



One Health

Integrated Action Plan for the City of Kuopio

Urban local group of Kuopio

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Introduction

The One Health approach describes the closely interconnected nature of the well-being and health of humans, animals, and the environment. Urbanization, denser living conditions, global travel, climate change, biodiversity loss, changes in the food environment, increasing lifestyle-related diseases, and declining mental well-being are examples of phenomena that have made it even more timely to examine actions guided by the One Health approach. Human activities impact the well-being of nature and animals, which in turn affects human well-being.

In the previous strategy of the city of Kuopio, the vision was to become the capital of a good life. The strategy has been implemented through four strategic programs: Healthy and Communal, Vibrant and Growing, Climate- and Resource-Wise (Viksu-Kuopio), and Renewing and Collaborating Kuopio. The programs include multidisciplinary goals related to the well-being of humans, animals, and nature.

In the new council term 2025-2028, the goal is to deepen our understanding of the One Health approach and implement it as a permanent way of operating within the city's activities. The City of Kuopio is committed to this as a city member of the WHO Healthy Cities network (WHO 2022. Local-level policy recommendations: operationalizing a One Health approach. Political statement of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network). Kuopio is one of Finland's ten largest cities, whose mayors jointly prepared the Nature Declaration in 2025 (Appendix 1) and committed to halting biodiversity loss. Through the Nature Declaration, Kuopio aims to strengthen biodiversity and sustainable urban development together with other cities. Biodiversity is vital for human well-being and health. Diverse nature also supports urban vitality, the economy, and attractiveness as a place to live and as an investment location.

In the updated Nature Declaration, city mayors commit to elevating nature-positive goals alongside climate change mitigation goals during the 2025 strategy updates. In the declaration, city mayors commit to developing and maintaining urban blue-green areas, which consist of a network of forests, parks, meadows, and water bodies. Additionally, they commit to considering the nature impacts of city procurements and implementing the principles of the mitigation hierarchy. According to these principles, the aim is to minimize harm to nature and compensate for any caused harm elsewhere. The city of Kuopio is participating in the One Health 4 Cities project, which is funded by the EU's Urbact IV (2021–2027)

Action Planning Network funding program. The project will be carried out from June 1, 2023, to December 31, 2025. The goal of the project is to promote the implementation of the One Health approach in Kuopio's strategy, services, and partnerships.

This action plan presents the current situation, vision, and upcoming measures of the City of Kuopio to integrate the One Health approach into its strategy, services, and initiatives. The plan has been prepared together with the local working group of the One Health 4 Cities project and other local actors. Additionally, the action plan has been developed in collaboration with actors from the international One Health 4 Cities network. The term "One Wellbeing" is used in Finnish as it better suits the city's organizational activities, instead of a direct translation of the One Health concept as "One Health."

One Health 4 Cities -network

The main goal of the One Health 4 Cities project is to form a network of European cities that collectively develop best practices toward a more sustainable urban future. The approaches include interdisciplinary collaboration between cities, co-learning and development, piloting initiatives in cities, and Co-development with regional stakeholders.

The project involves nine cities: Lyon (France), Kuopio and Lahti (Finland), Suceava (Romania), Strasbourg (France), Loule (Portugal), Benissa (Spain), Elefsina (Greece), and Munich (Germany). The project is coordinated by the city of Lyon in France. At the organizational level, the project is managed in Kuopio by the Citizen Services Unit, with a local working group composed of representatives from various organizations acting as an implementing partner. The group includes experts from different sectors of the City of Kuopio, Savonia University of Applied Sciences, the University of Eastern Finland, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, the North Savo ELY Centre, and the Regional Council of North Savo.

The project's development measures support the realization of Kuopio's previous council term vision of becoming the capital of good life and contribute to achieving the main goals of the strategic programs Healthy and Communal Kuopio and Viksu Kuopio. A new strategy has been prepared during 2025 and approved by the City Council in November 2025.

The preparation of programs implementing the strategy follows the city council's decision. The One Health approach is seen as a cross-cutting, unifying, and guiding mindset across all city sectors. The goal of the strategic programs is to achieve more consistent and comprehensive cross-cutting objectives and measures. Kuopio's key objective is to actively participate in international cooperation

networks. The One Health 4 Cities project is creating significant new connections between partner cities. The City of Kuopio is a member of the World Health Organization (WHO) Healthy Cities network. As a member of the network, Kuopio is committed to promoting the implementation of the One Health operating model within the city. The current term of the Healthy Cities network has focused on People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnership, and Peace. The One Health 4 Cities project thus also partly encapsulates WHO Healthy Cities -network's between-the-cities-collaboration.

Promoting the One Health approach also supports the objectives of the Healthy Municipality (Terve Kunta) network coordinated by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). Kuopio has been involved in establishing the Healthy Municipality network and continues to be an active member.

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1. Current status and the vision

1.1 One Health Approach

Municipalities and welfare areas play a crucial role in maintaining and promoting the well-being and health of people, animals, and nature. By investing in a comprehensive, holistic approach, it is possible to achieve healthy and sustainable living conditions for people, animals, and nature.

The One Health approach represents the closely interconnected human, animal, and environmental well-being and health, none of which can be separated in development measures. Adopting this approach promotes the achievement of sustainable development goals by addressing health and environmental challenges and enhancing the well-being of populations, animals, and ecosystems.

Human health and well-being, as well as the state of the environment, are influenced at all levels of decision-making and in all policy areas. Decision-makers must consider different perspectives and see the long-term consequences of decisions across sectors. Following the declaration by the World Health Organization (WHO), municipalities in the Healthy Cities network are committed to the Shared Well-being approach in their activities. The Shared Well-being approach is incorporated into strategic goals, programs, and practical actions through broad collaboration and by engaging residents.

