been met.

## The 2024 budget will strengthen subsidiary reporting to the Council

The 2023 budget set out the ownership strategy objectives for 15 subsidiaries of the entire group, of which there were 72 in total. According to financial reporting, 47 (or 65%) of the subsidiaries' objectives were met, and 25 (or 35%) were not met. In the financial statements, the fulfilment of objectives is documented differently than in subsidiary reporting. In the financial statements, meeting the objectives is described as 'met' or 'unmet' per the parent city's guidelines. Subsidiary reporting also provides an option for 'partially met'. According to Group management, the subsidiaries themselves determine the measures and target levels and assess the achievement of the objectives according to the set indicators.

Targets based on ownership strategies are set for 5–7 years. The 2023 budget sets out the objectives and indicators based on the ownership strategies of the most important subsidiaries. The budget states that the potential failure to meet two ownership strategy objectives will be reported separately to the City Council each year. The Audit Committee did not receive more detailed information on how the reporting of deviations to the City Council is carried out.

As a result of ownership strategies, the annual process of setting budget targets was abandoned, and the 2022 budget did not set targets for the subsidiaries

that needed to be reported to the City Council. For 2024, the operating model has been changed so that the budget confirms the objectives and indicators determined by the ownership strategies for the most important subsidiaries. In addition, the subsidiaries report on meeting the objectives set out in the budget to the City Board's City Group Sub-committee once or twice a year and to the City Council in connection with the consolidated financial statements.

## Conclusions

It is challenging to assess the achievement of the objectives of the cultural sector subsidiaries because the majority of the indicators for these objectives do not have any set target values or criteria. In addition, a single indicator may contain many measurable elements. According to subsidiary reporting, nine of the objectives of the cultural sector subsidiaries were met. The assessment showed that seven objectives were met, and seven could not be assessed. In addition, subsidiary reporting and financial reporting were not always consistent.

Deviations from two objectives set out in the 2023 budget for the most important subsidiaries based on their ownership strategies will be reported to the City Council. However, the Audit Committee was not provided information on how the deviations are reported to the City Council. The operating model has been changed in the 2024 budget so that it confirms the objectives and indicators determined by the ownership strategies for the most important subsidiaries. In addition, fulfilment of the objectives will be reported to the City Council annually with the consolidated financial statements.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the City Executive Office should

- ▶ ensure that each of the indicators for the objectives set out in the subsidiaries' ownership strategies contains only one measurable element.
- ▶ ensure that the indicators for the objectives set in the subsidiaries' ownership strategies have defined target levels or criteria and that they are described in the budget so that meeting these objectives can be verified.
- ▶ ensure that the achievement of the objectives is consistently documented in subsidiary reporting and financial statements.

Helsinki



# Responsible finances as the basis for sustainable growth





# The city's finances

## The finances of the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division were separated from the city's finances

2023 was the first year in which the expenditure and income of social services, health care and rescue services are no longer part of the city's self-financed budget. Funding for social services, health care and rescue services in the wellbeing services counties and Helsinki is based on general state funding, which

is mainly means-tested according to population and other factors. The Helsinki City Council still retains the power to decide how the funding is allocated. At its meeting on 16 November 2022, the City Council confirmed the city's income tax rate for 2023 as 5.36%. The following is an overview of the finances and key figures for Municipal Helsinki. The finances of the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division will be examined separately.

## Municipal Helsinki's finances

### Achieving the strategy's financial targets and budget

#### Expenditure growth was in line with the City Strategy's principle of accountability

The City Strategy 2021–2025 aims to achieve the principle of accountability in the growth of operating expenses. According to this principle, annual budgets must not exceed the expenditure level specified under the accountability principle. The City Executive Office has also made this a binding target. The increase in operating expenses is tied to changes in cost levels and population growth and the productivity target set for the city organisation, which is 0.5% in 2023–2025. The target was 0.3% in 2022. The change in the cost level is reflected in the price index for basic services. Population growth is described by age-group-specific population growth in the Education Division and the Culture and Leisure Division's youth services, and otherwise by total population change.

Based data from the financial statements, the indicator was met (Table 1). Expenditure under the accountability principle increased by around 4.9% in 2023. The change in the cost level, reflected by the price index for basic services, was significantly larger than estimated when the budget was drawn up. The high price index made it possible to meet this target.

#### The City Strategy's objective guiding investments was met

An objective set by the City Strategy 2021–2025 is that the total cash flow from operations and investments during a council period can be in deficit at most up to the deficit target set for the local administration

in the Public Finance Plan and the Municipal Finance Programme. The City Executive Office's binding target for 2023 was that total investments would be scaled to financially sustainable levels in terms of cash flow from operations and investments and growth in outstanding loans. The budget sets out the indicator for this target in tangible terms, stating that the cash flow from operating and investment activities must not exceed -0.5% of Helsinki's GDP. According to the financial statements, this objective was achieved. The cash flow from operating and investment activities showed a surplus of EUR 23 million. This target would have allowed for a deficit of 153 million euros, taking into account the city's share of GDP and its guarantee liabilities for public transport investments.

#### Tax revenues grew more than estimated

In 2023, municipal tax revenues were transferred to the state and the amount of state contributions decreased under the health and social services reform. As a result, tax funding decreased by 50% from 2022, meaning the tax revenues for the years are not comparable. The change can be seen in Figure 4.

Tax revenues amounted to over EUR 2 billion and were EUR 78 million higher than expected in the budget. Municipal tax totalled EUR 1.19 billion in 2023, which was EUR 52 million more than estimated in the budget. The increase was due to better-than-expected growth in earned income and outstanding taxes, which are tax revenues received at higher rates and distributions than in previous years. Corporate income tax revenue was EUR 539 million, which was about 30 per cent less than the previous year. State contributions amounted to EUR 200 million and decreased by approximately EUR 177 million from 2022. Property tax was EUR 307 million.

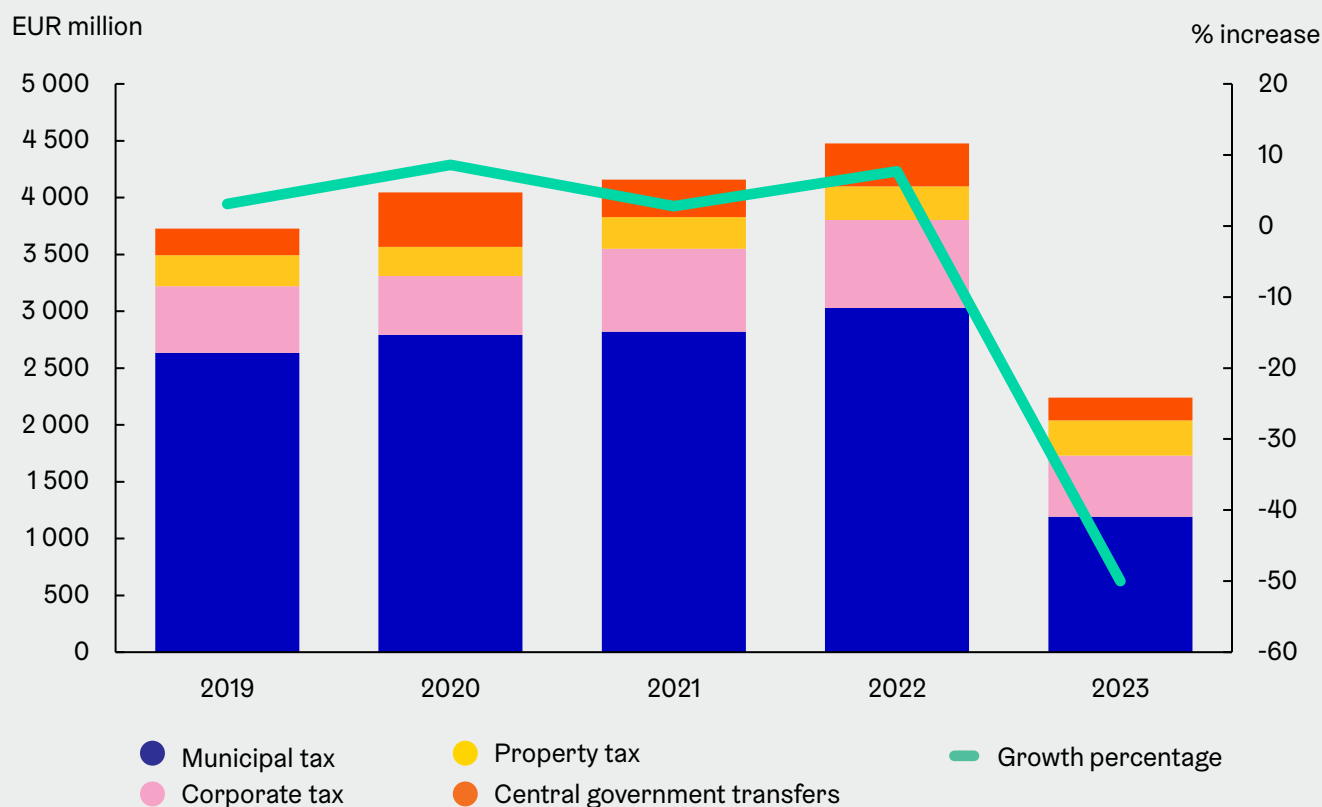
**Table 1. Growth in 2023 expenditure in accordance with the accountability principle\***

	BE 2023	FS 2023
Percentage change in population growth	0.6	1.0
Percentage change in the price index of basic services	3.8 (September 2022)	5.2 (Ministry of Finance 12/2023)
Efficiency improvement target, percentage points	-0.5	-0.5
<b>Expenditure growth rate allowed by the strategic target</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>5.7</b>
<b>Accountability principle</b>	<b>FS 2022</b>	<b>FS 2023</b>
Actual expenditure under the strategic objective, EUR million	1998**	2096
Actual increase in expenditure, EUR million		98
<b>Actual growth rate (percentage)</b>		<b>4.9</b>

\*Source: City Executive Office, Economy and Planning Department

\*\* Changes in the budget structure taken into account.

**Figure 4. Structure and development of tax funding 2019–2023.\***



\* Source: City Executive Office, Economy and Planning Department

The operating expenses of Municipal Helsinki amounted to EUR 2.9 billion and exceeded their budget by EUR 78 million. The overspending was mainly due to an overrun in the Education Division resulting from salary increases and increased costs, as well as growth in the Urban Environment Division's expenditure on maintaining public areas and infrastructure support for HKL. Operating income amounted to EUR 1.2 billion and was EUR 19 million below budgetary targets. On the other hand, the annual contribution margin was better than the budget estimated at EUR 815 million. The surplus was mainly due to better-than-estimated tax revenues.

In the 2023 budget, the operating budget section included a total of 26 binding appropriations or operating margins. Seventeen of these, or 66 per cent, were met, either on budget or better than budgeted. Nine binding appropriations items either exceeded their operating expenses or fell short of their operating margin. The City Council has granted overspending rights for these.

### **Most of the investment funds were spent on buildings**

In 2023, Municipal Helsinki made investments of EUR 810 million, when municipal enterprises and the investments of Metropolitan Area Transport Ltd are not considered. This represents 84% of the available investment funds. In the budget, EUR 968 million was available for investment, taking overruns into account. In 2023, all the investments of Municipal Helsinki and Metropolitan Area Transport Ltd totalled EUR 1,035 million. The largest investments were in buildings (EUR 289 million), major transport projects (EUR 144 million) and streets and transport routes (EUR 92 million).

The investment section had a total of 17 binding appropriation items. For eight of them, the budget allocation was either under-spent or spent as planned. There were nine budget overruns. These overruns are explained by the fact that several investment appropriations had already been authorised to be exceeded in the previous year because of unused funds.

The binding operational targets set for municipal enterprises have been considered as part of the achievement of binding objectives. These included two objectives related to financial results, one of which was achieved. The objective of Helsinki City Transport (HKL) was to achieve a result of at least zero for the accounting period, and the result was 3.1 million euros. Since the beginning of 2022, when Metropolitan Area Transport Ltd was established, HKL has only been responsible for the operations and infrastructure of the metro. Financial Management Services achieved its target for the accounting period: the surplus for the accounting period was EUR 0.1 million.

The other municipal enterprises did not have set targets for financial results. In line with the target, Palvelukeskus Helsinki had a surplus and Occupational Health Helsinki a deficit. The deficit for the accounting period of Construction Services Stara was lower than projected in the budget.

## **Trends in financial indicators**

### **The annual contribution margin was sufficient for investments**

The annual margin is the internal financing available for investments and loan repayments after paying the running costs. The annual contribution margin is a key indicator for assessing the adequacy of internal financing. Especially in Helsinki, where the level of investment is high, examining the cash flow statement alongside the income statement is essential, as the cash flow statement shows how the investments have been financed. The cash flow from operations and investments is, alongside the annual margin, an important key figure that describes the city's financial situation.

In principle, Municipal Helsinki's 2023 annual contribution margin can be compared with the corresponding figure for previous years, even though it no longer includes data for the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division. In Table 2, the debt service coverage ratio, internal financing of investments and cash flow from operating and investment activities reflect the entire city in addition to Municipal Helsinki, as the new Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division has limited investments and no loans of its own.

Table 2 shows that the city's annual margin has been more than twice the level of depreciation in recent years, and that figure has continued to improve. The annual margin declined in 2022 but improved again in 2023. The debt service coverage ratio improved despite the increase in interest rates. Helsinki's debt service coverage ratio is at a very good level. Figure 5 shows that the percentage of internal financing of investments improved from previous years. The annual margin was sufficient for investments, with the exception of public transport investments. The internal financing rate for investments improved compared to previous years. It shows how much of the acquisition cost of investments is financed by the annual contribution margin.

The accumulated cash flow from operations and investments over five years shows how much of the cash flow is left for net lending, loan repayments and bolstering cash reserves. If the figure is negative, expenses must be covered either by reducing existing cash reserves or by taking out additional loans. The cash flow from operating and investment activities was positive at EUR 23.2 million in 2023, with a positive accumulation for five years. The corresponding key

**Table 2. Trends in the key figures of the income statement and cash flow statement of Municipal Helsinki 2019–2023.**

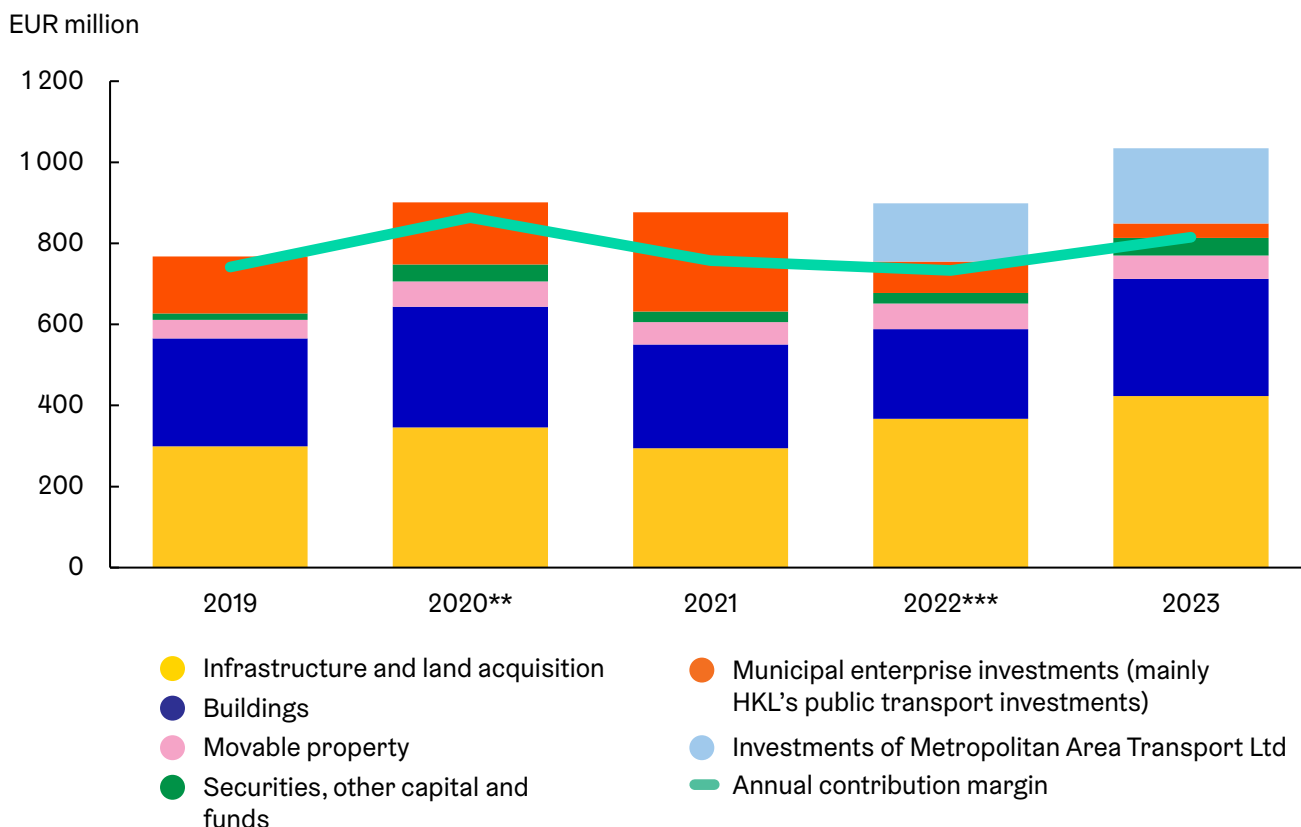
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Annual contribution margin, EUR per capita (parent)	1 134	1 314	1 150	1 104	1 207
Annual contribution margin, EUR per capita (Group)	2 106	2 190	2 029	2 049	2 067
Annual margin, per cent of depreciations (parent)	203	230	185	189	223.3
Annual margin, per cent of depreciations (Group)	167	170	142	150	145
Debt service coverage ratio (parent)	7.4	9.1	8.2	8.1	10.2
Debt service coverage ratio (Group)	3.1	4.8	3.9	3.9	3
Percentage of internal financing of investments (in brackets without the effect of HKL's incorporation) (parent)	97	85	88	72 (97)	98.6
Internal financing of investments, per cent (Group)	63	64	67	52	64.6
Accumulated cash flow from operations and investments over five years, EUR million (parent)	355	513	264	504	23
Accumulated cash flow from operations and investments over five years, EUR million (Group)	-283	-563	-789	-1, 632	-2, 179
Cash sufficiency, days (parent)	77	85	70	77	111
Cash sufficiency, days (Group)	62	66	60	60	72

**Table 3. Development of the City of Helsinki's balance sheet 2019–2023.\***

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Equity ratio, per cent (parent)	81.6	80.8	81.8	80.7	81.7
Equity ratio, per cent (Group)	62.7	62.1	61.6	59.4	58.7
Relative indebtedness, per cent (parent)	43.8	44.7	40.3	45.3	39.6
Relative indebtedness, per cent (Group)	88.6	90.3	88.3	93.6	95.7

\* The table describes the city as a whole in addition to Municipal Helsinki, as the Social/Health/Rescue Division's investments are limited, and it has no loans of its own.

**Figure 5. Evolution of investment expenditure and annual margin, EUR million.\***

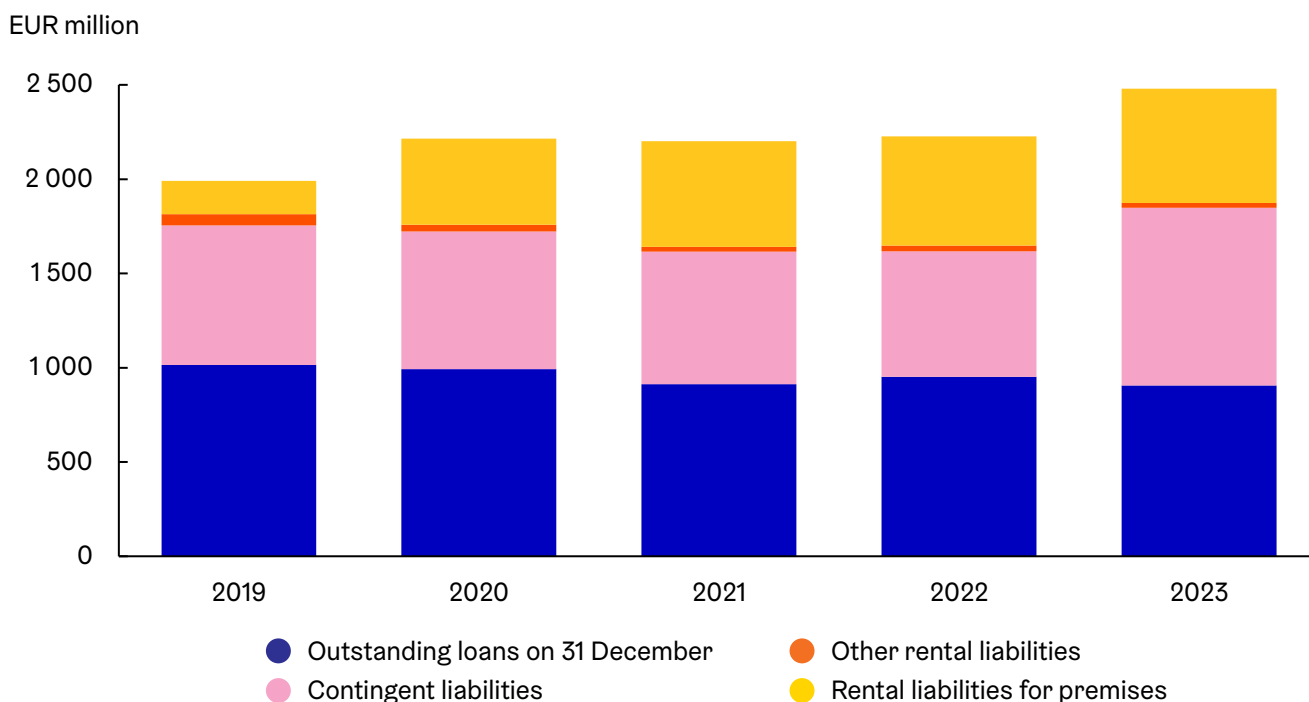


\* Source: City Executive Office, Economy and Planning Department

\*\* For comparability, the investment expenditure for 2020 has been described without the capitalisation of the Urban Environment House (130 M€)

\*\*\* For comparability, the investment expenses for 2022 have been described without the subscription of Kaupunkiliikenne Oy shares (265 M€)

**Figure 6. Development of Helsinki's outstanding loans, guarantees and rental liabilities 2019–2023, EUR million (at market prices).\***



\* Source: City Executive Office, Economy and Planning Department

figures for the Group were lower than for the parent city. The Group's internal financing of investments improved, but the cash flow from operations and investments has been negative and has continued to weaken.

According to the City Strategy, the cash flow from operations and investments during a council period can be in deficit at most up to the deficit target set for the local administration in the Public Finance Plan and the Municipal Finance Programme. This is called the deficit limit. This target was successfully achieved in 2023.

### **Outstanding loans decreased, but rental liabilities and contingent liabilities increased**

The city's outstanding loans decreased from the previous year. However, rental liabilities and contingent liabilities have continued to increase (Figure 6). Contingent liabilities are guarantees for loans granted to Group entities that are financed by the city. The Group also has a high level of outstanding loans and rental liabilities. The Group's figure is affected by the fact that Helsingin kaupungin asunnot Oy has a lot of borrowed capital. However, in practice, the company's loan servicing expenses are paid for by the rental income from the residents of rental buildings.

The city's relative indebtedness decreased, and its equity increased to the same level as in 2021. Although cash sufficiency declined, the indicator remains

at a relatively good level in the Group, as well. The Group's relative indebtedness was already high, and it increased slightly. The equity ratio has remained fairly stable for a long time, as shown in Table 3. Cash sufficiency declined slightly, but remains good in both the parent city and the Group.

### **Conclusions**

The finances of Municipal Helsinki turned out better than expected. Growth in operating expenses remained within the limits set by the 2021–2025 City Strategy. The target for cash flow from operating and investing activities related to financing investments was also achieved in line with the strategy. Key figures show that the restructuring of social services, health care, and rescue services carried out from the beginning of 2023 had little impact on the financial situation of the City of Helsinki.

The amount of long-term debt has been successfully reduced, but off-balance-sheet rental liabilities and guarantees to Group companies have been increasing for several years. Internal financing was sufficient for investments, except for public transport investments. At the Group level, both debts and investments are high, and financial indicators are consistently weaker than those of the parent city.

The City Council lowered the municipal tax to 5.3% when it adopted the 2024 budget.

## **Finances of the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division**

### **Funding was balanced**

Operating expenditure in the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division amounted to EUR 2.8 billion and EUR 32.6 million over budget. The most significant reason was the inclusion of Helsinki's share of the HUS Group's deficit of more than EUR 100 million as an expense in 2023. The net effect of the deficit was EUR 20 million because fewer services were purchased than planned. The City Council approved the HUS organisation agreement on 24 May 2023. Compared to the previous joint municipal system, the HUS deficit is no longer covered by additional contributions from member municipalities but is recorded as a mandatory provision in the income and balance sheet of the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division. The overrun in the division's expenditure was also due to higher-than-budgeted purchases of customer services. The coronavirus pandemic caused direct costs of EUR 16 million.

Operating expenses were financed with central government funding (EUR 2.6 billion), operating income (EUR 230 million) and financial revenue (approximately EUR 9 million). The annual contribution margin was positive at EUR 40 million. Investment expenditure in the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division amounted to EUR 12.7 million, EUR 0.3 million higher than budgeted.

The opening balance sheet for the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division in 2023 was formed by separating the assets, funds and liabilities at the disposal of social services, health care and rescue services from the city's balance sheet. The division's balance sheet at the end of the accounting period totalled EUR 484 million. The surplus of the accounting period, EUR 29 million, increased equity.



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# Supporting foreign-language pupils in comprehensive schools



Has the learning of foreign-language pupils been supported in Finnish-language comprehensive schools in accordance with the city's policies?



The city has supported foreign-language pupils in learning, but some measures are incomplete or limited in scope. There are shortcomings in the monitoring data for these measures.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Has the learning of foreign-language pupils been supported in Finnish-language comprehensive schools in accordance with the City Strategy and the priorities that promote integration in the City of Helsinki?

## Related questions:

1. Have the challenges of language learning and providing instruction for foreign language learners been addressed?
2. Have language-aware and multilingual pedagogies been increased in comprehensive schools?
3. Has the capacity of immigrant parents to support their children's schooling been strengthened?
4. Are the learning conditions of multilingual learners in comprehensive schools supported by multilingual instructors?
5. Are teaching staff in comprehensive schools trained to recognise discrimination and racism and to deal sensitively with diverse families?

The assessment also looked at how the city's comprehensive schools determine their pupils' needs for coursework in Finnish as a second language and literature. In addition to this, the assessment also examined how foreign-language learners in Helsinki who have completed comprehensive school have fared in their transition to further studies.

The City Strategy 2021–2025 sets out to address the challenges of language learning and providing

instruction for children and young people who speak a foreign language, strengthen their pathway to education and working life, and support their study path. The city's priorities for promoting integration 2022–2025 define the objectives for supporting foreign-language pupils in comprehensive schools, as well as their specific measures. These measures are linked to the Education Division's objective, 'All schools and kindergartens are good'.

The assessment covered the city's own Finnish-language comprehensive schools. Swedish-language comprehensive schools were excluded from the assessment, as the majority of foreign-language pupils study in Finnish-language schools. In the assessment, a foreign-language pupil means one whose native language recorded in the population register is something other than Finnish, Swedish or Sámi. In addition, it refers to a pupil who needs learning support due to deficiencies in the language of instruction at school.

The assessment material was based on interviews and e-mail inquiries to the experts responsible for developing the Finnish as a second language and literature (S2) syllabi, preparatory teaching in basic education, and promoting the integration of immigrants, as well as developer teachers for Finnish as a second language. In addition, the assessment used evaluations, studies, documentation and statistics on teaching foreign languages, information obtained during a visit by the Audit Committee's second commission, school action plans and comparative data from other large cities.

