

Helsinki



**Bicycle  
Account  
2023**



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Publication details



- **The Bicycle Account 2023**
- **is the fifth in a series of**
- **publications covering trends**
- **in cycling, resident opinions,**
- **cycling projects and cycling**
- **services in Helsinki. The first**
- **Bicycle Account was published**
- **in 2015.**



# Towards a carbon-neutral and people-friendly city



Helsinki has been working towards making cycling an appealing form of daily transport for about a decade. The results are visible in the cityscape – people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds are cycling increasingly longer distances, city bikes are immensely popular, and new cycling routes are being introduced efficiently.

Bikes allow children to get around independently, enable people without a driver's licence to travel easily and help people stay healthy by making daily exercise a part of everyday life. However, significant efforts are still needed to reduce transport emissions and promote the health of city residents by making cycling the most appealing mode of transport for even more people.

The need to promote cycling is becoming more pressing as climate targets become stricter and the public health problems caused by sedentary lifestyles increase. Simply shifting to electric cars is not enough; we also need to transition to human-powered transport. The more people choose

bikes, the greater the reduction in emissions and the harm caused by sedentary lifestyles.

Helsinki's goal is to be carbon neutral by 2030. This will also require doubling the volume of bicycle traffic. At the same time, we will improve conditions for pedestrians and public transport – and make them a truly viable alternative to private cars. This will also leave more room for those who need cars for their daily activities. Clear routes will make travelling easier and safer for everyone on the road. The development of cycling infrastructure is work that will benefit all city residents and people travelling in the city, regardless of their mode of transport.

We have increased investments to promote cycling since 2012, but the level of investment required to meet the targets was not reached until 2020, which was eight years late. Even though we have invested in cycling, we are still underinvested and need to pick up the pace. Therefore, we must speed up the completion of the cycling target network and increase the level of investment so that the majority of the inner city's target network and the Baana target networks are completed by 2030 – at the very least, with temporary measures.

Therefore, there is plenty to do. Nevertheless, Helsinki has developed significantly as a cycling city and has received international attention for this. The renovation of Hämeentie, the soon-to-be-completed Kaisantunneli tunnel, the ongoing renovation of Mannerheimintie, and the expansion of the Baana network with the Jokeri Light Rail and Crown Bridges are examples of how we are building Helsinki into a more cycling-friendly city one piece at a time – a better city for everyone!

**Anni Sinnemäki**

*Deputy Mayor*

Urban Environment Division

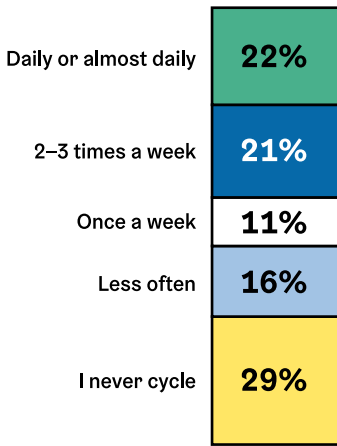
City of Helsinki

# Cycling is popular in Helsinki

## More than half of Helsinki residents cycle weekly

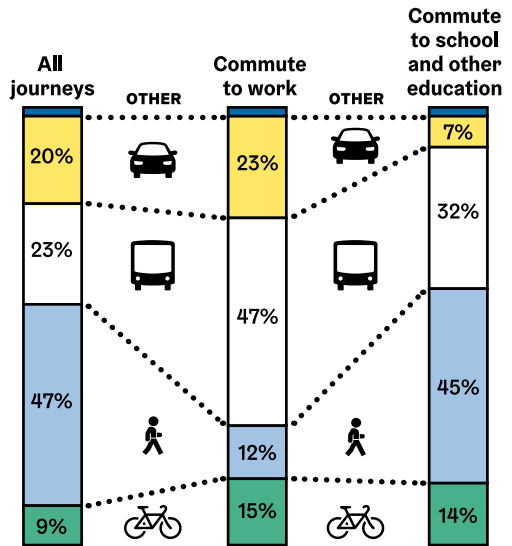
### Cycling in snow-free periods

Source: Cycling Barometer 2022



## Modal share of trips made in 2022

Source: Mobility habits of Helsinki residents in 2022



## The coronavirus has affected the volume of bicycle traffic

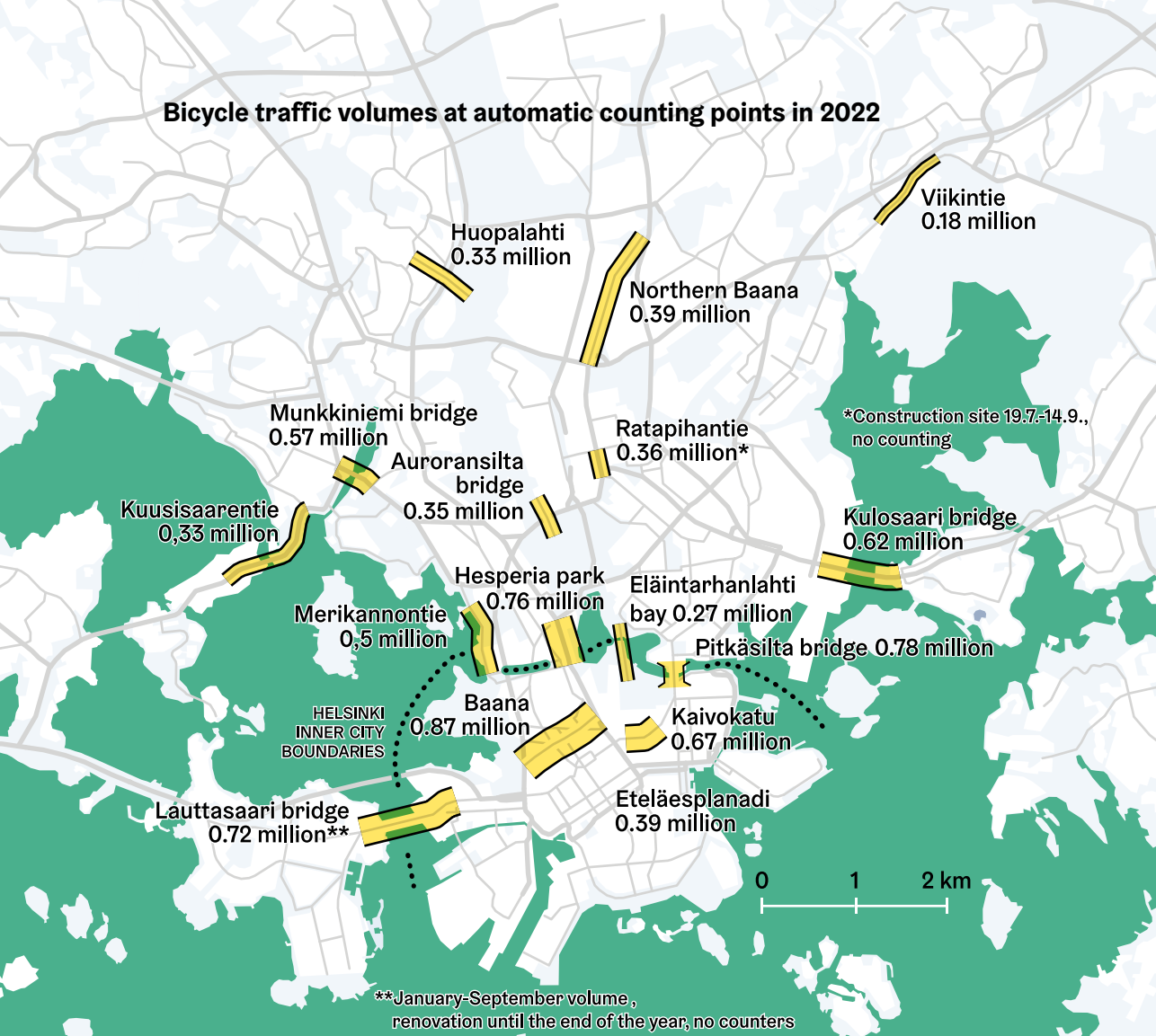
People make around 160,000 journeys by bicycle each day in Helsinki. Fifty-five per cent of Helsinki residents travel by bike at least once a week. The share is three percentage points lower than in 2020. This drop is mainly explained by the increase in remote work. However, the long-term volumes of bicycle traffic in the Helsinki peninsula have been rising since 1997.

