



Helsinki-Uusimaa
Region

Helsinki-Uusimaa, a Region of Solutions

— PIONEER IN FINLAND, FORERUNNER IN EUROPE —

Helsinki-Uusimaa, a Region of Solutions – Pioneer in Finland, Forerunner in Europe

Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Programme 2026–2029

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Description sheet

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Summary

Helsinki-Uusimaa, a Region of Solutions – Pioneer in Finland, Forerunner in Europe sets the region's vision for 2050 and outlines the development priorities, objectives and measures for 2026–2029. The programme was crafted over several workshops between the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council's key partners. Its objectives reflect the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the key plans and strategies of the European Union, national strategies and programmes, and the strategies of the municipalities of the Helsinki-Uusimaa region.

Helsinki-Uusimaa, a Region of Solutions – Pioneer in Finland, Forerunner in Europe outlines the region's key strengths and challenges, examines changes in its operating environment up to 2050 and sets out visions that serve as the basis for its development priorities and objectives.

The programme's vision for 2050 – 'The happiest, most innovative and environmentally smartest region in Europe' – is founded on the following priorities and key objectives:

• Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa

Main objective: The environmentally smartest region in Europe

Helsinki-Uusimaa strives for climate neutrality by 2030, followed by carbon-negativity where the region's carbon sinks exceed its greenhouse gas emissions. We take action to halt the decline in biodiversity and to improve the environment. We moderate the use of natural resources and actively promote the circular economy. At the same time, we focus on supply security and environmental safety, and improve our adaptability and preparedness for the impacts of climate change.

• Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa

Main objective: The most innovative region in Europe

We provide a fertile platform for fresh ideas, innovative solutions and successful business which create new jobs and new exports. Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa promotes RDI, which serves as a catalyst for the renewal of the entire region and enables growth within the planet's biocapacity. Our competitiveness is built on cooperation between companies, universities and research institutes, as well as on nationally and internationally acclaimed innovation ecosystems that attract talent, partners and investments.

• Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa

Main objective: Europe's leading region in well-being

Helsinki-Uusimaa is safe and happy. People enjoy services, culture, nature and affordable housing in non-segregated neighbourhoods. Resident participation is strong and education is of a high standard. Public services and the third sector support the integration of immigrants and create avenues which facilitate social integration. Youth employment and the well-being and inclusion of the younger generations are supported.

The roadmaps guiding the execution of the priorities will be updated later. The programme will be implemented by the parties engaged in Helsinki-Uusimaa's development, mainly through EU-funded projects. Programme implementation will be monitored by indicators measuring the progress of each priority.

A summary of the environmental report with a more detailed assessment of the programme's environmental and gender impacts is attached herein.

Keywords

Region, regional programme, Helsinki-Uusimaa, regional development, vision, strategy

Notes

The publication is also available in Finnish and Swedish.

A PDF version of the publication is available on our website at uudenmaanliitto.fi/julkaisut.

Foreword

The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Programme is a result of successful co-operation amidst challenging circumstances. Finland's economic growth remains stagnant, the employment situation in the region is more dire than in other parts of the country, and geopolitical shifts and the return of power politics raise concerns. All this makes our work ever more important. Helsinki-Uusimaa is the engine of growth in Finland and, by many measures, a European forerunner. We will continue to work decisively and collaboratively in this role.

This new programme has been titled 'Helsinki-Uusimaa, a Region of Solutions – Pioneer in Finland, Forerunner in Europe'. The title not only reflects our role as a generator of bold new solutions, but also our deep-seated desire for renewal. In addition to being a pioneer in Finland, we are a significant international player. Our vision is to be the happiest, most innovative and environmentally smartest region in Europe.

The programme sets the direction for the development of Helsinki-Uusimaa from 2026–2029. Our objectives are founded in the present and in the potential and possibilities

of the future. The programme reflects the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the key plans and priorities of the European Union, Finland's national strategies and the government's regional development decisions. It looks far into the future and is a continuation of the previous regional programme for 2022–2025. Our goals are ambitious but achievable through systematic and effective cooperation.

The implementation of the programme is our shared responsibility. Its preparation, headed up by the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, brought together a vast number of regional development bodies from municipalities, universities and other educational establishments to research institutes and various civil society associations and organisations. The work was overseen by the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Board. The programme creates a clear pathway for the future and promotes the safety, success and well-being of Helsinki-Uusimaa and Finland. A warm thank-you to everybody involved in its making!

Tuija Telén
Regional Mayor of Helsinki-Uusimaa



Introduction

Helsinki-Uusimaa, a Region of Solutions – Pioneer in Finland, Forerunner in Europe sets the path for the region’s development from 2026–2029. It outlines the region’s opportunities and preconditions for success, and strives for the development of the region as a whole. Its preparation, led by the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, brought together an extensive group of regional development bodies from municipalities and civic associations and organisations to institutes of research and higher education and providers of vocational upper-secondary education. These bodies were also closely involved in numerous workshops and events organised in the spring and autumn of 2025 to hone the programme’s goals. Its objectives reflect the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the key plans and strategies of the European Union, as well as national strategies and programmes. The priorities align with those established in the government’s regional development decisions: sustainable vitality and investments, a healthy population and communities, an attractive living environment and diverse nature.

The programme is a continuation of the previous regional programme, Well Ahead – Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Programme 2022–2025. The themes outlined therein for the development of the region are still relevant: mitigating climate change, strengthening biodiversity, and promoting the vitality and well-being of the region and its people. Although the basic objectives are still the same, their emphasis has shifted slightly, and some new areas (such as overall security) have emerged.

The regional programme is based on and driven by the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council’s diverse roles as a developer and advocate for the region. One of its key tasks is to bring together parties involved in the development of the region across both local and international networks. The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council is also a strategic developer of the area and creates conditions for success through regional development and planning. Our role as a producer of information is also important: we provide statistics and location data and produce



The programme’s objectives reflect the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the key plans and strategies of the European Union, as well as national strategies and programmes.

a situational picture of the region. We grant both national and European Union funding to local operators and provide assistance in EU funding applications. The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council functions in an advocative role at both the local and national levels. It strives to improve the vitality of Helsinki-Uusimaa and to influence national and European decision-making in a way that benefits the region. Helsinki-Uusimaa is a significant European



Measures fostering the success and competitiveness of Helsinki-Uusimaa and Finland are thus of particular importance, and reflected in all the programme's priorities.

forerunner in many respects, and its success drives national growth and competitiveness. The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council's advocacy work thus contributes to the success of Finland as a whole.

The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Programme 2026–2029 is titled 'Helsinki-Uusimaa, a Region of Solutions – Pioneer in Finland, Forerunner in Europe'. At the time of writing, Finland has been in a difficult economic situation for some time with no signs of economic recovery or a reduction in unemployment. Measures fostering the success and competitiveness of Helsinki-Uusimaa and Finland are thus of particular importance, and reflected in all the programme's priorities. As its title suggests, the programme seeks to find solutions to current challenges. The name reflects our role and attitude. Helsinki-Uusimaa, a Region of Solutions encompasses the entire geographic area, and serves as the strategy for the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council. The annual objectives guiding the activities of the council will be defined and monitored as a separate process.

The programme is divided into sections. Helsinki-Uusimaa Now examines the region's key strengths, challenges and characteristics. Future Directions forecasts possible longer-term

developments and sets a background for the programme's four-year objectives. Next, the programme identifies three development priorities: Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa, Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa and Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa, each with their objectives and implementation strategies. It sets out priorities for research, development and innovation which also serve as the region's Smart Specialisation priorities in line with European Commission requirements. As a tool of strategic development, the programme does not introduce any practical measures. The last section, Implementation and monitoring, describes the roles and means of implementation and the indicators used in monitoring progress. All operations are based on cooperation and engagement through the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council' networks. In the implementation, EU project funding with its new programming period plays an important role. Progress is monitored against indicators, the most significant of which are also internationally comparable. The section also explains the programme's role as the strategy of the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council. A summary of the programme's environmental report is annexed herein.

Helsinki-Uusimaa Now

In 2025, Helsinki-Uusimaa's population reached 1.8 million, which means that one in every three Finns lives in the region. While most are native-born, the number of migrants and immigrants is on the rise. The region has always attracted people, hence its name, Uusimaa: 'New Land'. The first reference to 'Nyland' (as Uusimaa is known in Swedish) in historical sources dates back to 1326. Helsinki-Uusimaa is a region of vibrant cities, a lively countryside and a charming archipelago.

It is a diverse area, with the roots of its people reaching far and wide in Finland and beyond. With 158 spoken languages, it is the most linguistically diverse region of Finland. Instead of being predetermined or fixated on the past, the identity and culture of Helsinki-Uusimaa are shaped by the people living there.

Helsinki-Uusimaa is the most significant and fastest-growing economic and population cluster in Finland. The Helsinki Metropolitan Area in particular attracts people to work and study, with its diverse services and vibrant city

life as extra incentives. Helsinki-Uusimaa is also a culture hub. It is the most creative area in Finland, and home to most of the country's artists and creative operators. This is a strength which makes Helsinki-Uusimaa truly distinctive. The region is also characterised by its growing surrounding municipalities and viable rural areas. The Helsinki-Uusimaa archipelago has potential not only as a tourist and recreational destination, but also as a place for new business opportunities.

In the smaller Helsinki-Uusimaa municipalities, people can enjoy the surrounding nature, safe and peaceful living, affordable housing and a lack of congestion. According to projections, robust growth in population will continue: by 2040, more than 2.1 million people will be living in the area. The region's municipalities all have their distinct characteristics and differ in terms of housing, language, jobs and livelihoods. This diversity is a strength. Inter-municipal cooperation is vital, not just for maintaining the viability of smaller municipalities and operators, but also for larger municipalities and cities.



In 2025, Helsinki-Uusimaa's population reached 1.8 million, which means that one in every three Finns lives in the region.

Population growth is heavily concentrated in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, where 70% of the region's population live. Central Uusimaa (Hyvinkää, Järvenpää, Kirkkonummi, Kerava, Mäntsälä, Nurmijärvi, Pornainen, Sipoo, Tuusula and Vihti) has also seen positive growth in recent years. In the eastern part, growth has been moderate, while in Western Uusimaa, the rate is currently negative. Demographic trends show significant variation across municipalities. With the declining birth rates, the population

in Helsinki-Uusimaa has aged in recent years, albeit at a much slower pace than in the rest of the country: in 2025, one in five residents was over 65 years old.