## Twenty-six per cent of pupils in Finnish-language comprehensive schools are foreign-language learners

In the autumn of 2023, 26% of the city's Finnish-speaking comprehensive school pupils (11,391 pupils) were foreign-language speakers. The share of foreign-language pupils in schools ranged from 0% to 62% in 2023. Pupils had up to 50 different mother tongues in individual schools.

In Helsinki's comprehensive schools, almost all foreign-language pupils follow the Finnish as a second language (S2) syllabus. Pupils follow the S2 syllabus if they have deficiencies in basic language skills and their knowledge is insufficient for the Finnish language

and literature (S1) syllabus. In addition to instruction in Finnish and their mother tongue, the pupils also receive support in other areas of learning, if necessary. According to the Basic Education Act, a pupil's guardian chooses the curricula.

Preparatory education is intended for learners with immigrant backgrounds whose Finnish or Swedish language skills are insufficient for basic education studies. Preparatory education mainly involves studying the Finnish language and getting to know the Finnish school system. Pupils can participate in preparatory education for 900–1,000 lesson hours. Pupils then move on to basic education, where their language learning continues. In the city's basic education, preparatory education is inclusive, i.e., in the same group with other children of the same age for pupils in the first and second grades and, generally, in separate groups for pupils in grades 3–9. A total of 715 preparatory education pupils were studying in Finnish-language comprehensive schools in the autumn of 2023. In the spring of 2023, 64% of the preparatory education pupils were studying in separate preparatory education groups and 36% in inclusive groups.

### **Not all schools have sufficient resources for language support**

In the spring of 2023, the Education Division compiled a snapshot of the implementation of preparatory education and S2 instruction in comprehensive schools. The survey identified the following main challenges to language learning and providing instruction for foreign language learners:

- ▶ When preparatory education ends, pupils in inclusive preparatory education have weaker Finnish language skills in speaking and text comprehension than the pupils in separate groups.
- ▶ Language support for pupils moving from preparatory education to basic education is insufficient.
- ▶ Not all teachers can find or use the materials and tools available.
- ▶ Some of the pupil data required for knowledge management has not been reported.
- ▶ The process of selecting and changing the S1 or S2 syllabus is not implemented in the same way in all schools and for all pupils.

The greatest development needs were identified in schools with few S2 pupils and, at the same time, low resources for preparatory teaching. In addition, the varying number of pupils in preparatory education during the academic year makes it difficult to allocate resources to schools. In 2023, about one-third of Finnish-language basic education schools were ones in which the funds calculated based on the number of

S2 pupils were insufficient to hire a single S2 teacher. In a national survey conducted in the autumn of 2021, 67% of Helsinki's basic education staff felt that their school's resources were insufficient to provide language support for pupils transitioning from preparatory education. Approximately half of the respondents felt that the school's resources for S2 instruction were insufficient.

The city has taken several measures in basic education to respond to the identified challenges in language learning and the provision of instruction for foreign-language speakers. For example, models have been compiled for principals and teachers on effectively using teaching resources in preparatory education, as well as methods for language-aware teaching and resource allocation. The division has also sought to resolve the resource challenge in schools by monitoring monthly enrolment figures and taking account of changes in the autumn budget revisions. New measures are also planned for 2024–2025.

Principals have the autonomy to decide how to use the budget based on the number of S2 pupils and the needs-based funding to compensate for differences in learning conditions between schools. For example, needs-based funding for schools can be used to hire staff to provide S2 instruction or other language support. The learning outcomes of schools receiving funding will continue to be monitored annually.

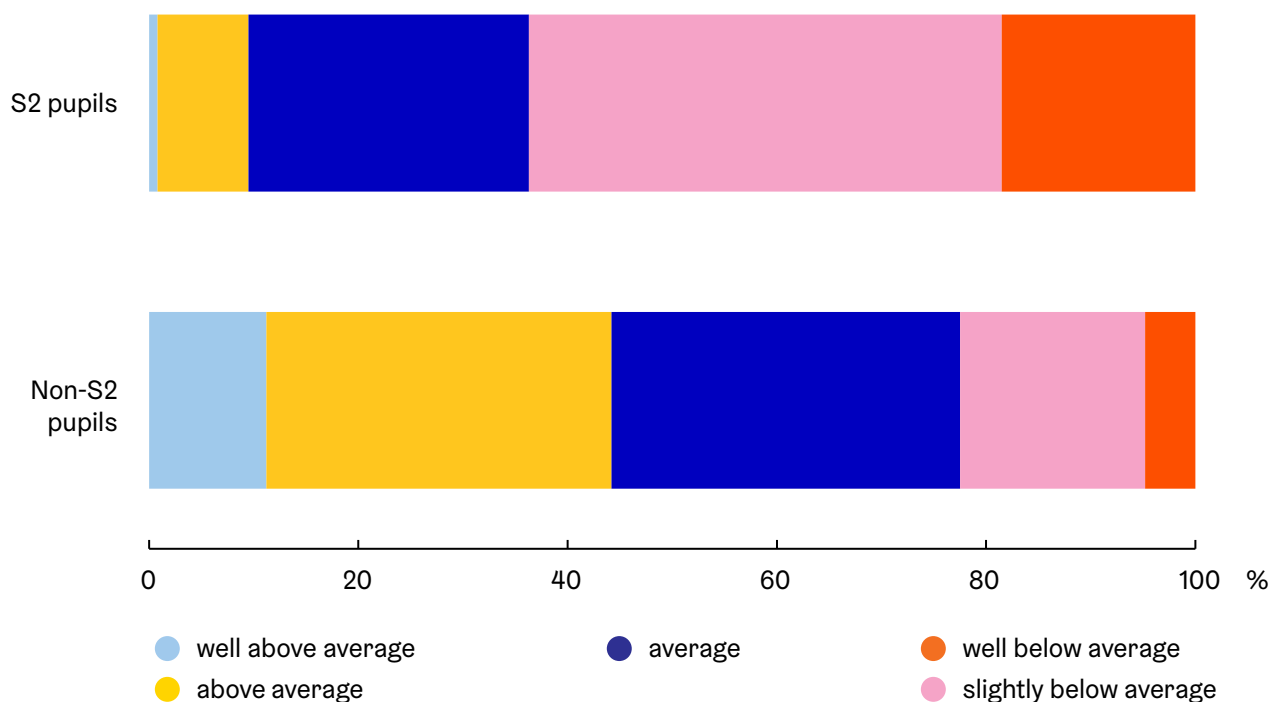
The process of selecting and changing the mother tongue and literature S1 or S2 syllabus is not carried out according to the division's guidelines. In the academic year 2024–2025, the division aims to standardise syllabus selection in all schools by introducing common procedures for selecting Finnish-language syllabi for new pupils.

### **Language- and culture-aware pedagogy is not fully utilised**

Basic education has taken many measures to increase language-aware and multilingual pedagogy. Language-aware education means that the teacher of every subject is also a teacher of the language in which they teach their subject. Language-aware pedagogical tools and materials are available to all schools, but it is up to the schools and teachers to decide how to use them. Support materials and tools are not known or used comprehensively by all schools and teachers, which means that language-aware pedagogy is not applied in all schools. According to the S2 teachers interviewed in the assessment, the broader adoption of language-aware pedagogy is hampered more by teachers' attitudes than the lack of knowledge.

The Education Division has promoted the use of language-aware pedagogy by expanding the activities of the developer teachers specialised in developing language awareness and literacy as pedagogical support

**Figure 7. Overall results in mathematics, native language and literary skills of Helsinki’s 3rd grade pupils according to native language syllabus, per cent.\***



\* Source: Longitudinal study. Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (Karvi) 2020. Helsinki Municipal Report.

in various schools; setting up a project to support the basic skills, transitions and well-being of lower secondary school pupils who have immigrated later in life; making the development of language-aware pedagogy an objective in the 2023–2024 school action plan; and organising various training courses. Support for developer teachers has been targeted at schools that have chosen to promote language-aware pedagogy or S2 teaching as their goal.

The indicator for the measure related to language-aware pedagogy in the priorities that promote integration was closing the differences in learning outcomes between foreign and Finnish-speaking learners. It is not yet possible to assess progress on this indicator, as some of the measures have only just begun, and their impact is not yet reflected in learning outcomes. In Helsinki’s Finnish-language comprehensive schools, the learning outcomes of foreign-language learners are clearly poorer than those of Finnish-speaking learners (Figure 7). They have not improved significantly, and the gap between the learning outcomes of Finnish and foreign-language learners has not narrowed between 2021 and 2023. In addition, the learning outcomes of Finnish-speaking pupils have also deteriorated. The trend is similar throughout the country, including in the neighbouring cities of Espoo and Vantaa.

According to the assessment findings, there is insufficient monitoring of learning outcomes in the division, where information on pupils’ backgrounds, such as

their date of immigration, could be combined with other data, such as the pupil’s mother tongue. Systematic monitoring and data aggregation are needed to design interventions and assess their effectiveness. In future, the knowledge base will be developed in a cooperative research project on learning analytics.

One of the Education Division’s priority measures for promoting integration is providing regular training on anti-racist working methods. No training has been held for the teaching staff of comprehensive schools in the academic year 2022–2023. However, training on anti-racist working methods has been provided to the staff of the Helsinki Vocational College and Adult Institute, who were also included in the training measure. The training provider will be selected in a competitive tendering process in early 2024. The division’s staff have been extensively trained to identify and address racism during the 2018–2021 strategy period. Some school staff do not yet recognise structural racism, although there is a more positive attitude towards pupils with immigrant backgrounds.

### Uncertainty in funding complicates the work of multilingual instructors

The division has promoted the capacity of immigrant parents to support their children’s schooling, but the measures to promote integration in this context have been small in scale and have not been adequately monitored.

The measure for promoting local cooperation between homes and schools through discussions with families and organisations has only been implemented in one school. Feedback on the cooperation, which is defined as a monitoring indicator, has not been collected. Because the feedback is missing, it is impossible to assess the success of this trial. The follow-up indicators for the measure of the model involving parents (Vanhemmat mukaan), which provided language instruction at local schools for stay-at-home parents, were met, but the number of participating parents has been low. Parents and schools have been largely satisfied with the programme, but the monitoring indicators do not provide enough data on its impact on participants' language skills and further progress. In addition, the indicators seem partly inappropriate for monitoring the impact of the trial.

Comprehensive schools have supported the learning conditions of foreign-language learners with multilingual instructors. Multilingual instructors support families with foreign backgrounds in their integration, inclusion, and cooperation between home and school, as well as the language and cultural awareness of other staff. The operating model has been able to provide low-threshold support for foreign-language families and strengthen home-school cooperation in schools where sufficient resources are available. The division has increased the number of instructors and developed activities and resource allocation. However, staffing and availability are perceived as challenges, especially if the instructor is rarely at the school. Planning, developing and increasing the impact of these activities is hampered by the temporary employment contracts of the instructors and changing funding sources.

In addition to the measures specified in the priorities for promoting integration, everyday activities in schools have included supporting the ability of immigrant parents to assist their children's schooling through various means, such as the use of translation tools, the language skills of school staff and the division's multilingual materials. However, communicating in different languages requires a great deal of working time, and there are still gaps in immigrant families' knowledge of the Finnish education system.

## Conclusions

The Education Division has supported the learning of foreign-language pupils in its Finnish-language comprehensive schools in accordance with the Helsinki City Strategy 2021–2025 and the priorities for promoting integration in 2022–2025. However, a large part of the measures are still pending. The resources and appropriate use of preparatory education, S2 instruction and multilingual instructors are key to how these measures can be applied in practice at different schools.

The Education Division has examined the challenges of language learning and the provision of instruction in foreign languages in accordance with the City Strategy. The division has taken several measures to respond to the shortcomings identified in preparatory education and S2 instruction. In addition, new measures are planned for 2024–2025. The division is working towards standardising the selection principles for the mother tongue and literature syllabus across all schools.

The division has sought to promote language-aware and multilingual pedagogy through a variety of measures. However, language-aware instruction is carried out at schools to varying degrees. We cannot expect the effects of these measures to be reflected in learning outcomes yet, as some of the measures have only just begun. The learning outcomes of foreign-language pupils have not improved significantly, and the differences in learning outcomes between Finnish-speaking and foreign-language learners have not narrowed. The implementation of training on anti-racist working methods in comprehensive schools is still ongoing.

The division has promoted the ability of immigrant parents to support their children's schooling, but the measures have been small in scale and have not been sufficiently monitored. The division has developed activities and resources for multilingual instructors, but their future is uncertain due to varying sources of funding. The model has helped to improve the conditions for learning for multilingual learners and to provide low-threshold support for foreign-language families.

The division has shortcomings in the monitoring data and knowledge management related to S2 pupils and their learning outcomes. Systematic monitoring and data aggregation are needed to design support measures and assess their effectiveness.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the Education Division should

- ▶ ensure that preparatory education, S2 education and multilingual instructors have sufficient resources to support foreign language pupils in all schools.
- ▶ ensure that schools receive adequate guidance and tools for the appropriate use of resources to support foreign-language pupils.
- ▶ continue the measures aimed at establishing language-aware pedagogy and anti-racist working methods in schools.



# Ambitious climate objectives and nature conservation



# Achieving the Carbon Neutral Port objective



Have the objectives of the Carbon Neutral Port programme progressed?



There has mainly been progress on the objectives. Ship emissions have been reduced, but the targets for emissions from heavy goods vehicles and machinery have not progressed.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Has the Port of Helsinki Ltd contributed to meeting the objectives of the Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan?

## Related questions:

1. Have ship emissions been reduced?
2. Have emissions from heavy goods vehicles and port machinery been reduced?
3. Is the Port of Helsinki's own carbon-neutrality target progressing on schedule?

The Port of Helsinki Ltd (the Port of Helsinki or the Port) is a 100% city-owned, market-based subsidiary of the City of Helsinki, which maintains and develops Europe's busiest passenger port and Finland's leading general port for foreign trade.

The City Strategy 2021–2025 does not directly mention the goal of a carbon-neutral Port of Helsinki. The objectives for a carbon-neutral city are set out at a general level in the strategy's theme, 'Ambitious climate objectives and nature conservation'. The goal is a carbon-neutral Helsinki that achieves its goals, leads by example, and does more than its fair share in combating climate change. The City Board approved the Carbon Neutral Helsinki Action Plan in 2018. The programme requires that emissions from port operations be reduced in accordance with the Government's and Helsinki's objectives. The Port of Helsinki has drawn up its own Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan to reduce its emissions.

The assessment material consisted of interviews, replies to requests for information, and written material and statistics on the topic. Two interview sessions were conducted for the assessment, both of which interviewed three representatives of the Port of

Helsinki. The assessment involved sending a request for information to the City Executive Office's Group Governance Unit and to experts in maritime emissions at the Finnish Meteorological Institute, Lappeenranta University of Applied Sciences, and Tallinn University of Technology. In addition, the Audit Committee's first commission made an assessment visit to the Port of Helsinki.

## The action plan only takes into account the carbon dioxide emissions generated in the port area and in the water area managed by the Port of Helsinki

The Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan began in 2019 when the City Council set a binding target for the Port of Helsinki in the budget, titled 'Preparing the Carbon Neutral Port 2035 Action Plan'. The action plan has been updated annually, and in the last update in 2023, the Port, like the rest of the city, pushed its carbon neutrality target forward to 2030. The goal is to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the port area by about 30 per cent, or 27,000 tons. The action plan is limited only to the carbon dioxide emissions generated within the closed port area and the water area managed by the Port of Helsinki. The programme does not take into account other greenhouse gas emissions. Due to the targets set by the International Maritime Organization and the European Union, greenhouse gas emissions from shipping are likely to decrease further after 2030. Table 4 presents the objectives and measures of the action plan.

In 2022, ships arriving and departing from the Port of Helsinki caused about 80% of its emissions. Emissions were also caused by machinery (10%), road traffic (8%) and emissions from the port company's own operations, including the use of electricity and heating in its own buildings and field facilities (2%). The total emissions from the port in 2022 were 79,120 tonnes of carbon dioxide, which is about three per cent of the total emissions of the City of Helsinki (2,638,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide).

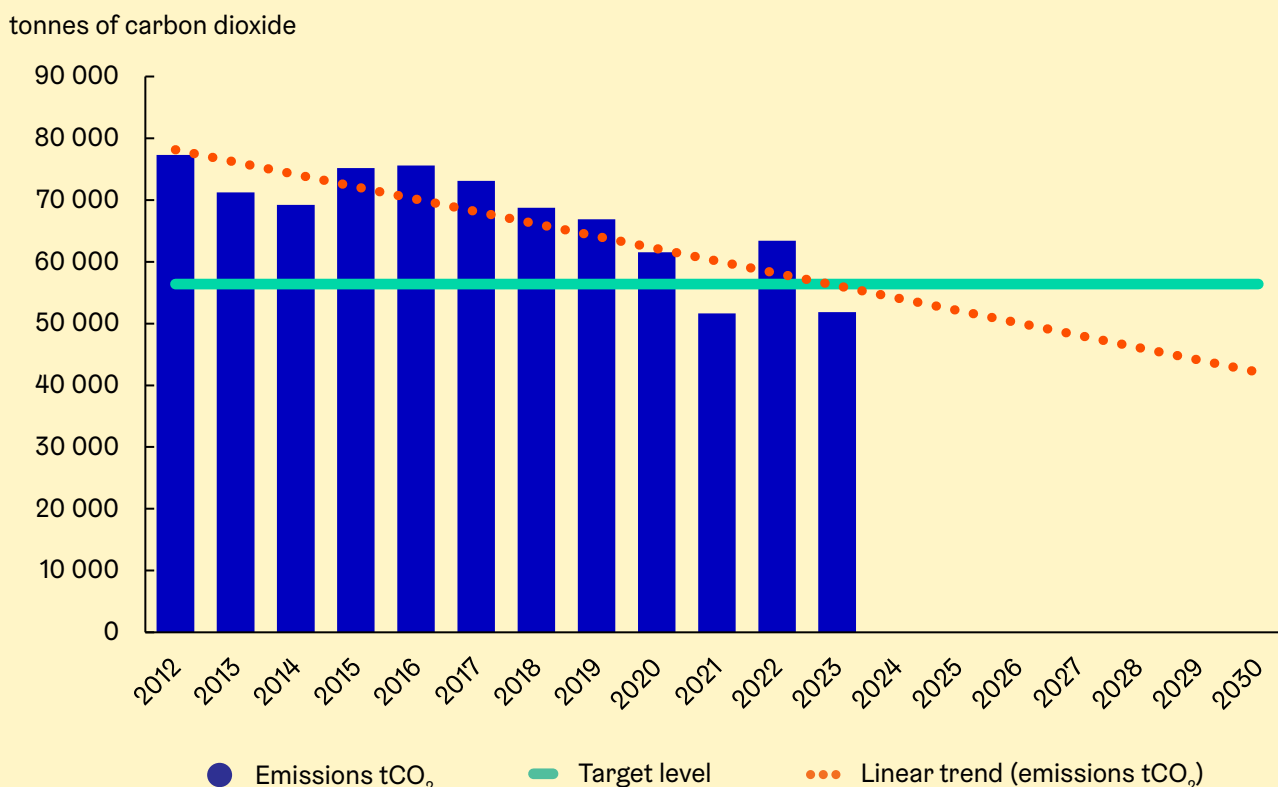
## The introduction of shore-side electricity and new ships have reduced ship emissions

The Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan aims to reduce emissions from ship traffic by 25% compared to 2015 levels by 2030. Figure 8 shows that emissions from ship traffic have been declining since 2016.

**Table 4. Objectives and measures of the Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan.**

Objective	Measures
<b>Ship emissions will be reduced by 25% by 2030.</b>	Shore-side electricity capacities will be increased at berths.
	Alternative fuels will be made available in the ports of Helsinki.
	Work will continue on developing an environmental discount programme for ships.
<b>Emissions from heavy goods vehicles will be reduced by 60% by 2030.</b>	The time spent at the port by transport vehicles will be minimised.
	Incentives for low-emission cars will be introduced.
<b>Emissions from non-road machinery in port areas will be reduced by 60% by 2030.</b>	The Port will enable an electric machinery infrastructure.
	The use of biofuels will be encouraged.
<b>In terms of its own emissions, the Port of Helsinki will be carbon neutral by 2025.</b>	The Port’s energy consumption will be minimised by modernising heating, LED lighting and increasing the use of solar power.
	The energy required will be obtained from carbon-free sources.
	Reducing the carbon footprint of subcontractors will be achieved through procurements.

**Figure 8. Emissions from ship traffic in 2012–2023 and the linear trend to 2030, in tonnes of carbon dioxide.**





Evidently, due to the coronavirus pandemic, shipping emissions fell below the 2030 emissions target for the first time in 2021. In 2022, emissions increased, but in 2023, emissions again fell below the target level. The linear trend of actual emissions in Figure 8 shows that, based on their historical development, the projected emissions in 2030 would be about 15,000 carbon dioxide tonnes lower than the target level of the Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan for ship emissions. However, we should exercise caution when making mechanical predictions of emissions based on historical data. The 2023 reduction in ship traffic emissions is due to the introduction of new low-emission ships, in particular. On the other hand, the Port of Vuosaari received fewer vessel calls than usual, and international cruise traffic was also almost half of what it was the year before.

According to Port of Helsinki representatives, emissions from ships have developed in line with their forecasts, and the emission reduction target will be achieved by 2030. The Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan currently only takes into account carbon dioxide emissions, but according to the Port of Helsinki, accounting for other greenhouse gases, such as methane, will not significantly increase emissions. All greenhouse gas emissions in the port area are known, as they are part of mandatory environmental reporting. According to the Port of Helsinki, ships using liquefied natural gas (LNG) do not emit methane in the port area, and other greenhouse gas emissions are already minor compared to carbon dioxide emissions. However, according to maritime transport researchers, the use of LNG carries significant risks of methane leakage. In addition, methane production can generate high emissions. The risks of methane leaks from ships potentially increase during voyages.

The most significant measures already taken by the Port of Helsinki and shipping companies to reduce ship emissions have been the provision of shore-side electricity to ships, new ships, automatic mooring systems for ships and economic incentives. Among the planned measures at the port, shore-side electricity solutions will achieve the largest single emissions reduction. Another important measure to reduce emissions from ships in the port area is the upgrading of old ships by shipping companies. New ships produce fewer emissions than old ones. At the time of the assessment, the Port of Helsinki provides environmental discounts to vessels that meet certain criteria. However, so far, the economic incentives do not consider carbon dioxide emissions significantly.

According to maritime transport experts, the Port of Helsinki has implemented a number of measures that reduce ship emissions. After the introduction of shore-side electricity and new ships, emissions can only be significantly reduced by abandoning fossil fuels, including fossil LNG. According to the researchers, one of the most effective ways to reduce ship emissions in the

Port of Helsinki would be to reward vessels operating in the port area or corridor that use alternative fuel or electricity. This would encourage shipping companies to purchase low-emission ships or to modify the engines of their existing ships. On the other hand, port fees are a relatively small expense for shipowners compared to other costs, and incentives for emissions trading are more significant, for example. According to the researchers, the Port of Helsinki should also prepare for building the distribution infrastructure for future fuels. Renewable methanol and sustainably produced biofuels will likely be the first in demand.

### **The emissions target for heavy goods vehicles is unlikely to be met**

The Carbon Neutral Port programme aims to reduce emissions from heavy goods vehicles and port machinery by 60%, or around 8,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide. Emissions from both sources have increased between 2012 and 2022, but in 2023, the emissions trend reversed with a slight decrease. According to Port of Helsinki representatives, both emissions sources are challenging because the Port of Helsinki has no direct influence on them. Although absolute emissions from heavy goods vehicles and machinery have increased due to the growth in freight transport, emissions have somewhat fallen relative to freight volume as a result of increased efficiency.

In 2023, it appeared that the 2030 emissions target for heavy goods vehicles under the Carbon Neutral Port programme would not be met. Achieving this goal requires both national and international efforts. The Port of Helsinki has sought to reduce road traffic emissions by improving traffic efficiency in the port area. For example, the port has invested in so-called 'double ramps', which speed up the loading and unloading of vessels. No environmental incentives have been introduced for low-emissions road transport, as according to the Port, there are not yet many low-emissions trucks on the road.

### **The Port expects to reduce emissions from non-road machinery, although so far progress has been slow**

Emissions from non-road machinery have increased steadily since 2012, partly due to their higher use levels. Key actions for reducing emissions include electrifying the machinery and switching to sustainable biofuels. However, no action has yet been taken, as it is uncertain whether sustainable biofuels are suitable for the existing machinery. In addition, the transition to electric machines will require large investments from both the Port of Helsinki and operators. However, the Port believes that the emissions target is likely to be met in the future, as there was much development work underway in 2023.

According to maritime transport experts, the Port of Helsinki should require companies operating in the port to electrify their machinery or switch to sustainable biofuels. According to the Port, an obvious time to agree on environmental incentives is when renewing fixed-term contracts with operators and defining contractual terms and conditions. For example, at the Port of Gothenburg, operators have a concession agreement attached to their contracts, which requires them to commit to the City of Gothenburg's environmental and emissions targets. There, the majority of operators have switched to renewable fuel oil. The Swedish Government also subsidises the use of renewable fuels through tax benefits.

### **The Port aims to achieve carbon neutrality in its own emissions by 2025**

The Port of Helsinki's own emissions consist mainly of electricity consumption and heating in the terminals and field facilities. Emissions from in-house operations accounted for about two per cent of the total port area emissions in 2022. The Port of Helsinki's carbon neutrality target for its own emissions is stricter, as the Port has outlined that it will already be carbon neutral by 2025 in terms of its own emissions.

In 2020, the Port switched to carbon-free electricity, reducing its carbon dioxide emissions from electricity consumption to zero. The Port has also taken other measures to reduce its own emissions, such as electrifying its car fleet, switching to LED lighting and improving the energy-efficiency of its properties. To achieve its carbon neutrality target in 2025, the Port of Helsinki aims to further reduce its energy consumption and source the remaining share of emissions from carbon-free energy sources. Any remaining emissions will be compensated.

### **Conclusions**

The Port of Helsinki Ltd has mainly made progress in achieving the objectives of the Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan. Ship emissions, which cover about 80% of the Port of Helsinki's emissions, have been reduced especially by the installation of shore-side electricity at the port and the introduction of new, more energy-efficient ships by shipping companies. Emissions from machinery and heavy goods vehicles in the port area have not fallen as much as hoped. The Port is likely to achieve carbon neutrality for its own emissions as early as 2025.

Ship emissions are on a downward trend, and the targeted 25% reduction in emissions compared to 2015 was already achieved in 2023. The coming years

will show whether the 2023 reduction will be permanent and whether the downward trend will continue. However, a slight uncertainty is introduced by the fact that the action plan thus far only takes into account carbon dioxide and not other greenhouse gases, such as methane. According to the Port of Helsinki, taking other greenhouse gases into account will not significantly change the situation, and according to the Port's measurements, there are no methane leaks from ships using LNG. However, according to maritime transport researchers, the use of LNG carries a risk of methane leaks, and the production of methane can result in high emissions.

The most significant ways ship emissions have been reduced and by which the Port aims to achieve its emissions reduction target are the installation of shore-side electricity in the port and shipowners upgrading their old vessels to new ones. Based on the information obtained in the assessment, the goal of reducing ship emissions by 2030 will almost certainly be met. However, emissions reduction targets will likely become more stringent after 2030. Ship emissions can only be significantly reduced in the future by transitioning away from existing fossil fuels. According to maritime transport researchers, the Port of Helsinki can contribute to this transition by strengthening the economic incentives for switching to new power sources and preparing for the requirements brought by new fuels.

Emissions from heavy goods traffic and machinery in the port area have increased during the review period. As a result, the need to reduce these emissions has been highlighted, and the Port has yet to make progress that is in line with the action plan. It seems that without national or international action, the emissions reduction target for heavy goods traffic will not be met in 2030. On the other hand, the Port believes that the emissions target for non-road machinery will be met in 2030, as much development work is currently underway on this issue. For the time being, environmental requirements have not been included in the contracts of port operators.

The Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan has some limitations, as it only takes into account carbon dioxide emissions, although maritime transport also generates other greenhouse gas emissions. The programme only takes into account emissions generated within the port area, although emissions from ships and land traffic are also generated outside the port. The Port of Helsinki is likely to be able to continue to encourage shipping companies and other port operators to take action to reduce emissions outside the port area.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the City Executive Office, as the party in charge of corporate governance, should


- ▶ direct Port of Helsinki Ltd to amend the Carbon Neutral Port Action Plan so that it takes methane and other greenhouse gases into account in addition to carbon dioxide.
- ▶ support Port of Helsinki Ltd in strengthening economic incentives to increase the use of alternative power sources to reduce direct emissions from ships, at least in the port area.
- ▶ promote agreements between the Port of Helsinki Ltd and companies that use non-road mobile machinery in such a way that steers these companies towards emission-free solutions for machinery.




# Art and culture make a good life possible



# Attractiveness of libraries and promoting reading

 Have libraries increased their attractiveness and promoted reading and literacy in line with the City Strategy?

 Yes, because visitor numbers have increased. Libraries have implemented a wide range of activities to promote literacy among different target groups.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Has the attractiveness of libraries been increased, and reading and literacy promoted in accordance with the City Strategy and budget targets?

## Related questions:

1. Have libraries increased their appeal?
2. Have libraries promoted reading and literacy?
3. Is the regional network of local libraries secured?

The City Strategy 2021–2025 sets out to make Helsinki the capital of reading and literacy and to strengthen the attractiveness of libraries and their position as community meeting places. Promoting reading and literature is also a statutory task for public libraries. The City Strategy aims to ensure that local services, such as libraries, are no more than fifteen minutes away on foot, by bike or by public transport. According to the City Strategy, services should be developed at the same pace and scale as housing development and population growth.

The assessment material consisted of interviews with people in charge of library services and e-mail enquiries to the experts responsible for monitoring the objectives of libraries. Documentation and statistical data on library activities were also used. The data obtained from the Audit Committee's second commission's assessment visit to the Culture and Leisure Division was also used as material. In addition, the assessment included a visit to Vuosaari Library.

## Visits have increased

The Culture and Leisure Division aims to encourage visitors to return to using their services after the coronavirus pandemic. The visitor volume targets set for

libraries in the city's 2023 budget were met. Physical library visits amounted to 8.1 million in 2023, compared to a target of 7.7 million visits. In addition, there were 3.6 million digital visits, compared to the target of 3.3 million. In 2023, all of the city library service areas had more physical library visits than in the previous year. Most of the growth has been in the eastern service area. Libraries have also gained new customers, with more new library cards issued in 2023 than in 2022.

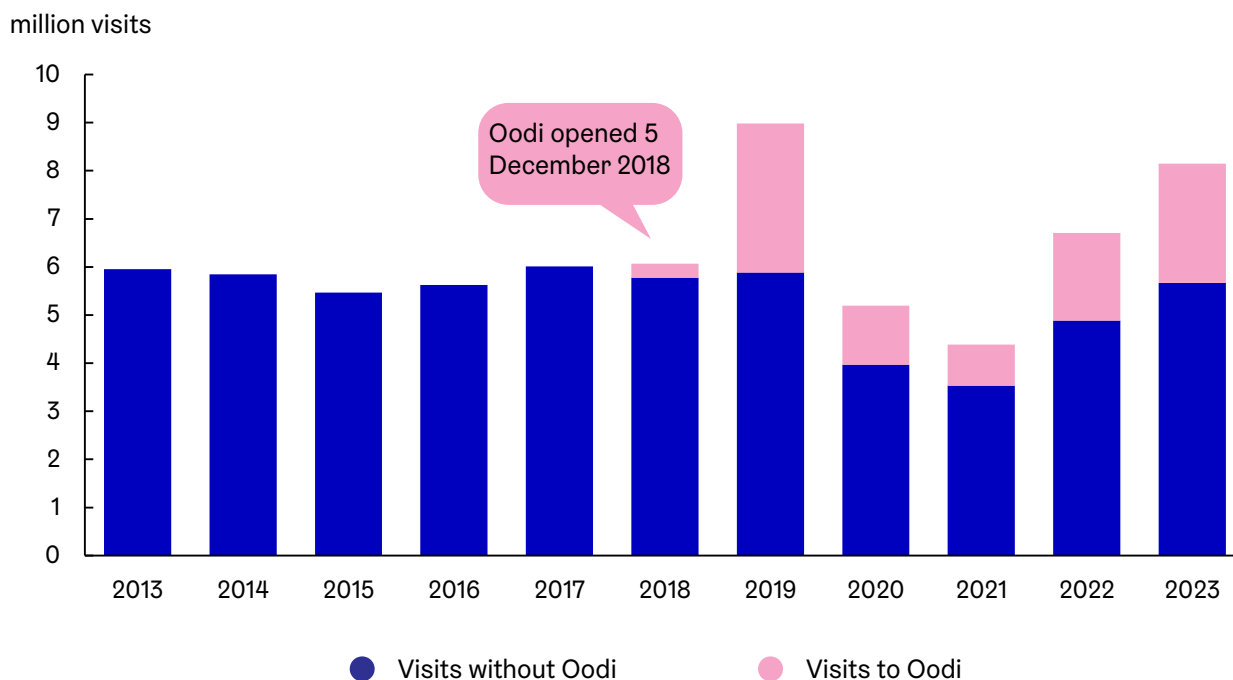
However, visitor numbers have not yet fully returned to the level before the coronavirus pandemic, although there were more visits in 2023 than in 2020–2022 (Figure 9). In 2019, the year before the coronavirus pandemic, the opening of the new Central Library Oodi led to exceptionally high visitor numbers.

Efforts have been made to improve the customer experience and, at the same time, the attractiveness of libraries. For instance, the rules for self-service libraries have been revised to improve their cleanliness, comfort, and safety. Self-service libraries are libraries that customers can use independently without the presence of staff. Self-service allows for longer opening hours. In addition, Library Services have undertaken various measures in 2020–2022 to improve the attractiveness of library facilities or their locations. For example, the relocation of Herttoniemi Library near the metro station and the expansion of Myllypuro Library have increased the number of visits to these libraries. The regional libraries have also held a number of events and activities for different target groups, such as children, families with children, seniors and people with immigrant backgrounds.

In line with the objective of library vitality, Central Library Oodi has updated its guidelines for workshop services. Workshop services refer to tools and workstations that allow customers to make different things or objects. These services include various printers, media workstations, sewing machines and electronics workstations. Workshop services are considered a major draw for Library Services. Safer space policies were also prepared for the libraries to improve their customer experience. However, in February 2024, they had yet to be introduced in all Helsinki libraries, so the objective related to their introduction for 2023 was not met.

Libraries collect customer feedback through many different channels, and this feedback is discussed in regional customer experience teams and library unit

**Figure 9. Physical visits to Library Services in 2013–2023.**



meetings. Based on the metrics, customer satisfaction with the regional libraries and Oodi was high in 2023, with no change compared to 2022.

Library services have improved their communications, including introducing a common social media strategy for libraries in 2022. In addition, the Helmet website, which is shared by all the libraries in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, was in the process of being redesigned in 2023. The redesign was scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2024.

Libraries have limited access to background data on visitors, so Library Services does not have data on how different measures to increase attractiveness have affected visits by different customer groups. However, people without families who are busy with work and recent immigrants have been identified as some of the customer groups that are difficult for Library Services to reach.

### **Libraries reach lower and upper secondary school students with less success than primary school pupils**

The Education Division and Library Services have agreed on cooperation between primary schools and Library Services in what is referred to as the 'Culture Path' plan. Under this agreement, the library offers all first-, third- and seventh-grade pupils the opportunity to visit the library. Both comprehensive schools and Library Services are satisfied with their cooperation. The planned visits by primary school pupils were successful, as the majority (80–90%) of first- and third-grade pupils visited libraries in the academic year

2022–2023. Lower secondary school pupils were not reached as well: less than half of seventh-grade pupils visited the library as part of the Culture Path in the academic year 2022–2023.

The 2023 scorecard target for Library Services, which was to develop cooperation between libraries and upper secondary schools, has been slower than planned, as libraries have not had enough available staff or working time to meet the targets. However, local libraries have provided a range of information retrieval and library tutorials for upper secondary school students. There are no similar structures for cooperation between upper secondary schools and libraries as there are for the cooperation between libraries and comprehensive schools. Library Services has identified cooperation with upper secondary schools as a clear development target.

### **Literacy among children, young people and adults promoted with a wide range of measures**

Libraries have taken a number of measures to promote literacy among children and young people. For example, children have participated in the library renovations at Malminkartano and Pikku Huopalahti libraries. Other activities that promoted literacy among children and young people include 'reading diplomas', which are updating lists of books for schoolchildren of different ages. They are also available for students learning Finnish as a second language. Literacy among children and young people has also been promoted through reading coaches who provide book suggestions, other book tips, various reading and craft sessions, 'library

grandmas and grandpas' who help with homework, and various educational games on literacy and media education.

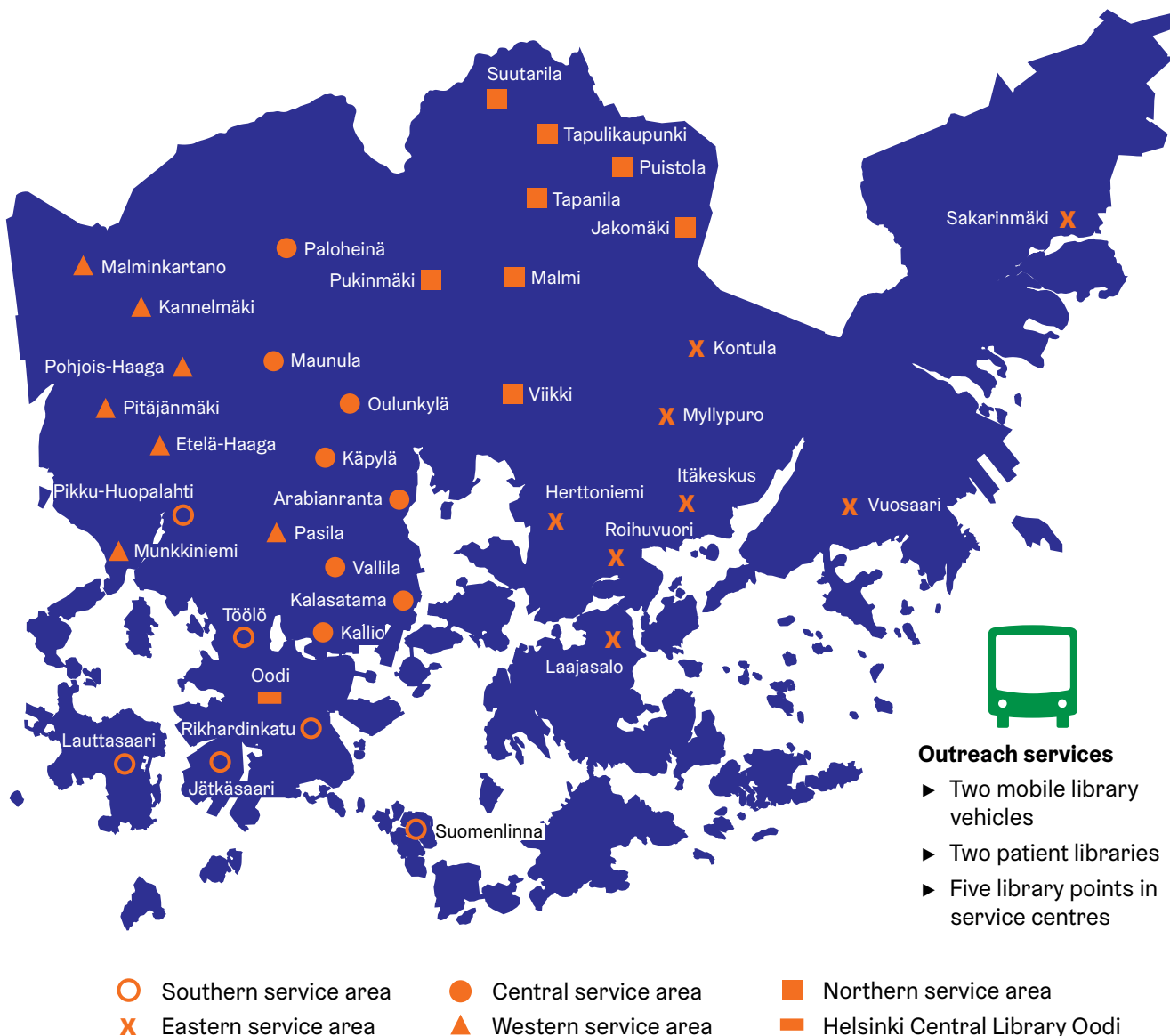
In line with the 2023 scorecard target for Library Services, libraries have introduced the 'emotion tag' (tunnemerkki), which is a new way of recommending books. Emotion tags are labels that can be inserted into books and allow customers to recommend a book they are returning to other customers. The online 'quick tip' (pikavinkkaus) form developed at Oodi has been expanded to all libraries. In addition, local libraries have promoted adult literacy in various ways. For example, Vuosaari Library, one of the libraries visited during the assessment, has provided various book tips to adults with weekly changing themes. In addition to Finnish, these suggestions are also available in Swedish and English. Other activities included author visits, Finnish language cafés for foreign speakers, digital

guides and walking tours for seniors, reading and singing groups and literature trivia. All of these events have aimed to incorporate literary and literacy-related content. It is impossible to assess the impact of the measures implemented in libraries on the literacy of people of different ages because there are no suitable metrics, and there is a delay before any effect occurs.

Library Services are joining the Culture Kids programme in 2024. Culture Kids is a programme in which all children born in Helsinki from 2020 onwards are invited to two free cultural events each year until they start school.

In 2023, the Library Services staff had the goal of participating in training for the Wellbeing Together (HYVÄ) model for engaging, encountering, and hearing children and young people. However, the number of participating staff was lower than expected. Participation

**Figure 10. Helsinki City Library locations and outreach services at the beginning of 2024.**



in the training was low because the content of the city-wide training did not meet the needs of Library Services.

## Most city residents can access a library in 15 minutes

Starting in the beginning of 2024, Helsinki City Library will have 38 libraries around the city and two library vehicles (Figure 10). At the request of schools, the library vehicles will visit schools that are more than one kilometre away from the nearest library. The City Library also operates two patient libraries and five service points in the City of Helsinki's service centres.

The '15-minute city', an objective in the City Strategy, is well implemented in Library Services. According to the 2023 service network review, around 63% of the city's population could reach the nearest library within 15 minutes by walking, 96% by cycling and 90% by public transport. In Helsinki, 96% of the population reached a library location within 15 minutes using at least one of the above modes of transport.

The Culture and Leisure Division's service network, including libraries, is monitored annually using the data collected from it. The service network is reviewed in relation to population changes in various areas under the guidance of the division's facilities services. Based on the service network review of Library Services, a new library was opened in Kalasatama in January 2024. The opening of the library was justified, among other things, by the area's demographic trends and population forecasts. In addition, the opening of Kalasatama Library was justified by the area's poor public transport connections to other libraries. The availability of library services in Kalasatama was also requested by the area residents, for example, in the 2018–2019 and 2021–2022 rounds of participatory budgeting in Helsinki.

## Conclusions

The attractiveness of libraries has been increased and libraries have promoted reading and literacy in line

with the City Strategy 2021–2025 and the 2023 budget targets. Libraries have increased their attractiveness, as the visitor volume targets for 2023 have been met in accordance with the 2023 budget target. Libraries have also taken sufficient measures to promote reading, in line with the Culture and Leisure Division's action plan for 2023. The regional network of local libraries has been secured. The accessibility of libraries in different areas has been monitored, and the service network has been planned and supplemented based on that monitoring. In line with the City Strategy, most city residents can reach the nearest library within fifteen minutes by walking, cycling, or via public transport.

The primary school pupils' visits to libraries, arranged with the Education Division, have been carried out comprehensively. However, efforts to reach the lower secondary school pupils have not been as successful. Cooperation practices with upper secondary schools are still being established, although local libraries have also offered their services to secondary schools.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the Culture and Leisure Division's Library Services and the Education Division should

- ▶ continue to develop cooperation between libraries and upper secondary schools.
- ▶ monitor how the implementation of library visits for the entire age cohort of first-, third- and seventh-grade school pupils, which is an objective for the Education Division and Library Services, varies by region and school.
- ▶ take measures based on the monitoring that will improve the coverage of library visits by schoolchildren under the agreement between the Education Division and Library Services.





BRINDABELLA  
L'ISOLA D'ORO E ARGENTO

# Development of cultural grants



Have cultural grants been developed in accordance with the objectives of the City Strategy and Culture Unit?



To some extent, yes, but it was not possible to assess whether new art forms and new operators had access to the city's assistance.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Has the city continued to develop cultural grants in accordance with the City Strategy and the Culture Unit's service strategy?

## Related questions:

1. Have new operators and art forms found support from the city?
2. Has the objective of providing opportunities for Helsinki residents to encounter, experience, participate in, and make art and culture been implemented in accordance with the Culture Unit's service strategy?
3. Has there been support for older adults participating in arts and cultural activities and pursuing them as hobbies?

According to the City Strategy 2021–2025, cultural, sports and youth grants will create the conditions for a wide range of recreational and cultural activities. The City of Helsinki will continue to develop grants so that, in addition to current operators, operators such as Dance House Helsinki and new sports, art forms and independent arts operators can benefit from the City's support. The city's 2023 budget calls for supporting older adults' participation in the arts and cultural activities. The city-wide goal is to improve opportunities for older people to be mobile, active and engage in recreational activities together.

The assessment material consisted of interviews, documents, statistics and written enquiries. The Audit Committee's second commission also obtained information from its assessment visit to the Culture and Leisure Division.

## The amount of cultural grants awarded has been decreasing

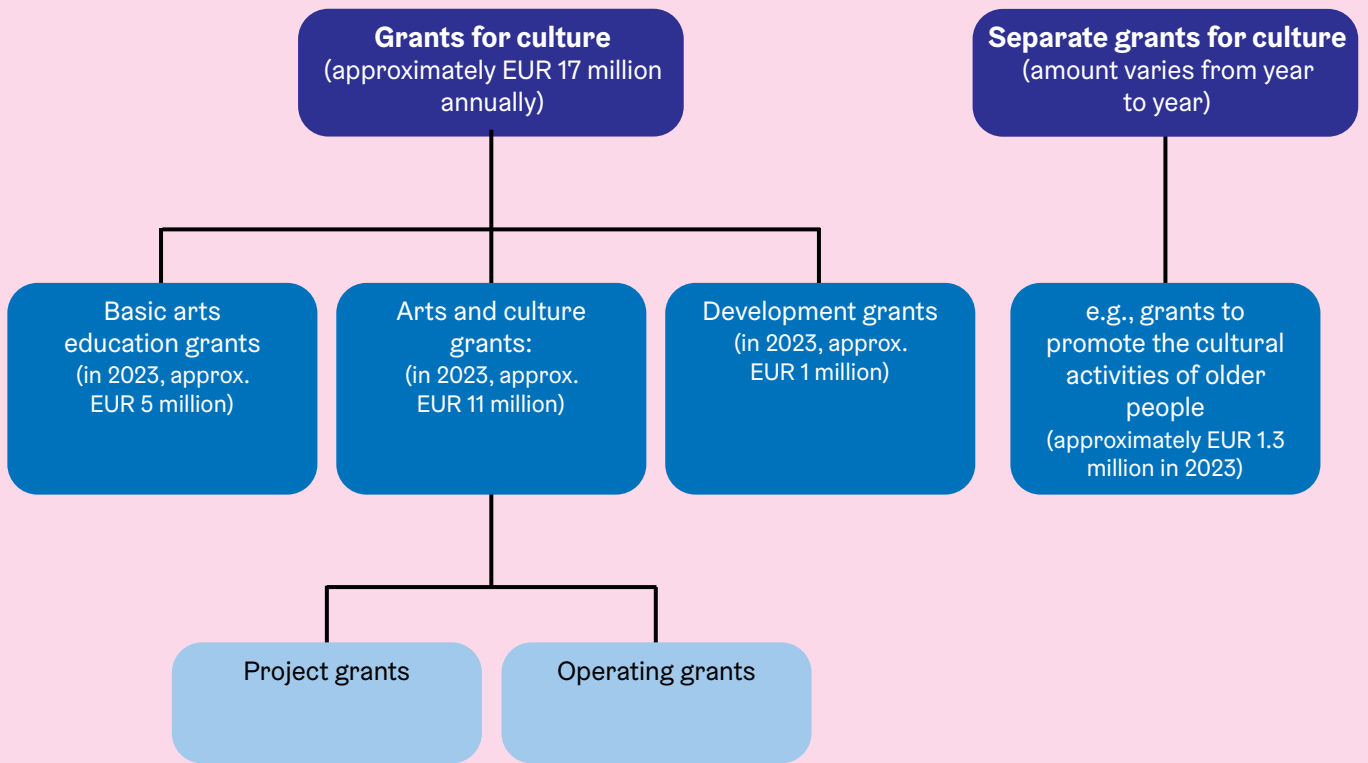
The City of Helsinki supports arts and cultural activities in the city that are open to the public with around €17 million annually. This distributed amount includes, among other things, operating grants for the entire year's activities and project grants for project activities. In addition to operating and project grants, the City of Helsinki distributes basic arts education and development grants and carries out special calls for grants within the scope of the available grant funds. In addition to the above, Cultural Services and Support may award discretionary grants from other funds, such as state escheat funds or additional coronavirus recovery funds (Figure 11). Taking into account cultural grants from other appropriations, the total amount of available funds exceeds EUR 17 million.

The amount of cultural grants awarded from the cultural grants allocation has increased from around EUR 16.5 million in 2019 to around EUR 17.1 million in 2023. Figure 12 shows the value of cultural grants adjusted to 2023 euros. When changes in monetary value are taken into account, the amount of awarded cultural grants has not increased in recent years.

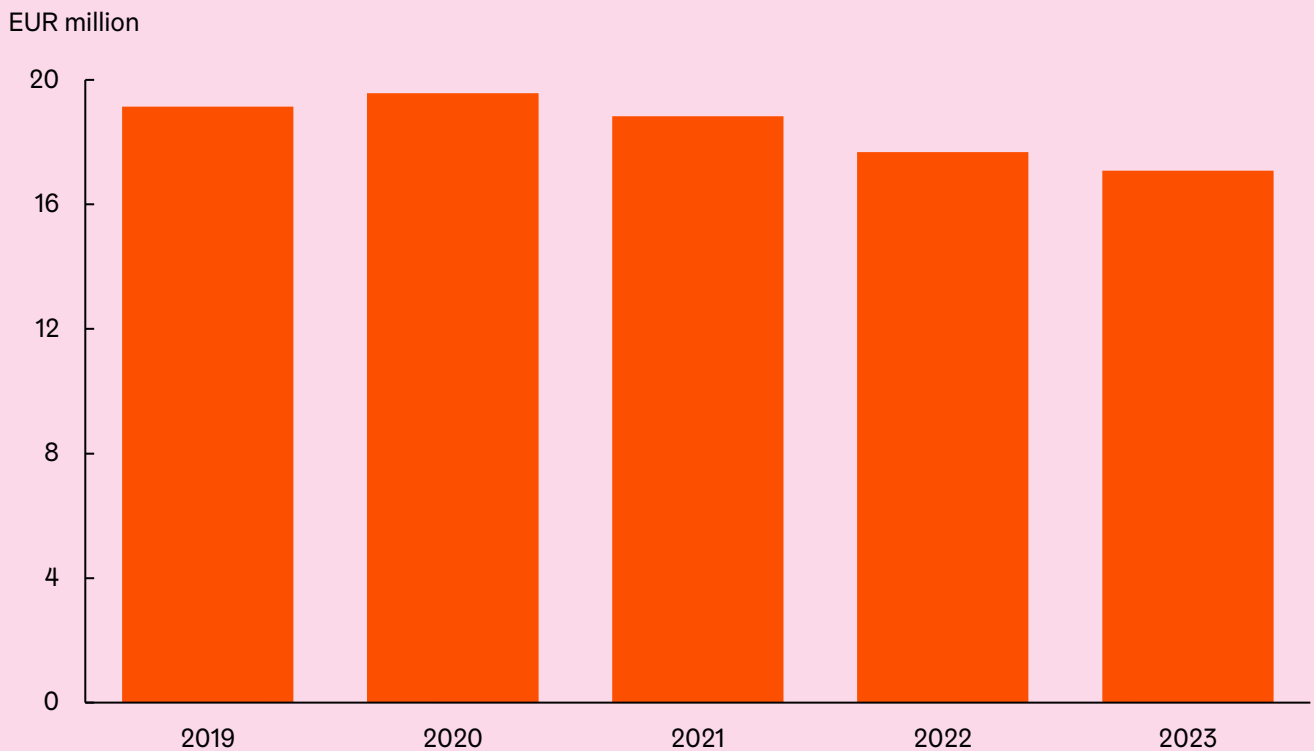
The total sum of the awarded cultural grants has been decreasing between 2019 and 2023, taking into account the general change in prices (Figure 12). Only in 2020 did the increase in the sum of cultural grants exceed the increase in the general level of costs. In 2023, annual inflation was up to 5.2 percentage points higher than the increase in the total amount of cultural grants awarded.

The largest number of cultural grants are awarded as project grants and operating grants. Project and operating grants together make up the majority of the approximately 400–500 cultural grants awarded annually. It is also possible to award cultural grants from other appropriations. For example, in 2022 and 2023, part of the project grants were awarded from the additional amount of coronavirus recovery funds, which reduced the number of project grants awarded from the cultural grant appropriation. In monetary terms, the amount of awarded project grants is now significantly lower. Operating grants are the largest category of cultural grants: almost EUR 10 million are

**Figure 11. The types of cultural grants considered in the assessment.**



**Figure 12. Annually awarded cultural grants, EUR millions (adjusted for 2023 euros).**



awarded each year. In addition to operating grants, a large amount of grants are awarded for basic arts education, almost five million euros annually.

### **The number of new operators and art forms receiving grants could not be estimated**

The evaluation criteria for cultural grants allow any operator or person who meets the criteria to apply for a cultural grant. The criteria include, among other things, that the operations are carried out in Helsinki and that the grant is not the sole source of funding for the entire operation. Otherwise, the evaluation criteria vary from one type of grant to another. The criteria for cultural grants that were updated in the summer of 2022 have sought to emphasise new art forms, and one of the issues affecting the award of grants is the diversity of art forms. Individual applications are assessed against the criteria and then compared with each other. Finally, an overall evaluation is made, which takes into account, for example, the available appropriations. The city does not intend to support new operators by creating quotas for different art forms, for example. Furthermore, the objectives and concepts for new operators and art forms are not very precisely defined, and the systems and tools in place do not allow access to the necessary information.

Applicants for cultural grants are advised to choose the art form that best describes their activities, so applicants should indicate their primary art form on their applications. For example, many performing arts practitioners might choose theatre as their art form, while those in the literary arts might choose literature. The art forms that may be selected in the applications have included disciplines such as design and crafts, film, photography and media, literature, visual arts and comics, multidisciplinary arts, music, circus, dance and theatre. During 2019–2023, the types of art recorded in the statistics have remained unchanged. There have also been some applications where the ‘art form’ field has been left blank. For these reasons, it has not been possible to assess any increase in the number of art forms based on the statistics on applications.