The One Health approach is parallel to the Planetary Health approach, which has been used for a longer time in various scientific fields (including medicine, veterinary medicine, and natural sciences), and which also examines the impacts of human activities on the well-being of the entire planet. These approaches, which emphasize slightly different aspects, are both linked to sustainable development. Both aim to promote the well-being of present and future generations and to highlight the essential interconnections between different fields that are crucial for building a sustainable future.

According to the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, health and well-being are based on understanding the connections between humans and the rest of nature. Natural systems sustain life by producing, among other things, clean water, oxygen, and food. Nature protects against floods, storms, and other extreme weather events. Contact with diverse nature strengthens the human body's microbiota and protects people from many diseases. Humans are part of the whole of nature and entirely dependent on the vitality of this whole. Human actions affect the environment and its state both locally and globally. At the same time, the state of nature and the surrounding environment directly impacts people's health and well-being. Overconsumption of natural resources, pollution, and harmful alteration of the environment threaten health and well-being in many ways. In addition, the lack of contact with nature is already reflected in our health and well-being.

The food system also requires extensive changes. According to WWF, food production is one of the largest global contributors to greenhouse gas emissions.

It also has other impacts on the environment. The majority of the environmental impacts of food come from primary production, that is, the raising of plants and animals. An advanced food system supports the well-being of animals, the environment, and humans in a sustainable way.

1.2 Kuopio in numbers

Kuopio is Finland's eighth largest city with a growing population of about 126,000 (Figure 1). About 25,000 of the residents live in rural areas and small towns. Kuopio covers a large area of 4,326 km², of which 3,241 km² is land. Kuopio has around 900 lakes and a shoreline of as much as 6,340 km. The population density is 37.8 inhabitants per km² of land.

Inhabitats 31.12.22	Inhabitats 31.12.23	Inhabitats 31.12.24
122 594 (+ 1 051, 0.9%)	123 021 (+ 1 427, 1.2%)	125 666 (+ 1 645, 1.3%)

Figure 1. Inhabitats of Kuopio 2022-2024.

The majority of people in Kuopio live in urban areas, and one fifth live in rural areas. In addition to permanent residents, Kuopio is a significant summer cottage municipality. Kuopio is also an important student city. The area has about 7,000 businesses and around 55,000 jobs. More facts about Kuopio can be seen in Figure 2.

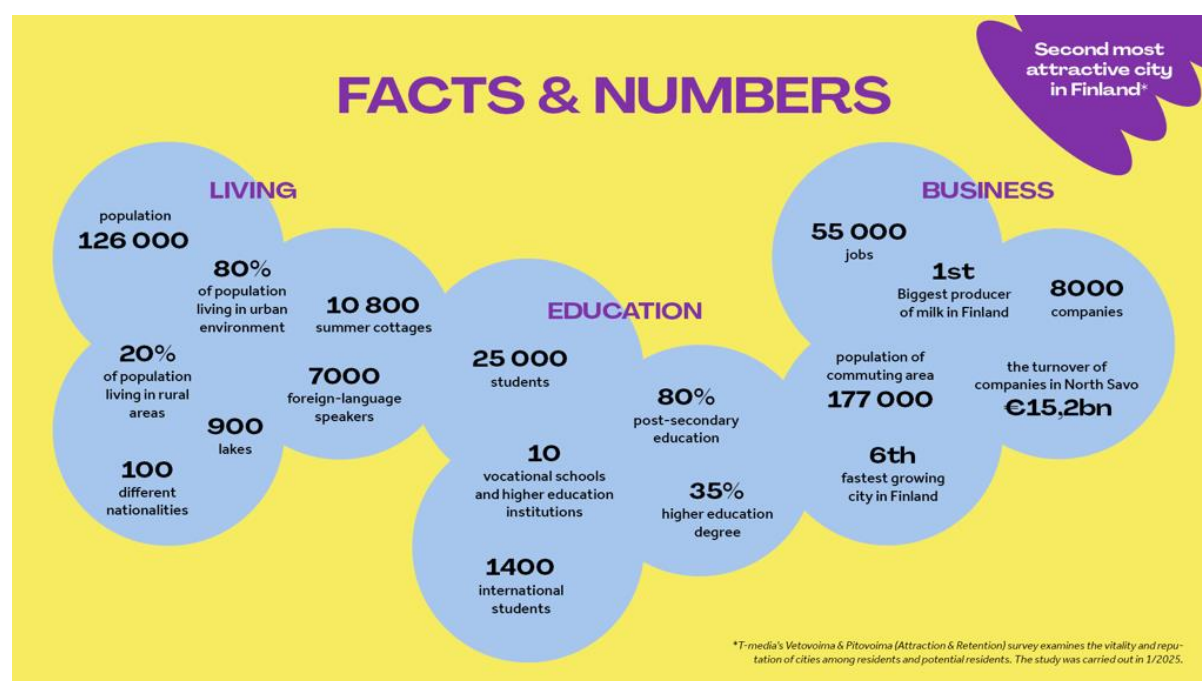


Figure 2. Kuopio facts and numbers (2025)

Viewed in terms of morbidity indices, the morbidity of the population in Kuopio is the highest among Finland's major cities (Figure 3 and Table 1). The morbidity indicator is a composite indicator compiled from the following disease groups: cancers, coronary artery disease, cerebrovascular diseases, musculoskeletal diseases, severe mental disorders, accidents, dementia, lung diseases, diabetes, and alcohol-related diseases. The well-being and health of Kuopio residents are monitored annually as part of the Kuopio Well-being Report and Plan's. The report is available on the website www.kuopio.fi/hyvinvointi.