While the Helsinki Metropolitan Area faces challenges of fast population growth, some municipalities in Eastern and Western Uusimaa show the opposite trend, which puts a strain on their vitality and the organisation of economically sustainable services. In the context of growth and viability, the concentration of the younger population and those in their early studies and careers in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area has become a differentiating factor between municipalities. However, according to Statistics Finland's most recent projection (2024), it is possible that the region will see more evenly distributed population growth in the future.

Helsinki-Uusimaa is the most international and multicultural region in the country, and home to 56% of Finland's foreign-language population. With the declining birth rate, population growth is increasingly driven by immigration.

At the same time, a growing proportion of internal migrants are foreign-language speakers. Helsinki-Uusimaa is a bilingual region, with several Finnish- and Swedish-speaking municipalities, and we see the Swedish language as an asset. Helsinki-Uusimaa's strength lies in its residents. Everyone should be able to lead a good and comfortable life here, regardless of their background.

One of the objectives set out in the Well Ahead Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Programme 2022–2025 was to increase the region's research and development expenditure to 5% of its GDP by 2030. This target still stands, and we are well on our way to achieving it. According to the international Regional Innovation Scoreboard Index, Helsinki-Uusimaa is not only a hub of RDI activities in Finland, but also one of the most innovative regions in Europe. Innovation ecosystems between the business sector and the higher education sector, complemented by our well-educated population, create a favourable growth environment for research and development. To maintain this momentum and growth in innovativeness and productivity, we need even greater investments in RDI, education and skills development.

Various indicators monitoring people's well-being rank Helsinki-Uusimaa in the highest percentile: in the 2024 EU Social Progress Index (SPI) it topped all European regions.



According to statistics, Helsinki-Uusimaa is also home to Finland's healthiest population. On the other hand, problems typical of larger cities – homelessness, low incomes and various forms of segregation – are also present and pose a challenge to our well-being.

Although most of the children and adolescents in Helsinki-Uusimaa are doing fine, there are some concerning signs: for example, in UNICEF's study measuring child well-being, Finland's rating dropped from 5th in 2020 to 17th in 2025. Economic downturn, mounting uncertainties fuelled by climate change and armed conflicts, and the surge in loneliness and anxiety induced by COVID-19 are testing the young. A weak overall economy and cuts in social security have led to an increase in child poverty. Rising unemployment rates have meant that there are fewer job opportunities available.

The effects of climate change, biodiversity loss and overconsumption of natural resources are visible all around us. Helsinki-Uusimaa is no exception. In our previous programme, we set the goal of becoming climate-neutral by 2030. Achieving the emission reduction target still requires a lot of work, even though greenhouse gas emissions in the region have decreased by almost a third over the last five years. Cleaner district heating and measures in the energy sector are driving this reduction.

Further cuts, especially in transport emissions, call for new and more diverse solutions. Stronger community structures should not come at the expense of biodiversity and forest carbon sinks. Changes in land-use and the resulting deforestation – which has continued at a significant rate in recent years – deserve particular attention.

Helsinki-Uusimaa will continue to experience strong growth in the future. One of our key challenges is to find ways to enable population and job growth in the most sustainable way possible. To this end, we need affordable housing options suitable for different life situations, sustainable transport and energy solutions, new industries, and measures that safeguard the natural and built environment and their pull factors. At the same time, climate change and adaptation measures fuel the need for diverse and sufficiently large natural areas and interconnecting ecological networks.

On the other hand, in Helsinki-Uusimaa, as elsewhere in Finland, maintaining the vitality of villages and rural settlements poses a challenge. In municipalities with declining and ageing populations, we need fresh approaches and renewal based on their own strengths. Supporting local actors and developing sustainable new business models, entrepreneurship and income-generating

associations present a challenge for the future. If successful, they will support local innovativeness and expand the Helsinki-Uusimaa innovation network.



Helsinki-Uusimaa's strength lies in its residents.

Key figures for Helsinki-Uusimaa

1,8 million people
31% of the Finnish population

26 municipalities

Average population growth over the last 10 years:
18,000 inhabitants per year

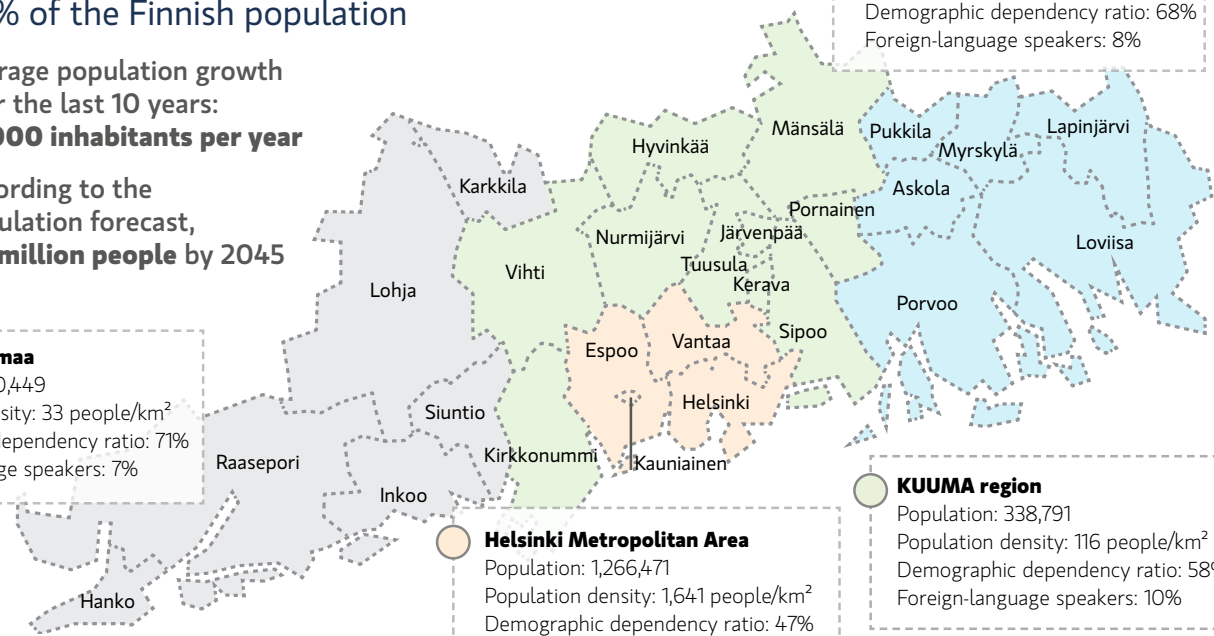
According to the population forecast,
2.2 million people by 2045

Western Uusimaa
Population: 100,449
Population density: 33 people/km²
Demographic dependency ratio: 71%
Foreign-language speakers: 7%

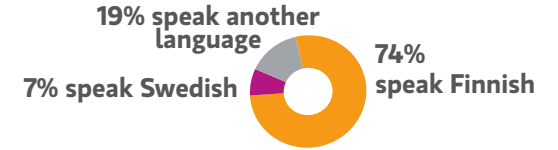
Eastern Uusimaa
Population: 76,589
Population density: 32 people/km²
Demographic dependency ratio: 68%
Foreign-language speakers: 8%

Helsinki Metropolitan Area
Population: 1,266,471
Population density: 1,641 people/km²
Demographic dependency ratio: 47%
Foreign-language speakers: 23%

KUUMA region
Population: 338,791
Population density: 116 people/km²
Demographic dependency ratio: 58%
Foreign-language speakers: 10%



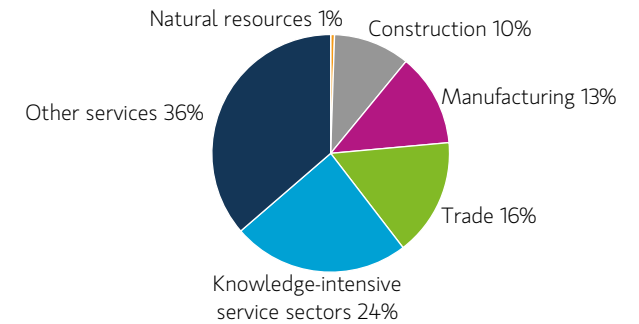
Of the population



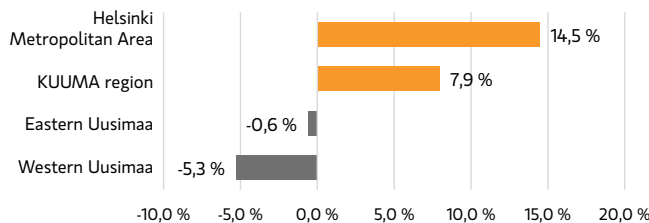
56% of those speaking another language in Finland live in Helsinki-Uusimaa Region

According to population projections the number of foreign-language speakers will increase from **340 000 to 700 000** by the year 2040 in Helsinki-Uusimaa Region

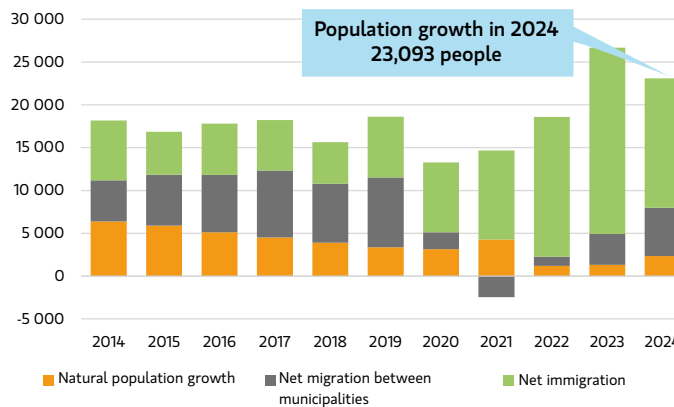
Helsinki-Uusimaa industry profile



Population change by region over 10 years



Population change in Helsinki-Uusimaa 2014–2024



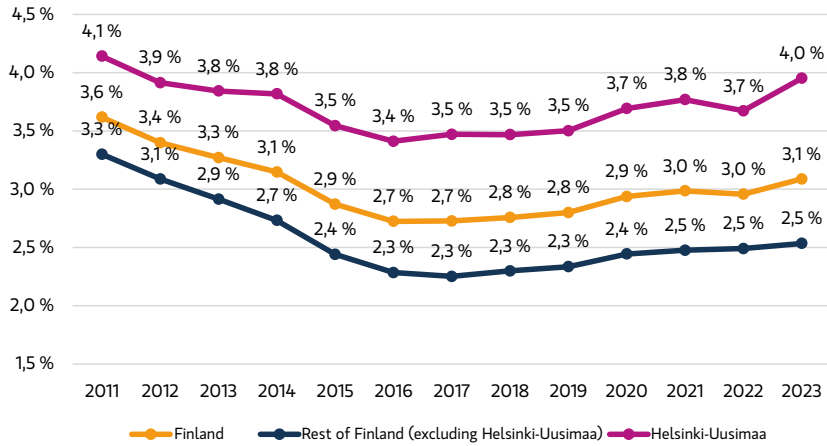
GDP per capita:

Helsinki-Uusimaa 61,100 €
Finland 49,000 €
EU 38,100 €

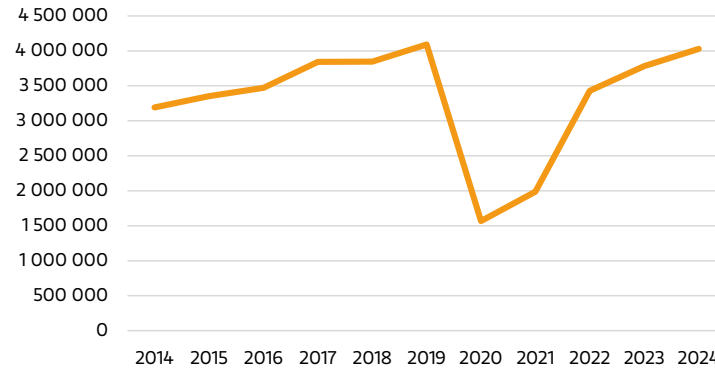
Helsinki-Uusimaa's share of Finland's total GDP 39%

Figure 1. Key statistics on Helsinki-Uusimaa's development.