The modal share of cycling has stagnated over the past few years, and bicycle traffic's share of transport modes has not increased

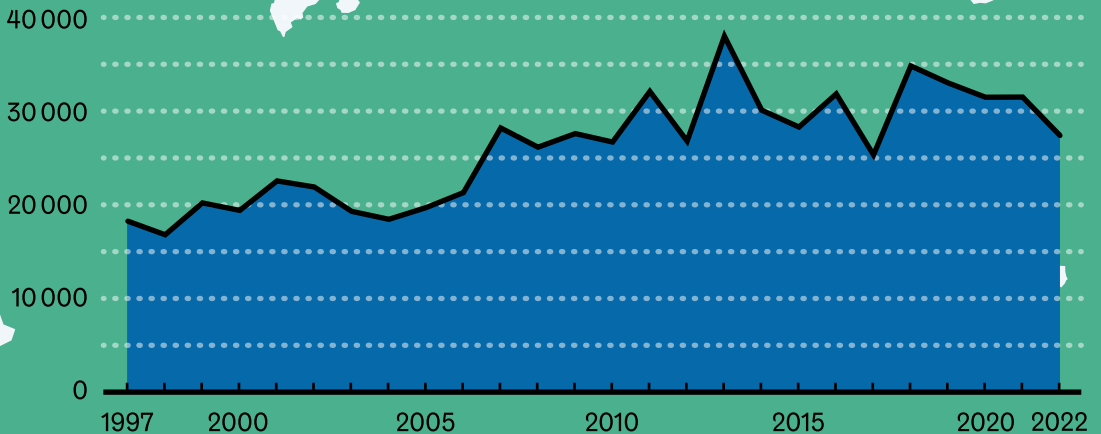
in line with targets. Helsinki aims for 20% of all trips to be made by bike by 2030. In 2022, nine per cent of all trips were made by bicycle.

Helsinki invests in finalising the target cycling network, as convenience is a prerequisite for cycling to become more widespread. Currently, the target cycling network is only partially complete. As a result, cycling is not yet seamless between many places. We are now finalising that network – and creating the conditions for cycling to grow in popularity.

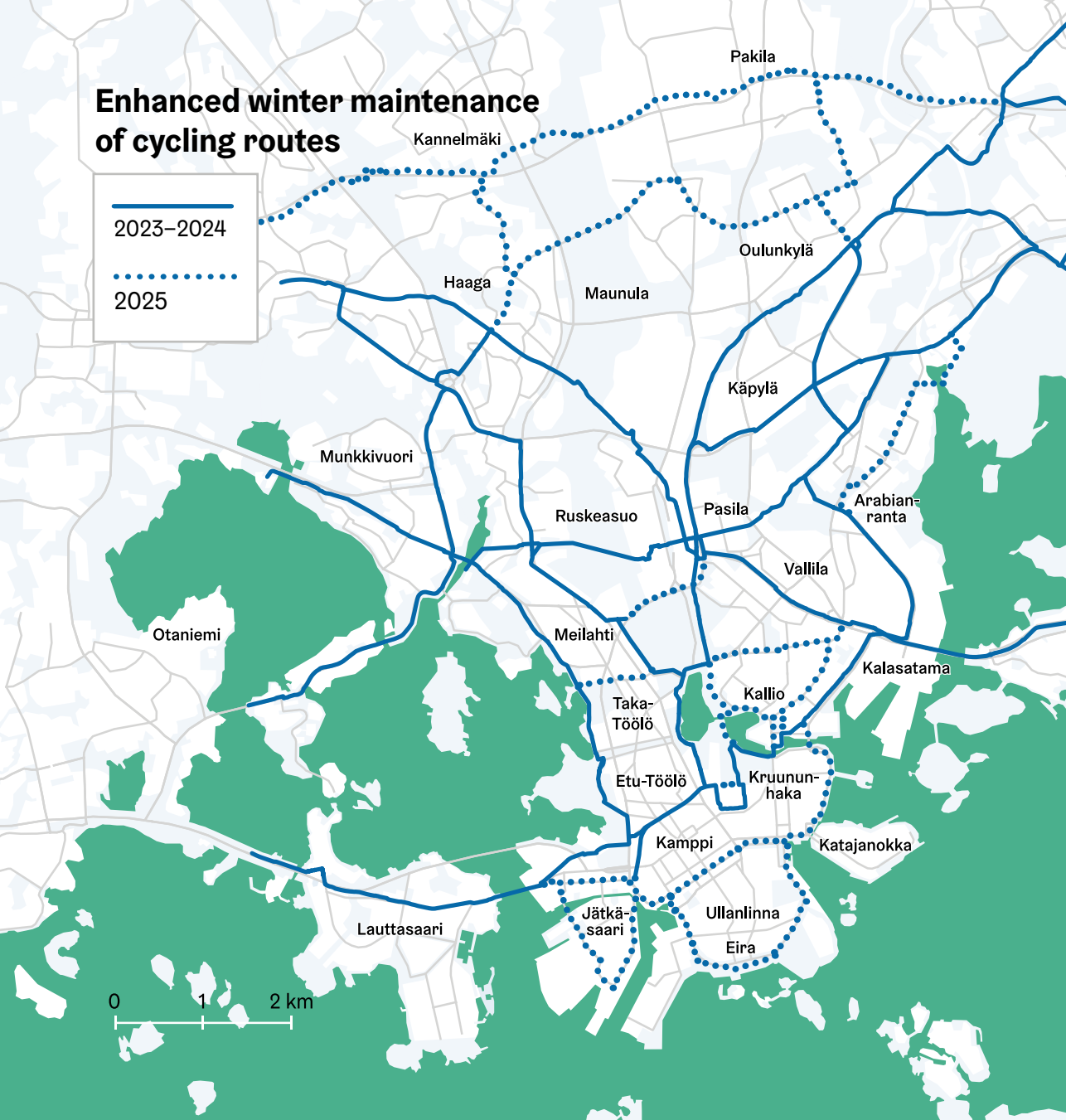
## Bicycle traffic volumes at automatic counting points in 2022