It was not possible to assess the emergence of new recipients of cultural grants. According to the criteria for evaluating cultural grants, any operator or person can apply for cultural grants. Applications from new operators are evaluated in exactly the same way as operators who have already received cultural grants. It is difficult to assess when a grant applicant is a new operator. For example, the same operator can apply for a cultural grant as an individual, a member of a working group or both at the same time. The same organisation may also be composed of different persons in different years. However, since 2023, Cultural Services and Support has carried out its own internal monitoring of which operators are new applicants. As the monitoring

has only been carried out for a short time, it is impossible to compare how the number of new applicants has evolved over time. New applicants and operators cannot be properly monitored because there is no definition of what is meant by a ‘new operator’.

### **The service strategy of the Culture Unit has been followed**

The service strategy of the Culture Unit is followed by taking its objectives into account when awarding grants, and it has also influenced the development of the evaluation criteria. The criteria for awarding grants have been updated in 2022. With this update, cultural grants will also take into account certain policies arising from the service strategy for cultural services. In addition, the tiered approach based on the requested amount was eliminated from the evaluation policy, and the application deadlines for year-round project grants were extended, among other things.

Grants are awarded based on where the activities seeking funding are located in the city, with the aim of bringing different events and activities closer to residents in different areas. Service network planning in the Culture and Leisure Division is also aimed at ensuring vitality in all areas of the city. By 2026, the division will also carry out visioning work on knowledge management. One of its goals is to help collect data and understand the needs of residents, so that the division’s activities can be targeted at the right resident groups and areas.

The aim is to strengthen residents’ connection to the arts throughout their lives, especially by supporting cultural activities for children. The aim is to involve children in arts and cultural activities, for example, through art classes during the school day at Annantalo Arts Centre. The city-funded Culture Kids programme also supports this connection with the arts. The Culture Kids programme means that children are invited to free cultural events every year until they start school. When they reach school age, the children move to basic arts education, which receives state subsidies in addition to Helsinki’s own contributions. In addition to separate targeted subsidies, grants, and activities, the Culture and Leisure Division provides a full range of cultural services to residents of all ages.

The operating conditions of arts and cultural operators are primarily supported by grants. As their name suggests, development grants are intended for developing operations. They also aim to improve the beneficiary’s operating conditions. Operating grants, on the other hand, secure and enable normal operations. The goal of diversity and versatility in art and culture has been taken into account in the evaluation criteria for grants. In addition to grants, the Culture and Leisure Division holds information events and communicates

to operators about matters such as grants and opportunities for cooperation with the city. Operators are also invited to meetings with city representatives and partnership meetings with the city and other cultural operators. These meetings can be used to discuss the situation of the operators or the cultural sector and share good practices and solutions.

Grants will also be targeted at regional and participatory activities. The Culture and Leisure Division promotes resident-centred activities by supporting urban culture, such as village festivals and neighbourhood events. In addition, the Helsinki Model is used to support and enable the participatory activities of arts institutions in city districts. The Helsinki Model is a model for inclusive regional cultural work which encourages art institutions and art professionals to work outside their own organisations in different city districts in cooperation with local residents and communities.

The Culture and Leisure Division has a dedicated staff member to promote urban culture and serve as an expert in local networks. As project grants are also awarded to unregistered operators, non-professional operators can also provide resident-driven cultural activities. In addition to the Culture and Leisure Division, the City Executive Office's Participation Unit awards small grants for resident participation. According to the division's experts, a clearer delineation between the Culture and Leisure Division and the City Executive Office's grant activities aimed at resident-driven activities is needed.

### **Cultural and arts activities for older people are primarily supported through grants**

Older people are often defined as people over 65 years of age. The number of older people in Helsinki has been increasing, especially since 2010. According to Helsinki's 2023 budget, the city should support the participation of older people in arts and cultural activities. Cultural and arts activities for older people are indeed supported in Helsinki through various means, mainly grants. Participation and leisure activities are also supported by the division's cultural services, such as the orchestra, libraries and cultural centres. The cultural offer for older people has also been expanded with the Lämpiö project, which created a digital service platform for accessing cultural content remotely. In this way, the proposed measures under the Art and Culture in Helsinki 2030 vision have been implemented, including the use of technology in making cultural services accessible.

A separate discretionary grant from state escheat funds is also used to promote cultural activities for older people, supporting their well-being and functional capacity. This grant aims to support older

people, especially those living at home, in leading quality and fulfilling lives in which they are active participants. The annual allocated amount was EUR 1.3 million, which was distributed during 2023 in accordance with the budget target. As a result of the supported projects, the division has noticed an increase in demand for art and cultural services among older adults. However, it is still difficult to draw conclusions about the long-term impact of these projects on the lives of older people. The use of new technologies to promote the accessibility of cultural activities has been taken into account, among other things, in the objectives for separate grants.

### **Conclusions**

The Culture and Leisure Division has partially continued to develop cultural grants in line with the City Strategy and the service strategy of the Culture Unit. For example, grant types and their evaluation criteria were updated in 2022. The evaluation criteria for cultural grants allow any operator or person who meets the criteria to apply for a grant. The assessment does not allow us to determine whether new art forms have found support from the city.

The inclusion of new operators within the scope of cultural grants could not be assessed, as it is difficult to determine when a grant applicant is a new operator. Since 2023, Cultural Services and Support has carried out its own internal monitoring of which operators are new applicants. As the monitoring has only been carried out for a short time, it is impossible to compare how the number of new applicants has evolved over time. It is also impossible to assess the inclusion of new operators and art forms within the scope of support because their objectives and concepts are not very precisely defined.

The criteria updated in 2022 have sought to highlight new art forms, and the diversity of art forms is one of the factors that is assessed when grants are awarded. However, new art forms are not pursued, for example, by creating quotas for different art forms. New art forms have also not emerged from the statistics on cultural grants over the years.

The objective of providing opportunities for Helsinki residents to encounter, experience, participate in, and make art and culture has been implemented in accordance with the Culture Unit's service strategy. The various elements of the Culture Unit's service strategy have been implemented primarily through targeted grants. The objectives of the strategy have been taken into account in the criteria for awarding grants.

The City Executive Office awards grants for resident-driven activities, some of which are similar to those awarded by the Culture and Leisure Division.

According to the division's experts, a clearer delineation or definition of these grants would be useful.

There has been support for older adults participating in arts and cultural activities and pursuing them as hobbies. In line with the budget target, grants for promoting cultural activities for older people have been awarded during 2023. There has been support for involving older people living at home in arts and cultural activities, especially with the separate grant for this purpose. In addition, in line with the proposed action plan for the Art and Culture in Helsinki 2030 vision, the accessibility of cultural services for older people has been promoted by participating in creating new digital platforms and taking this objective into account in the grant award criteria.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the Culture and Leisure Division and the City Executive Office should

- ▶ clarify the division of responsibilities in distributing grants to resident-driven activities.

the Culture and Leisure Division's Culture Unit should

- ▶ define the objectives for bringing new operators and art forms within the scope of the city's support so that assistance to new operators can be monitored.
- ▶ continue the monitoring of new applicants started in 2023.
- ▶ carry out measures based on the monitoring, if necessary, so that new applicants have a better chance of receiving grants.



# Strengthening youth work



Has youth work been strengthened in line with the objectives?



Outreach and detached work have been strengthened, but other youth work is understaffed, and facilities have decreased.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Has youth work been strengthened in line with the objectives of the strategy and budget?

## Related questions:

1. Have basic and open youth services been strengthened and secured across the city?
2. Have outreach and detached youth work been strengthened?
3. Has youth work been developed by training staff and introducing new approaches to encountering young people?

The City Strategy 2021–2025 aims to strengthen outreach and detached youth work and secure the operation of youth centres around the city. The aim of the industry has been to try to restore the number of visitors to its services after the coronavirus pandemic. In Youth Services, one of the goals has been, among other things, to strengthen basic activities and open youth work. The aim is also to introduce working models for preventing violence and loneliness among young people. In addition to written and statistical material, the key assessment materials included interviews with the management of Youth Services, youth work units and representatives of outreach and detached youth work.

This assessment covers basic youth work on the one hand, and outreach and detached youth work on the other. Basic youth work or basic youth work activities are understood as regional youth work and the activities of youth centres. The majority of basic youth work is open to all young people. The assessment also focused on outreach and detached youth work, which are considered to be part of special youth work.

## The number of young people has remained the same, but their needs have increased

The number of children and young people in Helsinki has remained fairly stable in recent years. There were

225,403 people aged 0–28 in 2022. Their share of the population has decreased slightly in recent years. The target group for Youth Services (10–28-year-olds) accounted for 23% of Helsinki's population in 2022.

Most young people are doing well, but some are doing worse than before. In addition, the problems differ among people of different ages and also vary according to gender. Bullying has increased in lower secondary schools over the last three years. More than one in three girls in Helsinki experiences anxiety or symptoms of depression. Experiences of discrimination, harassment and sexual violence are more common among girls, and harassment has become more common in recent years. Boys in Helsinki experience more threats of physical violence than boys in the rest of the country, and the threats are more frequent (Figure 13). Preventing violence and loneliness are key aspects of working with young people.

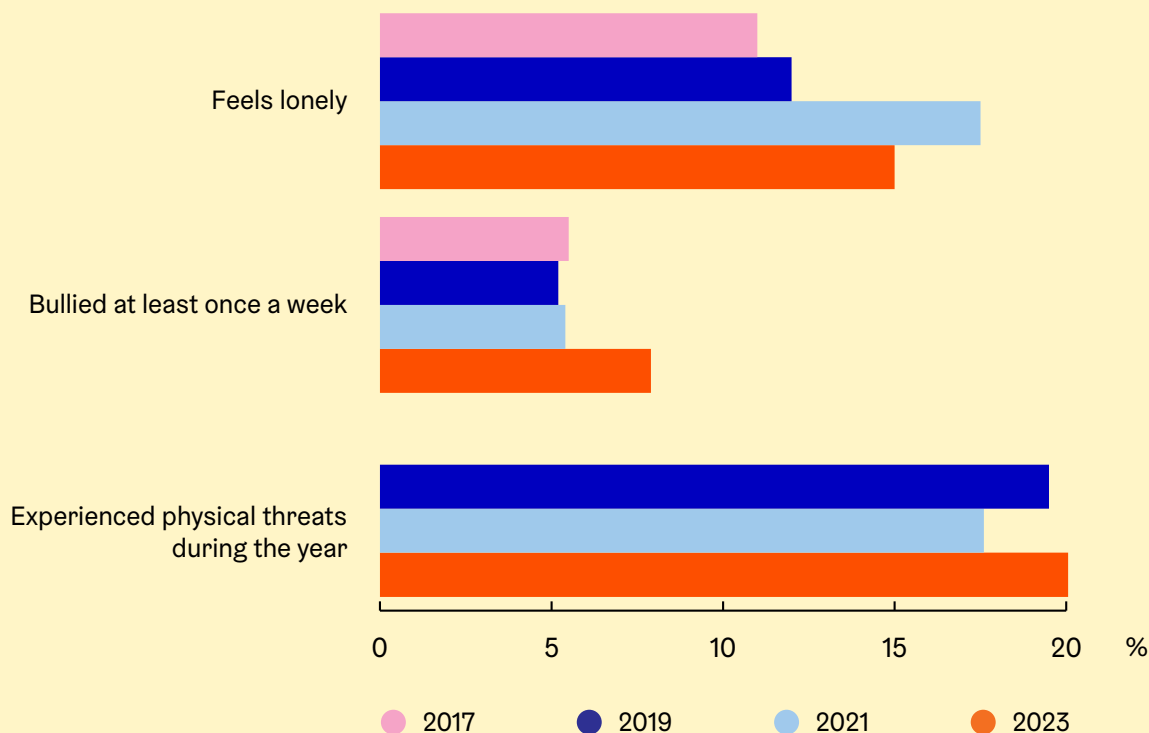
## Basic youth work suffers from staff shortages

Open youth work refers to activities aimed at all young people, and the work done in youth centres is a key part of it. The number of youth facilities has decreased, the number of square metres has decreased (Figure 14), and physical accessibility has decreased from 2017 to 2022. The number of visits to youth work units in 2022 was 13% lower than in 2019. Visitor numbers began to return to pre-coronavirus levels in 2023. In contrast, the number of young people receiving individual support increased significantly in 2021 and 2022. The number of young people receiving structured support also increased compared to previous years. Individual support means supporting and helping a young person through individual discussions. A young person or group of young people receiving systematic support will have a written support plan.

Both management and staff of youth services consider that open and basic activities have not been strengthened. The main reasons are perceived to be staff shortages and increased tasks.

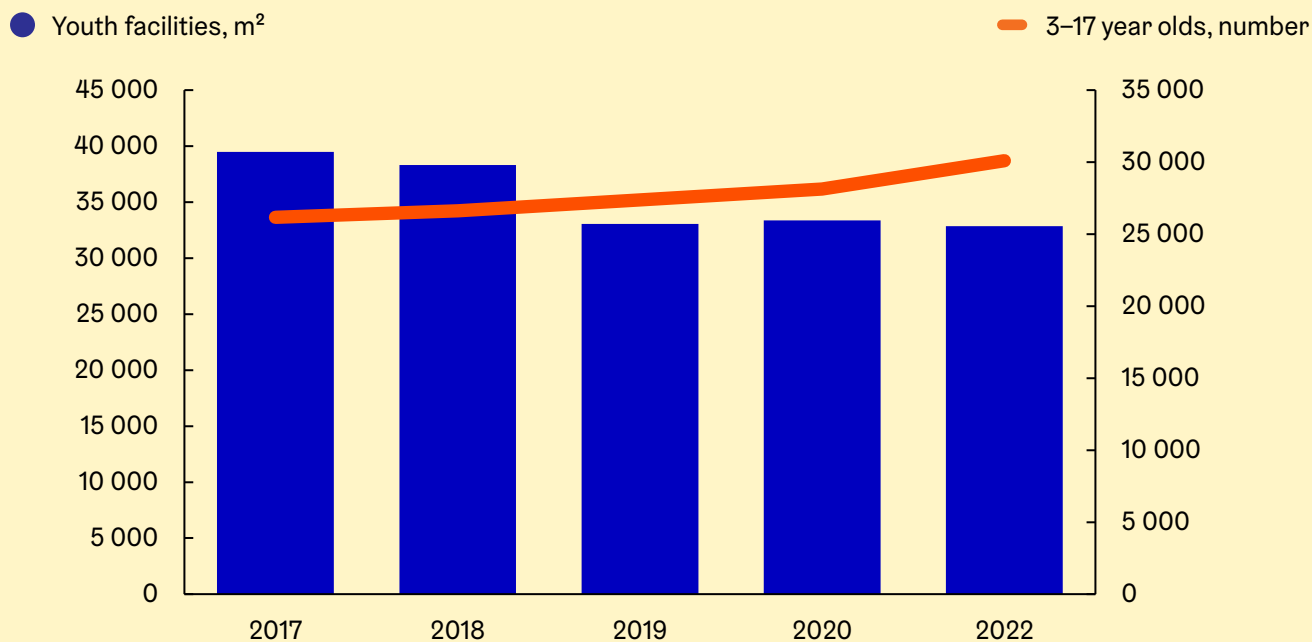
The activities of the youth centres are directed at young people aged ten and upwards, and in open activities, the special target group are 13–17-year-olds. Open activities aim to provide diverse activities, taking into account the diversity of young people. However, there is a wide range of expectations, which means that youth centres have to decide when to stay open, whether to have small group activities, which age groups to cater to and whether there is time to conduct outreach in the area. In addition, efforts should be made to reach young people through digital avenues.

**Figure 13. Loneliness, bullying and physical threats experienced by 8th and 9th grade pupils in basic education in Helsinki, 2017–2023, per cent.\***



\* Figure source: Results of the School Health Promotion Study. The question about experiencing physical threats was not included in 2017.

**Figure 14. Changes in the numbers of young people aged 13–17 and square metres of youth facilities in Helsinki, 2017–2020 and 2022.\***



\* Figure sources:  
 Number of young people (31 December): Statistics Finland.  
 Square metres of youth facilities: Youth Services, Culture and Leisure Division. The data on the square metres of youth facilities are from 5 June 2017, 27 November 2018, 30 October 2019, 20 November 2020 and 8 June 2022. No data are available for 2021.



The work is fast-paced and often reactive. According to the interviewed employees, they do not have enough time to meet with young people, which should be the core of youth work.

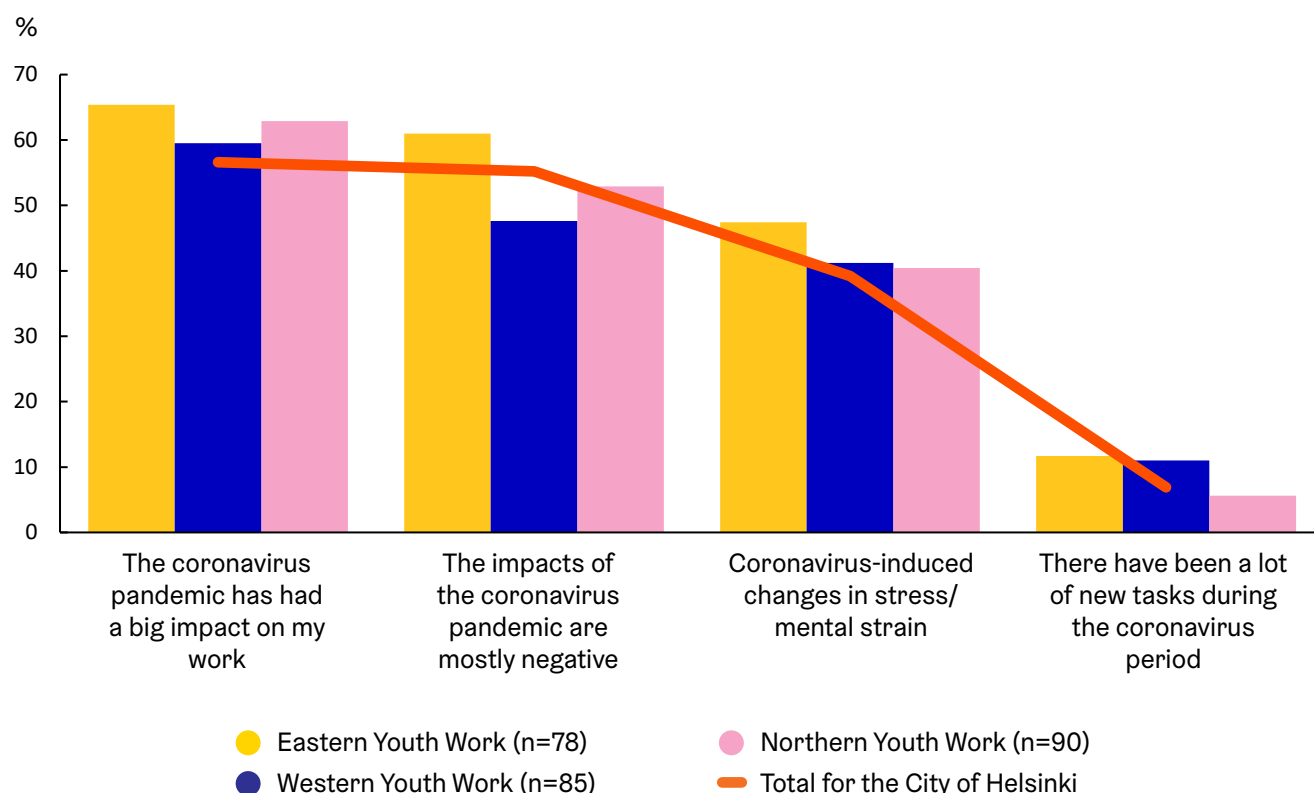
According to interviews, the resources in some areas are inadequate for the number and needs of young people. The number of youth workers has increased during the strategy period, but the change is not significant in terms of the number of staff. The availability of staff has also become more problematic. There are fewer qualified employees available than before, and job openings are not receiving as many applications as in the past. Helsinki used to be an attractive workplace, but nowadays, the surrounding municipalities attract employees with higher wages, among other things. Despite the fact that youth workers feel that their jobs are meaningful and that this has increased, job satisfaction is low in some places. According to the management of Youth Services, staff turnover has doubled from 2021 to 2023, and sick leave has increased. According to the division’s human resources department, no reliable data on the trends in absences due to illness were available for this assessment. This was due

to the problems with the 2022 introduction of Sarastia, the human resources and payroll management system. Data was also not received from the division in a timely manner. The division also did not provide any monitoring data on the developments in the number of staff and the filling of vacancies.

Some problems in the youth work areas can be traced back to management and the work atmosphere. Wellbeing at work has deteriorated especially in the Eastern region, but there is also a decline in the Northern region in this regard. These areas felt the effects of the coronavirus pandemic more severely than others (Figure 15). The division monitors work wellbeing at a general level, but the development of measures to improve it has been left to the work communities.

Youth work units believe that attractiveness and retention factors can be improved by improving pay and by differentiating work rather than having everyone do everything. One of the ways in which they will attempt to reduce the heavy administrative workload is through a team supervisor model between 2023 and 2024.

**Figure 15. The impact of the coronavirus pandemic in the different areas of Youth Services, compared to the situation in Helsinki as a whole. Kunta10 survey results 2022.\***



\* Figure source: Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. The results portal of the Kunta10 survey. The response options are 1 = not at all, 2 = somewhat, 3 = quite a lot and 4 = a lot. The results are shown as the percentage of respondents who chose options 3 or 4.

## Both detached and outreach youth work have been strengthened

During the coronavirus pandemic, temporary staff were added to detached youth work, and youth workers were trained extensively to conduct work in the community. This training also produced permanent training material. After the coronavirus pandemic, the employees went back to youth centres, but nowadays, a large part of the staff is also used to working in the community. Outreach has increased planning, efficiency and territorial responsibility. At the same time, closer cooperation with organisations such as the Children of the Station and the Red Cross has begun, and with Anchor activities, also with the police. Detached youth workers reach young people because, in most cases, they know where the young people gather. In practice, the young people encountered in their leisure activities range from primary school to around 22 years old. The latest focus of development is to go to the places where young people gather at the start of the school year, in addition to the traditional May Day and end-of-school celebrations.

Outreach youth work was transferred to Youth Services from the Education Division in 2018. Outreach youth work is carried out as an independent activity and specialised expertise is acquired from partners. At the same time, the volume of outreach youth work increased slightly. Outreach youth work cooperates closely with Ohjaamo. Its target group is young people under the age of 29, in practice 16–28 years old. According to a nationwide survey, customers are satisfied with the service.

The availability of staff is also a problem in outreach and detached youth work. Another challenge is that part of the activity is dependent on grants. Applying for grants is time-consuming and takes time away from core activities. If the grant is not received, the activity cannot be carried out unless the city provides additional funding.

## Investing in preventing violence and reducing loneliness

Youth work has been developed in line with the budget objective by training all staff in the HYVÄ model (formerly known as the Common Approach or CA model), which aims to strengthen early intervention models. In principle, this model is viewed as effective in youth work but is not generally perceived to bring new content to youth work.

In the spring of 2024, the Youth Violence Prevention project is underway, which will develop and implement new operating models to prevent violence among young people. Cooperation with the police and organisations has been stepped up. There have also been other training, such as the ART training for preventing violence, but the implementation of the models has

varied due to staff shortages, for instance. For example, training on anti-racist work methods has been central to work on violence prevention in the past.

Youth Services is involved in the Helsinki Mission project for preventing loneliness among young people. The association has carried out two surveys of young people on loneliness and trained city employees. Youth loneliness is best identified in targeted youth work, such as outreach youth work, and small group activities have been successful in preventing loneliness.

Youth Services also had other budgetary objectives, such as promoting the digital youth work project and systematising summer activities. Digital youth work was developed extensively as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, although the digitalisation project at Youth Services is still ongoing. Summer activities for young people have been systematised, in particular by developing processes for hiring young people and planning the placement of summer interns more systematically.

## Conclusions

Youth work has only been partially strengthened in accordance with the strategy and budget objectives. The number of youth facilities, their square metres, and physical accessibility have deteriorated, and due to the staff shortage, neither basic nor open activities have strengthened. In contrast, outreach and detached youth work was strengthened during the coronavirus pandemic. The increase in detached youth work staff was mainly temporary, with employees moving back into open youth work when the youth centres reopened. Youth work has been developed by training staff in accordance with the objectives, but the introduction of new operating models for the prevention of violence and loneliness is still ongoing.

Some of the youth centres have insufficient human resources for basic activities, as personnel have not been added in line with the increased expectations of young people and the growing number of tasks. Staff shortages are forcing youth centres to prioritise their work. For example, they have to decide which youth centres to keep open, at what times, and whether there is time to arrange youth-oriented small group activities. They also have to consider which age group to arrange activities for, and whether there is time to conduct work in the community and still have time to develop operations. Both the number of tasks and the administrative workload have increased, as has the pace of work. The team supervisor model is intended to reduce administrative work, but the trial is still ongoing.

Staff shortages are due to both attraction and retention factors. It is difficult to find qualified employees. Outreach and detached youth work is strained by the fact that many activities depend on grants, which are

laborious to apply for. Better pay and improved job profiles could facilitate recruitment and employee retention. According to the interviewed employees, it might make sense to differentiate tasks instead of having everyone do everything. Apprenticeship training has been found to be a good pathway into the sector.

Despite the fact that youth workers perceive their work as meaningful and that their experience of meaningfulness has increased, workplace wellbeing is low in some cases. Turnover has doubled in the last couple of years, and interviews show an increase in sick leave. Some of the problems in the youth work areas boil down to management and the work atmosphere. Employee wellbeing has deteriorated, particularly in the Eastern area, but there is also a decline in the Northern area. These areas also felt the effects of the coronavirus pandemic more severely than others. The division mainly monitors employee wellbeing at the unit level, and no measures have been drawn up at the level of the entire service. According to the information received from the division, obtaining monitoring data on personnel has been difficult due to the problems with the introduction of Sarastia. In addition, the division did not provide data on absences due to illness in time for the assessment.

Youth workers have been trained in the HYVÄ model in accordance with the budget objective. Staff have been trained and continue to receive training in many working methods that prevent violence and loneliness. The

training is considered useful if resources are allocated for implementing the working methods.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the Culture and Leisure Division should

- ▶ ensure that important human resources data is available, up-to-date and monitored.

the Culture and Leisure Division's Youth Services should

- ▶ work with staff to draw up a plan for developing the pay, training and job profiles of youth workers in order to improve the attraction and retention of the sector.
- ▶ systematically monitor developments in the human resources situation in the different areas and units.
- ▶ assist youth work units in prioritising tasks and planning the division of labour so that youth leaders have more time to meet with young people.
- ▶ target measures and resources to improve employee wellbeing, particularly in those areas where employee wellbeing is low.



# Fostering the distinctive character and safety of Helsinki's neighbourhoods



# Progress of urban renewal



Has there been progress towards the urban renewal objectives, such as infill development and increasing the attractiveness of the areas?



Mostly, yes, but the urban renewal is still in its early stages, so there are no major impacts yet.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Have the City Executive Office and the Urban Environment Division made sufficient progress on the urban renewal objectives?

## Related questions:

1. Have adequate measures been initiated to allow one-third more housing to be built in urban renewal areas by 2035 and to balance the distribution of the forms of ownership and financing?
2. Have sufficient measures been initiated and implemented to improve residents' sense of safety and comfort in these areas?
3. Have sufficient measures been initiated and implemented to increase the vitality and attractiveness of these areas?

The urban renewal is based on the Implementation Programme for Housing and Related Land Use 2020 (the AM programme). The AM programme has defined the urban renewal areas in Helsinki, which are Malminkartano-Kannelmäki, Malmi and Mellunkylä. According to the City Strategy, the urban renewal will also be implemented in Meri-Rastila. Meri-Rastila has not yet been included in the AM programme, but was selected as an urban renewal area later. Consequently, this area has been excluded from this assessment. A key objective of the AM programme is to ensure the prerequisites are in place to build one-third more housing units in the urban renewal areas by 2035 so that the distribution of ownership and financing in the housing stock in these areas evolves towards the city's goal of a diverse mix of housing. In addition, according to the AM programme, "the objective of urban renewal is to strengthen social sustainability in these areas. Urban reform will improve the residents' sense of safety and wellbeing in their areas and increase the vitality and attractiveness of the areas." The objectives of the urban renewal are shown in Figure 16.