R&D expenditure of GDP in 2011–2013



Tourists arriving in Helsinki-Uusimaa 2014–2024



Of Finland's international tourists,
more than 50% visit Helsinki-Uusimaa



Helsinki-Uusimaa's share
of Finland's R&D expenditure
51%

**Helsinki-Uusimaa residents have the
highest level of education in Finland**



41% of people over the age
of 15 have completed some
form of higher education



**Ranked first in wellbeing
in the EU**

(Regional social progress index 2024)

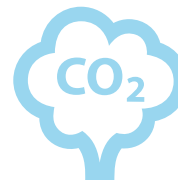


Helsinki-Uusimaa Region has about
866 000 workplaces
i.e. 36% of the Finnish total

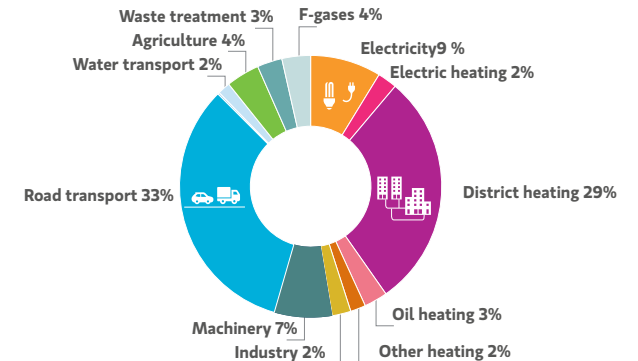
Emissions per resident in 2023

Helsinki-Uusimaa **3.2 tonnes CO₂e/person**
Finland average **4.9 tonnes CO₂e/person**

Change in total emissions in
Helsinki-Uusimaa since 2005
-39%



Distribution of greenhouse gas emissions in 2023



Helsinki-Uusimaa Region in 2024

- **Unemployment rate 8,9%**,
Average rate for Finland 8,4%
- **Employment rate 73%**,
Average rate for Finland 72,1%



Future Directions

The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Programme defines the direction and objectives of the region's development for the next four years. Shifts in global politics are creating uncertainty, and various conflicts have made our operating environment increasingly volatile. Regional development is a long-term endeavour, and most changes develop over a time scale longer than four years. Therefore, we also need to bear in mind the long-term effects of development and encourage a longer time horizon.

Climate change, biodiversity loss, demographic changes (immigration, an ageing population, a declining birth rate, and population concentration), technological advances and artificial intelligence are major forces of change affecting us in Helsinki-Uusimaa and

are all linked to growing inequality. Due to the changing geopolitical situation, this current version of the programme also addresses safety-related topics. The concept of safety is diverse and encompasses different aspects from living environment and physical conditions to social stability, accessibility and a sense of security. The forces of change and possible future developments are examined in greater detail in the [scenario analysis by the Helsinki-Uusimaa and North Ostrobothnia Regional Councils](#), which outlines future prospects up to 2050. This analysis presents four possible scenarios based on trends and elements of uncertainty with the potential to transform our operating environment.



Regional development is a long-term endeavour, and most changes develop over a time scale longer than four years.

Scenario 1

Global technological development sets the pace

Technological advances and innovations tackle climate challenges. Large corporations gain power and there is less regulation. Finns enjoy a higher standard of living, but our society becomes more competitive. Helsinki-Uusimaa gains international momentum while the concentration of the population in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area erodes the viability of smaller municipalities.

Scenario 2

European Renaissance

The EU is a globally significant player. The USA and China struggle with their internal problems. The effects of climate change threaten our living conditions. On the other hand, economic growth boosts well-being and reduces social tensions. Helsinki-Uusimaa produces top-level innovations, but some municipalities in the region experience a lag in growth.

Scenario 3

From stagnation to a welfare economy

The USA and China overtake Europe in terms of development. Helsinki-Uusimaa remains the most diverse and international region in Finland. The focus shifts from continuous growth to the comprehensive well-being of people and nature. An ageing population, a weak dependency ratio and low economic growth continue to pose significant challenges.

Scenario 4

Refugees and polarisation

Climate change, conflicts and a weaker EU drive global instability. Large areas around the world have become uninhabitable, leading to a massive influx of refugees. Populist movements gain strength, and there are tensions between population groups. Weak economic performance complicates the provision of services.

Figure 2. Scenarios for Helsinki-Uusimaa in 2050

The scenario work also involved the assessment of potential impacts. How should we prepare for the forces of change? What kinds of issues should we address in our short-term and long-term planning? The analysis concluded that Helsinki-Uusimaa should invest in at least the following to secure its future success:

- **Strengthening its international position** by promoting cooperation in the environmental, innovation and education sectors and by improving the region's accessibility and its international travel and transport chains.
- **Reducing climate emissions and adapting to climate change** by promoting the circular economy and green transition, securing the availability of clean energy and strengthening biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- **Enhancing safety and crisis preparedness** by strengthening regional resilience, maintaining a healthy living environment, and safeguarding food production, water security and the sustainable use of natural resources.
- **Advancing sustainable infrastructure** by introducing new technologies, strengthening transport links, preparing for extreme weather events and protecting critical infrastructure.
- **Renewing trade and industry** by supporting diverse business activities, community entrepreneurship and ecosystem cooperation, promoting competitiveness through investments in RDI and the green transition, and enhancing labour-market accessibility.
- **Improving employment** by increasing the availability of skilled labour, supporting the employment of immigrants and encouraging entrepreneurship and business growth.
- **Investing in education and competence-building** by ensuring equal learning opportunities, strengthening continuous learning and civic competence, enhancing educational institutions' digitalisation capabilities and building technological expertise for the needs of the green transition.
- **Promoting the wellbeing, equality and integration of residents** by preventing inequality, supporting health and life management and fostering multiculturalism, inclusion and cultural understanding.
- **Developing technology and artificial intelligence expertise** to e.g. expedite green-transition innovations and improve access to healthcare.



How should we prepare for the forces of change? What kinds of issues should we address in our short-term and long-term planning?

Helsinki-Uusimaa's vision for 2050



Helsinki-Uusimaa's vision for 2050 is to be the happiest, most innovative and environmentally smartest region in Europe.

Helsinki-Uusimaa's vision for 2050 is to be **the happiest, most innovative and environmentally smartest region in Europe.**

The environmentally smartest region in Europe creates solutions for a more sustainable future. We lead the way by being at the forefront of climate change mitigation. In 2050, the green transition covers all areas of society, and we continue our long-term efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen biodiversity and prepare for and adapt to climate change. The path to environmental wisdom is paved by extensive cooperation and RDI-generated innovations.

The most innovative region in Europe builds on RDI to offer solutions to global challenges, boost business and job creation, and foster the region's competitiveness through sustainable growth and multi-sector cooperation. Extensive international networks and good connections

to the rest of Europe add to the accessibility and international competitiveness of Helsinki-Uusimaa and Finland as a whole. We are a forerunner in know-how and education and invest in their continuous renewal and improvement.

In the happiest region in Europe, the well-being of people lays the foundation for vitality and prosperity. We advance inter-municipal cooperation, offer affordable housing and maintain transport connections that promote smooth and accessible life. We recognise immigrants' skills, and they find work and become an integral part of society. Language training, internship opportunities and cooperation with employers ease the transition to working life. We care for the younger generations and make sure everyone has equal opportunities for education, employment and participation wherever they live.



Priorities and objectives

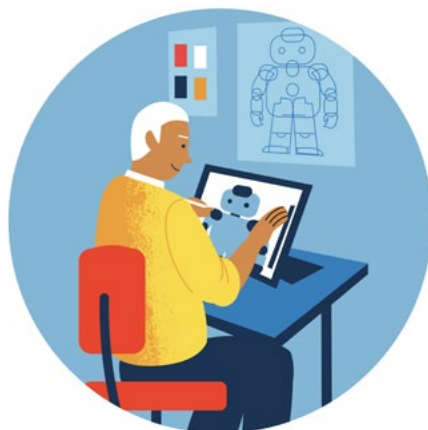
This programme sets out three priorities – Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa, Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa and Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa – which reinforce the region’s vision of being the happiest, most innovative and environmentally smartest region in Europe. These priorities are closely intertwined and partly complementary: for example, the attainment of our climate neutrality targets depends on RDI solutions, the natural environment improves residents’ well-being, and regional viability drives residents’ well-being and employment. The well-being and diversity of the population foster the development of new innovations. Art and culture, on the other hand, enforce our ecological sustainability, promote innovativeness and well-being, and facilitate the implementation of all the programme’s priorities.



Priority 1: Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa

Helsinki-Uusimaa strives for climate neutrality by 2030, followed by carbon-negativity where the region's carbon sinks exceed its greenhouse gas emissions. We take action to halt the decline in biodiversity and to improve the environment. We moderate the use of natural resources and actively promote the circular economy. At the same time, we focus on operational and supply security and environmental safety, and improve our adaptability and preparedness for the impacts of climate change.