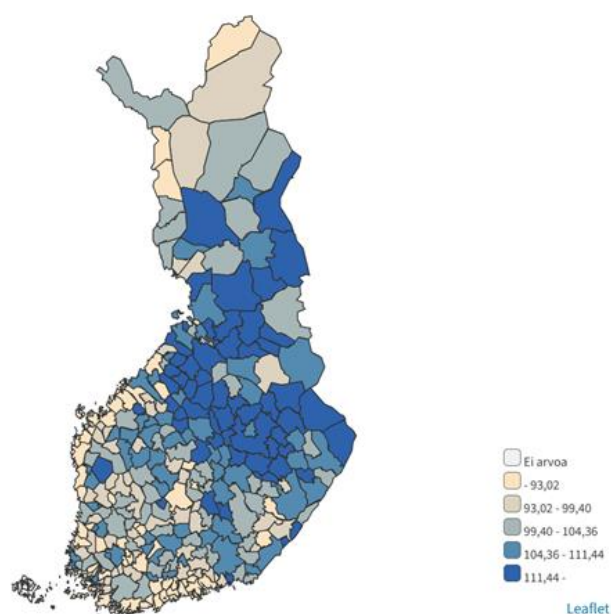


Figure 3. Age-standardized morbidity index in Finnish municipalities (2023)

Table 1. Mental health, morbidity, and musculoskeletal disease index in Kuopio and at the national level in 2023. A value of 100 indicates the national reference value, against which the results of cities are compared. Below 100 indicates a better situation than the national level, and above 100 indicates a worse situation.

Indicator	Area	2023
Mental health index, age-stand.	Finland	100
	Kuopio	150
Morbidity index, age-stand.	Finland	100
	Kuopio	117
Musculoskeletal health index, age-stand.	Finland	100
	Kuopio	130

Strong research evidence indicates that lifestyle plays a significant role as a risk factor for lifestyle-related diseases. The overall physical activity of people in Kuopio has increased in recent years, but the majority still remain insufficiently active for their health. Eating habits also still need improvement. According to the new nutrition recommendation published in 2024, Finns should increase their consumption of vegetables, which benefits human health as well as having positive effects on the environment. Increasing physical activity, especially during commuting for work, school, or errands, also has significant positive environmental impacts. Table 2 presents statistical information on the exercise and eating habits of Kuopio residents.

Table 2. Physical activity and dietary indicators.

Indicator	Area	2022	2023
Young people who eat few fruits, berries, and vegetables, % of 8th and 9th grade students	Finland		89
	Kuopio		88
Proportion (%) of adults aged 20-64 who eat few vegetables, fruits, and berries	Finland	8	
	Kuopio		7
According to the health exercise recommendation, the proportion (%) of people who are insufficiently active, aged 20–64	Finland	56	
	Kuopio		54
Percentage of 8th and 9th grade students who are physically active for at least an hour a day	Finland		25
	Kuopio		27

Human well-being and health are strongly linked to the well-being of nature and animals.

Lifestyle choices, including dietary habits, have a direct impact on human well-being. A healthily composed plant-based diet has been scientifically shown to promote health. It is also an option that supports the carrying capacity of nature. According to the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, it is estimated that following the so-called planetary diet would reduce premature mortality among Finns by a quarter by 2030. The planetary diet mainly consists of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, and oils containing unsaturated fats. It includes moderate amounts of fish and chicken and only small amounts of red meat, added sugar, and refined grains. The plant-based emphasis of the planetary diet aligns with Finnish nutrition recommendations, but the amounts of environmentally impactful animal-based foods (such as meat and dairy products) are more strictly defined.

Food production therefore has significant implications for the well-being of nature, animals, and humans from several perspectives. In addition to the aforementioned factors, considerations should also include biodiversity, the welfare of production animals, the climate impacts of food production, eutrophication, as well as food self-sufficiency in the region and local food. According to Luke, Finland's plant

protein production currently accounts for only 29 percent of total protein consumption, whereas it could potentially cover up to 98 percent. Achieving this change requires extensive measures throughout the entire food chain. If successful, this effort would improve both the profitability of agriculture and Finland's food security. (Luke 2024) The goal of the North Savo regional rural development plan for 2023–2027 is to strengthen profitable, sustainable, and developing agriculture and food systems, for example, by improving nutrient recycling and carbon sequestration in arable soil. (North Savo ELY Centre 2023)

The ingredients of Finnish food come from farms as well as from the lakes and seas of our country. Primary production plays a significant role in Kuopio. Kuopio is the largest milk-producing municipality in Finland. In 2024, approximately 67.9 million liters of milk were produced in Kuopio. The city of Kuopio ensures the oversight of animal welfare in the area, as well as veterinary services for both production animals and pets 24/7, in collaboration with the municipality of Siilinjärvi and private service providers. The city of Kuopio manages a collaborative project involving 16 municipalities, funded by the Regional Council of Northern Savonia, with the aim of producing a proposal for a joint operational model that particularly ensures the provision of veterinary services and the implementation of environmental health care as municipal cooperation. In this Sustainable Public Services 2030 project (KEVI 2030), cooperation opportunities in building supervision and environmental protection services are also being explored.

Being in nature has been shown to promote well-being and health in many ways. Spending time in nature has been found to have beneficial effects on mental well-being and the body's immune system, as well as helping to prevent chronic diseases. Therefore, the deterioration of nature and animal health also reflects on human well-being and health. Extreme weather events caused by climate change, such as heatwaves and storms, as well as biodiversity loss, also pose significant health challenges for people. In Kuopio, nature is close to people and fairly accessible to almost everyone. In Kuopio, 96 percent of residents can reach green space suitable for recreation within less than 300 meters.