The urban renewal has been included in the City Strategy 2021–2025 and is also a key focus of the City of Helsinki's 2023 and 2024 budgets. According to the City Strategy, Helsinki's goal is to be a city where residential areas are not segregated and where it is possible to live a safe and enjoyable life in every positively unique district. Construction investments aim to contribute to reducing area segregation and increasing Helsinki residents' sense of comfort.

The materials used in the assessment include interviews with the City Executive Office's Economy and Planning Department and the management of the Urban Environment Division's Land Use and City Structure and Buildings and Public Areas departments. In addition, documents and written enquiries to other divisions were also used. The Audit Committee's first commission also obtained information during its assessment visits to the Urban Environment Division and the City Executive Office.

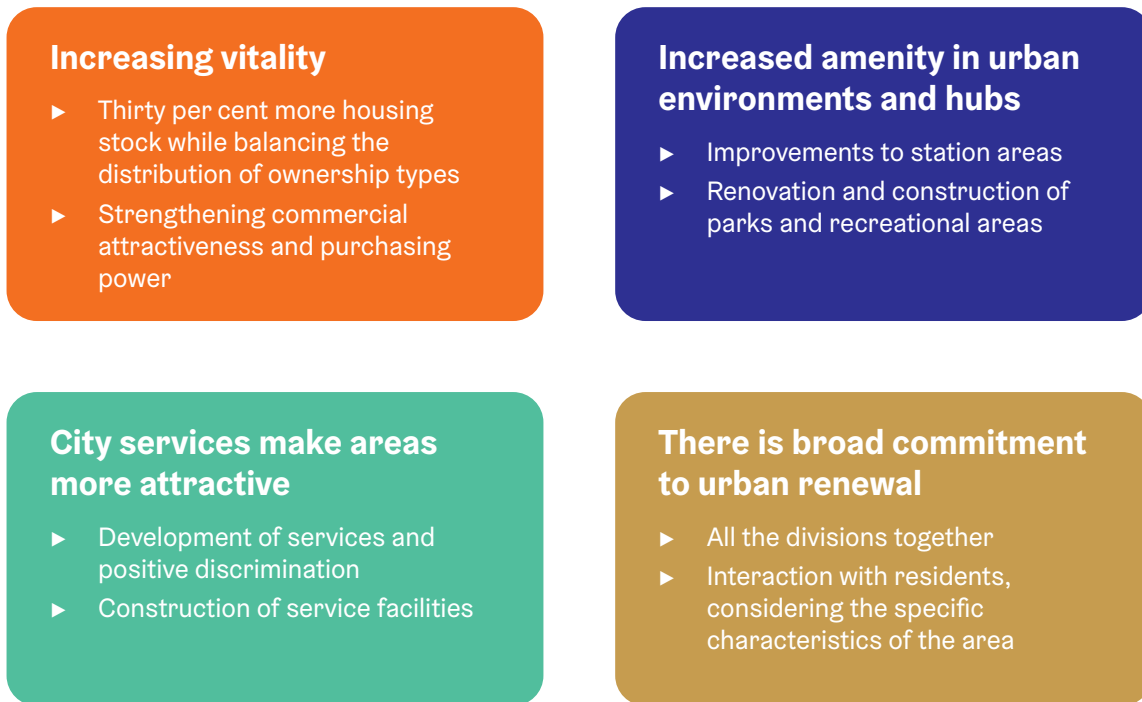
## The land-use prerequisites for housing construction are in place

The main objective of the urban renewal is to prevent urban segregation by building a third more housing units in the Malminkartano-Kannelmäki, Malmi and Mellunkylä areas by 2035. At the same time, the urban renewal will shift the distribution of forms of ownership and financing towards the city average. In order to achieve this objective, there must be a sufficient amount of legally valid development reserves in the areas.

Planning in all urban renewal areas is guided by the 2016 general plan, which allows for the zoning of infill construction. Several planning principles have also been adopted for these areas, which guide land use planning, allow for the inclusion of residents and commit decision-makers. These planning principles have already been found to have a steering effect, particularly on private properties. A development reserve for infill construction is currently being created in all the urban renewal areas. According to the project managers of the areas, all of them have fairly good prospects for zoning additional building rights. Several major land-use planning projects are currently being prepared in the urban renewal areas, and the land use planning has been coordinated for several years into the future.

The city uses, among other things, land transfers and other land policy measures to implement the objectives of the urban renewal. For example, it is possible

**Figure 16. The objectives of urban renewal.**



to sell plots of land for the construction of owner-occupied housing in urban renewal areas, although the city's general policy is mainly to lease the plots. This is one of the means for promoting owner-occupied housing in urban renewal areas. Owner-occupied housing in these areas is important, because the city has decided to stop producing price-controlled Hitas housing, and the state's support for right-of-occupancy housing production will end at the end of 2025, according to data from the early spring of 2024. Land transfers in urban renewal areas are coordinated with zoning and site preparation activities. The City Executive Office's Area Construction Unit coordinates projects in the area.

In order to correct the forms of housing ownership and financing, urban renewal areas should be made more attractive to homebuyers. This is why it is important that parks, markets, station areas and other central places in these areas are perceived as pleasant. According to the project managers of the urban renewal areas, it is also particularly important for area attractiveness that the quality of schools, kindergartens and other services is adequate.

### **Small steps have been taken to improve safety and amenity**

Improving the perception of safety has been featured in both the Helsinki City Strategy 2021–2025 and other operational objectives in the 2023 budget. Improving the perception of safety is a city-wide goal, meaning

that all the divisions had a budget objective related to this goal. The budget had a total of seven other operational objectives related to urban renewal, six of which were related to safety. Of these, four objectives were achieved. Perceived safety is also closely linked to the amenity of areas. There was one budget objective for amenity, and it was related to investment projects targeting urban renewal areas. These aim to produce visible changes in amenity, among other things. This objective was not met.

In the context of the AM programme's monitoring report for 2023, an action and investment plan for urban renewal areas for 2022–2025 was prepared based on the city's budget. The action plan includes, among other things, an objective for improving the amenity and appearance of the areas. The action plan consists of measures that promote the objectives. In 2023, there were 62 measures, and in 2024, their number had increased to 80. Of these, 12 were related to amenity in 2023, and 14 in 2024. In May 2023, 75 per cent of the measures related to amenities were ongoing, and 25 per cent of the measures had just started.

The measures taken to improve the perception of safety and amenity have been relatively small, but may be relevant to area residents. These have included holding safety meetings, repairing lighting, making minor improvements to train and metro stations, increasing low-threshold substance abuse and mental health services through mobile units, renovating and repairing playgrounds, and conducting placemaking

experiments, which involve developing urban spaces together with residents and other users. There are future plans to implement more extensive projects, such as the renovation of the Mellunmäki and Kontula metro stations and the Kontula shopping centre in Mellunkylä. The review of potential commercial spaces for private services in the station areas is also still ongoing. Improvements to the station areas can improve the appearance of the areas and improve their sense of safety.

The progress of urban renewal is monitored annually through various indicators. The development of social sustainability in urban renewal areas can be examined, e.g. through population size, the share of foreign language speakers, the morbidity index, socio-economic composite indices, housing and income assistance recipients, unemployment levels, numbers of jobs and businesses, price per square metre of housing, finished housing units and the distribution of housing ownership forms. Data on developments in these indicators only extend to 2021 and 2022. These indicators have been assigned target values for each area, which have not all developed in line with the objectives of urban renewal. Safety is measured through a safety survey carried out every three years. However, there are challenges in measuring this, as research is carried out for each major district, and there are not enough responses from the urban renewal areas to interpret the results. In 2020, the following indicators were assigned for amenity: 'completed development projects and their significance' and 'addressing the key deficiencies in public areas identified in resident surveys'. Various measures have been taken for the former, and an investigation is ongoing for the latter.

### **Vitality and attractiveness will increase in the long term**

Investments in public spaces and buildings, for example, aim to increase the well-being and attractiveness of urban renewal areas. The vitality and social sustainability of residential areas will be ensured, for example, through infill construction. Area planning and housing policies aim to keep residential areas attractive.

The objectives aimed at increasing vitality also emphasise improving the business environment and strengthening the commercial attractiveness of urban renewal areas. However, private services have not yet been attracted and the business environment has not been improved. The development of a more attractive urban structure may also lead to rising rent levels, which may make it more difficult to attract private operators to urban renewal areas. A potential concern for project managers in these areas is whether existing or new entrepreneurs will be able to pay the rent. However, according to the City Executive Office, attracting private investment to urban renewal areas is an important tangible measure for increasing vitality.

Attractiveness is currently increased mainly by directing the city's school and kindergarten projects and park investments to these areas.

Many of the objectives for increasing vitality and attractiveness are long-term goals – such as improving housing satisfaction, increasing and diversifying the housing stock and increasing social sustainability – which have not yet been possible to implement due to being relatively recent programmes. Some of the targets extend to 2035. On the other hand, the so-called 'fast and agile' measures have been successfully implemented. The implemented measures are related to matters such as the search for plots for the Evolving Apartment Building project in Malminkartano and Mellunkylä, the creation of a 3D model of the current state of segregation, creating housing ownership policies.

So-called 'anchor investments' are also planned in the urban renewal areas to make them more attractive. Examples of these are the Myllypuro campus project and Puu-Myllypuro (Wood Myllypuro), which were developed with the successful urban renewal of Myllypuro. At Malmi, the expansion of the Malmi indoor swimming pool has been chosen as one of the anchor investments. There are plans for the Heart of Malminkartano service facility project in Malminkartano; in Mellunkylä, Kontula House is planned in Kontula; and the Laakavuori community building is planned in Mellunmäki. Among other things, anchor investments aim to change the perceptions of these areas for the better, which can potentially improve their attractiveness.

The objectives of urban renewal are also monitored using attractiveness and vitality indicators. They have progressed in line with the objectives of the urban renewal. For example, the unemployment rate decreased in all of the areas in 2022.

### **Financing for investments is sufficient, but there is room for improvement in coordinating urban renewal**

The City Executive Office and the Urban Environment Division consider funding to have been sufficient. The lack of feasible plans and insufficient human resources pose challenges. In addition, new regulations on project costs and the war in Ukraine, among other things, have increased costs and slowed the projects down. The other divisions will have to balance the available resources as they implement the urban renewal measures with their core funding.

The City Executive Office's Housing Unit coordinates the implementation of the urban renewal. Awareness of the goals of urban renewal and commitment to it vary by division, partly due to conflicting strategic goals. Management and coordination are not considered clear in all respects. However, according to the

City Executive Office, awareness and attitudes have improved over the years. The aim is to streamline the management of urban renewal in 2024 by recruiting two project managers. Each urban renewal area will be assigned a person in charge of improving, among other things, the interoperability of services and the flow of information.

## Conclusions

The City Executive Office and the Urban Environment Division have, for the most part, made sufficient progress towards the objectives of urban renewal, given that it is still in its early stages. Plots of land that have been zoned in the urban renewal areas are likely to allow for adequate infill construction in the future. Balancing the distribution of ownership and financing types and implementing owner-occupied housing projects, on the other hand, is still likely to require many different measures. The measures taken so far to increase amenity, safety, vitality and attractiveness have been relatively modest, and the indicators set for urban renewal have not developed in line with the urban renewal objectives.

Land use planning in urban renewal areas has initiated sufficient measures to build one-third more housing in these areas by 2035 and to balance the distribution of ownership and financing forms. Based on the assessment, the general plan, the general plan implementation programme, and the planning principles prepared to support the detailed plan provide sufficient frameworks for the local detailed plan, enabling infill construction. There will be sufficient coordination between detailed planning, site preparation and plot allocation to allow for infill development. Zoning or lack of plots is unlikely to become an obstacle to urban renewal, unless there is a high rate repeal in the local detailed plans due to appeals, for example.

The end of intermediate housing production, i.e. right-of-occupancy and Hitas price-controlled housing, poses significant difficulties for new housing production in the urban renewal areas. In practice, the areas need substantial amounts of new owner-occupied housing, and various measures are being tested to accelerate this. In order for owner-occupied housing to be attractive to future residents, the reputation of the area must be improved in the eyes of home buyers. This can be influenced by improving the area's amenities and developing services that are important to residents, such as schools and kindergartens. However, it is still unclear what kinds of measures are needed to

make the construction of owner-occupied housing in urban renewal areas sufficiently attractive.

The city has sought to increase the amenity and sense of safety in the urban renewal areas by implementing relatively minor improvements. Many of the objectives set out in the 2023 budget to improve the sense of safety were achieved. However, the target for the completion rate of investment projects to improve safety, amenity, attractiveness and vitality was not met.

The city has been able to implement very limited improvements to increase the vitality of urban renewal areas. The implementation and development of extensive measures is still ongoing. In addition, development proposals for improving the business environment have not yet been implemented, and more specific plans or goals have not been made for attracting private operators to urban renewal areas. The ability of existing companies to pay rent is also a concern if changes in the urban structure result in higher rents for business premises. However, improving the business environment is one of the defined sub-objectives for increasing vitality. The attractiveness of the areas will mainly be increased through the city's own services. More extensive measures to improve amenity, safety, vitality, and attractiveness are still pending.

Funding for urban renewal areas has been sufficient so far, but the lack of viable plans and increased project costs have become a problem. Many divisions also have difficulties with prioritising funding. The divisions have expressed a need for clearer management of urban renewal. Thus, in 2024, the aim is to improve coordination within the city, for example, by recruiting two new project managers to develop and coordinate services.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the City Executive Office and the Urban Environment Division should

- ▶ promote business activities in urban renewal areas and ensure that the business environment is improved as urban renewal areas are developed.

the City Executive Office should

- ▶ ensure that the coordination of the divisions in the urban renewal areas is effective.







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KOTU

# The Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division's preparedness for incidents and emergencies

 Is the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division appropriately prepared for incidents and emergencies?

 The preparations for incidents and emergencies are generally adequate.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Has the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division prepared appropriately for incidents and emergencies?

## Related questions:

1. Are the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division's preparedness and contingency plans designed appropriately?
2. Are the logistical processes of materials management and power and water supply preparedness for crises and emergency situations properly organised?
3. Is the City of Helsinki's civil defence organised properly?

According to the City Strategy 2021–2025, the city aims to ensure extensive city-wide preparedness and to create a foundation for versatile capabilities in different situations. Contingency planning and preparedness for incidents and emergencies are topical due to the changed world situation. The world's security situation changed in 2022, when Russia initiated its large-scale war of aggression against Ukraine. Rapid changes in the external operating environment also highlight the importance of functional preparedness processes in the city and its divisions.

The materials used in the assessment were city and division-level readiness, preparedness and continuity management plans, and monitoring data. In addition,

the assessment also carried out a self-evaluation survey aimed at experts in the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division's preparedness process. During the assessment, experts from the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division and the City Executive Office's safety and preparedness team were interviewed. In addition, e-mail enquiries were made to the persons responsible for power and water supply and materials management in the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division. In addition, the assessment included a visit to the bedrock civil defence shelter at Merihaka. In addition to the assessment authors, a civil defence planner and a civil defence inspector participated in the visit to the bedrock shelter at Merihaka.

## Processes in normal conditions ensure protection against incidents and emergencies

The preparedness of Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services is based on their tasks and services under normal circumstances, upon which continuity is also based during incidents and emergencies. The goal of continuity management is to maintain the organisation's ability to function under any circumstances and minimise the negative impact of disruptions on service operations. The original aim of Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services was to create a single joint preparedness plan for the division following the national reform of social, health care and rescue services ('SOTEPE' reform). However, according to experts in Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services, the plans will not be combined. In future, the division's preparedness plan will likely consist of a single, shared public version available to all personnel and separate sections for Social and Health Services and Rescue Services that will be kept confidential.

## Operators' preparedness processes are based on continuous development work

The preparedness processes of Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services are based on continuous development work. The development

of emergency preparedness is based on the KUJA assessment model, which is an operating model created by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and the National Emergency Supply Agency of Finland to examine the preparedness process. The KUJA assessment model is intended to be a systematic and iterative method that allows organisations to monitor the progress of previously planned development measures and identify new development needs. The development of the emergency preparedness process has been hampered by recruitment challenges. For this reason, it has not been possible to implement all the measures as planned, despite a determined aim for regular development work. There have also been some shortcomings in contingency staffing arrangements in the various services within Social Services and Health Care, as core tasks have taken time away from contingency tasks.

The preparedness process in Social Services and Health Care is also based on continuous development work. The preparedness process of Social Services and Health Care can be divided into four stages: assessing the current situation, creating plans, implementation, and monitoring. The coronavirus pandemic had a significant impact on the entire preparedness process for the Social Services and Health Care Division: it has not been necessary to justify contingency planning since then. The organisation's awareness of preparedness and continuity management has increased since the war of aggression launched by Russia. The focus on preparedness has increasingly shifted to continuity management to ensure that the necessary services can be provided under all circumstances.

The assessment included a self-assessment survey for the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division, which was completed by the division's experts on the preparedness process. Compared to the results of previous self-assessments of the Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services, the preparedness processes have developed positively. The good state of the preparedness processes is illustrated by the fact that the results for even the worst item in the self-assessment survey were still relatively good.

### **It is possible to increase power and water supply preparedness**

The Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division has prepared for power and water supply disruptions by ensuring that their administration and services have prepared continuity plans for various disruptions. However, Social Services and Health Care has not kept any statistics on actual power and water supply disruptions. According to an expert, power and water supply disruptions have been rare in Helsinki, and there have been no extensive disruptions

in 2018–2023. In addition, Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services have made scenario-based plans for ensuring the supply of materials and drafted the necessary agreements with service providers. All of the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division's new contracts have taken continuity management and preparedness into account as separate contract items.

According to the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division's experts, the current situation would be an appropriate time to increase the city's crisis preparedness. However, the national and regional situation is complicated by cost-cutting pressures on social, health care and rescue services. Cooperation with power and water utilities has been found to work well, as the stakeholders are part of the municipal group.

### **There are differences in the condition of bedrock shelters**

There are approximately 5,500 civil defence shelters in Helsinki with a capacity for roughly 900,000 persons. The number of civil defence shelters and their capacity in Helsinki is sufficient to cover the protection of not only permanent residents, but also people visiting the city and the outdoor population. However, the shelters are not evenly distributed throughout the city. Figure 17 shows the public and shared civil defence shelters in the Helsinki area.

The owners of civil defence shelters are responsible for ensuring that shelters and their equipment remain in good condition. It is also the owner's responsibility to provide the necessary tools and other equipment. If the civil defence shelter is used for any other purpose, it must be possible to restore it to civil defence use within 72 hours. The city-managed shelters are partly in use as storage, and not all tenants are required to have a plan for vacating the premises. Based on the findings of this assessment, it is unlikely that the commissioning deadline required by the Rescue Act could be met in all cases. However, in the event of significant changes in the external operating environment, Rescue Services has the option to take over the bedrock shelters by cancelling their leases proactively. There is also some variation in the condition of the bedrock shelters. One expert estimates that the maintenance backlog for shelter repairs amounts to several million euros. However, the repair estimates must take into account the calculation criteria, as they will be affected by whether shelters are renovated to meet minimum obligations or to support the use of the facilities under normal conditions.

Based on the results of a survey conducted by Rescue Services in 2022, about one-third of the city's properties had an up-to-date civil defence deployment plan. Around 70% of civil defence shelters had been

**Figure 17. Public and shared civil defence shelters within the Helsinki area.**



inspected in the last year, and just over half of the properties had adequate civil defence material. The report resulted in seven different recommendations for divisions, municipal enterprises and agencies.

**The city has one unfinished bedrock shelter project**

During the assessment, it became evident that the Kauppakartanonkatu area is still without a common bedrock shelter, although Helsinki has assumed responsibility for constructing the shelter and collected fees from the property owners in the area. Property owners paid their share of the construction costs in the 1970s and 1980s, which amounts to around EUR 5.8 million in present value.

In 2021, the city set up a working group to consider different options for resolving the situation. The city’s working group held the view that the bedrock shelter on Kauppakartanonkatu must be built to meet the obligations of the Rescue Act, the concluded civil defence agreements, and the conditions of the plot allocation

and building permits. The city’s current construction programme shows the shelter as a leased property to be built by a third-party contractor. According to the construction programme, the city would lease the shelter under a long-term contract with a lease term of 2029–2059.

**Conclusions**

The preparedness of Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services for incidents and emergencies is mainly appropriate, but based on the findings, there is still plenty of development work to be done in the future. For the most part, Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services are appropriately prepared for incidents and emergencies, but based on the findings, there is still plenty of development work to be done in the future. After the reform of social, health, and rescue services, the goal was to create a single shared preparedness plan for the division, but this idea has since been abandoned. However, work on integrating the preparedness plans has continued in an appropriate manner. In future, the preparedness

plan is likely to include a shared public part for the entire division and confidential parts for both services.

The preparedness processes of Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services are based on continuous development work. The development work has been hampered by changes in the operating environment and turnover of managerial staff. As a result, Rescue Services, for example, has not been able to implement the KUJA evaluation model as planned despite its determined aim to conduct regular evaluations. However, based on the findings of this assessment, the preparedness processes of Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services have been developed successfully, when compared with the previous self-evaluations from these operators.

The Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division's power and water supply and materials management processes are properly arranged under normal conditions. According to experts, the current situation is an appropriate time to review the city's crisis preparedness. However, the situation is complicated by cost cutting pressures on social, health and rescue services. However, the city as a whole and the Social Services, Health Care, and Rescue Services Division have done a good job of preparing for any power and water supply issues. In addition, the material preparedness of Social Services and Health Care and Rescue Services has been arranged appropriately.

Civil defence in the City of Helsinki is partially well-organised. There are regional differences in the condition of civil defence and bedrock shelters despite their maintenance responsibilities being established. According to experts, there are bedrock shelters in the city where longer stays should be avoided due to problems such as poor indoor air quality. One expert estimates that the maintenance backlog for shelter repairs amounts to several million euros per shelter. However, estimates of the repair backlog must take into account whether the civil defence shelters will be renovated to the minimum required level or renovated to support use under normal conditions. Some of

the city's shelters are leased to external parties, and not all tenants have drawn up appropriate plans for vacating the premises so that the shelters are available within the time limit required by the Rescue Act. However, Rescue Services has the option to terminate leases proactively in the event of significant changes in the external operating environment.

The assessment also found that the shared bedrock shelter in the Kauppakartanonkatu area has still not been built. The city charged the property owners of the time a share of the construction costs in the 1970s and 1980s. The construction costs are around EUR 5.8 million in current value. The shelter is shown in the current construction programme as a rental property, the lease period of which is set for 2029–2059.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division should

- ▶ ensure that the division has the necessary human resources for preparedness and continuity management tasks.
- ▶ ensure that Rescue Services regularly evaluates its activities using the model from the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and the National Emergency Supply Agency of Finland.
- ▶ ensure that the plans for vacating civil defence shelters are up-to-date so that the implementation deadline required by the Rescue Act can be met.

the City Executive Office and the Urban Environment Division should

- ▶ ensure that the shared bedrock shelter in the Kauppakartanonkatu area is built according to plans.

**Intelligent  
transport  
solutions are the  
foundation of  
smooth daily life**



# Winter maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle paths



Has the winter maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle paths been developed in accordance with the objectives?



Not all of the objectives for the winter maintenance of cycle paths have been achieved on schedule, and some measures are only beginning for walking.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Has the winter maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle paths been developed in accordance with the objectives?

## Related questions:

1. Have the winter conditions on cycle paths been developed in line with the objectives?
2. Have the winter conditions on pedestrian routes been developed in accordance with the objectives?

According to the City Strategy 2021–2025, Helsinki aims to be a fifteen-minute city, where local services can be reached within fifteen minutes by walking, cycling or via public transport. The strategy identifies physical inactivity as a growing problem that can be mitigated by creating an environment that encourages daily physical activity. This is to be achieved by increasing the modal shares of public transport, walking and cycling and improving the conditions for walking and cycling. In addition, accessibility will be taken into account when planning the urban environment and city services. The assessment examined the development of winter maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle paths from the perspectives of the cycling development programme, the walking promotion programme and accessibility guidelines. In addition, the assessment examined how the implementation and quality of winter maintenance are monitored.

The assessment material included relevant city or division-level programmes, studies, surveys and statistics. This material included, e.g., the walking and cycling development programme, the City of Helsinki's Accessibility Policies 2022–2025, the snow management

development project, the action plan for improving the quality of winter maintenance, a survey on municipal engineering services, and the results of resident satisfaction surveys on winter maintenance. The assessment included interviews with experts from the Urban Environment Division's Maintenance Unit and the city's Accessibility Ombudsman. The Audit Committee's first commission also obtained information during its assessment visit to the Urban Environment Division.

## Winter maintenance is carried out in accordance with product cards and work instructions prepared by the city

The Urban Environment Division's Maintenance Unit arranges winter maintenance services for public areas. The winter maintenance service is carried out by Helsinki City Construction Services (Stara) and competitively tendered private service providers. The service providers' contracts govern the requirements for winter maintenance services. The basic tasks of winter maintenance are anti-slip measures, snow ploughing and removal, and the removal of de-icing material at the end of the winter season. Winter maintenance is carried out in accordance with the product cards and work instructions prepared by the city, which are based on the requirements of the Maintenance Act.

Service providers are responsible for maintaining the streets in accordance with the maintenance classification defined by the city. Routes are divided into five separate categories, with different quality requirements and intervention timeframes for each category, according to the product cards. The maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle paths in the city centre is also carried out by private property owners, who are responsible for the winter maintenance of pedestrian areas on the streets, as well as for the removal of snow banks piled next to them, in accordance with the original responsibility set out in the Maintenance Act. In other areas, the property is responsible for clearing its access point after the snow has been ploughed.

The quality requirements for the winter maintenance of pedestrian and cycle paths were made more stringent in 2022. The aim is to have the updated quality requirements for the product cards in place for all areas when the new project-specific contracts begin. The most significant changes to the quality requirements are the lowered threshold for starting ploughing based on the thickness of the snow layer and faster response times.

The monitoring of winter maintenance for bicycle traffic has been improved by increasing separate inspections conducted by bicycle. Efforts have been made to facilitate the winter maintenance of pedestrian and cycle paths by controlling vehicle parking.

### **Considering effective winter maintenance in land-use solutions for new areas is important**

The winter maintenance of pedestrian and cycle paths is hampered by rapidly changing weather conditions and extreme weather events. Material shortages and equipment breakdowns also cause delays in carrying out winter maintenance. Snow logistics has also caused problems in winter maintenance, as there are not enough storage and reception facilities for snow, according to the Urban Environment Division's Maintenance Unit. Due to the scarcity of facilities that can receive and store snow, it has to be stored elsewhere, such as in street areas, where space is already limited. When the snow has to be stored in street areas for prolonged periods, and there are cycles of melting and freezing, it makes pedestrian and cycle paths more slippery. Plans for snow removal are starting to be implemented, such as the development programme for improving the quality of winter maintenance and the snow management development project. This project aims to increase the number of snow disposal sites, improve winter maintenance and mitigate costs. The aim is to move the snow out of the street area faster and designate safe and suitable storage areas on the streets.

The Maintenance Unit believes it is important to consider areas from a year-round perspective in an urban environment that is becoming more compact. It is important to anticipate how the snow in the area will be ploughed and piled, as well as how it will be managed. According to the Maintenance Unit, new land-use solutions complicate the definition and development of maintenance methods, which are often left out as a problem to be solved later by maintenance services. Various lane arrangements and their separation might work during the summer, but in winter, these arrangements can be very vulnerable and become unsafe or even inoperable. According to the Maintenance Unit, all land-use and maintenance planning should develop processes and instructions in a way that takes into account the year-round use of the areas. The Maintenance Unit also suggests that planning should be carried out in closer cooperation with maintenance experts, as cooperation is only sporadic at present. According to the unit, it would be important to design the streets to have adequate space for snow and include reservations for snow disposal areas in the local plans. Experts should already be involved in the cooperation at the zoning stage, where spatial solutions are drawn up for the plans.