- ✓ **Main objective:** Helsinki-Uusimaa is the environmentally smartest region in Europe.
- » **Indicators:** Greenhouse gas emissions, carbon sinks and nature reserves



Priority 2: Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa

We provide a fertile platform for fresh ideas, innovative solutions and successful business which create new jobs and new exports. Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa promotes RDI, which serves as a catalyst for the renewal of the entire region and enables growth within the planet's biocapacity. Our RDI activities seek to solve complex global problems with a multidisciplinary approach. Helsinki-Uusimaa's competitiveness is built on cooperation between companies, universities and research institutes, as well as on nationally and internationally acclaimed innovation ecosystems that attract talent, partners and investments.

- ✓ **Main objective:** Helsinki-Uusimaa is the most innovative region in Europe.
- » **Indicator:** Regional Innovation Scoreboard



Priority 3: Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa

Helsinki-Uusimaa is safe and happy. People enjoy services, culture, nature and affordable housing in non-segregated neighbourhoods. Resident participation is strong and education is of a high standard. Public services and the third sector support the integration of immigrants and create avenues which facilitate social integration. Helsinki-Uusimaa seeks to be the best region in Finland for learning, which requires investments in education resources. Youth employment and the well-being and inclusion of the younger generations are supported.

- ✓ **Main objective:** Helsinki-Uusimaa is Europe's leading region in well-being.
- » **Indicator:** EU Social Progress Index

The programme's priorities and objectives are consistent with EU policies, and align with relevant EU programmes and strategies:



Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa

Climate neutrality target → [The European Green Deal](#) and [European Climate law](#)

Biodiversity, circular economy → [The EU's Biodiversity Strategy](#)



Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa

RDI-driven growth → [The New European Innovation Agenda](#) and [Competitiveness compass](#)

Cross-sectoral approach → [Smart Specialisation Strategies](#)



Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa

Inclusion, education and well-being → [European Pillar of Social Rights](#)

Quality of life, culture and a good living environment → [The New European Bauhaus Initiative](#)

Figure 3. Alignment of the priorities of the 'Helsinki-Uusimaa, a Region of Solutions – Pioneer in Finland, Forerunner in Europe' programme with relevant EU policies.



Priority 1: Environmentally Smart Helsinki- Uusimaa

Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa seeks to tackle the ecological sustainability crisis and create solutions for a more sustainable future in Europe. The green transition and its promotion are at the heart of our activities. We will cut our greenhouse gas emissions and enhance carbon sequestration. The transition to the circular economy reduces the impact of production and consumption on the climate and the environment. We promote sustainable land use, smart transport and environmentally conscious lifestyles. The bioeconomy is developed and the food system reformed within the limits of ecological sustainability. By addressing climate resilience, operational reliability and environmental safety, we make the region stronger. Municipalities will be better prepared for changing weather and climate conditions, and can adapt to climate change both fairly and proactively. New methods and common indicators will promote nature positivity and strengthen the earth's ecological carrying capacity. Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa has three objectives: a nature-positive Helsinki-Uusimaa; a carbon-negative circular economy; and a climate-resilient region.

1.1 Nature-positive Helsinki-Uusimaa

Biodiversity is the foundation of all life. Food production, carbon sequestration and the availability of clean drinking water all depend on it. The nature-positive Helsinki-Uusimaa builds up the well-being of its residents and recognises the importance of cultural landscapes as an inter-generational experience.

The region's population growth, resulting construction pressures and other human activities accelerate biodiversity loss and the

fragmentation of habitats. Our green areas and water bodies are increasingly exposed to climate change, the impacts of traffic and consumption, and other disturbances. Investments in the green transition may also threaten biodiversity by increasing construction outside existing built-up areas. By directing green-transition projects to areas with already existing structures, we can reduce their detrimental impact.

Helsinki-Uusimaa promotes nature positivity by reversing the trend in biodiversity from negative to positive. In practice, this is achieved by reducing the negative impact of land use on biodiversity, improving the condition of natural environments and increasing biodiversity in suitable areas, including the built environment.

Helsinki-Uusimaa promotes the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. The network of nature conservation areas is grown through voluntary means. As in other regions of Finland, the National Biodiversity Strategy and its objectives are pursued by preparing a region-specific biodiversity action plan.

Ecosystem restoration aims to recover biodiversity and vital services in areas altered by human actions. In safeguarding natural values, the preservation

of old forests is particularly important, but this does not mean disregarding more 'ordinary' nature. In order for the ecological network to function effectively, we must also pay attention to areas which have no special conservation value but which support the movement of wildlife and keep ecosystems functional. The built environment and sites used for forestry, agriculture and infrastructure must also contribute to the connectivity and diversity of green areas. Overall, we must halt the net decline in forests, fields and urban green areas and reverse the negative trend.

The natural environment has a significant impact on people's health and sense of well-being. By ensuring that every resident has access to their local natural space, we can add to their connectedness to nature and deepen their appreciation of the environment. Furthermore, Helsinki-Uusimaa's diverse nature and outdoor activities are tourist attractions whose potential has not yet been fully exploited. That said, all tourism must be sustainable, responsible and sensitive to its impact on nature.

The recovery of nature requires a shift to more sustainable behaviour, which in turn requires amendments to social and economic structures and a change in our values and attitudes. Verification of any nature-positive developments calls for regular, more



comprehensive monitoring of the state of ecosystems and their species. In addition, we need to enhance our understanding of the combined effects of human activities on ecosystems (e.g. ecological footprint) and measures that transcend ecosystem boundaries. For example, the restoration of marine areas and water bodies alone will not lead to the desired long-term effects if the water pollution caused by agriculture and forestry is not adequately addressed.

To halt biodiversity loss, we need a more coherent system of incentives and regulations that contributes to the strengthening of biodiversity. Public funding should promote measures which drive holistic improvement and not lead to deterioration in natural assets elsewhere. We should identify the impacts and risks to nature, with the primary aim of avoiding harm, and the secondary aim of mitigating it. Ecological compensation where the party causing the damage to nature compensates for the impacts elsewhere should always be the last resort.

The nature value market offers companies and municipalities a financial incentive for voluntary nature conservation measures. To promote nature positivity, we need financing and compensation instruments that support the rehabilitation of environmental systems. Here,

extensive cooperation across municipal and regional borders is crucial, supported by active citizen participation.

1.2 Carbon-negative circular economy

A key cause of climate change and the decline in biodiversity is the overconsumption of natural resources. Helsinki-Uusimaa strives for a systemic change towards a carbon-negative circular economy that creates equitable well-being within the limits set by the environment. We continue our work towards climate neutrality. After reaching that goal, our next target is carbon-negativity, where carbon sinks permanently exceed emissions.

The circular economy seeks to reduce the use of raw materials, utilise existing materials and products more wisely and increase their value, develop shared services and improve the intangible quality of life. It operates within the Earth's carrying capacity and takes persistent steps towards resource efficiency and sustainability. Added resilience and self-sufficiency also promote social cohesion and inclusion. A reduction in consumption-based emissions across the public and private sectors is achieved by making sustainable purchases, adopting environmentally friendly production methods, and prioritising reuse, repair and

sharing. When purchasing new products, options with the lowest possible environmental impact are favoured. Public procurement can promote the circular economy by evaluating suppliers against emission and nature criteria, and by imposing requirements for the use of recycled and reusable materials and extended product life-cycles.

Fossil fuel phase-out will increase the demand for renewable electricity. The challenge going ahead is to ensure sufficient energy supply and investment capacity while supporting the green transition and electrification and safeguarding the wellbeing of the residents. We seek to build energy systems that strengthen Helsinki-Uusimaa's position as a forerunner in the green transition and support the hydrogen economy, particularly in industry, transport and energy storage. We support smart solutions in renewable energy production, energy storage and energy sector integration. At the same time, we curb demand by improving energy efficiency and reducing consumption. We promote the utilisation of waste heat and develop biogas and hydrogen solutions for transport and industry needs. In regard to data centres, their environmental impacts are managed by assessing issues related to their location, energy consumption and waste heat utilisation.

In construction, climate impacts can be significantly reduced by using low-emission and resource-efficient solutions throughout the building's life cycle. We aim to utilise existing building stock more efficiently and promote the circular economy in construction. Instead of demolishing buildings, we improve their energy efficiency, extend their service life and favour recyclable, low-carbon materials. By locating new-builds close to existing infrastructure, we reduce the need for additional construction and support sustainable mobility. Work to preserve cultural heritage continues by identifying new sites of cultural and regional importance.

Sustainable mobility is best promoted by densifying community structures and by developing transport infrastructure networks, especially in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Improved rail transport will strengthen the core network of efficient, low-carbon public transport. Well-organised public transport and seamless travel chains serve locals and visitors alike. In areas where it is difficult to provide public transport, we concentrate on travel demand management and park-and-ride facilities. Walking and cycling are sustainable modes of transport, and we plan to create a regional cycling network over the coming years.

In order to promote environmental wisdom and energy efficiency in transport, we employ digital solutions and low-emission technologies by e.g.

enhancing the infrastructure for gas, electricity and other alternative fuels, and rolling out more recharging and refuelling stations. The development of transport-sharing services, low-emission urban logistics, micro-logistics and drone transport will add to resource efficiency and emissions reduction.

The largest material flows in Helsinki-Uusimaa are generated by construction, earthworks, demolition waste, plastics and textiles. Managing these flows will streamline supply chains and reduce environmental impacts. Logistics optimisation and digital solutions, such as geographic information systems and material passports, enable the efficient collection, sorting and reuse of materials.

Forests constitute the most significant carbon sink and carbon store in Helsinki-Uusimaa. Based on calculations, our current forest carbon sink is weak: this is a problem we need to tackle by reducing deforestation and curbing logging to levels which do not exceed forests' regeneration capacity. We employ forest management practices which will increase the carbon sequestration of forests and reduce greenhouse emissions from the soil. Here, financial incentives for forest owners to keep their forests intact play an important role. Stronger carbon sinks also support biodiversity. The largest carbon stores are often found in areas of high natural value.

In agriculture, carbon sequestration can be increased and emissions reduced through regenerative farming practices that improve soil health and the soil's ability to sequester carbon and water. This supports a broader transition to a regenerative, ecologically and economically sustainable food system based on local and responsible food production, water resilience (preparedness and adaptation to disruptions in the water system), a preference for locally sourced food, and reducing food waste. Public food services, digital solutions and bio-based innovations will lead the way in promoting the circular economy.



We support smart solutions in renewable energy production, energy storage and energy sector integration.

1.3 Climate-resilient region

The evolution of climate change, with its direct and indirect effects, plays an increasingly important role in managing the overall sustainability and adaptability of our region and its green transition. The Helsinki-Uusimaa



Regional Adaptation Plan compiles the key adaptation needs and measures to counter the most significant risks. Its implementation will strengthen our climate resilience.