The assumption of Kuopio's Climate and Resource Wisdom Program, known as the Viksu Kuopio program, is that taking care of the environment is also a prerequisite for the well-being of people. The main goals of Viksu Kuopio are to be emission-free, waste-free, and a city that consumes sustainably. Sustainable living in a green, diverse environment enhances the overall well-being of residents. In a densifying urban structure and a changing climate, we ensure through the implementation of the Viksu Kuopio program that species-rich urban nature and forests continue to support our health in the future. Through urban planning and construction solutions, we influence the preservation of green areas and valuable natural sites in residential environments. We contribute to the mitigation of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption. The Viksu Kuopio program promotes the wise use of natural resources, which broadly benefits the

well-being of nature.

Biodiversity is declining at an alarming rate globally, and according to the Finnish Environment Institute, one in nine of our known species is endangered. The goal of the EU's biodiversity strategy is to halt the loss of nature by 2030, which is also aimed for in Kuopio's biodiversity program. Biodiversity is taken into account in the management of the city's local nature and forest use, where in addition to protecting biodiversity, emphasis is also placed on the recreational use of forests and the care of carbon sinks. Our goal is to protect at least 10% of the city's forests and peatlands by 2035.

Table 3. Viksu Kuopio -program's main indicators.

Indicator	Status
Greenhouse gas emissions of Kuopio, including industrial emissions	552,1 kt CO ₂ -ekv., total (2023) 4,5 t CO ₂ -ekv. / citizen
Consumption-based carbon footprint or consumption-based greenhouse gas emissions	1105,8 kt CO ₂ -ekv., total (2024) 8,92 t CO ₂ -ekv. / citizen
Proportion of nature reserves (ha and %) of the city's forest and swamp area	750 hectares, 7 %

1.3 The Strategy of Kuopio

The Kuopio strategy extending to 2030 was drawn up in 2017 and updated during 2021 and 2022. The latest updated strategy was approved by the City Council in November 2025. The objectives of the strategy are reviewed annually in connection with the preparation of the budget.

In the current strategy of the city of Kuopio, the vision has been to be the capital of a good life. The vision has also been excellently suited for implementing the One Health approach within the organization. The capital of a good life is being built sustainably and together, multidisciplinary, taking into account the wellbeing of people, the environment, and animals.

With the update of the strategy, the city's vision has also been renewed.

Kuopio's vision for 2035

Flourishing Kuopio – sustainable growth and vitality

Flourishing is a state in which someone or something is vital, successful, and well-being.

Flourishing represents education, economic growth, and cultural vitality. It is personal wellbeing and surpassing oneself, learning, and growth.

A flourishing community is a place where people live harmoniously and are actively involved in cultural and social activities.

Flourishing is also the power of nature, when plants, animals, and ecosystems thrive in a healthy environment.

Flourishing arises from sustainability, growth and vitality.

1.4 Applying One Health approach – challenges and opportunities

The guidelines for Kuopio's journey towards being the Capital of Good Life have been defined in four separate thematic programs (see above). The city aims to develop in a determined manner with strong expertise. Promoting the well-being of nature and people is a central part of the strategy. Less attention has been given to animal welfare and its broader connections to the well-being of nature and people. Separate strategic programs have been observed to remain isolated from each other. Although the ultimate goal of all strategic programs has been the same – to become the Capital of Good Life – some aspects of the separate programs have been observed to maintain silos. When the programs integrate holistic objectives sustainably, the opportunities to consider the overall impacts of actions on humans, nature, animals, and the economy also improve. Table 3 presents a SWOT analysis of the strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities, of implementing the One Health approach evaluated by the Kuopio One Health 4 Cities urban local group.

Table 3. SWOT analysis of the strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats of implementing the One health approach in the One Health 4 Cities development work.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledgeable and committed professionals as well as extensive network expertise. The need is mutually recognized and understood - The project supports existing strategic programs and the city's slogan (on the way to becoming the capital of good living) - Strong support from elected officials - Strong health and environmental expertise in the region, including the University of Eastern Finland, THL, ELY Centre, Savonia University of Applied Sciences - Kuopio hosts a nationally significant center for security expertise - Kuopio has a national innovation ecosystem agreement, with focus areas in health and wellness technology as well as water expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Calendars are full – everyone has a lot going on. - Silos between different sectors - Difficult to get an overview – the importance of the matter is not understood (the concept of one health creates uncertainty) - The project's resources are limited – it needs to be integrated into the work
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in expertise and possible new innovations through the project - Kuopio's pioneering role in the theme - The region's areas of expertise linked to the shared health theme (water, health technology, food/food products, and safety) - Other local/national actors - Citizen-driven development of shared health – e.g., with EU funding – community-based activities - Ongoing Savilahti project and related development - A 15-year development project planned in the Neulamäki – city center – Kelloniemi zone - Impact assessments of decisions are already being conducted, and the effects on One health could be integrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of time - Balancing the economy - Failing to make things concrete enough - Expert knowledge from different fields is not utilized and combined, resulting in the overall picture remaining unclear - A densifying city and growing population pose a threat to both the city's blue and green areas as well as nature conservation areas - Health may be seen only as the responsibility of the welfare area. The city's role in promoting health and well-being is not recognized. The significant role of urban planning in health and well-being planning is not seen.

2. Integrated Action Plan for One Health in Kuopio

The Kuopio One health Integrated Action Plan is built around five strategic goals. The action plan supports the program work of the new strategy, which aims for a more holistic, cross-cutting approach than before.

The strategic goals, along with their measures and indicators, are described in more detail in Tables 2–5 below. The development of the goals, measures, and indicators has been carried out with Kuopio's multidisciplinary One health working group. To support thinking, a visualization is provided in Figure 3.

Goal 1: Multidisciplinary communication aimed at change is strengthened.