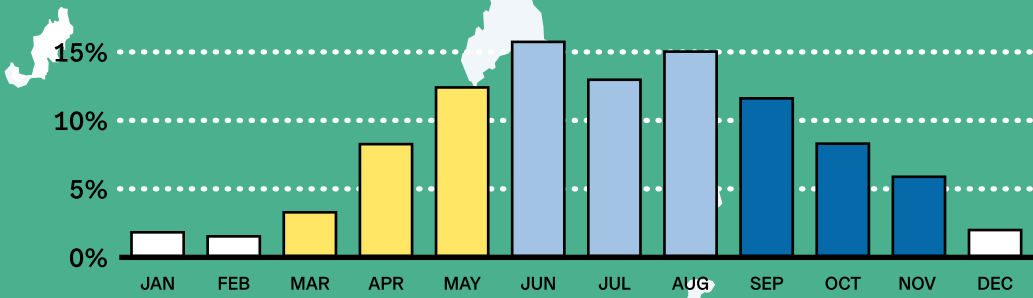
## Bicycle traffic volumes on the border of the Helsinki peninsula during a single weekday in June 1997–2022



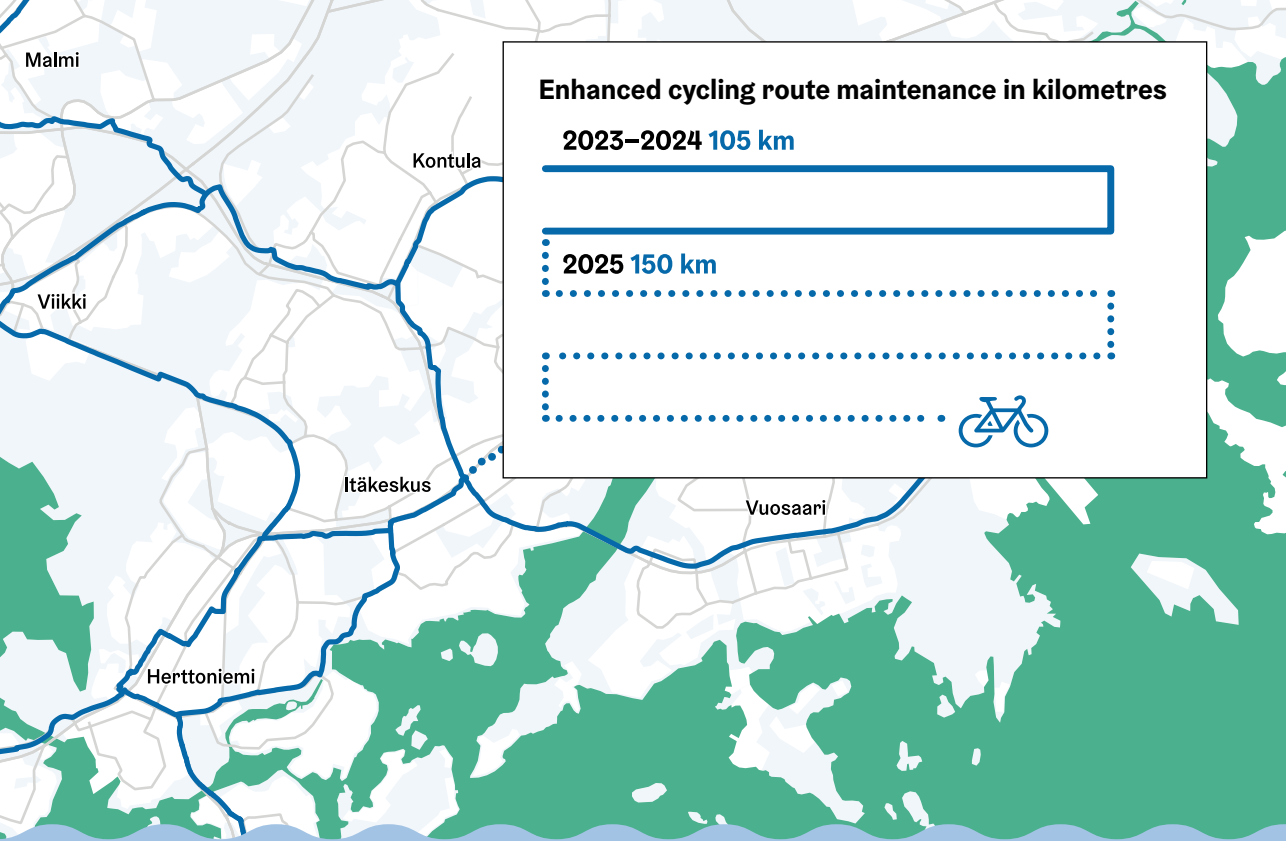
# Enhanced winter maintenance of cycling routes



## Monthly distribution of annual bicycle traffic, 2021–2022 average







## Cycling is also an option in cooler weather

Currently, about ten per cent of adults in Helsinki use bicycles all year round. Most of them cycle at least two or three times per week – even in winter. Forty per cent of Helsinki residents already use bicycles when there is no snow or ice. Helsinki aims to create the preconditions for people of all ages to be able to ride their bikes easily and safely all year round and for cycling numbers not to fall significantly in winter.

We still have some way to go to reach this goal, as snowfall and variable weather conditions currently cause at least short-term disruptions to mobility. After major snowstorms, clearing the streets of snow can take weeks, making it more difficult to travel for longer periods.