### **Cyclists have been dissatisfied with winter maintenance in recent years**

Based on the Urban Environment Division's pedestrian satisfaction survey in 2023, the number of pedestrians satisfied with winter maintenance was roughly equal to the number of dissatisfied respondents. In 2022, only one in ten was satisfied or fairly satisfied with winter maintenance. The results for 2021 were almost the same as in 2023, so there has been no positive development in recent years. The annual results are also significantly affected by the varying winter conditions each year.

Similarly, in the customer satisfaction surveys measuring cyclist satisfaction with winter maintenance, the share of fairly dissatisfied and dissatisfied has ranged between 62 to 91 percentage points from 2021 to 2023 (Figure 18).

Based on the results of the municipal engineering services survey in 2023, Helsinki residents experience more dissatisfaction than satisfaction with winter maintenance on pedestrian and bicycle paths. Helsinki's results for 2023 were among the worst in the group of municipalities that participated in the survey. Based on the surveys, Helsinki has ranked below the average of all the participating municipalities in snow ploughing and anti-slip measures in 2018–2023, except for 2020, when it reached the average.

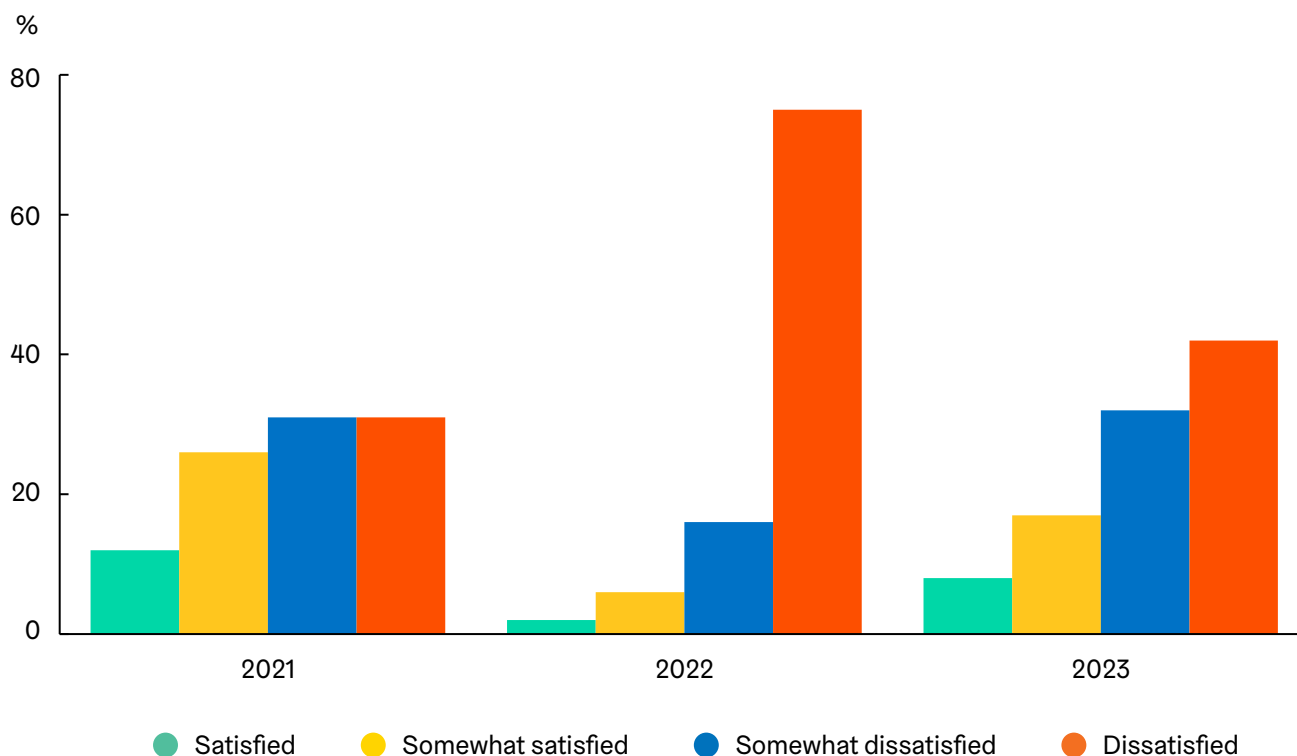
### **Increasing the proportion of people satisfied with the winter maintenance of cycle paths and the popularity of winter cycling have fallen short of their targets**

The number of enhanced winter maintenance routes has been increased annually. However, additional appropriations have been available too late, which has made it difficult to meet the target. Still, based on the assessment, the target of 150 kilometres of enhanced winter maintenance routes should be met within the scheduled timeframe for the indicator, i.e. by 2025.

The target for 2025 is to achieve 20% satisfaction with winter maintenance. Based on the 2018 Cycling Barometer, the percentage of people satisfied with the winter maintenance of cycle paths was seven per cent at the start of the programme. In 2022, that share was six per cent. Thus, the proportion of people satisfied with winter maintenance has even decreased slightly from the baseline, making it unlikely that the indicator will be met on schedule by 2025. Increasing the proportion of people who continue to cycle in the winter from 20% to 30% is unlikely to materialise, as that share has decreased from the baseline to 14% in 2022. According to the Maintenance Unit, the poor development of these indicators is partly explained by the increasingly dense urban structure, winters with heavy snow and the strict funding for maintenance.



**Figure 18. Cyclist satisfaction with winter maintenance in resident surveys between 2021 and 2023, per cent.**



In particular, the winter of 2021–2022 was the most difficult year for anti-slip measures in a long time in all of southern Finland, and in the winter of 2022–2023, the shortage of materials for brine reduced quality. According to the Maintenance Unit, increased funding is an important prerequisite for raising the quality of winter maintenance.

The assessment showed that the measure for preparing a roadmap for developing year-round maintenance has progressed, but not within its target timetable, which is 2021. The aim is to implement this measure within the timetable for the Bicycle Action Plan, which is scheduled for 2025.

Another winter maintenance measure is updating the winter maintenance classification of cycle paths. The measure has not progressed in its original scope, but the winter maintenance classifications have been updated on the product cards as part of project preparation, so it has been partially implemented. Progress has been made on this measure, for example, with updates to the winter maintenance classifications for main cycling routes and stricter maintenance deadlines on third-class roads, where cycling is frequent. The deadline for implementing the measure was 2021, which means that the target timetable for this measure has not been met.

### **The walking promotion programme seeks to improve the pedestrian environment.**

In order to achieve the walking-related goals of the City Strategy, the city has created a walking promotion

programme based on the Walkable Helsinki Vision 2030. Five measures have been identified to help meet the programme objectives, the third of which – updating the maintenance hierarchy for pedestrian routes – is related to winter maintenance. The second measure, defining the hierarchy of the pedestrian network, was previously linked to the measure for updating the maintenance hierarchy. However, the update of the programme allowed the third measure to be advanced independently.

The third measure, updating the maintenance hierarchy for pedestrian routes, has three winter maintenance objectives:

1. Defining a prioritised network for winter maintenance in the city centre based on core pedestrian areas and spatial data analysis.
2. Reviewing and updating maintenance classifications and quality requirements for the prioritised network where winter maintenance affects the state of the pavement, including snow storage and the narrowing of the pavement versus the roadway.
3. Developing monitoring for the implementation of winter maintenance contracts that meet the quality requirements.

Work on the first objective began when the measure and its objectives were updated in 2023. In the context of this update, it was decided to define the network

based on core pedestrian areas and spatial data analysis, rather than based on the hierarchy of the previous pedestrian network. Despite delays, the division estimates that the objective will be met by 2025.

Ploughing and anti-slip measures on pavements are guided by maintenance classifications and quality requirements. Updating maintenance classifications can help the snow situation in some places. However, the bigger challenge is the intermediate storage of snow on sidewalks, which can cause narrowing of the paths during periods of heavy snowfall. The new quality requirements and thresholds that trigger maintenance in the new product cards are already at a high level. Updated product cards will be gradually introduced as new contracts start.

### **Accessibility policy measures and their implementation**

At present, the City of Helsinki's accessibility policies aim to implement accessibility in accordance with the City Strategy. They have two guidelines for winter maintenance:

1. The aim is to reserve enough space for piling snow. Accessibility provisions are also ensured in winter conditions (sufficiently wide pathways). For example, illustrations will show the areas that are suitable for the temporary dumping of snow and the dimensions of the routes.
2. The contract documents for winter road maintenance will specify the accessibility criteria for the various routes during winter maintenance. The contracting authority will instruct the suppliers on the routes and areas that have been designated as accessible.

The indicator for the first measure is the amount of customer feedback received. A feedback monitoring system for this policy is currently being developed. However, the monitoring of this policy is meant to be linked to the measures of the programmes promoting road safety and walking, in which case the monitoring would take place in the future through these programmes. The Accessibility Working Group considers this link as consistent with the goals of the work towards making accessibility part of normal operations.

In winter maintenance, accessibility is taken into account through the quality requirements on the product cards. However, accessibility criteria are not included in the contract documents, and contractors are not specifically instructed on the routes that have been designated as accessible. However, according to the Maintenance Unit, contractors are aware of accessibility solutions implemented in their areas. In addition, according to the Accessibility Ombudsman, the

routes that are intended to be accessible have been discussed with the contracting authorities.

### **Deficiencies in winter maintenance can lead to penalties**

The implementation of the city's winter maintenance is monitored by two supervisors in the street areas and one in green areas. In recent years, a separate monitoring service for the enhanced winter maintenance routes has also been purchased from a consultant. The service providers also carry out self-monitoring. In addition, customer feedback is used in supervision where possible. The performance of ordered winter maintenance works is monitored at monthly jobsite meetings and reviews and in a joint event held in the spring. Contractors are supervised according to the same principles, regardless of whether the contractor is Stara or a private contractor. However, supervisors spend more time monitoring the tendered contracts. They point out any detected errors and make deviation reports. The quality requirements set for contractors are described in the product cards, and the penalty procedure is described in the contract documents.

Practical monitoring is carried out by driving the routes daily. Compliance with response times is monitored by visiting the relevant route sections as the deadline approaches. There are typically a handful of deficiencies per contract in the implementation of winter maintenance. Small deficiencies are often not penalised but are asked to be remedied promptly. Supervision focuses on the success of winter maintenance as a whole, which aims to take into account, among other things, the problems caused by weather conditions and the equipment resources approved by the contracting authority in the competitive tendering for area winter maintenance. The supervisors have found the current supervision to be sufficient and functional.

Penalties can be written remarks or fines. Currently, Stara's contracts stipulate lower financial penalties than those for external private operators. This difference in penalties is to be resolved through negotiations. When considering penalties, the contract area is considered as a whole, i.e. deviations from the quality requirements of an individual street will not necessarily lead to penalties. When considering quality standards and penalties, the experts say that the available budget must also be taken into account. If quality requirements are tightened and deviations from them are penalised unconditionally, these requirements will be reflected in higher prices for future contracts. According to the Maintenance Unit, what matters most is achieving the adequate level required by law. The issued warnings and penalties are monitored on a contract-by-contract basis but are not summarised or monitored more extensively. However, there are plans for overall comparisons of quality between areas

and developing contract management with regard to bonuses and penalties.

## Conclusions

Winter maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle paths has been partly developed in accordance with the objectives. Some of the objectives related to the winter conditions of cycle paths have not been achieved in line with the timetable of the Bicycle Action Plan. In particular, the proportion of people satisfied with the winter maintenance of cycle paths and the popularity of winter cycling have fallen short of their targets. Some progress has been made on the objectives related to winter conditions on pedestrian paths. With regard to walking, the measures are only just beginning, but the work is expected to be completed on schedule. The aim is to consider accessibility in the quality requirements for works, but there are no separate criteria or guidelines in the procurement documents yet.

According to the Maintenance Unit, it would be important to consider areas from a year-round perspective in an increasingly compact urban structure. New land-use solutions bring challenges to defining and developing maintenance methods, which are often left out as problems to be solved later by maintenance services. According to the Maintenance Unit, it would be important to carry out land-use and maintenance planning in closer cooperation with maintenance experts.

Based on the results of a 2023 resident satisfaction survey, the number of pedestrians who were satisfied with winter maintenance was roughly equal to the number of dissatisfied respondents. There have been no positive trends in pedestrian satisfaction with winter maintenance in recent years. Similarly, cyclists have experienced more dissatisfaction in recent years than satisfaction with winter maintenance.

Increasing the proportion of people satisfied with the winter maintenance of cycle paths and the popularity of winter cycling have fallen short of their objectives under the Bicycle Action Plan. In light of the results of the 2022 survey, it does not seem likely that either of these indicators will be met within their target timetables.

The prioritised pedestrian network for winter maintenance could only be updated after the measure was redefined. Quality standards and maintenance classifications for pedestrian paths and areas have already been reviewed and updated in the context of new contracts, but the maintenance classifications can only

be updated once the network has been defined. The update is expected to proceed according to schedule and be completed in 2025.

Providing sufficient space for piling snow, that is, reserving adequately wide paths, is at least partly being implemented. Accessibility has been taken into account when defining the quality requirements for winter maintenance contracts. Accessibility is taken into account in winter maintenance through the quality requirements of the product cards guiding the works. However, there are no separate accessibility criteria in the contract documents yet, and there is currently no guidance on accessibility for contractors.

Winter maintenance supervision focuses on the success of winter maintenance as a whole. What the Maintenance Unit considers most important is that the measures are carried out in accordance with the contracts, taking into account the weather conditions and achieving the sufficient level required by law. Any deficiencies in the implementation and quality of the work are primarily addressed by notifying the contractor, creating a deviation report and correcting the deficiencies. If necessary, penalties are imposed for deficiencies in accordance with the contracts. The financial penalties stipulated in the current contracts are lower for Stara than for other contractors. The success of the works, any penalties imposed, and deviation notifications and reports are reviewed at the jobsite meetings and the annual joint meeting in the spring. Penalties are not considered the primary means of control, but they are used as needed.

### The Audit Committee finds that

the Urban Environment Division should

- ▶ ensure that the requirements for effective winter maintenance are taken into account in land use planning.
- ▶ take measures to increase the number of winter cyclists and satisfaction with the winter maintenance of cycling paths in accordance with the objectives.
- ▶ ensure that all winter maintenance contractors are treated equally with regard contractual penalties.
- ▶ develop incentives for contractors to carry out their work in accordance with the requirements.

# Improving the health and wellbeing of Helsinki residents



# Social guidance for families with children



Has access to social guidance for families with children been improved and developed in line with the objectives?



Availability has improved, and operations have been developed, but queues for the service have increased, and the availability of skilled personnel has decreased.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Has the availability of social guidance for families with children been improved and have its activities been developed in accordance with the strategy and budget objectives?

## Related questions:

1. Have the availability and accessibility of social guidance for families with children improved?
2. Has cooperation with key partners been strengthened and increased in social guidance for families with children?
3. Has social guidance for families with children been developed?

Social guidance for families with children is early and low-threshold support for families with children under 17 years of age. Social guidance for families with children supports families with the challenges of parenting, relationships between family members, and raising children, such as problems with managing daily life and children's schooling. Social guidance is primarily work that is conducted in the family's home. At the end of 2023, there were 76 social counsellors working in social guidance for families with children, and the total number of clients in 2023 was approximately 7,450.

The City Strategy 2021–2025 states that families will be supported in a multidisciplinary way, with an emphasis on early and wide-ranging support. The goal is to prevent a build-up of problems and the need for child welfare. The strategy also sets out to increase home-based services and improve proactive approaches. In

the 2023 budget, one of the key priorities of the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division is to improve the accessibility and availability of services.

The assessment material consisted of interviews, a survey, responses to requests for information, as well as statistics and other related documents. The assessment involved interviews with the management of social guidance for families with children. An electronic survey was sent to staff, which resulted in a response rate of 68%. A request for information was sent to the partners of social guidance, which received nine responses.

## The dedicated sub-unit for social guidance for families with children was established in 2021

The social guidance service for families with children started in Helsinki in 2007, and the dedicated sub-unit providing social guidance for families with children was established in 2021. The sub-unit has three work units: social guidance for families with children aged 0–6 years, social guidance for families with children aged 7–16 years and social counselling for families with children. Social counselling is responsible for new clients at family centres and referrals to social services for families with children, carrying out service needs assessments, guidance and counselling for clients in early support, and neuropsychiatric coaching (nepsy-coaching).

Clients can contact social guidance for families with children by phone, using the 'I Need Help' online form or a Maisa application. In addition, clients are referred to the service from other services for families with children. After service needs assessment by child welfare services, clients are referred to social counselling unless there is reason to assess the need for child welfare or special support. The proportion of work done over the phone is significant, and there is often no need to refer clients to further services.

## Visibility and awareness of social guidance for families with children has room for improvement

Social guidance for families with children is a service that is fairly well-known in maternity and child health clinics, as they have been working together for a long

time. On the other hand, in early childhood education, familiarity with the service varies by area and unit. Social guidance for school-aged children was launched in 2018, so these activities are relatively new. There has been cooperation with the Education Division to raise awareness, e.g., through staff training and multilingual Wilma newsletters for guardians.

Efforts have been made to increase the visibility of social guidance among foreign-language residents through means such as joint consultations between social counsellors and nurses at maternity and child health clinics, as well as various group activities. However, few foreign-language clients seek social guidance compared to cases referred to child welfare. According to the management of social guidance services, family centres should direct more resources towards strengthening the inclusion of foreign-language speakers as clients.

### **There is not enough nepsy-coaching available**

According to the survey responses from the management and staff of social guidance for families with children, social guidance is available in different parts of Helsinki, and services are available in Swedish and English. The staff who responded to the survey believed that the service was able to meet client support needs at a sufficiently early stage (Figure 19). It could also offer clients a sufficient number of appointments. In contrast, there was a 3–4-month queue for nepsy-coaching in 2023.

Social guidance is usually available within 1–3 weeks. Access to the service is slowed by, among other things, cancellations of agreed appointments and limited time families have to accept the service. In addition, congestion in other services for families with children has been reflected in social guidance. For example, there have been wait times of several months for couples therapy and a staff shortage in student welfare services. Social guidance for families with children supports families when they are waiting for services elsewhere, if necessary.

In addition to having clients from early support, social guidance also provides nepsy-coaching, enhanced after-school support and sleep counselling for clients in special support and child welfare. According to the management of social guidance, this, to some extent, distorts the goal of strengthening early support, as clients also come to the service from elsewhere, other than early support. New posts have been created in the service, but these have been used to start implementing and developing new services for a wider range of clients. This also diverts resources away from preventive and early support efforts aimed at preventing crises in families and the need for more

intensive services. Ninety-three per cent of the staff who responded to the survey thought that the service has clients who need more intensive services.

### **Processing times have increased, and the availability of skilled personnel has worsened**

In 2023, the majority (82%) of initiated cases and incoming referrals were handled in 0–2 days in social guidance for families with children, but processing times have increased since 2022. According to the management of social guidance, the number of people contacting the service has almost doubled in the last five years or so. During the coronavirus pandemic, the number of contacts increased to their current levels. Calls can usually be answered on the same day or within three business days at the latest, but the response times to Maisa communications and messages received through the ‘I need help’ online form are longer. In 2023, social counselling had two fewer employees than in 2022, which has contributed to longer processing times.

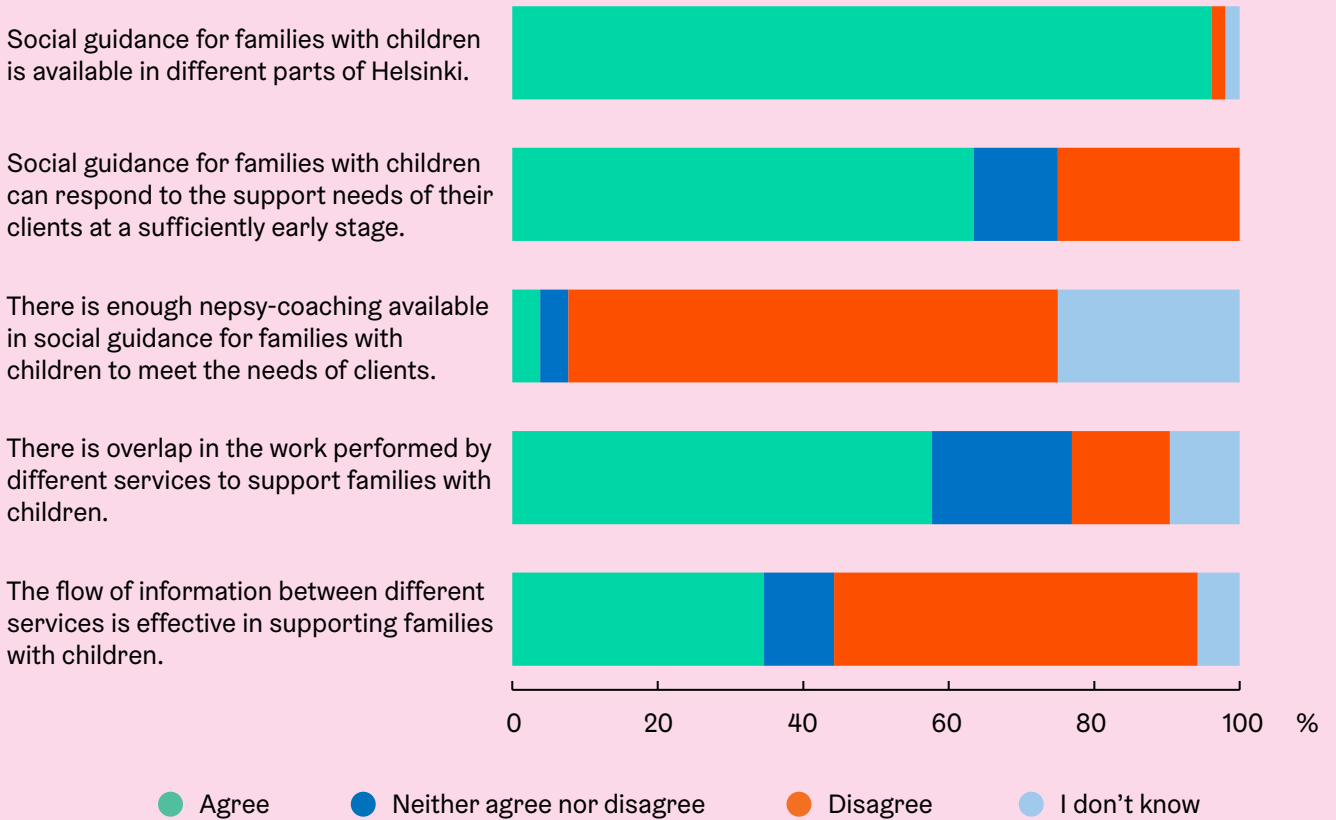
The number of clients has increased by more than two thousand since 2021, when there were 5,153. In January–November 2023, there were a total of 32,495 client communications, which is 34% more than in 2021 (Chart 20). The number of client meetings has increased by 65%, and the number of home visits has almost doubled since 2021. The number of calls has also more than doubled. Apotti’s reporting has not yet worked as expected, so the figures obtained for the assessment are indicative. The client and patient information system changed from Effica to Apotti in late 2021, and the data produced by the systems for different years are not fully comparable.

The number of staff has increased by about 15 between 2021 and 2023. In 2021, there were 63 employees. This growth is explained by the launch of social counselling at the end of 2021 and the new posts there in 2022–2023. In 2023, the availability of skilled personnel has decreased, as it has been challenging to find social counsellors to fill vacancies. The staff who responded to the survey felt that there are not enough personnel, especially in nepsy-coaching and social counselling.

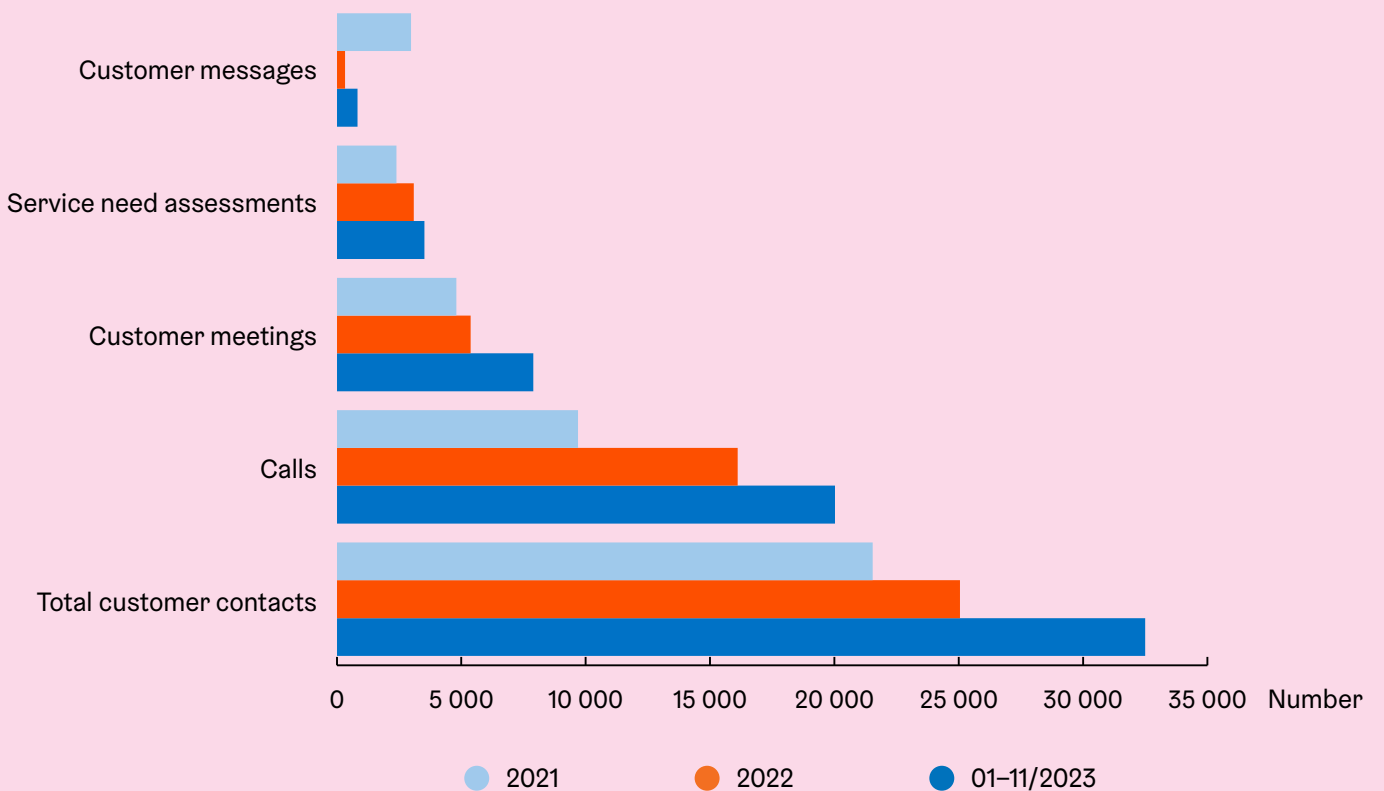
### **There are regional differences in the methods of cooperation, depending on the services and employees**

The mission of social guidance for families with children is extensive, and the service is linked to several other services for families with children. Key cooperation partners in social guidance include maternity and child health clinics, home services for families with children, child welfare, family counselling clinic,

**Figure 19. Staff perceptions of the services of social guidance for families with children, per cent of respondents.**



**Figure 20. Total number of contacts to social guidance for families with children in 2021–2023. The figure for 2023 includes contacts from January to November, number of contacts.**



therapeutic work for families with infants, couples therapy, paediatric special clinics, student welfare, after-school activities, early childhood education and playgrounds. These partners are consulted if necessary or when families are referred to their services in accordance with agreed practices. In addition, social guidance works with its partners in work pairs and holds joint meetings and group activities.