Goal 2: Interaction and collaboration are strengthened between different sectors, actors, and residents.

Goal 3: The One health perspective is visible in all strategic plans guiding the city's operations.

Goal 4: The assessment of decision impacts is carried out consistently and across sectors.

Goal 5: The implementation of the One health perspective in the city's services and decision-making is evaluated.

When defining the objectives and measures of the action plan, it was noted that the action plan should not repeat in detail the goals and measures set in several separate programs of the City of Kuopio to promote the well-being of humans, animals, and nature in a multidisciplinary way. Such programs include, for example, the Kuopio Welfare Report and Plan, the Viksu-Kuopio program, the Kuopio Biodiversity Program, and the Moving Kuopio program. Instead, it was considered essential to prepare a high-level action plan that guides the city's cross-administrative and multidisciplinary activities according to the One health approach, so that comprehensive well-being will be reflected in all activities in the future.

Detailed measures are defined in separate action programs and plans, all of which in their own way implement the strategy of Kuopio. The One health perspective should be a cross-cutting theme.

Figure 3. One health in Kuopio – visualisation



3 Goals, activities and evaluation

3.1 Goal 1 Multidisciplinary communication aiming at change is strengthening

The approach of One health requires understanding the holistic view and the interconnections. Communication plays a central role in increasing a more holistic way of thinking and understanding. The concept and practice of One health have been experienced as difficult to grasp in all their breadth. To increase understanding, the city's overall approach to promoting the well-being of humans, nature, and animals must be presented systematically.

Ultimately, this is a simple matter – examining the well-being of humans, nature, and animals comprehensively and interdisciplinarily. Seeking a holistic perspective requires expertise, time, as well as the ability and willingness to consider different viewpoints. Communication is needed to support both inter-sectoral understanding and the understanding between the city and its residents. Active communication about shared health also builds trust and confidence that a sustainable future is being pursued in a holistic way, considering the full impact. Through multidisciplinary communication, the aim is to achieve change in practices, attitudes, and behavior.

Table 2. Measures and indicators for Goal 1: Multidisciplinary communication aimed at change is strengthened.

Expected results	Actions	Evaluation
<p>-The general attitude and manner of discussing One health have become positive.</p> <p>The role of actors and the importance of working together are widely recognized in the area by both residents and various stakeholders. The common health approach is repeatedly highlighted across different channels.</p>	<p>The concept of One health is deliberately used in strategic communication.</p> <p>An advocacy communication strategy is prepared, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Agreed One health messages- Visual identity with graphic elements- Extensive use of different communication channels and new forums- An annual Puijo Summit seminar is organized in cooperation with the local One health group, serving as a key platform for One health collaboration and communication- City partnerships take into	<p>The amount and visibility of realized multidisciplinary communication is increasing.</p> <p>The number of followers/likes on online and social media communication is increasing.</p> <p>The number of participants at the Puijo Summit seminar is increasing.</p>

	account the implementation of the One Health approach - Ambassadors/social media influencers are utilized in communication	
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3.2 Goal 2 Interaction and cooperation are strengthened between different sectors, actors, residents, and regions

In connection with the City of Kuopio's well-being plan, the Our Kuopio participation model, and the renewal of the city strategy, a strong commitment has been identified to increase multidisciplinary cooperation and partnership between the city and its residents. Strengthening collaboration between different sectors of the city's organization is a prerequisite for promoting comprehensive well-being. Equally important is the partnership with other expert organizations, associations, and residents, as well as with other municipalities in the North Savo region.

The Our Kuopio participation model will be implemented from January 2026 on. The participation model will guide the city's activities toward a more multidisciplinary and inclusive approach and will involve residents more strongly than before in the planning of city services and operations.

Cooperation between municipalities in the areas of animal health and environmental health is being strengthened e.g. through a project implemented with funding from the Regional Council of North Savo involving 16 municipalities, entitled In the Sustainable Public Services 2030 project (KEVI 2030), according to the chosen operational model. This ensures the welfare of production animals as well as affordable veterinary services for pets throughout the region, along with the monitoring of animal welfare and the control of animal diseases.

Table 3. Measures and indicators for achieving goal 2 Strengthening interaction and cooperation with different sectors, actors, and residents.

Expected results	Actions	Evaluation
The way the city of Kuopio operates is more multidisciplinary and participatory than before, and interaction and cooperation are perceived to have	Implementation of the Our Kuopio participation model; Appoint a cross-administrative group to promote participation. Increase staff's skills to implement citizen participation.	Evaluation of the implementation of the Our Kuopio participation model and the realization of development according to the program.

increased both within the city's organization and in the experience of residents.		It is assessed during the evaluation of the strategy's implementation and in the context of the wellbeing report, as well as in the committees, and further in the city board and council.
<p>Together, we are proud of our work, well-networked, and enthusiastic.</p> <p>Environmental health and veterinary services are organized as regional cooperation according to the operating model selected in the KEVI 2030 project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain and strengthen networking and cooperation between different actors - Continue and further develop the work of the Kuopio One Health 4 Cities working group - Organize the Puijo Summit event annually - Each participating organization communicates its involvement and the theme within its networks. - Implement measures to increase residents' awareness and participation - Increase opportunities for residents to influence, such as feedback surveys and various studies - Present the results of surveys and studies and how they are used/impact activities (e.g., compilation on Kuopio's website) - Organize open meetings and events - Encourage residents through communication and other means to take small actions in their daily lives to promote shared health 	<p>Amount of realized cooperation.</p> <p>Municipalities commit to the operational model chosen in the KEVI 2030 project, and activities are organized accordingly.</p>

	- Municipal joint body in accordance with the KEVI 2030 project	
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3.3 Goal 3 A One health approach is included in Kuopio's strategy, the activities of guiding groups, and programs

The One health approach has been carried along in the strategy preparation process. The new strategy was approved by the city council in November 2025.