Growing global need to adapt to climate change drives us to innovate new practices, products and services. In times of global turmoil, we have become increasingly aware of the importance of safety, self-sufficiency, security of supply, and environmental emergency preparedness. We seek solutions that provide multiple co-benefits and help us achieve various sustainability goals simultaneously. Above all, climate change mitigation and adaptation measures must be compatible and complementary and not cause harm to nature or people.

The built environment carries significant economic value and must be safeguarded against the risks and economic damage caused by climate change. Zoning, environmental design, construction and new technologies play a key role in improving the climate resilience of buildings and infrastructure. With increasing extreme weather events, the reliability of our critical infrastructure – energy, water, transport and communications systems – is more important than ever. In critical investments, we must assess the climate impacts over their full life-cycle and ensure that the effects of climate change do not reduce the value or usability of the investments.

Green areas provide protection against the environmental and health hazards caused by extreme weather events. In addition, they enhance the adaptability of the built environment and promote environmental safety in the region. Nature-based solutions in buildings, blocks and city districts provide health benefits and add to comfort and biodiversity. In urban areas, we require multi-functional areas that serve residents and enhance adaptability. Physical structures must foster a sense of community and cater to the needs of the entire population, especially children, the elderly and other vulnerable groups.

Agriculture and forestry are key sectors in adapting to climate change. Regenerative agriculture ensures soil health and sufficient water resources while catering to sustainable food production. Forests play an important dual role: on the one hand, they provide raw materials for industry and, through added value, offer an alternative to fossil-based products; while on the other hand, they are irreplaceable ecosystems and crucial for the water cycle, groundwater formation and the vitality of countless species. As recreational environments, forests contribute to human well-being and create opportunities for nature-based tourism.

Helsinki-Uusimaa's coastal and archipelago habitats are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The protection of marine and coastal areas must be promoted, and cooperation between regional actors strengthened. In order to improve the ecosystems of the Baltic Sea, we must find ways to reduce the nutrient load from



Adaptation is a continuous process which aims to manage uncertainties and curb human costs and economic losses.

the mainland. Maritime transport involves significant safety and environmental risks which call for greater preparedness and additional resources for prevention. That said, maritime logistics, port operations and their development are important to the economy and enhance supply security in Helsinki-Uusimaa and Finland as a whole.

Water resilience and strengthening it play a key role in building our climate and crisis resilience. In order to manage the risks of climate change, drought and flood, we need smart solutions, water-cycle restoration and protection of critical water infrastructure. The availability of energy and clean water is essential for society's adaptability. The green transition is likely to increase industry's demand for clean water, a factor which must be taken into account in our water supply capacity and water sufficiency calculations. Growth in electricity consumption calls for a sufficient balance between supply and demand so as to ensure availability and keep the price of electricity reasonable for all users.

Adaptation is a continuous process which aims to manage uncertainties and curb human costs and economic losses. By utilising the latest information, we can ensure that our measures

are timely and correctly targeted. During their planning and implementation, we must consider not only their efficiency and effectiveness, but also their social dimension. Adaptation measures must not reinforce inequality: on the contrary, they must aid in building up a more equitable society. By addressing needs, especially those of the most vulnerable groups, we can guarantee everyone equal opportunities to cushion the negative effects of the changes. Any benefits must be shared fairly.

Investments in environmental safety will ensure that risks related to the environment and natural resources do not jeopardise the functioning and safety of our society. In Helsinki-Uusimaa, investments in climate change mitigation, energy transition and international supply chains are of particular importance. When reinforcing environmental safety, the promotion of the circular economy, renewable energy and local solutions for nutrient-cycling and utilisation of materials yield positive results. They reduce our dependence on imported raw materials and improve our supply security. And by finding solutions that also mitigate environmental risks, we can create new business opportunities and improve the resilience of the entire region.



Priority 2: Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa

Helsinki-Uusimaa's research, development and innovation (RDI) activities seek to find solutions to global challenges and create opportunities for the region's success. We have defined priorities and aligned them with resources and funding streams. We promote cooperation between the public and private sectors and support the growth, renewal and internationalisation of companies. Mutual interaction, good leadership, occupational well-being, internationality and multiculturalism provide a basis for creative solutions and innovations. We strive to raise the level of education, encourage continuous learning and increase Helsinki-Uusimaa's educational resources. By engaging internationally, we promote local knowhow and succeed in the competition for skilled labour. The Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa priority has three objectives: European accelerator of innovations; Networks for economic development and investments; and Helsinki-Uusimaa Region of expertise.

2.1 European accelerator of innovations

Helsinki-Uusimaa aims to become the most innovative region in Europe by promoting innovation, investing in the innovation potential of SMEs and raising educational attainment levels. We encourage innovativeness and strengthen experimental environments and innovation platforms in the region's research institutes, higher education institutions, cities and villages, supporting high-quality research,

development and innovation of international interest. Smart specialisation is an innovation policy for European regions which helps them to identify their key strengths and areas for development. In Helsinki-Uusimaa, the spearheads of smart specialisation are defined by the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council in cooperation with the key RDI actors in the region. They seek solutions to major global

challenges such as climate change, inequality, an ageing population and threats to security. The RDI priorities are supported in particular during the early stages of research and development, and when building up regional ecosystems. The aim is to scale the activities to the international and EU levels, drawing on both national and EU funding.

RDI priorities in Helsinki-Uusimaa

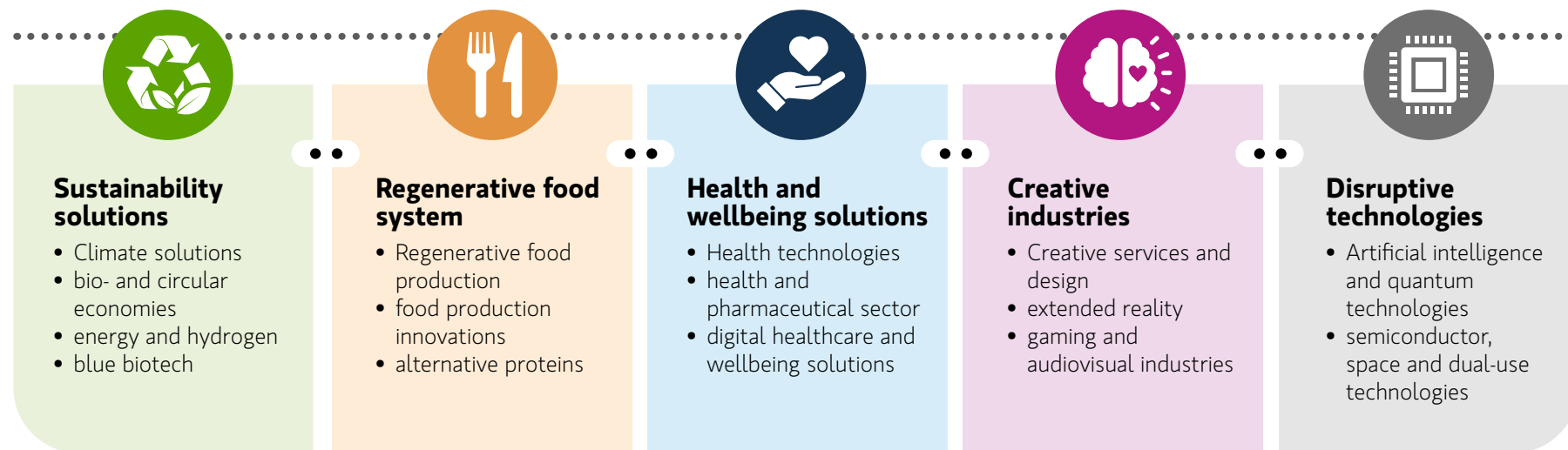


Figure 4. RDI priorities in Helsinki-Uusimaa

Sustainability solutions focus on innovations and operating models that strive to provide answers to various sustainability issues under the Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa priority. They focus in particular on climate- and nature-based solutions, the bio- and circular economies, new energy solutions and hydrogen expertise, blue biotech, and related business models. Climate- and nature-based solutions support Helsinki-Uusimaa's goals of climate neutrality and nature positivity. The theme also encompasses electric vehicles and other solutions combatting transport emissions. The bioeconomy makes use of renewable natural resources and promotes innovative solutions, while the circular economy focuses on the more efficient recycling of products and materials. Hydrogen expertise is connected to clean energy production and logistics and is an essential step towards a carbon-negative future. Blue biotech, on the other hand, studies marine organisms and their potential in developing new energy sources, chemicals, foodstuffs, medicines and other products.

The regenerative food system theme encompasses regenerative farming and food production, innovations in the food system, alternative proteins and cellular agriculture. In Helsinki-Uusimaa, we acknowledge the need for food system renewal and understand its RDI potential. The aim of the regenerative food

system is to introduce new innovations to strengthen regional food security and self-sufficiency and to improve the competitiveness of the entire food chain. Helsinki-Uusimaa aims to become an innovative and sustainable producer and distributor of food, and to turn innovations in food production into new export products.

RDI activities in health and well-being focus on preventive health solutions, mental well-being, health technologies, and the health and pharmaceutical sector. In digital solutions, applications of artificial intelligence in healthcare are an area of particular interest. The theme is closely anchored in the health and liveability of everyday environments. Helsinki-Uusimaa has a lot of potential in these sectors, especially in healthcare technologies and digital services. In the future, the social and healthcare sector will require a significant amount of additional hands, and digital solutions can help serve some of this demand. Helsinki-Uusimaa is home to one of Europe's most productive research and education communities in the field, integrating research, education and healthcare into a coherent whole.



The creative industries theme covers creative sectors and design, extended reality, immersive experiences, and the audiovisual and gaming industries. Strengthening the RDI activities in creative industries offers significant

opportunities in the region. Technology is a useful tool for improving social well-being, but in order to work, it needs to be fused with creativity. Alongside technology, innovations that tackle societal challenges are just as important. The higher education institutions in the arts and creative industries combined with a broad business base strengthens Helsinki-Uusimaa's position on the path to becoming a European leader in this field. Finland's creative-industry talent and jobs are concentrated in the region. Arts and culture should be an integral part of the entire education path and acknowledged as a basis for innovation. Creative thinking is a civic skill that helps us find solutions to complex problems, and plays a vital role in developing both the business sector and public services.