Winter cycling conditions have been improved with enhanced winter maintenance of a network of approximately 100

kilometres. Depending on the weather conditions, the aim is to achieve either an asphalt surface free of ice and snow or a hard and stable layer of snow. Enhanced winter maintenance includes brushing and salting as well as enhanced ploughing. The enhanced winter maintenance network covers 150 kilometres of Baana bicycle highway routes and main routes in 2025. Cycling conditions will also be improved on routes outside enhanced winter care.

Even though we prepare for heavy snowstorms in winter maintenance, mildly freezing temperatures and above-freezing temperatures are more typical weather conditions in Helsinki’s winter. So, there’s no need to put your bike in storage as soon as the evenings get dark and the weather cools down: you can still choose to ride your bike depending on the weather.

## Here's why we cycle:

Convenient way  
to get around

**42%**

Positive effects  
on physical fitness  
and health

**34%**

Outdoor recreation  
and leisure

**7%**

Affordability

**6%**

Environmental  
reasons

**4%**

Not subject  
to schedules

**3%**

Other reasons

**3%**

## TOP 5:

### People in Helsinki would cycle more if...

1. Bike parking spaces and areas would be better protected against vandalism and theft
2. The cycling network were more continuous and integrated
3. Cycling were safer
4. Traffic arrangements at intersections would take cyclists better into account
5. Cycling routes were be kept in better condition

Source: Cycling Barometer 2022





## Cycling is a convenient way to get around

People cycle in Helsinki mainly because it's a convenient way to get from one place to another. The Dutch and Danes, known for their cycling culture, also actively use bikes for the same reason. At the same time, they are achieving significant health benefits and improving public health without even noticing it. We are aiming for the same in Helsinki. In Helsinki, commuting to work or school is the most common reason for a bike journey. Recreational and leisure bike journeys have continued to grow since 2020.

Bicycles are an integral part of travel chains and complement public transport, in particular. A little less than a third of

those who cycle every day also use public transport on a daily basis. Satisfaction with the possibilities of combining cycling and public transport on the same journey has remained at the same level compared to 2020 and has clearly increased since 2016. Helsinki residents say they would cycle more if bicycle parking spaces were better protected from vandalism and theft, and if the cycling network were more extensive and integrated. Cycling would also increase with improvements to bicycle traffic safety, the organisation and maintenance of intersection areas, and routes under construction.

# Smooth cycling in Helsinki

- **Whether you're cycling, walking or driving, taking others into account and anticipating situations is everyone's responsibility.**
- **By following these tips, you can get around Helsinki by bike comfortably and effortlessly.**

## Keep to bike paths or roadways when cycling

Bicycles belong on bike paths, bike lanes or roadways. You can identify bicycle paths by their specific markings and traffic signs and bike lanes by lane markings and a possible traffic sign. If there is no bike path or lane, you must ride your bike on the roadway with other traffic. The sidewalk belongs to pedestrians, and only children under the age of 12 can ride a bicycle there.



## Bicycle traffic is typically unidirectional

Helsinki's new bike paths are mainly unidirectional. Unidirectional bike paths are normally placed on both sides of the street, in which case cyclists ride on the right side of the street in the same direction with the rest of the traffic. If a bike path is bidirectional, you can identify it as a two-way path by the additional sign under the bike path sign and the road markings.

## A new type of kerb separates a bicycle path

Bicycle traffic is separated from the pedestrian sidewalk on new bike paths. They are on a different grade and are separated by a kerb, just like other vehicle traffic.



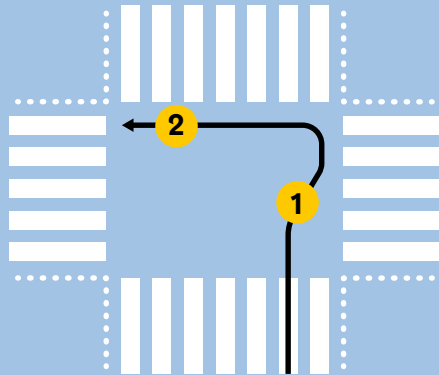
## Cross the street during the green light

You should generally follow bicycle traffic light signals when cycling. If there are no separate bicycle signals at an intersection, cyclists on unidirectional bicycle paths, lanes or roadways follow the main signals for motorized vehicle traffic. On bidirectional bike paths and combined bike path and pedestrian walkways, cyclists typically cross the road by following pedestrian signals and sometimes bicycle signals.



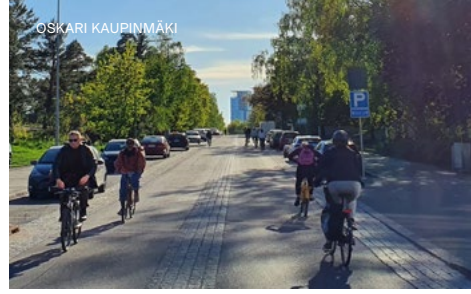
## Use a hook turn to make a left at a junction

On unidirectional bike paths and bike lanes, we recommend that you turn left with a “two-stage turn”. In the first stage of a two-stage turn, you cross the intersecting roadway directly ahead, then wait in the staging area on the other side of the junction. The staging area is usually marked on the road. The second stage of the turn, or continuing left, can be made when the traffic conditions allow. The safest thing to do is to wait until the green light turns on for vehicle traffic in the crossing direction.



# Checklist for the new Road Traffic Act:

1. Lights on at dusk and in the dark: white light in the front, red in the back.
2. Please make sure your bike has reflectors, a bell and working brakes.
3. Cyclists set the pace on the new bicycle street – Kulosaaren puistotie is Helsinki's first bicycle street
4. Cyclists may ride in both directions on one-way streets when indicated by a traffic sign.
5. If the bike path is on the left side of the road for the cyclist's direction of travel, they can also ride on the right side of the roadway or shoulder.



# The cycling network is expanding rapidly in the inner city

New cycling routes are being built in Helsinki to make cycling in the city more efficient and safer. In the near future, cycling routes will be built in the inner city, in particular, since that is the area with the most shortcomings in connectivity and high volumes of bicycle traffic. The construction of the city centre's target network has not progressed at the planned rate, but the pace of construction will accelerate in the coming years. We will also review design options for constructing cycling routes that are more streamlined and faster than street renovations.

Some of the cycling routes completed in 2023 are Caloniuksenkatu, Runeberginkatu (from Töölöntori to Mannerheimintie) and arrangements on Helsinginkatu (east of Sturenkatu). The upgrades to the Lauttasaarentie cycle path were also completed in summer 2023, and the construction of unidirectional bike lanes will continue on the west side of the route. Cycling conditions also improved in the city centre as a result of pilot projects on Eteläesplanadi and Lönnrotinkatu.