However, there are differences in the methods of cooperation, depending on areas, services or employees. Cooperation does not happen on its own, even if the services operate in the common areas of family centres. From the perspective of the management of social guidance for families with children, cooperation is challenging due to the management structure of the family centre, as well as unclear goals and management responsibilities. In addition, congestion and staff shortages in one service are reflected in other services and affect opportunities for cooperation. Both social guidance for families with children and partners feel that clear partnership structures and processes are key to strengthening cooperation.

### **Cooperation is considered sufficient**

The majority of the key partners of social guidance for families with children consider cooperation to be regular and sufficient. According to the partners, the cooperation has contributed, at least to some extent, to identifying client needs at earlier stages. According to experts from child welfare's assessment of service needs and support for families with children, the partnership structure was still partially emerging at the end of 2023. In the systematic work of home services, there was also a call for clearer structures for partnerships and closer cooperation with all social guidance units. Some of the partners felt that cooperation has strengthened and deepened in 2021–2023.

More than half of the staff surveyed felt that there was overlap in the work of various services. In addition, half of the respondents felt that the flow of information between different services is not working. Both child welfare's service needs assessment and support unit for families with children and the social counselling service for families with children carry out service needs assessments. Cooperation is not yet established, and the services have had diverging views on how extensive the service needs assessments should be and what they should include. Efforts have been made to streamline the process, and social counselors have been included in the client meetings of child welfare's service needs assessment and support unit in what are referred to as 'client transfer situations'. These are meant to speed up the process of getting to know clients and assisting them.

### **Social guidance has been developed to better meet client needs**

Much has been done to develop social guidance in recent years. The current team structure in social guidance took shape in 2021–2022, and the dedicated social guidance sub-unit and its manager have contributed to developing the service. Staff skills in various methods and their neuropsychiatric competence have been increased.

The vast majority of staff responding to the survey consider social guidance for families with children to have developed to better meet clients' service needs. In addition, about half of the respondents felt that the availability of social guidance for families with children has improved during the same period.

Social guidance has introduced the FIT (Feedback-Informed Treatment) method, which guides their work, as well as evidence-based methods, such as guided self-care. Employees report experiencing the numerous development activities and new methods as burdensome in addition to already extensive duties. Staff have also raised concerns about the impact of the forthcoming organisational change on existing development work and team structures. The Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division is planning a service restructuring that will merge social guidance and home services into a new unit in September 2024.

### **Conclusions**

The assessment found that the availability of social guidance for families with children has been improved, and its activities have been developed in accordance with the City Strategy and budget objectives. However, the queues for the service have increased and the availability of skilled personnel has decreased. In addition, the service is referred clients who need more intensive services. It is hoped that cooperation between services will continue to become more structured.

The service has been expanded, and the number of staff has increased in 2021–2023. Availability and accessibility have been improved based on the number of clients, client contacts and home visits. The majority of applications and notifications can be processed within the target timeframe, but the processing times have somewhat increased. However, the statistics from Apotti, the client and patient information system, are not yet completely reliable or comparable. With the exception of nepsy-coaching, the service can usually be accessed quickly, and there are sufficient appointment times on offer for clients. There is still room for improvement in awareness of social guidance



for families with children, especially for school-age children and foreign-language speakers. The service has already taken steps to raise its profile in other city services and among residents.

Managing challenging cases burdens social guidance workers, especially when early support is not enough to help clients. New posts have been created in social guidance, but these have been used to deliver new services and to serve a wider range of clients, such as those in child welfare and neuropsychiatric coaching.

Social guidance cooperates regularly with other services for families with children. Their partners consider cooperation to have partially strengthened and deepened in 2021–2023, but much of it depends on the particular person, service and area. For example, in addition to the social guidance unit, service needs assessments are carried out by the unit for service needs assessment and support for families with children. Differing views on the scope, criteria and division of labour of these assessments have been found within the services. The staff have reported some overlap in the work of the various services. In addition, congestion and staff shortages in other services affect the opportunities for cooperation.

Much has been done to develop social guidance in 2021–2023. Staff skills in various methods and their neuropsychiatric competence have been increased. There are plans to merge social guidance for families with children with home services to form a new unit in September 2024. The staff has had concerns about the impact of the forthcoming organisational change on existing development work and team structures.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division should

- ▶ develop services for families with children as a whole, ensuring that clients have access to services that meet their service needs, such as neuropsychiatric coaching.
- ▶ ensure the availability of staff for services for families with children through adequate measures.

the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division's Family and Social Services Department should

- ▶ raise awareness of social guidance for families with children, especially for families with school-age children and those that speak a foreign language, so that families in need of support can apply for and access services at an early stage.
- ▶ clarify the division of labour in service needs assessments between social guidance for families with children, child welfare and family social work.
- ▶ ensure that social guidance for families with children can focus on core tasks despite development and organisational reforms.



# Preventing drug-related deaths in substance abuse services



Have substance abuse services strengthened their services to prevent drug-related deaths?



Measures have been taken in substance abuse services that have facilitated access to opioid substitution treatment and detoxification, but the effects on access to other substance abuse services could not be assessed yet.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Has the city strengthened its services to prevent drug-related deaths?

## Related questions:

1. Has the city facilitated access to treatment for people with drug dependence?
2. Has the city made it easier for people suffering from drug dependence to access opioid substitution treatment?
3. Has the city developed health counselling and social guidance on preventing drug-related deaths?

The City Strategy 2021–2025 outlines that the city will prepare a set of measures to address the growing use of substances in a humane and comprehensive way and to reduce the harm and deaths caused by drugs. In addition, substance abuse services will be strengthened to provide adequate services that are easily and quickly accessible for people suffering from drug dependence. Young people in particular need immediate help.

The assessment material consisted of interviews, email enquiries and phone calls to experts responsible for the city's services for drug users and child welfare services, as well as statistics on the use of these services and their clients. In addition, the assessment included information obtained during the second commission's assessment visit to the Opioid Substitution Treatment

Assessment Clinic, documentation and client feedback from service users.

## Many reforms have made it easier for people with drug dependencies to access treatment

According to the National Institute for Health and Welfare, drug-related deaths can be prevented by providing drug users with low-threshold services and quick and easy access to treatment. Low-threshold substance abuse services refer, for example, to services that can be accessed anonymously, without appointments, and also while intoxicated.

The city has implemented several reforms related to access to treatment for drug dependence between 2021 and 2023. The most important of these reforms are:

- ▶ Extending the opening hours of walk-in substance abuse services (2023)
- ▶ Establishing a dedicated substance abuse service for young people aged 13–23 (2023)
- ▶ Facilitating access to opioid substitution treatment (2021–2023)
- ▶ New clients being able to start receiving treatment or services at the first visit, including in low-threshold services (mainly 2021–2023)

Thanks to the reforms, clients can quickly and easily obtain referrals to detoxification treatment, appointments for substitution treatment assessment, or to substance abuse outpatient clinics. They can also be referred from low-threshold services. After the reforms, substance abuse services have continued to develop substance abuse service chains for young people and adults, for example, by developing the division of labour between different services.

Once access to early-stage substance abuse services, such as substitution treatment and detoxification, has been facilitated, wait times may become longer for later-stage services. Aurora's detoxification ward has found that after the reforms, there is a longer waiting period for access to substance abuse rehabilitation from inpatient detoxification treatment. Substance

abuse services have deliberately prioritised access when developing their services. Resources, such as personnel, have been transferred to the initial services. Substance abuse services will monitor the effects of the reforms and continue to establish new operating methods and develop services.

### **The impact of the reforms of reception services without appointments on the number of clients could not be assessed**

At the beginning of September 2023, the walk-in receptions for substance abuse services were centralised in one location instead of four different ones. At the same time, the reception's opening hours were expanded so that it is open throughout its typical office hours on weekdays. Previously, on weekdays, three walk-in receptions were open for two hours at three locations, and one was open for 3.5 hours. The extended opening hours fulfilled the 2023 target for substance abuse services.

In September 2023, at the same time as walk-in receptions for substance abuse services were being transferred from different substance abuse outpatient clinics to Kalasatama, substance abuse services opened its centralised phone service for new clients. The phone service is also open during office hours on weekdays. Before the reform at the beginning of September 2023, it was also possible to seek substance abuse services by phone, but each substance abuse outpatient clinic had a different number, which was only answered for an hour each day.

It was impossible to assess the impact of walk-in substance abuse services reforms on the number of clients or visits to these services, as no reliable and comparable statistics were available. The lack of data is partly due to problems in data entry methods and partly due to reporting by the client and patient information system, Apotti. Too little time had also passed since the reforms to allow the service to produce comparable statistics in the time available for the assessment. For the same reasons, the impact of the reforms on the number of clients or visits at substance abuse outpatient clinics could also not be assessed.

### **The impact of opening a dedicated substance abuse service for young people on access to treatment could not be assessed**

In September 2023, the walk-in reception service meant for young people with substance abuse problems was transferred from the Youth Station for young people with mental health and substance abuse problems to a new service, the Youth Substance Abuse Service Pysäkki. At the same time, the reception's opening hours were extended.

By the end of 2023, the Youth Substance Abuse Service Pysäkki only had four months' experience in operation. In addition, there was no comparable and reliable statistical data on the number of clients or visits to Pysäkki compared to the similar services that had operated at the Youth Station. For these reasons, the impact of the reforms of the youth substance abuse service could not yet be assessed.

The aim is to encourage young people to use substance abuse services by offering them low-threshold services at Pysäkki, which do not require sobriety. In future, Pysäkki will also offer health services to prevent the harmful effects of substance abuse, such as testing for hepatitis C and HIV. Testing for communicable diseases requires a permit from the National Institute for Health and Welfare, which Pysäkki received in 2024. In 2023, middle management guidelines were still pending on the content of the work aimed at reducing substance abuse among minors or on the potential age limits for the different services at Pysäkki. Agreement on cooperation practices with child welfare services was also pending.

A separate service for young people who use substances could enhance staff expertise in substance abuse issues. In the past, the staff of the Youth Station, which served young people with both mental health and substance abuse problems, had very few opportunities to maintain their competence with substance abuse issues, as the Youth Station's clients consisted mainly of young people with mental health problems.

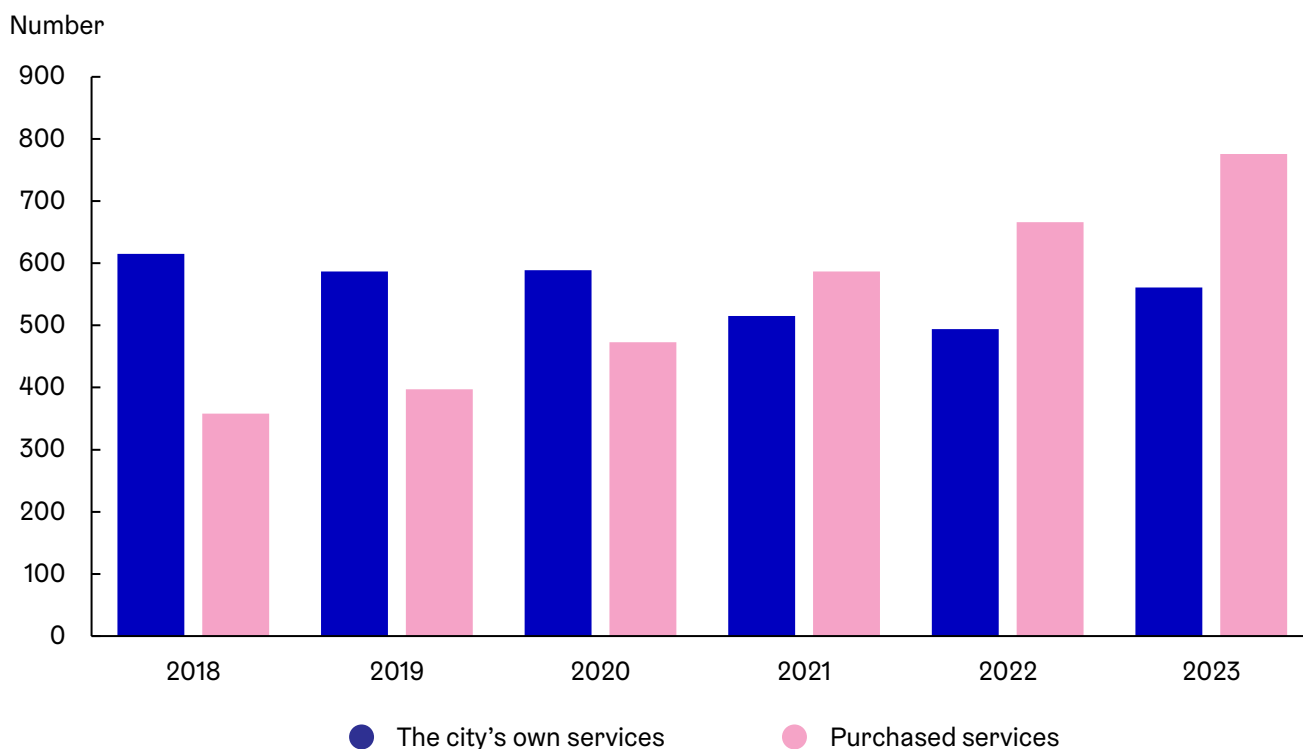
### **Easier access to replacement therapy and faster access to detoxification**

Substance abuse services have made it easier for people with drug dependencies to access the assessment process for opioid substitution treatment. The evaluation process has also been streamlined. The evaluation process for replacement therapy can be completed as quickly as within one day. Clients starting replacement therapy at the facility can start their medication within an average of 15 days of the treatment decision.

The number of clients at the Opioid Substitution Treatment Assessment Clinic and in substitution treatment (Figure 21), and thus also the costs, have increased in 2023 compared to 2022. The reforms have therefore made it easier for people with drug dependencies to access opioid substitution treatment. The increased substitution treatment has mainly been implemented through purchased services.

There has been occasional congestion for detoxification services in both the city's own and outsourced services. According to the monitoring carried out by Aurora's detoxification ward in 2019–2022, clients typically entered detoxification in seven days with a referral classified as urgent, and in 21 days with a referral classified as non-urgent. In 2023, access to emergency

**Figure 21. Number of clients in substitution treatment in the city's own and outsourced services in 2018–2023.**



detoxification took less than four days, and entering non-urgent detoxification took 15 days, so access to detoxification has become faster.

### **It is difficult to assess the development of health counselling**

Health counselling and social guidance that is directly related to the prevention of drug-related deaths is provided at least at the Symppis day centres for drug users and the Youth Substance Abuse Service Pysäkki. The availability of health counselling and social guidance was weakened by the temporary closure of the Symppis Itäkeskus location at the beginning of 2024. The closure was due to the need to find new facilities for the centre. The Itäkeskus centre will open in a new location at the beginning of April 2024. Substance abuse services launched its mobile health counselling and social guidance service in 2021, which has improved access to services.

Since Symppis centres can be visited anonymously, and data is not recorded for all visitors, there is no accurate data available on the entire client base or the health advice they receive. The number of client visits is estimated through sample counts, but the results of these counts were not available for the assessment for 2021–2022. It was therefore not possible to estimate trends in client numbers in 2023 compared to previous years. Symppis centre clients are only recorded in the client and patient information system in connection with certain health care and social guidance procedures. Most of the entries recorded in the

Symppis centres' client information system are for the replacement of injection equipment. Other common entries include doctors' prescriptions, appointments or consultations, for example. The number of health-related entries at Symppis centres has increased in 2023 compared to 2022.

Based on the assessment material, it is not possible to directly conclude whether the city has improved the content or quantity of health counselling and social guidance related to preventing drug-related deaths in the 2021–2025 strategy period compared to the previous strategy period, as there is no comparative data on the quantity and quality of counselling. It is also impossible to conclude whether health counselling services have reached more clients than before because there is no comparative data on the number of clients. The introduction of mobile health counselling and the increase in the number of healthcare entries suggest that there have been more opportunities for health counselling than before.

### **Difficulties in obtaining facilities is the biggest obstacle to the development of substance abuse services**

Based on the assessment materials, the main obstacle to the development of substance abuse services is the difficulty in finding suitable facilities for them. Facilities are difficult to obtain because residents and business owners are opposed to the placement of substance abuse services in their neighbourhoods. Problems in obtaining facilities hinder the improvement of the

regional coverage of services desired by both staff and the clients of substance abuse services. Renting facilities from the private sector is difficult, and the city does not own enough spaces that are suitable for substance abuse services.

For example, the safety and cleanliness of the areas around Symppis day centres is ensured through what is called 'neighbourhood work'. In practice, neighbourhood work may include, for example, cleaning a centre's surroundings and discussions with area residents and operators.

Some of the facilities used by substance abuse services at the beginning of 2024 were impractical for their purpose. According to the Facilities Strategy approved by the City Board in 2020, the city should own, in particular, the buildings necessary for the provision of the statutory services that form the long-term foundation of the service network. It is open to interpretation whether day centre services will be able to meet their clients' basic needs in accordance with the Social Welfare Act in the spaces at their disposal at the beginning of 2024, as they lack bathing facilities, for example.

From the clients' perspective, the network of day centre services in Helsinki consists of services provided by both the city and the third sector. As of July 2023, with the amendment of the Social Welfare Act, the provision of day centre services has become the responsibility of the wellbeing services counties and the City of Helsinki. The City of Helsinki can no longer grant subsidies for day centre activities that have become statutory. Since the third sector operators no longer receive funding for activities that have become statutory, they are scaling back those activities. As day centre services in the third sector have reduced their activities, the services provided by the city have become increasingly important for clients who use substances. Providing spaces for substance users in areas where they are already present can reduce the harm caused to the surrounding area by substance use.

### **Some substance abuse services have difficulties in providing psychiatric care to patients**

According to the assessment findings, some substance abuse services can treat mild mental health disorders. At the end of 2023, Pysäkki was well equipped to deal with mental health problems, as some staff had transferred from the Youth Centre, which focused on mental health issues. In inpatient detoxification, it is difficult for patients to receive psychiatric treatment during their detoxification treatment, and efforts are usually made to address detoxification first. However, it has generally been possible to arrange follow-up care for detoxification patients in outpatient psychiatric

services without any difficulties. Patients do not always seek out or adhere to the planned psychiatric service. Symppis centres find it difficult to get their clients into psychiatric treatment.

### **Four per cent of child welfare notifications were due to a child's substance abuse**

The assessment also examined how substance abuse among children and young people is reflected in child welfare services. Of the approximately 25,000 child protection notifications received by Helsinki's child welfare services in 2023, about a thousand were due to a child's or young person's use of substances. In 2023, 78 children were placed in child welfare institutions specialising in substance abuse detoxification and cessation on the basis of the Child Welfare Act.

### **Conclusions**

The city has strengthened substance abuse services that prevent drug-related deaths with good results with regard to access to opioid substitution treatment and detoxification. Substance abuse services have taken many measures to facilitate access to treatment for people suffering from drug dependence. These measures include extending the hours for walk-in receptions and phone services for adults and young people, establishing a dedicated substance abuse service for young people, and improving the process for assessing opioid substitution treatment.

However, some of these measures were new at the time of this assessment or lacked reliable and comparable monitoring data. Thus, the effects of the measures on substance abuse services other than opioid substitution treatment and detoxification could not be assessed. Substance abuse services have focused on developing access to early-stage services. Such services include, for example, substitution and detoxification treatment. In future, this may be reflected in reduced access to later-stage services, such as rehabilitation. This assessment could not show whether health counselling and social guidance related to preventing drug-related deaths increased, but the findings suggest that there may have been more counselling than in the past.

The lack of suitable facilities is the biggest obstacle to developing substance abuse services. Facilities are difficult to find because neighbourhoods typically oppose the placement of substance abuse service facilities in their areas. Problems in obtaining premises hinder the improvement of the regional coverage of these services and their quality. Renting facilities from the private sector is difficult, and the city does not own enough spaces that are suitable for substance abuse services. Providing services to people suffering from substance dependence can also reduce the harm caused to the neighbourhood by substance use.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the Urban Environment Division should, in cooperation with the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division,

- ▶ ensure that there are sufficient and appropriate facilities available for substance abuse services to provide statutory substance abuse services.

the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division should

- ▶ improve the quality of statistical data on clients and visits to substance abuse services.
- ▶ monitor the effects of reforms related to substance abuse services on access to services, treatment and rehabilitation.
- ▶ develop services on the basis of monitoring, if necessary.
- ▶ strengthen the cooperation between substance abuse and psychiatric services so that patients are treated holistically.



# National advocacy and international cooperation in developing Helsinki





# City advocacy from an economic perspective



Is the city's national advocacy goal-oriented and active?



The Mayor's Office and their advocacy team are active, but politically it is not always easy to agree on policies.

## The main focus of the assessment:

Is the national advocacy for the city's economic viability goal-oriented, active and in line with the objectives of the City Strategy?

## Related questions:

1. Has the national advocacy for the city's economic viability been strengthened compared to the previous strategy period?
2. Is there coordinated and systematic advocacy for the city's economic viability?
3. Is the advocacy for the city's economic viability carried out in a goal-oriented and active manner?

The City Strategy 2017–2021 aimed to strengthen national advocacy, establish effective cooperation with the Government, and form more active partnerships within the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and with other major Finnish cities. Advocacy is one of the priorities in the City Strategy 2021–2025. It emphasises securing the city's economic viability through goal-oriented and active advocacy. In addition to written material and memoranda from the city's management team, the assessment material included interviews with several key actors (the Mayor and their special advisers, the Deputy Mayor directing Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services, the City Manager and financial management, the Liaison Manager and the management of Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services). Representatives of the political groups in the City Council were also interviewed.

## The city's national advocacy has been strengthened

National advocacy concerning the city's economic viability was significantly strengthened with the transition to the mayoral model during the previous strategy period, when this function was also organised and

resourced. Under this leadership reform, the ultimate responsibility for advocacy was assigned to the mayor and deputy mayors. They are aided by personal special advisers, whose tasks include liaising with key stakeholders, such as special ministerial advisers.

Advocacy was incorporated into the city's strategy, and topics of advocacy were actively addressed by the city management team appointed by the mayor. The City Executive Office increased its human resources by hiring a liaison director and an advocacy expert to coordinate the advocacy work. The Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division also hired two staff members in 2023 to carry out advocacy tasks. The city has set objectives for advocacy and appointed the responsible parties. Key partners and stakeholders have also been identified, and the means of advocacy have been specified. Based on the assessment, the resources for advocacy are considered to be sufficient.

The city's leading politicians have been well connected to the central government in the past, too, but a 2021 study on the city's management system suggests that the transition to a mayoral model could be viewed as a new phase in which advocacy under the mayor's leadership will be politically visible and assertive. Figure 22 shows the responsibilities for advocacy.

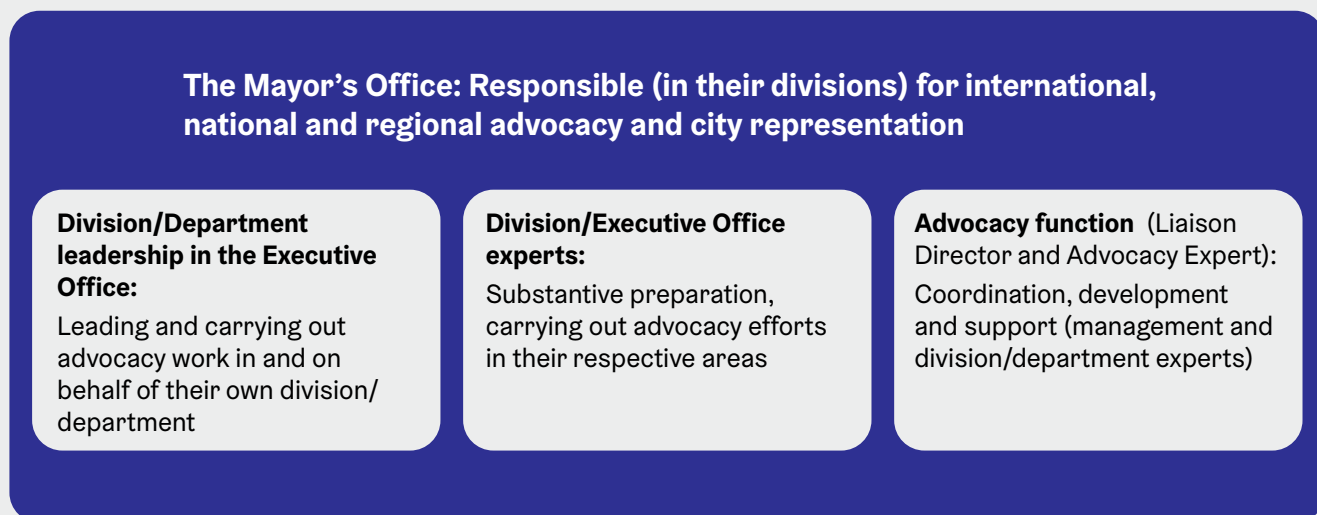
The reform of the management system and the mayoral model have promoted the visibility of the city's national advocacy and improved practical cooperation within the city. The political nature of advocacy issues can make it difficult to maintain commitments to objectives and continuity during transitions between terms. One of the objectives for establishing the city's advocacy function was to create a better framework for advocacy that extends beyond council terms.

As a result of the national reform of social, health and rescue services (SOTEPE), Helsinki's SOTEPE cooperation with the state has also deepened. Closer cooperation has led to the emergence of entirely new channels for advocacy on behalf of the city's finances and divisions.

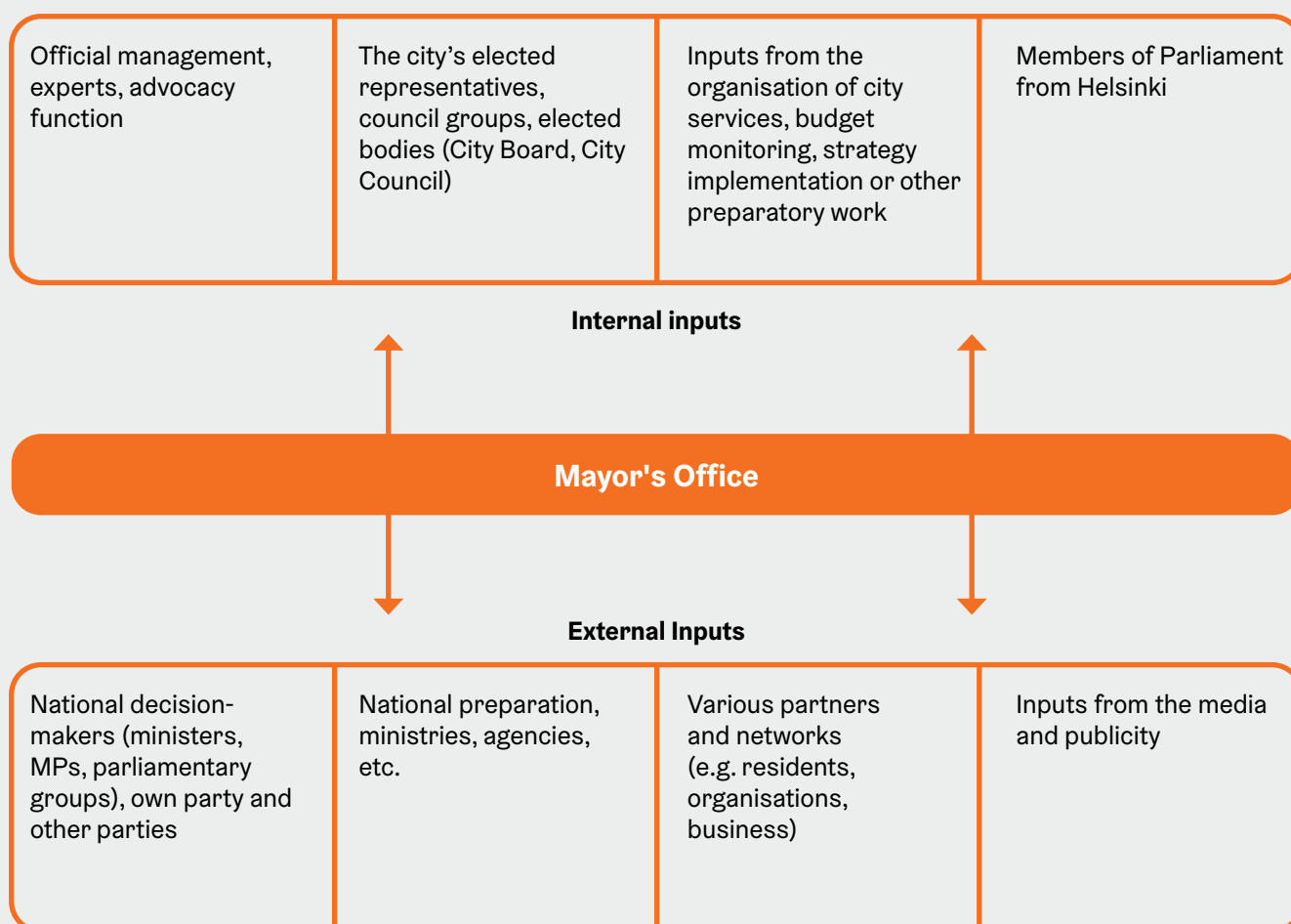
## The plan and the division of responsibilities support advocacy

The Liaison Director of the City Executive Office coordinates advocacy activities. An advocacy plan and division of responsibilities have been drawn up. The

**Figure 22. Responsibilities in advocacy.**



**Figure 23. Inputs to the advocacy efforts of the Mayor's Office.**



plan is updated at the beginning of each council term to reflect the new City Strategy, during the preparation of the government programme objectives, and when the government programme is completed. Based on the assessment, the Mayor's Office and senior official staff are very much up-to-date on advocacy issues. Figure 23 shows the inputs received by the Mayor's Office for advocacy.