Disruptive technologies are key enablers across all sectors. Core areas include: artificial intelligence and quantum technologies; semiconductor, space and energy technologies; and dual-use technology solutions. Disruptive technologies refer to technological innovations that displace established technologies in the market and can transform the dynamics of entire industries. The creation of such technologies is only half of the equation, as we also need to know how to apply them. Helsinki-Uusimaa is an international frontrunner in artificial intelligence and quantum technologies,

with particular expertise in space, energy and semiconductor technologies. The region also has the potential to strengthen its position in dual-use technologies that benefit both civilian and defence applications. In the future, more and more EU funding will be allocated to security and its enforcement. In this race, Helsinki-Uusimaa can lean on its technological expertise and significant defence-sector



innovation clusters, and cooperation between them should be further strengthened. RDI plays an important role in solving security challenges. We need further investments in the security sector and in the protection of critical infrastructure. To further its RDI priorities, Helsinki-Uusimaa needs regional, national and international investments, more EU funding and an increasing number of domestic and international companies. To date, Helsinki-Uusimaa has attracted a very limited amount of foreign RDI investments, an area which will need more attention in the future. Where investments are concerned, international accessibility is vital, and its improvement would benefit the competitiveness of Finland as a whole.

2.2 Networks for economic development and investments

Helsinki-Uusimaa's future vitality and competitiveness are built on comprehensive inter-municipal cooperation that brings together educational and research institutions, businesses, and public and private sector actors. RDI plays a crucial role in the industrial-sector renewal and growth in corporate productivity. The aim is to create a region-wide innovation ecosystem which promotes effective cooperation between actors and attracts systematic investments in jointly agreed R&D areas.

We want to strengthen business clusters throughout the region, identify potential areas for green-transition investments and business activities, and ensure that the advantages and disadvantages of development are distributed evenly. [VISIO](#), our innovative plan for the green



Rail network development is important, as it extends the area of potential professional mobility, improves accessibility and increases the attractiveness of the region from an investment perspective.

transition in Helsinki-Uusimaa, will support this. Once completed, this thematic plan and its specifications and profiles will enhance zoning, help identify and reserve potential areas for green-transition activities, and attract investments to the region.

Rail network development is important, as it extends the area of potential professional mobility, improves accessibility and increases the attractiveness of the region from an investment perspective. In addition to the new rail corridors under planning – the Airport Line, the West Railway, the East Railway and the Helsinki-Tallinn tunnel – we must improve existing rail connections and develop other key transport routes, such as Highway 25. International connections (such as the Helsinki-Tallinn tunnel and good, reliable air links) are essential components of ensuring the competitiveness and international accessibility of the region. They support its economy and promote tourism and labour mobility, and reinforce the region's position as part of the European transport network. New road connections like Ring Road IV and the west-east logistics corridor in Central Helsinki-Uusimaa improve logistics and heavy-traffic management. The implementation of heavy-traffic service areas, particularly in the area between Ring Road III and Highway 25, is also important.

Exploiting the full potential of the green transition, the circular economy and RDI activities requires closer cooperation between regional and national actors. The public sector can aid in this process by creating a proactive and innovation-friendly environment and providing the necessary structures, where private-sector actors can leverage their market orientation and risk-taking capacity. We want to enable both small and large municipalities and companies in Helsinki-Uusimaa to participate in the region's innovation networks and activities. This will support the utilisation of new technologies in the implementation of the sustainability transition, the promotion of well-being and as a source of sustainable growth.

Stronger networks are particularly important for the region's small and medium-sized companies, which often lack the resources needed for large-scale research and development projects. Business creation, growth and internationalisation will be supported through versatile business services covering the entire life-cycle of companies, from their establishment to growth and succession. These services must be customer-oriented, with smooth and effective communication and cooperation between the organising parties. Here, we need to identify the companies that will benefit most from the services, regardless of their size, sector or stage in their life-cycle.

This requires knowledge of the local business environment and the ability to utilise the expertise and financing potential of service providers. And since companies cannot grow or internationalise without a sufficient, skilled workforce, we also need to invest in services that facilitate employment and recruitment.

The benefits of research, innovation and development spread through experimentation. To this end, Helsinki-Uusimaa will facilitate experimental activities under various themes and offer facilities for this purpose. Cooperation between educational and research institutions and companies provides a foundation for testing and experimentation. Helsinki-Uusimaa invests in innovative testing and experimentation environments where businesses, students and researchers can test their innovations in real life. Public procurements by municipalities can contribute to innovative experiments and solutions, and at the same time provide Finnish companies with the references they need on the global market. Third-sector actors like associations, organisations, cooperatives and villages also play an important role by supporting the implementation of the programme with local solutions. Cities and municipalities are encouraged to support these bottom-up trials and innovations.

International projects, partnerships and networks provide access to the latest research

data and opportunities for innovation testing. At the same time, they attract new companies, experts and investments to Helsinki-Uusimaa by highlighting the region's strengths and opportunities in international contexts. RDI actors need information on the available sources of funding and support in building up project consortia. And by offering local actors information and advice on funding instruments and other topics, we support their participation in EU and other international projects and networks.

Helsinki-Uusimaa is a hub of knowhow and deserves to be marketed as such. Systematic cooperation increases its appeal and retention power and adds to the region's growth and vitality. Helsinki-Uusimaa forms a unified commuting area, with nine employment areas that liaise in meeting local labour needs. Smooth cross-border collaboration and international labour recruitment and settlement services pave the way to success.

2.3 Helsinki-Uusimaa Region of expertise

In order to achieve its goals of growing RDI activities, renewing industries and creating innovative solutions in higher education institutions and companies alike, Helsinki-Uusimaa needs skilled labour. Higher educational attainment levels and

competence-building require sufficient resources at a national level. By allocating resources to RDI activities in higher education institutions, we ensure that future experts gain a high-quality education and can smoothly integrate into working life.

By promoting RDI based on cooperation between companies, research institutes and universities and other educational institutions with their centres of excellence, we can create expert jobs and attract foreign investment and skilled workers to the region. In Helsinki-Uusimaa, we must build models that deepen collaboration between secondary schools, universities, research institutes and companies, lead to greater expertise, and ensure the availability of skilled labour. Creativity is a vital part of RDI: regardless of one's field or educational background, creativity paves the way for radical innovation.

Universities and other educational institutions in Helsinki-Uusimaa attract students from other parts of Finland and from abroad. However, when looking at the number of places available at higher education institutions in relation to the younger population, we can see that there are fewer openings in Helsinki-Uusimaa than there are in other regions in the country. By increasing the number of places and strengthening overall resources, we avoid compromises in education and make sure that

everyone willing to study and upskill can be offered the opportunity to do so.

Investments in quality education and its relevance to working life ensure that employers find employees who meet their needs and that this process is smooth and efficient. In Finland, the rise in education levels has stalled, and we are now below the OECD average in tertiary attainment. Higher education would boost productivity and innovation and enhance the competitiveness of Helsinki-Uusimaa companies. The education provided has to match working-life needs, and this calls for close cooperation between educational institutions and employers. Diverse business collaboration at different stages of studies, comprehensive career services and mentoring programmes and other measures that encourage closer links between educational institutions and businesses will smooth the transition from student life to working life.

To improve labour-market matching we must facilitate dialogue on skills needs between employers and educators. We invest in competence building, adult education and all forms of skills development through smooth cooperation between employers and education establishments. Organisations and companies investing in learning and renewal increase the competitiveness of the entire region. As

the population ages, continuous learning will play an increasingly important role in occupational well-being and extending careers. To keep up with the ever-evolving advances in technology and artificial intelligence, we must continuously update and expand our skills and knowledge. Digital skills, problem-solving and communication are key civic skills, and we need



to make sure that every resident in the region can maintain them at an adequate level.

International students are an asset to Helsinki-Uusimaa. To keep educated professionals in the region, we must help them find employment and settle in. Cooperation between higher education institutions and employers and the provision of internships play an important role and anchor the students to the area. In order to improve the labour-market situation in Helsinki-Uusimaa, we will increase labour immigration and facilitate the entry and employment of international talent. Work-based immigration is needed in many sectors, especially in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, but also in other parts of the region.

Recent restrictions on national immigration policies have reduced Finland's attractiveness in a situation where we compete for skilled labour with other Baltic Sea metropolises. For this reason, promoting work-based immigration in the Helsinki-Uusimaa region is crucial to the whole of Finland. To successfully attract international talent, support their settlement, and recognise and utilise the skills of immigrants, we need extensive cooperation, particularly between public-sector actors. In addition, we need immigration policies that reflect openness to international experts and that attract them to Finland.



Priority 3: Happy Helsinki- Uusimaa

Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa is a home to playing children, optimistic and enthusiastic adolescents and active, responsible adults. It is a place driven by development, intergenerational interaction and a sense of community. Helsinki-Uusimaa is a diverse metropolitan region whose municipalities form a cohesive whole. Affordable housing, efficient transport connections and accessibility support its vitality and prevent regional segregation. Preparedness and resident participation contribute to safety and crisis resilience. Helsinki-Uusimaa is open to new residents, and the integration of immigrants is promoted through services and opportunities for language-learning and participation. We invest in the well-being, education and inclusion of children and adolescents to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities for a good future. We nurture the younger generation's optimism about the future and tackle social exclusion and mental-health challenges. Youth employment is supported in cooperation between employers and educational institutions. The Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa priority has three objectives: a diverse metropolitan region; a good region in which to integrate; and work and well-being for the younger generation.

3.1 Diverse metropolitan region

Helsinki-Uusimaa is the only metropolitan region in Finland. Large cities, growing surrounding municipalities and vibrant rural areas form a unique whole. By promoting inter-municipal cooperation, accessibility and interaction, we bridge the gap between rural and urban areas and build on the strengths of the region. Helsinki-Uusimaa's diversity is reflected in the industries, population development and economic divergence of its areas. The viability of small municipalities, local communities and local actors is fostered through active cooperation and networking.

Improving the accessibility and transport connections of Helsinki-Uusimaa is essential for the vitality of the region, environmental sustainability and the well-being of its residents. The accessibility of municipal centres and Helsinki city centre from all parts of the region by public transport is imperative for the comprehensive development of the region and the inclusion of more remote areas. In addition to transport, accessibility is improved by good telecommunications

connections, cyber security and digital skills. Accessibility investments are also a safety issue and play an important role in enhancing our supply security.

A compact and well-connected community structure reduces the need for travel and improves the accessibility of services. Land-use planning and transport system planning enable smooth everyday life also without a



car, bringing both environmental and health benefits. We continue developing our regional cycle path network and encourage the transition from driving to cycling. Sustainable transport options must be easy and affordable and thus accessible to all.