Construction also began on the most significant bicycle project in the inner city in 2023: Mannerheimintie will have unidirectional bike paths on both sides of the street from Postikatu to Reijolankatu in a project to be completed in 2025. In Hakaniemi, on the other hand, cycling routes will be built as part of the construction of the Crown Bridges, in which both sides of Siltasaarenkatu will have bike paths. Links to Hämeentie from the Pitkäsilta bridge will improve significantly in the coming years.

In the coming years, the bicycle path network will also be expanded in the inner city in connection with the West Helsinki light rail, for example, on Runeberginkatu.

- **Up-to-date information on the planned construction of cycling routes is available at:**
- <https://www.hel.fi/en/urban-environment-and-traffic/cycling/construction-of-cycle-paths>

## City bikes are fun to ride

The popular bike share system covers almost all of Helsinki's residential areas. You can also use the same system to ride in Espoo. There are almost 460 bike stations in total, and you can use them to rent one of nearly 4,600 bikes at an affordable price. There are already tens of thousands of users, and we encourage everyone to give it a try!

- **You can view the locations of city bike stations on the Helsinki Region Transport website. You can also use the website to register as a city bike user: [hsl.fi/kaupunkipyorat](https://hsl.fi/kaupunkipyorat)**

Source: HRT website



## Estimate of the construction of the 2025 target network for the inner city

- Target network of cycling routes
- Completed sections in 2012–
- To be completed in 2024–2025
- To be completed in 2026–2030



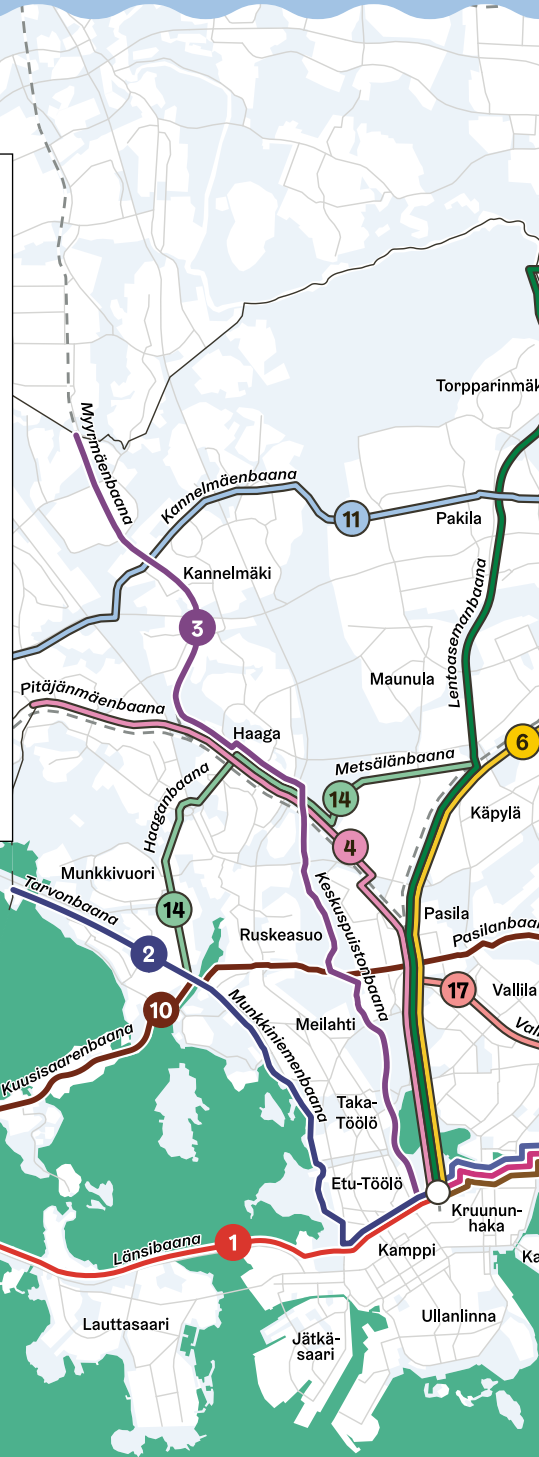


# The Baana network will expand across the entire region

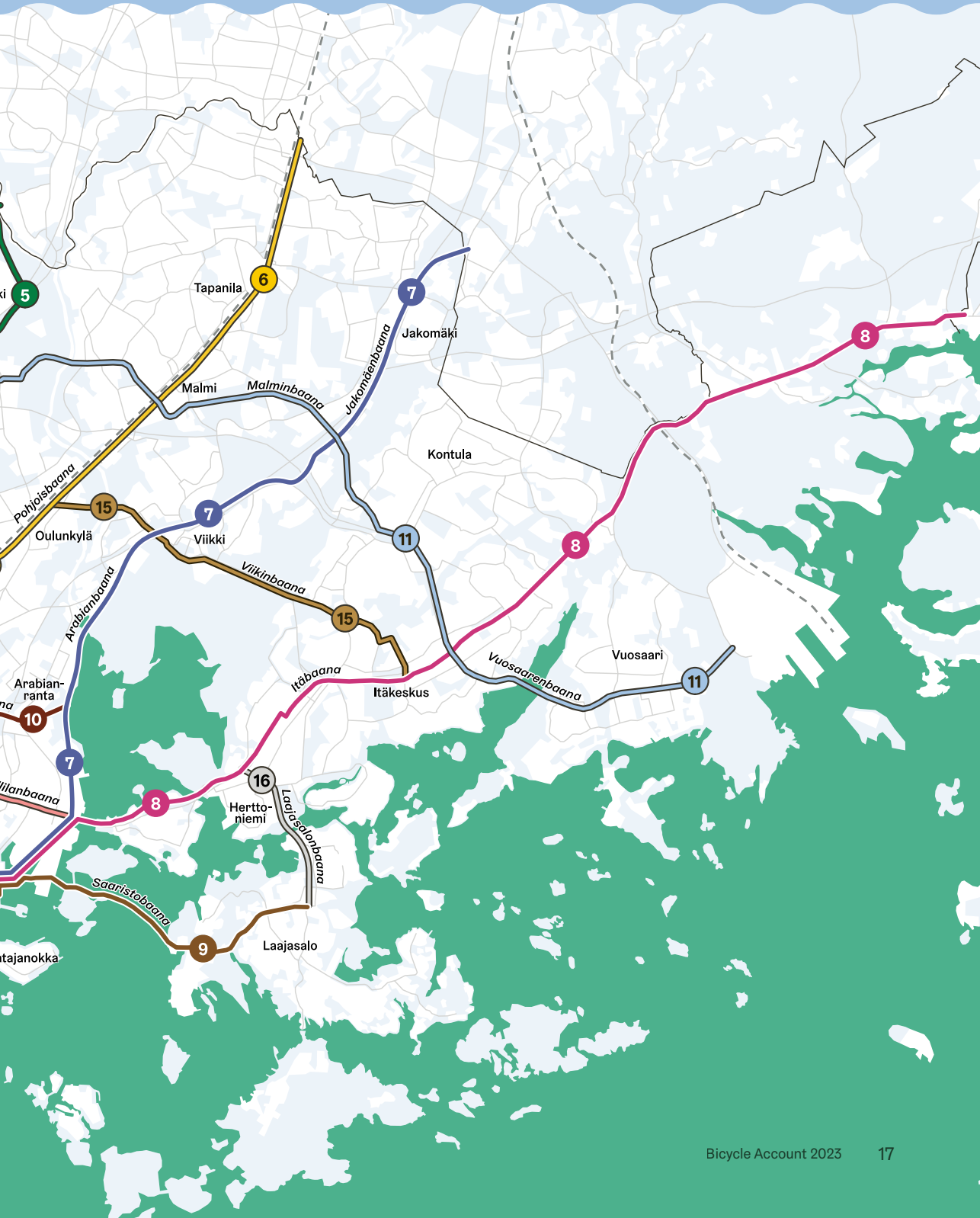
In the coming years, significant segments of the Baana network will be built as part of other development projects, such as the Crown Bridges, Laajasalo Boulevard and the Kalasatama – Pasila tram line. In Helsinki, planning for tram transport and the Baana network is always done in tandem.