Represented in the Mayor's executive team are the heads of all sectors and services. Multidisciplinary dialogue within the executive team, as well as the attitude toward the One health mindset, inevitably also guides the operations of the units. It is important to lead the One Health approach implementation at sectors.

The statutory cross-administrative wellbeing promotion activities of the City of Kuopio are guided by a wellbeing group composed of directors. Implementation is supported by an operational wellbeing group, whose members are service managers and special experts responsible in their own parts for the planning and implementation of services in their units as well as for defining tasks for their unit's personnel. These two groups are key guiding groups in the implementation of the One health approach.

Service managers must guide and inspire their staff towards multidisciplinary planning and enable collaboration through sufficient allocation of working hours. In the One Health 4 Cities project, a local One health group was established, bringing together experts from the city organization and partner organizations in the fields of human, environmental, and animal welfare. Establishing this activity as a permanent practice is considered important. The members of the group share information with each other about ongoing development projects and other current measures and programs, which enables joint development and resource sharing. Environmental health and veterinary services are organized as a municipal collaboration according to the proposals of the KEVI 2030 project.

Table 4. Measures and indicators for Goal 3 The approach of shared well-being is included in Kuopio's strategy, in the thinking of the groups guiding the activities, and in the implementation of programs.

Expected results	Actions	Evaluation
The approach of One health is included in	- Preparation of Kuopio's strategy	Documents where the common well-being

<p>Kuopio's strategy and in key guiding programs and documents. For example, in zoning participation and assessment plans (OAS), as well as in zoning reports, where the impacts of the plan are evaluated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active participation in the preparation of Kuopio's strategy and highlighting the approach Enhancing staff competence - Organize training and discussion sessions - Prepare interdisciplinary blog posts Strengthening cross-sector collaboration - Continue the work of the local One health working group and further develop the group's composition and activities 	<p>approach is taken into account</p> <p>Staff can explain what the Common Well-being approach means and how each person can promote it through their own work</p>
	<p>The Kuopio multidisciplinary well-being group and the executive well-being group serve as the main coordination groups for promoting joint well-being across disciplines.</p> <p>Necessary groups will be established to strengthen the implementation of a cross-administrative perspective in service planning and delivery (e.g., the Active Kuopio and Culture Kuopio programs).</p>	<p>The multidisciplinary nature and participation activity of the wellbeing group and the executive wellbeing group</p>

3.4 Goal 4 The assessment of the impacts of decisions is carried out consistently and across multiple disciplines

As part of high-quality decision-making preparation, municipalities must assess the impacts of a decision. Impact assessment is part of the adequate and

appropriate investigation required by Section 31 of the Administrative Procedure Act, and in addition, several special laws require consideration of different perspectives in decision-making preparation. These include, among others, impacts on the well-being and health of different population groups, the environment, businesses, and the economy.

Impact assessment is an important part of decision-making, as it helps to understand how different decisions affect various stakeholders and the environment. Impact assessments are always carried out before a decision is made to ensure that all perspectives are considered in the decision-making process and to identify potential risks. The City of Kuopio's advance evaluation of the impacts of decisions is carried out using a shared form template, which guides a comprehensive impact assessment (Appendix 2).

Table 5 Actions and indicators for Goal 4: The assessment of the impacts of decisions is carried out consistently and in a multidisciplinary manner to ensure implementation.

Expected results	Actions	Evaluation
The impacts of decisions are assessed in advance through a multidisciplinary approach.	Increase staff understanding of the importance of assessing the impacts of decisions. Train staff to carry out multidisciplinary assessments and allocate sufficient time for conducting multidisciplinary impact assessments.	Implementation of multi-sector impact assessments in different industries
A multidisciplinary impact assessment is seen as an essential part of the preparation, and sufficient working time is allocated for it.	Systematic use of preliminary impact assessment and increased multisectorial co-evaluation.	Implemented multidisciplinary impact assessments of decisions.

3.5 Implemented multidisciplinary impact assessments of decisions

The monitoring of the city's strategy and the programs that implement it is carried out on several different platforms. A challenge is that reporting often occurs separately from the overall context. Monitoring the achievement of multidisciplinary goals should be comprehensive, and reporting should be perceived as meaningful. The guiding idea of the Happy and Healthy Kuopio 2030 program is the implementation of an effectiveness ecosystem. This refers to a shared goal and the contributions, actions, and impacts of different sectors and actors in achieving it. Through ecosystem thinking, the aim is to increase understanding of each one's significant role in creating effective results in wellbeing promotion.

Table 6 Measures and indicators for target 5 The implementation of the One Health perspective in city services and decision-making is evaluated as being carried out

Expected results	Actions	Evaluation
<p>The Kuopio well-being report and plan are seen as a shared responsibility across all sectors.</p> <p>The Viksu-Kuopio program is implemented across all sectors, with a commitment to the set goals.</p> <p>Residents and decision-makers can comprehensively assess the objectives, measures, and current state of promoting shared well-being through the well-</p>	<p>A One health perspective will be included in Kuopio's wellbeing report and plan more strongly than before.</p> <p>The monitoring of the implementation of program measures is continuously being developed.</p> <p>The implementation of the measures of the Viksu-Kuopio program is regularly monitored.</p>	<p>The wellbeing report and plan are prepared in a multidisciplinary manner over the course of the council term, and in addition, an annual report is prepared each year, which is approved by the city council.</p> <p>The implementation of the measures of the Viksu-Kuopio program is monitored regularly.</p>

being report and plan, as well as through the reporting of the Viksu-Kuopio program.		
In monitoring strategic objectives, a comprehensive approach is highlighted instead of separate, siloed actions.	<p>In strategy monitoring, the implementation of promoting shared well-being is assessed comprehensively.</p> <p>Understanding of carrying out measures in line with binding goals and recording them in the monitoring system is strengthened. This also increases motivation for reporting – significance grows.</p> <p>The ecosystem approach to impact is emphasized – everyone has a significant role in achieving impact objectives.</p>	The Targetor tracking program for binding strategic goals serves as a monitoring tool.