Across the region, and in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area in particular, the lack of affordable housing is a challenge that affects residents' daily lives and undermines the vitality of the region. Good housing means having a home that is affordable, suits one's current life situation and is located in a place that enables smooth daily living. This requires consideration of regional characteristics and cooperation across municipal borders. Economically and socially sustainable land policies diversify the housing supply and add to the vitality, economic stability and well-being of municipalities and their residents. The availability of services and labour requires that the places where people live and work are located within a reasonable distance from one another and are connected by strong transport links. The housing supply must be developed evenly throughout the region with new construction and complementary building in a way that

balances population structures and prevents segregation. Investments in services, affordable housing, residential comfort and well-functioning transport connections all have an anti-segregation, safety-enhancing effect.

Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa is built on the well-being of its residents. Community drives trust in other people and thus adds to social integrity. We tackle marginalisation, racism and bullying, and prevent violence (in general, and violence against women in particular), making the region a safer place to live. We endorse diverse means of participation, the right to freely express one's opinions in the media, at demonstrations or elsewhere, and various forms of social activism, and see them as telltale signs of a functioning democracy. By allowing different views to be expressed as part of public debate, we strengthen trust in the government and protect society from extremism and organised violent radicalisation.

Preparedness for crises and exceptional situations is an increasingly important civic skill that strengthens society's resilience. Such situations may relate to critical infrastructure – water, electricity or telecommunications – and its vulnerabilities, or extreme conditions caused by natural phenomena. Pandemics and military threats can also cause anomalies. Preparedness requires readiness, expertise and understanding

of crises, disruptions and exceptional circumstances and their effects. This means the ability to anticipate accidents and abnormal or dangerous situations, and to act and adapt in response to them. These skills and capabilities must be honed and strengthened.

Through local democracy and dialogue and cooperation between municipalities and their residents, we make our living environment safer and encourage resident participation. By including people in the planning of their surroundings and improving public participation in land use planning processes, we not only increase residents' attachment to their area, but also end up making decisions that are more in line with their needs. Community and participation in decision-making spark appreciation for the living environment and motivation for its preservation.

3.2 Good region in which to integrate

Helsinki-Uusimaa needs new people to ensure an adequate workforce and to maintain its services. New residents and their families must be recognised as full members of society while also promoting the inclusion of those who have lived here longer. Successful integration means learning the language, becoming attached to the community, forming

social relationships and finding employment. In addition to work or education, immigrants must have equal opportunities to participate in society. Immigration must be promoted through fair policies that support well-being and the region's vitality. To this end, we must eradicate structural discrimination, actively combat



racism and create a respectful atmosphere in schools, workplaces and other social environments. As host communities for new residents, municipalities play an important role in building immigrants' sense of belonging.

Integration requires cooperation from society and immigrants alike. A person's own active participation is important, but so are smooth and easily accessible integration services. Proficiency in Finnish or Swedish and an understanding of Finnish culture and its rules are of the essence. Integration should never be hindered by administrative boundaries, and the acquisition of the necessary skills and competencies should be as easy as possible. Well-functioning services support both settlement and integration, and can strengthen regional attractiveness. The third sector, working alongside the public sector, plays a significant role in promoting integration. When integration is successful, immigrants adapt to their new setting, and society in turn adapts to its increasing diversity.

Work and entrepreneurship are the best means by which to integrate. The most effective way to become part of Finnish society is to join the workforce or start a business. In receptive and inclusive work communities, foreign employees feel welcome, enjoy themselves and choose to stay. From the employer's perspective, this may require a fresh approach or an attitude

check. For example, in jobs that do not actually require proficiency in Finnish, could they offer greater flexibility regarding language skill requirements? On the other hand, foreigners coming here to study in English-language degree programmes would benefit from additional language-teaching, because after graduation they usually need at least basic Finnish skills to enter the job market.

The employment rate of immigrant women is often lower than that of men. In order to prevent immigrant women from being excluded from society, we must invest in their language and integration training. The integration of children and adolescents is facilitated by supporting their participation in early childhood education and leisure activities. Culture and sports play an important role in integration. Participation in local events, cultural activities and sports clubs promotes equality, provides access to Finnish culture and the local community, and fosters social inclusion.

3.3 Work and well-being for the younger generation

The young are the makers of the future, and their well-being is particularly important. They must have opportunities to gain an education and find employment, and to start a family if they so wish. Unemployment in Helsinki-Uusimaa has remained at a high level in recent

years. The situation is particularly dire among the highly educated and recent graduates, even though education has traditionally been a protective factor against unemployment. The number of so-called NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training) is relatively higher in Helsinki-Uusimaa than it is in Stockholm, Copenhagen or Oslo. Work is a key prerequisite for livelihood and well-being, and improving youth employment is therefore our priority. The previous programme set a target of raising the employment rate in Helsinki-Uusimaa to 80% – a goal which still stands. Unemployment is detrimental because it hinders young people's integration into society and delays their independence and career-building. If prolonged, it makes it difficult to earn a living, affects mental well-being and undermines self-esteem. We aim to increase the graduation rate of the young and to promote their access to working life. We foster cooperation between education and working life by increasing the availability of internships and summer jobs and by providing entrepreneurship education and training. By anticipating education and competence needs, we give priority to sectors with the highest employment potential.

Early childhood education, comprehensive education and upper-secondary education play a key role in building a sustainable and prosperous future. In a region of happy young

people, all children and adolescents have equal opportunities for education, regardless of their background and place of residence. Safety in Helsinki-Uusimaa is strengthened through education, culture and a diverse civil society. General knowledge is a civic skill that enables participation in society, helps us understand the surrounding world and makes us more open to diversity. The ability to process information critically is essential amid the increasing flows of both information and misinformation on e.g. the internet. Education resources must not be reduced, but increased, since comprehensive schools must provide everyone with an equally strong educational foundation and skills to play a full and active role in society. Furthermore, high-quality comprehensive education serves as an important basis for higher education.

Education increases well-being, employment opportunities and social mobility. Negative trends in the intergenerational transmission of educational attainment can be broken by supporting access to secondary and higher education regardless of parents' educational background. Learning-friendly facilities, high-quality teaching materials and educational support available to every child and adolescent are essential prerequisites for learning. Learning difficulties and related risks must be identified at an early stage and countered. Intergenerational exclusion is prevented through family services, early childhood

education and educational support measures. Smooth and affordable transport connections from outlying areas to city centres and vice versa, both within and between municipalities, also support the well-being of the young and broaden their worldview. By ensuring that immigrants have adequate language proficiency, we make certain that insufficient skills in Finnish or Swedish do not become an obstacle to education, employment or social inclusion. In Helsinki-Uusimaa, the lower level of education among children with an immigrant background and their under-representation in higher education presents a particular challenge and makes the goal of higher educational attainment levels more difficult to achieve.

The mental-health challenges, substance-abuse issues and concerns over day-to-day livelihood among children and adolescents deserve serious attention, additional resources and more preventive work. Youth work plays a key role, as do mental health services, where service chains must function smoothly across administrative boundaries. Creating a safe and optimistic environment, free from bullying and violence, is important, especially in schools, which are a central social environment and community in young people's everyday lives. Enjoying school is important not only for their mental well-being and self-esteem, but also for learning outcomes, study motivation and decisions to go on to further studies.

The Finnish model for leisure activities, which is a project of the Ministry of Education and Culture, aims to enable every child and young person to engage in a free hobby, and thereby promote inclusion and mental well-being. This model needs to be maintained and developed further. The younger generation's interest in and opportunities for social participation must be supported. By listening to and involving them in decision-making, we can offer them better services, strengthen their agency and foster their belief in a positive future.



Work is a key prerequisite for livelihood and well-being, and improving youth employment is therefore our priority.

Implementation and monitoring



The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council will draw up roadmaps to refine the objectives of the programme and guide their implementation.

The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council will draw up roadmaps to refine the objectives of the programme and guide their implementation. Each roadmap will focus on a specific priority. The programme is primarily implemented through projects by development actors in Helsinki-Uusimaa: municipalities, higher education institutions, vocational education providers, regional chambers of commerce and various associations. The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council will work with the municipalities and other actors and promote implementation via active dialogue and cooperation. Networks, partnerships and collaborations will drive implementation at the local, intra- and interregional, and international levels. The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council works actively to utilise its networks for the benefit of local actors and to bring different parties together.

The central government and the Helsinki-Uusimaa region hold annual meetings to discuss issues related to regional development. These discussions are based on reviews of the region's operating environment.

At the national level, in addition to the central government, we work closely with Kanta-Häme, Päijät-Häme, Kymenlaakso, South Karelia and other regions in Southern Finland. In the EU regional classification, they form the NUTS2 region of Southern Finland, while Helsinki-Uusimaa forms its own NUTS2 area. In RDI, we collaborate with other major RDI-focused regions, such as Southwest Finland, Pirkanmaa and North Ostrobothnia, which we also use as our benchmarks.

Administrative reforms implemented or to be implemented in Finland (e.g. welfare area reform, the transfer of employment and economic development services from the state to municipalities, and the upcoming Economic Development Centres and permit agencies) have an impact on regional cooperation. Collaboration with the Uusimaa



Influencing the upcoming period and safeguarding Helsinki-Uusimaa's position within it is extremely important for the development of the region and of Finland as a whole.

Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY), i.e. the future Uusimaa Economic Development Centre, is continuous, and the steering group in charge of drawing up this programme has included ELY representatives.

We actively promote Helsinki-Uusimaa and its development in various international organisations and networks. Through these networks, we seek to influence policy-making, particularly in the context of EU cohesion policy, transport and project funding, and to promote cooperation in innovation and other areas.

4.1. Funding

Helsinki-Uusimaa must make diverse use of its existing funding channels. In addition to support from the EU Regional Development Fund, there are other potential funding sources, including other EU funding programmes, national funding instruments and foundations.

In project funding, the main sources of financial support are EU programmes, including Horizon Europe, Interreg Central Baltic, Interreg Baltic Sea Region, Interreg Europe, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural

Development (EAFRD), Creative Europe, the Environment and Climate Action Programme (Life), as well as national funding for sustainable growth and vitality in regions.

The EU's next programming period will start in 2028. Influencing the upcoming period and safeguarding Helsinki-Uusimaa's position within it is extremely important for the development of the region and of Finland as a whole. To this end, the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council is working closely with interested parties, including the region's municipalities, other regions and relevant ministries, and drawing on the expertise of the Helsinki EU Office. It seeks to ensure sufficient EU funding and to increase the support received from the EU's competitive funding programmes.