- You can find up-to-date information on the Baana routes currently under construction at:
- <https://www.hel.fi/en/urban-environment-and-traffic/cycling/construction-of-cycle-paths>

Source: Cities of Helsinki, Vantaa and Espoo 2023



● We are planning Baana bicycle highways in Helsinki. They are also the main connections of bicycle traffic to neighbouring cities. In the next few years, we will focus especially on the planning and construction of the Northern Baana and Eastern Baana routes. The plans for the Munkkiniemi Baana and Pitäjänmäki Baana are also progressing with the preparation of general plans. Parts of Eastern Baana, Pasila Baana and Pitäjänmäki Baana were completed in 2023.



# The Kaisantunneli tunnel and bike parking facility will be completed

The Kaisantunneli tunnel, a pedestrian and bike traffic underpass, and its bike parking facility will be completed on the north side of the Helsinki Central Railway Station in spring 2024. The tunnel forms a hub for the city's various Baana routes. This hub will significantly improve cycling connections for cross traffic in the inner city. In future, cycling and walking will be a convenient way to get from one side of the main railway line to the other.

Four metres in width, the bike path in the Kaisantunneli tunnel is designed to accommodate large volumes of bicycle traffic. The pedestrian walkway is separated by a kerb and is on a different grade. The design of the connection focused on elements such as lighting to ensure that it's always pleasant to use. The Kaisantunneli tunnel will be built on the north side of the existing pedestrian tunnel, and they will be connected by a gateway.

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## Kaisantunneli Bicycle Garage

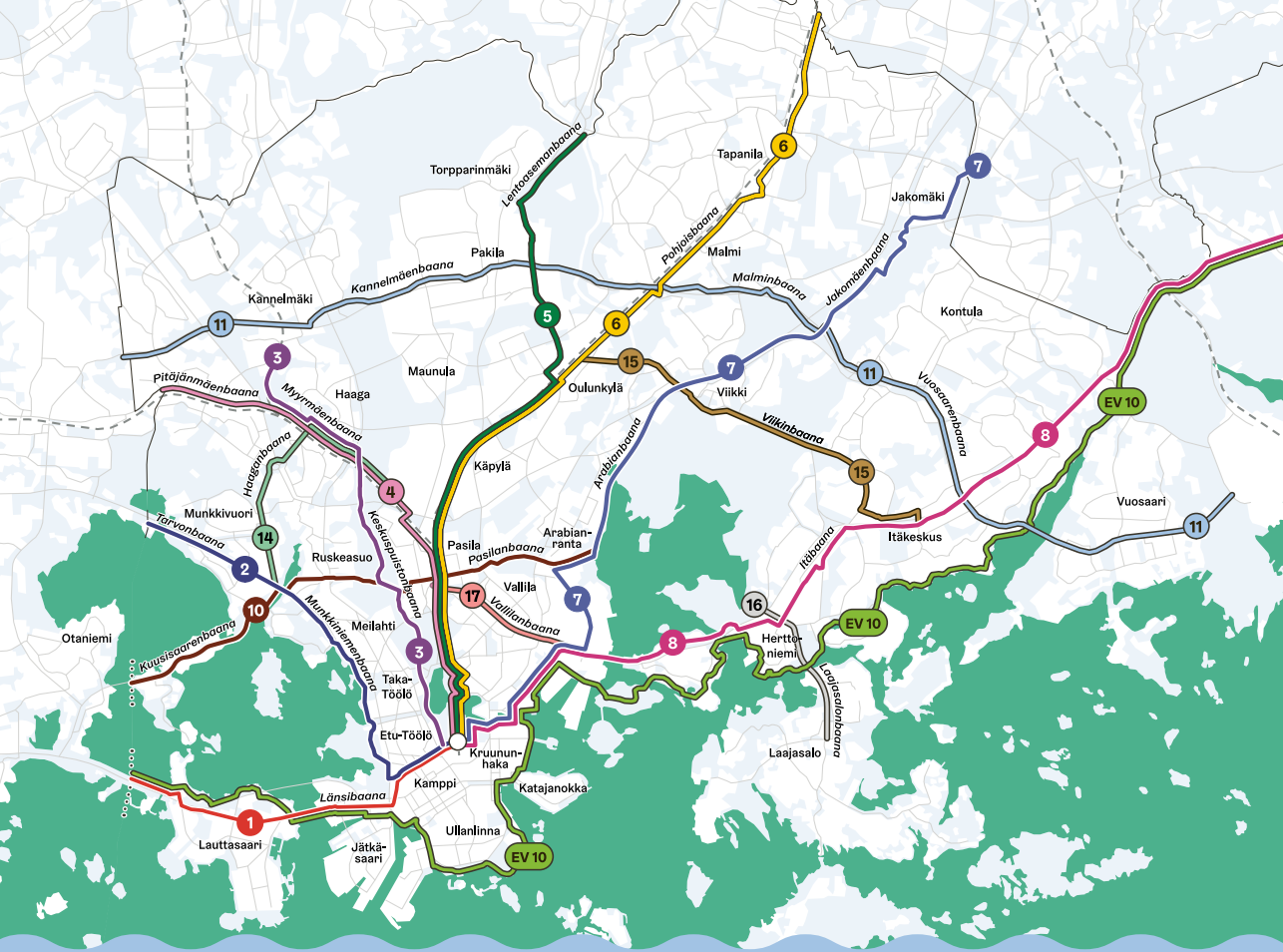
A new bicycle parking facility will be built to accommodate almost a thousand bicycles. We aim to increase the appeal of cycling by providing a safe, easy-to-use and full-service indoor bicycle parking facility in a central location in the heart of Helsinki.