4: Framework for plan implementation

4.1 Structures that support implementation and monitoring of activities

Table 7 Structures in the city organization supporting the implementation of the One health approach

Forum	Meeting frequency
Mayor's steering group	Weekly
Mayor's steering team	Every 3 rd week
Department steering groups	Varies
City planning steering group	Monthly
Wellbeing promotion steering group	4-5 times a year
Wellbeing promotion implementation group	4-5 times a year
Each unit's steering group	Varies
One Health Urban local group	2-3 times a year
Puijo Summit -coordination group	When needed
Urban citizen forum	1-2 times a year or when needed
Rural citizen forum	1-2 times a year or when needed
Good Citizen-relations forum	1-2 times a year or when needed

4.2 Implementation evaluation

Table 8 Platforms for monitoring joint wellbeing objectives, measures, and indicators

Strategy/Program/Plan	Objectives	Monitoring
Kuopio city strategy	Defines objectives and reports on the achievement of binding strategic goals set by the city council by sector	Strategian sitovien tavoitteiden toteutumisen seuranta osavuositarkastuksissa digitaalisessa alustalla.
Kuopio Wellbeing report and plan	Reports on the state of residents' wellbeing and the factors affecting it, as well as on multidisciplinary measures, and defines the multidisciplinary objectives and actions for promoting well-being	The well-being report and plan are reported annually on the PowerBI platform. The city council approves them. A comprehensive well-being report and plan are prepared for each council term.
Viksu-Kuopio -program	Defines climate goals as well as biodiversity promotion goals and reports on actions taken	Annual monitoring in the Viksu-Kuopio steering group and the City Board
Our Kuopio - participation model	Creates a framework for the City of Kuopio's objectives and structures for promoting participation.	The committees and the city manager's executive team monitor the implementation of participation. Actions and the realization of participation are reported in the welfare report.

Appendixes

Appendix 1 Nature Forum. Mayors' Nature Statement 2025

Preface

We, the mayors and city managers of Finland's ten largest cities, issued a joint declaration in Tampere on September 11, 2024, to demonstrate our commitment to stopping biodiversity loss and strengthening nature's diversity. With this declaration, we are updating our shared goals and measures. We understand the intrinsic value of nature, the importance of biodiversity, and recognize the severity of biodiversity loss and the urgency of addressing it. Biodiversity is essential for human well-being, safety, and health, as it ensures clean air and water, secures functional soil and food production, and helps us adapt to a changing climate. We want to nurture the shared health of humans and the rest of nature. A diverse natural environment also strengthens the vitality, economy, and attractiveness of cities as places to live and invest. We want to reconcile the strengthening of biodiversity with business activities. We consider it important that nature is preserved.

Our cities play a key role in achieving the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the EU Biodiversity Strategy, which aim to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 and put it on a recovery path immediately thereafter. As cities, we want to be active participants in this work and in implementing Finland's forthcoming biodiversity strategy. Through our actions, we aim to promote nature-positive outcomes, meaning generating more benefits than harm for nature.

The role of cities in strengthening biodiversity extends beyond their own activities. The business sector, residents, non-governmental organizations, and educational and research institutions operating in urban areas generate knowledge and implement solutions to stop biodiversity loss. Cities act as enablers, trendsetters, and important partners in this work.

For a long time, as cities, we have taken actions to strengthen biodiversity and protect local nature, and we are committed to continuing this work even more purposefully. We will comprehensively and diversely implement practices and means that promote stopping biodiversity loss and further develop them. The built environment plays a central role in strengthening urban nature, which requires not only our own active efforts but also closer cooperation with the construction industry. With our example, we want to encourage other cities in Finland and internationally to take biodiversity

protection and enhancement into account as cities grow. At the same time, we contribute to climate change mitigation through carbon sinks and to climate adaptation.

Actions

We have updated in Espoo on September 5, 2025, the goals and actions agreed upon in Tampere in 2024 as follows to accelerate our nature initiatives:

1. We are committed to developing and maintaining the green-blue infrastructure of our cities to support biodiversity and promote the well-being of urban residents. In addition to safeguarding local nature, we will consider the impact on nature in land use and planning. We also aim to take into account the nature impacts of our procurement. September 5, 2025

2. We want to elevate nature-positive objectives alongside climate change mitigation in the 2025 strategy update. We will examine what is required from our cities to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 and actively implement the measures needed to achieve the goal. We will set concrete, measurable nature targets for our cities, aiming for common practices and the best possible comparability. We will implement the mitigation hierarchy and commit to using common city metrics to assess the harm and improvements done to nature.

3. We support and encourage both the EU and the Finnish government in the development and implementation of predictable and long-term regulations that safeguard biodiversity. We believe that to achieve effective results that take into account regional characteristics, cities, including growth centres, should be actively involved in the planning of implementation. We are ready to be among the first to promote the adoption of developing practices that enhance biodiversity, such as ecological compensation in appropriate projects, so that best practices take root quickly and widely. We support the emergence and use of nature value markets to promote practices that help curb biodiversity loss.

4. We combine our resources in biodiversity work and in the preparation of the national implementation plan for the EU Restoration Regulation. We act as examples in Finland and internationally by sharing our best practices. We develop joint initiatives and projects with other cities, metropolitan areas, and stakeholders, such as companies, research institutions, and citizen and resident organizations. We accelerate the ambition of nature-related actions in our international networks by highlighting concrete, measurable actions as well as the achievements of city collaboration.