The European Commission's proposal for the future EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) emphasises the role of the so-called national envelope principle in the EU's funding programmes. According to the proposal, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) will mainly be implemented as part of national and regional partnership (NRP) plans under a common governance model. The agriculture budget, CAP 2028–2034, will be integrated into the NRP fund. While this may lead to more efficient resource allocation, coordination of policies

and consideration of regional characteristics, there is also a risk of a reduction in regional development funding. The plan should earmark funds for sustainable urban development, as a significant proportion of growth potential lies in urban innovation ecosystems. Cities and regions are key implementers of EU objectives and must therefore play a central role in preparing and implementing the NRP plans. Only in this way can the plans respond to the actual needs of the regions.

There is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the upcoming EU funding period. In 2026 and 2027, we need to focus on reinforcing the region's capabilities in order to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the upcoming European Competitiveness Fund to scale up solutions and support the renewal and competitiveness of our industries.

The remaining allocated funds from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development will be disbursed in 2026 and 2027. These funds will help us strengthen the ecosystems surrounding our regional RDI priorities and expand our competence base. Financing from the Agricultural Fund for Rural Development will support innovation paths, in SMEs in particular, and forge ties with broader RDI networks.

By working together, we can build smart paths to Business Finland's funding programmes and obtain funding not only for our RDI priorities, but also for the commercialisation of new solutions and to increase collaboration between companies and research organisations. Furthermore, we must support local actors and hone their abilities to obtain funding from other national programmes, funds and the private sector so as to enable greater flexibility and the implementation of larger-scale initiatives.

The Horizon Europe programme offers opportunities for research and innovation cooperation, networking and the development of international competence. This funding could help us strengthen the region's RDI priorities and build flagship projects around them.

To maximise the effectiveness of funding, we must equip the organisations and companies in the region with the tools they need in international networking, network-sharing and application processes. Long-term financial planning plays an important role. With these measures, organisations and SMEs in the region could boost their competitiveness and be even more successful in both national and international funding applications, strengthening the entire RDI ecosystem and helping to make it more sustainable and impactful.

4.2. Monitoring

Each programme priority has been defined a main objective, the progress and implementation of which will be monitored with selected indices and statistics. This monitoring aims to describe the progress of the objectives by comparing Helsinki-Uusimaa to the rest of Finland and to international (mainly European) reference regions. The results will be reported to the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Assembly twice per electoral term.



The monitoring of the programme will also involve other, more detailed statistical indicators. These indicators cannot be used to directly demonstrate the achievement of the objectives, but they can indirectly describe the direction of development. Due to the short time horizon of the programme period, data that are rapidly available and updated approximately every year have been selected as metrics where possible. The implementation of the programme and developments in the operating environment will be monitored throughout the programme period using the latest available data.



Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa

Main objective: The environmentally smartest region in Europe

Greenhouse gas emissions are monitored annually using the Hinku calculation model, taking into account Helsinki-Uusimaa's usage-based emissions by sector. The second indicator is carbon sinks and their development. This indicator looks at wood, grass and wetlands, farmlands, built-up areas and timber products, and describes their carbon balance, i.e. the ratio of emissions to removals. The third key indicator is nature

conservation areas, describing nature reserves conserved in Helsinki-Uusimaa under the Nature Conservation Act and changes therein. In addition to these, we monitor the proportion of forests and other wooded land to the region's total land area by tapping into sources like the Finnish Forest Centre's spatial data sets on forest and tree masks, and other data providing an up-to-date or comprehensive picture of changes in forest cover.

Strategic-level indicators for biodiversity monitoring are under development and will be specified later in the programme period. The upcoming Helsinki-Uusimaa Biodiversity Action Plan (LUMO) will also play an important role in the monitoring. The plan will pool information on the current state of the environment in the region and identify measures to halt biodiversity loss.



Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa

Main objective: The most innovative region in Europe

Progress towards achieving this objective will be monitored with the Regional Innovation Scoreboard (RIS), which measures the innovativeness of European regions. Compiled every two years, the RIS provides a comparative

assessment of innovation performance across 239 European regions. The indicators include educational attainment, lifelong learning, product innovation in SMEs, R&D expenditure in the business sector, patent applications, scientific publications and broadband penetration. According to the scoreboard, Helsinki-Uusimaa is the only region in Finland to rank in the Innovation Leader category.

According to a goal set during the previous programme period, R&D expenditure in Helsinki-Uusimaa will increase to 5% of the region's GDP by 2030. This objective is still valid and its implementation will be monitored through the Helsinki-Uusimaa R&D status report, updated throughout the programme period. The report provides an extensive overview of the priority area and its development across selected indicators.



Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa

Main objective: The happiest region in Europe

Progress will be monitored using the EU Social Progress Index (SPI), which compares societal well-being and development in different parts of Europe. The ranking is based on 12 components divided into three main categories: people's basic needs; well-being;

and opportunities offered by society. There are 53 indicators in total, covering areas such as housing costs, education levels, telecommunications, air pollution, corruption, lifelong learning and attitudes towards minorities. The comparison covers 236 European regions. In 2024, Helsinki-Uusimaa topped the ranking.

The development of the focus area will also be examined in the Helsinki-Uusimaa Population Well-being Status Report, published during the programme period. In line with the objectives of the Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa priority, the report will tap into the health of the population, the functionality of the living environment, the integration of migrants, and youth employment and well-being, among others. The factors monitored also include the employment rate and changes therein. As in the previous programme period, Helsinki-Uusimaa seeks to raise its employment rate to 80%.

In addition to the programme's monitoring indicators, the region's development is monitored by indicators describing the state of the operating environment. The metrics cover the economy, the labour market, demographics, education, tourism and the environment. The development of these and the programme-specific indicators can be monitored on the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council's website at www.uudenmaanliitto.fi.

4.3. Strategy of the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council

This programme also serves as the strategy guiding the activities of the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council for the period 2026–2029. The programme is approved by the Regional Assembly. The strategic priorities defined in the programme and their guiding objectives will be implemented and concretised through collective roadmaps and the guidelines governing the activities of the Regional Council. The roadmaps will cover all the priorities set out in the programme, while the guidelines will contribute to the council's international activities, communications and internal development, as well as the activities it becomes involved in to represent its interests. The roadmaps and guidelines will be approved by the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Board.

The objectives of the programme, the measures in the roadmaps and the guidelines of the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council are drawn up for each council term. The annual operational objectives, measures and monitoring indicators are recorded in the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council's budget approved by the Regional Assembly. The objectives arising directly from the programme are viewed as binding annual targets for the council, while those arising from

the roadmaps and guidelines are regarded as other annual objectives. The implementation of the annual targets is followed up by interim reports.



This programme also serves as the strategy guiding the activities of the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council.

Annex 1. Summary of environmental report



The assessment aims to ensure compatibility between the programme objectives and the principles of sustainable development.

A regional programme is a plan that must be assessed in accordance with the Act on the Assessment of the Environmental Impacts of Official Plans and Programmes 200/2005. The authority responsible for the plan or programme examines and assesses whether the implementation of the plan, programme or options under review are likely to have a significant impact on people, living conditions and comfort, natural conditions and resources, air and climate, biodiversity, as well as on the urban structure, landscape and built environment. The assessment aims to ensure compatibility between the programme objectives and the principles of sustainable development. Impact assessment was carried out throughout the preparation of the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Programme.

This programme promotes cooperation and seeks solutions to mitigate climate change, strengthen biodiversity, develop the region's

vitality and ensure well-being for all. As a strategic development programme it sets out objectives rather than concrete measures for their attainment. It creates positive synergies for the good of the people, the economy and the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

The objectives of climate change mitigation and adaptation are supported through various measures, including fossil fuel phase-out, smart energy solutions and other innovations, the promotion of the bio- and circular economies, as well as the measures laid out in the adjustment plan for Helsinki-Uusimaa. Improvements in biodiversity are facilitated by e.g. the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, restoration measures and the protection of natural values. Promotion of nature positivity and environmental safety, investments in residents' health, comfort and living conditions, and opportunities for

skill-building and employment have a positive impact on people's well-being. Prosperous people – young people in particular – who have equal opportunities for social participation and good prospects for education and employment enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of the region.

The programme has some positive effects on natural conditions and resources, regional structure and the environment. It is not expected to have a great deal of direct impact on the landscape and cultural heritage. The programme is not considered to have exclusively negative effects on any of the assessed aspects.

There are many uncertainties associated with the implementation of the programme. The achievement of its objectives is heavily dependent on funding, projects, and the commitment of various actors to common goals. In addition, the operating environment of Helsinki-Uusimaa is constantly changing and evolving, including for reasons beyond this programme. The global situation, world politics, political will and the availability of resources create uncertainties. The achievement of the programme's objectives requires extensive project activities, adequate funding, and cooperation and information exchange between parties.

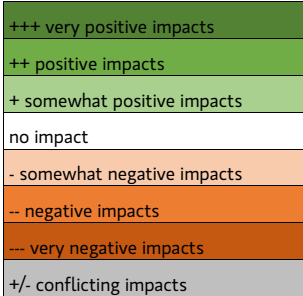
The programme was developed in broad interaction with stakeholders and takes into account key development policies and strategies at the national and regional levels. The programme's effectiveness is enhanced by two factors: firstly, it was drawn up in interaction with different parties; and secondly, it encourages cooperation between the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council and the region's municipalities, educational institutions, businesses and the public and third sectors to achieve common goals.



There are many uncertainties associated with the implementation of the programme. The achievement of its objectives is heavily dependent on funding, projects, and the commitment of various actors to common goals.

Assessment Matrix

Estimated impacts of the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Programme for 2026–2029.

IMPACTS ON	PEOPLE					NATURAL CONDITIONS AND NATURAL RESOURCES							REGIONAL STRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT			CLIMATE ADAPTATION			ECONOMY								
	Health and well-being	Living conditions and quality of life	Education	Employment	Integration	Equality and non-discrimination	Soil	Status of water bodies	Air quality	Biodiversity	Vegetation and species	Ecological network	Non-renewable natural resources	Settlement structure	Quality of the built environment	Landscape and cultural heritage	Townscape	Emission trends	Amount of renewable energy	Carbon sinks and carbon stocks	Adaptation to climate change	Circular economy	Conditions for RDI activities	Development potential of business activities	Regional attractiveness	Regional competitiveness	
<p>Priorities and objectives</p> 																											
Environmentally Smart Helsinki-Uusimaa - Nature-positive Helsinki-Uusimaa - Carbon-negative circular economy - Climate-resilient region																											
Innovative Helsinki-Uusimaa - European accelerator of innovations - Networks for economic development and investments - Helsinki-Uusimaa Region of expertise																											
Happy Helsinki-Uusimaa - Diverse metropolitan region - Good region in which to integrate - Work and well-being for the younger generation																											
OVERALL ASSESSMENT																											

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