The bicycle garage is designed to provide parking with frame-locking options for as many bicycles as possible while still taking

into account the requirements of different types of bicycles and a range of services to support cycling. In addition, there will also be facilities such as a bike washing station, similar to the popular one in Pasila.

In spring 2023, we conducted a survey identifying the needs of cyclists to finalise the service concept and plans for the bicycle garage.





# Cycling wayfinding will be improved throughout Helsinki

The current bike path network is known to be challenging to navigate, and one of the quickest and most cost-effective ways to meet this challenge is to build a high-quality wayfinding system.

The current bike path network is known to be challenging to navigate, and one of the quickest and most cost-effective ways to meet this challenge is to build a high-quality wayfinding system.

With this high-quality wayfinding system, a cyclist can see the direction to take from the junction from a traffic sign before the intersection. Traffic signs usually contain an arrow indicating the direction to continue

in, the destination, and the distance to the destination. In addition to these, the signs may contain other symbols. These may include the Baana route number, the station symbol or other similar symbol for a destination or route.

The Baana network routes are numbered. Clear numbering helps cyclists stay on the route. Before the whole Baana network is completed, the numbered Baana route will run along the current connections. There will also be separate signage for the international EuroVelo 10 route system.

# We are constantly improving bicycle parking

Helsinki is improving bicycle parking for its residents. Bike racks with frame-locking options will be gradually added throughout the entire city. Studies have shown that increasing the quantity and quality of bike parking will contribute to Helsinki residents cycling more.

The latest bike rack installations were in the street and park areas of Käpylä, Koskela, Konala, Lauttasaari, Lehtisaari and Pitäjänmäki. The regional bike parking project, which started in the inner city, will proceed to northern and eastern Helsinki.

In addition, a separate project will address the lack of bicycle parking in certain schools with an addition of approximately 4,000 bicycle parking spaces, which will be built in 2023–2024.

- **You can use the city’s map service to view the locations of bike racks on the streets and in parks at [kartta.hel.fi](https://kartta.hel.fi) by selecting “Bicycle racks” as the layer.**

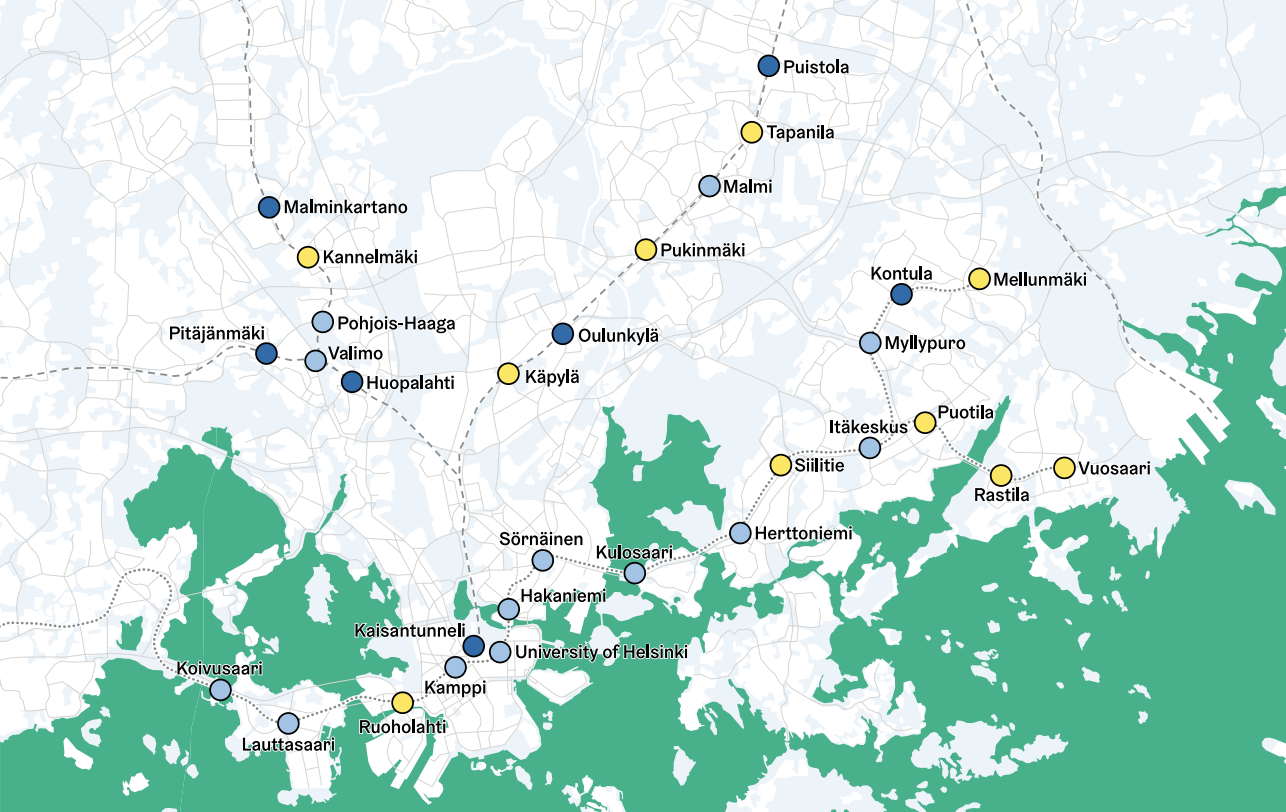
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## Improvements to bicycle parking at stations

Most people in Helsinki live within a few kilometres of a train or metro station. The stations have bicycle park-and-ride areas, where you can conveniently park your bike and continue your journey using public transport. We have made significant investments to develop the park-and-ride service in recent years, replacing old bike

racks, adding wayfinding and increasing the number of bicycle parking spaces. We have also improved parking safety and security by providing frame-locking options and adding lighting and canopies for shelter from the elements. Government grants have covered part of the construction costs for some projects.