The division of labour between political leadership and official management in advocacy is clear in principle. In practice, political actors and official staff cannot always know what the other is doing or the weight of their respective influence because they operate in different arenas. It is also not possible to plan all advocacy in advance, as there are unforeseen situations beyond the city's control that require an urgent response. As there is no obligation for mutual reporting, the methods of cooperation vary. Officials feel that politicians do not always sufficiently inform official staff about advocacy issues.

The city's advocacy partnerships have strengthened. The reform of the social, health and rescue services, which entered into force at the beginning of 2023, has created cooperation and new forums where the city's top leadership is represented. The role of these forums in advocacy towards the state is still evolving. As a result of the SOTEPE reform, the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division is now more comprehensively represented in wellbeing services county forums and national cooperation bodies. Cooperation with the state is perceived to be closer than before.

### **Advocacy is not very transparent**

The central message from the council groups was that there is a need for more transparency in advocacy and for politicians to be more aware of it. The interviews revealed that there is a wide range of politicians who may not have been aware of the issues being advanced and, therefore, have not been active in promoting the city's interests. It was suggested that advocates should include members of the City Board and Members of Parliament from Helsinki, as well as other politicians.

The assessment suggests that the organisation of advocacy, its procedures, communication and position-taking processes for statements, for example, could also be more transparent to elected representatives. For most of the council's political groups, advocacy efforts appear remote, and information on the topic is not easy to find.

### **Advocacy is goal-oriented and active if a common position has been reached**

Key advocates, such as the Mayor's Office and the Liaison Director working in the City Executive Office's

Strategy Department, see the role of the City of Helsinki as a goal-oriented advocate utilising a broad range of tools.

According to them, the advocacy is also active, although the level of activity varies from one actor to another. At the same time, they see the Mayor's Office as largely active, but the activity of senior management as being variable. It was pointed out that advocacy should not be dependent on the personal initiative of senior officials, but should be part of their normal work. On the other hand, to ensure that official staff have up-to-date information for advocacy purposes at their disposal, the political leadership must also ensure that they are well-informed in this area.

Advocacy is goal-oriented and active, especially in matters where the city has managed to form a consensus, i.e. where the city's goal is known. Although advocacy is perceived to be goal-oriented, in certain situations, the interviewees wished it were more prioritised. In some cases, it was considered difficult to form a city-wide consensus and thus to get the various parties to commit to the objectives. According to the council groups and official leadership, political consensus, in particular, can be difficult to achieve. In addition, advocacy methods seem to vary depending on which parties are in charge of the national government at any given time. In the interviews with the council groups, it was suggested that all parties should participate in the strategy drafting process, as the strategy is seen as the central tool for forming common advocacy goals.

### **Assessments of advocacy successes**

There is no unambiguous way to assess successful advocacy, and this assessment did not attempt to do so. The successes of advocacy mentioned in the interviews included, among others, a separate solution in the SOTEPE reform, coronavirus compensation funding, the achievement of certain objectives related to the criteria for determining state contributions, and the retention of the Helsinki Rescue School in the city. Success can be examined by considering factors such as the timeliness of the goals and processes, as well as the views of stakeholders.

In some instances, advocacy has succeeded in achieving the kind of negotiation link with state actors that has been the city's goal. In some cases, when setting up working groups and networks, the state may still only include the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities as a municipal representative. This was the case, for example, with the reforms related to the state contributions and the property taxes. Advocacy for the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division is still developing in different forums.

According to several interviews, it is perceived as difficult to represent the city's interests because

advocating for Helsinki may seem like an attempt to undermine the position of other municipalities. For this reason, there has been some reluctance to highlight the city's advocacy efforts.

## Conclusions

National advocacy for the city's economic vitality is largely in line with the City Strategy. National advocacy was strengthened quite significantly during the previous strategy period with the transition to the mayoral model. Advocacy was assigned to the Mayor's Office, and a Liaison Director and an Advocacy Expert were hired to coordinate it.

There is a plan and a division of responsibilities for advocacy, and the division of labour between political and administrative leadership is clear in principle. The Mayor's Office has the greatest responsibility and role in advocacy. The liaison director also plays an important role, which includes preparing advocacy initiatives. The Mayor's Office and the Liaison Director of the Advocacy Team have found the City of Helsinki's role in advocacy to be goal-oriented and mainly active.

However, the organisation of advocacy, its procedures, communication and position-taking processes for statements, for example, are not clear and transparent to elected representatives and those working in the divisions. The assessment suggests that in addition to senior officials, key political actors, such as members of the City Board and Members of Parliament from Helsinki, would also be welcome to participate in advocacy. Transparency about the objectives of advocacy and raising awareness were considered important.

Advocacy can be said to be goal-oriented and active on issues where the city has managed to form a consensus position. The aim of establishing an advocacy function was to create a framework for advocacy across council terms. However, it seems that the political nature of the mayoral model has, in some instances, made it difficult to maintain a commitment to objectives and their continuity when the government changes. As political consensus can be difficult to achieve, regular joint discussions are a key tool for forming advocacy goals.

## The Audit Committee finds that

the City Board should

- ▶ raise the awareness of elected leadership, such as members of the City Council and Members of Parliament from Helsinki, about the city's advocacy and its objectives.

the City Executive Office should

- ▶ ensure that key advocacy themes are included in the preparation of new strategies.
- ▶ improve the accessibility of information on the organisation of advocacy, its procedures and the city's position-taking processes for the city's elected representatives and divisions.
- ▶ explore ways to strengthen the role of senior administrative management in advocacy.



# The effectiveness of the Audit Committee's recommendations from the 2021 assessment report



Have measures been taken in accordance with the recommendations in the 2021 assessment report?



Action has been taken on 94% of the recommendations from the 2021 assessment report.

## The main focus of the assessment:

What impact have the Audit Committee's recommendations had?

## Related questions:

1. What measures have the Central Administration and divisions taken to address the recommendations in the Audit Committee's 2021 assessment report?
2. What impact have the recommended measures had?

The 2021 assessment report addressed 14 assessment topics and presented 48 recommendations. The effectiveness of the recommendations was assessed by examining the statements on the assessment report, the report given by the City Board to the City Council in December 2022, and by sending email enquiries to the management of the divisions or other responsible parties. A four-point scale was used to assess the implementation and impact of the measures (Figures 24 and 25). Table 5 summarises the implementation of the recommendations by assessment topic. More detailed descriptions of the implementation of these recommendations can be found in the assessment memoranda on the effectiveness of the recommendations at [www.arviointikertomus.fi/en](http://www.arviointikertomus.fi/en)

## Measures have been taken that are mainly consistent with the recommendations

Action has been taken on the vast majority (94%) of the recommendations in the 2021 assessment report

(Figure 24). This figure summarises the assessment results in terms of the measures taken. For comparison, the figure shows the implementation of the recommendations made in the 2019 and 2020 assessment reports. In 2021, the share of recommendations for which no action was taken was two per cent (one recommendation). The proportion of recommendations that were fully addressed has decreased compared to the previous two years.

Two of measures could not be assessed with the available data. The recommendations were related to the role of the City Executive Office in promoting tenant democracy at Helsingin kaupungin asunnot Oy (Heka). Heka has mainly acted in accordance with the recommendations, but the assessment could not demonstrate the City Executive Office's impact on the progress towards these recommendations.

The only recommendation that had not been implemented at all was that the Social Services and Health Care Division should set a target timeframe for people in mental health rehabilitation to access housing services that meet their needs. The division took the view that a target timeframe could lead to inappropriate placements. Wait times seem very long, as patients are registered on the housing waiting list very early, even if their treatment is still ongoing. It is often possible to offer clients housing at the end of their treatment. Thus, according to the division, setting a target timeframe will not guide the operations of housing services in an appropriate way.

## Up to 69% of the recommendations have positive effects

At the time of the assessment, 69% of the measures taken in response to the 2021 assessment report's recommendations had discernible positive effects (Figure 25). Positive effects were interpreted as any successes in developing operations reported by respondents that were linked to carrying out the recommendations. In 27% of the recommendations, the effects of the measures were not yet discernible.

The 2021 assessment report made one recommendation, the impact of which could not be assessed with the available data. This impact was related to the recommendation given to the Education Division to use monitoring to target its measures aimed at closing the learning gap according to pupils' needs. On the other hand, there could be no impact in one case where no measures had been taken in response to the recommendation.

The Urban Environment Division has taken measures to promote biodiversity in forest management. However, updating the process is only just beginning.

Together with the divisions, the City Executive Office has investigated increasing the transparency of business customer services, follow-up of business communications, and an effective way to monitor the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises in competitive tendering. There have been efforts to develop organisation, guidance and management in the various areas of digital security, and measures have been taken to standardise the objectives. To promote tenant democracy, Heka has taken measures such as updating the tenant democracy by-law to partly comply with the recommendation.

The Education Division has taken steps to identify the learning gap and direct support to those who need it, which is in line with the recommendations. Stadin AO has developed a system for monitoring the success of student guidance. The effects have been good in some cases. The Culture and Leisure Division has started to develop the indicators and communications for the Physical Activity Programme.

Access to oral health care has been improved in the Social Services and Health Care Division. In home

care, the assessment of the service needs of people over 75 is currently completed within the prescribed time limit, and the time spent on client work has been successfully increased in line with recommendations. The path from inpatient care to housing for people in rehabilitation for mental health problems has been significantly improved. Measures to improve the availability and retention of child welfare social workers have been taken in line with the recommendations.

Emergency room visits by elderly patients have been reduced, especially through the development of the Mobile Nurse service, as most cases have not required an ambulance after a visit by the Mobile Nurse. The discharge process has been further developed in cooperation with HUS. New home care clients' access to the Rehabilitative Assessment Unit has been streamlined, but the effects of these development measures are not yet apparent. The number of unplanned return visits to hospitals or emergency care has increased slightly.

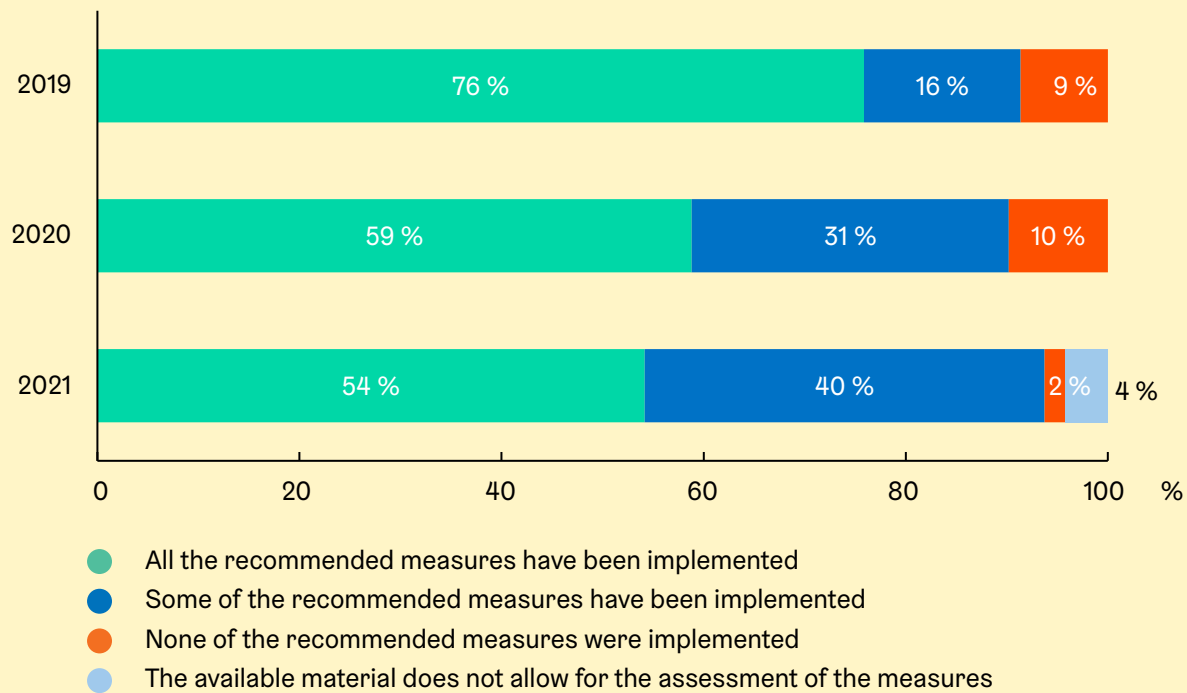
## Conclusions

Ninety-four per cent of the recommendations in the Audit Committee's 2021 assessment report had been followed by the divisions, either partially or fully. Some positive impacts were identified in 69% of the recommendations.

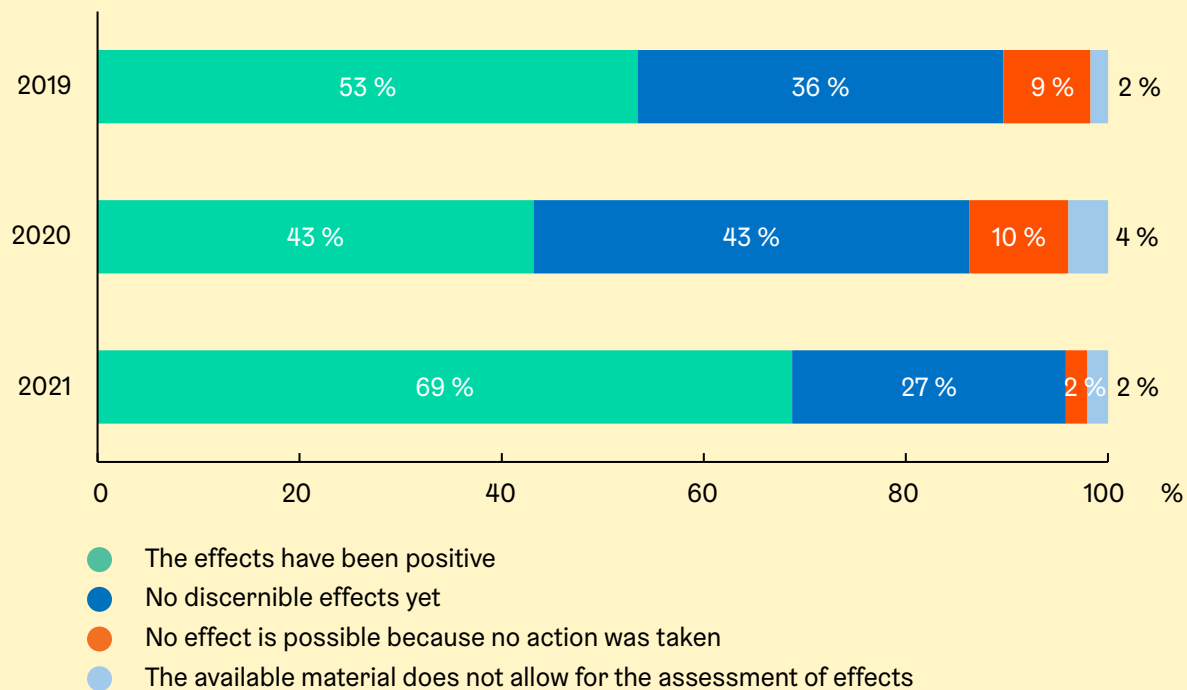
For example, as recommended by the Audit Committee, digital security and business friendliness have been promoted, access to oral health care has been improved, and the pathway from hospital treatment to housing for people in mental health rehabilitation has been improved significantly. The time spent on client work in home care for older adults has been increased, and emergency room visits have been reduced with the Mobile Nurse service.



**Figure 24. Actions taken based on the recommendations made by the Audit Committee in 2019–2021, as a percentage**



**Figure 25. Impact of the measures taken following the Audit Committee’s recommendations in 2019–2021, as a percentage**



The readability of the figures has been improved by rounding the percentages. This is why the total sum is not always 100.



**Table 5. Implementation summary of the 2021 assessment report's recommendations by assessment topic**

The result is calculated by scoring the assessments of individual recommendations and calculating their averages. The number of recommendations per topic ranged from one to six. The result is shown on the following scale

5 Measures have been taken that are mainly consistent with the recommendations.	5 The effects have been positive
3 Some of the recommended measures have been implemented	3 No discernible effects yet
1 None of the recommended measures were implemented	1 No effect is possible because no action was taken

<b>Assessment topic</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Assessing binding operational targets	4.0	4.0
Assessing the effectiveness of the recommendations	5.0	5.0
<b>Finances</b>		
Assessment of the city's finances	3.0	5.0
<b>Preventing inequality and social exclusion</b>		
Bridging the learning gap caused by distance learning in lower secondary schools	5.0	4.0
Adequacy of student guidance in vocational education and training	4.3	5.0
Adequacy of child welfare outpatient care services	4.0	4.0
<b>Health and wellbeing from services</b>		
Home care for older adults	4.0	5.0
Older patients in emergency wards	4.0	4.0
Path from hospital treatment to housing for people in mental health rehabilitation	3.5	4.0
Meeting the objectives of the Physical Activity Programme	3.0	4.0
<b>The built environment and environmental sustainability</b>		
Promoting biodiversity in forest management	4.0	3.5
<b>The city's attractiveness and internationality</b>		
Business friendliness and cooperation with businesses	4.5	5.0
<b>Digitalisation and e-services</b>		
The city's digital security	4.6	4.6
<b>Ownership policy</b>		
Implementation of tenant democracy at Helsingin kaupungin asunnot Oy	3.0	4.3

## APPENDIX 1: The Audit Committee's division of responsibilities in 2023

### First commission

#### Central Administration

- City Board
- City Executive Office

#### Central Administration's municipal enterprises

- Board of Financial Management Services
- Financial Management Services
- Board of Palvelukeskus Helsinki
- Palvelukeskus Helsinki
- Board of Directors of the Construction Services municipal enterprise
- Construction Services (Stara)
- Board of Directors of the Occupational Health Centre municipal enterprise
- Occupational Health Centre municipal enterprise

#### Urban Environment Division

- Urban Environment Committee
- Land use and city structure
- Buildings and public areas
- Services and permits
- Board of Helsinki City Transport
- Helsinki City Transport

#### Key subsidiaries in the first commission's area of responsibility

##### Regional and infrastructure

- Metropolitan Area Transport Ltd

##### Apartments

- Helsingin Asumisoikeus Oy
- Helsingin kaupungin asunnot Oy
- Kiinteistö Oy Auroranlinna

##### Economic development and marketing

- Forum Virium Helsinki Oy
- Helsingin kaupunkitilat Oy
- Helsinki Events Foundation sr
- Helsinki Partners Ltd
- Korkeasaaren eläintarhan säätiö sr
- Stadion-säätiö sr

##### Operating on market terms

- Finlandia Hall Ltd
- Helen Ltd
- Port of Helsinki Ltd
- Kiinteistö Oy Kaapelitalo
- Metropolilab Oy

##### Commercial facilities

- Helsinki City Premises Ltd

##### Support services and others

- Seure Henkilöstöpalvelut Oy
- DigiHelsinki Oy

### Second commission

#### Education Division

- Education Committee
- Early childhood education and pre-primary education
- Basic education
- Upper secondary education, vocational education and training, and liberal adult education
- Services in Swedish

#### Culture and Leisure Division

- Culture and Leisure Committee
- Library services
- Cultural Services
- Youth Services
- Sports Services

#### Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division

- Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Committee
- Family and Social Services
- Health and substance abuse services
- Hospital, rehabilitation and care services
- Rescue Department

#### Subsidiaries in the second commission's area of responsibility

##### Culture

- Helsinki Art Museum
- Helsingin Musiikkitalon säätiö sr
- Helsingin teatterisäätiö sr
- UMO Foundation sr

##### Sport and exercise

- Jääkenttäsäätiö sr
- Mäkelänrinteen Uintikeskus Oy
- Urheiluhallit Oy
- Vuosaaren Urheilutalo Oy

##### Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services

- Helsingin Seniorisäätiö sr
- Niemikotisäätiö sr
- Oulunkylän kuntoutuskeskus sr

## APPENDIX 2: Audit Department staff who assisted the Audit Committee's commissions

### First commission

Petri Jäske, Commission Secretary  
Senior Performance Auditor

Timo Cantell  
Assessment Manager as of January 2024

Harri Hynninen  
City Auditor

Aija Kaartinen  
Senior Performance Auditor

Liisa Kähkönen  
Senior Performance Auditor

Hanna Parkkonen  
City Auditor

Kalle Puttonen  
City Auditor

Jaakko Seppälä  
City Auditor

Minna Tiili  
Assessment Manager until the end of August 2023

Timo Valtaluoto  
City Auditor

### Second commission

Liisa Kähkönen, Commission Secretary  
Senior Performance Auditor

Timo Cantell  
Assessment Manager as of January 2024

Aija Kaartinen  
Senior Performance Auditor

Kirsi-Marie Kaito  
City Auditor

Juuli Mikkonen  
City Auditor

Tarja Palomäki  
City Auditor

Hanna Parkkonen  
City Auditor

Kalle Puttonen  
City Auditor

Jaakko Seppälä  
City Auditor

Minna Tiili  
Assessment Manager until the end of August 2023

Elina Vismanen  
City Auditor

## APPENDIX 3: List of the assessment memoranda prepared for the Audit Committee (in Finnish)

### First commission

- Progress towards the Carbon Neutral Port objective
- City advocacy from an economic perspective
- The progress of urban renewal
- Winter maintenance of light traffic routes
- The Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division's preparedness for incidents and emergencies
- Effectiveness of the recommendations, first commission

### Second commission

- Preventing drug-related deaths in substance abuse services
- Attractiveness of libraries and promoting reading in libraries
- Development of cultural grants
- Social guidance for families with children
- Strengthening youth work
- Supporting foreign-language pupils in comprehensive schools
- Effectiveness of the recommendations, second commission

# Abbreviations and glossary

## **AM Programme**

The implementation programme for housing and related land use prepared by the City of Helsinki for each council term

## **Anchor activities**

Multidisciplinary work that supports the well-being of young people and children and prevents crime. The activities involve experts from the police, social services, health care and youth services.

## **Anti-racist working method**

Anti-racism training for staff provided by the City of Helsinki's Education Division. Anti-racism means active engagement and actions to prevent discrimination in the name of equality.

## **Apotti**

Client and patient information system

## **ART method**

Aggression Replacement Training, which teaches young people exhibiting antisocial behaviour skills for constructive interaction and anger management

## **Children of the Station**

An association that supports the healthy growth of children and young people and natural interactions with adults

## **Biofuel**

Liquid or gaseous transport fuels produced from biomass, such as bioethanol and renewable diesel

## **CA Model**

The Common Approach operating model, which proactively identifies the resources of children, young people or families and their potential need for support

## **CO<sub>2</sub>**

carbon dioxide, the most significant greenhouse gas produced by human activity

## **Effica**

Patient and client information system

## **Outreach Youth Work**

Provides support and guidance to young people aged 16–28. Outreach youth work helps young people find answers to their questions and concerns and access the services they need.

## **FIT**

Feedback-Informed Treatment, a method for evaluating social and health services and strengthening quality and effectiveness

## **Heka**

Helsingin kaupungin asunnot Oy

## **Carbon neutral**

A situation in which no more carbon dioxide emissions are produced than can be sequestered from the atmosphere into carbon sinks

## **Hitas**

A system for regulating the price and quality level of apartments built on plots owned by the City of Helsinki

## **HKL**

Helsinki City Transport

## **HUS**

HUS Group, formerly called Hospital District of Helsinki and Uusimaa. It is responsible for specialist medical care in Uusimaa

## **HYVÄ-model**

The Wellbeing Together model, which is the same as the CA model

## **Detached youth work**

A form of youth work in which the workers meet young people in the environments where they spend their free time, such as streets, parks and other places where young people gather

## **Greenhouse gas emissions**

Gases that are released into the atmosphere and cause global warming. The most significant greenhouse gases are carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide.

## **Coronavirus compensation funding**

Compensation paid by the state to municipalities and joint municipal authorities for the additional costs and loss of revenue caused by the coronavirus pandemic

## **KUJA assessment model**

The operating model for preparedness and continuity management created by the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and the National Emergency Supply Agency of Finland

## **LiHo**

Mobile Nurse service

## **LNG**

Liquefied Natural Gas

## **Shore-side electricity**

Electricity that is centrally generated onshore, which significantly reduces emissions from ships in port

**Maisa client portal**

An online channel for accessing social services and health care

**Methane**

A greenhouse gas that is the second most significant greenhouse gas produced by human activity after carbon dioxide.

**Nepsy**

Neuropsychiatric challenges with underlying brain disorders such as ADHD, autism spectrum disorder and Tourette's syndrome

**Ohjaamo**

A counselling and guidance station for young people aged 15–29

**Oodi**

Helsinki Central Library Oodi

**Opioid substitution treatment**

Treatment of opioid dependence using medicinal products containing buprenorphine or methadone

**Pysäkki**

A walk-in substance abuse service for young people aged 13–23 in Helsinki with serious substance abuse and dependence issues.

**Cycling Barometer 2022**

A study examining the attitudes of Helsinki residents towards promoting cycling, as well as the perceptions of cycling conditions and the quality of cycling in Helsinki

**S2 syllabus**

Finnish as a second language and literature. S2 education is available to pupils whose Finnish language skills are not at a native level.

**Sarastia system**

A human resources and payroll system

**Sotepe**

Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division

**Stadin AO**

Helsinki Vocational College and Adult Institute

**Stara**

Helsinki City Construction Services, the city's municipal enterprise

**Symppis**

A low-threshold day centre providing health and social counselling for substance-using clients.

**'I need help' online form**

A low-threshold online service to help families with children in Helsinki find the right kind of support.

**Wilma**

The work and communications system of educational institutions.



# City of Helsinki Audit Committee's Assessment Report 2023

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**Helsinki**

**City of Helsinki  
Audit Department**

Sörnäistenkatu 1  
00580 Helsinki  
P.O. Box 400  
00099 City of Helsinki  
Tel. +358 9 310 36476  
[www.tarkastusvirasto.hel.fi/en/](http://www.tarkastusvirasto.hel.fi/en/)  
[www.arviointikertomus.fi/en](http://www.arviointikertomus.fi/en)