5. We contribute to strengthening education and awareness in stopping biodiversity loss and emphasize biodiversity in our various services. We

actively communicate the importance of biodiversity to residents, stakeholders, as well as city staff and decision-makers.

6. We meet once a year at the Nature Forum to evaluate progress. In 2026, we will meet in Lahti.5.9.2025

Kai Mykkänen, Espoo, Mayor
Daniel Sazonov, Helsinki, Mayor
Timo Koivisto, Jyväskylä, Mayor
Soile Lahti, Kuopio, Mayor
Niko Kyynäräinen, Lahti, Mayor
Ali Alatossava, Oulu, Mayor
Lauri Inna, Pori, Mayor
Ilmari Nurminen, Tampere, Mayor
Piia Elo, Turku, Mayor
Pekka Timonen, Vantaa, Mayor

Appendix 2 Preliminary Assessment of Impacts in the City of Kuopio

Impact Assessment in Kuopio's decision making processes

[Topic]

[Name]

[Group]

Ratings

++ Significant, long term positive impact

+ Short term positive impact

o Neutral or no impact

- Short term negative impact

-- Significant long term negative impact

Impact of the decision

Strategic impacts Kuopio strategy			
		Impact	Description
1	Healthy and communal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Living environment and participation Lifestyle and social impacts Lifelong learning, occupation, income Leisure-time activities 		
2	Vibrant and growing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competitive and encouraging entrepreneurial environment Bold and sustainable urban development Attractive innovation, research, and expertise hub, and high-quality education Growing tourism and attractive events Recognition of Kuopio and advocacy 		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate and resource wise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circular economy and resource efficiency Smart mobility and sustainable urban structure Promoting biodiversity and preventing nature loss Security of supply and crisis resilience 		
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewing and collaborative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smooth and renewing operations Renewing leadership Skilled and well-being staff Sustainable finances 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross-cutting objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digitalization, partnership, internationality 		

Conclusions

Impacts on people (Preliminary assessment of the social and health impacts of decisions on different groups of people, for example based on gender, sexual orientation, age, place of residence, language, cultural background, income, education, occupation and labor market status, or special group, etc.)

Which population groups are affected by the decision:

Mark the age groups with a cross: All ___ Adults ___ Elderly ___

Impacts on children and young people are described in the section "Assessment of impacts on children"

Does the decision target a specific population group? No, Yes, which _____,

		Impact	Description
1	Availability and equality of services, as well as quality (for example, education, culture, and sports, etc.)		
2	Social environment (for example, relationships, discrimination, community, communal, cultural, or spiritual participation)		
3	Lifestyle habits (for example, diet, substance use, physical activity, recreation, risk behavior)		
4	Health (physical, mental, social)		
5	Participation (to decision making, influencing, gaining information)		
6	Income of population groups (employment, economy, wealth, etc.)		
7	Equality and equity, such as gender equality and reducing health and wellbeing disparities		

Conclusions

Child Impact Assessment (Pre-assessment of the effects of decisions on the realization of children's rights.)			
		Impact	Description
1	The child's right to life, survival, and development (Article 6) (for example, physical, mental, and social health and safety, family, housing, mobility, leisure and hobbies, friendships, the right to receive quality education or early childhood education or pedagogical/special support)		
2	Non-discrimination and equality (Article 2) (for example, how it affects close and ongoing relationships, different groups of children, children living in different areas, children in particularly vulnerable situations, children's marginalization)		
3	The child's right to be heard and the respect for their views (Article 12) (How has the matter been handled with children/young people and how have they been heard? What opinions have they expressed)		
4	How can positive effects on children and young people be strengthened? How can negative effects on children and young people be eliminated or at least mitigated?		
Conclusions (consideration of the best interests of the child, Article 3.1)			

Impacts on rural areas (Preliminary assessment of the decision's effects, particularly on the rural operating environment.)			
		Impact	Description
1	Rural services (availability, quality, and price of housing and services, accessibility, connections, and infrastructure)		
2	Rural vitality (businesses, entrepreneurship and work, skills, strengths and attractive features)		
3	Rural democracy (community, social capital, and citizen participation)		
4	How can the positive impacts on rural areas be strengthened? How can the negative impacts on rural areas be eliminated or at least mitigated?		
Conclusions			

Impacts on the environment and climate (Preliminary assessment of the impacts caused by the use of natural resources and energy and the associated emissions and waste, changes in consumption behavior, or the location of activities and the related mobility and traffic solutions.)

		Impact	Description
1	Physical environment and comfort (working and living conditions, traffic and mobility options, for example noise, air pollution, risk of accidents, etc.)		
2	To soil, water bodies, and biodiversity		
3	To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt and prepare for climate change		
4	On the use of natural resources, the amount and harmfulness of waste, and the recycling rate		
5	To the landscape, cityscape, cultural heritage		
6	Built environment and community structure		
Conclusions			

Preliminary assessment of the impact on the municipality's finances and personnel

		Impact	Description
1	Personnel		
2	Economy (incomes, outcomes, investments etc)		
3	On effectiveness, productivity, and ways of working		
Conclusions			

Impacts on businesses (Effects caused, for example, by public procurement, housing and zoning policy, traffic solutions, or municipal financial policy.)			
		Impact	Description
1	Promote the conditions for business in the area / improve the operating environment for companies		
2	Diversification of business activities, market structure, and business operations		
3	Workplaces		
4	For business development		
5	For companies' access to workforce		
6	For companies' goods and workplace traffic		
7	Customer flow of companies		
8	Participation of companies in public procurement		
Conclusions			