## Bicycle park-and-ride projects at stations 2022-2023

### Built in 2022

- Mellunmäki\*
- Pukinmäki\*
- Puotila\*
- Rastila\*

### Built in 2023

- Kannelmäki\*
- Käpylä\*
- Ruoholahti
- Siilitie\*
- Tapanila
- Vuosaari

In the coming years, we will be replacing and gradually increasing frame-locking bike racks at the stations. The City of Helsinki's partner is Metropolitan Area Transport Ltd, which is responsible for developing and maintaining bicycle park-and-ride facilities in Helsinki.

### Upcoming bike park-and-ride projects at stations

#### 2024

- Huopalahti\*
- Kaisantunneli\*
- Kontula\*
- Malminkartano\*
- Oulunkylä\*
- Pitäjänmäki
- Puistola\*

#### 2025/2026

- Hakanieni
- University of Helsinki
- Herttoniemi
- Itäkeskus
- Kamppi
- Koivusaari
- Kulosaari
- Lauttasaari
- Malmi
- Myllypuro
- Pohjois-Haaga
- Sörnäinen
- Valimo

\*The government has contributed to the costs of the project



# City residents support the promotion of cycling

Helsinki continues to receive strong support from residents for its goal of promoting cycling. Ninety-four per cent of the adult population is in favour of promoting cycling.

Residents who cycle think Helsinki is a fairly good city for cycling, and satisfaction has remained more or less the same in recent years. People are slightly more satisfied with the safety and ease of cycling, although there is clearly room for improvement, as about one in five cyclists still feels unsafe while riding their bicycles. Of all the things that affect the cycling experience, the most dissatisfaction is due to temporary traffic arrangements for cycling routes during construction and winter maintenance.

The greatest increase in satisfaction has been in the options to combine bicycle and

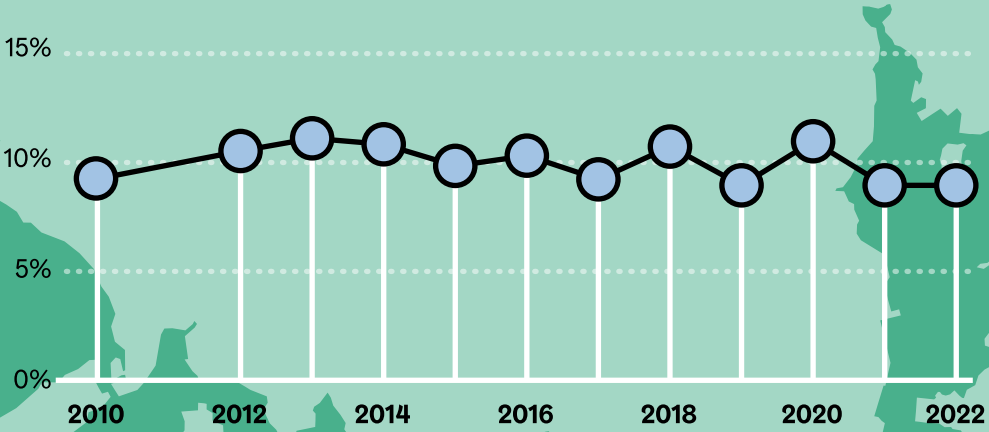
public transport, which has certainly been influenced by bicycle park-and-ride facilities, city bikes and the improved options for bringing bicycles on the train and metro.

We aim to improve residents' satisfaction with the cycling infrastructure with improvements to existing cycling routes and bike parking, adding more of both, as well as developing temporary traffic arrangements during construction, the winter maintenance of bike lanes and cycling services.

- **You can give feedback and suggestions for developing the cycling infrastructure in Helsinki at [palautteet.hel.fi/en/](https://palautteet.hel.fi/en/)**
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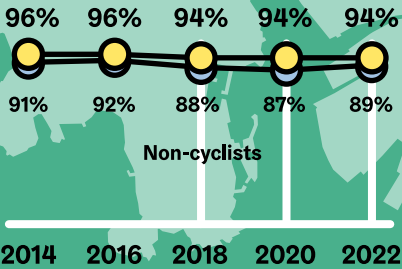
## Share of cycling of all journeys (%)



Source: Mobility habits of Helsinki residents in 2022

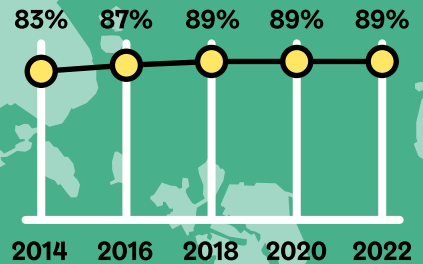
## Percentage of people who view the promotion of cycling positively

### Percentage of all people



## Satisfaction with Helsinki as a cycling city

### Percentage of cyclists

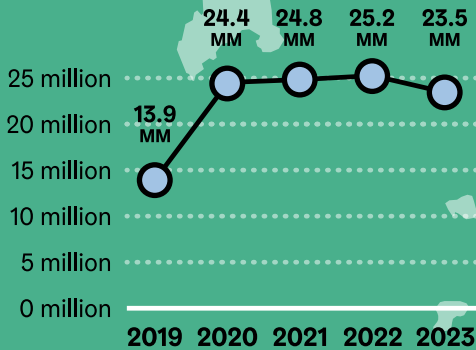


Source: Cycling Barometer 2022

## Investments in cycling are increasing

Helsinki has increased its cycling investment budget in line with its targets. In 2023, we will invest EUR 23.5 million in cycling routes, and we plan to increase the level of investment even further in the coming years. Properly targeted cycling investments will generate up to eight-fold benefits for society.

Source: City of Helsinki 2023



● The investment budget for cycling

# Publication details

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For more information, please see <https://www.hel.fi/en/urban-environment-and-traffic/cycling/cycling-routes>

Give feedback at [palautteet.hel.fi/en/](https://www.hel.fi/en/palautteet)

For urban environment planners:  
[pyoraliikenne.hel.fi](https://www.hel.fi/en/pyoraliikenne) (in Finnish)



A woman wearing a light-colored knit hat, a brown and white checkered winter coat, and dark gloves stands next to a teal bicycle with a red seat. She is looking to the right. The scene is set outdoors in the snow, with a reddish-brown wall and a black metal fence in the background.

Brochures of the  
Urban Environment  
Division 2024:1

[https://www.hel.fi/en/  
urban-environment-and-  
traffic/cycling/cycling-routes](https://www.hel.fi/en/urban-environment-and-traffic/cycling/cycling-routes)

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